

ECLECTIC MODEL OF BROADCAST PROGRAMMING PROCESS

BY

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Abstract

Content creation is the fundamental of programming process which is ongoing within the broadcast organisation. It determines the planning, identifying, formulating and controlling the typification of programme to be transmitted by such organisation (Radio /TV). This study therefore, attempted an eclectic analysis in formulating a model using the situation of a restaurant and its customers. This implied the aspect of social relations in the programming policy of broadcasting as a part of mass media of communication. This was done with a descriptive method by examining a diagrammatic conceptual framework. Agenda setting theory was used to underscore the essentials of broadcast contents in the process of its value as a menu (programme – type), taste (value) preference. (Uses and gratification), These content at the end are described as broadcast programmes through radio, television and even online channels which the audience consume. This in return, revitalises the programming policy and process of the broadcast organisation which sustains consumers' interests and patronages in the broadcast station.

Keywords: Content creation, Programming Process, Eclectic analysis, diagrammatic conceptual framework, audience consumption.

INTRODUCTION

Communications as a word is the underpinning factor which gives birth to all sorts of communication and information-giving channel. It spans from intra/inter-personal, group, mass to many others as formulated by scholarship has also developed into the word media which includes the so-called mainstream or conventional mass media of communication such as radio, television, and cable TV, then the reigning new media. The latter have also, metamorphosed from the internet to all kinds of websites, social media network, and the electronic (E-) applications. All these so far, have been described as the new distributing technologies, media exchange formal (MXF), and multi-media platforms. They are involved in the emerging characteristics of Internet in forms of interconnectivity, integration, interaction, participation, collaboration, and inter-operationability in the ways these media share, store, browse, archive create, manipulate and retrieve materials, documents or data (Aris and Bughin,2009). The enabling environment so created by computer-mediated

communication system (CMCS) has enhanced all these application giving rise to the wonderful moments of digitisation (conversion) and their involvements in the digitalisation (process). (Trevor 2003, Odetoyinbo, 2015, Boland, 2006 and Moylan, 2009).

Today's era of digital (digitisation and digitalisation) has challenged the business and organisation of mass media communication with particular reference to broadcasting and electronic casting severally. The underscoring concern is now content creation. Content in terms of the gains to be derived by the consumer (audience) when they invest their money and time. It is against this background, that the art and act of planning programmes of various kinds are of great concern to broadcast organisations in the competitive environment of the industry. This art [creative ability] and the act (capability/capability) have always been the determining indices when it comes to the issue of programme planning (programming). This feat is also viewed as a management process which as observed by Odetoyinbo, Odunlami,

Orebiyi, and Adebimpe (2021) that because programming content-based policy

It behoves broadcast status [radio and television] therefore, to adopt strategies which their programme and materials in whatever form from which comes on must not only be good quality, but acceptable by the audience who individually hopes to put them into use, thereby gratify such programme.

The need for the management of broadcast organisations to embark on the planning process of identifying and formulating the appropriate programming policy becomes the predication of this study for construction of a model of broadcast programming process based on eclectic analysis.

Statement of the problem-

The unending inventions in the technological escapades have brought to the fore many innovational breakthrough in the media world of today. These have been realistic and unfolding technological applications in the dissemination of information. These applications in forms of mode of transmission namely terrestrial, satellite, internet, telecommunication, and multi-media, have doubled the effort put in by the various broadcast organisations. This has in return, made the business very competitive to the extent that to survive requires strategic programming policies to acutely effect the standard and qualitative media contents. It is these contents which these stations are out to parade and see as their products for them to survive and remain in business.

Consequently the questions of great concern here are, what the policies in terms of strategic are to embarked upon by the broadcast organisations, how and when (timing factor) to go about the strategies, and importantly the planning process to adopt. These are the under-scoring issues which the model is aimed at proffering solution.

Scope-

The study is predicated upon the need for organisations to be abreast of the various modern distributing technologies. These required that their contents and the value derived by the audience make them to survive in the competitive innovative broadcast industry in Nigeria and the world over. Hence the eclectic model is meant to suggest and of course, bring to the fore that conceptual framework as an to help proffer the way forward at strategising for qualitative programming policies.

Conceptual framework-

Media content is always been regarded and of course the germane basis for the existence of only broadcasting organisation. It thus means that this has to do with what the station has to offer as it's produced for the consumption and value derived by the audience. Succinctly, therefore, this is the essence and need for a station to have a well and strategic programme planning policy (Ngwu 2011 and Okoduwa, 2010). Some of the assumptions and discoveries put up by some scholars and researchers about media effects affect the role of the audience (active or pressure). These bring to bear on the

issue of content formulation [programming] and its users (audience) (Odetoyinbo, et al, 2021).

The relationship between the station with its audience is the content, This is the bond that has brought forward the issue of processing broadcast programmes.

According to Albarran (2002:181) programming defined as a wheel of management function" is an ongoing process reflecting changes in audience tastes and preference and in distribution technologies". Ugwu (2011: 200) says" it involves the task choosing programmes and scheduling them in meaningful order and then evaluating their degree of success or failure" Programming to deduce from these definitions requires planning since it is a continuous process of identifying, formulating and controlling the typification of a station's programmes to be consumed by the audience over a period when it will be viewed again. Therefore programming emphasizes issue of management involvement.

Programming as management function-

The management of any set-up is deep rooted in the planning process of such organisation's resources of 5ms- man, money machine, materials, and method

(Mukul,2018). As observed by Akrani (2012), planning is important for the following reasons and this study sees relevant;

- It increases efficiency
- It reduces the risks involved in model business activities
- It facilitates proper coordination
- It aids in organizing all available resources
- It gives a right direction to the organization and also helps in decision making among others.

The process of programming [content] policies in broadcast is directed towards satisfying the audience to have values for the time, money used and simply to be informed, educated, and entertained. Hence all the programme categories ranging from children, news / current affairs, sports, documentaries to drama to mention but a few, are aimed in the programming policies virtually to achieve to a greater extent these objectives. As observed by Sobowale (2008:4);

The only way the mass communicator and only communicator for that matter can inspire the necessary response from his audience is to present a credible message based on incontrovertible evidence and package in a comprehensible manner. There is no other road to forceful and successful communication -- ----- tasks of the communicator are clearcut: gather authentic data, process them carefully, and present the information in a way the reader, listener, or viewer will understand and value.

Hence, this submission of Sobowale [2008] emphasizing research and planning for a successful media content [programming], and as of the case of broadcasting becomes relevant. This study therefore building on this, posits that planning itself as management process

entails in a nutshell the following which relate deeply to the process programming.

- Define issues and problems
 - Establishing goals and policies
 - Adopting implementation measures
 - Enforcing and carrying out those measures
 - Evaluating and updating each of the above steps.
- (www.sherwoodoregon.gov)

Thus the planning process as related to the programming process hinges on the audience as a residual causal effect of both'

The need for audience research-

Mass media of communication [radio, TV, and cable] over the years have created, portrayed, fine-tuned, and even entirely reshaped their environment. These have been realisable in the social, political, and economic structures extending to globalisation as observed in the internet with its resultant effects of mass culture. (McQuail, 2010 and Omidiora, Ajiboye, and Abioye, 2019). Most times these structures are taken for granted by mass media. This is because they believe in mere dissemination of information in whatever forms not minding the extent of their positivities and negativities. Amongst such outlets through are movies, musical videos, newsreels texts, and so on without minding the uses and gratification to the audience (Ogunyemi, 2019, Orebiyi, Ismail, and Ogundeji, 2020).

It is essential for the mass media specifically radio and television to be scientific in their approach to planning by a identifying, formulating, and controlling programmes for the audience. This is simply to determine and explore into the kinds of contents the audience expect and prefer rather than just lording programmes over them. It is as a consequence to this that Albarran (2002) argues, that research is a continuous exercise which avails broadcast stations to ascertain that their programmes successfully get to the target audience. He further posits, that audience research also makes them to monitor the effectiveness of marketing their programmes in their various types and treatment /packaging. The exercise can be done according to Albarran (2002), through demographic research which measures the media habits of audience. It is in this regards, that sobowale (2008), recommends survey of which through questionnaire, the sample respondents' (audiences) opinions feelings, attitudes, and behavioral patterns could be analysed.

Theoretical Framework-

Programming policy of a broadcast organisation is an ongoing process which tends to be in consistence with the trends competitors in the industry abide with. It is in this regards, that this discourse looks at the tenets of agenda-setting. A media effect theory of whose power resides not only in space or time given a story or slot in broadcast but places emphasis on events and at the same time influences the audience of its importance (Ogunlami, 2012 and Belnaves, Donald and Shoosmith, 2009).

The various programme types such as children, youth, family, entertainment, and news to mention but few are planned, identified, and scheduled for the audience's consumption. This is predicated

upon the audience assessment of which programmes they will generally have gratification for. Hence, the theory of uses and gratification comes handy for the consideration of a successful and effective programming evaluation. The theory postulated by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch in 1974 posits that the audience have choice of media as needed hence, active in determining or selecting the message they need from any media. It is relevant to this discourse because it points to the reason for stations to strategise in their programming process emphasising credibility, trust, worthiness, professionalism, and objectivity (Odetoyinbo et al, 2021).

Discussion-

The study adopts the qualitative analysis for descriptive explanation of this broadcast programme model with eclectic diagrammatic approach. This is underscored by attempting to answer the question raised earlier in this discourse.

Firstly, it concerns the issue in planning and identifying programme as continuous process. According to Albarran (2002) as cited by Odetoyinbo et al, (2021) programming as a responsibility of any broadcast organisation has to do with budgeting for various programmes in terms of production transmission, distribution, and marketing. Secondly, acquisition of foreign, local (sponsorship /syndication) and stations programmes. Thirdly, scheduling to various slots and other distribution channels. Lastly, evaluation of the ways of strategies in order to sell these programmes as their products to the audience.

These responsibilities are to be effectively achieved. This is to make the stations sustain the competitive environment in today's technological innovation that requires some strategies. Content generation is a creative prowess of the broadcasting parlance and of course, the underpinning factor as it were which a radio, television or even online media need to sustain their existence and remain in business. Aris and Bughin [2009:83] argue that "the company's ability to create [new] blockbusters is seen as the ultimate test of the company's ability to compete." They further reveal that content creation exceeds an art than a science.

This what seen to be the traditional conventional strategies of programming which is some extent as given scholars like Albarran 2002, Okoduwa, 2010 and Ngwu 2011 such as

- Timing, placement of programmes for special theme days.
- Counter-programming, targeting a different audience from that of competitors.
- Tent- poling a programme between two now or a weaker one.
- Ham-mocking, putting a new or weaker programmes between two established ones.
- Bridging in order to disallow the audience from changing channels and some others. As also suggested by Albarran [2002], strategies with timing the slotting of the programmes such as early morning, mid-day, and afternoon. Another strategy as disclosed by Bignell [2008] has to do with broadcast stations going into consultation to negotiate with others to officially arrange

plan of scheduling of some programmes so as both not to lose patronage especially with regards to commercials. These strategies and quickly becoming no more effective because of online media programming. As observed by Aris, et all [2009:84]

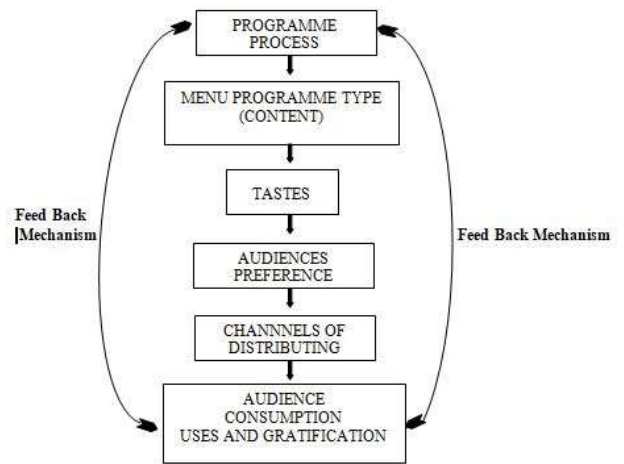
The coming years will see an increasing need For new content. The roll-out of digital platforms and fragmenting consumer taste will lead to an explosion of demand, Not only will traditional players try to fill this gap but also new players such as platform operators (Cable, ISPs, mobile) will start to offer content as their original services turn increasingly into new commodities.

This observation gives credence to this discourse which makes this model an eclectic and diagrammatic one. Therefore, broadcast programmes are like manufactured products or any other consumables such as raw foods and beverages giving an eclectic analysis. Broadcast production in its process like them, has 5ms(man, money, machine, materials, and method) as its resources too. The model gets a cue from a restaurant /food canteen which places its credibility, reputation, and sustainability on the priority it gives to the kinds of menu as a matter of choice and ability to creatively outsmart other food sellers. This is achieved through the arousal, tasty quality, and new food types or cuisine. Menu in their varieties arouses different tasty qualities which determine food preferences and eventual individual consumer’s actions.

Communication is a function of sharing and giving out information or message. This implies the aspect of sociology in mass communication. Hence, sharing generally can be in forms of physical, psychological or spiritual. These situation brings to the limelight that patronizing a restaurant or canteen for the uses and gratification of its menu are mostly enhanced through social relations among individual consumers. In these circumstances broadcast audience relates through all these avenues whenever a programmes are watched. These presumptions stations must, therefore, put into vital consideration in the acquisition of their programmes. These contents must have more values of interest to their audience. This can be ascertained and reinforced by consistent audience survey (Sobowale, 2008).

The beneath strategies in this example is for the restaurant in order to make realistic its food business to identify, plan, formulate, control, and evaluate all that it takes to succeed and remain in business. It is also equally important to consider the digital distributing technologies such as the internet and its resultant channels of interactions operating anyhow, anywhere, anything, and anytime. Hence, this model as eclectic analysis as it were, therefore, builds its credence on the diagrammatic analysis of broadcast programming policy. This is predicated on continuous/underling process of identifying, planning, formulating, and controlling which is aimed at securing always the patronage of the audience.

This is diagrammatically analysed thus:



The diagram above explains the continuous and unending relationship process between a broadcast station, the audience, and the different programs-types as its menu. The tastes are generated through the various strategies put into them which differentiate such programs’ transmission, distribution or marketing from other competitors: This is apparent in the format introduced into each program like in the case of a canteen whereby the chef identifies and creates peps, seasonings or ingredients in whatever combination into a kind of food or cuisine. Production formats such as vox-pop, musicals, features, documentary, talk- show, poem, quiz, and drama sketch to mention but a few. Hence, the use of formats serves as ingredients, seasoning, or pep which the producer/director of a programme as the case may be to arouse the interest of the audience. It makes a better understanding of a programme by the audience.

It, therefore, brings about audience preference through the several channels of distributing technologies via terrestrial, internet, satellite, telecommunication, and multi-media/broadcast [Odetoyinbo, 2017, Aris 2009, Dwyer 2003, and Bull, 2016]. Through these various channels of distributions which even the mainstream stations must ensure and explore that the audience realise their uses and gratification. These in return, create a kind of feedback mechanism relationship between the broadcast stations and their audience.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this discourse begins from the definition and concept of the essence of broadcast programming. It is succinctly a continuous process of planning, identifying, formulating controlling, and evaluating the menu and tastes to generate audience preferences through channels of distributing technologies in an unending changing world. This is also, regarded as sacrosanct for a broadcast organisation mainstream or online to survive and stay in business. Hence, the ability, capacity, and capability to continue to create new contents and roll out arousing formats in the eyes of the audience is the ‘onion’ each broadcast or media organisation must vision about.

Recommendations

- 1) Based on the various submissions in this study, it is hereby recommended that broadcast organisations should

constantly carry out periodic audience research in order to test or sensitise the audience to ensure their level of patronage, uses, and gratification.

- 2) The national broadcasting commission [NBC] should play the visible role of regulating media contents such that broadcast organisations would not be 'lording' programmes on audiences.
- 3) Broadcast organisations should endeavor to do periodic review of their programmes- types to allow for new programmes the audiences would benefit from.

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