



Impact of Radio Broadcasting on the 2023 Nigerian General Elections: A Case Study of Bauchi Radio Corporation (BRC)

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the impact of radio broadcasting on the 2023 Nigerian general elections. It determines the role of media (Radio) in political awareness. The main objective of the study was to examine the impact of BRC on the 2023 general elections in Bauchi state and in the country at large. It also examines the reason for the perceived low political participation in state and national politics. It has attempted to trace several negative factors like low levels of awareness and tribalism in the body polity. Relevant data were collected for this work, both primary and secondary data. A descriptive survey method was used for the study. The total population of the study area stood at 493,780 according to the 2006 census and constituted a sample size of 150. The researchers adopted the survey method using a simple random sampling technique. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed that there was sufficient usage of radio sets among the people and this impacted positively on political awareness, especially in the 2023 general elections. Government monopoly on the ownership and control of the mass media was found to be a hindrance to national progress. The researchers recommended that continuous dialogue and the use of local dialect as a means of political awareness remains paramount as well and people's direct participation in the radio programming is the best mechanism for achieving optimum political information desired to reach and mobilize the people.

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INTRODUCTION

The preparation for the conduct of Nigeria's 2023 general elections has witnessed a rise in the use of radio as a means of airing political campaign messages. Even, before then, a proliferation of radio stations in the entire country was witnessed. The radio stations that were mainly local stations otherwise known as FM stations were used to air political campaign messages by the government, political parties, and candidates. After the conduct of the 2023 general elections in Nigeria, Utor, (2019) researched to find out the reason for the lack of participation by the citizens. His findings

showed that voters in Nigeria have low levels of political knowledge and information. Moreover, he recommended the use of radio as the channel for disseminating political campaign messages while targeting the audience. Butressing this, Jibo (2016) suggests the importance of focusing on the influence of radio political campaign messages. He found out that radio as a medium can help in enhancing the political information awareness of Nigerian voters.

Media as an instrument of political awareness explores the radio as an awareness agency during the political transition period. It is

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thus, an important assumption of the work that a systematic study of political awareness of mass media should include an examination and the nature of operation of the mass media (radio) of communication in the Bauchi Radio Corporation (BRC) Bauchi. Radio is a tool for, political awareness, journalism education, enlightenment, culture propagation, and entertainment. Radio promotes economic development, stimulates political participation, and arouses national consciousness and unity. Historically, Radio was originally founded in Nigeria (1933) by the British colonial government named the Radio Diffusion Service (RDS). It allowed the public to hear the British Broadcasting Corporation as foreign radio. In April (1950), the RDS became the Nigerian Broadcasting Service and introduced radio stations in Lagos, Kaduna, Enugu, Ibadan and Kano. This service was recognized by the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) in 1957 by an act of parliament.

Modern-day politics demand that political parties serve as a platform through which politicians contest for different elective positions. And for these electorates to participate, Adibe (2015) observed that they (electorates) are mobilized to vote candidates into various offices. These mobilizations are done through the production and airing or publishing of political campaign messages that aim to educate and influence voters to act during the elections. Supporting this position, Adaba (2015) observed that, as Nigerians conducted their 2023 general elections, such political communication in the form of various campaign messages was witnessed. He asserts, that "Radio, which is one of the most frequent mediums used by campaign organizers and political parties, witnessed such presence of political campaigns even higher through radios."

The NBC was designed to serve the communication needs of the people in the regions. In the same vein, the Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON) was founded in 1973 to aid the successful interaction of the broadcasting media in Nigeria. The organization is used as a rallying point for coverage of major national and international events. It was owned wholly by the state then when it started. Radio can serve both the illiterate and literate classes

of people, unlike the print media, radio has played a major role in greasing the wheels of the country's political economy. Radio makes unbeatable contributions to the enhancement of the country's political growth as exemplified by its massive political education, enlightenment, awareness, consciousness, and provision for discussion, debates, and presentations. The performance of these functions was maximized during campaigns towards the advent of the current democratization process in Nigeria's 1999-2019 general elections and successful attempts at civilian-to-civilian democracy in Nigeria. It, therefore, provided the electorate with the opportunity, manifestos, and programs of political parties and candidates intending to eventually make rational, responsible, and mature choices during the elections.

The mass media (Radio) has many roles to play in the society. The mass media (Radio) service the political system. That is, the news media (Radio) are indispensable in a democratic society. It is the fourth estate of the realm, independent, free, and responsible to the public awareness is created for the citizens to know the problems and issues confronting the state and of their possible solutions and consequences. They provide people with the information they need to formulate their ideas and can stimulate them by presenting them to others. The mass media (Radio) is expected to play a crucial role in nurturing and sustaining the success or failure of our practice of democratic government. To a large extent, their success depends on how well the mass media (Radio) carries out their function as the mid-wife of democracy. In Nigeria, the mass media (Radio) of political information has become an instrument of political transformation of the entire masses because of its effectiveness. It has those who were politically averse to becoming politically conscious.

In democracies, radio, as a component of mass media, is the watchdog of the people. They usually mobilize and inform to create awareness about political culture. Political culture refers to a system of politics where the traditional orientation of the citizens of a nation towards politics affects their perceptions of political legitimacy. In the Nigerian political system and all over the world, mass media (radio) as a communication

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channel has been so overwhelming that most times, we wonder what we would have done without it. Limiting this to radio, the role of radio as an instrument of political awareness cannot be overemphasized, but despite all of them, it still has its weaknesses. We all know that, of all the mediums of communication, radio is the least effective, mostly because of its audio. Justify this by bringing up proof or a statement from any research. Talking about the most recognized and household communication mediums, we talk about the internet, our various television programs, magazines, and newspapers, to mention but a few.

Being in a more sophisticated and complex society, the radio has few chances of survival in dealing with the uprising complexities of the advanced age. Let's narrow this down to the role of radio. Going with the findings of the Bauchi State Economic and Empowerment Strategy document (BASEEDS), BRC, to be precise, has been known to be most effective in terms of choice of listenership in the rural areas of Bauchi State.

Objective of the Study

The level of political participation by rural dwellers in Nigeria and Bauchi state in particular seems to be very low. This may be a result of many of them lacking media awareness (Radio) "like not having a radio set, even those who have don't listen to the always because no electricity in the village to power their radio set, no money to buy dry cell battery and so on. This ultimately makes them lack the basic information and sensitization from the media against the political crisis. Therefore, this study was intended to:

1. Examine the crisis of political participation and de-politization which have impeded the blossoming of democracy in the country.
2. Find out the reason for the low political participation in Nigerian politics and equally the causes of the constant political crisis.
3. Inquire into how political participation in Nigerian politics can equally trace the genesis of the political crisis that identifies the factors responsible and the solution sought.

Research Questions

The basic questions posted as a result of this research include the following:

1. What is the crisis of political participation and de-politization which have impeded the blossoming of democracy in the country?
2. What is the reason for the low political participation in Nigerian politics and equally the causes of the constant political crisis?
3. To what extent can political participation in Nigerian politics equally trace the genesis of the political crisis that identifies the factors responsible and the solution sought?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research method because it dealt with human beings who would be served a questionnaire. Questionnaires were distributed randomly, and answers from respondents were collected. This method is used to reduce bias and error. The researchers used a survey of the inhabitants of the Bauchi local government area to determine the effect of radio on them during the 2023 general election. No other agency is better suited for this purpose than the media house, whose role is to inform the mass audience to achieve their goals. It relies on a wide variety of sources, both primary and secondary, including unpublished material.

The primary sources include eyewitness accounts of events, which can be oral or written testimony and can also be found in public records and legal documents, minutes of meetings, corporate records, recordings, letters, diaries, journals, and drawings. Secondary sources, on the other hand, can be oral or written, secondhand accounts of events found in textbooks, encyclopedias, journal articles, newspapers, biographies, and other media such as films or tape recordings. Specifically, the work depends on multiple sources of materials that include both primary and secondary sources.

The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire. The instrument of data collection was validated and accepted because

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the researchers were able to share the questionnaire themselves and obtain firsthand information relevant to the responses therein. The data gathered is objectively analyzed using frequency percentages and an analytical approach. After assembling the entire data—written and oral—related to the study, the researchers used the different sources as complementary to one another.

presented in the order of research questions posed for the study.

Research Question One: What is the crisis of political participation and de-politization which have impeded the blossoming of democracy in the country?

RESULTS

The results of the data analyses were Mean ratings on the crisis of political participation and depoliticization

S/N	Variables	Respondents			Staff		
		X	SD	REM	X	SD	REM
1	Radio	3.18	0.40	A	3.43	0.21	A
2	Television	3.35	0.32	A	3.18	0.15	A
3	Newspapers	3.28	0.15	A	3.31	0.06	A
4	Magazine	3.30	0.22	A	3.21	0.18	A
5	Others	3.39	0.33	A	3.24	0.19	A

X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, rem = Remark

The result in Table 1 above shows that the mean ratings of the respondents for item numbers 1-5 are 3.18, 3.35, 3.28, 3.30, and 3.39 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.40, 0.32, 0.15, 0.22, and 0.33 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the crisis of political participation and de-politization which have impeded the blossoming of democracy in the country on the above items

are 3.43, 3.18, 3.31, 3.21 and 3.24 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.21, 0.15, 0.06, 0.18 and 0.19 respectively.

Research Question Two: What is the reason for the low political participation in Nigerian politics and equally the causes of the constant political crisis?

Mean ratings on the reason for the low political participation in Nigeria's politic

S/N	Variables	Respondents			Staff		
		X	SD	REM	X	SD	REM
1	Radio	3.18	0.40	A	3.43	0.21	A
2	Television	3.35	0.32	A	3.18	0.15	A
3	Newspapers	3.28	0.15	A	3.31	0.06	A
4	Magazines	3.30	0.22	A	3.21	0.18	A
5	Others	3.39	0.33	A	3.24	0.19	A

X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, rem = Remark

The result in Table 1 above shows that the mean ratings of the respondents for item numbers 1-5 are 3.18, 3.35, 3.28, 3.30, and 3.39 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.40, 0.32, 0.15, 0.22, and 0.33 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the reason for the low political participation in Nigeria politics and equally the causes of the constant political crisis on the above items are

3.43, 3.18, 3.31, 3.21, and 3.24 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.21, 0.15, 0.06, 0.18 and 0.19 respectively.

Research Question Three: To what extent can political participation in Nigerian politics equally trace the genesis of the political crisis that identifies the factors responsible and the

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solution sought?

Mean ratings on the political crisis that identifies the factors responsible and solutions

S/N	Variables	Respondents			Staff		
		X	SD	REM	X	SD	REM
1	Radio	3.18	0.40	A	3.43	0.21	A
2	Television	3.35	0.32	A	3.18	0.15	A
3	Newspapers	3.28	0.15	A	3.31	0.06	A
4	Magazine	3.30	0.22	A	3.21	0.18	A
5	Others	3.39	0.33	A	3.24	0.19	A

X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, rem = Remark

The result in Table 1 above shows that the mean ratings of the respondents for item numbers 1-5 are 3.18, 3.35, 3.28, 3.30, and 3.39 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.40, 0.32, 0.15, 0.22, and 0.33 respectively. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the political participation in Nigeria politics can equally trace the genesis of the political crisis that identifies the factors responsible and a solution sought on the above items are 3.43, 3.18, 3.31, 3.21, and 3.24 with the corresponding standard deviation of 0.21, 0.15, 0.06, 0.18 and 0.19 respectively.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major finding of this research was to evaluate the impact of radio broadcasting on the 2023 Nigerian general elections. Thus;

1. The findings revealed that there is sufficient usage of radio sets among the people and this impacted positively political awareness especially that of the 2023 general elections.
2. Government monopolizing the ownership and control of the mass media is found as a hindrance to national progress.
3. It was found that youth listen to the radio more during political campaigns.
4. It was found that the overall attitude of the people towards political issues would have been better if many people had radio and were regular with radio broadcasting.
5. The findings from this research study and other empirical studies confirmed that radio broadcasting can also determine if an election will be free and fair.
6. It was also found that radio broadcasting enhances free and fair elections.
7. The research findings also show that radio

broadcasting sets the agenda for public discussion towards an election.

8. Also shows that the male respondents that opined that characteristics of electorates affect the radio broadcasting of elections are 31.7%, females are 49.8%, public servants and civil servants are 11.7% and 7.2% respectively.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study has shown that radio broadcasting has played a vital role in electioneering campaigns, a finding that is reflected both in the case studies and in the statistical analysis. Moreover, 44.7% of the respondents agreed, 39.9% strongly agreed, and 4.9% strongly disagreed with the significant level of equal radio broadcasting given to political parties. It was also found that 31.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 40.8% agreed, 4.9% of the respondents had no response, 6.8% disagreed, and 13.6% strongly disagreed that media coverage enhances a free and fair election. The research findings also show that 61.2% of the total respondents said to an extent, 18.4% said to no extent, 18.0% said to a large extent, and 2.4% had no response that radio broadcasting set an agenda for public discussion towards the election. It also shows that the male respondents who opined that the characteristics of electorates affect the radio broadcasting of elections are 31.7%, females are 49.8%, and public servants and civil servants are 11.7% and 7.2%, respectively.

The research shows that 46.6% of the respondents were satisfied, 6.8% were unsatisfied, and the other 46.6% of the respondents had no opinion. It was also found that 45.5% of the respondents opined that adults are not entitled to vote, while the elderly

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represent 19.4% and children represent 32.0%, respectively. This study has extensively evaluated the impact of radio broadcasting on the electioneering campaign, based on a case study of the 2023 elections in Nigeria. A research survey using descriptive analysis and chi-square was carried out on 225 respondents. This project provided the overall background for the study. It stated the statement of the problem of the study, the objective, and the research questions. It also featured the significance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, and an operational definition of the term to aid the understanding of the readers of the project. The roles of the mass media in setting agendas for public discussion in terms of agenda-setting theory were also reviewed.

CONCLUSION

It is not out of place to conclude based on the findings that radio broadcasting has been fair in giving equal radio coverage to political parties and candidates. To uphold their responsibilities as responsible, radio broadcasting in Nigeria has tried as much as possible to give an equal chance to political parties, especially during elections. Private radio broadcasting both broadcast and print is better than public-owned radio. The significance of the study is the relationship between radio broadcasting and media ownership concerning its effects and responsibilities during elections. The mass media mobilizes the electorate for the 2023 election in Nigeria at large.

Hence, radio broadcasting has been effective in mobilizing the electorate towards elections, as seen in various programs before, during, and after the elections in Nigeria. Various political programs in the media regarding elections in Nigeria are evidence of the fact that they are playing their agenda-setting roles in Nigeria towards a successful, free, and fair election. No doubt the degree of the political issues brought forward for public discussion will determine the level of exposing electoral misconduct such as rigging, results manipulation, and thuggery ballot box snatching, among others. This is evident in the 2023 elections, as the radio broadcastings were on top of the situation that almost destroyed the election result. There is a significant relationship

between radio broadcasting coverage and a free and fair election in Nigeria at large. The findings from this research study and other empirical studies confirmed that radio broadcasting can also determine if an election will be free and fair.

The findings of this study, therefore, indicated that the media, specifically the radio, through its airing of various political campaign messages, projected the 2015 general elections in Bauchi, Nigeria. This infers that the mass media generally, during the said elections, supplied people with information, which was in some quotas interpreted by opinion leaders and passed on to their opinion followers for use while making decisions to vote. The masses in Bauchi, having regard for the local radio stations, thus reacted following their reflection. Here, it could be said that variably two models were used.

The first is the medium of radio and opinion leaders, who served as guidance to the majority of the masses (registered voters) in Bauchi. The second is the political campaign messages that were produced and managed by the political actors, especially the political parties and candidates that were set to express their campaign messages to influence the voting behaviour of the electorates and vote for them during the 2015 elections. From a practical perspective, the results of the study suggest that voters' demographic characteristics and the somewhat urban/rural divide are necessary considerations in the formulation of political campaign messages.

The calibre of the respondents and the accessibility of the medium through which the messages would be disseminated are also important considerations. The implication of all these is that the results of this study have both practical and theoretical relevance. Practically, the combination of one of the mainstream media, the radio, and opinion leaders, a sought-after oral media, suggests that producers and managers of political campaign messages ought to adopt a flexible approach to political campaigns in their quest for influential campaigns on voters' electoral behaviour. Theoretically, this study contributed to the body of knowledge of political communication and marketing and also added to the stream of

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research findings in political communication (Oriavwote, 2010).

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the findings from this research work, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. Since it has been discovered that there is a direct relationship between media coverage and the election result, the mass media should endeavour to give equal media coverage to political parties and their candidates. In other words, the mass media should allow political parties and their candidates a level playing for their campaign.
2. The significant relationship between mass media coverage and election results has made imperative media ownership both public and private should do more to free the media practitioners to carry out their sacred responsibilities towards elections without any interference.
3. It is not a gain saying to establish that the mass media have been fair in mobilizing the mass media have been fair in mobilizing the electorates during elections. However, the mass media should improve on the mobilization of electorates during elections as reliable and valid results of elections largely depend on this process.
4. Agenda-setting programs of mass media towards elections are an effective way of mobilizing, educating, and enlightening the public and the electorates on the electoral process, hence, the mass media practitioners should endeavour to package more agenda-setting programs to ensure free and fair elections in Nigeria.

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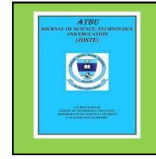
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