CONDUCTING MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH

A Guidebook for Nigerian Media Professionals and Organisations

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A Guidebook for Nigerian Media Professionals and Organisations

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Foreword

It is ten years since *Audience Research Methods for Campus Radio Stations* (Ojebode, Onekutu & Adegbola, 2010) was published. Between then and now, a number of lessons have emerged about the need to democratise access to basic research skills in the peculiar context of the African broadcast sector. The excitement that welcomed that little book, and the spread of its use beyond its target audience suggested something of the importance of a set of tools in the hands of those who need it.

The target beneficiaries of this book are media professionals and media organisations. Every now and then, a media organisation has to listen to and hear from its audience in a more systematic way than is done through phone-ins and online comments or posts. How to take this systematic route is detailed out in this book.

The approach to writing this book is unique in my view. First there is the authorial instructional aspect in which guidelines and instructions about research are discussed. Then there is the reportorial aspect in which a jointly conducted experiential research training workshop is detailed. It is commendable that that hands-on experience gained by the professionals who were trained at the workshop is presented in this book in way that can be easily caught by the reader.

In Africa, there is growing advocacy for policy-engaged research, which means, ultimately, partnering with research users to design and execute and implement research. For research users to be active partners in this process, they need to have some grasp of the research process. A book like this demonstrates what can be done as a way of equipping such users and actors to be active partners in this process.

While therefore commending this book, one's wish is that more like this will spring up in the different professions and vocations in the country. Then we would begin to

move towards the realisation of that dream of evidence-driven decision in most aspects of our public institutions and sectors.

Prof. Ayobami Ojebode

Ibadan, June, 2020

Reference:

Ojebode, A., P. Onekutu and T. Adegbola. 2010. Audience Research Methods For Campus Radio Stations. Lagos: IMS. https://imesoimeso.org/audience-research-methods-for-campus-radio-stations

Acknowledgements

AUDIENCE RESEARCH: MEANING AND RATIONALE

What is Audience Research?

Let us start by clarifying the meaning of audience research. A clear understanding of the basic concepts of this process by journalists and media managers is imperative. To put it in a simple term, Audience Research (AR) is an organised procedure of investigating and establishing attitudes, knowledge, interests, preferences and behaviours of a definite group of media audience. In other words, AR is a deliberate attempt to find out the demographic and the psychographic characteristics of an identified group of media audience and the implications of these characteristics for the media organisation on whose behalf the research is being conducted. Like other scientific methods of knowing, AR is systematic, organised, purposeful and targeted. The team conducting audience research must systematically follow some procedure and target an identified segment of the audience as guided by the specific objective(s) of the research.

Traditionally, AR aims to achieve two things broadly: The first is to estimate audience sizes and measure how the target audience are changing their patterns of media consumption in terms of content preferences. The second aim is to explore the context-specific dynamics and details of audience's utilization of the media either for private or corporate purposes. The first aspect is achieved chiefly through the quantitative approach, while the second component is done through the qualitative approach. We shall come back to these shortly.

Why Audience Research by the Media?

The contemporary world is becoming progressively data-driven. Many international agencies, leading corporate organisations and public institutions are investing massive resources in research that would generate huge and reliable data. Therefore, good media organizations that know their onions do not joke with data. They must generate valid and reliable data to ensure adequate planning and effective services that meet what the audience and the general public expect from the media outfits.

The most reliable means of generating these data about attitudes, knowledge, interests, preferences and behaviours of the audience is research, either primary or secondary. In essence, any media organization that wants to survive must remain strong and relevant. This is possible when the media organisations conduct periodic and effective audience research to perpetually know and provide what its audience want.

Besides, conducting audience research would help a media organization to confirm certain claims or hypotheses. For instance, it would remain a baseless claim to believe that your media organization has the largest share of the audience if there is no empirical evidence yet to prove this. But when audience research is conducted, there would be valid facts to affirm or discard this hypothesis. A media organization that does not conduct audience research will not be in touch with reality and may eventually go into extinction.

Prerequisites for Quality Media Audience Research

Some conditions must be met to conduct a quality audience research that generates valid and reliable data. Let us enumerate these criteria:

- The first thing is the definition of goals: We must define the specific things we want to achieve through the research. Is it to determine the audience sizes? Is it to know what the audience prefers or the patterns of their consumption? Is it to explain why the audience prefer certain programmes? All of these complexities must be outlined in the research objectives, and they may come as research questions or hypotheses.

- We need to define the target group or segment of the population to be approached for the research. In most cases, media audience are heterogeneous: they are different in terms of age, education, gender, religion, location, social orientations and occupations. These criteria could be used to disaggregate the audience for the research.

- We must choose the appropriate research design to answer the research questions or test the hypotheses. This should not be done arbitrarily, however. The nature of research objectives would determine the research design or approach to be adopted. For instance, if the objective is to determine the audience sizes by certain programmes, the quantitative design is appropriate. On the other hand, the qualitative design is suitable if we want to explore the reasons the audience prefer certain programmes.

- We have to develop an appropriate data collection instrument(s). Examples of data collection instruments are questionnaire, interview guide, observation instructions, and Focus Group Discussion guide. This also is not

arbitrary. The choice of specific instrument is guided by the nature of information (data) we are looking for and the research design we have adopted. Choosing the appropriate data collection instrument(s) would produce valid and reliable data.

- We must select the appropriate method for drawing the sample out of the target audience (population). This step is also systematic and guided by the nature of the audience and the data required.

- Administration of the research instruments cannot be done effectively by one person. We must engage trained staff as research assistants.

- We have to use a suitable method(s) of analysis to treat the data. These could quantitative (e.g., statistics—inferential or descriptive) or qualitative (e.g. theme mapping/emerging theme analysis, textual analysis, use of computer software).

- We must use appropriate graphic aids (e.g. tables, charts, histograms, graphs) to visualize results in manners that do not create confusion for the reading audience.

- We have to write the research report in a simple and clear language that is easy to understand by the public. In other words, simplicity, completeness and clarity should be our guiding principles. We should write to communicate, not to impress or confound.

MODERN APPROACHES TO CONDUCTING MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Broadly speaking, there two types of audience research - primary research and secondary research. As the name implies, primary research relies on primary data generated by the researchers. It is first-hand research executed by a media organization, an agency, or a team of researchers commissioned by a media outfit. Secondary research relies on secondary data; it has to do with reviewing the information available in some sources already published or made public. Secondary research is also called data journalism or desk research. Sometimes, we can use secondary data to complement primary data. The two research types are relevant. It all depends on the purpose. However, in this section, we shall pay more attention to primary research.

Media audience research is social science research. Therefore, whenever we do audience research, either primary or secondary, we must consider any of the two broad categories of social science research—Qualitative Research and Quantitative Research. These are the two modern approaches to conducting media audience research. We shall briefly explain these two approaches and provide some examples of situations where the approaches are applicable. Combining both approaches in one research is encouraged because that combination always yields more reliable research findings. Table 2.1 below provides a summary of how the two research approaches are unique.

Table 2.1: Quantitative and Qualitative Research: A quick comparison

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
It relies on numbers and measurement	It relies on opinions and experiences of participants
Involves large samples (Survey—Face-to-Face, Telephone, Online, SMS)	Involves smaller samples (Interviews, Focus Group, Observation, Expert Panel)
It looks for percentage (of people who listen to a radio station or watch a TV programme, etc.)	It gets in-depth analysis for critical interpretation and multiple explanations of phenomenon (why people listen to or watch a programme, etc.)
The research instruments contain mostly closed-ended questions (i.e. questions that do not allow the respondents to provide further explanations).	The research instruments contain mostly open-ended questions (note, however, that observation guide may (should) contain no questions at all).
Findings are used to establish a pattern and make a generalization (i.e. general conclusion about the group of people we have studied)	Findings are used to explain a phenomenon or theorize.
The researcher is expected to maintain neutrality.	The researcher is subjective as it is always impossible for them to detach themselves from the people being studied.

Quantitative Research Approach

The quantitative research approach is the one that employs research methods which give priority to the objective measurement of quantifiable data. In other words, quantitative research methods rely on data that have statistical, mathematical, or numerical values. Quantitative research projects are executed through methods such as surveys (face-to-face, telephone, SMS, online), quantitative content analysis, web analytics (monitoring online behaviours or digital interactions of the media audience), or experiments. Questionnaires, attitude rating scales, and computer software are examples of the instruments usually used to collect data in quantitative methods. For example, if we intend to measure percentage ages of the audience listening to, watching, or following our programmes, those that prefer certain programmes or certain presenters of our stations; or we want to identify the audience based on their demographics (e.g. age, gender, education, religion, economic status), the quantitative research approach is the appropriate one. In some other instances, we can employ the quantitative research methods to establish a relationship between variables (dependent and independent variables) such as trying to see how economic status, age or gender of the audience determine their preference for certain programmes or timing of such programmes.

In quantitative audience research, the population (the specific audience segment we want to observe) is identified, a sample is selected through appropriate sampling technique(s), and the instrument(s) are administered to the selected sample(s). The data collected from the sample are analysed through descriptive statistics (e.g. simple percentage range, standard deviation, mean, median) or inferential statistics (e.g. regression analysis, statistical hypotheses test, confidence intervals), and the findings are generalized across the population to explain certain situations.

The major strengths of the quantitative research approach are objectivity, systematic and structured procedure, minimized personal bias, and generalizable results based on larger samples. However, when the objective is to explore deep, present multiple contexts for understanding, or use unadulterated participants' perspectives to provide complex explanations for certain phenomena such as audience attitudes or preferences, the quantitative research approach is not appropriate.

Basic Features of Quantitative Audience Research

- The primary objective is to objectively count, classify, and measure to describe or make inference about a group of audience.

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- It relies on quantitative data that are usually collected through structured research instruments such as questionnaires and computer software.

- Quantitative research follows some rigid, structured and systematic procedure. This quality makes the quantitative study to be objective, reliable and easy to replicate or repeat by another team of researchers.

- Data have numerical, statistical or mathematical values that are presented largely in non-textual forms such as graphs, tables, figures, charts, or other appropriate graphic tools. However, the quantitative findings are explained in simplified textual forms to ensure that the report is understood by everybody (experts and non-experts).

- The results come from a larger sample(s) selected as a representative of the study population (the larger audience).

- Because the sample is selected from the whole population through samples, findings can be used to make general statements about the larger population, especially in terms of making predictions, establishing correlation, or explaining causal relationships between or among variables.

Selected Quantitative Research Methods

As we have explained in the foregoing section, there are many methods under the quantitative research approach, but not all of them are frequently employed in media audience research. Therefore, in this book, we shall discuss Survey and Web Analytics. These are two of the quantitative research methods that we can employ for media audience research.

Survey Research Method

The survey is one of the quantitative research methods that have remained widely employed by media scholars especially to conduct audience research. By definition, A survey is a research method of collecting a large volume of information from individuals who are the representatives of a large, definite group of people. The representative samples in the survey are usually selected through random samplings and, or other appropriate techniques. The idea is that the samples would provide the most accurate representations of the opinions, knowledge, attitudes or demographic characteristics of the whole group (the population) from which the samples have

been selected for the research. Today, media organisations use results from surveys, among other methods, to understand their audience and make appropriate decisions or policies.

There have been debates as to whether the survey is a qualitative or quantitative method. While some school of thought believes that the survey is purely a quantitative method, another school of thought believes that it is both qualitative and quantitative. Scholars that belong to the latter school of thought have hinged their arguments on the fact that the predominant qualitative methods such as interviews, focus group discussion and observation can also be used to gather people's opinions, feelings, thoughts, knowledge and attitudes about a situation, which is the primary focus of the survey. However, largely in media studies, the survey has been treated and deployed as a quantitative method. For the sake of clarity, and in the context of our focus in this guidebook, we consider the survey as a quantitative method.

As a quantitative research method, the survey is used to measure the variables of interest that the study is designed to examine. These variables of interests could be audience opinion about, knowledge of, or preference for, certain media contents (programmes), on-air personalities, or certain broadcast belts. These variables could also be about the reasons for or factors that could affect such feelings, thoughts, opinions, attitudes or preferences. To measure these variables, we use self-reports where, as researchers, we administer the questionnaire and other survey instruments to ask the research respondents (participants) to report directly on their own opinions, knowledge, thoughts, attitudes or feelings. Also in the survey, as reflected in our foregoing description, we naturally give priority to the issue of sampling, where a fairly large representative sample of a definite group is scientifically selected and studied, and the results (facts) from this sample are used to make general statements or conclusions about the study population. This is called empirical generalization.

Descriptive Survey Vs *Analytical Survey*

While conducting audience research there are two types of surveys that we can employ—*Descriptive Survey* and *Analytical Survey*. The objective of our study would determine whether the survey would be descriptive or analytical. For example, if our media organization intends to survey our audience in the metropolis to determine their programme preferences or tastes, their attitudes, changing values and other psychological or other demographic characteristics to determine the types programmes our media organization should prioritise, a descriptive survey is required. On the other hand, if the same media outfit, after establishing the

preferences, tastes, attitudes, or changing values of the audience, now intends to find explanations for such values, tastes or preferences, an analytical survey should be employed. In essence, while a descriptive survey attempts to describe or document the situations that exist now, an analytical survey attempts to explain why the situations exist (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011).

We can survey in-person (e.g. face-to-face personal interview and group administration), by telephone, through the mail, or the Internet (e,g. *SurveyMonkey* or *Google Form*). With these virtual methods, the researchers send the questionnaire to the respondents who fill their copies of the questionnaire and return electronically to the researcher. The recent global realities such as the COVID-19 pandemic has made the online survey (through the mail, telephone and the Internet) more popular as the preferred approaches.

The Strengths of Survey Method

Survey as a research method has the following advantages:

- The survey can be used to study the audience in their natural settings, unlike laboratory experiments where research subject are taken to an artificial setting. For example, we can use a survey to study how media audience read newspapers, watch television, listen to the radio or react to media contents in their natural settings.

- A large volume of data can be collected with ease from the audience through a survey method. For instance, in one single survey study, we can get information about audience feelings, opinions, thoughts, preferences, and demographics. We can measure the variables in the data using different statistical tools—both descriptive and inferential statistics.

- The survey is cheaper in terms of the volume of information we can collect compared to other research methods. In most instances, questionnaires are administered to the respondents free, unlike FGD where the researcher may have to give the participants some incentives.

- The survey can be conducted anywhere; it is not constrained by geographical barriers.

- Apart from being relatively cheap, online survey methods allow the researcher to include some complex or technical components in the questionnaire.

- It is easier to find respondents to participate in a survey.

The weakness of Survey Method

- In laboratory experiments, researchers can easily manipulate independent variables and see how they affect the dependent variables. This is not possible in a survey. In other words, a survey can only establish the relationship between two variables, it cannot establish how variable A causes of affects variable B. For example, we cannot use a survey to establish how media audience exposure to certain political programmes causes the audience to take certain political decisions such as voting during elections. An experimental study can do this effectively.

- In most cases, especially when the researcher does not word the questionnaire items properly, bias and wrong responses may set in. This can compromise the integrity of the findings.

- Recently, especially with the use of the Internet to administer the survey questionnaire, the rate of responses has declined, and the researcher has no control over this. In a face-to-face administration, the researcher can use non-verbal resources to encourage respondents, but this is not possible in online methods.

- Wrong persons not suitable for the study may be included in the samples. This is more prevalent in online survey methods. This situation could have implications for the validity of the results from such a study.

- Another major problem with the online survey approaches is that they may not be effective when members of the target media audience are predominantly illiterate or where there is a weak or no internet connection at all.

- Besides, respondents in an online survey may be unwilling to respond to the questionnaire due to many reasons such as the cost of the internet connection and anonymity of the researcher(s).

- Also, the level of validity of responses is low as the researcher is not able to control some validity problems such as proxy respondents and multiple responses (where the researcher forgets to deactivate or lock multiple responses).

Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of the instruments or tools used to collect data in a survey. Such information is used to describe, compare, or explain a situation and to describe the knowledge, attitudes feelings, behaviours, and socio-demographic characteristics of a target media audience. There are three types of questionnaire that we can use in media audience research. They are as follows: **(1) *Structured Questionnaire***: This consists of closed-ended items (questions) with definite responses. In this type of questionnaire, the researcher usually anticipates all possible answers and pre-codes them as the responses from which the respondents choose their responses. (2) ***Semi-structured Questionnaire:*** This comprises a mixture of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The semi-structured questionnaire enables the researcher to elicit a mix of qualitative and quantitative information from the responses. (3) ***Unstructured Questionnaires***: This consists of open-ended items that require the respondents to generate their responses. An unstructured questionnaire is used for survey interviews. The responses generated through open-ended questions are qualitative, and they are more difficult to analyse compared to responses to closed-ended questions.

Let us see some examples of closed-ended and open-ended questionnaire items (questions):

Closed-ended Question:

1). Which of the following criteria do you always consider as the MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR that attracts you to news stories about COVID-19 pandemic?

a) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic affects prominent personalities such as politicians, public officers, and celebrities.

b) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic affects my close relations, friends, acquaintances or colleagues.

c) When there is a sharp rise or drop in the confirmed cases, recoveries or fatalities.

d) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic is too odd or strange to believe.

e) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic is fresh or recent (breaking news).

f) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic projects negative consequences such as job loss and economic recession.

g) When news/information about COVID-19 pandemic happens in my community or locality.

2) Monitoring online news readers' engagement with COVID-19-related news and the categories of such news stories that they share with their social media contacts will help news editors in mainstream media to know the kinds of news about the virus that appeal to newsreaders.

a) Strongly disagree

b) Disagree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strongly disagree

Open-ended Question:

1) Mention any THREE political programmes on your favourite radio station?

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2) Why do you prefer to listen to newspaper reviews on broadcast stations instead of reading the newspapers directly?

Some Points to Note while Constructing Survey Questionnaire

The best way to guarantee the reliability and validity of respondents' responses is to have a questionnaire that is devoid of errors and biases. Therefore, in the following section, we shall present the principles guiding the construction of a good survey questionnaire.

1. Avoid irrelevant questions. Make sure that only questions that are relevant to the goal of the study are included in the questionnaire. This requires the researcher to have a clear understanding of the objectives of the study.

2. Do not present the questions in such a way as to lead the respondents into the answer.

    Example:

    ·   *Many people have said that in terms of political programmes, Mountaintop FM is the best radio station in the state. Do you agree with this?*

    This is a biased question aimed at swaying respondents' opinions or decisions. Instead, we can present the question thus:

> · *In your opinion, which of the following radio stations in the State would you rate as the best in terms of political programmes? (NB: options should be provided for this type of question)*

3   The questions should be simple, clear and complete; avoid wordiness and double-barrelled questions that produce ambiguity.

Example:

> · *Do you listen to the radio and watch television? YES / NO.*

This type of question would confuse the respondents while coding the responses would be problematic. Instead, we should split the question to eliminate ambiguity:

> · *Do you listen to the radio? YES / NO*

> · *Do you watch television? YES /NO.*

4   Do not use jargon or shorthand in the questionnaire because not all the respondents will understand technical words used in other fields or professions. If such technical words are inevitable in the questionnaire, we must provide brief explanations in brackets or as a footnote. Never assume that respondents understand all the questions in the questionnaire.

5   Do not attempt to impress the respondents. Avoid big or complex words and expressions. Do not use idioms, proverbs and figurative expressions. In other words, always use the layman language (plain and easy to understand) to craft the questions. Avoid ambiguous words.

6   When fixed responses are provided (in closed-ended items), make sure that they do not overlap. They must also be exhaustive. For example, categories such as the age or income bands of respondents and the turnover bands of companies should be sequential, exclusive and exhaustive.

7   If you suspect that the fixed responses are not exhaustive, allow for `others' where the respondents ould be allowed to provide responses not listed in the fixed categories.

8   Be specific especially when you want to measure the frequency of some actions. Avoid words such as usually, frequently, often, always, or occasionally. They do not provide measurable categories. Instead, use phrases such as two times a week, five days a month, and three hours a day

9   Always avoid sensitive questions that may discourage honest responses. For instance, it is considered sensitive to ask women about their exact age, a man (an African man) the number of children he has, the specific salary a respondent collects, or companies about their exact turnover. Instead of asking for such specific details, use a range of response bands (e.g. 15-19years; 20-24years; 25-29years; 30-34years, etc.) that conceals sensitive precision

Web Analytics as Media Audience Research Method

Web analytics is the process of collecting, analysing and reporting information on the website of an organization. These virtual activities cover everything that the visitors are doing on the website, where the visitors come from, the frequency of their visits, and the content they like or share. Web analytics usually examines users' activities on the website of an organization with a specific focus on organizational and user goals. It is a quantitative research method employed to observe traffic on the website, measure variables provided by the traffic, present such measurements and make inferences that help stakeholders to make the right decisions. Web analytics is employed to enable an organization to use the website data to measure its success or failure, and the extent to which it has met its corporate goals and satisfied the users or audience. When the organization is aware of these variables, it would be able to deploy the right strategies and policies that can improve the overall corporate performances.

Web analytics is one of the contemporary research methods that are frequently used by corporate entities including media outfits across the world. This is because, as a result of the Internet revolution, almost every organization now has a website where most of its daily business activities are carried out. Media houses are not left out. There is hardly a media organization today without a website. This suggests that as the audience listen to the radio, watch the television and or read the newspapers to get news, information and entertainment offline, they also go online to access media contents and interact with other audience in the virtual community. Therefore, any

media organization that wants to know more about its audience in terms of their preferences, feelings, knowledge, and attitudes should not focus only on the offline activities; it should also pay attention to the segment of its audience online. This reality has given relevance and imperativeness to web analytics as a research method. Web analytics is always used to complement empirical evidence collected through other research methods. If a media organization wants to know what the audience do on its website, how frequently they visit the websites, which programme they access and share most frequently, or which programmes attract most comments (positive or negative), it must do web analytics.

There are some tools that researchers can deploy to do web analytics. Examples of such tools are Clickstream Analysis Tools (e.g.Google Analytics [google.com/analytics)], Yahoo Web Analytics [web.analytics.yahoo.com], Crazy Egg [crazyegg.com]), Competitive Intelligence Tools (e.g. Compete [compete.com]), Experimentation and Testing Tools (Google Website Optimizer [google.com/websiteoptimizer], Optimizely [optimizely.com]), and Social Analytics (Facebook Insights, Twitalyzer [twitalyzer.com]). Some of these tools are free, while many are not free (Dubois, 2010).

What Do Researchers Look for in Web Analytics?

When we visit the website of our media organisation to analyse its content, there are a lot of metrics we can track using different tools depending on our goals. However, in our discussion here, we shall focus on the five key web analytics that Hughes (2019) has suggested we should be tracking.

i) Overall traffic

Overall traffic refers to the number of visits our site gets over a specific time. It is significant because it allows us to detect if our website is active or not; if it is receiving the attention we expect it to receive. We can also monitor the overall traffic on the websites of other media houses who are our direct competitors. This would enable our media organisation to measure its performance in terms of web visibility compared to the status of other competitors. Naturally, as the website grows older, it is expected that the traffic would increase. But if the traffic on the web reduces or remains constant as the web grows, this suggests that our media organization is not faring well in this aspect. It may also suggest an overall failure for the media outfit. Perhaps we are not giving our audience the contents they prefer.

ii) Desktop vs Mobile Visits

Unlike in the past when website visits were done exclusively through the desktop (laptop and personal computer), technology has now made it possible for users to use their mobile phones to access websites. This means every website should offer both desktop and mobile spaces for the users. We can use web analytics to track the percentage of audience visiting our websites through the desktop or mobile browsers. Data on these categories of the audience would enable our media organization to know to which of the groups we should give more priority.

iii) Bounce Rate

"Bounce" is a term used to describe a situation when a user visits a website and leaves almost immediately without viewing a second page or scrolling further beyond what is prompted on the screen. To get the bounce rate, we measure the percentage of those bounce visits we get against our overall traffic. Bounce rate is important because it enables us to be aware of any outstanding usability issues with our website which may determine the extent to which users feel comfortable staying on the site. Factors such as long or delayed loading time, unattractive web design, clumsy or awkward navigation scheme (i.e. bad user interface), and poor contents are some of the most common causes of a high bounce rate on a website. Although the average bounce rate is considered to be between 20 and 70%, it is better to be lower. Therefore, if the bounce rate of our website is higher than 30%, we may have to examine the foregoing possible causes and address them appropriately.

iv) New and Returning Visitors

There are two groups of users: Returning and New. Returning users are those audiences who have been visiting the website repeatedly, while new users are those visiting for the first time. As we would be happy to have new visitors on our sites, we would be more delighted if we can keep the returning users because they are the most reliable and the best. We should see them as our core audience. If the returning rate of our media outfit's website is not less than 30%, our media organization is doing well; it means we are retaining our core audience. But if it is below 20%; our website is not doing well in terms of engagement. Poor contents, bad user interface, or unattractive web design, among other factors, could be the causes. Unless we conduct regular web analytics, we may not be able to detect this trend and take the right step to correct it.

v) Traffic sources

Traffic sources are the pages that link to our website. Most times, users who visit our website for the first time will locate our website not by typing the URL (public link) of the website, but through links to the site from other sites. Traffic sources are of four categories: *search engines, visits from email campaigns, links from social media,* and *links from other sites*. Out of these four categories, the search engines category is the most important if we want to maximize traffic on our site. To optimize search engine resources, we must ensure that our contents are rich, current and relevant. This is because if we have good and trending contents on our website, anytime users are online using some keywords to look for contents similar to our contents, the search engine would prompt our website among other links on the browser. If our keywords are strong and popular, our website will be ranked on top of the list. This would encourage users to select our link and direct more traffic to our site. Any media organization that wants to improve on this aspect must constantly conduct web analytics.

Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative research approach adopts research methods that aim to produce deep and unique explanation about a situation of a group of people. Qualitative research methods focus more on experiences, life and situations as understood and described by the audience rather than trying to measure or determine sizes of the audience. The survey questionnaire is the heart of any survey research.

To conduct audience research using the qualitative approach, we must focus on the exact nature of the reality we are investigating, and the close relationship that exists between us as researchers and the media audience as the research subjects. We must also pay attention to the contextual factors (participants' beliefs, biases, values, experiences and preferences) that shape the research process. In other words, the qualitative research approach places emphasis on qualitative interaction between the researcher and the research participants. Consequently, a qualitative research approach emphasizes depth rather than size or number. Examples of qualitative methods that we can employ for audience research are In-depth interviews (through face-to-face, telephone, Skype or Zoom), Focus Group Discussions, Key Informant Interviews, Field Observations, social media analytics (qualitative), ethnographic interviews, and Case Studies.

Qualitative research methods could be used independently or alongside quantitative findings where in-depth explanations are necessary. For example, let us assume that a radio station has conducted a survey study and established that a group of market women do not like to listen to a specific political programme aired by the radio station. The radio station may want to go further to understand, from multiple perspectives (which could be perspectives of the women themselves, or of the other groups who could provide a further explanation), why the women do not listen to the programme. The appropriate research approach to be adopted by this radio station at this point is the one that permits a close interaction with, and keen observation of, the women. This is possible through qualitative research methods. To be specific, we can do simple focus group discussions (FGD) or in-depth interviews with those women to achieve this objective.

Basic Features of Qualitative Audience Research

·   The qualitative approach enables the researcher to conduct the study in every day (real-life) situations without manipulating or controlling the research participants. This situation allows the participants to provide reliable information.

·   There is flexibility in the design where the researcher has the opportunity to adapt to new procedures as they occur. The design is not rigid; it accommodates new developments during the study.

·   Sampling is done to gain deep knowledge about the situation we are investigating, not to establish empirical generalization (i.e. making evidence-based general statements) about the entire group of people that the study concerns (these people are referred to as the study population). This means that the principle guiding sampling in qualitative research is not about representativeness (i.e. covering a large percentage that could represent the whole group we are investigating), but the ability of the representatives (sample) to provide in-depth responses.

·   Findings reflect personal and multiple perspectives and personal experiences of the participants.

·   The researcher has close interaction and engagement with the participants; this provides opportunities for openness, respect, awareness, responsiveness and sensitivity which permit critical interpretation of the situation being investigated.

·   The approach allows the researcher to deeply engage with the data and establish important patterns and themes necessary for the explanation of the situation we are investigating.

Selected Qualitative Research Methods

As we did for the quantitative research approach, we consider it imperative to also discuss two research methods that are more frequently employed when the research approach is qualitative. Therefore, we shall examine the *Focus Group Discussion* and *In-depth Interviews*.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD) as Media Audience Research Method

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method where the researcher (here called the moderator or facilitator) recruits and organises a group of participants and coordinates a discussion with them. The number of participants may range from six to 12. The FGD is also called group interviewing or focus group. It is called focus discussion because the discussion must be on a particular area of focus that addresses the research objectives. It is a research strategy used to explore and understand audience behaviours and attitudes. The discussion is done among the group simultaneously where every participant is free to contribute in an orderly manner.

The participants recruited must share certain similar characteristics that make them qualified for the discussion. For example, in typical media audience research, all the participants to be recruited for the study could be people who listen to a particular programme on a particular radio station, and we may want to understand why the participants prefer to listen to the programme. The facilitator must structure the FGD question in line with the study objectives, but the discussion should be flexible enough to allow the participants to deviate from the prepared questions if they have views that are relevant to the research focus. The discussion could start by allowing

the participants to watch a video, listen to a news broadcast or discuss a general issue relevant to the focus of the discussion. This is to ensure that every participant feels free and is ready to participate in the full discussion.

The FGD could be used independently as the sole research method to answer research questions. This is called *self-contained FGD*. In another instance, we can conduct a *supplementary FGD* where we use the FGD as the starting point or a source of complementary data for a quantitative study. For instance, if we want to understand why a group of audience prefer to listen to a particular political programme on our radio station, we can use information from group discussions to form the questionnaire items for the survey. Alternatively, after the survey that has shown that most of the audience preferred to listen to a particular programme on our radio station, we can go ahead to conduct group discussions to probe further to provide explanations for the preference.

FGD has a unique methodology. For instance, to conduct an FGD, the researcher is expected to take the following steps: Define the research problem, select the sample(s), determine the number of groups needed, handle study mechanics (i.e. recruits the participants, determine the venues, arrange for incentives for the participants, get necessary recording gadgets, etc.), prepare the focus discussion guides (questions) and other materials, conduct the discussion session(s) and observe good interview procedures, analyse data and prepare a summary report (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). Note that the foregoing steps should be followed sequentially as listed.

- ❑ *Advantages of FGD:* One of the major advantages of FGD is that it permits the participants to discuss issues elaborately because of the flexibility of the questions. This allows for the cross-fertilisation of ideas. Besides, FGD is useful in providing preliminary data for a full-scale study. Lastly, the cost of conducting the FGD notwithstanding, the method generates rich and in-depth data that we cannot get through the survey.

- ❑ *Disadvantages of FGDs:* FGD is expensive to conduct especially where participants are reluctant to participate in the study. In a situation such as this, the researcher has to look for money to give to the participants as incentives. Also, apart from the fact that groups are difficult to organise, it is a difficult task, most times, to get the appropriate venue and time that would be

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acceptable to all the participants. Besides, unlike the case with the survey, we cannot use the findings from FGD to make an empirical generalisation (inferences or conclusions) or establish a pattern. We can only do this when we have many focus groups that would produce a fairly large representation of the whole population. This is quite expensive to achieve. Lastly, some members of the group may be naturally shy, while some are domineering. Unless the coordinator is efficient, only a few participants would speak throughout the discussion, while some participants would not make meaningful contributions at all. In this instance, the findings cannot reflect the collective experiences of the group but that of a few vocal individuals.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth Interviews are also called intensive interviews. As described by Wimmer and Dominick (2011), in-depth interviews are essentially a hybrid of one-on-one interview approach used for the survey. The major difference is that an in-depth interview is more elaborate and intensive as the name implies, and it uses smaller samples. The researcher (interviewer) recruits respondents (interviewees) with specialised knowledge or experiences on a particular topic. Such participants may include academics, community leaders, security experts, or specially skilled individuals who share certain knowledge or experiences about the focus of our research.

In-depth interviews do not require a large sample; they emphasise depth. Like group discussions, in-depth interviews are employed to provide elaborate and deep explanations for audience behaviour, attitudes values, feelings, opinions or motivation. Unlike personal interviews used in survey research, in-depth interviews take longer period ranging from 45 minutes to several hours or in some cases several sessions. An in-depth interview is usually conducted at a venue and time preferred by the interviewee. It may be in their offices, their homes, or at conducive public spaces when the interviewees do not have other engagements. Unlike the FGD where the interview comes as a simultaneous discussion among a group of participants, the interviewer engages only one participant at a time in a session of an in-depth interview.

Like the FGD, in-depth interview approach also has its unique procedure. Creswell (2013) identifies the following steps similar to those for group discussions, but with some unique aspects:

> Decide on the research questions that you expect the interviewee to answer. The questions should be open-ended and flexible focusing on the general research problem.

> Identify interviewees who have the expected knowledge and experiences to answer the questions. The selection here is usually through purposeful sampling.

> Determine what type of interview is feasible or practical. You may choose a face-to-face or virtual method. It all depends on the reality on the ground such as the preference of the interviewee, the nature of issues to be discussed, cost, distance, time, or other social factors (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic that requires that people observe social distancing).

> Select adequate recording procedures or gadgets. You should not rely on just one recording device as this may develop some faults during the interview. Always have back-ups.

> Design and use interview protocol (interview guide). The guide should be about five to seven open-ended questions and with enough spaces in-between so that you can write comments or add other questions as they emerge during the interview. A good in-depth interview protocol should have the *title* showing the media organization or the agency carrying out the study; *time of interview; date of interview; names of the interviewer and the interviewee, the position of the interviewee; a brief description of the study*; and *the questions.*

> Do a pilot study to refine (modify) the interview protocol (questions) and procedures.

> Determine the place and time for conducting the interview. The place must be quiet and the time must be convenient, especially for the interviewee.

> After arriving at the interview site, obtain consent from the interviewee to take part in the interview. You must have a consent form which you ask the

interviewee to complete. Tell the interviewee the purpose of the study, the expected duration and how the results from the interview will be used.

➢ During the interview, follow good interview procedures: Follow the questions; complete the interview according to the agreed schedule; show respect and courtesy to the interviewee; be a good listener, not a frequent speaker; be in control of the interview; take notes during the interview, but make sure that your recording devices are working.

➢ Immediately after the interview, playback the recorded conversations. Then start to transcribe and write the report.

❑ *Advantages of In-depth Interviews:* In-depth interviews produce detailed and precise information. They help to generate new and perhaps unexpected information especially when the interviewer is skillful enough to ask questions that would make the interviewee provide broad answers with rich perspectives. In-depth interview approach, like the FGD, is effective for eliciting in-depth descriptive data that provide deep explanations for audience beliefs, attitudes, feelings, opinions and values.

❑ *Disadvantages of In-depth Interviews:* One major problem with in-depth interviews is that generalization is impossible. This is because apart from the fact that samples are extremely small, each interviewee may respond entirely different from what other interviewees have said. Also, it may be difficult for the researcher to get the appropriate interviewees as they are typically busy individuals who may not be willing to spare their time for the interview. Another major problem with in-depth interview method is that it is prone to interviewer's bias as the interviewer may unconsciously or deliberately use their personal experiences or sentiments to draft the interview questions and drive the interview. Even at the point of result interpretation, the researcher may treat the results with interpretations different from the original intention of the interviewees.

Sampling in Media Audience Research

By definition, sampling is the process of selecting a fraction of the whole body, an entity or a group with such a fraction serving as the representative of the whole units and through which the general conclusions about the entire body of units are made.

Like in any other social science research, sampling is crucial to media audience research. In media audience research, the researchers always have a large audience to study. For the reason that the audience is too large to be effectively covered, and the fact that there are limited resources and time, media researchers have to select a representative of the entire body of the target audience. This entire body of audience that researchers intend to study in a particular situation is called *population* or *universe*. The representative fraction selected from the population is called a **sample**. In some instances where the researcher is dealing with a well-defined group of audience, the comprehensive list of all the members of the group serves as the *sampling frame* from which the researcher selects a sample. However, when the group of the target audience is not too large, the researcher may not need to select any sample. Rather, the whole population (target media audience) is studied. This is called a *census study*.

Nevertheless, apart from the fact that in scientific research, it is considered unnecessary, even if it is possible, to study the whole population, researchers prefer sample to census study because of some reasons: (1) it is assumed that an approximation may be sufficient; (2) sample is cheaper, in terms of time and other resources, compared to a census; (3) it may be difficult to access the whole population, which makes census impossible; and (4) studying the sample provides more detailed and accurate information. Besides, the sample size to be used for audience research is not sacrosanct: it all depends on some factors such as the desired degree of precision the researcher aims to achieve, the statistical power or tools required, the ability of the researcher to gain access to the target respondents, the degree to which the target population can be stratified, and the relevant units of analysis.

Theoretical Population Vs Study Population in Audience Research

We have two categories of population in media audience research—*the theoretical population* and *the study population*. While the theoretical population is the group to which we want to generalize at the end of the study, the study population is the actual population we can have access to for the study. For example, if we want to investigate the radio programme that has the largest listeners/followers in Oyo State, Nigeria, we cannot cover every part of the State. Therefore, we may have to divide Oyo State into constituencies, local governments, wards, streets and even households from where we select the actual sample for the study. In this case, our

study population will be radio listeners from the specific constituencies, local governments, wards, streets or households from where we select the sample. Whatever findings we get at the end of the study will be generalized to the theoretical population, which is all radio audience in Oyo State.

Sampling Methods in Audience Research

The specific ways of selecting the sample for audience research are called sampling methods or sampling techniques. The nature of the audience, the study objective(s), and the research approach we want to adopt are the basic factors that determine the appropriateness of any sampling method(s) we select. Thus, we can select the probability sampling method(s) or non-probability sampling technique(s). Let us briefly discuss these two broad categories of sampling methods and their examples.

Probability Sampling

The probability sampling is based on the principle that each element of a group has an equal chance of being selected. The researcher has no control on which elements are selected or not selected from the whole group as long as the prescribed procedures are followed. In probability sampling, there must be a comprehensive list of all the members of the study population, It is from this list (sampling frame) that the researcher selects randomly the members that would constitute the sample. For example, if we want to examine the attitudes of secondary school students in Lagos State to some identified educational programmes broadcast by Lagos State Television, we can choose the probability sampling technique, although at the multi-stage level. This will be done by obtaining from the State Ministry of Education all the names of secondary schools in Lagos State; we then use the list to randomly select some schools as the first layer of the sample. Then, we can obtain the class registers from the respective schools selected. The collected class registers will serve as the sampling frames from which we select the students (sample) that will finally participate in the study. The specific random sampling methods are briefly explained as follows:

a) *Simple random sampling*: The simple random sampling technique is used to randomly draw a sample from a study population. The selection is done in such a way that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. To use the simple random sampling technique, we must have a comprehensive list of all the elements in the study population. This list is

called the sampling frame. Simple random selection is done either through a table of random numbers or a computer-generated sampling frame derived from the study population. It is called simple random because the researcher can choose indiscriminately, but orderly, from the list. The selection must be done in such a way that no element is picked twice or denied the chance of being selected. Also, the digit of selection must be sustained throughout the selection process. Lottery method is commonly used in simple random sampling. With this method, each member of a group to be studied is assigned a number. Then, all the numbers will be generated and put inside a bowl or a tray from where they are picked at random. Any member whose number is picked becomes a member of the sample. This is repeated until the required sample size is met. For example, if we want to select 20% of a group of 300 television viewers, this will give us 60 viewers. This means we have to generate exactly 300 numbers and assign them to the 300 viewers. The 300 numbers form the sampling frame. Then we shall pick the numbers randomly 60 times, without replacement, to have the sample size of 60 viewers. One of the advantages of simple random sampling is that it does not require the researcher to have a detailed knowledge of the population. Also, it allows the sample to be representative of the population thereby making generalization possible. However, simple random sampling has been criticised for its non-practicability when the population is so large that it is difficult to have a comprehensive list (sampling frame) of all the elements in the study population. Again, if the sample is nor selected well, we may not have a fair representation of the population even if the sample is large. Any generalization, in this case, becomes invalid.

b) *Systematic random sampling:* Like the simple random sampling, systematic sampling also works on the principle of equal selection chance. It also requires a sampling frame. The major difference is that systematic random sampling is more strict and orderly. It is systematic as the researcher assigns an **n^{th} number** which represents the class interval. Every element in the group would be assigned a number which must be present on the table of random numbers from where the selection is made. For instance, in a group of 300 viewers where we need 60 (20%), the researcher can choose **5** as the class interval meaning that from the starting point, every **5th element** on the sampling frame will be constantly picked until we have 60 elements. If the

population is so small that intervals of 5 cannot produce the required sample size, we can reduce the interval. The procedure is easy and cheap, and it produces more accurate results than the case in simple random sampling. However, as the case in simple random sampling, systematic sampling is only applicable only when the comprehensive list of the study population is available to generate the table of random numbers (sampling frame). The method also permits the researcher to use periodicity (arrangement of elements on the table) to manipulate the selection process.

c) *Stratified sampling*: This is a method where we must first identify the sub-groups in the study population and then divide the population according to these sub-groups. This is to ensure that all the groups in the population are equally represented in the sample. For example, if we want to conduct a state-wide study to know the media type that appeals to the audience most, instead of selecting randomly from the population, we will first divide the State into senatorial districts. Then we will divide the districts by local governments, and finally by wards. From each ward, we will select the respondents that will constitute the final study sample. The logic behind this method is that each stratum (ward) is a homogenous group, and selecting participants from such homogenous groups would give validity to generalization. The stratification could be proportionate (proportional) or disproportionate (disproportional). We have a disproportionate stratified sampling if the sample size from each stratum is determined by the population size of the stratum. That is, the sampling fractions from each stratum are uneven; they vary according to the respective sizes of the strata. Conversely, if we select an equal number of participants from all the strata irrespective of their population sizes, we have a proportionate stratified sampling. The stratified sampling method ensures the representativeness and comparisons of relevant variables in the population. Besides, because the population is stratified into sub-groups, sampling error is reduced, while data is collected from homogenous groups. However, unless the researcher is well familiar with the terrain of the study location, employing the stratified random sampling may be defective or impossible. Again, apart from the fact that the sampling method is complex and expensive, the variables that define the strata may not be relevant to the focus of the study.

d) *Cluster sampling:* This is a sampling method that has cluster sampling whereby the researcher divides the study population into separate groups (clusters). In each of the clusters, the researcher applies a simple **random sampling** to select the sample. The clusters provide homogeneous characteristics of the population with each member of a cluster having an equal chance of being a part of the sample. An example of a media audience study where we can apply cluster sampling is provided as follows: Let us assume that we want to study radio listening habits of students of tertiary institutions in Kaduna State, Nigeria. To apply cluster sampling, we will group the students according to the universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education in the State. To make the sampling two-stage or multi-stage, we can further divide the tertiary institutions by ownership (state/federal or public/private). From each of the clusters, we shall select our samples randomly. Homogenous characterization of the study connects the stratified and cluster sampling methods as the two sampling methods also share some similar advantages and weaknesses. However, specifically, cluster sampling is cheap, but it does not specify how sampling fractions are selected from the clusters; it only prescribes how clusters are created. Besides, the method does not recognise individual characteristics of members of the cluster.

Non-Probability Sampling

The non-probability sampling does not give priority to an equal chance of selection for every member of a group. Non-probability sampling methods are used when it is not easy or possible for the researcher to generate a sampling frame for the population, and when much concern is not given to representativeness of the sample. While adopting the non-probability sampling techniques, the researcher has the freedom to choose any unit of analysis they think is appropriate. This suggests that non-probability sampling techniques permit some bias or arbitrariness by the researcher unlike the case when probability sampling methods are used. The non-probability methods that we can use in media audience research include convenience (available) sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling, and judgmental (purposive) sampling methods. These methods are briefly described below.

a) *Convenience sampling*: It is also called *available sampling.* A convenience sampling is a process of selecting the participants who are found to be most accessible to the researcher. For example, let us assume that we are studying the attitude of university undergraduates to a particular programme on a television station, and we just approach two or three lecturers in a faculty to assist us to administer our questionnaire. After their lectures, the lecturers ask their students to complete the copies of our questionnaire. This is a good example of convenience sampling. What we have done in this case is that we only collect data from a narrow section of the student population, which does not represent all the students in the university across the levels, faculties or departments. Convenience sampling is an easy and inexpensive sampling method most useful when we are gathering initial data for the study. However, in some cases, it can be used for gathering the final data. One major problem with this method is that it does not guarantee the representativeness of the sample. Consequently, we cannot use the findings it produces to generalize.

b) *Quota sampling:* This is a sampling method used to collect data from a homogeneous group. It involves at least two variables to screen information from the study population and show how such variables define the homogenous group. It is useful in establishing a quick comparison based on the identified variables such as age, sex or religion of the same group. For example, in a study population with 60% males and 40% females where the total population is 400, and the researcher wants to use 50% (i.e. 200) of the population, the quota sampling can be applied. In this case, it is assumed that we have a male-female ratio of 6:4. Therefore, we will select 120 males (i.e. 60%) and 80 females (i.e. 40%) of the population to give us the desired sample of 200 participants. This is how quota sampling is applied. Quota sampling allows for replication of the characteristics measured in a population. It also ensures that a certain group is not over-represented, but it requires the researcher to have prior knowledge of the composition of the study population.

c) *Snowball sampling*: As the name suggests, snowballing sampling is used when the researcher needs a member of the study population to refer the researcher to another member who in turn refers the researcher to another

member in that chain of referral. The trend continues until the number "snowballs" (increases) and reaches the desired sample size for the study. It is used in a study where the population is hard to access or members are not easily accessible or identifiable. Therefore, the researcher recruits participants through other participants. For example, if you want to organise group discussions with members of a secret society to understand their views on a given radio programme that focuses on peace and security, it may be difficult to identify and access members of this group. In this situation, probability sampling is not possible. The best sampling method to use is snowballing. You must try to meet one member, establish a relationship with them to win their trust. Then they may agree to participate in the research and then connect you to other members who also connect you to other members until you have the required sample. Although the method is useful when members of a study population are hard to reach or identify, it may be highly biased as members with more relevant experiences or opinions may be accidentally or deliberately excluded along the chain of referral.

d) *Purposive sampling*: This sampling method is also called **judgmental sampling**. It requires the researcher to consider certain criteria while selecting a sample. In other words, the participants must possess certain unique experiences or characteristics that qualify them for the study. Anyone who does not have such characteristics cannot participate in the study. The sampling method is useful in qualitative method when the objective is not to make statistical inferences but to explore detailed knowledge about a situation or provide an in-depth explanation for certain phenomena, values, or behaviours. An example is when we want to understand the opinions of cigarette smokers about the television advert on the negative effects of smoking on smokers' health. We must recruit only individuals who smoke and have watched the advert on television to participate in the study. Anyone who does not have these experiences is not qualified for the study. One major strength of the method is that it is capable of eliciting precise and relevant information from participants who possess the relevant experience and opinions. However, findings generated through purposive sampling cannot be generalized because the method does not consider sample representativeness suitable for statistical inferences.

CHAPTER
3

REPORTING MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH: SOME TECHNICAL AND LANGUAGE ISSUES

Two important factors determine, to a large extent, the quality and usefulness of a report of audience research. These are presentation format and the language of presentation. No matter the precision and appropriateness of the methodology or the depth of the findings, if the technical and language components of the report are deficient, the entire report becomes ineffective and effectively a waste of resources. When we conduct audience research, we must make sure that we proficiently communicate the findings in such a style that every segment the target audience of the report would be able to read and understand the core messages of the report. In this section, we shall first discuss the technicalities of presenting quantitative and qualitative findings of media audience research. Then we shall discuss the basic language issues.

Technical Aspects of Reporting Audience Research

Based on the research approaches, there are two categories of findings in media audience research. These are quantitative and qualitative findings. In this sub-section, we shall discuss the principles guiding the presentation of quantitative and qualitative findings:

a) *Present the Methodology before the Findings*: We must present the procedure (methodology) employed to execute the study before we present the findings. This should reflect the data type, source(s) of data (population), sampling procedure and sample size, instrumentation, procedure for data collection (administration of instrument), and data analysis tools (e.g. descriptive and

inferential statistics for quantitative data; and textual analysis, emerging theme technique, constant comparative analysis, etc. for qualitative data). It is imperative to present the methodology immediately before the findings because this would enhance the credibility of the findings and convince the research audience that we have followed the standard research protocols. In other words, we must present the "how" (methodology) before we present the "what" (findings) of the study.

b) *Use Appropriate Graphics to Present the Findings*: The truth is that the research audience (readers) may not always have the time to read the whole report. They want to see only the core messages. Therefore, we must use graphics and other visualization tools to concretize and foreground the findings. When results are presented on tables, charts, or graphs, they become visible and concrete, and their meanings are not concealed.

c) *Always Label and Reference Graphics Properly*: Anytime we use graphics, we must label them appropriately and make sure that we reference them correctly in the text. By labelling, we mean that every graphic tool used must have a number and a title to make referencing easy. An example of a good label in ***Fig. 5.5: Overall best political programme on Splash FM as rated by respondents.*** The graphics must be presented serially. Besides, while referencing the graphics, we must avoid the use of vague phrases such as: as shown in the table below; the results presented in the chart above show that the presenter is not popular among the audience; table on the next page shows that only a few of the audience did not listen to the radio station; the results are presented in the table on the next page, or see appendix. These phrases are indefinite and confusing. Instead, we should use phrases such as Table 2 shows that only 15.4% of the audience did not listen to the radio station; as presented in Table 4, 80.1% of the female listeners preferred the programme; or see Appendix Five for details. These phrases are precise, and they make specific references to the respective graphics (for examples of graphics, see *Part Five* of this Guidebook).

d) *Speak for Statistics:* Do not just present statistics on tables or charts needlessly; use graphics judiciously in a way that the research audience are not confused. Every table or chart presented must be interpreted or summarised in the text immediately before or below the table or chart. Some

graphics or statistics could be technical, so, we need to explain them. While doing this, we should not be tempted to try to explain every figure presented in a table especially when the table is large. Select only the findings that have strong implications and interpret them. Leave the rest to avoid clumsy texts.

e) *Simplify Complex Statistics*: When the inferential statistical tools are employed to analyse data, we are likely to have complex statistics which most of the research audience may not be able to interpret. Until we simplify these complex statistics, they are not playing meaningful roles in the report. Therefore, when we present such complex statistics, we should interpret them in plain expressions. In the following example from a study by Ojebuyi and Chukwunwike (2018), statistical values that are presented boldly in the brackets are further explained in plain language:

> The t-test results in Table 6 show that there was a significant difference in the scores for Jonathan (M=74.5, SD=66.3) and Sonaiya (M=2.0, SD=2.4); t=0.823, p = 0.001. The results statistically mean that Jonathan and Sonaiya significantly differ in the coverage and prominence level they got from the media. In other words, the newspapers reported Jonathan far more than they reported Sonaiya.

f) *Make a Focused Analysis*: It is wrong to believe that every item on the questionnaire or all that the interviewers have said must be included in the report. This would amount to "using data to insult the audience". The best practice is to focus on the most important aspects of the data, extract them and use them to answers the research questions. All other items that are not very important could be taken to the appendix section.

g) *Include Quotes from Interviews or Observation*: While presenting qualitative findings, apart from summarising what the interviewees have said, we must also present some direct statements by the interviewees. If the direct statements are short, they should be included in the paragraph and enclosed in quotation marks, but when they are fairly long (about four lines and above), they should be presented separately, indented on both sides and presented single-line spacing, but with no quotation marks again. The following examples from a study by Ojebuyi (2012) show how we can present quotations from in-depth interviews and FGD:

Interview (News Selection Procedure as a Teamwork)

Presenters and some other staff members on duty in the news department form the team of gatekeepers. Mr Kunle Thomas, the News Editor, Splash FM, summarised the picture of this procedure:

> *It is teamwork. Those staff members in the shift including the presenters are all involved. Some individuals source for local stories. Some source for foreign news, some politics, and some human angle stories. Ultimately, everything still has to pass through me. It is like we have about 50 or more stories, whereas, all we need might just be a few stories. So, my job as the editor now comes in to assess the newsworthiness of the stories and pick the few ones to be used for the day. We discard the others that do not meet our criteria.*

The foregoing description of news selection procedure given by Mr Kunle Thomas is similar to the picture painted by Mr Tunde Oluwanike of FRCN, Ibadan: "About three or four people are always on night duty. We all go through the newspapers available for the day. We pick the stories after thorough screening and take them to the presenters in the studio", he explained.

Focus Group Discussion **(Factors that Attract Listeners to Newspaper Reviews by Radio Stations)**

The Focus Group Discussion participants confirmed that they enjoyed the newspaper review by radio stations. "I like the programme because it is educative, informative and highly entertaining, especially the Yoruba version," one of the participants said. Other major factors the participants said attracted them to the programme are the timing, comprehensiveness, convenience and the mode of delivery employed by presenters. A discussant summarised it all as follows:

> *I have developed a strong passion for the programme. I like it because it is presented in a more dramatic style that adds fun to the whole exercise. The timing is right and convenient; if you miss the English version around six to seven o'clock in the morning, you are not likely to miss the Yoruba version that comes later. You can listen to the programme while you are eating; while you are driving; or*

while you are trekking. It saves time and money, and it brings news to
everyone whether they are literate or not; whether they are in the city
or in the village.

As evident in the examples above, it is more rigorous to present qualitative findings. This is because the researcher has a mass volume of information which may be diverse in perspectives. The researcher must interact deeply with the data and identify the core messages that run through the interviews of discussions. These core messages are thematised and presented according to the identified themes and as they answer the research questions.

Basic Language Issues in Reporting Audience Research

The language component of any research is crucial. This is because the essence of conducting research is to expose some facts and reality, and this exposition must be properly done in manners that communicate effectively to the public. Language is the means through which communication of the results is done. Therefore, no matter the depth or sophistication of a study, if the language is deficient, the whole exercise is a waste of time and resources. As media audience researchers, we must be familiar with and effectively use the language in a way that conforms to the universal convention of report presentation in terms of completeness, source credibility, scientific objectivity, and evidence-based approach.

Generally, the language of scientific research, including media audience research, must be formal, clear, simple, accurate, concrete, and concise. In this sub-section, we shall examine some basic language aspects (especially style and usage) of presenting media audience reports.

Use of Abbreviations and Acronyms

- The first time you use an abbreviation or acronym in your report, it should come in brackets after its full-meaning has been fully spelt out, e.g.:

  The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has been strengthened to effectively regulate the broadcasting industry in Nigeria.

- In subsequent cases, just the abbreviation or acronym would do; there is no need to write the full-meaning again.

- In lengthy reports, you should have a section where you list and explain the abbreviations and acronyms you must have used in the body of the report.

Figures or words?

Use words, not figures, in the following situations:

- For numbers below 10: *A three-man committee*; *Seven out of nine students did not listen to the programme.*

- For numbers that begin a sentence (even if the number is above 10): *Seventy-five respondents thought the programme was appropriate for secondary schools.*

- The same rule applies to titles and headings; do not start a title or a heading with a number. Example:

Incorrect:

"60 Years after Independence: A Journey through the Jungles".

Correct:

"Sixty Years after Independence: A Journey through the Jungles"

NB: News headlines are exempted.

- To state approximations, use words, not numbers. Example: *The presenter will spend approximately thirty minutes to read the news* (NOT: …approximately 30 minutes….)

- For common fractions: *Only one-third of Nigerians live in the cities*.

- For two consecutive cardinal numerical expressions, spell out one of the numbers in words: *We analysed five 4-act plays.*

But this does not apply when the numerals are ordinal: Every second four-paragraph news story was selected for analysis.

- To express numbers found in commonly used phrases. Examples: The researcher cited the Ten Commandments to substantiate his claims. NOT "The researcher cited the 10 Commandment…."

Use figures, not words, in the following situations:

- For numbers that have technical units of measure: *5 ml; 0.31mg*
- For items and sections: *Section 1, subsection v.*
- For tables and figures: *Table 5 presents the figures: As shown in table 4.3...*
- Commas must be used in *figures of 1,000 or above*.

NB: The following cases are exempted:

(a) Binary digits (e.g. 0010001110);

(b) Serial numbers (e.g. 63862385);

(c) Page numbers (e.g. p. 1323, or pp. 1325-1398);

(d) Degrees of temperature (e.g. 2144 ˚F—[degrees Fahrenheit])

(e) Acoustic frequencies (e.g. 1000 Hz)

To express plurals of numbers….

- ❖ Do not include an apostrophe ('); it is wrong to do so. The correct style is to add s or "es"-morpheme to the number to be expressed in the plural (e.g. in the 1970s, in the 1980s, fours, fives, sixes, 20s).

In what cases must we use hyphenation?

- Hyphenate when prefixes are followed by numbers, capitalized words, more than one word, or abbreviations. Examples: *post-911 years; pre-19th-century-technologies; COVID-19 pandemic; a non-UN member.*

- Hyphenate when the prefix *self* is used. Examples: *self-destructive tactics; self-administered questionnaire, self-isolation period.*

- Hyphenate when using fractions as adjectives. Examples: *Two-thirds majority; one-third deduction.*

- To avoid confusion of having double vowels that are the same co-existing, hyphenate. Example: *Re-educate; de-emphasize, pre-empt.*

- When the prefix can generate a new word with a different meaning, hyphenate. Example: *Re-lease the land, re-do the assignment; re-cover the pot. But NOT in cases such as* recover, replace, uncover (which retain their primary meanings).

- Hyphenate when using cardinal numbers. Examples: *Seventy-five; forty-one; ninety-nine.*

CHAPTER
4

PREPARING FOR, AND RETURNING FROM, THE FIELD: WORKING WITH BROADCAST JOURNALISTS TO CONDUCT AUDIENCE RESEARCH

In this section, we demonstrate audience research in practice. We present how broadcast journalists could be trained and guided to conduct audience research, and how they could conduct the research. The case we are presenting here is the training of staff of *Splash FM*, Ibadan, Nigeria, on the conduct of media audience research.

The training was organised by the Institute for Media and Society under the Support - to - Media Component of the EU-Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria Project. The primary objective of the training was to enhance the capacity of Staff of *Splash FM*, Ibadan, Oyo State, to conduct media audience research so that they could understand their audiences' preferences and sizes. The exercise, which comprised a two-day training and conduct of research, lasted for 14 days (25 April – 8 May 2018). As the Consultant, I conducted the training and coordinated the fieldwork, data analysis and write-up of the report of the fieldwork. Details of activities during the period of the exercise are presented as follows:

Training:

The training lasted for two days (Wednesday 25 and Thursday 26 April 2018), starting with a **Pre-test.** The pre-test was conducted to measure participants' previous knowledge of media audience research. I conducted the test which lasted 10 for minutes. I explained the purpose of the test to the participants.

On the first day of the training, after the pre-test, we discussed the following topics:

i.   Overview of Media Audience Research

ii. The Rationale for Media Audience Research

iii. Quantitative Research in Media Audience Research

iv. Survey Methods in Media Audience Research

v. Understanding Questionnaire Design in Media Audience Research

On the second day, the topics we discussed are as follows:

i. Case Study: Audience Research for a Radio Station

ii. Analysing and Presenting Quantitative Data in Media Audience Research

iii. Research Report Writing

iv. Structure of Research Report.

The training was highly interactive as the participants actively participated, asked relevant questions, and made useful contributions. The participants were also assigned some group and individual tasks during the training sessions. We ended the training with **a post-test**, which was conducted immediately after the final session. The objective of the post-test was to measure the knowledge and skills the participants must have gained from the training. As shown in **Table 4.1 and Figure 4.1** below, the participants' performances in the post-test reflected a significant improvement compared to their performances in the pre-test. This confirmed that the training was effective.

Table 4.1: Summary of Participants' Performances in Pre-test and Post-test

S/N	PARTICIPANT	Pre-test Score (out of 25)	Percent age	Post-test Score (out of 25)	Percentage
1.	Participant 1	14	56.0%	19	76.0%
2.	Participant 2	17	68.0%	23	92.0%
3.	Participant 3	On duty	-	18	72.0%
4.	Participant 4	08	32.0%	20	80.0%
5.	Participant 5	08	32.0%	21	84.0%
6.	Participant 6	10	40.0%	25	100%
7.	Participant 7	08	32.0&	24	96.0%
8.	Participant 8	On duty	-	On duty	-
9.	Participant 9	04	16.0%	On duty	-
10.	Participant 10	09	36.0%	20	80.0%

Fig. 1: Summary of Participants' Performances in Pre-test and Post-test
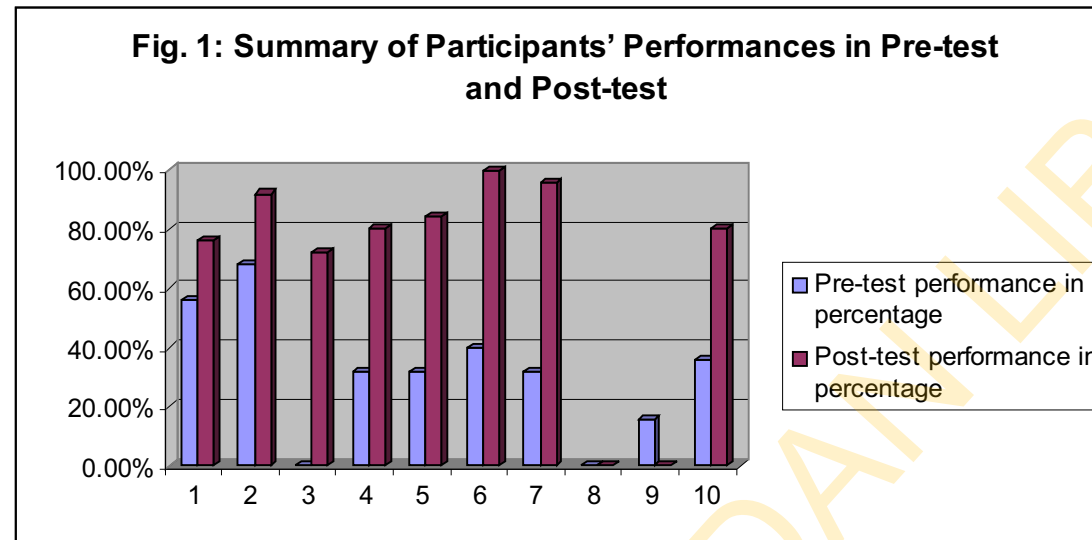
Pre-field Tasks

In preparation for the pilot study as part of the training, the participants were guided on some activities that enhanced their knowledge of media audience research. Such pre-field activities, which were held between 27 and 28 of April 2018, included the following:

· **Definition of Research Problem/Gap**

The participants were guided on how to identify the knowledge gap (the need to do audience research for *Splash FM*). The problem/gap guided us to develop the research instruments.

· **Development of Audience Research Tools/Instruments**

The participants were guided to develop the research tools (i.e. data collection instruments that were used on the field. These included two survey questionnaires (Structured and unstructured).

· **Distribution of Tasks**

Tasks were distributed among the participants according to their skills and preferences. For instance, some of the participants were assigned to search for literature to do the introduction, while some were asked to write the introduction, brief literature and profile of *Splash FM*. Eight of the participants volunteered to participate in the fieldwork.

Data Collection

Participants were first guided on how to go to the field and collect data from respondents who were audiences of *Splash FM*. Eight of the participants actively took part in the data collection exercise, which lasted for three days (30/04/2018 to 2/05/2018). Participants were monitored on the field as they collected data. Data were collected from six local governments randomly selected across the 11 local governments of the metropolitan and rural sections of Ibadan City. The local governments are *Ibadan North, Ibadan North-West*, and *Ibadan South-West* from the urban section, *Egbeda, Ona-Ara,* and *Lagelu* from the rural section of the city (more details on sampling techniques employed, the sample size and data collection are presented in the main report of the study). Those participants that took part in the data collection were given food and transport allowances according to the distance of the local governments they covered and the number of days they were able to participate.

Sorting, Coding and Analysis of Data

Given the limited time, we engaged the service of a professional analyst to do the sorting, coding and analysis of the data. However, some of the participants, who were not on duty on those three days (3/04/2018 to 5/05/2018) for which the exercise lasted, were asked to understudy the analyst. Some of the participants assisted the analyst. This enabled them to have the practical experience of data sorting, coding and analysis.

Writing, Editing and Proofreading of Reports

The participants were guided on how to report their findings: These tasks lasted for two days (6/05/2018 to 7/05/2018). Emphasis was placed on the scholarly style that ensures *clarity, accuracy, simplicity, completeness, objectivity* and *grammatical correctness*. Some of the participants were, asked to prepare the draft, which I eventually tweaked, fine-tuned, edited and proofread to have the final report.

Debriefing

On the final day of the exercise, I called a meeting to have a conversational session with the participants to review the whole research exercise. At the meeting, we shared and reviewed some issues that came up during the fieldwork. After this, I shared the final report with the participants. The aim here was to take the participants

through the various stages and components of a report as we had discussed during the training. The report was used to confirm and demonstrate most of the concepts and components of a good report, which we had examined during the training. This exercise excited the participants as they saw those aspects of report writing that might have appeared abstract to them during the training.

Conclusion

Given the feedback I received from the participants, it was clear that the whole exercise was a great investment. The participants were able to acquire the appropriate skills to conduct independent media audience research to understand the preference, knowledge, interest, and attitude of the audience of their media organisation.

Lessons and Recommendations

Experiences shared by the participants after the training and the study provided some lessons and recommendations that would be useful for media organisations or agencies that might want to conduct similar training and research:

- At the debriefing meeting, the participants expressed some displeasure that during the period of the training, they still had to perform their normal duties in their station. They confessed that this phenomenon created some stress for them and somehow affected their commitment to the training. It is, therefore, recommended that if this type of training is to be organised by any media organization or agency, the organisers/sponsors should appeal to the employers of the trainees to exempt the participating employees from any form of work or be given a short leave to cover the period of the training.

- The participants were not lodged; they had to come from their different home every day during the training. This caused some distractions and some occasional delays during the training. The participants said they would have preferred to be provided hotel accommodations throughout the training. It is recommended that in case of similar training in the future, participants should be lodged in a hotel or facility far from their station. This will generate a sense of commitment and allow the participants to be free from any form of distractions.

· The participants disclosed that what they witnessed and discovered during the data collection further enabled them to understand their audience better in terms of preferences, attitudes, knowledge, and media content consumption patterns. It is recommended that media organisations should organise capacity training for their staff and engage them in audience research as this would take them closer to their audience.

Participants' Fieldwork Experiences

The participants were asked to document their experiences during the fieldwork. Contributions from six of the participants that were involved in the fieldwork are presented below.

Ona Ara local government was assigned to Abidemi Yusuf and Abiodun Adewole. We administered 70 copies of the questionnaires for two days, that is, 1st and 2nd of May 2018. The challenges faced on the field were due to semi-literates who needed assistance in filling the questionnaires. This in a way slowed us down, but so far so good, the fieldwork was fun for me because my job exposed me to people in that category already. Getting to know people and making them talk freely. It also helped me to understand the local government area strengths and weaknesses. I thank the EU and IMS for the opportunity to participate in the training. (**Abidemi Yusuf)**

……………………………………………………………

We collected data at Ona-Ara Local Government of Oyo state. The first and second of May, 2018 were the data collection days for Abidemi Yusuf and me. We visited different places within the LG such as Olorunsogo, Saawia, Tioya, and Oremeji. The field experience was a lesson because we gained more knowledge, but it was somehow stressful as some people refused participation at the point of approach. Some insisted not to take part because there was no monetary incentive, while one had to explain repeatedly before some could understand the questionnaire. Above all, we thank God for the success of the exercise and safe journey. Thanks and best regards (**Abiodun Adewole)**

……………………………………………………………

My experience during the just concluded fieldwork was tedious as it took us two days (30th of April and 1st of May 2018) to complete the exercise. Administering the instrument at the rural area I covered was beyond my expectation as my partner (David Bello) and I had to persuade our respondents at some point to fill the Questionnaire, coupled with the distance between the two local government areas assigned to us, namely Egbeda and Lagelu Local Government **(Femi Ojo)**

....

Alongside Oluwaseun Akinola, Ebby Dickinson, Michael Olatunbosun and a few volunteers, we set out on Monday, the 30th of April and Tuesday, the 1st of May 2018, to the assigned local government areas. Due to the specificity of our questionnaires, we had to rely on available sampling as there were three major hurdles to surmount before administering them the questionnaire to the participants.

- Do you listen to radio?

- Do you listen to Splash FM?

- Do you listen to political programmes on Splash FM?

After crossing these hurdles, language posed another challenge as more often than not, we resorted to a face-to-face method and written translation in what turned out to be semi-structured questionnaires. I would suggest that in future, the preponderance of a Yoruba-speaking audience should weigh in heavily, with provisions made to that effect, so as not to exclude a substantial chunk of our target audience. I have since developed much admiration for field researchers as it is indeed an onerous task and also learnt that to avoid the chasm of one-way communication, media professionals should often engage in media-audience research. **(Olufunmilola M. Meduteni).**

....

My experience was a combination of stress and fun. Fun because l longed for what audience research is all about. It was quite stressful getting to beg/convince people to fill the questionnaires. More so, the topic was limited to a certain group of people. Working under the sun was not funny, and being rejected, too. I worked with Seun Akinola and Lola Meduteni and we covered lbadan South West and lbadan North (**Ebby Dickinson)**

....

I went on the fieldwork with Lola Medureni and Ebby Dickinson. We covered Ibadan North and Ibadan South West Local Governments within the metropolis for two days, while I did some work on the third day at the University of Ibadan and Agbowo area. The challenges were many: from the unco-operative attitudes of some respondents to the inadequacy of time. Some respondents were demanding incentives before they could respond to the material. It was a bit interesting and I realized how tedious it is to gather information from the public (**Oluwaseun Akinola)**

The foregoing testimonies from the participants show that doing audience research is both fulfilling and challenging. Like any other social science research, audience research requires rigour, purposefulness and the right skills.

CHAPTER
5

FROM THE FIELD:
EVIDENCE OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY
BROADCAST JOURNALISTS

After the training for the staff of Splash FM, Ibadan, they were sent to the field to collect data.

In this section, we present the Executive Summary of the study, the methodology adopted, and the findings. We provide this section to serve as a guide for researchers who may desire to conduct audience research in a setting similar to the one in this study.

Executive Summary

The duty of protecting democratic ideals rests disproportionately on the radio because a large part of the country's population resides in a rural area, with limited access to other forms of media of communication. Assessment of how radio serves the political process becomes imperative because of the important role it plays in correlating the urban and the metropolitan parts of a city. This audience assessment research focused on *Splash FM*, a regional radio station located in Ibadan, Nigeria, featuring political programmes that were believed to be popular among the audience, and connect them to the metropolitan and grassroots sections of Oyo State, Nigeria.

The study location is Ibadan where Splash FM is located and all its listeners in the location constituted the study population. The survey method was adopted with 420 copies of a structured questionnaire administered on listeners of Splash FM drawn from three metropolitan (*Ibadan North, Ibadan North-West*, and *Ibadan South-West*) and three rural (*Egbeda, Ona-Ara,* and *Lagelu*) Local Government Areas of Ibadan.

With 366 validly completed copies of the questionnaire retrieved, the retrieval rate achieved is 86.5%.

The findings of the study reveal that the listenership of the political programmes on *Splash FM* is not a preserve of the natives of the Yoruba speaking states of the South West Nigeria where the station is located. Contrary to logical expectation, the political programmes presented in the English language are found to be more popular than some programmes presented in the Yoruba language both in the rural and metropolitan locations. The political programmes are rated high by the audience in terms of fairness and objectivity of the political views they express. The programmes are rated moderately high also on inclusion of views of men and women, young people, people living with disabilities, young and upcoming politicians, smaller political parties, and people with little financial might.

It is concluded, therefore, that, in the estimation of the audience, *Splash FM* fared well in servicing the political process in Oyo State. Nevertheless, it is noted that the assessment was conducted many months away from general elections. As a result, the station might be experiencing at that moment minimal pressure from powerful politicians. It is recommended that the station devises a means of responding to political pressure in such a way that will not compromise the objectivity and fairness which endear its political programmes to the audience.

Background and Rationale

Splash FM, Ibadan, typifies a regional radio station in Nigeria with political programmes that were believed to be popular among the audience, and connect them at the metropolitan and grassroots sections of Oyo State, Nigeria. Being the first private radio station in Oyo State, it is believed that Splash FM would have a large audience base across the state. Therefore, focusing on the station (Splash FM), this study examined audiences' perception and rating of the radio stations to establish how the radio station fared in servicing the political system in the State. The study sought to answer the following question: *How has the Splash FM Ibadan fared in its reportage of political matters in Oyo State*? This question was answered concerning the performance of the radio station in terms of fairness and balance (objectivity); the extent of ownership influence in reporting political news; gender balance; and inclusiveness of political reportage to cater for the young and the elderly people, and the People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) especially at the periods before, during and after elections. Findings from this study would serve as empirical references for

the Management of Splash FM to understand audiences of the station in terms of their preferences, attitudes, and indifferences. Therefore, the station would be better informed as to what it should do to perform.

Method and Materials

The descriptive survey method was adopted for the study. The decision to adopt survey was informed by the objective of the study, which was to gather information from the audience of Splash FM, Ibadan primarily to establish their assessment of the radio station's performance in reporting political issues in the state. The population for the study were listeners of Splash FM in Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State. The study was restricted to Ibadan because of limited time at the disposal of the researchers. However, this restriction would not compromise the quality and validity of the findings from the study because, apart from being a culturally diverse city hosting Nigerians of different socio-ethnic and cultural backgrounds, all the Local Governments in Ibadan from where the respondents were drawn, are relatively proximate to Splash FM and were believed to have a majority of radio listeners receiving signals from Splash FM.

The respondents for the study were selected from six out of eleven (11) Local Governments in Ibadan. To ensure the spread and representativeness of the sample from the six Local Governments, we first grouped all the local governments in Ibadan into two categories - **metropolitan** and **rural**. We used simple random balloting (without replacement) technique to select the six Local Governments. This technique was used to achieve the principle of *Equal Probability Selection Method* (EPSM) where each of the 11 Local Governments stood an equal chance of being selected. Eventually, we selected three (3) Local Governments (*Ibadan North, Ibadan North-West*, and *Ibadan South-West*) from the urban section and three Local Governments (*Egbeda, Ona-Ara,* and *Lagelu*) from the rural section of the city.

To determine the sample size, we adopted *Raosoft* online sample size calculator (Raosoft.com, 2018). We used a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. This generated 385 as the minimum recommended size of a survey in a large population (see *Appendix IV* for details of population sizes of Ibadan and its Local Governments). We added 10% of 385 to the generated sample (385), which gave us 423. We, therefore, divided 423 by six, which is the number of randomly selected Local Governments in Ibadan. Through a random sampling technique, we assigned

70 copies to three Local Governments, and 71 copies to the three others. To select the respondents, we combined the purposive (judgemental) and available sampling techniques. Only available respondents who said that they listened to Splash FM were considered for the study. Two sets of instruments—*structured questionnaire and unstructured questionnaire*—were constructed to collect data from the respondents. We administered 70 copies of the structured questionnaire in Ibadan North-West, Egbeda and Lagelu Local Government, while we administered 71 copies in Ibadan North, Ibadan South-West and Ona-Ara Local Governments. However, we could not retrieve all the copies administered because of the large terrain of the Local Governments and the fact that most of the respondents were met outside their homes. Table 5.1 below shows the distributions of how copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved. Only 14 copies of the unstructured questionnaire were administered and retrieved. The unstructured questionnaire was used to generate qualitative data that we used to complement the quantitative data generated through the structured questionnaire. Data were analysed through simple Percentage while results are presented in tables and charts in the following section.

Table 5.1: Distribution and Retrieval of Questionnaire Copies According to Local Governments

CATEGORY	LOCAL GOVT	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES DISTRIBUTED	NUMBER OF QUESTIONNAIRES RETRIEVED	PERCENTAGE OF RETRIEVAL SUCCESS
URBAN	Ibadan North	71	61	85.9%
	Ibadan North West	70	52	74.3%
	Ibadan South West	71	59	83.1%
RURAL	Egbeda	70	56	80.0%
	Ona-Ara	71	71	100%
	Lagelu	70	67	95.7%
TOTAL (Average %)		423	366	86.5%%

Results

First, the demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented. Then, the substantive results are presented in line with the major focus areas of the study objectives: fairness and balance (objectivity), and extent of ownership influence in reporting political news; gender balance; and inclusiveness of political reportage to cater for the young and the elderly people, and the People Living with Disabilities (PLWD).

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are disaggregated according to their religions, gender, state of origin, and age. Details of these demographic components are presented in Figures 5.1 to 5.3 and Table 5.2.

Fig 5.1: Distribution of Respondents by Religions
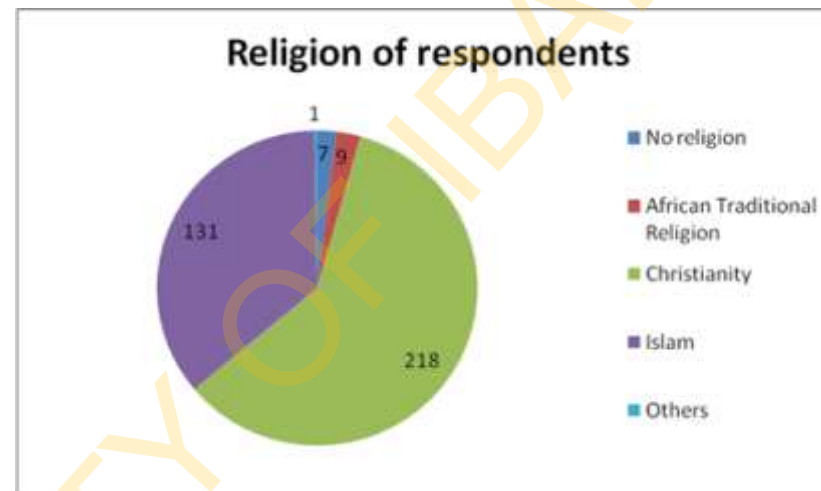
Most of the respondents are Christians (n =218; 59.6%) and Muslims (n =131; 35.8%) in that order. Only 2.5% of the respondents belong to the African Traditional Religions.

Fig 5.2: Distribution of Respondents by Age
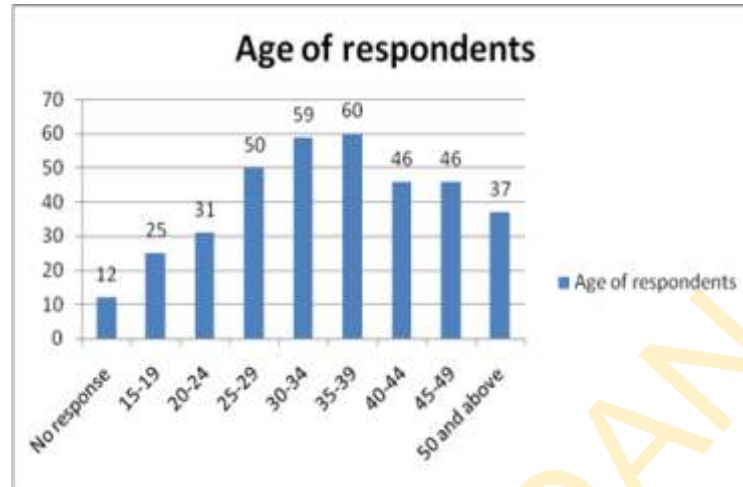
The respondents' ages are distributed across categories. The two younger categories of 15-19 and 20-24 recorded the lowest respondents at 6.8% and 8.5% respectively.

Fig 5.3: Distribution of Respondents by Sex
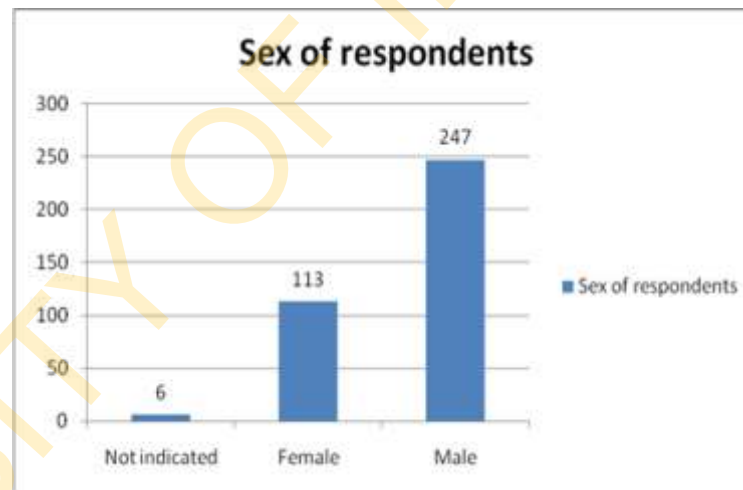
The respondents were predominantly male constituting more than half (n=247; 67.5%) of the sample, compared to the female respondents (n=113; 30.9%). What could account for more male respondents was the fact that data were collected on the streets, not in the households. And, naturally, in this part of the country, more men are likely to be on the streets to work and provide for their families, while more women are likely to be at home.

Table 5.2: State of Origin of Respondents

State	Frequency	Percentage
Abia	4	1.1
Akwa-Ibom	3	.8
Anambra	3	.8
Cross River	1	.3
Delta	7	1.9
Ebonyi	2	.5
Edo	4	1.1
Ekiti	17	4.6
Enugu	5	1.4
Ghana	1	.3
Imo	7	1.9
Kaduna	3	.8
Kano	1	.3
Kogi	8	2.2
Kwara	8	2.2
Lagos	7	1.9
Nasarawa	1	.3
Ogun	31	8.5
Ondo	12	3.3
Osun	41	11.2
Oyo	185	50.5
Rivers	2	.5
No response	13	3.6
Total	366	100.0

Respondents were predominantly from Yoruba speaking states, especially Oyo State. This trend could be attributed to the fact that Splash FM is located in Oyo State, which is one of the Yoruba-speaking states of South-western Nigeria.

Listenership Pattern and Preference for Political Programmes

We tried to establish respondents' patterns of listening to Splash FM and their preferences for the station's political programmes. To do this, we asked the respondents to identify political programmes they listened to, the programmes they preferred most, and reasons for their preferences. These results are presented in Tables 5.3 to 5.5, and Figure 5.4.

Table 5.3: Listenership of Political Programmes on Splash FM

Programme	Frequency	Percentage
TheConversation	115	20.4%
Talking Point	129	22.8%
Oro Sunnunkun	109	19.3%
Ijoba-Ibile	65	11.5%
Bosenlo	79	14.0%
Yemi Sonde Live	68	12.0%
Total number of responses	565	100.0%

The two English programmes are more popular than Yoruba programmes (see Table 5.3). *Talking Point* is the most popular political programme with 22.8% listenership while *Oro Sunnukun* is the most popular Yoruba political programme with 19.3% listenership.

Fig 5.4: Most Preferred Political Programmes
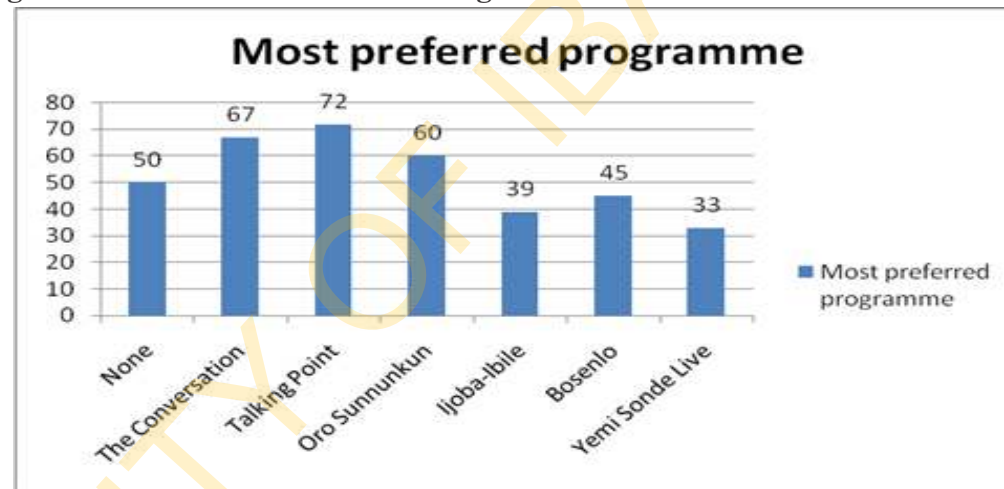
Consistent with their popularity, finding presented in Fig. 4 shows that the two English political programmes on Splash FM topped the list of audience's most preferred political programmes with *Talking Point* attracting the highest frequency (n=72; 19.7%). Also, *Oro Sunnunkun* is the most preferred Yoruba political programme on Splash FM with 16.4% (n=60).

Table 5.4: Disaggregation of Respondents' Preference for Programmes by Local Government

Programme	Egbeda	Lagelu	Ona Ara	Rural Total	Ibadan North	Ibadan South West	Ibadan North West	Urban Total
The Conversation	12	14	8	**34**	13	12	8	**33**
Talking Point	11	15	8	**34**	15	11	12	**38**
Oro Sunnunkun	9	7	11	**27**	11	14	8	**33**
Ijoba-Ibile	9	8	6	**23**	9	7	0	**16**
Bosenlo	6	6	17	**29**	8	4	4	**16**
Yemi Sonde Live	0	8	10	**18**	4	6	5	**15**
None	9	9	11	**29**	1	5	15	**21**

As presented in Table 5.4, the two English programmes were considered most preferred by the comparable number of respondents from rural and urban locations. However, more respondents in urban (n=33) than rural (n=27) locations indicated Oro Sunnunkun as the most-preferred political programme on Splash FM.

Fig. 5.5: Overall best political programme on Splash FM as rated by respondents
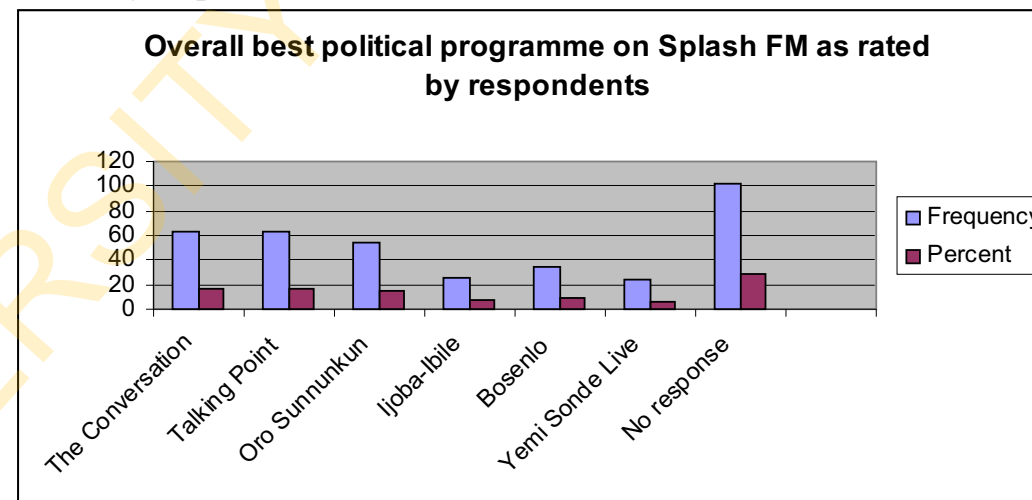
As shown in Fig. 5.5, the two English programmes (*The Conversation* and *The Talking Point*) were rated as overall best by the respondents who responded in agreement with the preferred programmes they indicated earlier. All other programmes also maintained the same position as they did in the preference indicated by the respondents.

Table 5.5: Reasons for Respondents' Preference for the Programmes

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Personality of presenter	65	17.8
Integrity of Splash FM	65	17.8
Quality of programme	147	40.2
Clear signals from the station	31	8.5
Integrity of Splash FM & Programme quality	4	1.1
Presenter's personality & Clear station signal	T	NKV
Presenter's personality & Integrity of Splash FM	5	NKQ
Presenter's personality, Programme quality & `lear station signal	Q	NKN
fntegrity of pplash cj C `lear station signal	8	OKO
Presenter's personality, Integrity of Splash FM & `lear station signal	N	KP
Presenter's personality, Integrity of Splash FM & Programme quality	N	KP
Programme quality & Clear station signal	4	1.1
Presenter's personality & Programme quality	6	1.6
All	1	.3
Others	9	2.5
None/no response	8	2.2
Total	366	100.0

In Table 5.5 above, for those who selected a single reason, quality of the programme (n=147; 40.2%) is the most prominent reason for respondents' preference of political programmes on Splash FM. Clear signal from station is the least (n=31; 8.5%), while personality of presenter and integrity of station attracted equal number of responses (n=65; 17.8%).

Fairness and Balance (objectivity)

By fairness and balance, we meant the extent to which the radio station accounts for all political matters and caters for the interests all the political parties and groups

without showing a bias for one side at the expense of other groups. The two variables of fairness and balance define the extent of objectivity maintained by the radio station. Findings here are presented in Tables 5.6 to 5.8, and Figure 5.6.

Table 5.6: While reporting Elections and Other Political Matters, Splash FM Balances the Interests of All Political Parties

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	121	33.1
Agree	124	33.9
Undecided	29	7.9
Disagree	47	12.8
Strongly disagree	15	4.1
No response	30	8.2
Total	366	100.0

Those who believed to varying degrees that the views expressed on the political programmes hosted by Splash FM are not biased in favour of any political party are the majority (67.0%). Those who believed to varying degrees that the views expressed on the programmes are skewed in favour of certain political parties constituted 16.9% of the total respondents (see Table 5.6).

Fig 5.6: Amount of attention Splash FM devotes to views of political parties other than APC and PDP
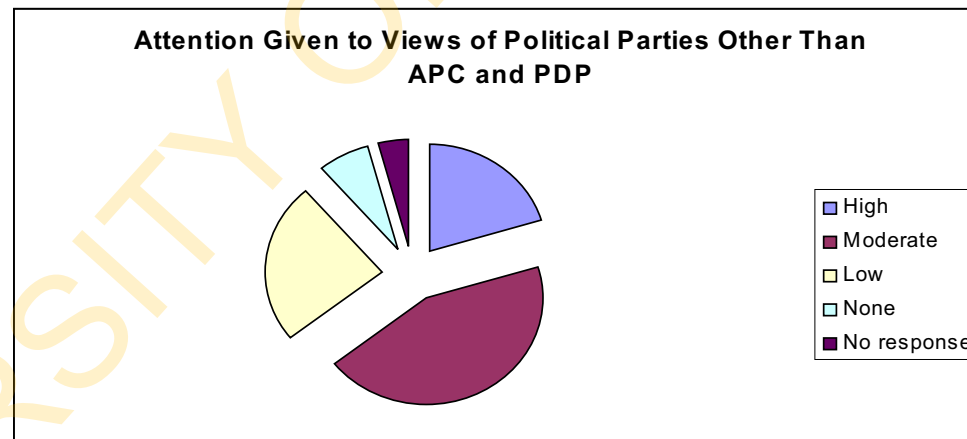
Figure 5.6 shows that majority of the respondents did not believe that the political programmes on Splash FM were dominated by APC and PDP, the two major political parties in the country. While 20.2% of the respondents indicated that the

programmes gave a high level of attention to other less popular political parties, 44.3% indicated that such parties enjoyed a moderate level of attention on the programmes. Only 7.4% of the respondents indicated that such parties enjoyed no attention on the programmes, while 4.1% did not answer the question.

Table 5.7: Ethnic Bias and Political Partisanship in Political Programmes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	77	21.0
No	183	50.0
Not sure	97	26.5
No response	9	2.5
Total	366	100.0

Many of the respondents (50%), as shown in Table 5.7, were of confidence that the presenters of the political programmes were not biased in favour of any politician, political party or ethnic group. While 21.0% of the respondents indicated that the presenters were biased, 26.5% were not sure about this notion. Only 2.5% of the respondents did not answer this question.

Table 5.8: Respondents' Views on Presenters' Direction of Partisanship

Response	Frequency	Percentage
APC	70	28.3
PDP	10	4.0
APC & PDP	7	2.8
Other parties	3	1.2
Unbiased	132	53.4
Undecided	25	10.1
	247	100

Majority of the respondents (53.4%) indicated that the views presenters expressed on the programmes were not in favour of any political party (see Table 5.8). They used words such as 'balanced' and 'neutral to describe the views of the presenters. While 28.3% of the respondents indicated that the presenters were biased in favour of the ruling party APC, only 4.0% indicated that the bias was in favour of the main opposition party PDP. Those who indicated that the presenters favoured political parties other than APC and PDP were 1.2%, while those who indicated that the presenters served the interests of both APC and PDP were only 2.8%.

The extent of ownership influence in reporting political news

Apart from measuring the level of objectivity of Splash FM in reporting political matters, we also found out how the listeners perceived influence of ownership factor on reportage of political issues by the radio station. Finding that established this is presented in Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9: Respondents' Views on the Notion that Splash FM Does Not Allow Interest of the Owners to Influence How it Reports Political Matters

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	91	24.9
Agree	124	33.9
Undecided	39	10.7
Disagree	76	20.8
Strongly disagree	29	7.9
No response	7	1.9
Total	366	100.0

A simple majority (58.8%) of the respondents believed that ownership interest did not influence the views that were expressed on the political programmes hosted by Splash FM. Those who disagreed to varying degrees constituted 28.7% of the total respondents, those who are undecided about the issue constituted 10.7%, and those who did not respond to the question constituted 1.9%.

Also, qualitative responses generated through the unstructured questionnaire provide further insights into audience assessment of Splash FM. For example, while providing their assessment of the radio station, one of the respondents said that *"political programmes of Splash FM are great. They inform the populace of political happenings in Oyo State and around the world"*. Another respondent provided a similar verdict saying that *"political programmes of Splash FM are the best in Ibadan because of the fairness of their reportage"*. The aspect of ownership influence also reflected as a respondent asserted that *"they (Splash FM) have excellent and unbiased political programmes and they are not under any influence"*.

However, Splash FM was not regarded as a perfect media entity. The respondents identified some inadequacies about the station. For example, the respondents seemed to be unanimous in their verdict about limited-time the station gave to the audience to

participate through phone calls. A respondent explained that "terminating phone calls when people are reacting to trending or burning issues" is a major weakness of the radio station. This was supported by another respondent with a similar verdict: "Anytime I tried to call in during the programme, the call didn't go through". Another respondent provided a similar but more critical view: "they (Splash FM) do not probe most of the political parties and anytime they are interviewing them, they hardly give people access to ask them (politicians) questions."

Inclusiveness of political reportage: Gender and People Living with Disabilities

We also examined how Splash FM accommodated gender and people living with disabilities. The results are presented in Tables 5.10 to 5.16 below.

Table 5.10: Respondents' Views on the Notion that Political Programmes on Splash FM Balance the Attention They Give to Views of Men and Women

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	127	34.7
Agree	200	54.6
Undecided	8	2.2
Disagree	21	5.7
Strongly disagree	7	1.9
No response	3	.8
Total	366	100.0

Most of the respondents agreed that political programmes on Splash FM balance the attention they give to views of men and women. Only three respondents (0.8%) did not respond to this question, while those who were undecided, disagreed or strongly disagreed were 36 (9.8%). Those who gave positive responses to this question are 327 (89.3%).

Table 5.11: Respondents' Views on the Notion that Political Programmes on Splash FM Feature Equal Number of Male and Female Guests

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	16.4
Agree	166	45.4
Undecided	47	12.8
Disagree	77	21.0
Strongly disagree	10	2.7
No response	6	1.6
Total	366	100.0

Majority of the respondents (61.8%) indicated that political programmes on Splash FM give equal opportunity to men and women to feature as guests. The level of disagreement expressed by the respondents is also high at 23.7% with 12.8% undecided.

Table 5.12: Respondents' Views on the Notion that Political Programmes on Splash FM Invite People Living with Disabilities as Guests

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	42	11.5
Agree	144	39.3
Undecided	76	20.8
Disagree	70	19.1
Strongly disagree	21	5.7
No response	13	3.6
Total	366	100.0

When asked whether political programmes invite people living with disabilities as guests, only half of the respondents (50.8%) responded in the affirmative. The rest of the respondents disagreed (24.8), were undecided (20.8%) or did not respond to the question (3.6%).

Table 5.13: Respondents' Views on the Notion that Political Programmes on Splash Discuss Issues Relating to Political Participation of People Living with Disabilities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	57	15.6
Agree	160	43.7
Undecided	53	14.5
Disagree	68	18.6
Strongly disagree	16	4.4
No response	12	3.3
Total	366	100.0

About 60% of the respondents indicated that political programmes on Splash FM discuss issues relating to the political participation of people living with disabilities. However, the level of disagreement is also high at 23% with 14.5% undecided and 3.3% of no response.

Table 5.14: Amount of Attention Splash FM Devotes to Political Views of Young People

Response	Frequency	Percentage
High	117	32.0
Moderate	199	54.4
Low	32	8.7
None	14	3.8
No response	4	1.1
Total	366	100.0

Respondents expressed moderate (54.4%) to high (32.0%) level of awareness of inclusion of the views of young people in the political programmes hosted by Splash FM. Only 8.7% of the respondents expressed a contrary view, 3.8% indicated that the programmes gave no attention to the political views of young people, while only 1.1% did not respond to the question.

Table 5.15: Amount of Attention Splash FM Devotes to Views of Young and Upcoming Politicians

Response	Frequency	Percentage
High	122	33.3
Moderate	176	48.1
Low	46	12.6
None	15	4.1
No response	7	1.9
Total	366	100.0

Views of young and upcoming politicians were considered highly (33.3%) and moderately (48.1%) included on the programmes by the majority of the respondents. Few respondents (12.6%) indicated the level of inclusion of views of young and upcoming politicians was low; 4.1% thought that those views were not included at all, while only 1.9% did not indicate any response.

Table 5.16: Inclusion of People with Weak Financial Strength

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	210	57.4
No	61	16.7
Not sure	85	23.2
No response	10	2.7
Total	366	100.0

Majority of the respondents (57.4%) agreed that the programmes give access to individuals and groups irrespective of their financial strength. Only 16.7% of the respondents disagreed with this position; 23.2% were not sure whether financial strength determined access to the programmes; while 2.7% ignored the question.

Discussion

Listenership of the political programmes on *Splash FM* is not a preserve of the natives of the Yoruba speaking states of the South West, Nigeria, where the station is located. Indigenes of states outside the South West also listen to the programmes. Contrary to logical expectation, the political programmes presented in the English language are found more popular than the ones presented in Yoruba language both in the rural and metropolitan locations. It is also important to note that the quality of programmes is the respondents' most important attraction to the political programmes on *Splash FM*. Analysis of political personalities, issues, and events by

the presenters of the programmes was considered fair and objective by the respondents. The respondents considered ownership influence on such views to be minimal. Evidence of overbearing ownership influence found in media operations (Ojebode, 2009; Ojebuyi, 2014; Omenugha, 2013) is scarce in audience assessment of political programming on *Splash FM*. These findings reveal that being a privately owned for-profit radio station does not prevent *Splash FM* from serving the democratic process. In other words, profit orientation is not antithetical to democratically useful political programming on the radio (Cushion, 2018).

Also, respondents' ratings of the inclusiveness of the political programmes on *Splash FM* vary. In terms of gender balance, the respondents rated *Splash FM* high. The respondents believed that the programmes entertain views of men and women on political issues and invite both men and women as guests. The respondents believed that people living with disabilities were moderately included in the programmes and their political participation was discussed on the programmes. As the respondents noted, political views of young people were entertained and the programmes gave young and upcoming politicians platforms to present their views to the public. Qualitative responses from the audience also confirm this as one of the respondents noted that "**:** it (the Station) balances its political programmes". That conclusion is logically consistent with the belief of the respondents that the political programmes give politicians media access irrespective of their financial strength. The level of inclusion that the respondents reported exists in *Splash FM* political programmes is higher than that which scholars reported exists in other media, especially newspapers.

Conclusion

Moderate followership of the political programmes on *Splash FM* exists in rural and metropolitan parts of Ibadan, Oyo State capital. The high level of inclusion reported by the respondents is a practice that should be promoted by other stations. The reason is that unbiased and inclusive media can serve the democratic process better than the one that compromises fairness and objectivity. It should be noted, however, that this assessment was conducted about a year away from general elections. The pressure which powerful politicians and political institutions exert on media stations tend to increase as election approaches. The important question, which is outside the scope of this assessment, is this: will *Splash FM* be able to sustain this level of balance,

fairness, and inclusion in the face of increased political pressure? It is recommended that the station devise a means of responding to political pressure in such a way that will not compromise the objectivity and fairness which endear its political programmes to the audience. An example of such could be that an edition of a programme which intends to address a controversial political issue should balance the representation of politicians from all sides of the political divide as much as possible. Peace and solution-oriented approach to political programming should be considered as an alternative to the attack - journalism approach.

CHAPTER
6

WRAP-UP

As we conclude our discussions in this guidebook, we need to remember that doing audience research is a process that involves different stages and activities that are sequentially connected. It is a cycle that must be completed. To do a typical audience research, the following activities must be completed at the appropriate stages as follows:

- **Identification of Problem**: You must first identify the necessity for the research; why are we doing the study? Why is the study necessary? If we do the study, what does the media organisation for whom the study is to be conducted stand to gain? What does the organisation stand to lose if the study is not done? Answers to the foregoing questions are imperative before we begin the study.

- **Research Design**: This has to do with the exact research approach to employ. Are we using a qualitative or a quantitative approach, or a combination of the two approaches? What specific research methods are we using (survey, focus group discussion (FGD), in-depth interviews, field observation, case study, etc.)? Choosing the research design and research methods is not arbitrary: it must be guided by the objective and nature of the study, and the category of the audience as the study population. For example, if our objective in a study is to provide explanations for preference for a particular development programme on our radio station by the farmers at the grassroots, the qualitative research design (e.g. FGD, in-depth interviews or case study) would be appropriate. On the other hand, if we want to use listenership to rate the popularity of radio stations in Lagos metropolis, the quantitative design (e.g. survey) would be relevant.

- **Development of Research Instrument(s)**: After choosing the appropriate research design, we must develop the instruments for data collection. The instruments could be a questionnaire, observation guide, content categorisation (coding sheet), or FGD/interview guides. Apart from the research method(s), another factor we must consider while selecting and developing the research instruments is the nature of the study population. The language and format of the instrument(s) must be suitable for the socio-demographic peculiarities of the study population.

- **Selection of Sample for the Study**: As we have already explained in the previous sections, it is not always desirable for the researcher to attempt to study the whole population especially in media audience research where the population is usually fairly large. What we do is to select some members of the audience to serve as the representatives of the study population. It is the sample that we include in the study, and through whom we generalise on the whole population. To select the sample, we can employ the probability or the non-probability methods as already explained in the previous sections.

- **Data Collection (Fieldwork)**: At this stage, we go to the field to administer our research instruments to the study participants in their natural places of work or residences. As we do this, we must be guided by our sampling method(s) to approach the appropriate participants. Successful data collection requires resilience and good interpersonal communication skills.

- **Returning from Fieldwork and Cleaning up of Data**: After collecting the data, we must return to our research base where we clean up the data. We check to see how much data we were able to collect; how many copies of the questionnaire were administered and how many were successfully returned, etc. We separate clean copies of the questionnaire from voids to know the actual amount of data we are processing.

- **Data Processing and Analysis**: Until we process the data, they are a useless jumble of information. So, we need to sort, code, enter and analyse the data using the appropriate tools or software. The tools to use are determined by the nature of the data (quantitative or qualitative). If the data is quantitative, we may use descriptive statistics or inferential statistics. If the data is qualitative, we may use emerging data techniques to establish the inherent themes.

- **Presentation and Discussion of Findings**: The results of the study must be presented in the format that makes meaning to the layman. Therefore, we must use the appropriate graphic tools (tables, charts, graphs, etc.) to present the findings—especially the quantitative findings. After, this, we must interpret the findings in the language that communicates the message. All statistical values must be explained in layman language. For qualitative data, texts or quotes must be presented. The final thing is to discuss the findings to show how they address the problem we identified or the questions we raised at the beginning of the study. The discussion must also interrogate existing scholarly works and draw inferences that need further interpretations. For instance, if findings of a study show that only two out every ten viewers that call in during a TV programme are women, what inference can we draw from this? Does it suggest that women do not like the programme or women do not like to contribute to discussions on TV through phone calls? Is the pattern peculiar to that socio-cultural setting where the study is conducted, or it confirms what exists in the larger cultural context? How does this affect the effectiveness of the programme on the general society? What is the level of gender balance and inclusiveness of the discussion through telephone calls? What implications does this have for the commercial drive of the TV station?

Finally, we must be familiar with the accepted format for presenting the report of our study. This is also crucial as bad presentation could dwarf the substance of a good study. As a recap, a good report should have four key sections: 1) **Report Preface** (to include Cover Page, Report Title Page, Disclaimer, Table of Contents, and Table of Tables and/or Figures); 2) **Main Report** (including Executive Summary, Background and Objectives, Methodology, and Results); 3) **References/Credits** (list of literature sources consulted); and 4) **Appendixes** (Additional Tables and Charts, Data Analytics, Instruments and Pictures). We must also ensure that all facts and figures we provide in the report are **accurate, clear, complete, simple**, and **objective**.

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APPENDIX 1
TRAINING ON CONDUCT OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH AND SUPERVISION OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH EXERCISE BY STAFF OF SPLASH FM 105, IBADAN
(Wednesday, April 25, to Tuesday, May 8, 2018)

Training Plan and Research Activities (Conceptual Maps)

STAGE & DATE	ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES		ACTORS	LOCATION
Stage 1 (25/4/18-26/4/18)	**Training**	1). **Pre-test:** This will be conducted just before the training commences to measure participants' previous knowledge on media audience research (10 minutes)		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM, Ibadan
		2). **Day One of Training**: Topics to cover are: i. Overview of Media Audience Research ii. The Rationale for Media Audience Research iii. Quantitative Research in Media Audience Research iv. Survey Methods in Media Audience Research v. Understanding Questionnaire Design in Media Audience Research		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM, Ibadan
		3) **Day Two of Training** : Topics to cover are i. Revision of Day 1 Discussions ii. Case Study: Audience Research for a Radio Station iii. Analysing and Presenting Quantitative Data in media audience research iv. Research Report Writing v. Structure of Research Reports		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM, Ibadan
		4) **Post-test:** This will be conducted immediately after the final session of the training to measure the knowledge and skills the participants must have gained from the training.		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM, Ibadan

| Stage 2 (27/04/2018 – 28/04/2018) | 1) **Development of Audience Research Tools/Instruments**

2) **Distribution of Tasks**

3) **Definition of problem**

4) **Brief literature review** | 1) The participants will be guided to develop the research tools (i.e. data collection instruments that participant will deploy while on the field; these will include survey **Questionnaire** and **Focus Group Discussion Guide).**
2) Tasks will be distributed among the participants according to their skills and preferences.
NB: *Given the number of participants (10), and to have a good research report at the end of the exercise, all of the participants will work together as one research team. However, they may be grouped for tasks execution.*
3) The participants will be guided on how to identify the knowledge gap (the need to do audience research so that the Splash FM station gives to the audience what they want and subsequently sustain their loyalty)
4) The participants will be guided on how to review literature, the essence of which is to identify the current trend of argument and research in media audience. | Consultant &Participants | University of Ibadan |
| Stage 3 (30/04/2018 -1/05/2018) | **Data Collection** | Participants will be guided to go to the field and collect data from respondents who are the audience of Splash FM | Consultant &Participants | On the Field (different locations in Ibadan Metropolis) |

Stage 4 (2/04/2018-4/05/2018)	**Sorting and Coding of Data**	• The participants, having returned from the field with the data, will be guided on how to sort and analyse the data using appropriate analytical tools. • We may need the service of a good analyst here to help select the appropriate tools, and analyse the data. • Some participants who have good knowledge and mastery of data analysis will be actively engaged, and they will lead the group.		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM & University of Ibadan
Stage 5 (5/05/2018-6/05/2018)	**Writing of Reports**	• The participants will be guided on how to report their findings: • Emphasis will be placed on the scholarly style that ensures **clarity, accuracy, simplicity, completeness, objectivity** and **grammatical correctness**. • This is to ensure that the report communicates to a wider spectrum of the audience and stakeholders as much as possible.		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM & University of Ibadan
Stage 6 (7/05/2018)	**Submission of Draft Report**	The participants will submit the first draft of the report to the consultant, who will ensure that the report is presented in good language and style.		Consultant &Participants	University of Ibadan
Stage 7 (7/05/2018)	**Correction and Revision**	The consultant will guide the participants to correct and revise the draft report before the final copy is produced.		Consultant &Participants	Splash FM & University of Ibadan
Stage 8 (8/05/2018)	**Submission of Revised Report**	Having revised the draft report based on the advice of the consultant, participants will submit the report, both in print and electronic copies, to the consultant.		Consultant &Participants	University of Ibadan

Stage 9 (8/05/2018)	Debriefing	• The consultant will have a conversational session with the participants to review the research exercise. • This will be done by sharing and reviewing some issues that came up during the research.		Consultant &Participants	University of Ibadan
Stage 10 (9/05/2018)	Submission of Final Reports	The consultant will submit the final research report and other reports of activities to the **Institute for Media and Society** (IMS).		Consultant	University of Ibadan

APPENDIX 2

STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AUDIENCE OF SPLASH FM

Institute for Media and Society & EU- Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria

<u>**Media Audience Research Questionnaire (Structured)**</u>

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to seek information on how *Splash FM* has performed in its coverage of the electoral process in Oyo State. All information gathered shall be used for academic purpose only. You are, therefore, implored to be as honest as possible. Be assured that your opinions shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Please tick ($\sqrt{}$) the appropriate box that best represents your view in each case, where applicable

SECTION A

1. Which of the following political programmes of *Splash FM* do you listen to? You can pick more than one programme.

   a) *The Conversation* [   ] b) *Talking Point* [   ] c) *Oro Sunnunkun*. [   ] d) *Ijoba-Ibile* [   ] e) *Bosenlo* [   ] f) *Yemi Sonde Live* [   ]

2. Which of the political programmes above do you like most? _____

3. Which of the following factors most influences why you listen to the political programme you like most *on Splash FM*?   a) Personality of the presenter(s) [ ].   b) Integrity of *Splash FM* [ ] c) Quality of the programme [   ] d) Clear signals from the station   [   ] e) Others, Specify………………………………………..

SECTION B

Kindly indicate your view on each of the statements in the next table by checking the appropriate boxes [] [Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD), or Undecided (U)].

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD
Political programmes on Splash FM balance the attention they give to views of men and women.					
Political programmes on Splash FM feature the equal number of male and female guests.					
Political programmes on Splash FM invite people living with disabilities as guests					
Political programmes on Splash discuss issues relating to the political participation of people living with disabilities.					
Splash FM does not allow the interest of the owners to influence how it reports political matters					
While reporting elections and other political matters, *Splash FM* balances the interests of all political parties.					

SECTION C
Kindly check the appropriate box [] to indicate the option of your choice.
1. What amount of attention do the programmes give to the views of young people on political issues? a. [ ] High   b. [ ] Moderate   c. [   ] Low   d. [ ] None
2. What amount of attention do the programmes give to the views of young and upcoming politicians? [ ] High   b. [ ] Moderate   c. [ ] Low   d. [ ] None
3. What amount of attention do the programmes give to the views of political parties other than APC and PDP? [ ] High   b. [ ] Moderate   c. [   ] Low   d. [ ] None

4. In your opinion, does Splash FM provide space for people or groups with the weak financial strength to feature on the station's political programmes? a. [ ] Yes   b.[ ] No   c. [ ] Not sure.
5. In your opinion, do the presenters of the political programmes on Splash FM take sides with politicians, political parties, or ethnic groups when discussing political issues? a. [ ] Yes   b.[ ] No   c. [ ] Not sure
6. Which political parties do you think the views of those presenters often support?
   _____
7. Which of the political programmes listed above would you rate as the overall best political programme on *Splash FM*?
   _____
8. Give a reason for your response to question 10.
   _____

SECTION D

12. To which of the following religions do you belong?   a. [ ] African Traditional Religion   b. [ ] Christianity   c. [ ] Islam   d. [ ] Other religions…………………………..   e. [ ] No religion

   13. How old are you (please, state your age in years)? (a) 15-19 [ ] (b) 20-24 [ ] (c) 25-29 [ ] (d) 30-34 [ ] (e) 35-39 [ ] (f) 40-44 [ ] (g) 45-49 [ ] (g) 50 and above [ ]
14. Please indicate your sex   a. [ ] Male   b. [ ] Female
15. What is your state of origin? _____

APPENDIX 3
UNSTRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AUDIENCE OF SPLASH FM
Institute for Media and Society & EU- Support to Democratic Governance in Nigeria
<u>Media Audience Research Questionnaire (Unstructured)</u>

Dear Respondent,
This questionnaire is designed to seek information on how *Splash FM* has performed in its coverage of the electoral process in Oyo State. All information gathered shall be used for academic purpose only. You are, therefore, implored to be as honest as possible. Be assured that your opinions shall be treated with the utmost confidentiality.
Instructions: Please, provide your response in the space provided after each question.

1. Please, give your overall assessment of Splash FM in terms of her political programmes?
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2. Please, state the exact things that you like about how Splash FM treats and reports political
matters…………………………………………………………………………….

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3. What are the things you do not like about how Splash FM treats and reports political matters?

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4. What do you suggest Splash FM should do to improve the way it reports political matters especially before, during and after elections?

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S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	HEADQUARTERS	LOCATION
1.	Ibadan-North	Agodi Gate	URBAN
2.	Ibadan North-West	Onireke	
3.	Ibadan South-West	Oluyole Estate	
4.	Ibadan South-East	Mapo	
5.	Ibadan North-East	Iwo Road	
6.	Oluyole	Idi-Ayunre	RURAL
7.	Ona-Ara	Akanran	
8.	Lagelu	Iyana-Offa	
9.	Egbeda	Egbeda	
10.	Ido	Ido	
11.	Akinyele	Moniya	

APPENDIX 5
LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN IBADAN BY POPULATION SIZE

S/N	LOCAL GOVERNMENT	POPULATION
1.	Ibadan North East	331,444
2.	Ibadan North	308.119
3.	Ibadan North West	154,029
4.	Ibadan South East	266,457
5.	Ibadan South West	283,098
6.	Lagelu	148,133
7.	Oluyole	203461
8.	Ona-Ara	265,571
9.	Ido	104,087
10.	Egbede	283,643
11.	Akinyele	211,811
12.	**TOTAL**	**2,252,042**

Source: National Population Commission (2018). State population. Retrieved from
http://population.gov.ng/

Texts of Responses to Unstructured Questionnaire

QUESTION ONE: Please, give your overall assessment of Splash FM in terms of her political programmes?

Responses:

Respondent 1: Political programmes of splash are fantastic; it answers the questions raised by the audience about the politicians in and outside Oyo State.

Respondent 2: They present good political programmes

Respondent 3: Good

Respondent 4: It gives a concise and truthful clarification of political issues.

Respondent 5: They have excellent and unbiased political programmes and they are not under any influence.

Respondent 6: It balances its political programme.

Respondent 7: Amazing and wonderful.

Respondent 8: Political programme of Splash FM is great. They inform the populace of political happenings in Oyo State and around the world.

Respondent 9: They discuss political issues with explanations and they engage politicians while they also allow people to phone-in during the programmes

Respondent 10: Political programmes of Splash FM are the best in Ibadan because of the fairness of their reportage.

Respondent 11: Splash has been doing so fine in its political programmes.

Respondent 12: Splash FM has vibrant political programmes. Its political programmes are vibrant, dynamic and in-depth.

Respondent 13: Political programme of Splash is good and perfect.

Respondent 14: The electoral coverage of splash is upright

QUESTION TWO: Please, state the exact things that you like about how Splash FM treats and reports political matters.

Responses:

Respondent 1: Their investigative journalism gets me interested in the Splash FM

Respondent 2: Good reporting; balanced programming; balanced interview; opportunity for the non-elite to Participate

Respondent 3: Balanced issues; breaking news; featuring professionals as resource persons

Respondent 4: It educates the audience on political issues all the time

Respondent 5: Fearless and non-sentimental manners of reporting political matters

Respondent 6: Objectivity and balanced reporting

Respondent 7: Splash provides a guide to political issues in the state

Respondent 8: Daily happenings of political happenings; exposure of different politicians (from different political parties) so that the audience will know them better.

Respondent 9: They are not partisan.

Respondent 10: a. detailed approach

b. balanced report

Respondent 11: a. Quick response to political issues

b. Educating people on political matters

c. equal preference to all political parties.

Respondent: 12: a. Balance and fairness in the treatment of political stories

b. Well researched programme

Respondent 13: It keeps the audience informed of the current issues about politics in Oyo State and Nigeria as a whole. It also allows the audience to contribute to political issues and fight for their rights.

Respondent 14: It is unbiased; it is critical and sincere about political issues.

QUESTION THREE: What are the things you do not like about how Splash FM treats and reports political matters?

Responses:

Respondent 1: I have no dislike whatsoever for Splash FM's political matters

Respondent 2: Terminating of the phone call when people are reacting to trending or burning issues.

Respondent 3: None

Respondent 4: None

Respondent 5: Nothing. It is fair

Respondent 6: None

Respondent 7: They do not probe most of the political parties and anytime they are interviewing them, they hardly give people access to ask them (politicians) questions.

Respondent 8: Nothing.

Respondent 9: They need to give room for more political parties to air their views.

Respondent 10: Too many issues are included in a programme. This breaks the flow of issues being discussed.

Respondent 11: Sometimes, they don't want to give the government in power fairness.

Respondent 12: Nothing

Respondent 13: Anytime I tried to call in during the programme, it did go through.

Respondent 14: Splash is not INEC, therefore, they should report only what is in the public domain.

QUESTION 4: What do you suggest Splash FM should do to improve the way it reports political matters especially before, during and after the election?

Responses:

Respondent 1: Splash FM should expand its coverage areas to reach more Nigerians

Respondent 2: It should regularly interview of aspirants; it should conduct of debate for the aspirants; it should review the promises and speeches of the electoral aspirants (who eventually win) after the elections

Respondent 3: They should reach out to the people by getting information for (or from) them; they should give incentives to the reporters

Respondent 4: It should improve its anchors' programmes. It should also increase its personnel.

Respondent 5: They should get ready for criticism and be more professional

Respondent 6: They should try and balance their report any time they report election and political matters.

Respondent 7: a. They should keep inviting the politicians across political parties, ask them questions to reveal their aims to the electorate.

b. They should give no room for supporting a particular political party.

Respondent 8: They should do more research.

Respondent 9: They need to give room for more political parties to air their views.

Respondent 10: None

Respondent 11: Splash FM should collaborate with the electoral body, INEC, and other organisations such as NOA, VON, etc. to adequately inform members of the public.

Respondent 12: There should be more politically termed programme on the station.

Respondent 13: They should allow the masses to speak the truth about what is going on in the political arena in Nigeria because the mass media is the best place to express their views.

Respondent 14: I opine that political issues and electioneering decision is not a sole right of splash FM.

APPENDIX 7
Names of Training Participants

S/N	PARTICIPANT	DIVISION
1.	Seun Akinola	News Anchor, Presenter; *The Conversation*, Insights, Economic Searchlight
2.	David Bello	Statehouse correspondent
3.	Abiodun Adewole	Anchor: Ijoba Ibile, Gbanga Lassa ta, Aditu/Ta lo jebi-Public affairs programme
4.	Femi Ojo	Legislative correspondent
5.	Ebby Dickinson	Anchor: Naija today-Pidgin current affairs show
6.	Bidemi Yusuf	Associate Editor/Reporter
7.	Lola Meduteni	Co-anchor, Morning Splash: Breakfast Show
8.	Victor Pius	Anchor: Sabi your right-Pidgin rights programme
9.	Jacobs Adeyemi	Content Manager/Assistant Programmes manager *Splash FM*
10.	Jibola Akinyefa	Anchor *BOSENLO*: Yoruba current affairs show

APPENDIX 8

PROFILE OF SPLASH 105.5 FM, IBADAN

Splash 105.5 FM is located in Ibadan, the capital city of Oyo State, Nigeria. The radio station is a subsidiary of West Midlands Communications, which was incorporated in 1990. The station was officially commissioned on the 22nd of March 2007, by the then Executive Governor of Oyo State Alhaji Adewolu Ladoja. Known as the most popular (with the largest audience) radio station in the South-west, Splash FM is the first independent radio in Ibadan; and first radio station with a working partnership with the United Nations, and organizers of the first city-wide marathon in Nigeria (IB City Marathon) among others.

In consonance with the alias of Oyo State, its home state (Pace-Setter), Splash FM has proved to be not only a pace-setter but an "agenda-setter", revolutionizing broadcasting in Oyo state by shunning sycophancy and providing a platform for meaningful discourse from dissenting minorities. The appellation, *The Integrity Station*, was rightly earned in recognition of its contribution towards good governance by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission.

As a corporate entity, Splash FM fulfils its Corporate Social Responsibility through charitable events and activities it regularly partakes in. A few of such events are the annually-held Splash FM IB City Marathon and the Splash FM Oratory Contest. The former is a booming enterprise that generates publicity and puts the state on the map, attracts investors and participants from all sectors of the society.