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Influence of Honest Bunch Podcast on the Social Lives of Residents in Imo State

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Abstract

This study focused on the influence of Honest Bunch podcast on the social lives of residents in Imo State. The study was anchored on social learning theory. Survey method was used for this study with a population of 5,459,300 and a sample size of 385 derived from Australian Online Sample Size Calculator. Multistage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Findings revealed among others that Glitch Africa podcast influence the social lives of residents in Owerri Metropolis. This study concluded that Glitch Africa podcast influence the social life of resident of Owerri Metropolis. The researchers recommended among others that the producers of Glitch Africa podcast should leverage this influence by creating more socially relevant content that promotes positive values, community development, and youth empowerment.

Keywords: Influence, Honest Bunch, Podcast, Participation

Introduction

The emergence of digital media platforms has revolutionised the way individuals, especially youths, access information, engage with content, and shape their behavioural patterns. Among these platforms, podcasts have grown significantly, offering an alternative space for discourse, entertainment, education, and social influence. Podcasts have become a unique medium for storytelling and conversations that resonate with youth audiences due to their accessibility, flexibility, and the personal connection they foster with listener (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). The proliferation of smartphones and internet penetration in



Nigeria has further accelerated podcast consumption among Nigerian youths, transforming podcasts into a powerful tool of socialisation and behaviour modification (Statista, 2023).

Honest Bunch, a YouTube page that has gained traction among Nigerian youths, epitomises the evolving landscape of digital content creation. Known for its engaging and often provocative podcast episodes that cover topics ranging from pop culture, entertainment, politics, and youth-centric social issues, Honest Bunch has become a prominent voice influencing public discourse. With its interactive style, the platform has created a niche that appeals to people in Imo State and the country at large. These podcasts, often featuring celebrities, influencers, and social commentators which have the potential to shape listeners' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours subtly but significantly (Adegbola & Gearhart, 2019).

The surge in podcast consumption has introduced new dynamics in media influence. Honest Bunch, as one of the leading podcast platforms in Nigeria, has become a cultural hub where issues relating to pop culture, lifestyle, politics, and societal trends are discussed in a manner that appeals to the audience. The interactive nature of the podcast, combined with the informal and relatable tone of Honest Bunch's content, has positioned it as a significant socializing agent capable of influencing the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of its youthful listeners (Adegbola & Gearhart, 2019).

However, there is growing concern over how such media content might be subtly reshaping audience behavioural patterns, including their language use, lifestyle aspirations, moral outlook, and civic engagements. While podcasts like Honest Bunch provide platforms for constructive dialogue and enlightenment, they also carry content that could promote controversial, sensationalist, or misleading narratives, which may impact either positively or negatively on its audience (Okoye, 2021). The blurred lines between entertainment, information, and influence pose a challenge in discerning the exact nature and extent of behavioural changes resulting from podcast consumption. Despite the rising prominence of podcasts within Nigeria's media ecosystem, there is a dearth of empirical research focusing on how specific platforms like Honest Bunch influence people's behaviour at a localised level. Most existing studies on media influence tend to concentrate on traditional media (radio, television) or broader social media platforms, often overlooking the nuanced and intimate influence that podcasts wield (Spinelli & Dann, 2019). Thus, this study sought to ascertain the influence of Honest Bunch podcast on the social lives of residents in Imo State.

Theoretical Framework

The social learning theory was propounded by psychologist Albert Bandura in 1986. The assumption of social learning theory is that people learn through observation especially through television when applied to mass media (Bandura, 1986). This theory claims that people model (copy) the behaviour they see and this occurs in two ways: through imitation and identification. Baran (2009) refers to it as imitation - the direct replication of an observed behaviour. The Social learning theorists confirmed that imitation and identification are products of three processes: observational learning, inhibitory influence and dis-inhibitory influences (Baran, 2009). By observational learning, social learning theorists posit that observers can acquire (learn) new behaviours simply by seeing those behaviours performed. In observing the new behaviour, there are inhibitory and dis-inhibitory influences.

The SLT can be applied to Honest Bunch podcast, which provides a platform for individuals to engage in societal issues. Listeners may learn new behaviours and attitudes by observing and imitating the behaviours and attitudes presented in the podcast. The SLT provides a valuable framework for understanding the influence of Honest Bunch podcast on youth behaviour.



Method

Survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of this study consist of residents of Imo State. According to Statistics made available by City Population (2022), the projected 2022 population of Imo State is 5,459,300. A sample size of 385 was arrived at through the use of Australian Online Sample Size Calculator at a confidence level of 95% and error limit of 5%. Multistage sampling technique was adopted for the study. First stage, the researchers identified the three senatorial zones that make-up Imo State. Second stage, the researchers selected one urban local government from each of the senatorial zones which are Okigwe (Okigwe), Orlu (Orlu) and Owerri (Owerri Municipal). Third stage, the researchers selected three urban communities in the selected local government which are; Okigwe (Ezinachi, Ikigwu and Otanzu), Orlu (Amaifeke, Ihioma/Ebenese and Umuna) and Owerri Municipal (Umuororonjo, Amawom and Umuonyeche). Fourth Stage, the instrument was distributed non-proportionately to respondents in the selected communities. The instrument of data collection was questionnaire. The questionnaire was in two section, A and B, representing demographic data and psychographic data respectively. The instrument was thoroughly examined by the professionals in the field of mass communication. Test re-test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. Responses retrieved were compared via Pearson Moment Correlation and result indicated very high reliability at 0.8 reliability. The instrument was administered to respondents face to face with the help of research assistants and were collected on the spot, this is to reduce the loss of instrument. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed in the study to ensure the protection of participants. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents prior to participation, with clear explanations provided about the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time without any consequences. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and all data collected were used solely for the study. Data were analysed using mean analysis, this is to ensure easy understanding.

Findings

From the 385 copies of the questionnaire distributed to respondents, 378 copies were duly filled and returned which estimate for 98.2% of the copies of the questionnaire used for the analysis of this study.

Variable Keys: SA (Strongly Agree) = 4; A (Agree) = 3; D (Disagree) = 2 and SD (Strongly Disagree) = 1

Please Note: The decision rule and weighting scale hereunder apply to all the summary tables.

Decision Rule: If the calculated mean score is lower than 2.5 (1-2.4), the item in question is rejected. However, if the calculated mean score is higher than 2.5 (2.5-4.0), the item in question is accepted.

Research Question One: To what extent are residents of Imo State exposed to Honest Bunch podcast?



Table 1: Respondents Responses on Extent of Exposure to Honest Bunch Podcast (N=378)

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
I have heard of Honest Bunch podcast	378	-	-	-	4.0	Accepted
I have listened and viewed Honest Bunch podcast on YouTube	278	100	-	-	3.7	Accepted
I watch Honest Bunch podcast everyday via YouTube	125	253	-	-	3.3	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.6	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1 shows that with a grand mean of 3.6, the researchers decide that respondents are to a high extent exposed Honest Bunch podcast. This implies that residents of Imo State are highly exposed to Honest Bunch podcast.

Research Question Two: What is the influence of Honest Bunch podcast on the social lives of residents of Imo State?

Table 2: Respondents Responses on the influence of Honest Bunch podcast on the social lives of residents of Imo State (N=378)

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
The podcast has influenced my communication with people	183	132	52	11	3.3	Accepted
I have understood more about social lives of people through the podcast	91	198	76	13	3.0	Accepted
The podcast has influenced my social life	89	83	196	10	2.7	Accepted
Grand Mean					3.0	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 2 revealed that a grand mean of 3.0, the researchers decide that respondents social lives are influenced by Honest Bunch podcast. This implies that the social lives of residents of Imo State are influenced by Honest Bunch podcast.

Research Question Three: What are other factors that can influence the social lives of residents in Imo State?

Table 3: Respondents Responses on other factors that can influence the social lives of residents of Imo State (N=378)

Options	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
Family dynamics can influence social lives	83	168	85	42	2.8	Accepted
Cultural norms can influence the social lives of youths	201	137	32	8	3.4	Accepted
Economic conditions can influence the social lives of youths	75	98	183	22	2.6	Accepted
Grand Mean					2.9	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, 2026



Table 3 that with an average mean of 2.9, the researcher decides that there are other factors that can influence social lives among residents of Imo State. This implies that there are other factors that possess the capacity of influencing social lives among residents of Imo State. Some of these factors are family dynamics, cultural norms and economic conditions.

Discussion

Finding revealed that residents of Imo State are highly exposed to Glitch Africa podcast. This was revealed in table 1 with an average mean of 3.6. This implies that residents of Imo State are highly exposed to Honest Bunch podcast. This finding aligns with the works of Kim (2009), Kavya and Viswanath (2024), and Altman (2015), who all highlight the democratization and participatory potential of digital platforms such as YouTube and podcasts. Kim (2009) argues that digital media platforms like YouTube create new avenues for participatory democracy and cultural exchange. Similarly, Kavya and Viswanath (2024) explain that podcasting has transformed communication patterns by promoting inclusivity and accessibility, thereby expanding media exposure among diverse audiences. Altman (2015) also emphasizes that podcasting serves as a tool for educational and scholarly communication, enabling easy access to informative and engaging content.

Further finding indicated that Honest Bunch podcast influence the social lives of residents in Imo State. This was revealed in table 2 with a grand mean of 3.0 (N=378). This means that the social lives of residents of Imo State are influenced by Honest Bunch podcast. This finding is consistent with the works of Ahmad (2024) and Ozukum (2021), who all underscore the influence of podcasts and social media on social interaction, community-building, and cultural awareness. Ahmad (2024) shows that podcasts enhance engagement and foster community identity, while Ozukum (2021) further supports this by asserting that social media has become a powerful tool shaping social and cultural life, influencing collective behaviour and societal values.

Also, findings revealed that there are other factors that can influence the social lives of residents of Imo State. This was revealed in Table 3 with a grand mean of 2.9 (N=378). Some of these factors are family dynamics, cultural norms and economic conditions. This finding aligns with Haq and Kwok (2024), Myers et al. (2023), and Borhan-Eddine et al., (2020), who highlight the multifaceted nature of social media influence. Haq and Kwok (2024) reveal that online interactions are often shaped by selective exposure and digital identities, implying that users' social experiences are influenced by multiple factors such as cultural background and online community norms. Myers et al. (2023) discuss how influencer cues, social identity, and symbolic interactionism affect engagement, further suggesting that media influence is complex and depends on individual and contextual variables. Similarly, Borhan-Eddine et al. (2020) note that discussion, political efficacy, and online expression are interlinked in shaping participation and social behaviour.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the researchers concluded that residents of Imo State are highly exposed to Honest Bunch podcast and the podcast influence their social life. The researchers recommended that;

1. Since the residents already have a high level of exposure to Honest Bunch podcast, the producers should maintain and further strengthen this visibility through continuous promotion across social media platforms and local media outlets.



2. The producers of Honest Bunch podcast should leverage this influence by creating more socially relevant content that promotes positive values, community development, and youth empowerment.
3. Future studies should identify and explore these other influencing factors, such as traditional media, peer interactions, and cultural events, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of social behaviour among residents. This will help content creators like Honest Bunch align their messages more effectively with the community's broader social context.

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