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Assessment of Armed Forces Radio Programming in the Civil-Military Relationship in FCT

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Abstract

Civil–military relations remain a critical dimension of national cohesion and public trust, and broadcast media increasingly serve as a strategic platform for fostering mutual understanding between civilians and military institutions. This study assessed the impact of Armed Forces Radio programming on civil–military relations in the Federal Capital Territory. Guided by Agenda Setting Theory, the study employed a survey research design using a questionnaire to elicit data from respondents. From a population of 1,693,400, a sample of 400 participants was selected for the study. The findings showed that 79% of members of the public within the AMAC community had regular access to Armed Forces Radio and were allowed to participate in programmes promoting civil–military relations. The study further revealed that Armed Forces Radio programming has a significant positive impact on fostering understanding and collaboration between civilians and the military in real-life contexts, although some audience members remained skeptical about the military's sincerity in sustaining peace and cordial relations with civilians. These findings indicate that the military has made deliberate efforts through broadcasting to create a platform for strengthening civil–military relations. The

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study therefore underscores the importance of expanding signal coverage to rural areas and sustaining audience-centered programming to consolidate positive public perception and enhance participatory communication in support of stronger civil–military engagement.

Keywords: Agenda Setting Theory; Armed Forces Radio; Civil–Military Relations; Public Perception; Radio Programming

INTRODUCTION

The quality of civil–military relations is a crucial component of national stability, democratic consolidation and public trust in security institutions. In Nigeria, historical tensions between civilians and the military shaped by years of military rule, human-rights concerns, security challenges, and public perceptions of opacity have created a communication gap that often fuels suspicion and misunderstanding. Scholars such as Fayemi (2018) argue that effective communication mechanisms are central to bridging this gap, especially in societies with a long legacy of mistrust between civilians and the armed forces. Against this backdrop, mass media platforms owned or managed by the military have become strategic tools for public engagement, transparency, and community relations.

The establishment of Armed Forces Radio in Abuja in 2015 was part of a broader institutional effort to improve civil–military communication, enhance public understanding of military operations and demystify military culture. According to Oladipo (2020), military broadcasting stations globally are increasingly adopting public-oriented programming to humanise the armed forces, counter misinformation, and promote collaborative security practices. In Nigeria, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) presents a unique context because it is the administrative seat of government, a hub for national institutions, and a diverse metropolitan setting where perceptions of the military are influenced by political awareness, media exposure, and direct encounters with security agencies.

Radio remains one of the most accessible communication channels in Nigeria, reaching urban and semi-urban audiences at low cost and with high frequency. As Akinbobola and Oso (2021) note, radio maintains a strong agenda-setting function in Nigeria by shaping public opinion on governance, security and community affairs. This positions Armed Forces Radio as a potentially powerful platform for strengthening civil–military relations through programs that explain military activities, highlight community

outreach, promote safety awareness, and allow for dialogue between civilians and the armed forces. However, the extent to which the station's programming fulfils this mandate requires systematic examination. The military is mostly angered by high-profile missteps from the media, such as revealing tactical positions and embellishing reportage when embedded with a military tactical unit (War-Room, 2019). The reports from the mass media can either spoil the image of the Nigerian Armed Forces or build its image. It is therefore imperative to investigate the impact of the media particularly radio which enjoys rural and urban listenership on civil-military relationship.

Statement of the Problem

The military is an important organization of the modern state. The contribution of the military to nation building cannot be overemphasized or waved aside however stated. Despite the fundamental role of the armed forces, their relationships with the civilians have been a major concern over the years (Aboluwe, 2019). The military has been noted in the past for the use of violence in dealing with the civilians and their desire at toppling civilian governments at a slight mistake. The military has used this access to the instruments of violence to control government not only in Nigeria but other African countries. In Nigeria, during the various military regimes, the civil-military relations were marred with violation of human rights and consequent strains relationship.

Existing research suggests that communication strategies employed by security agencies often face challenges of message framing, public credibility and audience perception, particularly in contexts marked by fear of militarisation or concerns about media control (Ekeanyanwu & Okoye, 2019). For military broadcasting to positively influence civil–military relations, programming must reflect principles of participatory communication, transparency and responsiveness. This aligns with the view that communication for security is most effective when it integrates both informational and relational approaches to build long-term trust (Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

In the FCT, episodes of public–military friction, such as roadblock encounters, protests, security operations and civil disturbances, highlight the importance of having a credible communication platform that can reduce tension and promote understanding. Armed Forces Radio has the potential to fulfil this role by providing accurate security information, highlighting military contributions to national development, and offering spaces where civilians can ask questions or make contributions. Yet, as observed by

Abdullahi (2022), the degree to which military-owned media adopt inclusive programming formats and audience-centered content determines whether they serve as tools of public engagement or instruments of institutional propaganda.

Despite the strategic importance of Armed Forces Radio, empirical studies assessing its programming and its actual impact on civil–military relations remain limited. Most available literature focuses broadly on security communication or media roles in peacebuilding without specifically examining military broadcasting in Nigeria and its impact on civil-military relations. This gap underscores the need for a systematic assessment of Armed Forces Radio programming within the civil–military communication framework in the FCT. Such assessment is essential to understand its effectiveness, identify programming strengths and deficiencies, and determine how the station contributes to building trust, transparency and mutual understanding between civilians and the military in Nigeria's federal capital. It is in response to this that the Nigerian military established Armed Forces Radio in Abuja to create an avenue for fostering civil-military relationship. It is against this backdrop that this study aims at the assessment of armed forces radio programming in civil-military relationship in the FCT.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the work is to establish the public assessment of Armed Forces radio with a special focus on the civil-military relationship. Specific objectives of the study are to:

1. investigate the level to which members of the public access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship.
2. determine how the programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship.
3. examine the impact of the establishment of Armed forces programmes on the state of civil-military relations.

Conceptual Review

The major concept constituting the study was reviewed to provide additional contextual insight into the study.

Civil- Military Relations

Civil-military relations is a broad, multidisciplinary field that examines the institutional, political and social relationships between armed forces and the societies and governments they serve. At its core the concept addresses who holds ultimate authority over the use of force, how military power is subordinated to political control, and how the professional identity and behaviour of the military interact with civilian values, institutions and policy objectives (Huntington, 1957). Classical treatments frame civil-military relations as a problem of balancing two sometimes competing goods: effective defence provided by a competent, apolitical military and democratic accountability ensured by civilian oversight and control (Janowitz, 1960; Finer, 1962).

Samuel P. Huntington's foundational account emphasises the professional autonomy of the military and argues that stability in civil-military relations is best achieved when civilians grant the armed forces technical control over military matters while retaining ultimate political authority — a division he labels "objective civilian control" (Huntington, 1957). Huntington's position stresses the military's expertise, cohesion and distance from politics as safeguards against politicisation and coups. Morris Janowitz offered a complementary but distinct perspective by highlighting the socialisation of military personnel into broader society and arguing that the modern officer corps is increasingly integrated with civilian institutions; Janowitz therefore expected convergence between military and civilian attitudes in democratising societies and emphasised the role of the military as a "constabulary" force engaged in internal order and civic relations (Janowitz, 1960). Where Huntington foregrounds institutional separation to maintain professionalism, Janowitz foregrounds social integration as a pathway to legitimate civilian control.

Early comparative work on the topic extended these foundational debates by analysing patterns of praetorianism, coups and military intervention. Cecil V. Finer argued that military intervention in politics often correlates with weak political institutions, fragmented elites and ambiguous modes of recruitment and promotion within security forces; his historical-comparative account linked structural political vulnerabilities to the propensity for military intervention (Finer, 1962). Building on these structural concerns, later scholarship brought more formal institutional and behavioral models to bear. Michael Desch focused on how regime type, threat perceptions and institutional incentives shape civilian control and military behaviour; his work showed that external threat environments,

civil-military bargaining power, and the internal organisation of the military significantly influence the quality of civilian control (Desch, 1999).

Review of Related Literature

In this section, relevant literatures were reviewed in line with the research objectives.

Level of Public Access to Radio Programmes on Civil-Military Relations in Nigeria

Radio has been a prominent medium of communication in Nigeria, especially in rural and underserved areas, where access to other forms of media such as television or the internet may be limited (Oyediran& Adewuyi, 2018). According to Olatunji (2020), radio remains the most accessible form of mass communication in Nigeria due to its affordability and the relative ease of access, even in remote areas. Civil-military relations, particularly within the Nigerian context, are often addressed through radio programmes aimed at educating the public on security issues, military governance, and civilian oversight. Civil-military relations in Nigeria have been characterized by tension, especially following periods of military rule. The military's involvement in politics and governance has generated a range of public sentiments, from suspicion and fear to admiration for its role in maintaining national stability (Akinola, 2021). Radio, as an accessible medium, provides an opportunity for dialogue and reflection on the state of these relations, potentially influencing public understanding and attitudes.

The content and format of radio programmes on civil-military relations also determine the level of public engagement. Programmes that are tailored to the interests and literacy levels of the target audience tend to have higher listenership. Research by Omodia and Agbaje (2022) shows that radio programmes that incorporate interactive formats such as phone-ins, community discussions, or interviews with military officials and civilian experts are more engaging and tend to have a wider reach. Moreover, the framing of military-civilian interactions matters. Programmes that portray the military in a positive light, focusing on its role in national security, may attract audiences who favor military influence in governance. On the other hand, programmes that critique military interference in democratic processes or examine the potential dangers of excessive military power often appeal to those advocating for democratic reforms (Adeyemi, 2020).

Several studies have explored the level of public engagement with radio programmes that discuss civil-military relations. A survey conducted by Akintoye and Okunoye (2019) in Lagos and Ogun states revealed that while a significant proportion of

the public had access to radio, only 45% actively engaged with programmes specifically related to military governance or civil-military interactions. The survey also found that public engagement was higher among educated individuals and those who regularly followed political news. Radio listenership data published by the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) (2022) further indicates that while the majority of Nigerians (about 75%) have access to radio broadcasts, only a small fraction (around 30%) engage with content related to political or military issues. This gap suggests that while the potential for dissemination of information about civil-military relations is high, actual public consumption and engagement are relatively low.

The Role of Radio in Promoting Civil-Military Relations in Nigeria

Radio has long been a powerful medium for communication in Nigeria, a country with diverse linguistic, cultural, and political landscapes. Given Nigeria's history of military rule and its ongoing efforts to consolidate democratic governance, civil-military relations have been a contentious and dynamic area of public discourse. Media, especially radio, has been at the forefront of promoting dialogue, awareness, and understanding of civil-military interactions. This literature review examines the role of radio in fostering positive civil-military relations in Nigeria, exploring how radio programming influences public perceptions of the military, promotes civilian engagement with the military, and contributes to democratic governance.

Radio, as a primary means of communication in Nigeria, is a powerful tool for promoting dialogue between the military and the civilian population. Studies have shown that despite the rise of digital media, radio continues to be the most accessible form of mass communication in Nigeria, especially in rural areas where other media may not be readily available (Oyediran& Adewuyi, 2018). As a result, radio serves as an important platform for educating the public about military roles, responsibilities, and activities, thereby promoting transparency and understanding in civil-military relations. One of the key ways radios promote positive civil-military relations is through its role in educating the public about the military's function in society. Programs on national security, defense policies, and military-civilian cooperation help to demystify the military's role and reduce suspicions that often arise due to past military rule (Olatunji, 2020). According to Akintoye and Okunoye (2019), radio stations often invite military experts, retired officers, and civilian analysts to participate in discussions about the military's contributions to national

security, such as in the fight against insurgency, terrorism, and other security challenges. These programs aim to foster a better understanding of the military's role in safeguarding democracy and promoting national stability.

Theoretical framework

Agenda setting theory was selected to serve as the theoretical underpinning for the study

Agenda Setting Theory

According to Cohen (1963) and Lippmann (1946), the news media are the main message intermediaries influencing the public's view of the world. According to Prior (2013), Protess & McCombs (2016) and Luo et al. (2019), news media remain the main means for the majority of people to learn about the outside world. The agenda-setting theory, as propounded by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in1972/1973, proposes that facts which people know about public issues tend to be those that the mass media presents to them. The theory rests on the basic assumption that the mass media sets agenda for public discussion, as they may not always determine what we think, but what we think about (Folorunsho, Adegboye, Adewumi& Yunus, 2021).

The agenda-setting theory was developed as a study in 1968 and first introduced in 1972 by Drs. McCombs and Donald Shaw (Freeland, 2012). The theory, also known as the 'agenda-setting function of the mass media', suggested that the media set the public agenda by telling the public what to think about, although not exactly what to think. In its most basic sense, agenda-setting is the creation of public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media. The two most basic assumptions of agenda-setting are:

(i) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it, and (ii) media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues. The time frame for this is one of the most critical aspects of the agenda-setting role in mass communications (Chaffee, 2021; Freeland, 2012; Langer, Gruber, 2021).

The agenda-setting hypothesis was investigated for the first time by McCombs and Shaw (see McCombs, Shaw, 1972). According to agenda-setting theory, what the media considers important will eventually be reflected in what community members consider vital. It helps to shape public opinion and disseminate information about the benefits and drawbacks of ascertain issue. When agenda are created, the focus of attention shifts from

immediate effects on attitudes and opinions to long-term effects on cognition. People obtain accurate knowledge about public events via the media, but readers and viewers also learn how much importance they allocate to a topic based on its focus in the news media.

The mass media most especially radio as in the context of this study owe sacred obligations to the public particularly in helping to promote relationships that are beneficial to the society. Civil-military relationship has been straining in Nigeria for long as there exists a line of dichotomy between civilians and the military which makes the relationship to be adversarial. However, the radio serves as a veritable tool most particularly Armed forces radio which give room for custom made programmes aimed at promoting civil-military relationship.

METHODS

This study adopted survey research, which is the quantitative research methods used for a clear understanding of the research problem (Wimmer & Dominic, 2003, p. 108). This study examined the "Assessment of Armed Forces Radio on the Civil-Military Relationship. Hence, this method is appropriate for investigating the questions raised in the study. The researcher believes that this method will enable him to describe precisely the result of the study and the instrument was administered to a scientifically selected sample, using appropriate statistics.

The target population of this study consists of Abuja Municipal Area Council residents who largely constitute the primary population of the listeners of Armed Forces Radio, Abuja. In addition to that, the study will be limited to Abuja Municipal Area Counmcil due to the limited reach of the radio frequency at 107.7MHz. Owing to geographical proximity, most of the listeners are from within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The population of residents in FCT Abuja is 1,693,400 according to National Bureau of Statistics projected population, 2024.

Taro Yamane's statistical calculation was used to determine the sample size of a population of eleven million, two hundred and forty-nine thousand, eight hundred and twelve (11,249,812), meant for this study.

The sample size can be determined by using Taro Yamane formula: = N

1 +*N* (e) 2

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)2}$$

Where :

n= sample size required

N = number of people in the population

e = allowable error (%)

Substitute numbers in formula:

$$n = \frac{1{,}693{,}400}{(1 + 1{,}693{,}400(0.05)2)}$$

$$n = \frac{1{,}693{,}400}{(1 + 1{,}693{,}400(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1{,}693{,}400}{(1 + 4233.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{1{,}693{,}400}{4234.5}$$

$$\frac{1{,}693{,}400}{(1 + 1{,}693{,}400(0.05)2)}$$

$$n = 399.95$$

$$n = 400$$

RESULTS

Table 1: Showing how members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship with absolute clarity.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, to a very high extent	119	30.2%
Yes, to a moderate extent	230	58.3%
Yes, to a low extent	45	11.5%
Total	394	100 %

Data on table 1 above shows if members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship with absolute clarity.

The implication of the data is that majority of the respondents said Yes, to a moderate extent, members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship with absolute clarity, as shown by 230 respondents representing (58.3%) of the entire respondents.

Table 2 Showing how members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship on daily basis.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, to a very high extent	79	20.1%
Yes, to a moderate extent	293	74.3%
Yes, to a low extent	22	5.6%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 2 above shows how Members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship on daily basis. The implication of the data is that majority of the respondents said Yes, to a moderate extent, Members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship on daily basis as shown by 293 respondents representing (74.3%) of the entire respondents.

Table 3 Showing how Members of the public within AMAC community are allowed to participate in programmes on Armed Forces Radio on civil-military relationship.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, to a very high extent	161	40.9%
Yes, to a moderate extent	198	50.2%
Yes, to a low extent	35	8.9%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 3 above shows how Members of the public within AMAC community are allowed to participate in programmes on Armed Forces Radio on civil-military relationship. The implication of the data is that majority of the respondents said Yes, to a moderate extent, Members of the public within AMAC community are allowed to participate in programmes on Armed Forces Radio on civil-military relationship as shown by 198 respondents representing (50.2%) of the entire respondents.

Table 4: Showing if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship via dialogue in radio programmes.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	133	33.8%
Agree	186	47.2%
Neutral	38	9.7%
Disagree Strongly Disagree	22 15	5.5% 3.8%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 4 above shows if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship via dialogue in radio programmes. The implication of the data is that majority of respondents agreed that Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship via dialogue in radio programmes as shown by 186respondents representing (47.2%) of the entire respondents.

Table 5: Showing if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through corporate social responsibility by the military.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	164	41.7%
Agree	128	32.4%
Neutral	45	11.4%
Disagree Strongly Disagree	34 23	8.7% 5.8%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 5 above shows if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through corporate social responsibility by the military. The implication of the data is that majority of respondents strongly agreed that if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through corporate social responsibility by the military as shown by 164 respondents representing (41.7%) of the entire respondents.

Table 6: Showing if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through advocacy in the radio programmes.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	49	12.4%
Agree	268	68.0%
Neutral	32	8.1%

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Disagree Strongly Disagree	25 20	6.3% 5.0%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 6 above shows if Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through advocacy in the radio programmes. The implication of the data is that majority of respondents agreed that Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through advocacy in the radio programmes as shown by 268 respondents representing (68.0%) of the entire respondents.

Table 7: Showing how the establishment of Armed forces radio has positive impact on the civil-military relationship within AMAC community and beyond.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	69	26.3%
Agree	189	44.8%
Neutral	102	13.1%
Disagree Strongly Disagree	15 19	7.2% 8.6%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 7 above shows how the establishment of Armed forces radio has positive impact on the civil-military relationship within AMAC community and beyond. The implication of the data is that the majority of respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio has positive impact on the civil-military relationship within AMAC community and beyond as shown by 189 respondents representing (44.8%) of the entire respondents.

Table 8: Showing how the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes mutual understanding between civilians and the military within AMAC community and beyond.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	53	13.4%
Agree	174	44.1%
Neutral	128	32.5%
Disagree Strongly Disagree	34 5	8.7% 1.3%
Total	394	100 %

Data on table 8 above shows how the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes mutual understanding between civilians and the military within AMAC community and beyond. The implication of the data is that the majority of respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes mutual understanding between civilians and the military within AMAC community and beyond as shown by 174 respondents representing (44.1%) of the entire respondents.

Table 9: Showing how the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes civil-military collaboration and partnership within AMAC community and beyond.

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	151	38.3%
Agree	167	42.3%
Neutral	23	5.9%
Disagree Strongly Disagree	42 11	10.7% 2.8%
Total	394	100 %

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Data on table 9 above shows how the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes civil-military collaboration and partnership within AMAC community and beyond. The implication of the data is that the majority of respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes civil-military collaboration and partnership within AMAC community and beyond as shown by 167 respondents representing (42.3%) of the entire respondents.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the current study were discussed thematically in line with the research objectives as an attempt towards answering the research questions.

What is the level to which members of the public access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship?

The research question aimed at investigating the level to which members of the public access Armed Forces Radio programmes on Civil-Military relationship. Findings from the study revealed that majority of the respondents affirmed "Yes" to a moderate extent, members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship with absolute clarity, as shown by 230

respondents representing (58.3%) of the entire respondents. Furthermore, 293 respondents representing (74.3%) of the entire respondents said "Yes", to a moderate extent, members of the public within AMAC community access Armed Forces Radio programmes on civil military relationship on daily basis and 198 respondents representing (50.2%) of the entire respondents also affirmed that to a moderate extent members of the public within AMAC community are allowed to participate in programmes on Armed Forces Radio on civil-military relationship. Apparently, it could be deduced from the findings of the study that members of the public within AMAC community enjoy high level of access to Armed Forces Radio on regular basis and are allowed to participate on programmes promoting Civil-Military relationship. This shows deliberate efforts have been made by the military through the Armed Forces Radio to create an avenue for the promotion of Civil-Military relationship through broadcasting.

The findings of this study agree with the findings of Olamide and Segun (2019) assessed the level of youth engagement with radio programming on national security. The study found that radio programmes targeted at young people, particularly those discussing the role of the military in counterterrorism efforts, had a significant impact in changing youth attitudes towards the military. Younger listeners, especially those from conflict-prone areas, reported feeling more connected to national security issues when discussed openly on radio.

On the other hand, Akinola (2021) conducted a comparative study in urban and rural Nigeria, assessing how radio programmes promote civil-military understanding. Findings revealed that urban dwellers engaged more critically with radio programmes due to higher literacy rates and greater media exposure. However, rural listeners were found to have a more direct, lived experience with military operations, which influenced their perception of the military. Radio was found to play a pivotal role in bridging the information gap in rural areas by providing explanations about military activities, such as counterinsurgency operations in the northeast. This shows radio programmes on civil-military relations are more accessible in the urban areas compared to the rural areas where the large population of Nigerians live.

How do the programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship?

This research question sought to determine how programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship. Results from the study show that programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship via dialogue in radio the programmes as shown by 186 respondents representing (47.2%) of the entire respondents. In addition, 164 respondents representing (41.7%) of the entire respondents strongly agreed that programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through corporate social responsibility (CSR) by the military and 268 respondents representing (68.0%) of the entire respondents agreed that Programmes on Armed Forces radio promote civil-military relationship through advocacy in the radio programmes. An analysis on the various programmes aired at Armed Forces Radio revealed that different programmes have been featured on their broadcast schedule with the specific aim of fostering Civil Military relationship which borders mainly on advocacy on civilians' rights and dialogue as evident in the study.

The findings of the current study align with the findings of Akinola andOkunoye (2019) who explored the effectiveness of interactive radio programmes, such as call-in shows and live discussions, in facilitating dialogue between the military and the public. Their study revealed that when the military directly interacted with civilians through these programmes, it resulted in improved transparency and accountability. Audiences reported feeling more engaged and understood, which helped to humanize the military and promote a more favorable view of its role in society. It is apposite to note that interactive programmes on the radio that foster dialogue and open discussion have the potency to promote civil-military relations in real life as evident from the findings of both studies. Priority needs to be given programmes that promote dialogue and interaction between civilians and the military.

This is in tandem with the major postulation of agenda setting theory which states that the media raise issues to salience and prominence when they report such issues often and it begins to take centre stage in public discourse thereby influencing public opinion. The media may not be successful in telling the public what to think but they are always successful in telling the public what to think about. Through the agenda setting role of the

media, the Armed forces radio is able to foster civil-military relations among Nigerians via their programming.

What is the impact of the establishment of Armed forces programmes on the state of civil-military relations?

The research question here aimed at examining the impact of the establishment of Armed forces programmes on the state of civil-military relations. Findings from the study indicated that189 respondents representing (44.8%) of the entire respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio has positive impact on the civil-military relationship within AMAC community and beyond. Furthermore, majority of respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes mutual understanding between civilians and the military within AMAC community and beyond as shown by 174 respondents representing (44.1%) of the entire respondents. Additionally, 167 respondents representing (42.3%) of the entire respondents agreed that the establishment of Armed forces radio promotes civil-military collaboration and partnership within AMAC community and beyond. The findings of the study revealed that Armed Forces radio programmes have significant impact in promoting mutual understanding between civilians and the military as well as fostering collaboration and partnership between the duo. This aligns with the major tenet of Agenda setting theory where the media is said to set agenda for the public thereby influencing the opinion of the members of the public towards such issues. In the same vein, radio can be used to shape the image of the Nigerian Armed Forces as well as promoting civil-military relationship in Nigeria. This is particularly so because the mass media influence what the members of the public often should think.

Conversely, Olatunji & Olusola (2021) examined the impact of radio programming on civil-military relations in the Niger Delta, a region where the military's role in security operations has been contentious. The study found that radio programmes focusing on the military's role in maintaining peace in the region were less effective in building trust due to the long-standing history of military abuses in the area. The study suggested that more inclusive radio programming, addressing both the military and civilian grievances, would be needed to change public attitudes.

In the same vein, Olatunji (2020) examined how radio was used in the aftermath of military coups in Nigeria to rebuild trust between the military and the civilian population.

Programs that featured ex-military officers discussing their role in past political transitions, as well as their commitment to national peace and security, were instrumental in restoring some degree of trust. However, the study noted that the legacy of military rule in Nigeria made it difficult for many civilians to fully embrace these messages, especially in regions affected by past military abuses.

This behooves that while radio programming might subtly influence the mindset of the civilians towards relating with the military, there must be deliberate and commensurate effort by the military to match their actions with their words and the radio programmes aired on Armed Forces radio in order to win the already lost trust they had with the civilians. This will go a long way in disabusing the minds of the civilians from the abuses they had suffered in the hands of the military in time past.

CONCLUSION

Consequent upon the findings of this research, the study concludes that Armed Forces radio programme on Civil-Military relationship has a significant impact in fostering understanding and collaboration between civilians and military in real life situations. Be that as it may, some of the audience expressed skepticism in over the sincerity of the military in maintaining peace and cordial relationship with civilians. This was as a result of the uncomely experiences such civilians have had in the past in relating with the military which has left a lasting impression on their minds in spite of the efforts made by the military via the radio programmes aired. This suggest that the military needs to do more in matching their words with their actions do as win the trust of the skeptics towards fostering a more cordial civil-military relationship.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from this study, the following recommendations were given;

1. There is the need for the extension of the signals and frequency of Armed Forces radio to reach rural areas in order to boost the access across urban and rural areas.

2. Armed Forces radio should give more primacy to dialogue centred programmes which are more interactive in bringing together civilians and military.

3. The military should make deliberate efforts in creating cordial relationship with civilians so as to match the content of the Armed Forces radio with their actions in real life as actions speak louder than words.

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