AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.14 (2), January-April, 2025 https://ajemates.org

INFLUENCE OF RADIO DRAMA IN TACKLING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF STORY-STORY RADIO DRAMA IN ENUGU STATE

Aguolu Obialunamma
Department of Mass Communication
Faculty of Arts,
University of Nigeria, Nsukka
Enugu, Nigeria.
Phone: +2347061012654; Email: obyaguolu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

There are improvements in tackling the various challenges facing third world countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. However, issues like social exclusion of people with disability, infant mortality, maternal health problems, gender discrimination, human right abuses, environmental degradation and Routine Immunization resistance are still extant. This, if not addressed, will continue to slow down the pace of global development. Therefore, an unwavering search for more effective strategies out of this development quagmire remains imperative, especially now that the global development discourse is laying more emphasis on not only how to engender development, but most importantly, how the said development can be sustained. It is against this backdrop that this paper proposes radio drama as one of the vehicles through which acceptance of people with disability can be achieved in Nigeria. The study covered three local government areas that made up Enugu metropolis: Enugu East, Enugu South and Enugu North. The population of the study is the radio listeners in Enugu metropolis. The study was guided by the agenda-setting theory of mass communication. The sample size was 385, gotten through the Australian calculator. As the survey research method was used to execute the work, the questionnaire was used to generate data. Results indicate majority of the respondents listen to radio programmes very often and to great extent, they are exposed to story-story radio drama on FRCN Enugu station that highlights the acceptance of people with disability in Nigeria. The study also discovered that story-story radio drama was effective in influencing positive attitudes towards people with disability. The study recommends the continuation of the radio drama to stop the discrimination against people with disability and to channel this success to other development needs of the society.

Keywords: Influence, Radio Drama, Discrimination, PWD, Story-Story, Enugu State

Introduction

Over the years, the world has persisted in developing plans and programs to lessen the suffering of the vast majority of its people, who reside in what are now referred to as "Third World" nations. The World Bank designated the first two decades following World War II (1950s–1950s) as

"development decades," highlighting the pressing need for the international community to pool all available resources to free impoverished countries from the bonds of underdevelopment (Shamagana, 2015). As a result, many development strategies that were successful in helping post-World War II European towns recover were replicated in third-world countries, including those in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. However, it was discovered at the conclusion of these decades that the endeavor did not yield outcomes that were comparable in terms of really and practically fostering growth in the so-called underdeveloped countries (Shamagana, 2015).

Western hemisphere academics thought that the distinctive cultural structures of third world countries ran counter to the fundamental principles of modernization theory. According to their advice, traditional societies will only advance if they embrace more contemporary customs, which may also entail eradicating more aspects of their cultures (Rostow, 1971, Bernstein, 1971). On the other hand, experts from the third world (most of whom are from Latin America) thought that the modernization merchants had overlooked opportunities for their tangible and sustainable development in their distinct cultural makeup.

Radio is one of the mass media platforms for attaining sustainable development. We learn from the messages broadcast by radio, which is a powerful source of information. It can broaden a person's perspective beyond the boundaries of his immediate environment. It provides direct access to information on events occurring both domestically and abroad. People in another group may become more ambitious after hearing about the successful implementation of new techniques and collective achievements in that community.

The radio is a personal and auditory medium that is used in homes, workplaces, and even in people's transportation networks. Its portability allows it to reach people and places that would normally be considered unreachable. Despite the fact that the medium is limited by its nature as a purely aural means of disseminating information, it emphasizes its benefits as a medium with extensive penetration and reach, using comparatively easier broadcasting techniques to reach a large audience and appealing to both the blind and the sighted (Ubong, 2009). Radio drama is a type of radio broadcast that uses dramatic representations in the acoustic medium. It is also known as audio play or audio drama. According to Okigbo, as cited in Nda (2019), this type of theater doesn't need visual aids because it primarily uses music, sound effects, and language to tell stories and let the audience picture the characters. Despite being mostly audio-based, radio drama can evoke visuals from the listener's point of view, as they conjure images in their minds while listening to the piece.

The combination of radio and theater gives rise to the phrase "radio drama," because although though the audience cannot see the actors, they may still understand the message being conveyed. As a result, the essence of theater as a social mirror continues to manifest in radio play. According to Moemeka (2007), radio drama has such

extraordinary power that it can be used to advance social change. This is the case because, particularly when it comes to its sociopolitical ramifications, radio drama shares many characteristics with theater. A listener's ability to visualize relatable scenes while listening to a radio drama is largely down to how well the themes being depicted speak to them.

It is estimated that more than 1 billion individuals worldwide-roughly 15% of the total population-live with a disability. Discrimination and stigma are among the numerous obstacles that people with disabilities must overcome in order to access opportunities and services including work, education, and healthcare (WHO, 2021). Seven percent of household members over five in Nigeria reported having some degree of difficulties in at least one functional category, such as sight, hearing, communicating, cognition, walking, or self-care, according to the 2018 Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (World Bank, 2020). There are worries, too, that surveys frequently understate the frequency of disabilities. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the actual number is probably closer to 29 million people, or 15% of Nigeria's total population.

In Nigeria, like elsewhere, there is still a great deal of prejudice against persons with disabilities. A large portion of this is a result of misguided cultural assumptions that have led to poor public attitudes of disability. The social inclusion of individuals with impairments is negatively impacted by the prevalent perception of disability issues in Nigerian society as being related to welfare or charity (Uduu, 2020). Furthermore, the nation's media frequently portrays disabilities via a 'welfare' or 'charity' lens, which reinforces discrimination. The Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act was signed into law in 2019 and continues to be in force, even though Nigeria adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the year 2007.

In order to address the stigma and discrimination around disabilities in Nigeria, BBC Media Action carried out the Disability Inclusive Development (DID) project from November 2020 to June 2021. This was a component of the UK Government's Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO)-funded Inclusive Futures program, a disability-inclusive development initiative that aims to give all adults and children with disabilities equal access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities. Under the direction of Sight Savers, the Inclusive Futures consortium consists of leaders and experts in disability and development from throughout the world. In order to guarantee that everyone has equal opportunities and a future that is inclusive of people with disabilities, it collaborates with the public and private sectors, as well as individuals with disabilities and organizations that represent them.

Statement of the Problem

In order to address issues of disability discrimination, stigma, accessibility, and the inclusion of those with disabilities in society at large, BBC Media Action created and aired

the radio drama Story Story along with related social media content. In order to better include and represent people with disabilities, cover disability-related issues, and combat stigma and discrimination around disabilities, the project also involved creating and distributing radio public service announcements (PSAs) through local radio partners and enhancing the capacity of local media practitioners. This study aims to investigate the impact of radio dramas on eradicating discrimination against those with disabilities in the state of Enugu.

Research questions

1. How often are Enugu residents exposed to radio programmes?
2. What is the extent of exposure to radio drama on physical disability?
3. How does radio drama influence the acceptance of people with disability?

Conceptual Clarifications

Disability

The rights of PWDs are guaranteed and protected by a number of articles in the CRPD. The Convention's complete failure to provide a clear definition of the term "disability" is one of the frequently mentioned objections to it. Although the Convention's accepted terms are defined in Article 2, this clause does not provide a clear definition of disability. Despite the fact that Article 1 lists the groups of people who may be considered PWDs, the term was not defined by the Convention. According to the World Health Organization, disability has three different parts:

1. A person's ability to carry out their responsibilities is impaired, either physically or intellectually; examples of infirmities include memory loss, vision loss, or limb loss.
2. Physical limitations, include trouble seeing, hearing, walking, or resolving problems.
3. Restrictions on the capacity to do everyday activities, including employment, social engagement, recreational pursuits, and access to healthcare and preventative care.

According to the Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, a handicap is a physical or mental problem that prevents a person from using a body part fully or readily or from learning new things quickly. The medical paradigm, which defines disability as a health issue, allows for ongoing marginalization and discrimination because the disabled person struggles to do daily tasks on par with non-PWDs. This is related to the social model, which emphasizes that institutional, physical, and attitude barriers that prevent people from fully engaging in society are the root cause of disability. Disability is defined in Article 1 of the CRPD as the state in which social and physical impediments keep an individual with a disability from participating in their community's regular activities on an equal basis with others.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), people with disabilities are individuals who suffer from permanent physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments that, when paired with additional barriers, may make it difficult for

them to fully and equally participate in society. Similarly, PWDs are defined by the International Labour Organization (ILO) as individuals whose chances of obtaining, reentering, maintaining, and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced because of an effectively understood physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental impairment. Both categories include individuals who have obvious disabilities (such as the blind and deaf) and hidden disabilities (such as diabetes, epilepsy, and mental health), as well as people with a history of disabilities and progressive and recurring illnesses (such as cancer). Millions of people with a wide range of disabilities, many of whom would not consider themselves PWDs, fall under these broad classifications.

Disability might therefore be mental, emotional, cognitive, developmental, psychological, physical, or a combination of these. It might appear at any time during a person's life or be there from birth. Disability is a general phrase that includes limitations on activities, participation limits, and impairment. In actuality, the majority of people will encounter some form of handicap at some point in their lives.

The Exploitation of Persons with Disabilities by Significant Others

PWDs suffer at the hands of family caregivers, who spend their money on pricey goods without their permission or desire and progressively mistreat and isolate them (Etieyibo&Omiegbe, 2016). It is implied that the victim's money is wasted and distributed to other people needlessly. Family caregivers who lavishly mismanage money, assets, or financial resources for their own selfish and evil gain sometimes fail to pay or cancel bills for essential services or utilities. If a person becomes disabled suddenly due to unforeseen events and their assets or estate documents are controlled by close relatives, they may be transferred or changed without the victim's knowledge or a valid reason.

According to Human Rights Watch (2020), guardians and conservators who look after people with disabilities and manage their income benefits on their behalf-such as family members or close friends-are known to take advantage of them. Because of their bad health and their complete need on their abusers to meet their basic requirements, people with disabilities find it difficult to live independently of their abusers. PWDs' reliance on families is strengthened by governments and laws that forbid them from leading independent lives and mandate that family members obtain benefits and pensions on their behalf (Agency Report, 2019).

PWDs from low-income families are sent out to beg as a means of both economic and medical survival. According to Madukwe (2012), who looked into the surge in PWDs begging for charity on the streets, over 80% of them resided in sections of the nation that were considered to be underprivileged. Consequently, 20% of the PWDs were children who were especially susceptible to maltreatment, including sexual abuse, rape, or assault, and 30% were street youths. Therefore, school time is diverted to treating the condition of the family member with a disability and begging for food for the family.

Due to their exposure to abuse by their families, PWDs' abilities are wasted and opportunities are missed; as a result, the cycle of poverty continues and realizing their full potential becomes difficult. Due to inequalities brought about by inadequate treatment from both families and society, PWDs comprise a sizable portion of the nation's poorest of the poor. These inequalities restrict their access to health care, education, work, asset accumulation, and opportunities to engage in social and community development (World Bank, 2020).

Concept of Radio Drama

According to Okigbo (2010), a radio broadcast of a dramatized, entirely acoustic performance is known as radio drama, audio drama, audio play, radio theater, or audio theater. Radio dramas rely on conversation, music, and sound effects to help the listener visualize the characters and tale because they lack a visual element. According to media academics, it has a physical aural component but a psychological force that is just as potent as a visual one. According to Moemeka (2009), radio drama programs are very good in inspiring social change. Therefore, the combination of theater and radio as a communication medium is known as radio drama, radio plays, or drama. Stated differently, it is the radio version of the theatrical genre. In order to make the adaptation legitimate, the producer substitutes sound elements for the drama scene's visual components.

These include sound effects for the narration of scenes or actor-to-actor discussion, background music that creates ambiance, and a stronger focus on the actors' vocals. The goal of the many components of radio drama, according to Ubong (2009), is to help the listener use their imagination to immerse themselves in the narrative. This undoubtedly aids in placing the idea of radio drama-which uses words and sounds to paint vivid images in the listeners' thoughts while also fulfilling certain objectives-into context. Beginning in 1920, the radio evolved into a mass medium and a type of entertainment that combined information and music. By that time, creating radio serials had become popular, and plays of many genres-preferably dramas-were known to be produced via radio equipment. In Latin America and Spain, this phenomenon was highly well-liked. Its appeal was explained by the fact that theater play is an entertainment that not everyone can afford, and its radio adaptation eliminated this class divide.

However, the radio play began to lose popularity as television and social media gained popularity. In this way, the audience's usage of social media and television soap operas took the place of radio serials. According to Onyekwere (2010), as radio allows for direct emotional communication between the writer and the listener, radio drama feelings, emotions, and ideologies must be truthful. Because radio play is so frugal, it cannot afford extraneous sound effects, characters, extensive exposition, or description. Compared to stage or television drama, radio drama is far shorter. The necessity to keep the listener interested is the root cause of this; if this isn't the case, the listener turns off. Because of this, radio

drama appears to be a highly suitable medium for promoting social change.

The Importance of Radio Drama as an Essential Instrument for Social Transformation The blind man's medium is thought to be radio. In spite of this, it can invigorate the mind. Guglielmo Marconi, a renowned Italian electrical engineer, created it in 1895 (Folarin, 2012), and it has since grown to become a nearly worldwide communication tool. It serves as a medium that instantly connects nations, states, regions, communities, and continents. It enables people who cannot see stay connected and shows the world to those who cannot read. According to Okigbo (2010), who highlights the popularity of radio in Nigeria, radio's appeal to rural residents stems from its low cost and operating expenses. Both the literate and the uneducated can use radio sets since they are portable. According to Okigbo (2010), radio drama is a dramatized, entirely acoustic performance that is either broadcast on radio or recorded on audio medium like tape or compact disc. Since radio drama lacks visual elements, it relies on sound effects, music, and speech to help the listener visualize the characters and plot. In the physical realm, it is auditory, but in the psychological realm, it is just as potent as a visual force.

Radio drama rose to prominence as a popular form of entertainment worldwide by the 1940s (Moemeka, 2009). According to Onyekwere (2010), the purpose of these programs is to provide enjoyment and "relaxation." According to him, local stations use drama to spread social norms, values, and structures. It can also be used as satire to expose obvious misconceptions regarding odd societal issues and to rectify social evils. It is impossible to overstate the importance of radio drama as a weapon for social change correction. The need to change societal behaviors has grown critical in Nigeria. The moral decay in Nigerian society is getting worse every day. The majority of radio program directors and producers, however, no longer perceive the need to create a radio drama in the broadcasting industry.

As a result, radio drama has been overlooked in both the general public and educational theater. Because of this, people no longer see the value of radio drama. As a result, the primary goal of this essay is to revive public interest in and support for the use of radio play as a tool for social change. Since change is the one thing that is continuous in nature, people must adjust to positive societal changes in order to live better and healthier lives. However, radio drama is a powerful tool for bringing about these changes.

Theoretical Framework

Agenda Setting Theory

The agenda-setting theory, first proposed by McCombs and Shaw in 1973, holds that the press instructs people the things they should think about instead of what they should think about. Due to their gatekeeping function, they select and direct public attention toward issues that are thought to be more important based on the prominence and emphasis placed on those concerns by the media. The thesis states that the issue or message that is frequently highlighted in the

media determines the public agenda of the populace (Coffman, 2002).

The agenda setting theory evaluates how the public's perception of a certain subject is influenced by the news. The primary topic or subject that many individuals or community members are most concerned about is the public agenda. This hypothesis analyzes the relationship between how the public or press audience responds to a topic and how long the press covers it (Littlejohn and Foss, 2009). This makes it possible to hold the media accountable for influencing public opinion and agenda. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, the mass media can affect public opinion or agenda (Iyengar& Kinder, 1987 as cited in Nor, 2014).

The agenda setting hypothesis states that the public agenda cannot be set by the media, especially when it comes to issues of attitude or mood (Cohen, 1963 as referenced in Nor, 2014). Nonetheless, the mass media possesses a unique ability to shape or affect the target market's interests, values, priorities, and opinions. Because of the media's pervasive influence, people often develop their own beliefs or concentrate on topics they believe should be at the top of their minds (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Advocates of the agenda-setting theory argue that the media has a greater power to influence the audience's thoughts about the information or news that they have been provided, as well as their perceptions of what they have read, heard, or seen (McCombs & Reynolds, 2002).

By highlighting, the idea clearly argues that the radio drama's portrayal of significant issues increases public awareness that may influence a positive attitude toward people with disabilities. The mass media can thereby influence public opinion on specific subjects.

Research Methodology

For this study, a survey design was chosen. In essence, it was thought to be the best design for the project because primary data collecting would primarily come from the opinions of Enugu residents. All citizens of Enugu state make up the study's population. One of the states that served as the locations for the nationwide broadcast of the radio drama was Enugu State. The chosen state has 1,951,092 residents, according to the National Population Commission's (NPC) 2006 population census. Nevertheless, this demographic estimate is no longer accurate and does not reflect the state's current population. Therefore, the state's population over a period of eighteen years was calculated using the yearly population growth rate prediction in order to determine the current population. Hence, using the straight-line formula, the result was as shown below:

Population of Enugu State

N_0 = 1,951,092
K = 0.032% or 3.2%
n = 18
N_1 = 1,951,092 (1 + 0.032 x 18)
= 1,951,092 (1 + 0.576)
= 1,951,092 (1.576)
= 3,074,920

Therefore, 3,074,920 would become the population for the study. A total of 385 participants make up the sample size for this

study. The National Statistics Service (NSS) produced the Australian Calculator, which was used to obtain this. The sample size for this investigation was determined by the use of multi-stage sampling. For this study, the questionnaire served as the data gathering tool. The face validity of the study tool was examined. The measuring instrument questionnaire's reliability was examined using the test-retest approach. The generated data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

Analysis of the results

The impact of these radio dramas and seminar exams on eradicating discrimination against those with disabilities in the state of Enugu. The study employed a survey research design. Male respondents outnumbered female respondents, according to the demographic analysis. In the survey, there were 289 (79%) male respondents and only 78 (21%), female respondents. This indicates that more men than women completed the questionnaire. The age distribution of the respondents revealed that the majority of them are in the 40+ age range, with 125 (34%) respondents, 100 (27%) respondents, 90 (25%), and 52 (14%), while the 18-23-35 age group had 52 respondents. This suggests that the bulk of radio listeners are older people who are out of the youth demographic.

The majority of respondents, 289 (79%) are married, while 78 respondents, or 21%, are single, according to the respondents' marital status. But none of the respondents said they were divorced. This result supports the idea that the majority of respondents are adults. According to the occupational breakdown, 237 respondents, or 73% of the total, were in the business world. Of the responders, 24 (6%), were students, and 76 (21%) were civil personnel. This suggests that businesspeople make up the bulk of FRCN story-story radio drama listeners. Additionally, it was found that 275 respondents, or 75% of the sample, had an HND, B.Sc., or BA, while 61 respondents had a WASSCE, or 17%, 23 (6%), and 8 (2%), respectively, of the sample had an FSLC and a higher degree. This suggests that because they are the more literate segment of society, people with first degrees are more active in radio drama. Regarding the respondents' religion, it was found that 93% of them were Christians and only 7% were Muslims, despite the fact that none of them mentioned African Traditional Religion. Based on the assumption that the study was conducted in the largely Christian state of Enugu, this result is regarded as typical.

The first study question in the psychographic part is to ascertain the frequency of radio program exposure among Enugu inhabitants. The results suggest that although all respondents listen to the radio, the majority of them—142, or 39%—said they do so frequently. This indicates that the vast majority of those surveyed are avid radio listeners. Additionally, every responder stated that they have listened to radio drama on FRCN and that they are aware of what radio drama is.

This demonstrates that citizens of the city of Enugu are well-informed about the FRCN radio drama. Uniprojects.net (2017, p.46) found that respondents had a low level

of awareness of news commentary, which contrasts with this finding. This result suggests that the citizens of the city of Enugu are frequently exposed to the radio play of FRCN, which contributed to their high degree of awareness. This may be explained by the fact that they frequently listen to the radio and that drama series are frequently aired on the station.

How much of an impact can radio drama exposure have on physical disabilities? The amount of time spent listening to the radio every day is a crucial factor in determining how much radio drama contributes to the acceptance of individuals with disabilities. Regarding this, the respondents were asked to select their preferred alternative from the list provided. As a result, table 13 showed that 38% of the respondents listen to the radio for at least an hour and up to two hours every day. 28% of respondents said they spent two to three hours a day, and another 31% said they spent less than an hour. Over three hours a day are spent by the remaining 3% of responders. It is clear that the percentage of respondents decreases as average time rises. Regarding the respondents' exposure to radio drama that promotes acceptance of individuals with disabilities, it was found that most of them—130, or 36% of the respondents—agreed that they were exposed to radio drama that promotes acceptance of individuals with disabilities on a weekly basis. What impact does radio drama have on the acceptance of those with disabilities? According to the results, 132 (36%), the majority of respondents, said that the dramas were able to depict the hardships of these individuals as well as their significant contributions to the advancement of society. The voices of the characters were characterized by regular listeners as "unique," with distinct speaking patterns. This made it easier for students to identify different characters by their voices, especially those with disabilities. In contrast to television or other visual media, radio drama uses a mix of sound effects, music, and speech to construct a "picture" for the listener.

The use of a range of backgrounds, scene lengths, and sound effects often makes stories more interesting for listeners, according to experience from BBC radio drama story-story development. Story Story's creative use of sound contributed to its success. The majority of its stories are filmed on location in authentic environments that sound recognizable to viewers and feel true to the characters. This made the drama sound more genuine and distinguished it from other radio dramas that were aired in Nigeria. The play successfully addressed disability-related problems, as evidenced by the nearly 50% of Story-Story listeners who stated that they enjoyed it because it addressed issues that affected PWD.

Also, respondents said they liked how the characters in the play represented individuals with disabilities because it helped them feel more included in the debate of disability issues and in the drama and society. The play inspired PWD to demand their rights and reasonable accommodations, helped them understand what they should expect in terms of respect, and gave them a sense of increased social involvement.

Prior studies conducted in other nations have demonstrated the influence of media, including drama, in changing unfavorable perceptions of individuals with disabilities, especially when it comes to intellectual and psychological impairments. There is little evidence of comparable work being done in Nigeria. As an illustration, consider the fictional Bangladeshi television show Meena, which had a successful impact on girls' educational inclusion in remote, difficult-to-reach places. The Bangladeshi Ministry of Primary and Mass Education created a quick interactive play and a brief Meena episode in 2014 to increase public awareness of autism. The play helped lessen the stigma associated with autism by being performed in 158 subdistricts throughout Bangladesh (Bae, Lee, &Bae, 2014).

Conclusion

According to the evaluation's findings, radio drama in particular can help combat stigma and discrimination connected to disabilities and promote disability inclusion in a number of ways. The study comes to the conclusion that there were important elements of the Story-Story radio drama that helped with this process and that might be used for future interventions of this kind (in Nigeria or elsewhere). By making disabled individuals more visible and vocal in the media and demonstrating their engagement and involvement in society, they also demonstrated that disability is not a path. Story-Story accomplished this by using a variety of characters with different kinds of disabilities. Presenting persons with disabilities in a positive light in order to dispel myths about their capacity to engage in society on an equal basis (for example, in employment and education), which serve as the foundation for various forms of discrimination and stigma. Characters with impairments that questioned these presumptions were featured in the story, such as the physically disabled taxi driver Ejike.

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