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Research Paper

Listeners' perception of the contents of Ere-agbe farm broadcast programme in peri-urban area of Ibadan, Nigeria

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Farm broadcast especially radio is known to play a major role in agricultural extension and rural development. The study examined listeners' perception of the contents of Ere-agbe farm broadcast programme in peri-urban area of Ibadan, Nigeria. A total of 134 respondents participated using simple random sampling technique. Questionnaire was used to elicit information from the respondents. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive (frequencies and percentages) and inferential (Chi-square and PPMC) statistics. Result showed that 78.8% of the respondents were males, 87.9% were married, 81.3% had tertiary education and the mean farm size was 2.8 ha. The major area of respondents' interest in the broadcast was on agricultural news/technology dissemination (75.0%). Findings also showed that the majority (53.3%) benefitted highly from Ere-agbe farm broadcast, while 60.0% of them had a favorable perception towards the broadcast. Significant relationships existed between farming experience (X^2 = 13.709, p = 0.008), benefit derived (r = -0.604, p = 0.000) and perception towards Ere-agbe farm broadcast. The study recommended that Ere-agbe programme should dwell more on increased marketing opportunities and endeavour to create more awareness on loan facility for listeners.

Keywords: Ere-agbe, farm broadcast, perception

INTRODUCTION

There is no gainsaying in the fact that rural development broadcasts on radio play a major role in agricultural extension and rural development. In Nigeria, as in many other countries, limited numbers of extension agents (1:4000 farmers) make it impossible to reach all farmers by interpersonal means (Yahaya and Badru, 2002). For this reason, radio and more recently television have been used by agricultural organisations and broadcast stations to disseminate relevant agricultural information to large numbers of farm families at minimal cost and to areas hitherto not accessible to extension agents on a regular basis.Prior studies have confirmed that agricultural programmes on radio and television are either being sponsored by corporate organizations such as research institutes, agricultural development programmes, media organizations, but the most unique thing about "Ere-agbe" the agricultural radio programme being studied is that it is a privately sponsored programme by the producer. Ere- agbe is an independently produced agricultural radio programme on Amuludun FM 99.1. It is usually on air between 5.00 pm to 5.15 pm every Tuesday.

The programme usually dwells on current farm operations, agricultural news and interviews of agricultural experts. The programme has a wide range of audience, which constitute a formidable listeners group (Adegbola, 2015). Radio is one of the several vehicles in which information is being transferred in Nigeria and the

world at large. It permeates every nook and cranny of the society provided there is a receiver with adequate supply of power. Certain qualities inherent in the radio technology make it a very potent tool of mass communication. Apart from its timeliness, it is capable of carrying the message to the audience no matter whether they are in their living rooms, car or on their farms.

Once the audience has a receiver with adequate supply of power, the absence of such facilities as roads, light and water are no hindrance to the radio (Adamu, 2009). Illiteracy is no barrier to radio message as such messages can be couched in the audiences own language.

It is this unique advantage of the radio over other mass media tools that have made government all over the world to accord radio a pride of place as means of reaching the masses that may be dwelling in far-flung rural environment.

The role of mass media in bringing about economic, social and educational change in a nation has been well recognized. Mass media has being playing a crucial role in the agricultural information dissemination in Nigeria, although their role is supportive.

The radio programme in farming entitled 'Agbe mase' (I will take to farming) was the first to be aired in Nigeria by the Western Nigeria Broadcasting Service (WNBS) in 1963 (Omenesa, 1999). Since then, a lot of other agricultural agencies such as Agricultural Development Programmes, research institutes and agro input companies have been packaging different agricultural programmes on radio and television.

Experience has shown that with the commercialization of broadcasting in Nigeria, the media houses may not be too willing to give free air time to agricultural programmes and government which is the largest employer of Village Extension Agents (VEA) may also not be able to sustain huge investments in agricultural radio programming, hence the need to encourage privately sponsored agricultural radio programmes.

Yahaya and Badru, (2002) posited that mass media have great potentials for the development of the Nigerian agricultural sector and the rural areas. Myers, (2002) confirmed that radio has also been credited with preventing conflict between farmers and pastoralists in Mali where farmers have been able to inform the local radio station when their fields will be harvested and become free for grazing by migrating herds of cattle. Yahaya, (2002) found that radio is the most accessible channel of communication to farmers in 2 agro-ecological zones of Nigeria and that they also listened to radio throughout the day, but generally prefer listening to agricultural broadcasts in the evening and in the local language. Olowu, (1996) equally found out that farmers in Nigeria own or have access to radio sets and generally prefer listening to agricultural broadcasts in the evening between 6 pm - 9 pm, while showing their acceptance of the programmes by requesting for allocation of more time to such programmes. However, the perception of listeners' on the contents of the broadcast especially private sponsored agricultural programme has not been ascertained which therefore necessitated the focus of this study. The specific objectives were to:

1. Describe the personal characteristics of the respondents.
2. Identify the listeners' area of interest in Ere-agbe farm broadcast.
3. Ascertain the benefits derived by the listeners from Ere-Agbe farm broadcast.
4. Determine the perception of the listeners towards Ere-agbe farm broadcast.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. The population for the study comprised of 192 members of the Ere-agbe listening group which spread across the peri urban area of Ibadan. Out of the 192 members of the listening group in the list, 70% which constitute 134 members of the group were randomly selected. Data were collected with the use of structured questionnaires. This was made possible through the assistance of the producer/ presenter of the programme who usually host the group in his office at Bodija, Ibadan, Oyo State. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive (frequencies and percentages) and inferential (Chi-square and PPMC) statistics.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Personal characteristics of respondents

The age distribution of the respondents as shown in (Table 1) reveals that the majority (54.2%) of them was between 40-49 years and the mean age was 49.1. This tells that the respondents are in their middle-age, and are expected to be active, ambitious and would as such seek information in order to increase their farm production, to which Ere-agbe radio programme can serve as a means of supplying such information.

Table 1 also shows that majority of the respondents were males (78.8%), which implies that more males listened to the farm broadcast than female; this is traceable to the common belief that agriculture is mainly for males because of the drudgery associated with it (Agbebaku, 2004). Additionally, the majority of the respondents were married (87.9%), meaning they utilize information obtained from Ere-agbe radio programme by engaging in agriculture in order to provide for household needs, this corroborates Akinbile, (2007) that marriage confers responsibility. Most of them had tertiary education (81.3%), thereby increasing the possibility of easy understanding of the message being broadcast on

Table 1. Distribution of respondents by personal characteristics.

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
Age	30-39	11	8.3	49.1	7.5
	40-49	72	54.2		
	50-59	33	25.0		
	60-69	16	12.5		
Sex	Male	106	78.8		
	Female	28	21.2		
Marital status	Single	16	12.1		
	Married	118	87.9		
Education	No formal	13	9.4		
	Primary	8	6.3		
	Tertiary	109	81.3		
	Adult education	4	3.1		
Primary occupation	Farming	88	65.5		
	Trading	23	17.2		
	Teaching	14	10.3		
	Civil servant	9	6.8		
Farm size	≤ 3	94	70.0	2.8	2.5
	4-6	27	20.0		
	≥ 7	13	10.0		
Farming experience	≤ 10	35	25.8	2.4	1.1
	11-20	43	32.3		
	21-30	39	29.0		
	31-40	9	6.5		
	≥ 41	9	6.5		
Farming system	Crop	22	16.1		
	Livestock	30	22.6		
	Mixed farming	82	61.3		

Source: Field survey, 2015.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by area of interest in Ere-agbe farm broadcast.

Area of interest	Yes
Advertisement	25 (18.8)
Jingle	4 (3.1)
Interview segment	46 (34.3)
Agricultural news/technology dissemination	100 (75.0)

Source: Field survey, 2015.

the programme by the respondents.

Area of interest in Ere-agbe farm broadcast

Table 2 shows that during broadcast of Ere-agbe programme, the majority of respondents paid attention to agricultural news/technology dissemination (75.0%); which means that they keep themselves abreast of the latest agricultural technologies which can enhance farm productivity. It worthy to note that as farmers receive useful information on agricultural activities from radio, the farmers gradually introduce change in farming methods through the application of new technologies (Ekoja, 2003).

Benefits derived from Ere-agbe farm broadcast

Benefits derived by the respondents from the programme are shown in (Table 3). It can be seen that 51.7% of them indicated that, to a large extent, listening to Ere-agbe radio programme offered them better access to agricultural inputs, as the broadcast points out locations where improved seeds and other farm input can be purchased. Similarly, 51.7% stated the broadcast offered an avenue to learn new agricultural technologies. This corroborates Khanal, (2011) which stated that radio serves as a useful medium in educating farmers on modern agricultural technologies. Additionally, 46.7%, 56.7% and 55.2% stated that the broadcast provided increased marketing opportunities for their farm produce,

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by benefits derived from Ere-agbe farm broadcast.

Benefits	Large extent	Moderate extent	No extent
Better access to agricultural inputs	51.7	48.3	-
Improved farm management	56.7	43.3	-
Increased farmers' income	41.4	58.6	-
Awareness on loan facility	28.6	42.9	28.6
Increased marketing opportunities	46.7	46.7	6.7
Opportunities to learn new agricultural technologies	51.7	44.8	3.4
Ability to interact with fellow farmers through the radio programme	44.8	31.0	24.1
The programme teaches me what to cultivate at the right time	55.2	41.4	3.4
The programme teaches me improved cultural practices at the right time	69.0	31.0	-
The programme encourages me to practice commercial agriculture	46.7	46.7	6.7

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table 4. Level of respondents' perception on Ere-agbe farm broadcast.

Perception	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Favourable	60.0	23.9	4.4
Unfavourable	40.0		

Source: Field survey, 2015.

improved farm management and information on the right time for crop cultivation, respectively. Information on marketing of produce, better farming methods and timely planting are provided on radio (Nakabugu, 2001). These findings connote that the respondents are well-off listening to the radio programme, which can as well translate into them having a favourable perception towards it.

Perception on Ere-agbe farm broadcast

As shown in (Table 4), the majority (60.0%) of the respondents had favourable perception towards Ere-agbe radio programme (mean = 23.9). This favourable perception is consequent on the fact that the programme is contributing positively to them, to which Chapman et al. (2003) averred that radio is widely perceived as a strong extension tool due to its ability to reach farmers and provide them with information relating to all aspects of agricultural production.

Listeners who perceive the farm broadcast favourably can through word-of-mouth recommend it to others (Table 4).

Relationship between respondents' personal characteristics and perception on Ere-agbe farm broadcast

Table 5 shows that the respondents' farming experience and their perception on Ere-agbe radio broadcast (X^2 = 13.709, p = 0.008) were significantly related. This nexus between farming experience and perception entails that farmers who have been involved in farming for an ample number of years can sieve information received from Ere-agbe radio broadcast with a view to know if such information is beneficial or not. If they consider received information beneficial, this can trickle down to other farmers hence giving Ere-agbe radio broadcast a positive perception.

Relationship between socio-economic characteristics and perception

Table 6 shows that there was no significant relationship between respondents' age, farm size and their perception of Ere-agbe farm broadcast programme. This means that age and size of the farm do not have any effect on the respondents' perception of the Ere-agbe programme (Table 6).

Relationship between benefits derived and perception on Ere-agbe farm broadcast

The correlation analysis between benefits derived by respondents and their perception indicates a significant relationship (r = 0.604, p = 0.000). It follows that the way the respondents view Ere-agbe radio programme is dependent on the gains they get from listening to the programme. This is explainable from the fact that because respondents derive, among other things, better access to agricultural inputs, increased marketing opportunities for their farm produce and an avenue to learn new agricultural technologies through listening to Ere-agbe radio programme . This will definitely influence

Table 5. Chi-square test between personal characteristics and perception on Ere-agbe .

Characteristics	Df	X^2 value	p – value	Decision
Sex	1	0.031	0.860	NS
Marital status	1	0.089	0.765	NS
Education	3	1.606	0.658	NS
Farming experience	4	13.709	0.008	S

Field survey, 2015
Df = Degree of freedom, X^2 = Chisquare value, p- value = Significant value, NS = Not significant, and S = Significant

Table 6. Relationship between socio-economic characteristics and perception.

Characteristics	r – value	p – value	Decision
Age	0.052	0.813	NS
Farm size	-0.424	0.062	NS

Field survey, 2015. r = Correlation value

Table 7. Correlation between benefits derived and perception.

Variable	r – value	p – value	Decision
Benefit	0.604	0.000	S

Field survey, 2015.

positively how they perceive the programme (Table 7).

Conclusion and recommendations

The listeners of Ere-agbe radio farm broadcast were mostly males, married, middle-aged and had tertiary education. Majority of them were interested in agricultural news / technology dissemination and had favorable perception of Ere agbe farm broadcast; as a result it was recommended that more independent farm broadcast programmes should be encouraged even on television which combines audio and visual. Government owned broadcast stations should also encourage interested independent agricultural programmes by reducing the cost of their air time. This would go a long way in complementing epileptic extension services being offered by Agricultural Development Programmes in Nigeria.

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