

**THE EVOLUTION OF PODCASTING AND ITS
IMPACT ON MODERN MEDIA CONSUMPTION**

BY

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**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY.**

AUGUST,2025

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MASS
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research study was carried out by Miss EGUNJOBI FLOURISH OLUWAYIMIKA in the department of mass communication under my supervision

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(Project supervisor)

DATE

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(Head of Department)

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STUDENT'S THESIS

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the creator of the universe who has been my anchor all the way and even till the conclusion of this project. I also dedicate this work to my my parents for their unending love and support throughout my academic sojourn in the University of Benin

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ABSTRACT

Podcasting has evolved from a niche digital medium into a mainstream content platform, revolutionizing how people consume and interact with media in the digital era. Originating in the 1980s as 'audioblogs', it has undergone significant transformation. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining descriptive qualitative and quantitative survey designs, to investigate podcast users, utilizing estimated population figures where necessary.

The findings reveal that podcasting has fundamentally transformed media consumption patterns, shifting audiences from traditional scheduled broadcasting towards on-demand, personalized content. Crucially, podcasting empowers individuals and niche groups to create and distribute content, effectively bypassing traditional media gatekeepers. By catering to specific interests, podcasts foster dedicated communities around shared topics.

Consequently, the research recommends that traditional media organizations proactively develop their own podcast offerings and embrace on-demand content strategies to remain competitive.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

In the contemporary era, Podcasts have evolved from a niche digital medium into a mainstream content platform, revolutionizing how people consume and interact with media in the digital era. Podcasts, originally known as audioblogs, date back to the 1980s, but they gained traction with the advent of broadband internet and portable digital audio players.

The term "podcast" combines "iPod" and "broadcast." It was pioneered by Adam Curry and Dave Winer, two friends who sought a way to download radio broadcasts onto an iPod, a groundbreaking device launched in 2001. Podcasts rose in popularity from 2004 and became even more mainstream by 2014. Having existed for over 15 years. Before podcasts emerged in the early 21st century, people had already been experimenting with video blogs and internet radio shows. In 2003, software engineer Dave Winer developed an audio RSS feed for Christopher Lydon, a former New York Times reporter and public radio host. Lydon used this new RSS feed to share notable interviews on his blog, and tapes of these interviews circulated at BloggerCon that same year.

In 2004, Winer teamed up with former MTV VJ Adam Curry to create iPodder, a program that enabled users to download internet radio broadcasts and other audio content to their iPods. These broadcasts soon became known as podcasts, a name inspired by the iPod MP3 player that played them. By the end of 2004, the first podcast hosting platform, Liberated Syndicam, was launched.

In 2005, Steve Jobs integrated podcast subscriptions into iTunes (now Apple Podcasts), marking a turning point. Podcasts, once a niche interest for tech enthusiasts, began their journey into the mainstream.

Bonini (2015) avers that digital technologies have led to a profound transformation in the media landscape in recent years. This has resulted in new and innovative ways of consuming and distributing content.

Podcasts, as on-demand digital audio programs, have become a powerful and influential force in media consumption, disrupting traditional media and offering a platform for diverse voices and storytelling. Podcasts have transformed the way audiences engage with modern media, shifting from a niche industry to a mainstream content platform. They offer a vast range of styles and topics, from brief 15-minute daily news updates to in-depth interviews lasting several hours. Their accessibility has made them an essential medium for millions worldwide, especially as smartphones and internet access have become nearly universal. With most people carrying a smartphone, accessing podcasts has never been easier. Podcasts initially began as an audio-only medium.

However, with their rising popularity, many podcasters have adopted video podcasting to differentiate themselves and expand their audience. Video content is in high demand in 2022,

users spent an average of 19 hours per week watching online videos, nearly 50% more than in 2018. To maximize growth and attract a broader audience, many podcast creators are now incorporating video elements into their shows. Modern media doesn't refer to a single mode of communication. Some forms, like online newspapers, blend both old and modern media, while others, such as podcasts and smartphone apps, are entirely digital innovations. Defining modern media becomes even more complex as technology evolves, continuously reshaping its meaning. In general, modern media includes any digitally delivered content, from newspaper articles and blogs to music and podcasts. Whether through websites, emails, mobile phones, or streaming apps, any internet-based communication falls under the umbrella of modern media.

The era when radio and television were the primary sources of news and entertainment to the digital age dominated by streaming services and social media, the way we access and engage with content has changed dramatically. Podcasts have been a key part of this evolution, offering a unique platform that meets the diverse needs and preferences of modern audiences. One of the most notable shifts in media consumption today is the growing demand for on-demand content.

As McLung and Johnson (2010) avers that, unlike traditional radio, podcasts give listeners complete control over when, where, and how they consume content, creating a highly personalized media experience that seamlessly integrates into daily life. Podcasts offer the flexibility to access content anytime and anywhere, making them especially appealing to busy individuals. Whether commuting, exercising, or doing household chores, listeners can easily tune into their favorite shows, making podcasts an essential part of their daily routines.

The impact of podcasts on modern media consumption is significant; they are widely accessible, requiring only a smartphone and an internet connection. Additionally, platforms like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts make it easy for listeners to discover and subscribe to shows, ensuring they never miss an episode. Bottomley (2015) notes that while podcasting originated from the technical and cultural foundations of radio, it has evolved into a distinct medium that challenges radio's dominance by offering greater convenience, specificity, and listener control.

Radio was one of the first traditional media formats to be impacted by the rise of podcasts. As podcasts grew in popularity, traditional radio stations began losing listeners, particularly among younger audiences who preferred the on-demand nature of podcasts. In response, many radio stations adapted by launching their own podcasts, providing digital versions of their shows to align with shifting consumer preferences. This transition has helped radio remain relevant in the digital age, blending the immediacy of live broadcasting with the flexibility of on-demand listening.

Television has also felt the influence of podcasts, especially in storytelling. Many successful podcasts have been adapted into TV shows, movies, and documentaries, highlighting the medium's crossover appeal. True crime podcasts, in particular, have demonstrated how compelling audio content can translate effectively into visual media. Additionally, some streaming services have started integrating podcast content, further blurring the lines between audio and video entertainment to create a more seamless content experience for users.

1.2 Statement of the problem

As podcasts continue to rise in popularity, they are reshaping the media landscape, challenging traditional media, and introducing new uncertainties about its relevance and audience engagement. The growing demand for on-demand, personalized podcast content raises concerns about the potential displacement of traditional media.

Understanding the characteristics and behaviors of podcast listeners is crucial, as it directly impacts content creation and marketing strategies. However, the lack of comprehensive research in this area makes it difficult to tailor content to the preferences of diverse audiences effectively.

While the rapid expansion of podcasts enhances content diversity, it also brings challenges related to quality control, misinformation, and the representation of niche voices. This raises broader societal and cultural concerns about the influence of unregulated podcast content.

The relationship between podcasts, traditional media, and the larger media ecosystem requires careful examination, as their coexistence and competition remain uncertain. The absence of sufficient research on this dynamic limits a comprehensive understanding of the shifting media landscape.

Given these challenges and uncertainties, there is a pressing need for research to explore the evolution of podcasting and its impact on modern media consumption. Addressing these issues will support informed decision-making within the industry and offer deeper insights into changing media consumption patterns.

1.3 Research Objectives

- 1.To analyze the notable impact of podcasting on modern media consumption patterns.
- 2.To assess how podcasts impact audience behavior, including consumption habits and preferences.
3. To examine diverse voices and perspectives enhance by podcast platform
- 4.To determine whether podcasts enhance or disrupt traditional media and their effects on audience engagement.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1.What is the impact of podcasting on modern media consumption patterns?
- 2.In what ways do podcasts enhance audience behavior, including consumption habits and preferences?
3. How do podcast platforms enhance diversity in voices and perspectives?
- 4.Do podcasts enhance or disrupt traditional media, and how do they affect audience engagement?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is essential for understanding and exploring the evolving landscape of modern media. Podcasting has emerged as a powerful tool for democratization, providing a platform where diverse voices can thrive, even in challenging environments.

Beyond democratization, podcasting has transformed narrative structures and storytelling techniques, fostering meaningful connections with audiences. The study also explores the evolving relationship between podcasting and social media, emphasizing how platforms like Twitter and Instagram enhance audience engagement and community building.

By challenging traditional media hierarchies, podcasting contributes to a more inclusive and participatory communication environment. Its accessibility and ability to cater to niche interests empower individuals and communities to share their perspective on a global scale. As traditional media continues to evolve, this research highlights podcasting's unique attributes, which not only disrupt established communication patterns but also promote a more diverse and representative media landscape.

Podcasts offer an affectionate and captivating storytelling experience, enabling in-depth investigations of topics while promoting audience engagement. This study provides valuable insights for content creators, media professionals, and policymakers looking to leverage the benefits of podcasting for effective and impactful communication in the digital age.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of this study on the rise of podcasting and its impact on media communication patterns is wide, covering multiple dimensions of this evolving medium. It explores the historical development of podcasting, from its origins to its growth, and explores its role in the modern media landscape, analyzing the intricate interactions between technology, culture, and communication.

This study also investigates the democratizing potential of podcasting by assessing its impact on modern media consumption. It delves into listener behaviors, engagement metrics, and the role of podcasting in fostering communities and niche audiences. By tackling these aspects, the research provides a comprehensive understanding of the diverse effects of podcasting.

The study explores the technological advancements and features of podcasting, such as availability, portability, and niche-specific content, to determine how they shape communication patterns. Through this analysis, the research offers valuable insights into the impact of podcasting on communication shifting in today's digital landscape.

1.7 Operational definition of terms

1.Content diversity: Content diversity involves expanding the range of topics, formats, perspectives, and voices in order to engage a broader audience and create a more enriching listening experience.

2. Consumption: Consumption refers to the process of individuals or audiences receiving, interpreting, and engaging with media content

3. Evolution: A gradual process of transformation growth and change

4. Modern media: Modern media includes digital and internet-based communication technologies such as the internet, social media, streaming platforms, and mobile devices.

5. Niche: niche refers to a specific topic or targeted audience that a podcast caters to. It defines the show's focus, helping listeners understand its content and attracting a particular group of people interested in that subject.

6. Podcast: podcast is a digital program that can be downloaded or streamed over the internet. It is typically an episodic series of audio files that users can access on their personal devices and listen to at their convenience.

7. Traditional media: Traditional media includes communication channels such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio that were established before the rise of the internet and digital platforms.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Podcast

Podcasts offer unparalleled accessibility, allowing listeners to engage with content whenever and wherever they choose. As a democratized medium, podcasting empowers individuals from all backgrounds to share their perspectives, fostering a vibrant culture of creativity and dialogue. This innovative platform has rapidly evolved into a powerful tool for personal expression, knowledge dissemination, and brand promotion, making it one of the most transformative communication technologies of the digital age.

A podcast is an internet based audio or video series that uses subscription technology to automatically deliver new episodes directly to listeners' devices. Functioning similarly to a DVR for television, this system eliminates manual searches by pushing content updates through RSS feed technology. Listeners can subscribe to podcasts using dedicated applications like Apple Podcasts, Spotify, or Google Podcasts (known as podcatchers or aggregators). These platforms monitor your subscriptions and automatically download new episodes the moment they're published. This creates a hands off listening experience where fans receive their preferred content without actively tracking release schedules, guaranteeing they always have access to the latest installments of their favorite shows. The subscription model's efficiency lies in its automation once you subscribe to a podcast feed, the technology handles content delivery in the background, ensuring convenience and consistency for both creators and audiences.

Unlike email blasts that force content on you whether you want it or not, podcasts let you choose exactly what to listen to. You're completely in control, you can pick which shows to follow, drop them anytime, and change your subscriptions as your tastes change. This turns the old media model upside down, making the listener the boss who decides what's worth hearing rather than just passively taking whatever content gets pushed at them. It's all about giving power to the audience to curate their own personal listening experience.

Spinelli and Dann (2019) see podcasts as a game changing way to tell stories and connect with listeners. They explain that podcasts aren't just recorded audio, they're a whole new way to share stories that can change style, try creative techniques, and really involve the audience. Unlike regular radio with its set schedule, podcasts let you listen whenever you want, create a personal connection, and even interact with the content. The researchers highlight how podcasts are transforming audio entertainment by being more flexible and engaging than traditional media, completely changing how we experience spoken stories.

Podcasts mostly use MP3 audio files; these are compressed digital files that make it easy to share sound over the internet while keeping good quality. Some podcasts also include videos made for watching online or on phones. The small size of MP3 files helped make online audio popular. Listeners can choose to either play episodes directly online or save them to their devices to hear later whenever they want.

Llinares, Fox, and Berry (2018) describe podcasts as a personal, on-demand audio medium that combines the best of traditional radio with modern digital features. They point out three main things that make podcasts special: you can listen whenever you want (not live like regular radio), take them anywhere on your devices, and enjoy the close, storytelling feel. The researchers compare podcasts to DVRs (like TiVo) for radio letting you access shows whenever you choose. This "listen anytime" feature, where episodes stay available to play later, is a big reason why podcasts have become so popular.

Podcasts are digital audio shows you can stream online or download to listen to later. They come out as regular episodes about all kinds of topics, made by everyone from individual creators to big companies. You can find most podcasts for free on apps like Spotify, Apple Podcasts and Google Podcasts, which is why they've become so popular worldwide. They're like radio shows but you choose when and what to listen to, with new episodes dropping weekly, daily or whenever the creator makes them.

A podcast is like a regular audio or video show about a specific subject. The people who make these shows are known as podcasters. The word "podcast" only came about in 2004, so it's still new. But even though it hasn't been around long, podcasts have already changed how people around the world listen to and watch content. They've become a big deal in how we get information and entertainment today.

Podcasting is one of the easiest and cheapest ways to create audio content. All you really need is a microphone and some simple recording software to get started. Unlike radio or TV, there aren't many rules or restrictions, so practically anyone can make a podcast and share their ideas. Once you create your show, there are many ways to find listeners. Platforms like Apple Podcasts and Spotify help people discover and follow your podcast. Good titles and descriptions can also help your episodes show up in Google searches, bringing in more listeners. Because it's so affordable to make and easy to distribute, podcasting lets all kinds of voices be heard and can reach audiences big or small. This makes podcasts special; they're open to everyone but can still grow to reach lots of people if the content connects with listeners. Whether you're talking about niche hobbies or big ideas, podcasting gives you the tools to share your voice without needing expensive equipment or special permission.

Markman and Sawyer (2014) describe podcasting as an open audio platform that gives regular people the power to create and share content easily. Unlike traditional radio or TV, podcasting doesn't have big companies controlling what gets made or heard. Anyone can start a podcast with basic equipment, and creators can make shows about very specific topics that mainstream media usually ignores. This freedom leads to more variety in content and lets podcasters build close connections with their listeners. The researchers highlight how podcasting allows for more diverse voices, different styles of shows, stronger bonds between creators and audiences, and new ways of making media. Because it's so easy to start a podcast and reach people directly, the platform encourages creativity and helps communities form around shared interests. This makes podcasting very different from old-school broadcasting where only professionals could make content and decisions were made by executives. The whole system is

more open, with creators trying out fresh ideas and building loyal followings without needing approval from media gatekeepers.

Podcasting is a highly flexible medium with no fixed rules or singular purpose. Podcasts serve diverse goals some entertain, others educate, inform, or even inspire laughter. Listeners may tune in to learn about niche topics, stay updated on current events, enjoy humor or storytelling. For creators, podcasting offers unique opportunities expanding reach to new audiences, engaging existing followers more deeply, building trust through community driven content. Unlike traditional media, podcasts thrive on creative freedom, allowing both hosts and listeners to shape the experience according to their needs.

Podcasts have grown into a major media platform in Nigeria, with more than 75 million regular listeners and growing popularity. They work as a powerful tool to share knowledge, inspire people, and build connections through audio content. Essentially, podcasts offer a different way to consume information while some people like reading articles, others enjoy listening to audio because it's more convenient and personal. What makes podcasts special is their adaptability. creators can try different content styles, connect with audiences in unique ways, and play with creative storytelling methods. This ability to adjust and innovate makes podcasts an increasingly important communication tool in Nigeria's digital space, helping creators engage listeners effectively. The format's flexibility and the intimate nature of audio help podcasts stand out as a popular choice for both creators and audiences across the country.

Bonini (2015) describes podcasts as a mix of old school radio and modern digital media. They keep the best parts of radiolike storytelling and regular episodes while adding digital benefits, such as: Listeners choose what, when, and where to listen, Available globally, anytime, More diverse topics than traditional radio. In short, podcasts blend the strengths of both worlds, making them a flexible, modern form of audio media.

2.2 History of podcasts

The idea behind podcasts existed even before the internet became popular. In those early days, they were just personal audio or video recordings that people could share with others. Later, when faster internet connections and online radio stations appeared, they helped podcasts become more widespread and develop into what we know today. These technological advances made it easier for podcasts to grow and reach more listeners over time.

Before they were called podcasts, these were known as "audio blog posts" , a fresh way for people to share their thoughts online by recording and uploading their voices. This new approach lets creators start digital conversations in a more personal way. The credit for developing this idea goes to two pioneers: David Winer, a tech expert who loved blogging, and Christopher Lydon, a journalist. Together, they created the foundation for what we now recognize as modern podcasting, giving people a simple way to record and share audio content with the world.

The concept of podcasting began before the name existed, starting with a conversation between Adam and Dave in 2000. They were discussing how to automatically share media files online. While their initial focus was on video content, they disagreed about how it should work.

Adam liked the idea of subscribing to download videos automatically, but Dave preferred a different approach since he wasn't convinced about video subscriptions. Dave was already developing RSS (Really Simple Syndication), a technology that lets people automatically get updates from websites in a format computers can read. This was revolutionary because it allowed anyone to subscribe to websites and follow new content easily. By combining Adam's subscription idea with his RSS system, Dave started building what would eventually become podcasting technology. This blend of ideas of automatic downloads through subscriptions using RSS formed the foundation for how podcasts work today.

In 2004 four years after their initial discussion Adam and Dave created a program called iPodder. This software allowed people to automatically download radio shows to their iPods. While they had been working toward this goal since 2000, iPodder was what finally established them as the true inventors of podcasting. That same year, journalist Ben Hammersley first used the word "podcasting" in a Guardian article, cleverly blending "iPod" and "broadcast" to name this new technology. This marked the official beginning of podcasting as we know it today.

The podcasting world saw major growth in 2005. That January, the first podcast network Tech Podcasts.com launched, followed by others like The Podcast Network. These networks offered shows about specific topics or mixed content. As more creators started making podcasts, directories like **PodcastAlley.com** and **PodcastPickle.com** appeared to help listeners find shows. With so many important developments happening, 2005 became known as the breakthrough year when podcasting really took off, marking countless firsts and achievements for this new medium.

In July 2005, Apple's Steve Jobs brought podcasts to the masses by adding them to iTunes. This lets users easily subscribe to more than 3,000 shows and download episodes to their computers or iPods for offline listening. Putting podcasts in iTunes made them instantly popular people subscribed to over a million shows in just 48 hours. Apple also created Apple Podcasts (originally called iTunes Podcasts) to help makers produce and share their shows. By making podcasts simple for both listeners and creators, Apple became closely tied to podcasting's early success, showing this new medium's huge potential

Big corporations began seeing podcasts as a promising business opportunity, with Apple taking charge by releasing iTunes 4.9 the first version with built in podcast support. That same year, "podcast" earned the title of Word of the Year from the New Oxford American Dictionary, showing how quickly it became part of mainstream culture. Even U.S. President George W. Bush embraced the trend, making history as the first president to share his weekly address as a podcast, proving this new medium had reached all levels of society

After 2005, podcasting really took off as more companies entered the space, with many receiving investor funding. Most of these businesses made money through podcast advertising. As internet speeds improved and more people went online, podcasts grew rapidly each year. What started as just audio shows expanded to include live performances with audiences, showing how much the medium had evolved. The combination of better technology and growing listener interest helped podcasts move from a niche hobby to a mainstream form of entertainment and information.

In 2021, about 500,000 active podcasters were creating all kinds of audio and video shows. While the biggest original podcasts (not adapted from other media) now regularly attract over a million monthly listeners, most shows typically reach between 1,000 to 50,000 people. The podcast business has grown into a \$23.56 billion industry worldwide. There are now more than 5 million podcasts available, containing over 70 million total episodes, with nearly 465 million people tuning in. Experts predict the audience will grow to about 505 million listeners by year's end, showing how quickly podcasting continues to expand as a popular medium.

2.3 Conceptual review

2.3.1 Conceptualising modern media

Modern media refers both to contemporary communication platforms of our present era and to the new forms of media that emerged during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Historically, the concept was tied to the invention and implementation of groundbreaking techniques in mass communication, marking a shift from traditional methods to innovative technological applications. Modern media refers to the diverse range of platforms and channels used in today's society to distribute information, entertainment, and communication content..

Modern media refers to digital communication platforms and content formats that developed alongside internet technology, such as websites, social networks, and streaming platforms. This category stands in distinction to traditional media channels, which are predominantly represented by print publications and broadcast systems like newspapers and television.

Modern media, often referred to as new media, doesn't represent any single communication format. Some forms, like digital newspapers, are simply electronic versions of traditional print media, while others, such as podcasts and mobile apps, are completely novel creations. The definition grows increasingly complex when we consider how technological progress constantly reshapes what qualifies as new media, making it an evolving concept rather than a fixed category.

New media encompasses all forms of digital communication, whether delivered via websites, email, mobile devices, or streaming platforms. This broad category includes everything from online news articles and blogs to What's considered cutting edge today often becomes outdated tomorrow where DVDs and CDs were once revolutionary for movies and music; they've now been largely replaced by streaming platforms like Netflix and Spotify.

A key feature of these platforms is their interactivity: users don't just passively consume content but actively engage with it. They can create and publish their own material, leave comments, share posts, and even interact in real time, making the experience dynamic and participatory. Another defining feature of new media is its cross-platform accessibility, with most digital platforms available across multiple devices. Take YouTube as an example. This video-sharing service isn't restricted to just one type of device, but can be accessed through smartphones, desktop computers, smart TVs,

Jenkins (2006) underscores the participatory paradigm of contemporary media, arguing that digital environments transform audiences from passive consumers into active co-creators. His work posits that modern media's essence lies in this cultural shift where users routinely modify, reinterpret, and circulate content rather than in technological features alone. This democratization of creative agency, Jenkins contends, redistributes cultural power to everyday participants, fundamentally altering domains ranging from popular entertainment to political discourse.

In *The Mediated Construction of Reality*, Couldry and Hepp (2017) propose that contemporary media has transcended its role as mere communication tools, becoming instead the foundational infrastructure through which social reality is collectively experienced and constituted. Their central thesis challenges the notion of media as passive reflectors of society, instead framing them as the pervasive, invisible ecology that structures human activity influencing everything from labor and intimate relationships to political mobilization and epistemic frameworks. Like water to fish, this mediated environment operates beneath conscious awareness while fundamentally conditioning the possibilities for social action and meaning making.

New media forms the backbone of digital media, operating as a dynamic communication system that enables users to create, modify, and share content affordably (Akinwalere, 2021). It encompasses user generated materials, information, and online content distributed or stored through digital platforms. Today, smartphones and tablets facilitate the delivery and retrieval of new media, allowing users to exchange content globally using simple, often free, tools. Essentially, new media refers to any digitally produced, user-generated, or intentionally accessed content transmitted electronically via computers and digital networks.

Akorga and Tachi (2020) define new media as the creation and dissemination of content to the public via the internet. Additionally, new media can be understood as interactive digital formats, including blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, and other online communication tools

Akinwalere (2021) and Maikaba (2021) describe new media as an evolution of traditional media through the integration of computer technology. According to UK Essays (2017), new media is characterized by its digital nature, relying on numerical and binary codes that allow for manipulation. This includes text, images, and videos produced using computers and distributed via the internet. A key distinguishing feature of new media is its interactivity, an element often absent in traditional media. Unlike conventional forms, new media emphasizes internet-based distribution and exhibition rather than just production (UK Essays, 2017)

2.3.2 Conceptualising traditional media

Traditional media means the old-school ways we got news and entertainment before the internet, things like TV, radio, newspapers and magazines. In these systems, professional teams create the content and send it out to everyone, with regular people just receiving it without much back and forth. It's a one way street where big companies decide what information to share and how to share it.

Traditional media covers familiar advertising channels like radio, TV (both broadcast and cable), newspapers/magazines, and outdoor billboards. These tried and true methods have worked well for businesses for decades. But people still argue about which type works best. A TV salesperson might claim nothing beats television's wide audience, while a radio agent could argue their medium works better because it reaches people when they're out shopping or driving, ready to buy. Truth is, every traditional media option has its pros and cons. What works for your business depends on who you want to reach, what you want to say, how much you can spend, and what format you like best. There's no one size fits all answer different businesses will find different traditional media types work better for their needs.

The author Lister et al (2003) clearly compares traditional media with digital media by highlighting three main differences. First, digital media isn't controlled by a handful of large corporations like traditional TV stations or newspapers. Second, digital content is available whenever you want it, unlike scheduled TV shows or radio programs you have to catch at specific times. Third, regular people can now create and share their own content online, not just consume what professionals make. The mention of Lister's work shows this isn't a small adjustment but a complete transformation in media shifting from the old system where professionals controlled everything to a new, more open approach where audiences participate too. This change mirrors how technology and society have evolved, completely reshaping how media gets made and shared in recent years..

Traditional media means the old ways of sharing information that were popular before the internet. This includes things like newspapers and magazines that get delivered physically, TV and radio shows that air at specific times, and billboards you see outside. In these systems, professional editors and producers decide what content gets made and shared. Big companies control everything from creating the content to distributing it, while regular people just receive it without much chance to interact or respond. These media types make money mainly from ads or big organizations funding them, not from what users do or like. You have to wait for the evening news or tomorrow's paper and always look the same for everyone. This was how most people got their news and entertainment in the 1900s, until the internet came along and let anyone create content and share it anytime.

2.4 Opinion review

2.4.1 Types of podcast

The podcasting world is incredibly varied, offering a wide array of genres and formats that rival other entertainment mediums like books and films. Although comedy reigns as the top genre, others such as true crime, news, and business also attract large audiences.

Podcasts vary greatly in length, tone, and style, with some of the most common formats including:

1. Interview podcasts

Interview podcasts feature one or more hosts conversing with different guests each episode, unified by a consistent theme like relationship guidance, entrepreneurial wisdom, or criminal investigation narratives. Each visitor contributes their distinct viewpoint, providing fresh

perspectives for listeners with every installment. The flexible framework accommodates diverse voices while maintaining thematic coherence, creating clear audience expectations. A key benefit of the interview format lies in its natural promotional capabilities. Guests frequently share their appearances across their networks, expanding the podcast's reach to new audiences. This approach does present certain obstacles, however, including scheduling coordination difficulties and the ongoing challenge of finding compelling participants.

2. Conversational/co-hosted podcast:

These programs generally center on a core theme, either exploring specialized topics in depth or addressing a variety of subjects. The format's primary advantage lies in its lively interchange of perspectives. As multiple presenters contribute their diverse viewpoints, audience members frequently identify with at least one personality, enhancing the program's widespread appeal. Presenters commonly reveal personal anecdotes, shared humor, and insights into their relationships, creating an atmosphere where listeners feel included in the dialogue.

3. Theatrical:

While numerous podcasts concentrate on factual accounts, certain productions venture into fictional territories, offering scripted narratives that unfold across sequential episodes or exist as self-contained stories.

4. Scripted/ Narrative fiction podcasts

Narrative fiction podcasts translate cinematic storytelling to the audio medium through meticulously developed plots, skilled voice performance, enveloping acoustic environments, and musical accompaniment. These audio productions typically follow one of two structures: continuous narratives that develop throughout a season (similar to television series) or compilation style episodes presenting complete stories within each release. This format has experienced notable expansion in listener engagement, largely attributed to its financial efficiency compared to visual content creation. Independent artists can manifest detailed, creative universes without the substantial financial resources demanded by film production. The industry has additionally drawn prominent production entities now making considerable investments in story-based podcasting, frequently featuring celebrated performers as vocal talent, while simultaneously generating prospects for scriptwriters to market their work to these audio-oriented production houses.

5. Scripted non-fiction podcasts

Factual narrative podcasts deliver thoroughly investigated authentic accounts through precisely structured storytelling. This category includes investigative reporting, comprehensive historical explorations, and the widely embraced true crime segment. Similar to fictional audio

productions, these programs may develop as sequential narratives spanning several episodes or present comprehensive accounts within individual releases.

This category has secured considerable influence within the media ecosystem, with numerous successful audio series being transformed into television productions. For content developers, this creates promising possibilities. Skillfully produced factual narrative podcasts frequently generate interest from media companies seeking engaging stories to expand across diverse platforms.

6. Call in Podcast

Presenters may engage with audience members in immediate dialogue, respond to inquiries delivered through recorded messages, or implement both methodologies. Through enabling straightforward communication between hosts and their audience, call-participation programs frequently exhibit a natural, unpredictable atmosphere, guiding episodes toward unanticipated developments.

Nevertheless, participant contributors generally require preliminary evaluation to confirm their compatibility with the program and verify their audio fidelity is sufficient for recording purposes. The program's enchantment resides in its improvised nature; each installment evolves according to the participant's narrative, whether recounting tales of unfaithful partners, deceptive acquaintances, or admissions of unusual fascinations.

7. Repurposed content podcast

Repurposed content podcasts Adapted material podcasts transform previously created narratives from written pieces, visual recordings, or direct transmissions into audio episodes. This approach particularly benefits organizations, companies, and news entities that generate substantial content, enabling them to extend their audience reach. Converting existing content presents several benefits: it enhances listener participation and permits identical information to be distributed through various channels without necessitating completely original material.

8. Hybrid podcast

Hybrid podcasts integrate various presentation styles or distribution techniques, commonly merging auditory and visual components to produce a more captivating experience. The podcast medium offers considerable adaptability, making it ideal for creative exploration. When implementing a blended format, seek audience reactions social networking platforms provide effective means to assess listener responses. Fundamentally, each episode maintains its essential purpose of providing specialist knowledge and actionable guidance.

2.4.2 Impact of podcasting on modern media consumption

In the digital age, where new media relies on technology to deliver information, podcasts serve as an alternative medium, offering content in episodic formats through audio or video recordings distributed via the internet. While podcasts share similarities with radio as an audio based platform, they provide a wider variety of content ranging from educational and scientific topics to purely entertaining material. This diversity makes podcasts a preferred choice for many

audiences seeking tailored information. Today, podcasts are available in both audio only and video formats, with many being hosted on platforms like YouTube.

Podcasts are growing in popularity as a modern alternative to traditional broadcasting in the digital era. One key factor is their flexibility, listeners can enjoy podcast content while multitasking or on the go. Additionally, podcasts serve as an informative medium that broadens perspectives and stimulates new ideas. With their personalized and on-demand nature, podcasts offer a fresh way to distribute audio content, complementing conventional radio and video based platforms. They are easily accessible, secure, and convenient for users. Moreover, podcasts often feature trending topics with high relevance, covering politics, social issues, education, opinion pieces, and more enhanced by audiovisual elements that can be streamed anytime via internet-connected devices. Given these advantages, it's no surprise that many audiences are shifting from traditional broadcast media to podcasts for their information and entertainment needs. In fact, many counter establishment media outlets now utilize podcast platforms to distribute content, often featuring the most trending and controversial topics of the day.

Digital technology has undeniably transformed media communication, shifting from conventional formats to digital platforms with podcasts now replacing traditional broadcast media. The rising popularity of podcasts demonstrates their effectiveness as a modern broadcasting tool. While their content may resemble radio programming, the key distinction lies in podcasts' inherent flexibility. Though often labeled as a contemporary broadcasting medium, podcasts occupy a unique space: unlike radio, which is legally recognized and regulated as broadcast media, podcasts currently operate without formal classification under broadcasting laws.

Offering remarkable diversity in both format and subject matter, podcasts deliver everything from quick 15 minute news updates to extensive multi hour discussions. Their widespread accessibility fueled by near universal smartphone adoption and internet connectivity has established podcasts as a daily essential for millions of global listeners. There are reasons why podcasts stand out in digital space:

1. Accessibility and Convenience:

Podcasts deliver a uniquely convenient, screen-free media experience that fits seamlessly into daily life. While reading and video-watching demand your full attention, podcasts let you learn or be entertained while commuting, working out, or handling chores perfect for time-strapped commuters, busy professionals, and multitasking parents. This frictionless accessibility explains why podcasts have become a mainstream habit across all age groups and lifestyles.

2. Niche Content for Specific Audiences:

Podcasts shatter the limitations of conventional media, thriving without strict editorial boundaries or predetermined schedules. This creative liberty enables producers to dive deep into ultra-specific subjects designed for passionate followers. From quantum computing to obscure film genres, from vintage car restoration to paranormal investigations no interest is too

specialized for the podcast world. It's precisely this capacity to serve hyper focused audiences that has fueled podcasting's rise as a contemporary storytelling powerhouse, building tight-knit communities around shared obsessions.

3. Personal Connection and Engagement:

Podcasts create an unparalleled sense of intimacy between hosts and listeners that other media struggle to match. The natural, conversational style of audio storytelling makes audiences feel like they're in a one on one dialogue, whether with a favorite humorist, investigative reporter, or specialized expert. This genuine rapport builds deeper engagement and transforms casual listeners into devoted fans.

4. Length Flexibility

Podcasts break free from the rigid time constraints of traditional broadcasting, offering content durations tailored to their topics. This adaptability enables creators to craft perfectly paced episodes from bite-sized 15 minute briefings to immersive deep dives spanning hours. As the medium matures, it's being transformed by emerging technologies, evolving listener behaviors, and innovative revenue models.

5. Video Podcasts

Many podcast creators are now expanding into visual formats by producing video versions of their episodes for platforms like YouTube. This multimedia approach enables content producers to engage broader audiences while enhancing the listener experience through complementary visuals.

6.AI and Personalized Content

Sophisticated algorithms now curate personalized listening recommendations by analyzing user behavior, while AI-powered tools streamline content creation through automated transcription and dynamic show note generation. These advancements are reshaping the entire podcast ecosystem.

7.Global Expansion

The podcasting revolution has transcended its Western roots, achieving remarkable adoption across developing regions. Markets such as India are experiencing particularly rapid growth, fueled by native language content that's unlocking fresh creative and commercial potential. This worldwide expansion is fundamentally transforming the industry's dynamics while fostering distinct regional podcast cultures.

2.4.3 Impact of podcasting on traditional media

Podcasting has fundamentally disrupted modern media ecosystems, transforming established models of content production, dissemination, and engagement. As Thompson (2019)

demonstrates, the medium's minimal technological requirements requiring only basic recording capabilities and internet connectivity have democratized audio content creation. This accessibility has precipitated an unprecedented diversification of programming, enabling coverage of specialized subjects frequently excluded from mainstream broadcast channels.

Corbett (2018) pointed out that podcasting gives creators the freedom to cover all kinds of topics, appealing to different audience tastes. Unlike traditional TV or radio with fixed schedules, podcasts let listeners tune in anytime, anywhere, and on any device. This convenience gives people more control over what they listen to, making them more engaged and loyal to their favorite shows. In short, podcasts have completely changed how audiences interact with content.

Peters (2021) highlights how podcasts have created multiple income opportunities for creators, moving beyond just ads. Options like subscriptions, merchandise, live shows, and crowdfunding help reduce reliance on advertising revenue. Meanwhile, traditional media outlets have started incorporating podcasts into their offerings to stay relevant. Van Reijmersdal (2011) notes that podcasts break geographical barriers, reaching global audiences while building strong connections between hosts and listeners. This shift, as Berry (2016) argues, is redefining traditional broadcasting and shaping the future of digital media.

Podcasting has revolutionized media consumption by breaking down traditional barriers to content creation. Unlike conventional broadcasting, podcasts empower independent creators to connect directly with audiences through on-demand, personalized content. This transformation has:

1 Democratization of Content Creation:

By dramatically lowering production barriers, podcasting has empowered grassroots creators to compete with established media outlets. This shift has fostered unprecedented content diversity, redistributing influence from institutional broadcasters to independent voices across the podcast ecosystem.

2.On-Demand Accessibility:

Podcasts shatter the constraints of scheduled broadcasting, delivering content on the listener's terms. This freedom to choose when and where to engage creates a fundamentally more personal media experience.

3.Diversification of the Media Landscape:

Podcasts have given a platform to voices often excluded from mainstream media from niche interests to marginalized communities dramatically expanding the variety of content listeners can discover.

4.Adaptation and Innovation in Traditional Media:

The podcasting boom has compelled broadcasters and publishers to evolve, developing original podcast series, adapting existing material for audio, and pioneering fresh narrative approaches to stay competitive.

5.Increased Listener Engagement:

Podcasts create a deeper connection than traditional media with room for thoughtful conversations and real back and forth between hosts and listeners.

6.Shifting Advertising Landscape:

Podcasts have revolutionized advertising through host-read ads that feel personal and authentic, delivering better results than traditional commercials.

7.Competition with traditional radio:

The rise of podcasts is challenging traditional radio's dominance. With their flexible, on-demand format, podcasts allow users to listen anytime unlike scheduled radio programming. This shift has forced radio stations to create podcast versions of their shows to retain audiences.

8.Changing the way we consume media:

While traditional media fights for your undivided attention, podcasts meet you where you are turning downtime into learning or entertainment. This fundamental accessibility is driving their dominance in modern media diets.

In summary, podcasts are transforming traditional media by reshaping consumption habits and opening new creative possibilities. As listenership grows, this disruptive influence will only intensify, driving continued evolution across the media industry.

2.2.5 Impact of podcast on consumption habits

Podcasts are changing how people enjoy media by letting them listen whenever they want to whatever they choose. Unlike regular radio or TV that airs at set times, podcasts give you complete control: you pick what to hear and when to hear it. This freedom to choose topics you care about and listen to on your own schedule explains why more and more people are tuning into podcasts instead of traditional broadcasts. The ability to customize your listening experience is making audio content more personal than ever before.

1. On-Demand and Flexible Consumption:

Podcasts let people listen whenever and wherever they want at home, on the go, using phones or computers. Unlike regular radio or TV that only plays at certain times, podcasts are always available when you're ready. This makes them perfect for busy lives. You can listen while driving, exercising, or doing chores without being tied to a schedule. The anytime-access means you never miss your favorite shows and can fit them into your daily routine easily.

2. Personalization and Choice:

People can pick podcasts that match exactly what they like whether it's the subject, style or how it's presented. This means everyone gets their own perfect listening experience. When you choose shows that really interest you, you feel more connected to what you're hearing and where you find it. It's like having a radio station made just for you.

3. Rise of Audio-Based Media:

More and more people are choosing to listen rather than watch their entertainment and information, with podcasts being a big part of this shift. You can see this change in how popular audiobooks and music streaming have become too. Unlike TV or videos, podcasts let you focus completely on the sound, creating a special kind of attention and involvement that's different from screen-based media.

4. Beyond Entertainment: Educational and Informational Purposes:

Podcasts do many different things they can entertain you, teach you new things, or help you grow as a person. Lots of podcasts share useful information about all sorts of subjects, turning them into handy tools for learning. They're also great for starting conversations, helping people understand themselves better, and bringing communities together through shared interests. Whether you want to laugh, learn something new, or connect with others, there's likely a podcast that fits what you're looking for.

5. Podcasts influence what people buy

People often trust their favorite podcast hosts, which makes them more likely to buy things the hosts recommend. Because of this trust, ads and product suggestions on podcasts can really sway what listeners purchase. When podcast hosts seem genuine and knowledgeable, their audience tends to be more open to trying the products they talk about. It's like getting advice from a friend you respect you're more inclined to take their suggestions seriously.

2.4.4. challenges and future trends of podcasting

Challenges

Podcasting has several problems that affect its growth and role in today's media. It's hard for listeners to find new podcasts, and creators struggle to make money. There's also a lot of competition, and podcasts need to keep up with changing audience tastes and new technology. These issues can slow down new ideas, make podcasts harder to access, and threaten the future of the industry.

1. Discoverability:

There are so many podcasts out there that it's tough for shows to find more listeners. The way apps recommend content, how searches work, and how podcasts get promoted all make a big difference in whether people can find and try new shows.

2. Monetization:

Podcasts can make money in different ways like ads, sponsorships, and subscriptions, but many creators still find it hard to earn enough. This makes it difficult to keep making good content regularly and can threaten the future of their shows. According to AdNews, money problems affect how long podcasts can last and how good they stay.

3.Competition:

Making a successful podcast is getting harder because so many new shows launch every day. Podcasters now have to work extra hard to stand out, keep their content interesting, and find the right listeners. There's more competition than ever before..

4.Adaptation to Changing Audiences and Technologies:

Podcasters need to keep up because what listeners want keeps changing. They have to adjust their topics, styles, and how they make their shows. New tech like AI and better sound quality brings exciting possibilities but also makes things more complicated.

5.Lack of Awareness and Implementation:

Many schools and teachers don't fully understand how useful podcasts can be for learning. Because of this, they rarely use them in classrooms or teaching methods.

Future trends

Podcasts are changing fast. More shows are adding video, especially on YouTube and Spotify. AI is helping creators by doing jobs like editing and writing show notes. Listeners might soon enjoy more interactive podcasts and shorter episodes. New ways to make money from podcasts are appearing too. The tech keeps improving, with better tools for making and sharing shows. AI will also help suggest podcasts you might like. While regular audio podcasts aren't going away, video podcasts are becoming more popular. These changes mean podcasters need to keep learning new skills.

1. Video Podcasts:

Video podcasts are becoming more popular, especially on YouTube and Spotify. These video shows make listening more interesting and interactive. Some people now like video podcasts better than audio-only ones. Many viewers discover new podcasts through YouTube and Spotify instead of traditional podcast apps.

2. AI Integration:

AI will help podcasters by automatically editing audio, fixing sound quality, and creating written transcripts. It can suggest shows to listeners based on their preferences and adjust content for different audiences. AI tools will also help with creating podcasts, sharing them online, and interacting with fans. The technology will make it easier to connect with voice assistants too

3. Interactive and Immersive Formats:

Listeners will soon play a more active role in podcasts, making choices that shape the content. New sound technologies like 3D audio will make stories feel more real and lifelike. Live podcast recordings, whether online or at actual events, are becoming more common too. These interactive and immersive formats are changing how people experience podcasts.

4. Short-Form Podcasts:

People's attention spans are getting shorter, so podcasters are making quicker, snackable episodes. These bite-sized shows work well for social media sharing and listening while busy.

5. Monetization Opportunities:

Creators are trying fresh ways to make money from their podcasts, like offering paid subscriptions, special bonus episodes, and brand partnerships. AI tools can spot money-making chances by analyzing what listeners like and helping shows attract more fans and sponsors.

6. Growth of Niche Podcasts:

There are now more than 5 million podcasts out there, giving creators lots of room to explore specific interests. This lets hosts dive deep into subjects they care about while building loyal listener communities. The huge variety means there's space for shows about nearly any topic imaginable.

7. Increased Focus on Quality and Audience:

Podcast creators are upgrading their gear and improving sound quality to make shows more enjoyable. AI tools give them insights about their listeners so they can create more relevant content. Hosting live shows and adding interactive elements helps them bond with their audience.

2.5 Empirical studies

A number of empirical research that are relevant to this study have been conducted. This section looks at these studies in the light of the ongoing investigations. The following empirical articles were looked at:

Sylvia Chan-Olmsted and Rang Wang conducted groundbreaking research titled "Understanding Podcast Users: Consumption Motives and Behaviors" in October 2020.

Their study broke new ground implementing an extensive national survey that offered the first thorough analysis of American podcast listeners, focusing specifically on their motivations and usage patterns. The investigation provided valuable insights into this emerging on-demand audio format by exploring what drives consumption, how people engage with podcasts, and how it compares to other audio media choices. Their findings highlighted that people primarily listen to podcasts for entertainment and information, while also valuing the medium's unique advantages over other audio platforms. The research demonstrated that these motivations directly influence various aspects of listening behavior, including when and where people listen, how many

different shows they follow, how deeply they engage with content, and their regular listening habits. The study also examined how podcast usage interacts with other audio options like traditional radio, internet radio, and music streaming services. Importantly, the results established podcasting as a distinct media format with its own special qualities, rather than simply being a portable, on-demand version of conventional radio. The research emphasized that podcast consumption in today's complex media environment involves multiple dimensions that require evaluation from different angles and across various contexts to fully understand listener behavior.

Lisa Perks and Jacob Turner conducted important research in 2019 titled "Podcasts and Productivity: A Qualitative Uses and Gratifications Study," published in Mass Communication and Society, which provides one of the most thorough investigations into how podcasting facilitates and changes media multitasking habits. Their study used a combination of different research methods, including detailed interviews with 36 frequent podcast listeners from various backgrounds, personal listening journals maintained by participants for two weeks recording their podcast habits, and direct observations of people listening to podcasts in real situations. This comprehensive approach helped gather both what people said about their listening behaviors and how they actually listened, overcoming limitations of earlier studies that depended mostly on questionnaires. A major contribution was their development of the "productive listening" concept, explaining how podcasts uniquely allow people to do other tasks while listening. Their findings showed that 83% of podcast listening happens while doing other activities, that audio content doesn't require the same visual attention as other media, that listeners carefully match certain types of podcasts with specific tasks, and that many participants felt they accomplished more by listening to podcasts during routine activities. Unlike television or videos that demand viewers' full attention, podcasts enable continuous engagement alongside other tasks, making them distinct in the media landscape. The research revealed how people intentionally combine particular podcast genres with complementary chores or work to maximize their time and efficiency. Many of those interviewed reported experiencing increased productivity when they incorporated podcasts into their daily routines, demonstrating the medium's special ability to support multitasking in ways that visual media cannot.

Tiziano Bonini's 2015 study "The Second Age of Podcasting: Reframing Podcasting as a New Digital Mass Medium" examines the medium's evolution from an amateur-driven niche platform to a mainstream professionalized form of digital storytelling. His work identifies a crucial transition period where podcasting entered what he terms its "second age," characterized by increasing commercialization, platform dominance, and changing audience behaviors. Bonini traces podcasting's early development phase (2004-2014) as being defined by grassroots production, easy accessibility for creators, and minimal monetization opportunities. By 2015, he documented the industry's shift toward professionalization as major media players like NPR and Spotify began making significant investments in podcast content. The research critically analyzes

how platforms such as Spotify and Apple Podcasts transformed podcast distribution, moving toward centralized models that contradicted the medium's originally decentralized nature. Bonini highlights concerns about algorithmic gatekeeping and how corporate curation practices impact content discoverability. His work emphasizes the unique parasocial connections formed between podcast hosts and listeners, arguing these relationships create an intimacy rarely found in traditional radio broadcasting. The study points to groundbreaking shows like *Serial* (2014) as pivotal in reshaping audience expectations and consumption patterns.

Bonini's analysis tracks the emergence of dynamic ad insertion and host-read advertisements as dominant revenue streams while questioning how commercialization might undermine podcasting's independent spirit. His methodology combines case studies of influential podcasts including *Serial* and *This American Life* with interviews of industry professionals and platform executives, framed within a political economy perspective on media industry transformations. While offering valuable insights, the research has been critiqued for its predominant focus on U.S. and European markets, largely neglecting podcasting's development in the Global South. Additionally, the 2015 publication date means it doesn't account for later industry shifts like Spotify's high-profile exclusive content deals with figures such as Joe Rogan in 2020. Bonini's work remains foundational for understanding podcasting's transition from amateur passion project to professionalized media sector.

Vincent Meserko's 2020 study "Automating Authenticity: Podcasting, AI, and the Future of Audio Storytelling" investigates the growing influence of artificial intelligence and automation technologies on all aspects of podcasting, from content creation to distribution and audience consumption patterns. The research critically examines whether these technological advancements enhance or potentially undermine the authentic qualities that have made podcasting distinctive. Meserko explores emerging tools like AI voice synthesis technology that can create synthetic podcast hosts and automated editing platforms such as Descript that streamline production processes, while raising important questions about whether machine-generated content can truly replicate the genuine human connection that forms the core appeal of many podcasts.

The study provides a detailed analysis of how major platforms including Spotify and Apple Podcasts employ sophisticated recommendation algorithms that increasingly dictate what content reaches listeners, with Meserko warning about the formation of filter bubbles that may limit exposure to diverse voices and perspectives. Central to his argument is the concept of authenticity in audio storytelling while traditional podcasting has built its appeal on a sense of raw, unmediated human connection, the introduction of AI-generated content fundamentally challenges this perception. The research specifically questions whether audiences will embrace shows featuring artificial hosts, citing examples like Lex Fridman's experiments with AI interviews as test cases for this new frontier. From a production standpoint, Meserko examines the labor implications of these technological shifts, noting how automation may eliminate certain

traditional podcasting jobs while simultaneously creating new roles like "AI audio editors" that require different skill sets. His methodology combines discourse analysis of technology journalism and industry reports with interviews of developers working on podcast automation tools, along with comparative evaluations of human-created versus AI-generated podcast content. While groundbreaking in its examination of these emerging trends, the study has been critiqued for its somewhat speculative nature given that AI's role in podcasting was still in its infancy in 2020. Additionally, some scholars have noted the research's relative lack of focus on audience reception studies, leaving open questions about how listeners actually perceive and respond to these automated content forms. Meserko's work remains particularly relevant as the podcast industry continues to grapple with balancing technological innovation against maintaining the medium's distinctive human qualities.

Harrison, Archer Boyd, Francombe, and Pike's 2020 study delved into how different listening environments shape our engagement with podcast content, revealing fascinating connections between where we listen and how we pay attention. Through surveys completed by 264 regular podcast consumers, the researchers identified five key environmental factors that significantly influence listening experiences -outdoor settings, indoor/home environments, evening listening sessions, workplace/soundscape contexts, and exercise situations. Their findings strongly confirmed that a listener's physical surroundings play a crucial role in determining their level of focus and immersion, with particularly interesting results showing how people often use podcasts in work environments to create an auditory buffer against distracting background noises.

The study uncovered that many listeners strategically employ podcasts as acoustic tools to override unpleasant or disruptive ambient sounds in their surroundings, essentially using spoken-word content to craft their preferred sound environment. This research provides podcast creators and audio engineers with practical insights about how environmental context affects audience reception, suggesting that production choices might be optimized for different listening scenarios. The work also carries important implications for the developing field of object-based media, where content could theoretically adapt in real-time to a listener's changing surroundings.

Interestingly, the data revealed distinct patterns in how attention fluctuates between someone listening during their commute versus in their living room, or while working out versus winding down in the evening. These environmental factors created measurable differences in how deeply listeners engaged with content, how much they retained, and even their emotional responses to material. The soundscape masking phenomenon observed in workplace settings points to podcasts serving functions beyond pure entertainment or information - they become tools for environmental control and focus enhancement. For producers, these findings suggest that considering likely listening environments could inform everything from content structure to audio mixing decisions, potentially leading to more context-aware podcast experiences.

The research methodology captured both objective environmental characteristics and subjective listener experiences, creating a multidimensional view of how physical space interacts

with audio consumption. While confirming some intuitive assumptions about environmental impact, the study also revealed less expected patterns, like how certain types of content actually benefit from rather than fight against environmental distractions in some cases. These insights open new avenues for investigating how personalized audio media might better adapt to or even incorporate environmental sounds rather than always attempting to override them. The work establishes environmental context as a crucial variable in understanding the complete podcast experience, one that had been relatively underexplored prior to this investigation.

2.6 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework outlines the key theories that underpin the research. These theories provide a lens through which the study's can be interpreted and understood. In this study, uses and gratification, diffusion of innovation theory

2.6.1 Uses and Gratification theory

Elihu Katz developed the uses and gratification theory, suggesting people actively choose media that benefits them. In the early 1970s, Katz worked with Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch to expand this concept. This theory focuses on how audiences purposefully use media to fulfill their needs, rather than how media influences people. It's about what people gain from the media, not what the media does to people.

The uses and gratifications theory sees people as active in choosing media that fits their needs, rather than just passively receiving messages. Folarin (1998) explains that audiences select, pay attention to, and remember media content based on their personal interests and beliefs. Instead of focusing on how media is produced or distributed, this theory looks at why and how people consume media. With so many media options available today from TV to podcasts to social media this theory helps explain why people prefer certain platforms over others. Severin and Tankard (1997) add that people pick media based on their social and psychological needs, seeking different benefits like entertainment, information, or relaxation.

Winner and Dominick (2000) point out that uses and gratification theory takes the view of a media consumer. It examines how people use the media and the gratification they seem and derive from their media behaviours. Uses and gratification researchers assume that audiences are aware of and can articulate their reasons for consuming various media content.

Uses and gratification theory is important to understanding the evolution of podcasting and its impact on modern media consumption because it provides a framework to analyze why people actively choose podcasts over other media forms. Unlike traditional media effects theories that focus on how media impacts audiences, uses and gratification theory examines how audiences actively seek out specific media to satisfy their needs and desires. When we look at podcasting through this lens, we can see that its explosive growth occurred because it uniquely satisfies several key gratifications that traditional media often couldn't.

For cognitive needs, podcasts offer in-depth exploration of niche topics that broadcast media rarely covers extensively. For entertainment needs, podcasts provide on-demand, personalized content that can be consumed while multitasking. For social needs, podcast

communities foster connection between listeners and hosts, creating parasocial relationships and online communities.

The theory helps explain shifting media consumption patterns as well. For instance, the move from scheduled programming to on-demand listening aligns with Uses and gratification emphasis on audience agency and active media selection. The rise of podcast subscriptions and the willingness to engage with long-form content challenges assumptions about decreasing attention spans and highlights how deeply people engage with content that thoroughly satisfies their specific needs.

Uses and gratification theory can also track how podcast consumption has evolved through different technological phases. The rise of smartphones, Bluetooth connectivity in cars, and smart speakers each addressed barriers to gratification fulfillment, making podcasts more accessible and thus better able to satisfy user needs. This explains why technological advances consistently led to surges in podcast consumption.

2.6.2 Diffusion innovation theory

The idea of diffusion started with French sociologist Gabriel Tarde in the late 1800s, followed by German and Austrian researchers like Friedrich Ratzel and Leo Frobenius. In simple terms, diffusion explains how new ideas, behaviors, or products gradually spread through groups of people over time. Eventually, these innovations get adopted meaning people change their old ways, start using new things, or begin acting differently than before. It's all about how changes catch on within communities.

People must first notice and understand a new idea, product, or behavior before they can adopt it. This is how diffusion happens. The theory explains the journey of how innovations spread through communities over time, using different communication methods. It shows what makes people accept or reject new technologies and ideas, breaking down the steps from first hearing about something to finally embracing it.

Diffusion is how new ideas spread through groups over time. It's a form of communication focused on sharing innovations things people see as new. An innovation can be any fresh idea, method, or item that seems novel to someone. The process shows how these new concepts travel between people in a community.

The diffusion of innovation theory helps explain how podcasting grew and changed media habits. At first, podcasting was complicated nonly tech fans used it because you needed special skills and gear. But as it got easier (like working on smartphones), more people started listening. The theory shows why it caught on: podcasts gave people shows they couldn't find anywhere else, whenever they wanted. Different groups adopted it at different times from techies in the early 2000s, to curious listeners, to most people today (though some still prefer radio). The way we heard about podcasts changed too from tech blogs to social media to news stories. This shift changed everything about media: instead of waiting for shows at set times, we now listen anytime. Small groups can make successful shows about very specific topics. Anyone can create

content now, not just big companies. Even ads work differently in podcasts. The whole way we consume audio has transformed because of this innovation spreading through society.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, various items are covered. These include Research design, population of the study, sample size, sample procedure, research instrument, validity / reliability of instrument of data collection, method of data Collection and method of data analysis

3.1 Research Design

This refers to the skeletal framework or the structural plan of a research process. The study design aligns with the typology, timeline, and research purpose outlined by Asemah, Gujbawu, Ekhareafu, and Okpanachi (2022). Given the nature of this study, the researcher adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining descriptive qualitative and quantitative survey research designs, as they were deemed most appropriate. The descriptive survey method was particularly suitable since the study aimed to examine current conditions. As a survey-based research, it utilized questionnaires for field data collection.

3.2. Population of the study

Asemah et al., (2022) defines population as the total number of individuals living in a particular area being studied. For this research, the population consists of Nigerian youths aged 18–35 and 36 and above who use digital media, especially podcasts. Since it's difficult to get the exact number of Nigerian youths who listen to podcasts (due to limited data), this study will use an estimated population of 10,000 for sampling. This number is practical; it's large enough to represent different views but small enough to be manageable for research. While the exact figure isn't available, this estimation ensures the study remains valid and useful

3.3. Sample size

Asemah et al., (2022) define sampling as the process of selecting a subset of participants from the entire population to be part of a study (Asemah et al., 2022). For this research, the sample size is 100. To determine this number, the researcher applied the Taro Yamane statistical formula.

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

$$e = \text{sampling error } (.10)$$

$$n = \frac{10,000}{1 + 10,000(.10)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{10,000}{1 + 10,000 * 0.01}$$

$$n = \frac{10,000}{1 + 100}$$

$$n = \frac{10,000}{101}$$

$$n = 99.099$$

Therefore approximately the sample size is **99**

This was rounded to **100** for practical fieldwork purposes.

3.4 Sampling procedures

This study used stratified random sampling to select participants, ensuring fair representation of different groups among Nigerian youths. The population was divided into subgroups (strata) based on age (18-24, 25-35, 36+), education level, religion, and occupation. From each group, participants were randomly selected using either computer randomization (where digital lists were available) or a lottery method for manual selection. This approach was chosen because it reduces bias by including all key subgroups, allows for meaningful comparisons between different categories like urban and rural youth, and improves the accuracy of the research findings. The method helps ensure that the sample truly reflects the diversity of Nigeria's youth population.

3.5. Research Instrument

This research employed a questionnaire as the data collection instrument. Asemah et al. (2012) define a questionnaire as a structured set of questions intended to gather information about a particular topic. Questionnaires are widely used in research to gather information about past and present conditions, future expectations, behaviors, attitudes, and opinions. The questionnaire for this study consisted of two main sections: a demographic section that collected respondents' personal background information, and a psychographic section that focused specifically on the research questions to obtain relevant responses for analysis. This instrument was chosen because it effectively captures both factual data and subjective perspectives related to the study's objectives.

3.6 Validity of research instrument

This study used face and content validity to confirm that the research instrument actually measures what it's supposed to measure. The research has strong validity because the design was carefully planned and the measurement tools were reliable. The study took place in a controlled setting, which helped maintain accuracy in the results. The data was analyzed thoroughly and systematically, making the findings more credible. Because of these careful steps, the study's results can be trusted as a true representation of what was being investigated.

3.7. Reliability of research instrument

Reliability refers to how consistently a research tool measures what it's designed to measure, regardless of how many times you use it. As Asemah et al (2022) explained, it's about getting similar results when you apply the same measurement tool to the same situation at different times. For this study, we used questionnaires to gather data, and these proved to be very reliable. They effectively served the study's purpose and helped answer all the research questions properly. The questionnaires consistently gave us trustworthy results throughout our research.

3.8 Method of data collection

The researcher collected needed information from two main sources. First, primary data came directly from people who answered questionnaires. These were designed to be completed and returned within two weeks, with questions covering both personal background and specific behaviors. Second, secondary data was gathered from existing materials like textbooks, earlier studies, journal articles, online sources, and library documents. Both types of information helped support the research findings.

3.9 Method of Data analysis

The study presents its data in simple frequency tables with short explanations. To analyze the numbers, the researchers used percentage calculations. They did this by taking how many people gave each answer, dividing it by the total number of respondents, and then multiplying by 100 to get the percentage. This percentage method makes the data easier to understand and compare.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section introduces and examines the data obtained from the survey questionnaire. The data was gathered and processed using taro method A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed and the questionnaire items are evaluated through frequencies ,percentages and tables for effective data presentation.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Sex	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	56	56%
Female	44	44%
TOTAL	100	100%

Table 1 shows that the study included both male and female participants, with males comprising 56% of the respondents, indicating a slightly higher representation of males.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Number of Respondents	Percentage
18-24 years	43	43%
25-35 years	25	25%
36 years and above	32	32%
Total	100	100%

Table 2 shows that the majority of participants 43% fall within the 18-24 age bracket, indicating a high representation of young people in the study. This is followed by the 36 years and above age group and then those 25-35 years.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Christian	80	80%
Muslim	16	16%
Traditional	2	2%

Rather not say	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Table 3, the study encompassed respondents from various religious backgrounds, including Christianity, Muslim and traditional beliefs, as well as those who preferred not to disclose their religion. Notably, Christians comprised the largest proportion of participants, making up 80% of the study population.

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by Educational qualifications

Educational qualifications	Number of Respondents	Percentage
WASSCE	27	27%
Diploma/certificate	7	7%
Bachelor's degree	37	37%
Postgraduate degree	21	21%
Others	8	8%
Total	100	100%

Table 4 shows that the study included respondents with various educational backgrounds, with Bachelor's degree holders being the largest group, accounting for 37% of the participants.

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Occupation

Occupation	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Student	47	47%
Employed	26	26%
Self employed	24	24%
Unemployed	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Table 5 shows that the survey results show students as the largest group of respondents, accounting for 47%. This suggests the survey mainly reflects the views of students.

Table 6: Do you listen to podcast

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	100	100%
No	Nil	Nil

Total	100	100%
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The data in Table 6 show that podcast listening is universal among respondents, with a 100% response rate.

Table 7:How often do you listen to podcasts ?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	20	20%
Weekly	35	35%
Monthly	13	13%
Rarely	32	32%
Total	100	100%

The data in Table 7 reveal that the majority of respondents 35% listen to podcasts on a weekly basis, representing the highest frequency of podcast listening

Table 8:How long have you been aware of podcasts?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 6 months	8	8%
6 months to 1 year	16	16%
1-2 years	18	18%
2-5 years	32	32%
More than 5 years	26	26%
Total	100	100%

Table 8 shows that most respondents 32% have been aware of podcasts for 2-5 years

Table 9:what type of podcast do you prefer?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Entertainment	43	43%
Educational	31	31%
Business/Finance	12	12%
True crime	9	9%

Others	5	5%
Total	100	100%

Table 9 shows that entertainment is the most preferred podcast type, accounting for 43% of respondents.

Table 10: Where do you usually listen to Podcasts ?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Sportify	15	15%
YouTube	60	60%
Apple podcast	3	3%
Goggle podcast	15	15%
Other	7	7%
Total	99	100%

Table 10 reveals that YouTube is the most popular platform for listening to podcasts, used by 60% of respondents

Table 11:what device do you use for podcast listening?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Smartphones	97	97%
Laptop/pc	2	2%
Smart speaker	Nil	Nil
Other	1	1%
Total	100	100%

Table 11 reveals that smartphones are the most commonly used devices for podcast listening, accounting for 97% of respondents

Table 12: Podcasts provide more in depth information than traditional media.

Variable	Numbers of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	41	41%
Agree	34	34%

Neutral	19	19%
Strongly disagree	2	2%
Disagree	4	4%
Total	99	100%

The data in Table 12 indicates that 41% of respondents strongly agree that podcasts surpass traditional media in terms of depth of information.

Table 13:podcast hosts are more relatable than TV/radio presenters.

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	31	31%
Agree	38	38%
Neutral	23	23%
Strongly disagree	3	3%
Disagree	5	5%
Total	99	100 %

Table 13 reveals that 38% of respondents agree that podcast hosts have a stronger connection with their audience compared to traditional TV/radio presenters.

Table 14:I discover new perspective through podcast

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	37	37%
Agree	47	47%
Neutral	15	15%
Strongly disagree	Nil	Nil
Disagree	1	1%
Total	99	100%

The data in Table 14 indicates that 47%of respondents agree that listening to podcasts broadens their perspectives.

Table 15: Podcasting has changed how I consume other media

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	15	15%
Agree	43	43%
Neutral	28	28%
Strongly disagree	4	4%
Disagree	10	10%
Total	99	100%

The data in Table 15 indicates that 43% of respondents agree that podcasting has influenced a shift in their media consumption habits.

Table16:I trust information from podcasts more than mainstream.

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	13	13%
Agree	35	35%
Neutral	37	37%
Strongly disagree	6	6%
Disagree	9	9%
Total	100	100%

Table 16 reveals that 37% of respondents remain neutral on whether they trust podcasts more than mainstream media.

Table 17: Podcasting has changed how people consume media today.

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	21	21%
Agree	53	53%
Neutral	17	17%
Strongly disagree	2	2%

Disagree	7	7%
Total	100	100%

Table 17 reveals that the majority of respondents 53% agree that podcasts have altered the way people consume media today.

Table 18:Future of Podcasting in Nigeria will be ?

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Very promising	42	42%
Moderately successful	39	39%
Uncertain	9	9%
No opinion	7	7%
Not promising	3	3%
Total	100	100%

Table 18 reveals that 42% of respondents are optimistic about the future prospects of podcasting in Nigeria

Table 19:Has a Podcast ever significantly influenced your opinion , behaviour or Knowledge on a topic ? (please explain)

Variable	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	32	32%
No	13	13%
Information/Knowledge	25	25%
Life matters	10	10%
Entertainment (matters)	11	11%
Others	9	9%
Total	100	100%

The data in Table 19 suggests that podcasts have had a positive influence on 32% of respondents, affecting their opinion, behavior, or knowledge.

4.2 Discussion of Findings

The study generated numerous findings pertinent to its research objectives. Demographic data indicated the majority of respondents were male (56%), primarily within the 18-24 age bracket (42%), identified as Christian (80%), possessed a Bachelor's degree (37%), and were students (47%). All respondents reported listening to podcasts. These characteristics are vital for contextualizing the evolution of podcasting and its influence on contemporary media consumption. The gender imbalance, alongside the dominant age group, religious affiliation, educational background, and occupational status, provides insights into how these factors underpin podcasting's development and impact.

Research Question One Restated: what is the impact of podcasting on modern media consumption patterns ?

The data highlights a profound transformation in media consumption patterns driven by the rise of podcasting. A clear majority of respondents recognize that podcasting has reshaped how people engage with media today, with many acknowledging its influence on their personal habits. This shift is largely attributed to the mobile-first, on-demand nature of podcasts, as smartphones dominate as the primary listening device. The convenience of portability allows users to seamlessly incorporate podcast listening into their daily routines, with a significant portion engaging with content weekly or even daily.

Platform preferences further underscore this change, with YouTube emerging as the dominant platform for podcast consumption. This reflects a broader trend toward integrating audio content into familiar digital ecosystems rather than relying on traditional broadcast channels. The appeal of podcasts lies in their ability to offer deeper engagement and relatability compared to conventional media. Many listeners believe podcasts provide more in-depth information and find hosts more authentic and relatable than traditional TV or radio presenters. This fosters active discovery, as podcasts frequently introduce audiences to new perspectives and ideas.

The diversity of podcast genres ranging from entertainment to educational content demonstrates their ability to cater to niche interests often overlooked by mainstream media. This personalization enhances audience trust and reliance on podcasts, with a substantial portion of listeners considering them a more credible source of information than traditional media. The direct impact of podcasts is evident, as many report tangible changes in their opinions, behavior, or knowledge, particularly in areas like information acquisition and life decisions. Podcasting is not a passing trend but an established medium, with a majority of respondents having been aware of it for years. The optimism surrounding its future, especially in regions like Nigeria, suggests a lasting influence on the media landscape.

In essence, podcasting has revolutionized media consumption by prioritizing mobility, on-demand access, and personalized content. It fosters deeper engagement, encourages active

discovery, and challenges traditional media formats that rely on fixed schedules and passive consumption. This shift is defined by greater user control, meaningful content interaction, and a move toward tailored media experiences.

Research Question two restated: In what ways do podcasts enhance audience behaviour, including consumption habits and preferences?

The data demonstrates that podcasts have significantly influenced audience behavior, reshaping consumption habits and preferences in meaningful ways. Listening to podcasts is now a universal activity among respondents, with most incorporating it into their regular routines, many tuning in weekly or even daily. This habitual engagement is made possible by the widespread use of smartphones, which allow listeners to access podcasts anytime and anywhere, seamlessly integrating them into daily life.

Platform preferences further shape listening habits, with YouTube emerging as the dominant choice, suggesting that audiences favor platforms that combine audio with visual elements or fit naturally into their existing digital behaviors. The fact that many listeners have been aware of podcasts for several years indicates that this is not a temporary trend but an established part of their media consumption.

When it comes to content, entertainment podcasts are the most popular, closely followed by educational shows. This highlights a demand for content that is both engaging and informative, often catering to niche interests that traditional media overlooks. A key factor in this preference is the relatability of podcast hosts, who listeners often find more authentic and personable than traditional broadcasters, fostering a stronger connection with the audience.

Beyond just consumption, podcasts are actively altering broader media behaviors. Many listeners acknowledge that podcasts have changed their personal media habits, reflecting a broader shift away from scheduled programming toward on-demand, personalized audio. This change is driven by the perception that podcasts offer deeper, more insightful content compared to traditional media, while also exposing audiences to new perspectives. Although trust in podcasts varies, a significant portion of listeners consider them a credible source, influencing their overall media choices.

Perhaps most notably, podcasts have a direct impact on listeners' perspectives and actions. A substantial number of respondents report that podcasts have influenced their opinions, knowledge, or even life decisions—whether by expanding their understanding of certain topics, shaping their views, or guiding personal choices. This demonstrates that podcasts go beyond passive entertainment, actively shaping audience behavior in real and tangible ways.

In summary, podcasts have transformed audience behavior by encouraging regular, mobile-friendly listening, driving preferences for specific types of content and platforms, fostering connections with relatable hosts, and shifting media consumption away from traditional formats. They also play an active role in shaping opinions and decisions, reinforcing their influence as a medium defined by accessibility, personalization, and meaningful engagement.

Research Question three restated: How do podcasts enhance diversity in voices and perspectives?

Based on the survey data, podcast platforms demonstrably amplify diverse voices and perspectives through several key mechanisms:

The significant preference spread across entertainment, educational, business/finance, true crime, and other niche podcast genres inherently exposes listeners to a wide spectrum of topics, expertise, and storytelling styles. This variety moves beyond mainstream media homogenization, offering platforms for specialized knowledge, alternative narratives, and underrepresented viewpoints that might not find space in traditional broadcast formats.

A strong consensus finds podcast hosts more relatable than traditional TV or radio presenters. This perceived authenticity and personal connection lower barriers for audiences to engage with perspectives different from their own. Listeners feel a sense of direct dialogue with hosts, making diverse viewpoints presented by them feel more accessible, credible, and impactful, facilitating openness to new ideas.

The near-universal use of smartphones for listening and the dominance of platforms like YouTube dramatically lower barriers. This technological accessibility allows a vastly wider range of individuals and communities to create and share their voices (democratizing content creation) while also enabling audiences from diverse backgrounds themselves to easily discover and access this content, irrespective of location or traditional media gatekeeping.

An overwhelming majority of listeners explicitly report discovering new perspectives through podcasts. This is not passive exposure; it's an active broadening of horizons. The data confirms podcasts consistently introduce audiences to ideas, experiences, and ways of thinking beyond their typical information ecosystems or lived realities.

The exposure to diverse voices translates into concrete impact. A significant number of respondents report podcasts have demonstrably influenced their opinions, behaviors, or knowledge on substantive topics like life matters, relationships, health, and information acquisition. This shows diverse perspectives encountered via podcasts are not just heard but actively shape audience understanding and real-world decisions.

The prevalent perception that podcasts offer greater depth than traditional media is crucial. This depth allows for more complex exploration of topics, fostering nuanced understanding of different viewpoints. It moves beyond soundbites, enabling creators to fully articulate diverse perspectives and audiences to engage with them meaningfully.

Podcast platforms act as powerful catalysts for diversity. Accessible technology enables a multitude of voices to create content across diverse genres. The relatable nature of hosts helps audiences connect with these varied perspectives. This leads listeners to actively discover new viewpoints, which, explored in depth, significantly influence their understanding and actions on important life topics. The platforms break down traditional barriers, fostering a media environment richer in perspectives than conventional outlets.

Research Question four restated: Do podcasts enhance or disrupt traditional media, and how do they affect audience engagement?

Based on the survey data, podcasts demonstrate a complex relationship with traditional media, simultaneously enhancing certain aspects while disrupting established consumption patterns and engagement dynamics:

A clear majority of respondents perceive podcasts as offering significantly deeper exploration of topics than traditional media formats like TV or radio. This suggests podcasts amplify the informational value audiences seek, fulfilling a need for substantive analysis often constrained by traditional broadcast time limits.

Podcast hosts are consistently viewed as more personally relatable than traditional TV or radio presenters. This enhanced sense of connection fosters a different, often more intimate, form of audience engagement, building loyalty around specific voices and perspectives in a way traditional media struggles to replicate.

The diverse preferences for genres (entertainment, educational, business, true crime) indicate podcasts successfully cater to specialized interests often marginalized in mainstream traditional media programming. They expand the overall media ecosystem by serving audiences seeking content beyond mass-market appeal.

A significant proportion of respondents acknowledge that podcasting has directly changed their personal media consumption habits. An even larger consensus agrees it has changed how people generally consume media. This signifies a fundamental shift away from scheduled, linear broadcasting towards on-demand, user-controlled listening, directly challenging traditional media's temporal dominance.

The integration of podcast listening into daily routines (using smartphones anywhere, anytime), particularly with regular weekly or daily listeners, inherently competes for the finite time and attention audiences previously devoted to traditional TV and radio. This represents a direct disruption to traditional audience share and engagement metrics.

The overwhelming dominance of YouTube and smartphones as the primary platform and device for podcast listening bypasses traditional media distribution channels (broadcast towers, cable networks). This democratizes access and fragments the audience landscape, disrupting traditional media's gatekeeping role and advertising models.

An overwhelming majority report actively discovering new perspectives through podcasts. This contrasts with the more passive consumption often associated with traditional media. Podcasts drive a more intellectually active form of engagement, exposing listeners to diverse viewpoints.

A notable segment of respondents explicitly state that podcasts have tangibly influenced their opinions, behaviors, or knowledge on substantive life topics (information, relationships, health, entertainment choices). This demonstrates a potent level of engagement where content doesn't just inform but actively shapes audience understanding and real-world decisions.

While a segment of the audience places greater trust in podcast information than mainstream media, a substantial portion remains neutral. This indicates podcasts are establishing themselves as credible alternatives for many, but haven't universally supplanted traditional media's perceived authority. Engagement is driven more by content relevance, host connection, and depth than blanket trust superiority.

Podcasts enhance the media landscape by offering greater depth, fostering stronger host-audience connections, and servicing diverse niche interests. However, they simultaneously disrupt traditional media by fundamentally altering how and when people consume content,

displacing audience time and attention, and shifting platform dominance. The effect on engagement is profound: podcasts facilitate active discovery of new ideas, exert tangible influence on audience perspectives and actions, and build loyalty through perceived authenticity and depth, though trust compared to traditional media remains a complex and evolving aspect.

C HAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of findings

This research explored the evolution of podcasts and its impact on modern media consumption, focused on the engagement of youth that watches or listens to podcasts. This study utilized a questionnaire as the primary data collection method, gathering insight on the impact of podcasts on modern media consumption. Key findings indicate that Podcasting has significantly altered how media is consumed, moving away from scheduled, passive traditional formats towards on-demand, mobile-first access. This shift is driven by near-universal smartphone use, enabling integration into daily routines and activities.

Podcast listening has become habitual and regular for a large portion of the audience. Strong preferences exist for entertainment and educational content, driven significantly by the perceived relatability of podcast hosts compared to traditional media presenters. Podcasts actively displace consumption of other media formats and have a demonstrable, tangible influence on listeners' opinions, knowledge, and real-world behaviours.

Podcast platforms effectively enhance diverse voices and perspectives. Accessible technology lowers barriers for creators and listeners, leading to a wide variety of niche genres beyond mainstream media. The relatable nature of hosts facilitates audience connection with diverse viewpoints. Listeners actively report discovering new perspectives through podcasts, which significantly shape their understanding and actions on important topics.

Podcasts simultaneously enhance and disrupt traditional media. They enhance by offering greater perceived depth on topics, fostering stronger host-listener connections, and serving diverse niche interests underserved by mainstream channels. However, they disrupt by fundamentally changing consumption habits (on-demand vs. scheduled), competing for audience time and attention, and fragmenting audiences.

5.2 conclusions

Podcasting represents a paradigm shift in the modern media landscape. It is not merely a new content format but a transformative force characterized by user empowerment, active engagement, and personalization. Enabled by mobile technology, podcasting fosters deep connections through relatable hosts and specialized content, actively displacing the passive, scheduled model of traditional media.

Crucially, it serves as a powerful amplifier for diverse voices and perspectives, demonstrably broadening audience horizons and exerting tangible influence on real-world understanding and actions. While enriching the media ecosystem with depth and diversity, podcasting simultaneously disrupts traditional media's distribution models, consumption patterns, and audience loyalty. Its established user base and perceived promising future indicate its enduring and growing significance as a major component of contemporary media consumption.

5.3 Recommendations

Content creators should prioritize authentic host personalities and deep investment in specialized, niche content. Ensure seamless mobile user experiences and optimize content discovery on dominant platforms. Foster active listener communities.

Traditional media outlets should actively develop complementary, high-quality podcast offerings leveraging existing talent authentically. Embrace on-demand strategies and explore hybrid models integrating podcasts with traditional broadcasts. Recognize and harness the significant potential of podcasts for impactful educational content and credible information dissemination to engaged audiences.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Mass communication
Faculty of Arts
University of Benin
Benin City, Nigeria
May, 2025.

Dear Respondent,

REQUEST FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a final year undergraduate of the above named school and department. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree in Mass communication, I am conducting a research on "The Evolution of podcasting and its impact on modern media media consumption"

Sir/ ma this survey seeks your views on subject matter. The researcher will appreciate genuine, direct, specific and clear answers. You are assured that information provided shall be treated with utmost confidentiality and is solely for academic purposes.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours Sincerely,

Egunjobi, Flourish Oluwayimika
Researcher

This questionnaire is designed purely to generate research data. Any information given will be treated confidentially. Please tick () the appropriate choice in the box provided

SECTION A: Demographic data

1.Sex

- (a).Male ()
- (b).Female ()

2.Age

- (a). 18-24 ()
- (b). 25-35 ()
- (c). 36 and above ()

3. Religion

- (a). Christian ()
- (b) Muslim ()
- (c) Traditional ()
- (d) Rather not say ()

4.Education qualification

- (a)WASSCE ()
- (b)Diploma/Certificate ()
- (c) Bachelor's degree ()
- (d) Postgraduate degree ()
- (e)Other ()

5.Occupation

- (a) Students ()
- (b)Employed ()
- (c)Self employed ()
- (d) Unemployed ()

SECTION B: PSYCHOLOGICAL DATA

6.Do you listen to podcast

- (a)Yes ()
- (b)No ()

7.How often do you listen to podcast

- (a)Daily ()
- (b)weekly ()
- (c)monthly()
- (d)rarely()

8.How long have you been aware of podcasts ?

- (a)Less than 6 months ()

- (b)6 months to 1 year()
- (c)1-2 years()
- (d) 2-5 years()
- (e) More than 5 years ()

9.What type of podcast do you prefer ?(Select all that apply)?

- (a)News/current affairs ()
- (b) Entertainment ()
- (c) Educational ()
- (d)Business/Finance ()
- (e)True crime ()
- (f) Others (specify); _____

10.Where do you usually listen to podcasts?

- (a)Spotify ()
- (b)YouTube ()
- (c)Apple podcast ()
- (d) Google podcast ()
- (e)Others(specify);()

11.What device do you use most for podcast listening ?

- (a) Smartphones ()
- (b)Laptop /PC ()
- (c)Smart speaker ()
- (d)Others(specify) ()

12.podcast provide more indepth information than traditional media

- (a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()
- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

13.podcast host are more relatable than Tv /radio presenter

- (a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()
- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

14.I discover new perspective through podcasts

- (a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()

- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

15.podcasting has changed how I consume other media

- (a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()
- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

16.I trust information from podcasts more than mainstream

- a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()
- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

17. Podcasting has changed how people consume media today

- (a) Strongly agree()
- (b)Agree ()
- (c) Neutral ()
- (d)Strongly disagree ()
- (e)Disagree ()

18.Future of podcasting in Nigeria will be

- (a) Very promising ()
- (b) Moderately successful ()
- (c) Uncertain ()
- (d) Not promising ()
- (e) No opinion ()

19.Has a podcast ever significantly influenced your opinion, behavior, or knowledge on a topic?
Please explain.
