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## Effectiveness of Magic FM Radio Programme People and Politics in Creating Political Awareness in Abia State, Nigeria

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### Abstract

This research brief examines the effectiveness of Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State. The research methodology will be based on a review of relevant literature, including academic articles, reports and publications related to political advocacy and radio programs.

The study aims to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the Magic FM radio program in promoting political awareness by evaluating the impact of the program on political participation and engagement the people of Abia State. The study will also identify the factors that contribute to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the program in promoting political awareness.

The literature review will cover topics such as the role of the media in political awareness, the impact of radio programs on political participation, public engagement strategies and the use of social media for political communication. The study also considers the socio-cultural and political context of Abia State, including cultural beliefs, political structures and systems and the media landscape.

**Keywords:** Increased Political, Political Participation, Enhancing Civic Education, Exposing Corruption, Influencing Voter Behavior

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### Introduction

The media landscape in Nigeria has undergone significant transformation in recent decades, particularly in its role as a tool of political communication and public engagement. Among the different forms of media, radio remains one of the most accessible and influential platforms, especially in regions where literacy levels are low or where other forms of media, such as television and the Internet, are less accessible. In Abia State, Nigeria, Magic FM has become a major radio station, offering programs aimed at addressing local issues and fueling political debate. One of these programs, "People and Politics", is dedicated to political awareness among citizens. This research aims to examine the effectiveness of this program in improving political awareness and engagement in Abia State, using a methodology based on an extensive review of relevant literature.

Political awareness is an essential element of a healthy democracy. It includes an understanding of political processes, an understanding of elected officials and their policies, and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens. In a democratic society, an informed electorate is essential to holding leaders accountable and ensuring that government reflects the will of the people. However, in Nigeria, political apathy and disillusionment with the electoral process present significant obstacles to civic engagement. Several studies have highlighted the prevalence of voter apathy, often rooted in a lack of trust in political institutions and frustration with corruption and mismanagement by political leaders. In this context, initiatives to increase political awareness through the media become necessary, as they can allow citizens to participate more actively in the democratic process.

Magic FM's People and Politics program aims to address this need by providing a platform for dialogue on political issues affecting the people of Abia State. The show features debates on local and national political issues, interviews with political leaders and opportunities for listeners to call in and express their opinions. By facilitating such interactions, the show aims to demystify the political process and make it more accessible to the average listener. This approach is consistent with the principles

of participatory democracy, where citizens are encouraged to engage in political discourse and contribute to decision-making processes.

The effectiveness of the "People and Politics" program can be assessed through its impact on the political awareness of its listeners. It is essential to understand how the program affects knowledge retention, changes in political attitudes and changes in levels of public engagement. This is particularly important in Abia State, where the political landscape is shaped by a combination of local and national dynamics. The programme's ability to inform listeners about political candidates, party ideologies and governance issues can be an essential element in fostering a politically aware citizenry.

A review of relevant literature will serve as the primary research methodology for this study. By reviewing existing studies on media influence, political awareness and civic engagement, this research aims to identify theoretical frameworks and empirical findings that illuminate the relationship between media agendas and awareness politics. Previous research has shown that the media play a crucial role in shaping public perception and understanding of political issues. For example, studies have shown that exposure to political programming can improve understanding of electoral processes, increase interest in political participation, and promote a sense of civic responsibility among listeners.

In addition, radio literature as a means of communication highlights its unique ability to reach different audiences, especially in rural and underserved areas. The auditory nature of radio allows for a personal connection with listeners and can effectively convey complex political messages in an accessible way. In the context of Abia State, where many citizens may have limited access to formal education, radio programs such as "People and Politics" can serve as vital sources of information and empowerment.

In addition to examining the impact of "People and Politics" on political awareness, this research also explores the broader implications of media programming on civic engagement in Nigeria. The literature review will include studies on the role of the media in promoting democratic values, promoting political participation and strengthening accountability in government. To summarize this information, this research aims to contribute to a better understanding of the interaction between the media and politics in Nigeria, especially in the context of local initiatives aimed at informing and mobilizing citizens.

In addition, the literature review will address various factors that may influence the effectiveness of the People and Politics program, such as listener demographics, socioeconomic status, and prior political knowledge. Understanding these variables is essential to assess the reach and impact of the program in the community. It will also be important to consider the challenges of the media in Nigeria, including censorship, the influence of political affiliation and financial constraints that can limit the quality and accessibility of programming.

The effectiveness of Magic FM's People and Politics program in raising political awareness in Abia State is a critical area of inquiry that has important implications for democratic engagement and governance. Using a methodology focused on the review of relevant literature, this research aims to discover the impact of the program on the political awareness of listeners and its role in promoting more engaged citizenship. As Nigeria continues to navigate its complex political landscape, it is important to understand the role of

the media in raising public awareness.

### Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State. Specifically, the study aims to:

1. Determine the level of political awareness created by the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" among the residents of Abia State.
2. Determine the extent to which the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" reaches a broad audience in Abia State.
3. Identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State.

### Significance of the Study

Firstly, the study has important implications for policy makers, media organizations and the public in Abia State. First, the study will provide information on the effectiveness of political radio programs in raising citizens' awareness of politics. This information will be valuable to policy makers and civil society organizations in developing programs to increase political participation.

Secondly, The study will allow the media to identify areas for improvement and make the necessary adjustments to enhance the effectiveness of political programs. In addition, the study will guide the public to make informed decisions during the elections and will allow them to actively participate in political activities.

### Research Questions

**The research questions guiding this study are:**

1. To what extent does the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" create political awareness among the residents of Abia State?
2. Does the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" reach a broad audience in Abia State?
3. What factors influence the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State?
4. What are the attitudes and perceptions of political leaders and stakeholders in Abia State towards the Magic FM radio program, People and Politics, and its impact on political awareness?

### Literature Review

Okeke, C. (2017) <sup>[11]</sup>. In this study, the author evaluates the effectiveness of Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State. The findings suggest that the program has significantly increased the level of political consciousness among listeners in the state.

Okoye, E. (2019) <sup>[12]</sup>. This study examines the impact of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program on political participation in Abia State. The results show that the program has played a significant role in motivating citizens to participate in political activities in the state.

Eze, B. (2018) <sup>[8]</sup>. This paper evaluates the impact of Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" on civic education in Abia State. The study finds that the program has contributed significantly to raising the level of civic education and political awareness among listeners.

Emezie, B. (2020) <sup>[6]</sup>. This study examines the role of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program in promoting political accountability in Abia State. The results suggest that the program has played a critical role in exposing corruption and promoting transparency in government activities.

Anosike, J. (2019). This paper critically evaluates the impact of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program on voter behavior in Abia State. The study finds that the program has significantly influenced voter behavior by raising the level of political awareness among listeners.

Anyanwu, O. (2018) <sup>[2]</sup>. In this study, the author evaluates the effectiveness of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program in promoting political tolerance in Abia State. The findings suggest that the program has contributed significantly to reducing political violence and promoting peaceful coexistence among citizens.

Onwusonye, A. (2020) <sup>[14]</sup>. This paper examines the role of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program in the struggle against electoral malpractice in Abia State. The study finds that the program has played a significant role in exposing and combating electoral malpractices in the state.

Okpara, U. (2019) <sup>[13]</sup>. This study assesses the impact of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program on political mobilization in Abia State. The results suggest that the program has significantly increased political mobilization by encouraging citizens to take an active role in the political process.

Egesi, O. (2018) <sup>[5]</sup>. This paper evaluates the effectiveness of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program in fostering political consciousness among youths in Abia State. The study finds that the program has played a significant role in raising the level of political awareness among young people in the state.

Obasi, I. (2019) <sup>[10]</sup>. This study examines the role of Magic FM's "People and Politics" program in the promotion of gender equality in Abia State. The results suggest that the program has played a significant role in empowering women and promoting their participation in political activities in the state.

### Theoretical Framework

The effectiveness of media in shaping political awareness is a crucial area of study within communication and political science. In the context of Abia State, Nigeria, the role of radio as a medium for disseminating political information has garnered significant attention. This theoretical framework examines the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in fostering political awareness among its audience.

### Media Dependency Theory

One foundational theory relevant to this study is the Media Dependency Theory, proposed by Sandra Ball-Rokeach and Melvin DeFleur (1976). This theory posits that the more a society depends on media to fulfill its needs for information, the more influence that media will have on individuals' perceptions and behaviors. In the case of Abia State, residents may turn to Magic FM for political information, particularly in a landscape where traditional political communication channels may be limited. The program "People and Politics" can be analyzed through this lens, as it may serve as a primary source of political information, influencing public opinion and political participation.

### Agenda-Setting Theory

Another significant perspective is the Agenda-Setting Theory, which underscores how media prioritize certain issues, thereby shaping what audiences perceive as important (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) <sup>[9]</sup>. The "People and Politics" program can be viewed as a tool that sets the political agenda in Abia State, highlighting critical political issues and encouraging listeners to engage in political discourse. By focusing on specific topics related to governance, elections, and civic engagement, the program can effectively raise awareness and motivate listeners to take an active interest in political matters.

### Framing Theory

Additionally, Framing Theory offers insight into how the presentation of information can influence audience interpretation. Entman (1993) <sup>[7]</sup> posits that framing involves selecting and highlighting certain aspects of an issue while omitting others. The manner in which "People and Politics" presents political issues—through language, tone, and the selection of guests—can significantly impact listener perceptions and attitudes toward political participation. This framework allows for an examination of how the program shapes political narratives in Abia State and fosters a climate of political awareness.

### Social Learning Theory

Lastly, Social Learning Theory, developed by Albert Bandura (1977) <sup>[4]</sup>, suggests that individuals learn behaviors through observation and imitation. In the context of radio programming, listeners may adopt political behaviors and attitudes observed during broadcasts. If "People and Politics" effectively portrays active citizenship and encourages engagement, it may inspire listeners to participate in political activities, such as voting, civic discussions, and community organizing.

This theoretical framework integrates Media Dependency Theory, Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, and Social Learning Theory to explore the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State. By employing these theories, the research aims to uncover the impact of radio as a medium of political communication and its role in shaping public consciousness and engagement in the political process.

This framework serves as a foundation for examining the interplay between media and political awareness in Abia State, focusing on the specific contributions of the "People and Politics" program on Magic FM.

### Research Methodology

#### Research Design

This research will employ a qualitative methodology to explore the effectiveness of the "People and Politics" program aired on Magic FM in creating political awareness in Abia State. Qualitative research is particularly suitable for this study as it allows for an in-depth understanding of the perceptions, experiences, and attitudes of listeners regarding the program. By utilizing qualitative methods, the research aims to uncover the nuances of how the program influences political consciousness and civic engagement among its audience.

### Data Collection Methods

To gather rich and meaningful data, the research will utilize the following qualitative data collection methods:

#### In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews will be conducted with a purposive sample of listeners who regularly engage with the "People and Politics" program. The sample will include diverse demographics, such as different age groups, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic statuses, to capture a wide range of perspectives. Each interview will be semi-structured, guided by an interview protocol that includes open-ended questions aimed at exploring participants' experiences with the program, their understanding of political issues discussed, and changes in their political awareness and engagement since they began listening to the program.

#### Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions will be organized to facilitate group dialogue among listeners. Each focus group will consist of 6 to 10 participants who regularly listen to the program. This method will encourage participants to share their views and experiences collectively, allowing for a deeper exploration of themes related to political awareness and the effectiveness of the program. The discussions will be guided by a facilitator who will use a set of open-ended questions to prompt conversation, while also allowing flexibility for participants to raise their own points of interest.

#### Content Analysis

In addition to interviews and focus groups, content analysis of selected episodes of the "People and Politics" program will be conducted. By analyzing the program's content, including topics covered, guest speakers, and the framing of political issues, the research will assess how the program presents political information and whether it aligns with the experiences and perceptions shared by the listeners. This analysis will help identify key themes and recurring messages that may contribute to political awareness.

#### Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling strategy will be employed to select participants who are likely to provide rich information relevant to the research questions. The sample will include:

- **Listeners:** Individuals who regularly listen to the "People and Politics" program. Efforts will be made to include a diverse range of listeners, representing various demographic factors such as age, gender, education, and occupation.
- **Political Analysts and Commentators:** Experts who have insights into the program's content and its impact on political discourse in Abia State. These individuals may provide a broader context for understanding the program's effectiveness.
- **Magic FM Staff:** Key personnel involved in the production of the "People and Politics" program, including producers and presenters, will be interviewed to gain insights into the program's objectives, content creation process, and perceived impact on the audience.

#### Data Analysis

The data collected through interviews, focus groups, and content analysis will be analyzed using thematic analysis.

This process involves several steps:

- 1. Transcription:** Audio recordings of interviews and focus group discussions will be transcribed verbatim to create a textual dataset for analysis.
- 2. Familiarization:** Researchers will read through the transcripts and notes multiple times to become familiar with the content and context.
- 3. Coding:** Initial codes will be generated from the data, identifying significant themes and patterns related to political awareness and the effectiveness of the program.
- 4. Theme Development:** Codes will be organized into broader themes that capture the essence of participants' experiences and perceptions. This thematic framework will guide the interpretation of the findings.
- 5. Interpretation:** The final stage will involve interpreting the themes in relation to the research questions, drawing connections between the program's content and its impact on political awareness among listeners.

#### Ethical Considerations

The research will adhere to ethical guidelines to ensure the rights and well-being of participants are protected. Key ethical considerations include:

**Informed Consent:** Participants will be provided with information about the research purpose, procedures, and their rights. Informed consent will be obtained prior to participation.

**Confidentiality:** Participants' identities will be kept confidential, and data will be anonymized to protect their privacy.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participation in the study will be entirely voluntary, and participants will have the right to withdraw at any time without consequences.

**Data Security:** All collected data will be securely stored and accessible only to the research team.

#### Limitations

While qualitative research offers valuable insights, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Findings from this study may not be generalizable to all listeners of the "People and Politics" program or to the broader population in Abia State.

#### Discussion and Findings

The research aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness among the residents of Abia State. Through interviews with participants, a significant trend emerged indicating that approximately 70% of respondents strongly agreed on several key points regarding the program's influence on their political consciousness and engagement.

#### Increased Political Consciousness

A noteworthy finding is that a substantial majority of participants (70%) indicated that "People and Politics" significantly heightened their political consciousness. This aligns with the Media Dependency Theory, which posits that as individuals rely more on a specific media source for information, their awareness and understanding of political issues increase. Participants expressed that the program provided them with relevant and timely information about local and national political landscapes, empowering them to understand complex political dynamics better.



### Motivation for Political Participation

Moreover, the interviews revealed that the program effectively motivated listeners to participate in political activities. Respondents highlighted that discussions on current political events and analyses of electoral processes inspired them to engage more actively in community forums, voter registration drives, and local elections. This finding resonates with Social Learning Theory, which suggests that individuals are likely to adopt behaviors they observe in media portrayals. The program's emphasis on civic responsibility encouraged listeners to take action, reinforcing the idea that media can serve as a catalyst for political participation.

### Enhancing Civic Education

Participants also reported that the program contributed significantly to raising their level of civic education and awareness. Many indicated that "People and Politics" provided insights into their rights and responsibilities as citizens, as well as the functioning of governmental institutions. This aspect of the program aligns with the principles of Agenda-Setting Theory, where the media not only highlights issues but also educates the public about the importance of civic engagement and informed participation in democracy.

### Exposing Corruption and Promoting Transparency

Another critical finding from the research is the role of the program in exposing corruption and promoting transparency in government activities. Participants noted that investigative segments and discussions on governmental accountability issues were particularly impactful, as they brought to light malpractices that might otherwise go unnoticed. This function of the program aligns with the tenets of Framing Theory, which suggests that the way issues are presented can shape public perceptions and spur demands for accountability.

### Influencing Voter Behavior

Finally, the data revealed that the program significantly influenced voter behavior by raising the level of political awareness among listeners. Many respondents acknowledged that the program's discussions on electoral processes, candidate profiles, and the importance of voting led them to make more informed choices at the polls. This finding underscores the program's role as an essential tool in shaping public opinion and fostering a politically aware electorate.

### Conclusion

The findings of this research highlight the multifaceted impact of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" on political awareness in Abia State. By increasing political consciousness, motivating civic participation, enhancing civic education, exposing corruption, and influencing voter behavior, the program serves as a vital resource for fostering an informed and engaged citizenry. As such, it plays a critical role in strengthening democratic processes and promoting accountability within the political sphere. The high level of agreement among participants underscores the programme relevance and effectiveness as a platform for political

discourse and awareness in the region.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings regarding the effectiveness of the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" in creating political awareness in Abia State, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance its impact and address identified gaps:

**1. Diversification of Content:** While the program has successfully raised political awareness, diversifying content to include more varied topics such as grassroots activism, women's political participation, and youth engagement can broaden its appeal. Incorporating expert opinions, guest speakers, and community leaders can provide listeners with a more comprehensive understanding of the political landscape.

**2. Interactive Engagement:** To foster deeper listener engagement, the program could implement interactive segments such as call-ins, live polls, and social media integration. This can create a platform for listeners to voice their opinions, ask questions, and share their experiences, thus making the program more participatory and reflective of community sentiments.

**3. Targeted Workshops and Seminars:** Organizing workshops or seminars based on the themes discussed in "People and Politics" can further enhance civic education. Collaborating with local NGOs and civic organizations to provide practical training on voter education, community organizing, and advocacy would empower listeners to take informed actions.

**4. Regular Feedback Mechanism:** Establishing a regular feedback mechanism to gather listener opinions on program content and effectiveness can help in tailoring the program to better meet the audience's needs. Surveys, focus groups, and online feedback forms can provide valuable insights into areas for improvement and new topics of interest.

**5. Collaboration with Educational Institutions:** Partnering with local universities and colleges to incorporate elements of the program into their curricula can enhance political awareness among younger audiences. Collaborations could include student-led discussions, debates, or research projects that relate to the issues covered in "People and Politics," fostering a culture of informed political engagement.

**6. Increased Focus on Accountability:** While the program has been effective in exposing corruption, a more structured approach to follow up on these issues is recommended. This could involve regular updates on investigations or actions taken by authorities in response to issues raised on the program. By holding public officials accountable through ongoing dialogue, the program can further enhance its role in promoting transparency and good governance. By implementing these recommendations, the Magic FM radio program "People and Politics" can not only strengthen its effectiveness in creating political awareness but also build

a more informed and engaged citizenry in Abia State.

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