
Research Studies on Interactive Radio Programme: A Review

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ABSTRACT

The society today is witnessing a surge in communication & technology. This revolution in communication and technology has not only influenced all sectors but has revolutionized the education sector throughout the world. Though Television and Internet's have penetrated the masses the popularity of Radio especially FM's and Community Radio, is still going strong with its innovation and creativity. Radio as a means of communication has an interesting history to it. This medium carries decades of experience and experiments in field of entertainment and as a tool of education. Initially, radio was used for purpose of entertainment but seeing its reach, this medium was extensively used as a medium of instruction. Gradually, it was realized that a two way communication is vital for teaching and hence Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) slowly emerged. IRI is a teaching methodology in which a radio broadcast guides a teacher and learners through the activities of a lesson. There are studies that deal with impact of interactive radio. In this direction, the present paper tries to do a Meta analytic literature review of the selected works. The paper emphasis the fact that radio as a tool of educational instruction still holds upon prerogative amidst the rise of new media.

Key Words: Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI), Communication, Technology, Education, Distance Education

INTRODUCTION

The society today is witnessing a surge in communication & technology. This revolution in communication and technology has not only influenced all sectors but has revolutionized the education sector throughout the world. One of the Mass Media that is very close to heart in the yesteryears was Radio. Though Television and Internet's have slowly taken over the popularity of Radio this media is still going strong with its innovation and creativity. One of the popular form of Radio today is FM's and Community Radio. FM's being a mix of both information and entertainment, Community Radio serves as a developmental tool both in colleges and villages. Radio as a means of communication has an interesting history to it. This medium carries decades of experience and experiments in field of entertainment and also as a tool of education, be it educating the masses or Individuals.

Radio as a means of communication has an interesting history to it. The first educational radio was started in the year 1930 in Britain. This radio experiment was introduced to bring in fresh wave of creative methods in teaching. This medium carries decades of experience and experiments in field of entertainment and as a tool of education. Initially, radio was used for the purpose of entertainment but seeing its reach, this medium was extensively used as a medium of instruction. Gradually, it was realized that a two way communication is vital for

teaching and hence Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) slowly emerged. IRI is a teaching methodology in which a radio broadcast guides the teacher and learners through the activities of a lesson. While listening to the radio, learners actively participate in the lesson by singing, reading, writing, answering questions and solving problems in ways that ensure active learning (Martha MacwaniSitali). Since radio is a creative medium, the adaption of radio as means of instruction created a platform amongst the students for more exploratory thinking. However IRI gained popularity and there has been a lot of discussion and studies on this mode of Education and teaching. A review of the opinions and suggestion on this mode has been presented below.

OBJECTIVES

Across the world there are studies that deal with impact of interactive radio. In this direction, the present paper tries to do a literature review of the selected works on Interactive Radio Programmes. The paper emphasizes the fact that radio as a tool of educational instruction still holds upon prerogative amidst the rise of new media.

METHODOLOGY

This paper has used the secondary sources where in research was done using Meta analytic study on interactive radio programming. “In statistics, meta-analysis comprises statistical methods for contrasting and combining results from different studies in the hope of identifying patterns among study results, sources of disagreement among those results, or other interesting relationships that may come to light in the context of multiple studies” (Greenland S, O’ Rourke K). Thus, this paper aims to bring in the most prominent studies across the world on interactive radio programming and thereby trying to see the impact of them.

REVIEWS ON INTERACTIVE RADIO LEARNING PROGRAMMES

A case study on ‘Communicative English through Media’ by Silima Nanda (2006) studies the Interactive Radio Instruction programme in Jharkhand. “The Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) programme is funded through the dot-Edu project with the objective to improve the quality of education in the state. IRI Programme in Jharkhand was designed to teach ‘Introductory English’, in collaboration with the state Government and local Non-Government Organizations at Primary School Level. The study shows that the learning level of children in the schools where programme was broadcasted improved. In addition teachers also learnt new techniques of active teaching process. Students groups were formed to enable them to actively participate in learning process. The programmes used songs and activities as part of the teaching sessions. Some of the IRI songs became so popular among students that they sing it always in groups and Teachers found enough time to conduct activities where, all students can participate”. (Nanda, 2006).

An another study conducted by Florence Y. Odera Kisumu, Kenya (2011) ‘Learning English Language by Radio in Primary Schools in Kenya’ explores the use of school radio broadcast to assist teachers and pupils to learn and improve English language both written and spoken

in Kenyan primary schools. The researcher here even found that most of the students' mixes vernacular, Kiswahili and English and came up with another language called "Sheng".

The main findings of the research indicate that most teachers were not listening to the school radio broadcasts. Those, who listened to English radio lessons, valued them very much and noted how it has helped to improve the pupils spoken English and performance in Kenya certificate of primary education examination. This study established that some of primary school teachers in Kisumu District had access to schools broadcast and listened to English lessons.

Usha Chandar and Ramesh Sharma (2003) in one of their survey research 'Bridges to Effective Learning through Radio' took a feedback from the *GyanVani* listeners. The study found that "half of the respondents were regular listeners of radio and they listened to few hours of programmes. 23% respondents reported they listened to radio occasionally. A significant number of respondents (51%) reported that they preferred listening to the radio with their family and friends. The study says that many of them were very positive regarding the broadcast service. The majority of them listened to the radio as they found radio to be educative and informative at the same time relaxing".

Archana Nambiar(2010) in her experimental research on 'Interactive Radio Instruction (IRI) found that IRI, which only requires a radio and an adult facilitator, reaches large numbers of teachers and learners who are isolated by distance and poor infrastructure. It can be used in almost any setting, from formal classrooms to community learning centers to outdoor venues.

Peter Wintz, Godryne Wintz (2013) in their comprehensive study on 'Old technology - New experience: Teachers' and pupils' reactions to Interactive Radio Instruction in Guyana' introduced the cost effective Interactive Radio Instruction Programme in Mathematics. This study examined teachers' classroom practice, and explored teachers' and pupils' reactions to IRI in Grade Two mathematics classrooms. "The finding reveals that Mathematics learning improved in Guyana classrooms through Interactive Radio Instruction. However, a teacher meeting an acceptable standard in the teaching and learning process is a pre-condition for its success".

An another case study on 'The relevance of media education in primary schools in Hong Kong in the age of new media' (Cheung, 2006) was done in primary schools in HongKong, with regard to social change, recent education reform and learning initiatives of primary pupils. The study focused on local primary school to examine the views of pupils, parents, and teachers on the effects of media educational lessons and campus radio projects on pupils in this age of new media. The study endorses the opinion that the recent development in curriculum reforms in Hong Kong created an exciting opportunities for media education to negotiate its space in a much more open and flexible framework of curriculum. In the new design, the breakdown of subject barriers, and subjects were organized under eight key learning areas (KLAs). It was found that Media education had the potential to gain entry into this curriculum in at least four different areas: Chinese language education, English language education, arts education, and personal, social and humanities education.

The findings of the study on ‘Evaluating large-scale interactive radio programmes’ (Potter, Naidoo, 2009) focuses on interactive radio programmes in South Africa with large numbers of schools, teachers, and learners. The evaluation approach is participatory, linking the requirements of external summative evaluation conducted for accountability, with data yielded by internal evaluation. The study is done through internal and formative evaluative studies of limited scope, combined with developmental classroom-based evaluation based on the logic of project team members working with teachers to promote the programme’s self-evaluative capacity. The Programme records indicates that around 36,000 teachers, while it is currently estimated that 1.3 million learners across all nine provinces of South Africa listen to the Programme’s audio lessons daily.

CONCLUSION

From analysis of all the above studies it can be concluded that students enjoy the interactive classes and educational intervention through radio which has resulted in significant knowledge enhancement of the most unreserved casts. Also, radio as a medium has been effective in teaching languages. In Addition IRI has been a good tool to improve the quality of education and an effective and attractive method of mass education. It has been observed through many programmes that IRI has the potential to improve mathematics learning in classrooms. Hence IRI as a technology has the potential to addresses many educational concerns in developing countries even today more so, in improving quality of education in rural areas.

In a nutshell, Radio can be a better interventional tool than text books in bringing a stress free learning. It is seen that Information Communication Technology also plays a vital role in formal & non formal forms of education including teachers. Not only at the school or college level Radio programme has been an effective educational instrument of social transformation especially in rural areas with the target groups like women and farmers. It has demonstrated over the years that information campaigns, if well designed can succeed.

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