

The use of print and electronic media in Botswana

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One principle of Botswana's Long Term Vision for 2016 is 'An educated and informed nation' through access to electronic and paper media and computer-based communication. This Department of Information and Broadcasting Services (DIBS) survey provides background data to ensure equality of access among communities. User patterns and preferences for viewing, listening and reading are determined using questionnaires, interviews, observation and focus groups. The survey technique provided for systematic random samples from city, town, urban village and village areas, reaching over 1,700 respondents. Access to radio and television, stations and times preferred, and newspaper readership are analysed by gender, age, education and income. Concludes that access in low income and rural areas should be increased by implementing more proactive education policies, equal employment and incomes policies, and the creation of rural community centres with television and radio. Radio and TV should not take a back seat to Internet access. Information should be in multiple languages, not just principal and official languages, appropriate to age and educational level of the audience, and should include programmes with useful local content created by the users themselves. The free newspaper should be more effectively distributed.

INTRODUCTION

The study reported here was carried out against the backdrop of Botswana's Long Term Vision for 2016. The Botswana Government is trying at all levels to improve services, reduce costs, be more responsive to customer needs and introduce the new technology to enable it to deliver on these. In 2016, Botswana will have been an independent nation for 50 years and it is envisaged that by then it will have met the following major Vision Principles:

- an educated and informed nation;
- a prosperous, productive and innovative nation;
- a compassionate, just and caring nation;
- a safe and secure nation;
- an open, democratic and accountable nation;
- a moral and tolerant nation;
- a united and proud nation (Presidential Task Group, 1997).

The Vision Principles, as stated above, spell out the kind of society that Botswana hopes to become by 2016. Of relevance to the study reported here is the Vision Principle that by 2016 Botswana will be 'an educated and informed nation'. Botswana hopes to provide opportunity for continued and universal education with options during and after secondary school to take up vocational or technical training as alternatives to purely academic studies. More poignantly, it is believed that Botswana will have entered the information age on an equal footing with other progressive nations of the world. It will have sought and acquired the best available information technology and have become a regional leader in the production and

dissemination of information. It is anticipated that the country will have developed its communication capacity, particularly in the electronic media, telephone, radio and television, to ensure quick, direct and effective means of disseminating information. At this level it is envisaged that all Batswana will be informed about the rest of the world, will have access to the media through national and local radio, television, libraries and newspapers and all schools will have access to computers and computer-based communication systems such as the Internet.

ENSURING ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Botswana, judging from the foregoing, recognizes the importance of information and of developing efficient and effective information systems and networks for the support of communication, education, development and research. The challenge that arises, for this study, is that of providing data that will encourage authorities to ensure access to information, television, audio and print media and further develop an environment conducive to the free flow of information among the communities in Botswana. The Department of Information and Broadcasting Services plans to implement the findings of the study by:

- interpreting policy and actions of the Government to Botswana through continuing services of information and public relations, campaigns and concentrated publicity on particular subjects;
- encouraging and assisting Botswana to take an increasing interest in and responsibility for the economic, cultural and political development of their country;
- advising Government on public opinion especially in all fields affecting the development of Botswana;
- developing and exploiting the media in order to assist ministries and departments in performing their routine and extension services;
- publicizing Botswana outside its borders (Sesinyi, 2002).

THE DIVIDE

Although there has always been a gap between those who can effectively use information and communications technology (ICT) and those who cannot, there is now an urgent need to close it. It is believed that, if not tackled, the digital divide threatens to widen the economic divide that already exists in society thereby increasing social instability and reinforcing the information under-class. Currently, the most far-reaching barrier to development in this direction is the lack of skills to access ICTs and the scarcity of local content information,

or relevant local content, which most users want (Twist, 2000). A lot of emphasis has been devoted to increasing education and Internet access but less is being placed on providing skills, local information content and encouraging information sharing. There is much talk about creating wired communities, providing both broadband and narrowband access to rural communities but less about creating wireless communities to ensure digital inclusion. The aim, therefore, should be directed at having the r-community alongside the e-community, where the former emphasizes radio access and availability of information and the latter Internet access and connectivity. Useful local content would include information that can be clearly understood by those with limited literacy and information that is culturally appropriate, some of which would have been created by the users themselves with a particular focus on educational information, health, nutrition, business, tourism, trade, entertainment and employment. Such information should be disseminated in multiple languages considering the multiplicity of languages in some developing countries such as Botswana. Some language policies that favour the dissemination of information in the so-called principal and official languages only will have to be revised. Focus, therefore, should not only be on access but also on skills building, awareness and affordability. There is an urgent need also to work below bandwidth and pipelines. This is the arena for radio and television. Not everyone is itching to get wired (Kalish, 2000). Radio and television seem to have taken a back seat in being used to provide local content information, especially to communities that are illiterate and have no access to the Internet.

THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING SERVICES (DIBS)

The DIBS, which operates under the Ministry of the State President, has embarked on a nationwide survey (here reported) to determine listener/viewer patterns as well as preferences of its listeners, viewers and readers. In Botswana, public television, radio services, the *Botswana Daily News* and the *Kutlwano Magazine* are the responsibility of the DIBS. The emergence of the public television broadcaster, Botswana Television (Btv) has been the most recent accomplishment of Vision 2016. Btv, as it is popularly known, which was launched on the 30th August 2000, is the first station in Africa fully to utilize digital technology and rivals the likes of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in terms of state-of-the-art technology. The Btv signal is carried on a PAS7 satellite with a footprint that covers the rest of Africa. The main challenge facing the Btv, however, is to expand its news broadcasts as well as its local programmes. It is believed, therefore, that this national survey will provide management and the Government of Botswana with the

data or information they need to offer a better and more efficient service for the benefit of the listeners, readers and viewers. It will also provide advertisers with much needed data on Btv viewers and, hopefully, this will help increase advertising revenue.

Presently, Radio Botswana operates two radio stations: RB1 that was established in 1965 and its commercial wing RB2, established in 1992, which provides a 24-hour service. The Botswana Telecommunications Authority (BTA) granted licences in 1990 to two commercial radio broadcasting stations, namely Yarona FM 106.6 and Gabz FM 96.2. Radio channels and Btv broadcasting are available via satellite countrywide, with appropriate receiving equipment readily obtainable.

There has been a steady emergence of a variety of print media in the past 36 years since Botswana's independence. Currently, private sector newspapers include: the *Botswana Gazette* (established 1985), the *Botswana Guardian* (established 1980), *Mmegi* (the Reporter) (established in 1984), the *Midweek Sun* (established in 1990), the *Mirror* (established in 1997), the *Voice* (established in 1993), the *Economist* (established in 1993, now defunct) and the *Okavango* (established in 1992, now defunct). Government-owned papers include: the *Botswana Daily News* (established in 1965) and *Kuthano Magazine* (established in 1962) (Thapisa & Megwa, 1998).

STUDY OBJECTIVES

The Department of Information and Broadcasting Services (DIBS) commissioned a national survey in which this author was a lead researcher (Thapisa & Megwa, 2002). The survey was designed to monitor and systematically analyse the information needs and media use of the DIBS' audiences and readers in order to determine how effectively it can respond to, and adequately satisfy, their needs. This would provide not only the necessary feedback on social realities regarding the use of the service but also a 'surveillance' apparatus that would enable the Department to learn about its market situation and dynamics. This undertaking would provide important data to enable it to market its services effectively and to produce relevant content material that meets the needs of customers. The Department would also use the data so gathered to plan for effective competitiveness.

Public perception in Botswana has not been favourable to the products of government-owned media services. Central to this negative public perception are the observations that information that is provided through such services is not credible, independent or transparent (Thapisa & Megwa, 1998). To overcome this, the DIBS needed to know where, when and how to reach its intended audience and what their needs were. As a

government institution it desperately needs to be seen to be independent of government influence in its editorial and broadcasting policy. In this regard it tries to provide objective, reliable and quality information in its reporting of public affairs and government activities and policies.

The national survey was intended to undertake and provide credible data on:

- how the public viewed, read and listened to the Department of Information and Broadcasting products and services;
- how those products and services were utilized if at all;
- a survey based on personal in-house interviews;
- public expectations of the Department of Information and Broadcasting Services;
- the public ratings of Department of Information and Broadcasting products and services, versus the private media.

METHODOLOGY

A triangulation approach was used which included questionnaires, house-to-house interviews, observational approaches and focus group interviews. In designing the questionnaires and in assigning field research assistants to research locations, intensive training was provided for the assistants who were mainly humanities, and library and information studies students at the University of Botswana. The field research assistants were fluent in both English and Setswana, which are the official and local languages, respectively, spoken in Botswana. The training was designed to prepare and to acquaint them with methodological orientations conducive to the prevailing cultural patterns and social attitudes in the rural and urban areas of the country. They were trained therefore not to accept 'yes' or 'no' answers without a tempting to get the reasons why. To achieve this, it was important for them to 'buy' their way in by attracting attention, being assertive and following through with some critical questions, being quick witted, focused, presentable, professional and purposive.

The training of the field research assistants was essentially designed to ensure that they were well equipped to fill in the gaps where the questionnaire fell short. The questionnaire was respondent-constructed by pre-testing upon the 17 field research assistants themselves and 10 other volunteers. It was crucial that the instrument be tested on both the field research assistants and volunteers because it was imperative that the former had personal acquaintance with the instrument in terms of knowing firsthand about its strengths and weaknesses. The final version, which was administered to the respondents, was therefore shaped by the

findings and comments of the field research assistants and volunteers.

The survey had three phases of data collection. Phase 1 used mainly the questionnaire method and some observational approaches including field notes and debriefings made by the field research assistants. The questionnaire contained sufficient closed and open-ended questions to elicit both qualitative and quantitative data. As part of their training, the field research assistants learnt how to compile notes about their impressions of what went on during their encounters with the respondents. Upon their return, they went into debriefing sessions where they were encouraged to narrate their field experiences for the record. These sessions not only allowed corrective measures to be taken as the data were being collected, they also provided the lead researcher with instant feedback on what was taking place in the field.

In selecting the areas to be surveyed, the Reference Group, representing the DIBS, guided the process by providing what was referred to as 'critical areas' for the investigation. These were used as a form of stratification in predetermining the areas of the country to be sampled and surveyed. Using a multi-stage cluster sampling approach, 'critical areas' were designated as predetermined 'clusters'. Using a systematic random sampling technique, locations within each cluster were sampled. In each sampled location, using the same technique, streets and houses were randomly selected. Field research assistants identified the houses on given streets and interviewed people in them who were willing to participate. It was discovered, nevertheless, that in some towns like Lobatse, Francistown and Selebe-Phikwe the streets were not name posted and some houses were not numbered. Access to them proved very difficult despite the map we obtained from the Population Statistics Department. It was then decided that every house in sampled locations or streets, where access could be obtained, would be surveyed. This approach was adopted and used in all 'critical areas' and 'non-critical' ones. Finally the following areas and locations within given towns, cities and villages were sampled.

Critical areas

'Critical areas' were defined as those settlement clusters (cities, towns and villages) that had to be surveyed without exception because of their centrality to the national survey, economy and the size of their population. They were to be included in the study sample en masse. Random sampling was undertaken in areas, extensions, wards and centres found within each critical area.

The following were the critical areas including the sampled extensions, wards and centres found within them:

Francistown: Area G; Area W; CBD Extension; Government village; Mall Centre (Along Blue Jacket Street); Madzibalori; Mater Spei Secondary School and Selepa (Coloured Area);

Gaborone: Babusi (Extension 14); Boitshoko (Extension 10); Bontleng (Extension 8); Borakanelo (Extension 3); Botswello (Extension 5); Dilalelo (Extension 4); Mephato (Extension 12); Phologolo (Extension 9); Sekwa (Extension 7); Selemelo (Extension 2) and village (Extension 15);

Kanye: Goo-Matebejane; Goo-Makepe; Kanye Mall; Ga-Sebako Ward; Dinaleding; Bagami; Kanye Hospital; Ga-Rra Chibana; Goo-Lagae; Ga-Rra Tsimia; Goo-Sebako; Ga-Rra Moranyane; Ga-Rra Kgano; Ga-Rra Sebege; Ga-Rra Tsimia; Goo-Thage; Goo-Rra Motlhala; Ko Kgosing; Kamodi Ward; Taung Ward; Gorewang Sekokotla Ward; Goo-Lebekwa; and Mmookodi Ward;

Mahalapye: Xhosa Ward 1; Xhosa Ward 2; Madiba; Tidimalo Ward; Sebelebeledi; Tudumane; Konyana Ward; Borakanelo; Matshing; Tshikinyega Ward; Botalaute; Matlhabelo; Madimikwe; Dilaene; Flower town; Diline; Mmeselane; Mowana; Thoma Dithotse; Herero Ward; Bokaa Shoshong; Borotsi; and Mokgosing;

Molepolole: Bokaa 1; Bokaa 2; Borakalalo Ward; Borakanelo; Goo-Ntloedibe Ward; Lekgwapheng Ward; Difethamolelo; Livingstone Memorial Hospital; Tlhakweng Ward; Goo-Rra Nta; Sewagodimo; Ntloedibe Ward; Council Houses; Goo-Rasume; Mahokotswane; Ga-Modubu; Legonono; and Mogogoru Ward;

Selebe-Phikwe: Kagiso; Kutlwano; Masupatsela; Main Mall; Masupatsela; Olando; and South East Extension;

Serowe: Swaneng; Marobela; Newtown; Tidimalo; Kwanyana; Sebinanyane; Botlaote; Makolojwane; Ramogatlhe. Mokwena and Rakgomo;

Lobatse: the lack of clear demarcations of locations and wards precluded any scientific sampling to be undertaken. As a result, since the town is also small, we surveyed all accessible locations.

Non-critical areas

These were all settlement clusters not classified among the critical ones as explained above. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used. The settlement clusters were subjected to a random sampling procedure and within each randomly chosen cluster, random samples were obtained of areas, extensions, centres and wards found in them. However, while in Maun the sub-clusters such as centres and wards were clearly identifiable and defined on the map, the other settlement clusters did not have such clearly identifiable centres or wards. The non-critical areas together with their extensions, centres and wards were:

Maun: Boyei Ward; Kgosing Ward; Mabudutsa Ward; and Shorobe Ward;

Mogoditshane: owing to lack of proper demarcations and the smallness of the village, a deliberate decision was taken to survey the whole of Mogoditshane where access could be obtained. Access was very difficult here since not a lot of people were cooperative. People seemed to be very busy. Due to its proximity to Gaborone, the capital city, Mogoditshane was classified as an urban village;

Orapa: given the fact that this town had no disenabled sub-clusters such as centres and wards all accessible areas were surveyed. It should be noted that Orapa is a diamond-mining town and, therefore, it is a protected settlement with limited or controlled access;

Tlokwen: owing to lack of clear demarcations of wards etc. and the smallness of the village, a deliberate decision was also taken to survey the whole of Tlokwen where access could be obtained. Like Mogoditshane, owing to its proximity to Gaborone, Tlokwen was classified as an urban village;

Gantsi, Gweta, Hukuntsi, Kasane and Nata: when we got to these villages it became very clear that the extensions, centres and wards were a feature of the urban villages, towns and cities mainly found among the critical areas. Ordinary small villages and towns like Nata did not have them. It was then decided, as before, to survey all accessible households without discrimination.

The classification with regard to 'cities', 'towns', 'urban villages' and 'villages' was problematic. Most people who had moved from rural areas/ villages to cities and towns saw their affiliation with the cities as temporary, absorbing little of the urbanity from their work places. It is likely therefore that in their responses, the respondents in 'urban' or 'city' environments drew their experiences from the areas they originated from rather than from their present living areas. The 'urban villages' like Kanye, Molepolole and Serowe have physical characteristics, like modern buildings and shops, normally found in towns or cities like Francistown, Lobatse and Gaborone but they clearly exhibit rural orientations. The respondents originating from these areas, therefore, may have had attitudes far more entrenched than the parochialism of the areas identified as towns or cities. As will be seen from the analysis, some respondents saw Francistown and Gaborone as both cities and towns. Officially these were recognized as cities. However Lobatse and Mahalapye, which were towns, were clearly seen as such but urban villages such as Kanye, Molepolole and Serowe were seen strictly as villages although about 16.6 per cent saw Molepolole as a town.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1 illustrates that a total of 1,720 randomly sampled respondents in both 'critical and non-critical areas' participated in the national survey on the use of print and electronic media in Botswana, 33.1 per cent of whom lived in cities, 23.7 per cent in towns, 31 per cent in urban villages and 12 per cent in villages.

Sample characteristics

Of the 1,720 participants, 52.2 per cent were males, 47.8 per cent were females and there were 70 missing cases where gender was not indicated. 25.9 per cent of respondents were aged between 21-26 years, 20.4 per cent were 27-32, 19.4 per cent were 15-20 and 12.6 per cent were 33-38 years. Only 9.5 per cent were aged between 39-45 years, and 6.6 per cent were aged 52 years and older. The majority of the respondents in the sample were, therefore, relatively young, termed in this article 'youth' (aged between 15-38 years old).

Most respondents had Junior Certificate (27.8 per cent), O Levels (25.6 per cent), diplomas (15 per cent) and degrees (10.6 per cent). Standards 6 and 7 comprised 12.1 per cent of the sample, Standards 3 and 5 occupied 3.1 per cent and those with no qualifications 4.9 per cent, possibly graduates of a non-formal education programme.

At the time of the survey, 41.4 per cent of those who responded were unemployed, 26.6 per cent were employed full time, 10.3 per cent were self-employed, 15.7 per cent were officially employed by others, possibly domestic workers, and only 4.4 per cent had part-time employment. Of those who said they were not employed, 50.1 per cent were students, 35.7 per cent had never worked in their lives, 3.8 per cent were looking for work, 4.8 per cent were retired and 5.6 per cent were pensioners.

15.8 per cent of respondents earned in excess of P5000* per month, while 14 per cent had no source of income, 12.5 per cent earned a monthly income of P1000 to P2000, 11.8 per cent earned between P751 and P1000 per month, 9.8 per cent earned between P251 and P1000 and 4.8 per cent earned between P1 and P250 a month. It would appear that a majority of those who earned an income were middle to high earners and the rest had little or no income at all.

Radio and television ownership

Radio ownership with respect to where respondents lived was very high across all four types of dwellers: city (97.6 per cent), town (96.9 per cent), urban village (94.8 per cent) and village (92.7 per cent). In contrast, with television ownership, it made a difference where one

Location		Count	Survey %
City	Gaborone	469	27.3
	Francistown	101	5.9
	Total	570	33.1
Town	Lobatse	135	7.8
	Maun	92	5.3
	Orapa	13	0.8
	Sellebe-Phikwe	49	2.8
	Kasane	17	1.0
	Mahalapye	101	5.9
	Total	407	23.7
Urban village	Kanye	91	5.3
	Malepolale	206	12.0
	Ghantsi	59	3.4
	Serowe	101	5.9
	Mogaditshane	23	1.3
	Tlokweng	53	3.1
	Total	533	31.0
Village	Nata	62	3.6
	Gweta	61	3.5
	Hukuntsi	87	5.1
	Total	210	12.2
Table total		1720	100.0

lived. City residents were more likely to own television sets than either town or village dwellers (city 78.7 per cent; town 59.3 per cent; urban village 63.8 per cent and village 33.5 per cent). Town residents (62.2 per cent) were more likely to have at least one radio set at home than those in the city (56.5 per cent), urban village (60.4 per cent) or village (52.4). However, those who lived in the city were more likely than either village or town dwellers to own more than one radio set.

City dwellers were more likely to own television sets than either urban village or village dwellers. In fact city (12.6 per cent) and town (10.8 per cent) dwellers were more likely to own two television sets than those in both urban villages (10.5 per cent) and villages (3.3 per cent).

A majority of the respondents (71.6 per cent) listened mostly to Radio Botswana (RB1) while 53.9 per cent listened to Radio Botswana (RB2), 21.9 per cent to Radio Mtswedeng, the only South African station listened to in this survey, 20.7 per cent to Yarona FM and 13.2 per cent to Gabz FM (See Table 2). 72.3 per cent listened to the radio daily while 4.2 per cent listened only five days a week. The majority of the respondents listened daily, most in the evening. Popular radio listening periods were 18:00–19:00hrs (52.7 per cent), 19:00–20:00hrs (51.9 per cent) and 20:00–21:00 hrs (51.5 per cent). In the morning, 48.9 per cent listened to radio

	Cases	%
Radio Botswana (RB1)	1152	71.6
Radio Botswana (RB2)	867	53.9
Gabz FM Radio	213	13.2
Angola	1	0.1
Namibia	20	1.2
Radio Jakaranda	36	2.2
Yarona FM	333	20.7
Radio RSA	16	1.0
Mmabatho	77	4.8
Zambia	8	0.5
Matswedi	352	21.9
Zimbabwe	14	0.9
Other	36	2.2
Total	1609	194.2

between 6:00 and 7:00 hrs while 44 per cent did so in the afternoon between 12:00 and 14:00 hrs. Few respondents (31.6 per cent) listened to the radio between 8:00 and 12:00 hrs. Only 27.8 per cent listened before 6:00 hrs (See Table 3).

This finding is very significant in terms of when to broadcast important information. It might well be the case that the peak hour broadcasting principle is irrelevant in Botswana. This is important where people do not necessarily drive home for lunch but simply walk to a restaurant near by. Peak hour listening for Botswana therefore might largely be the evening.

Of respondents of all ages 71.6 per cent listened to RB1, although mainly middle-aged and older people did

	Number	%
Before 6:00	441	27.8
Between 6:00 and 7:00	776	48.9
Between 7:00 and 8:00	568	35.8
Between 8:00 and 12:00	501	31.6
Between 12:00 and 14:00	699	44.0
Between 14:00 and 16:00	557	35.1
Between 16:00 and 17:00	632	39.8
Between 18:00 and 19:00	836	52.7
Between 19:00 and 20:00	824	51.9
Between 20:00 and 21:00	817	51.5
Later than 21:00	605	38.1
Total	1587	457.2

so. RB2 was principally listened to by the youth who constitute 61 per cent of its listeners. Of those aged between 15–20 years 67.7 per cent listened mostly to RB2. Of women 75.3 per cent listened to RB1 compared with 68.5 per cent of men. Of both women and men 53 per cent listened to RB2 although more females (28.6 per cent) than males (27.6 per cent) listened to both RB1 and RB2.

Of the 27–32 age range 30.2 per cent listened to the radio very frequently. Similarly, 28.7 per cent of those aged between 21 and 26 years listened very frequently. However, of those aged 52 years and above 33.7 per cent did not listen frequently, neither did many of those aged between 46–51 years of age (32.2 per cent) and 39–45 years (30.2 per cent). This trend would appear to suggest that the older one became the less one listened to RB1 and 2. This could actually mean that both stations were not well targeted to these audiences.

People who had fewer educational qualifications were most likely not to spend most of their time listening to the radio. The findings illustrated that 44.1 per cent of those without formal education or qualification did not listen often to the radio. Some degree holders (30.1 per cent) also did not listen frequently. It is actually those who possessed Junior Certificate that listened very often (31.6 per cent) followed by O Level Certificate holders (28.5 per cent) and Standards 6 and 7 (26.7 per cent). The groups who reported that they listened often were those with diplomas (37.2 per cent), O Levels (34.9 per cent), Junior Certificate (34.3 per cent) and degree holders at 33.1 per cent.

Location, age, education and radio listening

With regard to where one lived, most villagers (88.6 per cent), town dwellers (82.9 per cent), urban villagers (74.7 per cent) and city dwellers (55.4 per cent) listened to RB1. RB2 also had audiences in towns (59.2 per cent), villages (52.6 per cent) and cities (50.6 per cent). In terms of how frequently they listened to these two radio stations, 26.7 per cent of city residents, 33.2 per cent of town dwellers, 32.2 per cent of urban villagers and 9 per cent of villagers listened very often. Both Gaborone-based FM radios, Yarona and Gabz had good listening audiences (40.2 per cent and 27.6 per cent respectively), indicating that should they one day broadcast nationally they are likely to pose a very serious threat to both RB1 and 2.

With regard to age, the older respondents were more likely to listen to RB1; 97.9 per cent of those aged 52 years and older listened to this radio station, 88.4 per cent of those aged 46–51, 81.8 per cent of the 39–45 year olds, 80.6 per cent in the 33–38 age range, 77.7 per cent of those aged 27–32 years and 63.4 per cent of the 21–26 year olds. Those aged 15–20 years listened to RB1 less; 53 per cent of this age group listened to this station. Far more than any of the other groups, this age range

listened to RB2 (67.7 per cent of them) and 56.2 per cent of those aged 33–38 years also listened to RB2 followed by those aged 21–26 years (55.9 per cent), 27–32 years (54.7 per cent) and 39–45 years (39.2 per cent). The younger respondents were, the more likely they were to listen to RB2, Gabz FM and Yarona FM.

More women (75.3 per cent) than men (68.5 per cent) listened to Radio Botswana (RB1). However, more men preferred to listen to RB2 than women. In terms of how often they listened to Radio Botswana stations, women seemed to listen to them much more often than men.

Those with fewer educational qualifications listened mostly to RB1 (92.4 per cent of them) while the more educated, diploma and degree holders listened mostly to RB2 (54.6 per cent and 53 per cent respectively). 63.4 per cent of those with O Levels and 56.3 per cent of Junior Certificate holders also listened to RB2. Most respondents who listened to Yarona FM had O Levels (30.8 per cent) followed by those with a diploma (26.9 per cent) and higher degrees (25.6 per cent). Of those who listened to Motsweding, most had O Level qualification (26.9 per cent) followed by diploma holders (24.8 per cent) and degree holders (21.4 per cent). Of those who listened to Gabz FM, most were degree holders (26.2 per cent) followed by those with diplomas (21.8 per cent) and O Levels (14.5 per cent).

Income and listenership

Those who were employed full time (78.3 per cent) by organizations (69.6 per cent) listened to RB1 the most. Similarly, 54.8 per cent of full-time employees, 65.2 per cent employed by organizations and 53.7 per cent of the unemployed listened to RB2. 34.9 per cent of those who were employed part time and 22 per cent of those who did not have employment at the time of the survey listened to Yarona FM the most.

RB1 was listened to by 70.5 per cent of all income groups. However, low-income earners listened more to Radio Botswana (RB1) than high-income earners (85.2 per cent and 70.5 per cent respectively). Middle- and high-income earners tended to listen to RB2 the most (57.8 per cent and 57.5 per cent respectively). Similarly, high-income earners listened to Gabz FM most. The same pattern is repeated for Yarona FM. However, those without income also listened to Yarona. Motsweding's listenership in terms of income was evenly spread.

Television viewing

Most respondents (69.7 per cent) watched television while 30.3 per cent did not watch it. Of those aged between 15–20 years of age 79.5 per cent watched it whilst 77.7 per cent of those aged between 33–38 years were regular viewers. Of those aged between 46 and 51 years 75.4 per cent also watched daily, as did 69.5 per cent of those aged 39–45 years; 69.4 per cent of 33–38

year olds; 64.6 per cent of those aged 15–20 years and 58.1 per cent of those in the 21 to 26 age group. It would appear therefore that the younger the viewer the more frequently they watched TV.

An overwhelming majority (81.1 per cent) of those who did not watch TV did not have access to it, 4.1 per cent could not afford to buy one and 3.9 per cent did not like it (See Table 4). There appeared to be an equal number of both male (70 per cent) and female (69 per cent) viewers and thus there was also an equal percentage of males and females who did not watch TV (30 per cent and 31 per cent respectively). This is a significant percentage of non-viewing which seems to indicate that there is an untapped market for TV viewing among the public. However, there is a need to know why there is such a high percentage of non-viewing. Is it just the lack of TV sets or might this be an indication that some programmes are not popular?

The fact that there were more female viewers (67.7 per cent) who watched daily than males (60.3 per cent) is a significant finding for programmers, since they may have to consider the relevance of programme content, which appears to be more appealing to women viewers. South African Broadcasting channels such as e-tv were also watched by 72.3 per cent of respondents while 61.3 per cent watched Btv and 30.7 per cent watched CNN, BBC and Sky News. While 10.1 per cent watched movie channels, 7.3 per cent watched music channels, 5.7 per cent sports channels, 3.7 per cent Euro-News and 3.4 per cent watched the Gaborone Broadcasting Corporation. Some 25.2 per cent preferred to watch soaps, 21 per cent chat shows, 18.8 per cent news programmes and 44.1 per cent entertainment programmes. Only 16.6 per cent needed general information and educational information. It is significant that the need for general information and educational information appears to have taken a back seat to entertainment and news. These were interesting findings of which programmers should take note.

Most respondents (72.1 per cent) watched Btv although 27.9 per cent did not watch it. Many of those who watched it (28.1 per cent) did so because it is their

national television station. Others (21.9 per cent) watched it because it shows local programmes not shown on other channels. Only 15.9 per cent watched it because they liked its programmes. 15.8 per cent stated that it was the only television station they received. 65.5 per cent of those who did not watch Btv did not have access to television sets while 13.6 per cent did not like its programmes and 1.9 per cent did not like its presenters. Of those who watched it, however, 45.9 per cent believed that the reception on their sets was good and 42.4 per cent thought it was excellent while only 9.1 per cent thought it was poor.

Newspaper readership

Of the 1,720 respondents, 75.4 per cent read newspapers and 24.6 per cent did not (see Table 5). Of those who read newspapers 23.3 per cent did so daily, 22.9 per cent read occasionally, 13.1 per cent once a day, 12.2 per cent three times a week and 11 per cent twice a week. Most readers (66.8 per cent) read *Mmegi* (the *Reporter*), 56.5 per cent the *Botswana Daily News*, 38 per cent the *Botswana Guardian*, 29.8 per cent the *Voice*, 28.3 per cent the *Botswana Gazette* and 16 per cent read the *Midweek Sun*. Those who read foreign papers (20.3 per cent of the sample) read the *Sowetan*, the *Sunday Times*, the *Mail & Guardian*, the *Star*, the *Mirror* and the *Citizen* respectively. The three most read newspapers were *Mmegi*, the *Botswana Daily News* and the *Botswana Guardian*. Of those who read newspapers 53.5 per cent read mainly the headlines, 51.2 per cent read the politics section, 44.3 per cent the sports, 38.8 per cent read the entertainment news, 33.1 per cent read about cultural activities, 30.3 per cent read about education developments, 20.9 per cent read the letters to the Editor and 15 per cent read columnists.

Of those who did not read the *Botswana Daily News*, 38 per cent did not receive it, 25.8 per cent did not like its style of reporting, 7.5 per cent were satisfied with what they got in other newspapers and 28.7 per cent did not specify reasons why they did not read it. Of those who preferred to read papers other than the *Botswana Daily News*, 82.7 per cent thought that those papers contained most of the information they needed, 4.9 per cent liked their reporting style and 2.5 per cent liked their objectivity and professionalism. Of this group 41.4 per

Table 4. Why don't you watch TV?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Do not like TV	17	1.0	3.9	3.9
Do not have access to TV	357	20.8	81.1	85.0
Valid Can't afford to buy a TV set	18	1.0	4.1	89.1
Other	48	2.8	10.9	100.0
Total	440	25.6	100.0	
Missing System	1280	74.4		
Total	1720	100.0		

Table 5. Do you read newspapers?

	Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid Yes	1277	74.2	75.4	75.4
Valid No	417	24.2	24.6	100.0
Total	1694	98.5	100.0	
Missing System	26	1.5		
Total	1720	100.0		

cent read the news and issues about national and local politics, 36.1 per cent read the sports news, 20.4 per cent the national news and information, 20.1 per cent the entertainment news and information, 17 per cent the international news and information, 14.5 per cent community news and announcements, 7.7 per cent employment news and job adverts and 5 per cent read about issues dealing with youth and women's affairs.

Newspaper readership by age and education

Mmegi (the Reporter), which is the most read newspaper in Botswana, appealed more to the younger generation: 66.4 per cent of those aged between 15–20 years and 70.6 per cent aged between 21–26 years read it. Having said that, it is important to recognize that *Mmegi's* appeal cut evenly across people of all ages; 66.9 per cent of all respondents read this newspaper. The *Botswana Daily News*, on the other hand, although it had some appeal to the youth (52.6 per cent read it), seemed to appeal most to those 52 years and older (64.4 per cent read it). Like *Mmegi*, the *Botswana Daily News's* appeal appeared to spread out evenly across all age groups; 56.7 per cent of all those surveyed read it. The *Botswana Guardian*, which is one of the three most read newspapers, read by 42.6 per cent of the respondents in the survey, appealed mostly to those aged between 45–51 years and those aged 52 years and older. The *Voice* was read mostly by those aged between 15–20 years (40.9 per cent read it), 21–26 years (31.1 per cent) and 27 to 32 years (30.7 per cent). Its appeal was also spread out evenly across all age groups. The *Botswana Gazette* was read by only 28.3 per cent of respondents, mostly those aged between 33–38 years (32.6 per cent of this age group read it) and 15–20 years (30.6 per cent).

In terms of newspaper readership with respect to education, the *Botswana Daily News* and the *Botswana Gazette* seem to be read mostly by those who had no or few educational qualifications. Specifically, 85.7 per cent of the respondents with no formal education read the *Daily News*, followed by 78.3 per cent of those with Standards 3 to 5 and 75 per cent of those with Standards 1 to 2 (75 per cent). The *Botswana Guardian* was also read widely by those with no formal education (42.9 per cent read it) followed by those with Standards 3 to 5 (30.4 per cent).

Newspaper readership by location, employment and income

The *Botswana Daily News* was read most in the villages (61.3 per cent of village dwellers read it), towns (60.4 per cent) and less in the cities (47.8 per cent). *Mmegi* was also read most in villages (70.6 per cent) then cities (65.7 per cent) and towns (63.2 per cent). The *Botswana Guardian* had quite an evenly distributed readership across cities (39.5 per cent), villages (37 per cent) and towns (36.8 per cent). The *Voice* had a better readership in cities (33.8 per

cent) and towns (33.1 per cent) than in villages (24.1 per cent).

Those respondents who were employed by organizations, part-timers and the unemployed read the *Botswana Daily News*. Perhaps this pattern of readership has to do with the fact that the *Botswana Daily News* is distributed free of charge. Those who read it less were those employed by others, perhaps domestic workers. *Mmegi (the Reporter)* was read most by those employed by organizations (93.3 per cent read it) and those without employment (69 per cent). The *Botswana Guardian* was read most by those employed by organizations (46.7 per cent read it) and least by those with part-time employment (19.6 per cent).

With reference to income, low-income earners read mostly the *Botswana Daily News* and the *Voice* while high-income earners tended to read *Mmegi (the Reporter)*, the *Botswana Guardian* and the *Botswana Gazette*. 77.8 per cent of those earning between P3001 and P4000 and 77 per cent earning between P4001 and P5000 read *Mmegi*. On the other hand, 72.9 per cent of those earning between P251 and P500 and 68.1 per cent earning between P502 and P750 read the *Botswana Daily News*. The *Botswana Guardian* was read most by those earning P5001 and above (52.9 per cent read it) including those earning between P3001 and P4000 (52.7 per cent). 40.3 per cent of those earning between P501-P750 and 36.5 per cent of those earning between P251-P500 read the *Voice*.

CONCLUSIONS

In order to target its services appropriately the Department of Information and Broadcasting Services (DIBS) should be sensitive to the fact that although receiving equipment like radios and TV receivers are readily available in Botswana, they may not be readily accessible given the fact that some audiences cannot afford to buy them. This is owing to the fact that while some are poor and unemployed others have very low income. Those who were not employed were more likely not to possess radio and television sets or video machines. To improve access to DIBS services, therefore, the Government of Botswana may have to increase ownership of and access to radio, television and newspapers. This calls for the creation of equal employment opportunities, a more proactive education programme and an equitable incomes policy. Radio listening and TV viewing groups could also be established in given centres in rural areas where community members would go to listen or watch. This would go a long way towards fulfilling the information tenets of Vision 2016.

The DIBS should also be sensitive in its programming and information dissemination activities following the observation that the older members of its audience are more likely to listen to RB1 than to RB2. Invariably,

those audiences are more likely to be villagers, domestic workers, the less educated and full-time employees. It is important to note also that the younger generation including those with better educational qualifications and domestic workers seemed to be more attracted to RB2, Yarona Motsweding and Gabz FM. The unemployed and the self-employed were more likely to listen to both RB1 and RB2.

Given the fact that more villagers and town dwellers listened more to both RB1 and RB2 and considering that both stations have very weak signals in the rural areas, a case can now be made for increasing the strength of the signals in these areas.

Most respondents listen to the radio mostly in the afternoon between 18:00 and 21:00 hours. This is a very significant observation in that the peak hour broadcasting principle in Botswana may not be between 13:00 and 14:00 hours, when people are having lunch as has been generally believed, but in the evening. This means, therefore, that most important information should be broadcast in the evening, with the view that it is then that most people will receive it.

Although radio listening and TV viewing appear to be generally high, most audiences were worried about reporting style, objectivity and professionalism. The respondents were of the opinion that this may have had something to do with government ownership of the media. In their view, radio and television broadcast what the Government wanted to hear or what it considered palatable to the nation. The media therefore were seen as neither free, independent nor transparent agents. Both TV and radio were regarded as 'government-mouth-pieces' or 'government-say-so' stations. The question, therefore, is whether the Government intends to use the media to increase access and affordability or to spread its propaganda. As Kunda Dixit (2000) aptly put it:

...born again digerati may scoff at unglamorous AM radio, but the fact remains that no other medium today comes close to matching its reach, accessibility and affordability. And yet, what have we done with radio? By using it shamelessly as a public address system for government propaganda, we have insulted hundreds of millions of radio listeners and wasted this medium. It is possible that the digital elite will argue that by talking about AM radio we are trying to keep our people in the age of bullock carts. To begin with, what is wrong with bullock carts? Second, if your information superhighway is full of potholes, you are probably better off in a bullock cart (p. 15).

Attention should also be paid to the observation that more women than men, and more older people than young watch TV on a daily basis. This certainly calls for more suitable programmes for these audiences. Programmes that target the youth with appropriate pro-

gramming including infotainment may help encourage them to watch. A study might be necessary to establish programme content most suitable to men and women and to the old and the young.

Although radio and television are very powerful information disseminators (Thapisa, 2002), only the educated and the rich seem to be able to have access to these media. As seen above, an overwhelming number of respondents with degrees watched television followed by those with diplomas and O Levels. However, those with non-formal education or qualification did not watch TV, including those with Standards 1 to 5. Level of education therefore had an influence on media access and media behaviour. Respondents with little or no formal education tended not to possess television sets in their households while those with diplomas, degrees, O Levels and Junior Certificates did. Those without any form of education, therefore, were least expected to own television sets or radios in their homes. It is, nevertheless, important to note that a majority (81.1 per cent) of those who did not watch TV lacked access. Some could not afford it and others simply did not like some of its presenters and programmes.

In terms of newspaper readership, it was observed that those who had no qualifications, presumably those with non-formal education, and Standards 1 to 5 read the *Botswana Daily News*. Only a few of the degree and diploma holders actually read it. On the other hand, if one had a degree, O Level or diploma one was likely to read *Mmegi*, the *Botswana Guardian* or the *Botswana Gazette*.

It is very interesting to observe here that although the *Botswana Daily News* was read mostly by people of lower educational backgrounds, it was also read very consistently by people of all age groups within this sample. One interpretation of this is that in Botswana not only is the *Botswana Daily News* available to the public free and therefore appeals to those with less money and education, it is also used in non-formal education sessions as a text for reading practice purposes.

Most of the respondents who did not read the *Botswana Daily News* did not have access to it or did not receive it. This therefore calls for a more efficient and effective distribution network for this newspaper. It should also be mentioned that some respondents did not like its reporting style as they thought that it was capitulating too much towards government views and lacked editorial independence or autonomy. Others actually wanted to see it published in colour so as to improve its appeal.

BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Evidently, as seen above, the key to bridging the digital divide and to meeting some of the tenets of Vision 2016 in Botswana lies in increasing the efficiency and

effectiveness of the radio and television services including provision of an effective educational programme and the publication of a free *Daily News* paper.

The digitization of radio and television signals provides immense opportunities for disseminating information where the blending of old with new media provides more access to traditional audiences and strengthening the information service. Of vital importance nevertheless is the provision of a local content structure that is relevant to the audience. The DIBS is challenged to provide localized information that is relevant to the communities. According to Rui Carreira (2002), local content is not merely about content that is different from foreign content.

Content is about identity. Promoting content is about realising that we own it and that we have a responsibility to share it. But generating an appetite for our own stories is more about understanding the reasons behind cultural fashion than trying to make our stories fashionable.

Rooted in tradition, custom and reality, the content must also be very fresh and concise. Its format and style should be tailored to the medium while suited to its market niche and relevant to the target audience. The team producing it must also be multi-skilled and creative. In addition to providing relevant content, broadcasters should provide value-added services, which include breaking news, alerts, sports news (not only results), information, live audio, weather, traffic, results and financial indicators, and interactive devices such as vote lines (Sandison, 2002).

The process therefore of developing local content is related if not the same as that of local knowledge creation (LKC). Local knowledge creation is achieved through experimentation, research, consultancies, gathering folklore, stories, tales, proverbs, news and idioms. As Stiglitz (2000) rightly observed the best practice must be localized, based on practical know-how, which cannot be downloaded from the Internet. This is necessary because as says:

...Local adaptation cannot be done by passive recipients of 'development knowledge'; it must be done by the 'doers of development' in the course of their activities. There are two points here: the necessity that knowledge be made locally applicable and that the adaptation be done by the local 'doers of development' (not given as a gift or imposed as a conditionality from outside). It is the local selection, assimilation and adaptation of knowledge that local doers 'make it their own' (p. 10).

In conclusion therefore, researchers and broadcasters should work together towards the creation and dissemination of new knowledge. Such knowledge should be grounded in the present and the future as well as in the past. According to Wieczorek-Zeul

(2000) local knowledge should be embedded in its socio-cultural context so that it is adaptable to local conditions. If attention is not paid to the creation of local knowledge the risk is that the whole nation will be lost or overpowered by a new intellectual colonialism, which Stiglitz (2000) believes is coming to most countries masked as quality control or best practice.

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