



## THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPACT OF COMMUNITY RADIO ON GRASSROOTS DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** *This work is aimed at outlining the Sociological Impact of Community Radio to the Nigerian Communities, most especially to grassroots or rural dwellers. The information to conduct the research was gathered from the respondents purposely selected from the people who listen to RAVE FM radio station. Agunbelewo, Osogbo, through a well structured questionnaire. The outcomes of the study are presented in a simple percentage with the use of tables and inference made with the statistical tool of Chi-square. It is discovered that the radio station makes significant impact on grassroots development. It is therefore an indispensable tool in developing the grassroots. It is recommended that more community radio stations are needed to be established at the grassroots levels in order to enhance rapid development and growth.*

**Keywords;** Radio Station, Community, Media, Development, Grassroots.

### Introduction

Community radio is a means of disseminating information to the community. The community radio is also capable of educating, entertaining and promoting the people's culture through their various cultural oriented programmes (Ayobami and Akinrosoye, 2002). The emergency of radio communication is as a result of scientific innovation traced to Guglielmo Marconi an Italian. Radio is a wireless form of communication that releases rays or waves that carry signals, programmes, messages and information for the purpose of educating or developing a community or a country at large.

In addition, a community radio station should be an information centre for the people in that particular area where the people can receive adequate and reasonable

information about an event and socio-political activities in their environments (Ayobami and Akinrosoye, 2002).

Radio got to Nigeria in 1932. Unlike the history of the print media which came through evangelism (Ifedayo, 1998). The birth of electronics media both radio and television in Nigeria had link with political, economic and cultural factors. The intention was mainly to strengthen the colonial power of Britain on the colonies for political and economic reasons. The service was provided with information link between Britain and colonial offices scattered all over the British Empire (Oni, 2001). In effect, radio as a medium was established in Nigeria as a political instrument with which the colonial masters were to reach out to their people to mobilize and inform them of the activities of government in the home country and to



tell their culture and economic system to the colonies with broadcasting under government, it was inevitable that there would be substantial government colonies, more so under colonial situation. Radio Broadcasting era in Nigeria began with the operation of wired system and continued to operate till 1949. When the first wireless services of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) were set up under the auspice of the post and telegraphs department (Ayobami, 2009).

A Briton, Tom Chalmers of BBC was picked to train Nigerians to run the Nigeria Broadcasting Services, a part of department of the Post and Telegraphs Chalmers became the first Director of the Nigeria Broadcasting service (NBS). The early days of broadcasting in Nigeria gave no room for choice of programme as a listener had only the opportunity to tune to the talking “box” that does not wait for reply.

The NBS changed to Nigeria Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) under the statutory corporation Act (NBC ordinance no.39 of 1956) with national and regional services based in Lagos, Enugu, Kaduna, and Ibadan (Abiola, 2008). The NBC later became Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) in the 1970’s and today it is called as Radio Nigeria even without any law backing such name. Up till 1953 broadcasting was the exclusive right of the Federal government but the 1954 constitution paved the way for regions to establish their own radio stations and television services that is, WNB/ WNTV. Today, each of the 36 states in Nigeria has radio stations. The FRCN maintains its Zonal stations and also making frantic effort to set up a station in each of the state of the federation.

#### **Theoretical Framework:**

##### **Social Responsibility Theory**

According to McQuail (1987) cited in Ayobami (2009), the theory of social responsibility media theory postulated the specific functions of the broadcast media with which radio station is among.

- a. to serve the political system by making information discussion and consideration of public affairs generally accessible.
- b. to serve the economic system for instance, by bringing together buyer and sellers through the medium of advertising.
- c. to present financial autonomy in order to become dependent on special interest and influence.

In principle, the media can be used by anyone who has an idea to express, but they are forbidden to invade private right or disrupt vital social structure or interest (Adedire, 1996). The only serious constraints by then were exercised by community opinions, consumer protests and professional ethics. The electronic media is therefore, the transformation of audio and aural signal, aural electrical impulse and then retransform into aural and or visual signal through a specific technology for the sole purpose of hearing and watching (Adidi, 1996).

Though, the theory of social responsibility media theory says community radio station serves as: provision of adequate information about the happening of their environment or locality, provision of educative programs, to gather and dissemination people’s opinion (Kelin, 1962). It serves as watch dog between leadership of community and followers and between government and the community, it promotes culture and norms and it creates awareness. Radio station to be regarded as an instrument of passing information to the people in rural areas for the purpose of developing the grassroots.

##### **Development Media Theory**

Development media theory relates specifically to media structures and performance in the developing countries. It encompasses a great variety of socio-cultural, economic and political conditions which however tend to converge in a primary concern to use the media for development purpose (Locke, 1978).



In his Theories of Mass Communication, Ayobami (2009) justifying the Development Media Theory assigned three functions to the radio medium, namely:

1. Surveillance of the environment (News function).
2. Correlation of the different parts of the environment (Editorial function).
3. Transmission of the other.

Community Radio Station aims at keeping the people of its locality informed about what is happening in their territory. People may be informed about social, political, culture and even the event that is about to happen and of great importance to the society.

The following are the sources of information to community radio stations,

1. Local business centers or organizations;
2. Local governments
3. Local institutions
4. Mass media agents like NAN
5. Chieftaincy matters
6. Villages or local festivals
7. Market women
8. Custodian of cultures

It is believed that for community radio station to remain in existence, it must have a stable, financial source to sustain the production and enhance its sustainability to perform its basic functions.

What motivated the writing of this paper resolves around the fact that community radio station as one of the variable components of the mass media has a lot of impacts on grassroots. As a result of this, the Rave FM, Osogbo was taken as a case study to measure the sociological impacts of the community radio station in developing the grassroots. RAVE FM is a licensed radio station, situated around Agunbelewo area in Osogbo, Osun State, Nigeria, it is a youth-oriented and urban centric, digital equipped station. It operates on Frequency 91.7 FM. The station broadcasts throughout the 24 hours

of the day and offers amazing music and quality talks. It serves the needs of listeners across the Southwest Nigeria, as well as listeners around the world via the online streaming portal [www.rave917.fm](http://www.rave917.fm) and other platforms such as IOS, Android app, radio garden and Tune in Radio. The Chief Executive Officer of RAVE FM is Mr. Femi Adefila. RAVE FM commences operations in October, 2015 on frequency 91.7 FM

Having realised the essence of the community radio stations, the challenges facing them that serve as the limitations to enhance the objectives, and the curiosity to carry out this research work; this paper focuses on Rave FM Osogbo lays emphasis on the reasons why the grassroots believe in the impact of radio politically, economically, socially and culturally. The paper, as well finds out how well the community radio has been able to achieve the set up objectives and the problems faced by the radio stations.

The research questions emanated from the aforementioned stated problems are;

- (i) Does the Community Radio have sociological impacts on grassroots development?
- (ii) Does the Community Radio develop community, economically, politically and socially?

#### **Aim and objectives**

The aim of this paper is to find out the sociological impact of community radio on grassroots development and the contributions on such impacts to the grassroots.

While the objectives are to;

- find out how well the community radio has been able to achieve the set up aim.
- evaluate the evolution of radio stations in Nigeria and the establishment of community radio stations with particular reference to RAVE FM Osogbo.

#### **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Community radio has no significant positive sociological impact on grassroots development.



H<sub>1</sub>: Community radio has significant positive sociological impact on grassroots development.

**Methodology**

A stratified sampling method was employed in gathering information for this research work with the distribution of 100 copies of a structured questionnaire to the respondents. 60 respondents were selected from the students of Osun State Polytechnic, Iree, 10 members of staff and the remaining 30 respondents was drawn from the Iree indigenes. The respondents were listeners of RAVE FM radio station. Descriptive statistics of Bar chart was employed for description of the observed responses. Also, the tool of frequency, percentages and Chi-square ( $\chi^2 = \sum (o-e)^2/e$ ) are employed for inference making.

**Analysis**

Respondents characteristics and classifications

**Table 1: Respondents according to their level of education**

Education level	Respondents	Percentage (%)
SSCE	20	20
OND	30	35
HND/BSc.	35	30
MSC/ others	15	15
Total	100	100

Source: Field Survey 2021.

The table above shows that 20% of the respondent were O’Level, 30% were OND, while 35% were HND/BSc., which means first degree graduates listen to Rave FM more than others.

**Table 2: Respondents who were conversant with radio set.**

Respondent category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	78	78
No	12	12
Total	100	100

Source: field survey 2021

From the responses to the question in table 2, it was found that seventy eighty (78%) respondents were conversant with the radio, while twelve (12%) did not. The reason is that radio is cheap, available in phones and affordable to buy.

**Table 3: Respondents who listened to Rave FM radio station Osogbo.**

Response category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	78	78
No	12	12
Total	100	100

Source: Field survey, 2021

Despite that fact that the virtually, all the homes in the country have at least a radio set, it was still discovered from the response on the table that twelve percent (12%) out of hundred percent (100%) respondents surveyed did not listen to Rave FM, Osogbo.

**Table 4: Programmes respondents listen to.**

Respondents category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
News	63	63
Sports	15	15
Press report	13	13
Announcement	9	9
Total	100	100

Source: field survey 2021

The response has indicated that sixty-three (63%) percent of respondents were listeners of news programmes while fifteen (15%) percent of respondents were for sports and thirteen (13%) listened to press reports, nine (9) % of the respondents were for announcement and others. The findings showed that respondents have preferences for news than other programmes.



**Opinion on agreement that community radio station teaches moral and ethical values of the community.**

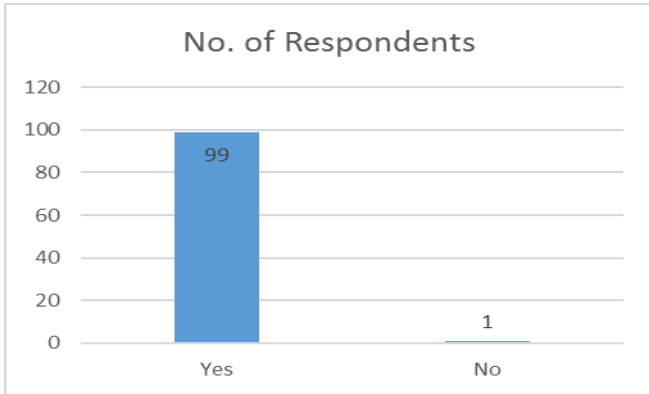


Fig.1, Source: Filed survey, 2021

The fig.1 shows that ninety-nine (99%) percent of the respondents agreed that the community radio station teaches moral and ethical values of the community, while only one (1%) percent of the respondents disagreed.

Does community radio develop the rural area politically and socially?

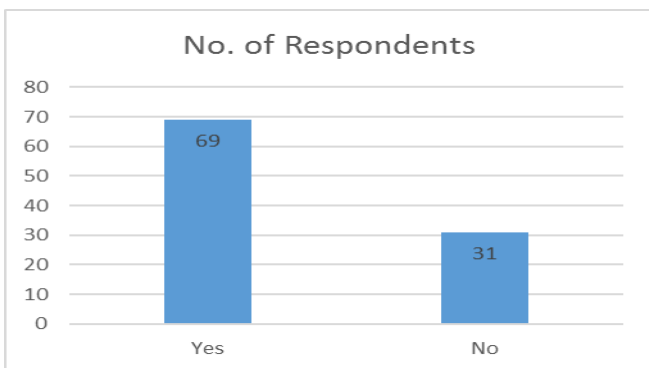


Fig. 2, Source: field survey, 2021

Going by the analyzed result in the above Fig.2, sixty-nine (69%) of the respondents were of the opinion and agreed that community radio develops rural area politically and socially, while the remaining thirty-one (31%) percent of the respondent agreed otherwise.

Does community radio promote the economy of its locality?

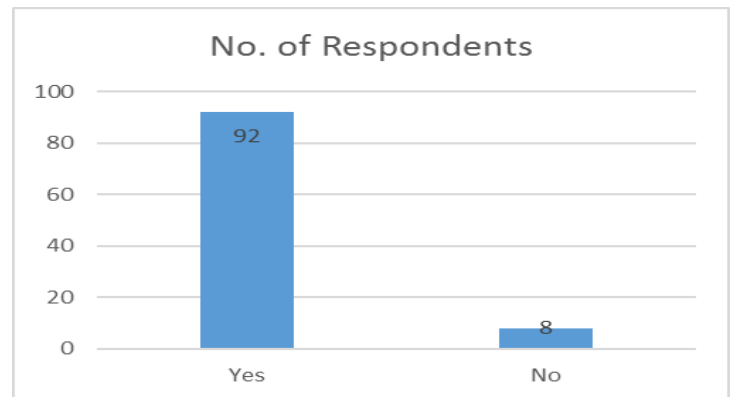


Fig.3, Source: Field survey, 2011

Ninety-two (92%) percentage of the respondents agreed that community radio promotes the economy of its locality while eight (8%) percent of the respondents disagreed.

**Table 5: To what extent does community radio serve a watching between the leadership of the community and followers?**

Response category	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Excellent	31	31
Good	49	49
Fair and others	20	20
Total	100	100

Source: field survey, 2021

Going by the result analyzed in the above table 5, thirty-one (31%) of the respondents excellently agreed, forty-nine (49%) respondent gave good judgment about the item while twenty percent (20%) of the respondents passed fair impression that community radio serves as watchdog between the leadership of the community and followers.

**Test of hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Community radio has no significant positive impact on grassroots development.

H<sub>1</sub>: Community radio has significant positive impact on grassroots development.

Table 6: Observation table



Does community radio has significant positive impact on grassroots development			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Yes	99	50.0	49.0
No	1	50.0	-49.0
Total	100		

Table 7: Chi-square

Test Statistics	
	Does community radio has significant positive impact on grassroots development
Chi-Square	96.040 <sup>a</sup>
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.000
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 50.0.	

**Decision:** Since the p-value = 0.000, H<sub>1</sub> is thereby accepted and conclude that community radio has significant positive impact on grassroots development.

**Conclusion**

Radio makes significant impact on grassroots development. It is therefore, an indispensable tool in developing the grassroots. It is to be noted that more community radio stations need to be established at the grassroots level in order to enhance rapid development and growth. This paper played a significant role in enabling the radio station to ascertain whether the credibility of their contents has sociological impact on grassroots’ development in term of social, economic, cultural and political development.

In addition, it enables the Radio Stations to measure and determine the level of programmer’s pattern among radio stations as well as proving whether the credibility of their messages influences grassroots development.

**Recommendations**

With relevance to the perception of the respondents on the topic “The Sociological Impact of Community Radio Station on Grassroots Development” case study of Rave

FM 91.7, Agunbelowo, Osogbo, Osun State. The research has proven that more community radio stations will bring development to the community. It is recommended that the upgrading of current infrastructural facilities in our community radio stations shall help to cope with the challenges of modern information technologies. Lastly, radio stations should try to base most of their programme on how to civilize as well as to educate and entertain people properly to have a better community to live in.

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