Poor Content Formation Of Broadcasting Media And

Programming Is A Challenge Towards National Development;

A Case Study of 96.3 Beat Fm.

By

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The requirement Of The Award of The Degree of
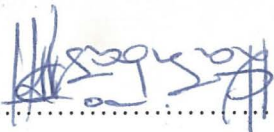
Bachelor of Mass Communication of Kampala

International University

August 2008

DECLARATION

I Kaziba Kenneth declare that this is my original work and has never been presented by any other student for the same award.

Signature......................................

Date...16th - 09 - 2008...

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this study has been carried out under my guidance and approval as a supervisor.

Signature……………………………..

Date………………………………….

Name   Ms Byamukama Sylvia

Date: 20/9/2008

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My joy and endless thanks go to my almighty God because with out his blessings nothing is possible.

Abstract

The study was carried out at 96.3 Beat fm in Kampala, from the working staff, listeners and opinion leaders around Kampala. The main objectives of the study were; to find best ways for the implementation of new practical measures to over come the challenge of poor content formation and programming, provide information and create opportunities for stake holders in the media to develop action to prevent the poor content formation and programming especially towards national development, increase the awareness of the problem and to open a flood gate for further scrutiny on the research topic. Data about the study was obtained from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data was obtained from thirty five (35) respondents including five (5) opinion leaders, ten (10) staff of beat fm and twenty (20) listeners from the general public using questionnaires and interview data collection methods. The respondents were selected from the total population using simple and stratified sampling techniques.

The data collected was presented and analyzed using tables and narrations accompanied for interpretation purposes. The findings reveal that the nature of content formed at most radio station with beat fm inclusive is based on the nature of audience and advertisers basically because of the need to maximize profits and keep in the media business.

The conclusion drawn by the researcher was that since the media is privatized and it cannot stay in existence without making profits then it would be fair for the programmers to design content and programmes in regard to the maximization of profits though to some extent they should not forget that the media is a developmental tool society.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

Content formation and programming has remained as a crucial problem to note in the media of Uganda and is faced by most media houses in Uganda.

Content formation is basically characterized by acquiring material that will form the composition of every single programme. In this, content is usually broken down in the form of sports, newscasts, documentaries, interviews, discussions, drama and music among others. This means content formation refers to the actual spots in a particular programme.

Programming is profoundly the scheduling of different groups of content in a sequence according to time of radio or television clock format. It deals with inclusion of the available content on the day's programme.

To note is that the dilemma of content formation and programming affects both urban and rural media. The identified factors that cause the phenomenon are lack of adequate education for the programmers, attitude of listeners and programmers, inadequate research, plagiarism and poor policy foundation of he media houses.

This proposal intends to undertake a study on the challenges of content formation in relationship with national development of Uganda particularly focusing at one

of the broadcast media houses in Kampala district and suggest ways to overcome the problem.

Content formation and programming is not a new problem in the media of Uganda and it has existed for as long as the media has been in Uganda. The challenge covers both publicly and privately owned but mostly community based radio stations, newspapers and television. Infact some media houses have been kicked out of business because of the poor content formation and failure to match the demands of the audience, advertisers and also designing a good programme policy that is strongly directed towards national development.

The media was liberalized in 1993, but since then the electronic media has increasingly worsened due to the reflex effects in the media, low professionalism, and lack of research among others. Effort has been directed to improve on the content and programming in the media with not a vivid improvement being recognized. For example international broadcast programmes and content have been brought in as a symbiosis to enhance the content formation in the broadcast media of Uganda.

These take examples of the British broadcasting corporation (BBC), which even takes the directive of offering training to workers of some media houses. (An example of 96.0Busoga fm.) They also relay news, information, and material like

documentaries on our local radio stations but still they are given very little attention. This brings us to the argument that the populace has also contributed to what kind of content should be formulated and therefore they are acclimatized to entertainment programmes.

The press and journalism statute of 1995 also highlights on the standards of media content and programming in a bid to supervise the media in Uganda. But still this also hasn't yielded convincing success in the sense that the laws are not practical. Global media monitoring agencies have been set up but they at5 times seem not to care especially about the operations of media in low developed countries, all they mind is publicizing disaster. In Uganda today most content formed and programmes are aimed at entertainment and only to some limited extent do they try to make it edu-entertainment or info-entertainment media.

The government has tried to overcome the problem by introducing professional courses in response to the media. In 1988 a diploma in mass communication was introduced at Makerere University. By then a few newspapers were in circulation and there was only the state owned electronic media. Therefore even those got the chance to study did not get enough practical work and above all 20 vacancies were offered for admission at makerere meaning the government by then had not realized the great importance of professional communicators as a developmental tool.

When the frequency modulation (fm) radio stations came up in Uganda, their content and programming became directly influenced by the owners. These radio stations and televisions were being managed by people who did not have enough or even had no training at all about content formation and programming of the broadcasting media. This greatly influenced the operations of various media houses and it also still prevails.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Content formation and programming is a serious problem to the general audience, advertisers, workers and the government at large. The study intends to cut across the root causes that have led to poor content formation and programming in direct focus to national development.

To the audience, the media owes them the responsibility to act as watch dogs to the people who are the policy implementers of which these policies are focused towards development and if this cannot be clearly done then the content programmers should be blamed for this poor approach and usage of the media. For example in Uganda there is a big problem of events completely erasing the follow up of other important issues. Take for instance the case where the former minister of health major general Jim Muhwezi selfishly used the national funds and all over a sudden the issue is no more talk on the electronic media and even the audience is reluctant about making inquiry.

1.2 Research objectives

To find best ways for the implementation of new practical measures to over come the challenge of poor content formation and programming.

To provide information and create opportunities for stakeholders in the media to develop action to prevent the poor content formation and programming especially towards national development.

To also increase the awareness of the problem. This is because this has not been looked at as a serious problem by the populace hence it should be informed about what kind of content that the media ought to provide.

Academically, to open a flood gate for further scrutiny on the topic especially tat higher level of education.

1.3 Scope of the study

The research will cover 96.3 Beat fm. in Kampala district. The research will take a time scope of 2005 to 2007. It will focus on how the content is formulated at beat fm and how it reacts to the phenomenon of national development.

1.4 Significance of the study

The research is crucial for the reason that the knowledge revealed and gained will have a direct relevancy for the designing and implementation of good programmes and formulating content in the media that is developmental.

The end result of this study is to disclose the reasons why the problem exists and to recommend on the practical measures to end it. The publication of this work is aimed at three fundamental groups;

1. *Programmers and staff*

2. *Opinion leaders*

3. *Listeners or the audience*

Academically, it is the beginning of a serious investigation in the area. It opens room for further research on this topic at a higher level.

1.5 Research question

What are the challenges of poor content formation and programming in the media towards national development?

1.6 Definition of key concepts

Content- This refers to the actual material that is going to be aired on the air waves

Programming- This refers to the sequencing of all the acquired material onto a programme in reference to the time clock

Constitution-These are amendments of the law that every one should obey as a citizen and they are put in place through the parliament.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0   Introduction

Uganda constitution suggests the minimum broadcasting standards the media in Uganda ought to have on any programme broadcast, news, talk shows and other programmes. For example programmes should not be contrary to public mortality, programmes should be balanced to ensure harmony.

Joseph R Dominick et al (2000) is very crucial to this research because he gives a plat form on electronic media programming, its history and the different kinds of programmes in radio and television. He analyses content analysis under media effects.

Don. R Pember (1996) is also very relevant to this research because he gives regulations on programme content citing sanctions and regulations of children programming, political programming which involves equal opportunity to candidates who use the air waves. News and public affairs specifically the fairness doctrine against persona; attack and editorials as addressed. It is the purpose of this research therefore is to find out why, what is in this literature is not practiced by the media of today.

Looking at the rules and regulations that should be followed as set by the media council of Uganda. It clearly set the levels of which programmers, editors should

be chosen but this has not been taken into consideration by the media stake holders. So the rules and regulations of the Uganda media council will be very vital to this research.

According to Greg Lewis (1995) in his book broadcasting and journalism.

He urges that while most content programmers must produce programmes that focus onto public interest there is a very vital role for the programmers to design programmes in response to the media consumers. In his book Greg says that the content formed is supposed to portray the reality of society to fulfill the mass media role of society.

He says proper content formation is very vital in communication because of the power that the media possesses over human beings in society. Usually journalism is a part of society that is believed to portray the truth and that's why whatever the media gives to the populace influences them. Lets take a look at how the world passives the relationship between the European world and the Arab world. You can see that today all Arabs are believed to be terrorists which may not be the case but because of how the media has always portrayed that relationship.

In 1974 a UNESCO study done in western Europe noted that the way the international media houses reported about the developing countries was only to decrease their levels of development and increase the levels of exploitation by the developed countries and indeed up to date its the same thing happening. When

they are reporting about what happens in Africa for instance they report basically about disaster and under development which would not be bad but what is the out come of the reporting is what matters, bringing us to the point of fair and balanced content formation.)

Bella mody is also so significant in this research to the extent of relating how proper writing for communication can help content programmers to organize the right communication for the populace in terms of content and programming.

2.1   Theoretical framework

The media is known for basing its activities on the agenda setting theory. The agenda setting theory also known as the power structure issues emphasizes the importance of the media to structure issues depending on how it treats them. For example, giving them front page coverage or placing them among the first news items on radio or television.

The theory also states that most of our information and attitudes are formed through what we get in the media, so there is evidence that the media content influences people's perceptions and their world at large. People also often talk of what is in the media, so the media indirectly influences the direction of peoples thoughts and attention meaning that the media sets the agenda for the public through its content and programmes. (Nassanga 1994)

So because of the agenda setting role of the media noted above, if there is poor formation and programming of broadcast content, definitely this poses a challenge to national development or advancement because people often turn to the media for interpretation of issues and it is said to hold a high potential of influencing awareness levels. (Okugbo 1997)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter presents a background against which data will be gathered, research design, methods of data collection, sample size, population size, data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

3.1   Research design

Consistent with the research objectives and questions in chapter one, the research will be cross-sectional in nature of design and also the researcher will use qualitative and quantitative design in order to focus on the relationship to the response of the media content in focus to national development and media performance. Qualitatively the researcher will present the findings non-numerically and quantitatively is where the researcher will explain in numerical form.

3.2   The study population

The study will be conducted from the total population of the staff of beat fm. people and the sampling frame will include the following categories of people, listeners, and opinion leaders, as illustrated here below;

Table 1: Study population

Category	Number of people
Opinion leaders.	20
Staff members	30
Listeners	50
Total	**100**

3.3 Sampling method

The researcher will use the stratified random sampling and simple random sampling methods to select respondents for the study. Under this, all names of respondents will be written down on pieces of paper from their respective strata. The papers will be folded and put in the tin, after mixing them well the researcher will pick up one by one randomly and the procedure will repeated up to when the required sample size from each stratum will be got to make up a total sample size respondents from which the study will be taken.

3.4 Source of data

The data collected will be both primary and secondary based.

3.4.1 Primary data

Primary data will be collected directly from the respondents by the use of questionnaires and interviews. The data collected will be in response with the research objectives and questions of the study.

3.4.2 Secondary data

Secondary data will be collected from various sources which include journals, magazines, textbooks, publications, conference proceedings, and newspapers, electronic media that is internet material and research reports.

3.5 Data collection methods

Questionnaires, interviews, desk research are the main methods to be used.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires will be self administered, open and closed, simple and free in nature and will also be delivered by the researcher to the individual respondents for answering.

3.5.2 Interviews

Interviews will also be conducted to supplement on the answers given in the questionnaires and these mainly will be carried out with staff of beat fm and opinion leaders.

3.6 Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

3.6.1 Analysis

The data collected will be checked first by the researcher to ensure consistency in responses, accuracy and reliability. It will then be edited, sorted and coded in both descriptive and statistical form by use of Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) data analysis package from which tables with variable frequencies and percentages will be drawn for easy analysis.

3.6.2   Interpretation

Media content formation and programming in electronic media is a challenge that has troubled very many media houses and in particular96.3 beat fm.

3.6.3   Presentation

The collected data will be presented in tables with frequencies and percentages.

3.7   Action plan

The tables below show the action plan and how much it will cost the researcher to accomplish the study.

Table 2: Action plan

Time allocation in months	place	Activity	results	explanation
First 2 weeks	Kampala district	piloting research	scrutiny survey	prepare research assistants
Third week	Kampala district	studying on	interview and participatory observation	distribution of questionnaires and interviews
Second month first week	Kampala district	data collection and arrangement	compiling	organization of data and report

				preparation
week 2-3	Kampala district	typing printing and binding	submission of report	distribution to the required

3.7.1 Budget

Table 3: Budget

transport	100,000/
airtime	50,000/
accommodation	120,000/
printing questionnaires	20,000/
data collection and distribution	30,000/
printing and binding	50,000/
miscellaneous	30,000/
Total	400,000/

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0   Introduction

The chapter presents presentation, analysis and interpretation of findings derived from both primary and secondary sources basing on the stated objectives of the study. This was done using simple frequency, percentage tables and for easy understanding.

4.1   Findings on the response

The response rate can be presented in the table as shown below:

Table 4:   Response rate

Category	Sample Size	Response	Percentage (%)
Opinion leaders	5	3	7.5
Staff of beat fm.	10	8	20
listeners	20	17	42.5
Total	**35**	**28**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

According to the table above, most of the questionnaires distributed were filled and collected. Thus the researcher obtained over 20% response rate. This implies

that data obtained was not so adequate and sufficient to find solutions to the research problem.

4.2 Findings on respondents' bio data

The researcher obtained bio-data in respect of age, gender, marital status and the duration with Beat fm. as staff and listeners, opinion leaders respectively.

4.2.1 Findings on gender

Table 5: Respondents' gender

	Opinion leaders Frequency	%	Staff of beat fm Frequency	%	Listeners frequency	%	Total Frequency
Male	2	66.7	5	62.5	10	58.8	17
Female	1	33.3	3	37.5	7	41.2	11
Total	**3**	**100**	**8**	**100**	**17**		**28**

Source: Primary data

Observation of the responses indicated that 2 (66.7%) were male opinion leaders while 1 (33.3%) was a female opinion leader, 5 (62.5%) were male beat fm employees while 3 (37.5%) were beat fm employees, 10 (58.8%) were male listeners while 7 (41.2 %) were female listeners. This shows that men dominated women an indication that they are men who form the biggest proportion beat fm, listener and opinion leaders.

4.2.2 Findings on respondents' age

Table 6: Respondents' age

Age of respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-24	7	17.5
25-30	10	25
31-35	15	37.5
ABOVE 35	8	20
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Primary data

From the table above, it shows that the survey population aged 18-24 was 7 (17.5%), 25-30 was 10 (25%), 31-35 was 15 (37.5%) and among the respondents there were only 8 (20%) aged above 35. This shows that the respondents mostly were of the age between 31-35 and could give reliable information and this also indicates that most of the opinion leaders, beat fm employees and interviewed listeners lie within this age brackets.

4.2.3 Findings on respondents' marital status

Table 7: Respondents' marital status

Marital status	Opinion leaders Frequency	%	Staff of beat fm Frequency	%	Listeners frequency	%	Total Frequency
Married	3	100	6	75	12	70.6	21
Single	-	-	2	25	5	29.4	7
Total	**3**	**100**	**8**	**100**	**17**		**28**

Source: Primary data

From the table above, it's shown that all the respondents from opinion leaders were married 3 (100), 6 (75%) beat fm staff were married while 2 (25 %) were single, 12 (70.6%) listeners were married while 5 (29.6%) were single. This shows that over 75% 0f the survey population were married who gave reliable information and also it implies that opinion leaders are reliable people as well as the working staff of beat fm and the listeners who tune in for developmental reasons.

4.3 Findings on level of content formation and programming

The respondents were asked if the media (beat fm.) was designing its content and programmes in focus to national development.

Table 8: Level of content formation and programming towards national development

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	30	75
Agree	10	25
Strongly Disagree	-	-
Disagree	-	-
Total	**40**	**100**

Source: Primary data

From the table above, 30 (75%) of the respondents were of the view that the content formed at beat fm was not at all in focus to national development while 10 (25%) agree that to some extent the content formed and programmes at beat fm is in focus to national development, no respondent disagreed. This implies that though the content formed is not in direct focus to national development to some extant they have tried to look at national development in their content formation and programming.

4.4 Findings on respondent's general comments

The data collected revealed that the media has tried to look forward to national development but there operation has been hindered by several points that include

stakeholders' interference, profit invasion in the media, competition within the media among others.

However, there are some other factors that affect content formation and programming which constitutes the 13 % and these may include natural endowment, population of the country and political factors.

Basically it is because privatization deals with making profits to survive in the stiff competition then the media ends up focusing on entertainment programmes to maximize there audience and to make sure that they have a very good advertising background in order to make profits.

If that was not the case then every media house would have heir content formed and programmed towards national development because the researcher learnt from the research that the media programmers also know the role of the media towards national development but at ties it is inevitable.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary, conclusion and recommendations relating to

the objectives as discussed and interpreted in the previous chapter.

5.1   Summary of the findings

From the discussion and interpretation in the previous chapter, the following

points can be noted from the findings;

The media council of Uganda first and fore most has done very little to enhance

the formation of content and programming in direct focus to national development

and all they do is sit back and relax so at the end of the day you find that the

media owners are in complete charge of what is supposed to be done within the

media.

Not a lot can be done to eliminate this problem because of the privatization of the

media and since the media survives from advertisement and for it to win

advertisers it has to have a steady audience then it has to have more entertainment

to hook more listeners and this is true without dought.

Globalization of the media has also enhanced the poor content formation and

programming in the media of Uganda. Today people differentiate the media by

content in that those who can afford adapt to international media for developmental purposes and utilize the local media purposely for local news and entertainment which leads to poor content formation and programming.

5.2   Conclusion

In Uganda, the problem of poor content formation has decreased the level of domestic development in that it does not play its basic role of informing the public what would help them develop and even when they try to do so they give a very limited time to developmental programmes.

However, some where the media tries to bring in some programmes that focus on issues like health, domestic violence, agriculture, politics but as already discussed they don't give them enough time to express in details to the public to their benefit.

The best way to eliminate the problem of poor content formation is to educate the mass, make sure that the programmers have the right qualifications and the media should also do what it aught to do towards proper content formation and programming.

5.3   Recommendations

In order to improve on the level of content formation and programming in Uganda laws governing content formation should be created, cultivated, monitored and enforced. The researcher recommends implementation of the following;

The media council should put in place strict regulations for the content formed in the media and how programmes should be designed to focus on the national development of our country.

Employers should make sure that they employ people with appropriate knowledge about content formation and programming so that they can use that knowledge to design programmes and form content in focus to national development.

Advertisers who are the greatest influence in the formation of content and programmes should be advised not to focus only on entertainment programmes but also focus on developmental programmes that are of benefit of the populace in terms of national development.

Government should also look at the media as a source of knowledge and information and should enforce proper content formation and programming in response to national development.

The populace should also be taught about what kind of programmes they aught to get from the broadcasting media and they should not take it for granted that

broadcasting media is only entertainment based for the benefit of national development through the media.

Lastly media workers should understand that the media is the fourth estate of the state therefore they have to use it in response to the objectives of the state whereby the main of objective of the state is usually development in all spheres thus socially, economically and politically.

5.4   Areas for further research

The areas for further research include;

Future researcher should carry out a study across the effects of the poor content formation and programming towards the populace in Uganda.

Future researchers should also carry out a study on how effective the media council has tried to eliminate the problem of poor content formation and programming.

Carry out a study on the government response towards poor content formation and programming and what it aught to do for the media to increase the levels of content formation and programming in the broadcast media.

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Democracy.

APPENDICES

QUESTIONAIRE

I KAZIBA KENNETH hereby do declare that this questionnaire will remain confidential. It is not for any other use other than for academic purpose. This questionnaire is therefore partial fulfillment towards my award of the bachelors' degree in mass communication.

Part A: Personal information

Sex:

(a) Male   ☐   **(a)** Female   ☐

Age:

(a) 15-30   ☐   (b) 31-40   ☐

(c) 23 -30   ☐   (d) 40-50   ☐

Marriage   status

(a)   Marriage   ☐   (b) Single   ☐

Religion

(a) Catholic   ☐   (b) Protestant   ☐

(c) Muslim   ☐   (d) others (specify)   ☐

Education level

None   ☐   Primary   ☐

Secondary   ☐   Tertiary   ☐

Part B

Do you listen to radio?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

If yes specify

i...

ii..

iii ....

Have you listened to beat fm before?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

If you have listened to it, what kind of programmes interest you and why?

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Do those programmes that you listen to help you in anyway to develop?

Yes   No

If yes how?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Part C

The media is supposed to have programmes in focus to national development. Do you agree or not?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If no why…………………………………………………………………………………………..

………………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Government has tried to watch over what the media is doing in terms of content and programming. Do you agree or not?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes how?

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…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Is the content formed and programmes at 96.3 beat fm in focus to national development?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes which one in particular?

....

....

How can the media enhance the content formation and programming especially beat fm 96.3?

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Is the media ready to disappoint the advertisers that it maximizes through entertainment programmes?

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Has the media council done what is needed to overcome this problem?

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....

Comment about the media response towards national development in general.

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....

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.