

Organization and Cost of Literacy by Radio Programme in Ekiti State of Nigeria

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Abstract: The study was set out to examine how literacy by radio was organized and also consider the cost of operating it. This will allow the national and international policy maker on illiteracy education to see the need for devoting more of their resources to Adult Literacy Education. The study centres on the adult illiterate in Ekiti state also focus on the activities of Ekiti state adult and non-formal education agency, towards implementing the National literacy by radio programme. Oral interview and secondary data was used to arrive at the conclusion. It was therefore concluded that radio study group with print support was not enough in the state. All the illiterate did not have access to the radio set and print media. The operation cost of the programme was too small for the programme to be effective. Federal government should pump ₦ 96.5 billion, instead of ₦96.5 million and share ₦2.5 billion instead of ₦2.5 million. The state counterpart funding should also be released without any hindrance. The cost of facilitations alone (₦2.94 million) was greater than what the Federal Government allocates to the state (₦2.5 million).

Key words: Illiteracy, literacy, radio set, study groups, organization, print and cost

INTRODUCTION

The literacy by radio programme was conceived because of the need for Nigeria to move at a greater pace in her effort to make the many illiterate people literate. The main objective of the programme was to start learning the process of reading and writing with illiterate or semi-literate adult people of different ages through out Nigeria. Literacy by radio is the teaching of reading, writing and calculation to adult learners in their mother tongue.

Can radio teach? Radio place in education depends on two of radio's features one radio communicates through only one of our senses and two it signals our broadcast. When radio was developed for use in education in the 1920's and 1930's, the comparative effect of teaching by radio and in the ordinary classroom were studied extensively.

From the 1920's, it has been used to inform and to motivate a large public audience. In practice, it is radio's capacity to distribute information that has led to its use for education. Radio was first used in education to bring new resources into the classroom. It was also used to take the classroom to students outside the school's walls. Radio has been used to distribute public information, to enrich ordinary classroom teaching, and to extend education beyond the classroom walls. Examples abound in Nigeria, Australia and New Zealand. In Nigeria, radio is used to educate the adult, most especially the farmers on their various aspects of their farm products.

Recently, the use of open broadcast was employed to teach the illiterate adult, the rudiments of becoming

literate. Open educational broadcasting is important, even if its audiences are relatively small. Radio programmes are probably of most valuable in the teaching of subject about which the teachers are themselves uncertain: science, new curricular in mathematics and languages that are new to both teachers and students.

Okediran and Momoh (2004) asserted that Radio is a powerful means of communicating ideas, information and knowledge of various subject under the sun. This is because radio is the commonest, cheapest and all purpose means of mass communication. Because of its spontaneity of message delivery it has the effect of a hypodermic needle on the listeners as they absorb and react to its message. Adepaju (2000) asserted that Radio helps in increasing economic productivity of a nation. Shaibu (2000) observed that radio is perceived as a means of political communication, education mind-bending, mobilization, orientation as well as creating and strengthening mankind unity. It is also a powerful means of eradicating illiteracy in the world, in which Ekiti State of Nigeria is part thereof Radio is accessible, even to the poor and the illiterate while radio ownership in rural areas is still spotty, a receiver is available in most communities. Moreover, since people can listen in groups, chances are that educational programme will be heard by many. Illiterate people are at no disadvantage with radio, the medium is cheap enough to be used on a relatively small scale, which can extend access to those who need programmes in minority language or need information situated to local needs Radio is perceived as being both authoritative and friendly. Most adult listeners pay serious attention to what they are told on the radio. At the

same time, they also appreciate the sound of a voice. It gives an impression of personal contact, which can reduce the feeling of isolation often experienced by adult listeners in remote places.

Radio is also extremely effective where creative thinking, affective learning or an imaginative response is required. Ideas can be stimulated or issues raised through dramatic presentation, personal account or debate for some teaching job. Radio appears particularly effective. For example, languages can be taught on radio by native speakers, dramatic presentations have proven particularly effective for teaching adult illiterate.

Radio is also particularly useful when the need is to present up to date or local information to the adult. In teaching agriculture, for example, programme can include items on new products, outbreaks of diseases or the effect of unusual weather condition. Similarly, radio is also important when there is a need to attract a wide or scattered audience particularly the adult illiterate who cannot read.

Radio can also be used in conjunction with printed materials to teach basic literacy and numeracy. This is typical of the recent literacy by radio programme in Ekiti state of Nigeria.

Limitations to the use of radio for literacy instruction:

Most topics in adult literacy education can be taught by using radio alone. If the same lesson is taught by radio, television and print, learners are liable to remember just as much from each type of presentation. Yet for two reasons, students can learn only little at a time from radio. First, the programme itself is transitory, it cannot be reviewed like a page in a book by the adult learner who wants to check on points missed or forgotten. Second, adult learner cannot pay attention for a long time to a broadcast, unless the tone of the programme varies.

Radio teaching is less effective than Face-to-Face teaching, for communicating detail, particularly if used alone. It is also inferior for instruction in practical work that requires a pictorial or written record or demonstration as well as comprehensive instructions.

Some subjects are difficult to teach by radio, since effective learning requires numerous active responses. Here, the problem is not the medium itself, but time. In a situation where enough air-time is available, radio teaching is also effective. In the case of literacy by radio in Ekiti state of Nigeria, for example 1 h is slated on the air, to teach a topic, which will be explained each by the facilitators at the next available meeting time which used to be the next day after the broadcast.

Open radio broadcasts with print: In literacy education, many open broadcasting service devote considerable air time to broadcast on Agriculture, Health Education, Community Development, and other rural issues. Some evidence suggests that these programme reach and

influence their intended audiences. For instance, Perraton (1981) observed that studies in Malawi suggest that some 27% of farmers had learned something about Agriculture from radio. And that from Northern Nigeria, he observed that nearly half of the farmers population thought that radio is the most important source of Agricultural information.

In an attempt to eradicate illiteracy through radio, open broadcast alone will not carry out the message effectively. It has to be combined with print. The use of print with radio has not only made it more convenient for the facilitators, it has also contributed to a shift in radio function.

As over 30 years of experience in the Latin America radio schools shows, if lessons are regular and enough time is given, during the programme for students to refer to their workbooks, this approach can yield dramatic result. Print is crucial in broadcast programmes for teaching and reinforcing grammar and vocabulary. This will encourage reading beyond the limited minutes of a radio programme.

If literacy broadcast, supported by print are backed by a tutorial service, then the tutors can lessen the distant learners' isolation. Systematic feedback from the adult listeners to the tutors can be used, to help the adult learner learn more effectively and can also inform the broadcaster about audience reaction.

Generally, this kind of tutorial support has been provided through the use of literacy primer courses, linked with radio. This is the practice with literacy on radio in Nigeria.

Perraton (1981) asserted that in Dominican Republic, that students of Radio Santa Maria, listen at home to recite programme work on correspondence lessons, and come together once a week with a monitor who collects their work and sends it on for marking. Through this means, adult learners can work through a basic education curriculum and take an examination equivalent to primary education.

Radio broadcast with literacy study group: The techniques of group study, Supported by radio have been used for programmes, such as vocational, rural education and literacy primary school equivalency programme. Young (1970) in Perraton (1981) asserted that in the last few decades, some important steps have been taken to connect radio with organized but informal groups. The radio is use to arouse interest and to convey information. The information and the ideas are then discussed by group member. Often the area mass literacy officer or the facilitators serve as a group leader. The combination seems to be a powerful one, it allows the technical knowledge of the teachers or experts usually from outside, to be combined with and adapted to the local knowledge of the adult learners.

The essence of this method is to use radio with print to carry the main burden of teaching where there are no ordinary schools, and not to provide orthodox in school education. The Latin America Radio schools, according to Perraton (1981) started with Accion Cultural, Popular (ACPO) in Columbia, comprised of small groups of Adult learners who use radio and print to study their way through a curriculum. Moreover the radio school curriculum is not limited to 3 years of writing reading and computation. It may also be focus of Agriculture, Health, family life or religion.

The cost of literacy by Radio broadcast: Literacy by radio programme can, despite the preceding disadvantages, be produced cheaply and on short notice. Consequently producers can be flexible. Radio programmes are easier, and in many cases cheaper, to distribute than programmes conveyed by other media.

In considering the costs of radio, it is convenient to distinguish among the costs to the listener and to the editor. Jenkins (1981) reiterated that since few listeners buy radios to listen to educational broadcasts, for most people, the cost of an educational broadcast amounts effectively to the extra use of battery.

To the broadcaster, cost can be divided between transmitter costs (including loan charges, maintenance staff costs, and electricity) and production costs (which may vary according to the sophistication of broadcast). The cost to the educator depends on the financial policy of broadcasting station. If it is a public service station, or if it is obliged by its contract to make time freely available for education, then the educator's only cost are in staff time. But as for air-time on commercial stations, Jenkins (1981) asserted that the educator will have to pay a fee.

Calculating broadcasting costs entails some difficulties. One question is either to consider broadcasting cost as a proportion of the total transmission costs together with production costs, or primarily as the rate at which time is sold to advertisers.

Further difficulty comes in seeking a cost per listener or learner, where the audience size and learning gains from radio are difficult to measure. In analyzing the cost of radio for literacy education, Perraton (1981) asserted that educators should distinguish between four types of expenses Viz (i) the cost of producing programmes (ii) the cost of transmitting them, (iii) the cost of the listener receiving them and (iv) the cost of organizing support for the programme.

Estimates of the cost of producing and transmitting programmes should be fairly easy to make. Yet the figure available varies widely, in part, because the same goods and services cost differing amounts in different parts of the world.

Estimates for reception costs are even more difficult to calculate, since these vary not only with economic condition of the country in question, but also with the number of listeners who use each radio set and with the number of hours a set is used. Perraton (1981) asserted that estimates in Tanzania suggest that the reception cost per pupil per hour in primary school varies between US\$0.00171 and US\$0.00204, and that these figure seem to compare favorably with the cost of teachers, time and with the cost of prints.

The cost of using radio with other media technique may be lower or higher when radio alone is employed. Using radio and print or group discussion is much more expensive than open broadcasting. Some precautions had to be made when computing for the figures. First, all the costs of broadcast in this calculations are attributed to the enrolled students; yet, a significant general audience exist for and benefits from even the most narrowly conceived educational broadcast, second, while the total cost of using radio with print and group support are greater than the cost of using radio alone, these higher costs needs to be viewed against the alternative ways of meeting a similar objective.

Basis of illiteracy eradication through radio programme in Ekiti state: UNESCO (2009) reported that over 776 million adults worldwide are still illiterate and that 2/3 of them were women while about 75 million children are out of school with very high dropout rate. This fact is a reflection of the situation of illiteracy in Nigeria. This is corroborated by the assertion of Fasokun and Pwol (2010) that illiteracy continues to be a significant problem in Nigeria. According to 2008 Global monitoring report, the most recent data for Nigeria show an Adult literacy rate of 69% (78% for men and 60% for women). More than 22 million people are illiterate 65% of who are women. Ekiti state share out of this figure even though the state is called fountain of knowledge, there are still some Adult in both the rural and urban areas who cannot read and write.

These trends move the federal government of Nigeria to set in motion, the act of achieving the goals of the Education for all (EFA) by 2015. This propel the Federal government through the National commission for mass literacy, adult and non-formal Education (NMEC, 2008) to release 96 million Naira to be distributed to the state as part of counterpart funding for the eradication of illiteracy in Nigeria and also to take education to the grass root dwellers through radio broadcast. Radio option was taken because it is the commonly used medium for dissemination of information.

The Federal Government of Nigeria under the MDGS support has so far released the sun of ₦96.5 Million to

state for literacy by radio programme out of which ₦2.5 million was transferred to the account of each state from the commissions account. Also, the commission has supplied 100 radios set each to the 774 local government areas in Nigeria. With 1800 personnel, trained as facilitators to handle the programme.

Ekiti state is one out of the 36 states in Nigeria. She also got her share out of this ₦96.5 million for illiteracy eradication through radio approach. The purpose of this paper is to find out the cost implication of this programme in Ekiti state, and also know how was organized for effective dissemination of information.

Organisation and cost of literacy by radio in Ekiti State:

The slow pace of illiteracy eradication in Nigeria and Ekiti state in particular moved the state, government to support the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) programme by UNESCO to find solution to the world illiteracy problem. The Federal Minister of Education (2010) came out boldly of giving ₦2.5 Million to the state to fund the literacy programme. The big question then is, would ₦2.5 million be enough for the project? And for what period will the money cover? What then is the cost of the programme?

Organisation of literacy by radio in Ekiti State: How was literacy by radio programme organized in Ekiti state? (Information was retrieved through oral interview and secondary data) Ekiti State is made up of sixteen local government areas, with its headquarters in Ado-Ekiti. Literacy by radio programme is under the control of Ekiti state Agency for Adult and Non-Formal Education which is a parastatal under the Ministry of Education. This is directly under the Federal National Commission for Mass Literacy Adult and Non-Formal Education (NMEC, 2008).

Ekiti state agency for Adult and Non-Formal agency, through the local government area for mass literacy officer organize the grass root literacy by radio programme in Ekiti state.

The radio broadcast was made through the two radio stations in Ekiti state. The two stations are:

- Broadcasting Service of Ekiti state (BSES)
- Progress F.M.

The literacy by radio broadcast was made two times in a week by two experts in literacy delivery the time was scheduled for the evening period between 4-6 p.m on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Apart from the scattered adult illiterate all over the state that listens to the broadcast with keen interest, in each local government area, there is organized literacy by

radio study group. This was organized by the Area Mass Literacy Officer (AMLO) to further strengthening the open radio broadcast. Each participant in the group was given a radio set and primer to follow. They will listen to the broad-cast through the radio given and follow the instruction from the radio broadcast. But since majority of them may not know the in-depth of the broadcast, the follow-up programme by the study group facilitators was also provided.

Each facilitator was given a type of radio set that can use both solar energy and battery to record the broadcast during life broadcast. On the next day of open broadcast, the facilitators will gather the members of each group together to re-play the broadcast with practical explanation. The adult learners will then be able to ask question from the centre facilitators.

The type of the radio set given was not the sophisticated type but the one that can be used without battery, and when battery is used, the low price one can be used. Likewise the Adult learners can easily operate it to receive the broadcast. The poorest among them can afford the battery for weekly broadcast.

Each local government was grouped into three centres which is easily accessible to the adult learners.

From the Table 1, one can see at a glance that the total number of registered members of the groups was 1,467 in the state. The number was below expectation because the population of Adult illiterate was more than half of a million in the state. The problem for low enrolment was due to some of the highlighted reason. (i) Some of the study centers were too far from the hamlets and villages; to get to and fro mobility was difficult. (ii) Transportation cost and availability of the Adult learner is another problem. (iii) The time of study groups meeting was between 5 and 6 pm. By this time, the rural farmers should have become worn-out because of the days'

Table 1: Location of literacy by radio study centres in Ekiti state

Local government area	No. of study centers	Total enrolments for the study groups
Ado-Ekiti	4	169
Ekiti East	3	127
Irepodun/Ifelodun	3	82
Ise/Orun	3	84
Ekiti South/Emure	3	67
Gbonyin	3	88
Ilejemeje	3	92
Efon	3	83
Oye	3	56
Ikere	3	69
Ido/osi	3	75
Moba	3	86
Ijero	3	90
Ekiti North-Ikole	3	98
Ekiti South westIlawe	3	83
Ekiti West Aramoko	3	101
Total	49	1,469

Ekiti State Agency for Adult and Non-Formal Education (2010)

activities. (iv) Many of them did not have personal radio set because only one hundred (100) set was given to the state by the Federal government

The cost of literacy by radio in Ekiti state: What is the cost of the literacy by radio in Ekiti state?

In answering this question, oral interview and secondary data was used. The discussion was centered on following points

- Cost of the broadcast to the government
- Cost of the radio set, owned by adult learners and the facilitators
- Cost of the facilitators
- Cost to the adult learners
- The air time was borne by government. It is calculated through the time consumed by the presenter. The presenters are civil servants in the state agency for adult and non-formal education who did not receive additional pay for their duty.
- The radio set were provided free of charge by international donors like UNICEF, and National body of (NMEC) i.e. National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education. The unit prices of those materials were not available at the time of this study.

The cost of the facilitator: The facilitators received the monthly stipend of ₦5000 cash. There are 49 of such in the state. The total salary of such in the state is ₦245000 per month. If this amount is multiplied by 12, then the yearly amount will be ₦2.94billion. Third figure is greater than the total amount released by the Federal government to operate at the state level.

Adult learners cost: This type of programme did not cost the learner extra money apart from their time, and battery money which is meager to replace the worn out battery. Some of them were given solar radio set. Which did not require any battery to operate.

DISCUSSION

Literacy by radio is the teaching of reading writing and calculation to adult learners in the mother tongue. The organization is such that the presenter and the broadcaster work hand in hand, following curriculums and primers provided. Only few of the illiterate adults were able to get the radio sets and the primers used by the broadcaster. Majority of the clients especially the distant rural populace did not benefit maximally from the programme. According to the field officer in charge, many of the adult learners deserted the radio literacy centre after obtaining the radio set. The organization of the literacy by radio programme in Ekiti state was in agreement with the postulation of Perraton (1981) and Jenkins (1981).

The cost structure is such that, if the total number of the recipients were known, there is tendency that the unit cost will be lowered down. But for those who usually enrolled for the radio study group, the unit cost is ₦2,004.09 of the facilitators' cost. The ₦2.5 million released by the Federal Government was just like a mockery of the whole issue. It did not cover the air time cost nor the facilitators cost.

The facilitator remuneration is so small considering the level of inflation in Nigeria. The money is not enough to transport the facilitators to the radio study groups' center per month.

The shortage of fund released led to the disappearance of the programme on the radio station used. There was a great debt which the counterpart funding did not over come.

RECOMMENDATION

The government (both Federal and state) should be more committed financially for the effective implementation of the programme. More radio sets must be provided free of charge for the villagers or make them to pay some token amounts so that the recipients can keep them very well.

Facilitators honorarium should be increased beyond poverty level monthly salary. The facilitators should be well guided with the use of the primer before allowing them to guide the learners. The Federal government should pump enough money so that the whole thing will not be like a show case.

More literacy by radio study centre should be created and make the learners primer available to the illiterates through the Area Mass literacy officer in the local government. This will afford them to listen to the radio broadcast individually.

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