



Challenges and the Impact on the Performance of Ghanaian Universities' Radio Broadcasting, the Case of Radio Universe 105.7fm.

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Abstract: *The study sought to evaluate the challenges and effects of radio broadcasting at Ghanaian universities, with a special focus on Radio Universe 105.7FM. The study was conducted to get a knowledge of the issues connected with campus radio broadcasting, the impact of these challenges, and solutions to manage campus radio broadcasting. To achieve the study aims, a mixed research approach and an exploratory research design were used. The study made use of both primary and secondary data sources. The study included fourteen (14) people. To collect data from study participants, the researchers employed a self-administered questionnaire and an interview. Radio Universe operations are hampered, according to the study, by a lack of funds to run campus radio broadcasting, radio licensing and renewal requirements, businesses' unwillingness to place radio commercials on campus radio, infrastructure, equipment, logistics, and operations financing, particularly programming expenditures. The survey also discovered that campus radio station operations encounter difficulties in self-promotion and gaining the requisite personal knowledge to fulfill all commitments. The paper claims that radio operations fall short of society's expectations due to a lack of components judged appropriate for inclusion in public radio programs, which university radio cannot achieve. Managing campus radio operations, according to the research, needs proactive planning, sticking to a specific broadcasting goal, and hiring devoted workers. According to the report, Radio Universe may be managed by maintaining adequate logistics, awarding performance, establishing flexible work schedules, and rewarding stipends to student workers. As a non-profit organization, the report advised that Radio Universe's management seek financial assistance from Non-Governmental Organizations and the government. According to the findings, Radio Universe's human resource managers and leadership should improve their marketing strategies to acquire business patronage for their services. According to the findings, Radio Universe's operations are regularly updated to meet or anticipate the needs of their clientele.*



According to the report, Radio Universe should consider collaborating with other well-known radio stations to address the challenges they face in their operations. The paper adds to the body of knowledge on campus radio broadcasting. The research also adds to the body of knowledge about the difficulties associated with campus radio broadcasting. The study also adds to the literature on the influence of radio broadcasting problems on radio station operations.

Keywords: *Radio Broadcasting, Campus Radio, Radio, Community Radio, Broadcasters.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The study of Belair-Gagnon, Nelson, and Lewis (2019) argued that radio is one of the most appealing and universal mass media for participatory communication and development globally because of its concept, uniqueness, and ability to connect people in ways never seen before. Radio broadcasting can reach many students, especially when it is a campus-based radio station. Radio broadcasting in universities is carried out by radio stations located on university campuses and run by university students, or they may include programming from the surrounding community. Although the radio transmitters in universities only reach a few miles, they allow isolated communities and students to voice their concerns for redress, implying that they provide essential services.

Dr. Ahmed, the Manager of Radio Universe 105.7 FM at the University of Ghana in the daily guide network in 2021 stated that due to its non-profit status, funding and financing of campus radio continues to be a challenge. As a result, they are forced to choose between going commercial and not going commercial. On the other hand, the dangers of commercialization loom large, as they deprive many students of the opportunity to begin their careers in broadcasting and other media-related fields, as well as communications. According to Wilson David (2015), radio stations face four major categories of characteristics. Seasonal issues, resolving the performance dilemma, volunteer work for tensions, and the innovative versus the normative are among them. Another issue raised by Wilson David (2015) is the issue of programming (Fauteux, 2015). According to Fauteux, the primary responsibility of community-based campus radio stations is to broadcast alternative programming not typically heard on commercial radio, as well as in-depth spoken word programming, community specific programming, and special interest music.

Rubin (2015) concluded that campus radio provides three essential services: news broadcasting, training, airplay, and promotional exposure to new and emerging local artists. Rivas-Rodríguez further explained that campus radio stations exist to train professional radio personnel, sometimes to broadcast educational programming, while other radio stations provide an alternative to commercial or government broadcasters. Furthermore, university radio stations provide new and emerging local artists with airplay and promotional exposure. Similarly, they broadcast a wide range of programming, including news in multiple languages, sports (often involving the campus), spoken word, and general music.



Objectives

The aimed to evaluate the challenges and effects of radio broadcasting at Ghanaian universities, with a special focus on Radio Universe 105.7FM. The study was conducted to get a knowledge of the issues connected with campus radio broadcasting, the impact of these challenges, and solutions to manage campus radio broadcasting. The paper adds to the body of knowledge on campus radio broadcasting. The research also adds to the body of knowledge about the difficulties associated with campus radio broadcasting. The study also adds to the literature on the influence of radio broadcasting problems on radio station operations.

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Approach and Design

The study used a mixed research approach to address the study objectives. An exploratory sequential mixed method design was also employed; as a result, two distinct research methods were displayed: quantitative followed by qualitative. The research used primary and secondary data to address the study objectives. A simple random sampling (SRS) approach was employed to select the study participants. The study used interviews, questionnaires, and 4-Likert Scale to collect the needed data for the data collection.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Challenges Associated with Campus Radio Broadcasting

Financial Challenges

The study rated financial challenges average (Mean = 2.8215). It suggests that, on average, the study considers the financial constraints to be modest. In another development, lack of money to run radio was rated above average (Mean 3.5), suggesting that monetary challenges have a significant impact on campus radio broadcasting program quality. The outcome supports the study of Srivastava, Gupta, and Kaur (2020) which indicates that a mean score that is higher than the average indicates a more serious problem. Thus, a lack of funds has a significant and negative impact on the quality of campus radio broadcasting programmes. These findings emphasize the essential role that financial resources play in maintaining programme quality, emphasizing the need for targeted solutions to address the unique financial constraints that campus radio stations face. The study again found that requirements for radio licensing and renewal, as well as tax obligations, challenge radio universe operations. Businesses' unwillingness to place radio commercials on campus radio platforms, and infrastructure, equipment, logistics, and operations financing, notably programming expenditures, pose a hurdle to Radio Universe operations. These results affirm that of Farooq and Soler (2017) which confirmed that campus radio has challenges connected to radio licensing and renewal requirements, as well as tax duties. Furthermore, businesses' unwillingness to advertise on college radio platforms creates hurdles, as do difficulty in securing money for infrastructure, equipment, logistics, and operational expenses, notably programming expenditures. These obstacles offer considerable impediments to the smooth running of campus radio transmission.



Leadership Challenges

The analysis rated leadership and human resource management challenges average (mean = 2.143). As a result, the analysis found that the inability to adhere to campus radio management policy, as well as bad governance of the community in which campus radio operates complicates campus radio broadcasting operations. The outcome has a positive relationship with the investigation of Kobo, Abu-Mahfouz, and Hancke (2017) which found that difficulties in complying to campus radio management standards, along with inadequate governance in the surrounding community, greatly affect campus radio broadcasting operations. The interview revealed that the radio station faces challenges in self-promotion, assisting management, and gaining the necessary personal experience to fulfil all functions as a university radio station. The findings support the conclusions of Picard and Pickard (2017) study, which found that financial constraints distort radio operations entirely, changing the landscape of mass media and continuing developments. The findings are also consistent with that of Perera et al. (2017), who concluded that when radio broadcasting operations are financially challenged, constant and uninterrupted information transmission becomes constrained.

3.2. Impact of Campus Radio Broadcasting Challenges

Financial constraints have a substantial impact on university radio broadcasting by limiting important activities and resources (mean = 2.655). These obstacles, such as difficulties in employing experienced media professionals to carry out standardized programs as expected by audience (mean = 2.857), a limited operating resource (mean = 2.786), communities' unwillingness to patronize in campus programs (mean = 2.57), and difficulties in constantly updating campus radio operations to meet the needs of customers licencing restrictions emerge as a result of financial challenges. This outcome agrees with Bodó (2021) findings that campus radio rarely engages media experts because of budgetary constraints, and limited resources to reach a bigger audience. As a result, budgetary constraints limit the station's reach, degrade programming quality, impede community participation, and jeopardise the overall sustainability and relevance of college radio broadcasting. Similarly, the radio station is incapable of maintaining listeners due to a lack of well-produced local quality material. The outcome has a direct relationship with that of Buadee (2023) in Ghana. According to the study, most campus radio lacks certain resources, for instance, experienced human resources deemed fit to engage the communities where it operates, the communities rarely patronize its programming. The inference is that campus radio leadership would have difficulty remaining in operation for a lengthy period. The study again found that financial constraints affect the pace with which Radio Universe completes its work, inadvertently compromising the quality of services offered the larger communities.

Ways to Manage Campus Radio Broadcasting

Managing campus radio broadcasting effectively despite financial constraints requires a strategic approach that focuses on optimizing existing resources, building partnerships, and leveraging digital platforms (Brunetti et al 2020). The study rated planning as an essential component of administration campus radio operations (mean = 3.071). Additionally, adherence to radio broadcasting policy aids in the proper operation of campus radio



broadcasting (mean = 2.929). The study also found that having a clear broadcasting goal with dedicated personnel aids in campus radio station management mean = 2.786). The findings are consistent with those of Hollifield, Wicks, Sylvie, and Lowrey (2015), who emphasised the importance of effective planning, strict adherence to radio broadcasting regulations, clear broadcasting objectives, and a dedicated workforce for effectively managing campus radio in the foreseeable future. The current study also identified several strategies deemed fit to address the challenges faced by campus radio stations.

Diversify Revenue Streams:

Campus radio should actively seek grants and sponsorships from local businesses, alumni, and community organizations to supplement operating funds. They ought to organize fundraising events, such as concerts, auctions, or radiothon campaigns, to generate additional income and engage the community. This is congruent with Bray's (2022) recommendation that, in order to improve financial security, campus radio actively seek grants and sponsorships from local businesses, alumni, and community organisations. Organising fundraising events such as concerts, auctions, or radiothon campaigns can also generate extra cash while encouraging community involvement.

Cost Optimization

Management of campus radio needs to implement efficient budgeting strategies, prioritize essential expenses, and eliminate unnecessary costs to make the most out of the available funds. Encourage student and community volunteers to contribute their skills and time, reducing the need for paid staff for certain tasks. The findings support Kulkarni, Chin, and Farnham's (2010) recommendation that campus radio management apply prudent financial measures, prioritising critical expenses and minimising needless costs. Encouraging student and community volunteers to offer their talents and time can lessen the station's reliance on paid personnel, allowing the station to make the most use of available finances.

Community participation

Campus radio broadcasting management should work with local businesses, schools, and non-profits on collaborative events and programming to increase community participation and attract possible sponsors. To develop a sense of ownership among listeners, create participatory shows that involve the community, such as chat shows, interviews, and live call-ins. The findings corroborate Getto and Flanagan's (2022) study, which found that collaborative events and programming with local businesses, schools, and non-profits can attract new sponsors and promote community involvement.

Audience Research and Content Improvement

One method of effectively managing campus radio programming is to do rigorous and regular research to determine listener preferences, allowing the station to modify its content to match audience expectations. Maintaining high content production standards, ensuring that all programmes are well-produced, interesting, and relevant to the target audience, serves as a basis for smooth campus radio programming. The findings accord with Murray et al. (2015), who discovered that doing rigorous and consistent research to determine listener preferences allows the station to modify its content to match audience expectations. Thus, maintaining high production standards, all programmes are well-produced, engaging, and relevant to the target audience, laying the groundwork for successful campus radio programming.



Implications of the Study

The findings suggest that campus radio broadcasting, particularly in the context of Radio Universe, faces significant challenges, primarily in the areas of finance and leadership. Financial constraints, including insufficient funds for operations, licensing requirements, and limited resources for programming and community engagement, have a detrimental impact on the radio station's ability to function effectively. These constraints not only limit the station's reach and audience engagement but also affect the quality and timeliness of the news and content it delivers. As a result, the station faces difficulties in retaining listeners and may struggle to remain operational in the long run.

In response to these challenges, the study proposes several ways to manage campus radio broadcasting more effectively. These include adhering to broadcasting rules, having a clear broadcasting objective, involving university management in daily operations, hiring more personnel, providing logistical support, and offering financial incentives to student workers. The study emphasizes the importance of capable employees and functional leadership, aligning with existing research conclusions that competent staff and effective leadership significantly contribute to organizational performance.

In summary, the implications of the findings underscore the critical need for adequate financial support and strong leadership in managing campus radio stations. By addressing these challenges and implementing the suggested strategies, campus radio stations can enhance their operations, improve content quality, and better serve their audience and community.

4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study paints a stark picture of the challenges faced by Radio Universe, the university's radio station. These challenges primarily revolve around severe financial constraints, encompassing difficulties in securing funds for essential broadcasting activities, meeting licensing requirements, attracting businesses for commercials, and financing infrastructure, equipment, and operational needs, particularly in programming expenditures. Consequently, these financial limitations have had cascading effects on the station's operations.

Financial constraints have rendered Radio Universe unable to attract media specialists and have hampered the station's ability to engage effectively with the local community. These limitations have hindered the station's expansion efforts, making it challenging to adapt operations to meet the evolving needs of its audience. Consequently, the station struggles to maintain a significant listener base, impacting its overall reputation and perceived competence. Furthermore, the study underscores the discrepancy between public expectations and the station's ability to deliver due to the lack of necessary components in its programming. This gap has led to missed opportunities in reporting significant stories and events, reinforcing the perception of the station's ineptitude.

The study provides clear guidance on potential solutions. Effective management of campus radio operations requires proactive planning, adherence to specific broadcasting goals, and the recruitment of dedicated employees. Additionally, the study suggests that proper logistics, performance-based rewards, flexible work schedules, and stipends for student workers could contribute to the station's improved management.



In essence, addressing the financial challenges and implementing the recommended strategies is crucial for Radio Universe to enhance its operations, better engage with its audience, and meet the expectations of both the university community and the broader public. Proactive management and financial support are essential to ensuring the station's sustainability and effectiveness in the long term.

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