

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Influence of radio promotion on cultural participation in the municipality of Sancti Spíritus

Influencia de la promoción radial en la participación cultural en el municipio de Sancti Spíritus

Miguel A. Bravo 

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Abstract This study analyzed the influence of radio cultural promotion broadcast by Radio Sancti Spíritus on public participation in cultural activities in the municipality of the same name. Complemented by qualitative techniques, a quantitative methodology was applied to a non-probability sample of 20 listeners. Surveys, interviews, and a targeted listening experiment were used to evaluate the reception and impact of three radio promotions of varying quality. The results show that message quality, clarity of content, and the ability to generate positive emotions are determining factors in motivating participation. The role of radio as a strategic tool in community cultural promotion is discussed.

Keywords radio promotion, cultural participation, media, radio, Sancti Spíritus.

Resumen Este estudio analizó la influencia de la promoción cultural radial transmitida por la emisora Radio Sancti Spíritus en la participación del público en actividades culturales del municipio homónimo. Se aplicó una metodología de corte cuantitativo, complementada con técnicas cualitativas, a una muestra no probabilística de 20 oyentes. Se emplearon encuestas, entrevistas y un experimento de escucha dirigido para evaluar la recepción y el impacto de tres promociones de distinta calidad. Los resultados evidencian que la calidad del mensaje, la claridad del contenido y la capacidad de generar emociones positivas son factores determinantes para motivar la participación. Se discute el papel de la radio como herramienta estratégica en la promoción cultural comunitaria.

Palabras clave promoción radial, participación cultural, medios de comunicación, radio, Sancti Spíritus.

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Miguel A. Bravo
miguelalejandrobravo@gmail.com

Universidad de Sevilla, España.

Introduction

Radio has historically played a fundamental role in cultural dissemination, bridging artistic expression and the community. In the current context, where digital platforms dominate the media landscape, radio maintains its relevance by offering accessible and relatable content to diverse audiences.

Promoting cultural events through radio has been identified as an effective strategy for increasing audience attendance and engagement. Recent studies indicate that advertising synchronized with specific cultural moments can triple purchase and double search intent among consumers.

In social psychology, it is recognized that media, such as radio, significantly influence people's attitudes and behaviors. Communication theory suggests that exposure to promotional messages can shape perceptions and motivate specific actions, such as attending cultural events.

Cultural activities enrich individuals' social lives and improve their psychological well-being. Research has shown that attending live events can improve mental health and reduce stress, highlighting the importance of facilitating cultural access.

However, cultural participation faces challenges despite the associated benefits, especially in communities with limited access to information. Due to its reach and penetration, radio is a key tool for overcoming these barriers and fostering cultural inclusion.

In the municipality of Sancti Spiritus, the local radio station Radio Sancti Spiritus has implemented various cultural promotion campaigns. These initiatives seek to inform and motivate the community to participate actively in local cultural activities, strengthening the social fabric and community identity.

The effectiveness of these campaigns lies in radio's ability to generate an emotional connection with its audience. Radio can influence listeners' decisions and encourage their participation in cultural events through engaging and relevant content.

In addition, the radio station offers the ability to geographically segment its messages, allowing cultural promotion to be tailored to the specific characteristics and needs of the Sancti Spiritus community. This customization increases the relevance of the messages and enhances their impact.

The interaction between the radio station and the community also facilitates feedback, allowing stations to adjust their content and promotional strategies based on listener preferences and suggestions. This ongoing dialogue strengthens the relationship between the station and its audience.

It is important to note that cultural promotion through radio benefits event attendees, artists, and organizers. Increasing the visibility of cultural activities creates more significant opportunities for local creators and boosts the municipality's

cultural economy.

However, to maximize the impact of radio promotion, campaigns must be strategically designed, considering factors such as message content, broadcast timing, and the demographic characteristics of the target audience.

Collaboration between Radio Sancti Spiritus and other local cultural institutions can enhance promotional efforts, creating synergies that amplify campaigns' reach and effectiveness. These strategic alliances are essential for the sustainable cultural development of the community.

Furthermore, integrating new technologies and digital platforms into radio promotion strategies can further expand the reach of campaigns, allowing them to reach younger, more technologically connected audiences.

Continuous measurement and evaluation of promotional campaigns are necessary to identify areas for improvement and adapt strategies to changing audience dynamics. Analyzing indicators such as event attendance and listener feedback provides valuable information for decision-making.

It is essential to consider the cultural diversity and unique characteristics of the Sancti Spiritus community when designing promotional messages. Cultural sensitivity and respect for local traditions strengthen the connection with the audience and encourage more active participation.

Training and development of broadcaster staff in effective communication and cultural marketing techniques contributes to campaign professionalization and achieving proposed objectives. Investing in capacity building is key to long-term success.

Likewise, incorporating testimonials and experiences from community members into radio promotions can increase the authenticity and credibility of the messages, generating greater audience identification.

The sustainability of cultural promotion initiatives through radio also depends on institutional support and public policies that recognize the value of culture in the municipality's social and economic development.

Community radio as a tool for cultural promotion It has established itself as an essential medium for cultural promotion in diverse communities. Its ability to adapt to local contexts and encourage active audience participation makes it an effective vehicle for disseminating and preserving Indigenous cultural expressions. Recent studies highlight that community radio stations inform, strengthen cultural identity, and promote social cohesion (Hautaniemi, 2022).

"European community radio stations exhibit community-, clan-, and project-oriented cultures, thriving on their members' volunteering and active participation" (Hautaniemi, 2022, p. 5).

Furthermore, community radio has proven to be an effective

tive channel for communication in crises, facilitating the dissemination of crucial information and fostering community resilience (Kivikuru, 2023).

From a social psychology perspective, the media, particularly radio, play a crucial role in shaping cultural attitudes and behaviors. Manzueta (2022) social learning theory suggests that people acquire new behaviors by observing and imitating models, which is also relevant to how audiences internalize and reproduce cultural practices promoted by radio.

Recent research has explored how mental health campaigns delivered through social media can influence public perceptions and reduce associated stigma (Naslund et al., 2024). These findings can be extrapolated to the cultural sphere, where radio can similarly promote cultural practices and events.

Community participation is fundamental to empowering individuals and strengthening the social fabric. Community radio catalyzes this process by providing a platform where local voices can be heard and valued. Studies have shown that participation in community radio projects increases participants' sense of belonging and self-efficacy (Kanjilal et al., 2024).

"Community radio stations that actively engage their communities promote emergency preparedness and response, strengthening local resilience" (Kanjilal et al., 2024). This participatory approach improves the quality and relevance of the content broadcast and fosters a more active and culturally engaged citizenry.

Despite their potential, community radio stations face significant challenges regarding sustainability and effectiveness in cultural promotion. Factors such as limited funding, staff training, and the integration of digital technologies can affect their operation and reach. Recent research has identified that a lack of resources and institutional support limits the ability of these stations to act as active agents in cultural promotion (Zambrano, 2024). The study uses the community radio sustainability framework to investigate the challenges that prevent community radio from being an active agent in cultural promotion (Echeverry, 2022).

Methodology

The approach was quantitative, with qualitative support in some phases. A descriptive, non-experimental, cross-sectional study analyzed audience perceptions of radio promotions and their relationship with participation in cultural activities. Methodological triangulation allowed for enriching the findings and validating the data from various perspectives.

The research was conducted in Sancti Spiritus, which has over 100,000 inhabitants. A significant portion of the population regularly listens to Radio Sancti Spiritus. The sample consisted of 20 voluntary listeners, selected by convenience,

all residing in the municipality's urban center, considering its proximity to cultural institutions. The sample was diverse in age (ranging from 14 to 70 years) and gender, with a slight female majority.

Structured survey: This survey was used to understand listening habits, perceptions of the quality of promotions, and frequency of cultural participation. Questions included: "What time of day do you listen to Radio Sancti Spiritus?" "What topics would you like the station to cover?" and "Do you participate in the cultural activities promoted by Radio Sancti Spiritus?" It also explored whether the audience was hesitant when choosing cultural activities and whether they remembered recently promoted events.

Experimental questionnaire: A subgroup was presented with three promotions of varying quality. After listening, they evaluated aspects such as their enjoyment of the message (on a scale of 1 to 5), their emotion, their desire to attend the event, and suggestions for possible improvements. The promotions were rated with adjectives such as "exciting", "melancholic", or "fun", which allowed them to capture the emotional component of the message.

Semi-structured interviews: Researchers explored topics such as knowledge of radio promotions, forms of cultural information, elements that capture their attention in advertising, and their perceptions of the relationship between promotions and cultural participation. They were also asked for advice on improving the work of the station's radio promoters.

Table 1. Distribution of participants by age and sex

Participant	Age	Sex
1	14	Female
2	15	Male
3	16	Female
4	19	Female
5	20	Female
6	21	Male
7	21	Female
8	24	Male
9	26	Female
10	29	Female
11	30	Male
12	33	Male
13	35	Female
14	37	Male
15	40	Female
16	46	Female
17	52	Male
18	58	Male
19	63	Female
20	70	Female

The study was conducted from October to December 2015 using in-person data collection procedures. Participants (Table 1) completed the instruments in controlled settings, including a dedicated space for the audio questionnaire, where

they individually listened to promotional materials and provided responses. Ethical compliance was ensured through informed consent protocols prior to participation.

Results and discussion

The results show that radio continues to be a relevant medium for the population of Sancti Spiritus, with a notable preference for musical, informative, and cultural content. Most respondents listen to the station during the week, especially in the morning and afternoon.

Regarding radio promotions, 85% of respondents reported having heard of promotions for cultural activities. However, only 40% said they had participated in such activities, and 30% responded that they sometimes did. Sixty-five percent considered the promotions “good” or “excellent”, although several noted they were uncreative or repetitive.

In the listening experiment, the high-quality promotion scored an average of 4.6 on the liking scale, while the medium-quality promotion scored 3.2 and the low-quality promotion scored 2.1. The most common emotions were joy, excitement, and curiosity, especially for the first promotion. Desire to attend the advertised event was highest after the first promotion (80% affirmative responses) and decreased significantly with the other two.

Listeners valued everyday language, appropriate music, message clarity, and content relevance. The interviews confirmed that many cultural events are unknown due to a lack of effective publicity and that radio remains the most reliable and accessible medium for receiving cultural information.

Furthermore, it was identified that promotions with dramatizations, real-life situations, and a humorous tone are more memorable to the public. It was also suggested that the frequency of broadcasting be increased and that the selection of times and programs in which promotions are aired be improved, prioritizing those with the highest audiences.

These findings coincide with previous research that points out the role of the media as agents of cultural socialization and highlights the importance of persuasive elements in mass communication (Ferreiro, 2018).

The results obtained through the questionnaires, interviews, and experimental dynamics allow us to affirm a significant relationship between Radio Sancti Spíritus’s radio promotion and public participation in the municipality’s cultural activities. This finding coincides with what is proposed in the theoretical framework, where community radio is recognized as a medium with the capacity for social mobilization and strengthening cultural identity (Hautaniemi, 2022; Kanjilal et al., 2024).

A large majority of respondents—85%—reported frequently listening to Radio Sancti Spíritus, particularly in the

morning and afternoon. This high level of exposure aligns with studies such as Almirón (2018), which identify the morning time slot as the peak period for radio consumption in urban areas. Furthermore, 90% acknowledged having listened to cultural promotions, suggesting adequate penetration of the message in the community. However, 30% rated these promotions as “not very innovative”, revealing an opportunity for creativity and adaptation of promotional language improvement.

Sixty-five percent of participants reported having recently attended cultural activities promoted by the station, and 40% did so specifically motivated by the promotions. This data corroborates the assertion of Güiza (2023) and Casas (2022), who argue in their writings that radio, beyond informing, mobilizes, mainly when cultural campaigns include emotional elements and appeal to collective identity.

Furthermore, the interviews showed that listeners positively value promotions incorporating real testimonials, familiar voices, and references to local cultural figures. This aligns with the concept of emotionally significant cultural narratives proposed by Tusa-Jumbo et al. (2023). These authors indicate that message recall and intention to act are higher when the content generates identification with the listener’s daily life.

In the experimental dynamic, where three radio promotions of varying quality were presented, a clear relationship was evident between the quality of the message and the listener’s motivation. The promotion with the highest technical and emotional level obtained an average rating of 4.6 out of 5, generating enthusiasm and joy. In contrast, the low-quality one was evaluated with only 2.2, accompanied by emotional responses of indifference and confusion. This finding supports what was proposed by (De la Montaña, 2023), who emphasized that the aesthetics of the message and its emotional clarity are decisive in mobilizing cultural behavior.

From a social psychology perspective, Nielsen et al. (2021) argue that social learning occurs through observation and imitation, especially when role models are presented in a meaningful environment. In this study, radio plays the role of a symbolic environment, where listeners observe behavior patterns (attendance at events) promoted repetitively and emotionally, thus facilitating their internalization and reproduction.

Furthermore, the community empowerment theory proposed by Vergara et al. (2024) is manifested in the active participation of listeners, who consume content and provide suggestions and constructive criticism. The community’s involvement in the interviews confirms that radio does not act as a one-way transmitter but rather as a space for cultural dialogue and shared construction of meanings.

Despite the positive results, there are areas for improve-

ment. The lack of targeted promotions for specific audiences (youth, seniors, etc.) limits the reach of some campaigns. Community radio stations also face structural challenges, such as funding and technological upgrades, affecting Radio Sancti Spiritus's capacity for communicative innovation.

The data from this study confirm the direct influence of radio promotion on cultural participation and reveal that the quality of the message, its emotional content, and local relevance are determining factors. As a community medium, radio can continue to be a driving force for cultural mobilization if its connection with citizens is strengthened and more engaging, inclusive, and technologically updated narrative strategies are incorporated.

Conclusions

This research highlights radio promotion as a crucial factor in enhancing cultural participation in Sancti Spiritus, demonstrating that the quality of radio messages significantly influences public engagement with cultural events. Key findings reveal that emotionally resonant promotions, everyday language, dramatizations, and local identity connections are highly valued by audiences, while well-crafted content improves recall and motivation. Radio Sancti Spiritus remains a vital cultural dissemination platform, especially in areas with limited digital access, though improvements in creativity, audience segmentation, and technology could further enhance promotional impact. The study reaffirms radio's potential for cultural and social empowerment, provided communication strategies are participatory, inclusive, and community-tailored. Strengthening institutional partnerships, incorporating listener feedback, and systematically evaluating promotional impact will be essential for optimizing cultural management through media.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares that have no conflicts of interest.

Author contributions

Miguel A. Bravo: Conceptualization, data curation, formal analysis, investigation, methodology, supervision, validation, visualization, drafting the original manuscript and writing, review, and editing.

Data availability statement

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

Statement on the use of AI

The author acknowledges the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve the readability and clarity of the article.

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