

Effects of Radio on Prevalent Unethical Use of Language in Communication Among Tertiary Institutions' Students in UASIN GISHU County, Kenya

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Abstract - National development and human resource management today are founded on responsible communication. The purpose of the study was sought to determine the effects of the radio on the prevalent unethical use of language in communication among tertiary institutions' students in Uasin Gishu County. This study was based on the social influence theory, since FM radio programs contribute to influencing listeners in terms of oral communication. This study was conducted in Uasin Gishu County in Rift Valley and covered five tertiary institutions. The study adopted descriptive survey research design to address the research objectives. The target populations for this study were students in the sampled institutions. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the sample from the target population. The sample population for this study was 200 respondents. To collect data, questionnaires were used for the students and oral interviews were used for the radio presenters. The study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques; in certain frequencies, percentages and inferential statistics. Data presentation was done using tables and bar charts. It is hoped that the findings of this study would be used to evaluate the extent to which FM radio stations influence oral communication among the students in tertiary institutions.

Keywords - Radio; Communication; Prevalent; Students; Tertiary institutions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Kenya's media scene changed and expanded markedly with the beginning of multi-party politics in 1992 ([1],[2]). The communication and media environment in Kenya has been dynamic. On one hand the media is relatively free compared to many of its African neighbors, but on the other hand, the government has demonstrated a tendency to control it occasionally. Since the reinstatement of multi-party democracy in 1992 and improved democratic space after the 2002 elections, the media menu has improved ([3]). In 1963 when Kenya became independent, the majority of broadcasts on government radio and television stations were imported British and American programs. The public media contents were first aimed to meet the information needs of the governing sector, not ordinary citizens ([4]). After independence, more Kenyan culture was promoted through the mass media, but the media environment was still not very functional ([3],[4]).

Communication styles have been instrumental to the quality of language development and use in capacity building. Due to code mixing in oral communication among the youth, ethics and aesthetics in language use either in Kiswahili or English have been challenged. Since FM radio stations in Kenya use the two languages interchangeably to reach their audience, there is a likelihood of them influencing oral communication styles among the youth. The language used is not English, but coded slang thus the youth end up belting out a mixture of English and Kiswahili ([5]). The objectives of the study were; to identify the most popular FM radio and programs among students in tertiary institutions, languages used in FM radio and its excitement on tertiary institution student listeners.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Language and communication have been identified as indispensable instruments of achieving national aims, goals,

objectives and development ([6]). Crystal ([7]) conceptualizes language as having, perhaps, 'magical and mystical' and 'unique role in capturing the breath of human thought and endeavors.' Radio as a medium has a greater access compared to the other communication media. Important changes have been made to the receiving equipment-the radios themselves-which have profoundly altered the way we listen and what we listen to ([8]).

For a long time the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) dominated Kenya's electronic media scene, formerly the voice of Kenya, the station, founded in 1927, runs a nationwide television service, two radio channels broadcasting throughout the country in English and Kiswahili and 16 regional ethnic language stations ([9]). Until 1998 the press in Kenya was heavily controlled by the government. It gradually gained its freedom and found its voice from 1992 with the introduction of multi-party democracy in the country ([10]).

According to Buckingham ([11]), every medium has its own combination of languages that it uses to communicate meaning. For example, television uses verbal and written language as well as the languages of moving images and sound ([11]). Ethical communication involves choice-for instance deciding whether the ethics of communication are relative, universal or situational. As indicated by Considine ([12]), language plays an important part in media's role which is five-fold that is, shapes the attitude of the society.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized mixed method of research where both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were employed ([13],[14]), since it assessed human behavior and oral communication among the youth in tertiary institutions. This study adopted descriptive survey research design which describes the state of affairs as it exists and the researcher has no control over the variables, but can only report what has happened or what is happening ([15],[16]). The instruments used were questionnaires and semi-structured interview which are fundamental in collecting information for descriptive survey ([17],[18]). These are the instruments with which the necessary information was collected. This particular study has used questionnaires to collect data from the respondents.

The research targeted the students drawn from five tertiary institutions mentioned above within Eldoret region. The total student population of the five institutions was

listed to provide the population frame for the study from which a sample size was determined.

Five presenters were interviewed from four FM radio stations. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the sample from the target population. This method involves which dividing the population into homogeneous, mutually exclusive groups called 'strata' and independent samples are then selected from each stratum ([19],[20],[21]). From this frame a sample size of 200 students and 10% of the sample size was targeted for the study. A total of 100 questionnaires were issued to the institutions with each filling 20 questionnaires. For qualitative data such as required in this study, the ability of the researcher to argue the relativeness of any sample to a broader area ([22],[23],[24]).

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Popular FM radio

As depicted in Table 1, the respondents were asked to indicate the various radio stations that they tuned to and 2.1% of the respondents indicated that they tuned to KBC which also had 4.1% of all the cases. Citizen had 19.7% and 39.2% of all cases as a result of multiple responses. Kiss FM had 17.6% and 35.1% of cases, Capital FM had 1.6% and 3.1% of cases, Classic FM has 13.5% and 26.8% of cases and Easy FM had 10.9% and 21.6% of cases. Metro FM had 2.1% and 4.1% of cases, Kass FM had 9.3% and 18.6% of cases, Ramogi FM had 0.5% and 1.0% of cases, Mulembe FM had 1.6% and 3.1% of cases, Kameme FM had 1.0% and 2.1% of cases and other FM stations had 20.2% and 38.2% of cases. The study results indicate that the most listened to radio station was Citizen FM with 39.2% of all the cases.

This therefore revealed that most students preferred stations which broadcast in English and Kiswahili or both. The results also indicated that the total percentage of cases that listen to vernacular FM radio stations is less compared to the percentage of the most popular FM radio station among students in tertiary institutions. This may be an indication that most students do not understand vernacular languages used. This raises an issue about vernacular speaking showing that respondents are not conversant with the language(s) so not at ease tuning to vernacular radios. This also revealed that there is need to carry out a study on vernacular FM radios since they recorded the lowest percentages in terms of listenership by the respondents for example, Ramogi, Mulembe and Kameme as shown in

Table 1. According to the findings, Kass FM has the highest percentage of cases.

This may be due to the area of study which is majorly inhabited by speakers of the particular vernacular used which is a local language- kalenjin. Thus the value of tuning in to a particular FM radio is to access the menu available

and make a choice on the FM radio to listen to. The type of program tuned to should be informative especially on current issues affecting the youths, to satisfy their quest for knowledge, latest news, music, fashion to mention a few. The number of listeners to a particular radio gives it popularity thus making it competitive in the market.

Table 1. FM Radios Stations

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Radios ^a	KBC	4	2.1%	4.1%
	Citizen FM	38	19.7%	39.2%
	Kiss FM	34	17.6%	35.1%
	Capital FM	3	1.6%	3.1%
	Classic FM	26	13.5%	26.8%
	Easy FM	21	10.9%	21.6%
	Metro FM	4	2.1%	4.1%
	Kass FM	18	9.3%	18.6%
	Ramogi FM	1	0.5%	1.0%
	Mulembe FM	3	1.6%	3.1%
	Kameme FM	2	1.0%	2.1%
	Other FM stations	36	20.2%	38.2%
	Total	190	100.0%	199.0%
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.				

4.2 Radio Programs by tertiary institution

From Table 2, slight majority of the students (11) from Ol' Lessos Technical preferred to news as a radio program. On talk shows, Elgon View College, Eldoret Polytechnic

College and Alphax College all had 10 respondents. Call INS or Phone INS had Ol' Lessos Technical (5) having a majority. Finally, music has a radio program had Alphax College was leading by 13 respondents.

Table 2. Radio programs by tertiary institution cross-tabulation

Programs ^a		Institution					Total
		Elgon College	View Polytechnic College	Eldoret Polytechnic College	Ol' Lessos Technical College	Alphax College	Rift Valley Technical
	News	4	10	11	4	10	39
	Talk shows	10	10	8	10	8	46
	Discussions	3	1	0	5	4	13
	Call INS or Phone INS	2	1	5	4	4	16
	Music	9	11	11	13	8	52
Total		17	20	20	20	20	97

4.3 Languages used in radio broadcast

As shown in Table 3, the respondents in the study were asked to indicate the radio programs they listen to. News had 23.5% and 40.2% of cases, talk shows had 27.7% and 47.4% of cases, discussions had 7.8% and 13.4% of cases,

Call ins or Phone ins had 9.6% and 16.5% and finally music had 31.3% and 53% of cases. The study results indicate that the most listened to radio program was music with 53% of all cases in multiple responses. From the interview sessions, the respondents were asked on what informed the program content for student and youth listeners.

Table 3. Radio Programs

Programs ^a		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
	News	39	23.5%	40.2%
	Talk shows	46	27.7%	47.4%
	Discussions	13	7.8%	13.4%
	Call INS or Phone INS	16	9.6%	16.5%
	Music	52	31.3%	53.6%
Total		166	100.0%	171.1%
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.				

One respondent indicated that he/she preferred programs about music and opportunities that are available for the youth to engage in. In a program aired in citizen radio dubbed "chapakazi" the presenter reiterated that it focuses on youth affairs. In this particular program a youth who has made remarkable achievements in business, life or career is interviewed and from what transpires in the interviews other youths are inspired to move on and actualize their dreams in life. Such programs attract their attention since many of them identify with the language used and are at the level of making career choices and trying to shape up to fit their career fields.

Topical issues and current affairs were the issues that informed the program content for students and youth according to one interviewee. Another interviewee reiterated that the program content for this bracket of audience, was informed by lifestyles vis a vis the environment of the audience. The criteria of determining ethics in FM radio programs are that coverage must be fair; even-handed treatment of views, unbiased; separate our personal opinions from the subjects we are covering; complete and honest. These could form the 'other reasons' why the listeners tune to the radios. Ethics at this level is two way; on the part of the presenter and the content. The presenter should portray issues and events in honesty, maintain the highest standards of journalistic integrity, credibility of information must be taken into account and also conduct themselves impartially. According to Adejmolola, Ayenigbara and Tunde ([25]), language is a unique human endowment, which defines human's humanity, that is, it makes man species specific. It is used as an instrument of communication as well as development in all spheres of life ([25]).

4.4 Language excitement

In view of Table 4, the respondents were asked on excitement they had as listener of the above language. Grammar of language had 32% and 48.5% of cases, new words had 27.9% and 42.3% of cases, mix-up of language used had 19% and 28.9% of cases, provocative language had 11.6% and 17.5% of cases and any other reason had 9.5% and 14.4% of cases. From study, grammar of language was the most prevalent issue that excited the respondents concerning the language by 48.5% of all the cases. This revealed that presenters use language correctly and understandably thus easily grasped by the respondents. Excitement is a feeling experienced when something makes you happy, arouses your interest thereby appealing to your senses. This component was of great importance as it served to measure the level of aesthetics in the language use mechanisms in FM radio. Grammar of language took the highest percentage and this indicated that language was grammatically used which should translate in making the respondents oral communication refined.

Mix-up of language used at 19% indicated that this aspect did not appeal to the respondents as it assumed since they form a great percentage of *Sheng* speakers especially in oral communication. This showed that mix-up of language is not fully acceptable in communication. This could be a pointer to the fact that the students are conscious of code mixing being unethical and informal. If they condone it, then it would be to their disadvantage taking into account that their written communication must be formal to ensure desired performance as they pursue their studies.

Table 4. Multiple responses of language excitement

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Excitement ^a	Grammar of language	47	32.0%	48.5%
	New words	41	27.9%	42.3%
	Mix-up of language used	28	19.0%	28.9%
	Provocative language	17	11.6%	17.5%
	Any other reason	14	9.5%	14.4%

Total	147	100.0%	151.5%
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.			

V. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The study realized that that the most listened to radio station was Citizen FM with the majority of all the cases. The research findings revealed that music was the most listen to radio program because it provides entertainment for the respondents. The study clearly showed that English was the most preferred language by most respondents as it enabled easier communication in radio by most respondents with a majority of all cases. Grammar of language was the most prevalent issue that excited the respondents concerning the language because of the educative perspective.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In the context of the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that broadcast time should be made more convenient. It is recommended that the radio presenters should broadcast programs at specific and convenient time so that it would reach the intended target. Also, it is recommended that the content of radio programs should be reformed and transformed to ensure that they are relevant and beneficial to its listeners.

From findings of the study, the researcher suggests these areas for further research. First, the study recommends a comparative study to be conducted to assess the effects of television and radio on the oral communication. Secondly, a research should be conducted to find out how television broadcast affect the moral framework of students at the study area and how ethical the broadcast can be done.

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