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### Perception and Actual Usage of African Language Radio by Generation Y

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#### Abstract:

Radio broadcasting is the most consumed form of broadcast media worldwide. This medium's reach and relative ease of accessibility make it a constantly available option, even for consumers who prefer other forms of media. In South Africa, African language radio stations (ALSs), which are under the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), dominate the radio broadcasting medium and have the responsibility to inform, educate, and entertain every individual in the country. Conventional literature indicates that newer forms of media represent a potential threat to traditional mass communication media, including radio and ALSs. However, South Africa remains a developing economy with a slow adoption rate of newer forms of media, and only 54% of the population has access to the internet. Coupled with the structural and socio-economic challenges that the country adopts new media forms do not automatically yield the abandonment of traditional forms such as radio and ALS. Of the 35 million average weekly South African radio listeners, 26 million prefer to listen to ALSs. These stations have a combined audience share of more than 70% in South Africa's radio landscape; however, for this dominance to continue, younger consumers such as Generation Y must constitute the main component of these mediums' listenership. Generation Y in South Africa constitutes more than 35% of the population and represents 54% of the country's workforce. Individuals who make up the majority of this consumer cohort have a minimum post-secondary education qualification with prospects for increased economic power in the future. The economic potential displayed by this group makes South Africa's Generation Y attractive to both ALSs and marketers; however, this generational cohort is also the first to grow up in an era with access to the internet and associated digital technologies. This access to the internet influences Generation Y's consumption of media in totality, its tendency to prefer digital media, the actual and perceived abandonment of ALSs, and the market's perception toward and actual usage of ALSs. This study's primary objective is to investigate Generation Y's perceptions and actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa.

**Keywords:** generation Y, African language radio stations, intention to use, actual usage, technology acceptance model.

是一代對非洲語言廣播的認知與實際使用

**摘要：**

無線電廣播是全球消費最多的廣播媒體形式。這種媒體的覆蓋範圍和相對容易訪問性使其成為一種持續可用的選擇，即使對於喜歡其他形式媒體的消費者也是如此。在南非，隸屬於南非廣播公司公共廣播服務的非洲語言廣播電台主導著廣播媒體，並負責向每個人提供資訊、教育和娛樂在國內。傳統文獻表明，新型媒體對傳統大眾傳播媒體（包括廣播和非洲語言廣播電台）構成了潛在威脅。然而，南非仍然是一個發展中經濟體，新型媒體的採用率緩慢，只有 54% 的人口能夠上網。再加上該國採用新媒體形式所面臨的結構性和社會經濟挑戰，並不會自動放棄廣播和非洲語言廣播電台等傳統形式。南非平均每週有 3500 萬廣播聽眾，其中 2,600 萬人喜歡收聽非洲語言廣播電台。這些電台在南非廣播領域的總受眾份額超過 70%；然而，為了繼續保持這種主導地位，是一代等年輕消費者必須成為這些媒體聽眾的主要組成部分。南非的 Y 世代佔人口的 35% 以上，佔該國勞動力的 54%。佔這一消費群體大多數的個人至少擁有高等教育學歷，未來經濟實力可望增強。該群體所展現的經濟潛力使南非的 Y 世代對非洲語言廣播電台和行銷人員都具有吸引力；然而，這一代人也是第一代成長在可以使用網路和相關數位科技的時代的人。這種對網路的存取影響了 Y 世代對媒體的整體消費、他們對數位媒體的偏好、對非洲語言廣播電台的實際和感知放棄，以及市場對非洲語言廣播電台的想法和實際使用。本研究的主要目的是調查 Y 世代對南非非洲語言廣播電台的想法和實際使用情況。

**关键词：**是世代、非洲语言电台、使用意向、实际使用情况、技术接受模型。

## 1. Introduction and Background

The advent of new media forms has created a perception that traditional media, such as radio broadcasting, in South Africa and the rest of the world are obsolete. Koenderman's (2011:1) assertion that "every time a new medium is introduced obituary of some older one is invariably written" could be among the driving forces behind this shift in perception. However, even with what appears to be the fast-paced penetration of digital media worldwide, an estimated three billion weekly radio listeners globally position radio broadcasting as the most consumed form of broadcast media on earth (Duncan, 2019). Consumption data show that radio broadcasting continues to stand the test of time as its usefulness, resilience, significance, and support remain steady (Lekgoathi, 2015:201; Oliveira *et al.*, 2014). In South Africa, almost 80% of sixty million residents consume radio broadcasting regularly, with more than 70% of the market listening to the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) African language radio stations (ALSs) (SABC, 2021; Bosch, 2022). The SABC, which is a government-owned but autonomously operated South African mass media system comprising radio and television platforms, uses ALS radio broadcasting media to execute the responsibility to educate, inform, and entertain individuals of all ages in the eleven official languages of the country (Duncan, 2017; Olivier, 2011)

South Africa ALS radio broadcasting media collectively command more than 29 million listeners; however, the audience comprises a declining number of individuals born between 1986 and 2005, the cohort known as Generation Y (Markert, 2004). Young

consumers of Generation Y are leaning toward using new media forms, primarily for entertainment and interpersonal interaction (Savage, 2006). While radio broadcasting through mediums such as ALS transcends the limitations of distance and time, it invisibly permeates private spaces, which allows for usage and consumption at one's leisure (Hilmes, 2011). Their perceived usefulness to individuals belonging to Generation Y, including in countries such as South Africa, is changing. Marketers regard Generation Y as a valuable consumer segment and, consequently, are devoting resources toward attracting this consumer cohort, which comprises more than 35 percent of the population of South Africa (Bevan-Dye, 2019; Kruger & Saayman, 2015). The economic power of Generation Y with their materialism makes this a lucrative consumer grouping for marketers (Butcher *et al.*, 2017). This highly sought-after consumer segment contributed meaningfully to the R47 billion generated through South Africa's advertising and marketing industry in 2021 (Redtech, 2022). Forecasts further reveal that this contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is increasing albeit at a decreasing rate due to intensifying competition resulting in younger consumers' favorable attitudes toward newer forms of media at the expense of traditional ones.

Attitude (AT), together with subjective norms (SN) and intention to use (IU), are components of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) highly recommended for explaining individuals' usage behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2005; Schiffman *et al.*, 2014). Understanding consumers' actual usage of products or services requires an investigation of the

effects of their intention to use, which emanates from the convergence of attitude and subjective norms; elements of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), which also appear in the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis *et al.*, 1989; Tripathi *et al.*, 2022). TAM is fundamental in explaining individuals' actual usage of technological products as a result of products' perceived ease of use (PEOU) and perceived usefulness (PU) (Roy *et al.*, 2018). While this is the case, no literary work has tested the TAM theory's applicability to mass communication media technology, such as African language radio stations in South Africa.

Teer-Tomaselli (2019) argued that while there is a shortage of research into radio broadcasting in Africa, the minimal available literature has been scattered across time or locality. This could explain why the usage of ALS radio broadcasting media has not been fully explored by the marketing fraternity. ALSs currently reach more than 70% of the South African radio consumer market, and this reach, coupled with their influence, positions them favorably regarding the dissemination of information. However, although most audiences in South Africa continue to prefer ALS broadcasting, marketers apportion a larger proportion of their expenditure to commercial English stations. The distinctiveness of South Africa's present as influenced by its past renders traditional media, such as ALSs, an easier and cost-effective the country's broadcasting option. With some segments of the South African population yet to experience certain forms of traditional and digital media technology in totality, it becomes important to understand these segments' perceptions of media forms such as ALS and elements that affect their actual usage of these media. ALS' relative ease of accessibility to other forms of mass communication media contributes to making this a highly consumed form of media across the African continent by individuals of all ages (Chiumbu & Ligaga, 2013) yet not fully exploited by marketers. Ordinarily, ease of access would be linked closely to perceived ease of use (PEOU), with PEOU referring to consumer perception of the simplicity of using a product or service while experiencing minimal to no difficulty (Amin *et al.*, 2014). As soon as consumers perceive a product to be easy to use because of factors that may include easier accessibility, it is presumed that their intention to use the product and its actual usage will also be enhanced. Therefore, the resultant effect should be satisfaction with the product and an increase in its perceived usefulness (Mullins & Cronan, 2021; Rezaei & Amin, 2013). However, there appears to be some skepticism in Generation Y's perception of traditional mass communication mediums.

Conventional literature states that the Generation Y market prefers to engage through nontraditional digital media, and marketers are encouraged to engage this demographic primarily on such platforms (Ave S. Dalle *et al.*, 2015). While traditional media tend to be seen as irrelevant and not useful in meeting the needs of younger consumer cohorts, according to the

Broadcasting Research Council of South Africa (BRC), a proportion of Generation Y consumers prefer ALSs to meet their need for music and information. Traditional media, such as ALSs incorporate digital media into their functionality to render themselves more attractive to younger audiences (Grek, 2018; Schatin, 2018). Considering that the majority of "South African Generation Y are growing up in one of the most unequal societies in the world" and are exposed to ALSs as the "most widespread, affordable and available mass medium in the country" (Bosch, 2022; Van Schalkwyk, 2019:56), this consumer segment is significant to marketers for ALS audience growth and economic benefit. However, given younger consumers' perceived resistance to content transmitted using traditional media (Hartung *et al.*, 2006), it becomes apparent that there is a gap in how media such as ALSs are perceived and used by Generation Y; ALS's ability to cater for this market; and marketers' understanding of Generation Y's ALS consumption behavior. Upon closing this gap in the literature through the use of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), marketers will be able to understand Generation Y's ALS consumption behavior in an environment of technological advancements and digital media penetration (Ambrose *et al.*, 2020) and develop better strategies when targeting this consumer cohort from a media and strategic marketing perspective.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Radio

The rise of the radio medium can be attributed to technicians such as Italian Guglielmo Marconi, the United Kingdom's James Maxwell, Canadian-born Reginald Fessenden, Edwin Armstrong, Lee de Forest, Charles Herold, American Frank Conrad, Aleksandr Popov from Russia, German Heinrich Hertz, Roberto Landell de Moura from Brazil, Edouard Branly and Eugene Ducrete from France, Serbia's Nicola Tesla, Austrian Robert von Lieber, Danish Valdemar Poulsen and Hans Olderd from The Netherlands (Kuitenbrouwer *et al.*, 2019). The conveyance of voice and music via the radio was an idea proposed by Vladimar Poulsen, a Danish engineer who invented an arc inverter to generate continuous-wave radio signals in 1902 and began to send signals over longer distances through high and low 'modulated' frequencies (Bathgate, 2020). Bathgate highlights that Fessenden was also conducting experiments in Massachusetts in the United States of America (USA) and eventually made a breakthrough on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December 1906 when his voice became the first to be heard on the airwaves in the United States as he recited the last verse of Handel's *Largo* wax-cylinder recording entitled "*Oh Holy Night.*"

The period between 1900 and 1920 was used for in-depth research in the exploration of how radio transmission could be enhanced to become fully-fledged broadcasting. Since then, radio has transcended

the limitations of distance and time, invisibly permeating people's private spaces through the airwaves in a manner that allows for consumption at one's leisure (Hilmes, 2011). Radio has now been able to distinguish itself by being produced and consumed at the same time (McDonald & Chignell, 2023). From the point of broadcast to the distributors of the signal, this medium is then transmitted to different corners of society while being "pervasive, local, extensive, flexible, available, readily understood, personal, portable, speedy and efficient" (Manyozo, 2009:1).

While Koenderman's (2011) assertion regarding the inevitable demise of older media as new ones are introduced may have some accuracy, the perceived and actual competition by alternative media has inversely become an advantage to some traditional media. The general usage of social media platforms, web-based technologies and applications for programing and distribution of audio, coupled with engagement through polls, online comments and videos, which tend to be made possible by mobile devices, are more extensions of this medium's adaptation of 'new radio practices' in the continued betterment of its engagement with consumers (Bottomley, 2020:3; Rambe & Madichie, 2020). Through these modes, radio media offer audiences multitudes of opportunities to participate in media production while also enhancing conventional production methods in what is regarded as traditional media (Fenton, 2010; Paterson & Domingo, 2008). Unfortunately, the term 'traditional media', which includes radio, inadvertently fails to highlight that media such as these have integrated with modern technological elements; instead, the term inaccurately projects mediums classified under traditional media as "old-fashioned, outdated and conventional as opposed to innovative or progressive" (Lacey, 2018:118). The radio medium was, after all, the first form of traditional media to experiment with the possibility of streaming content online (Bottomley, 2020). As such, when referring to 'old media', and by extension traditional media, the descriptions should be used in a relational manner and not in an approach that perpetuates these media's perceived outdatedness (Natale, 2016). The global fascination with the proliferation of new media requires an appreciation that radio has been a platform for social media since the beginning, as broadcasting was founded on the need to enable "peer-to-peer communication and interaction" prior to it being overtaken by the commercial element that now strives for a multitude of listeners' attention (Sterne *et al.*, 2008; Wu, 2010).

Hesmondhalgh and Lobato's (2019:959) argument in support of the television medium, therefore, becomes applicable to radio, since in the 21<sup>st</sup> century this medium also "needs to be understood not as a single industry under threat from Silicon Valley but as a medium that emerges from complex interactions

between interlocked industries, technologies and regulations". To this end, Mofokeng's (2018) proposal that networking sites, live streaming, podcasting and social media, all enabled by the internet, should be regarded as forms of broadcasting, given how they have augmented the consumption of media such as radio, becomes valid. While these new media tend to be seen as driven by a form of "disruptive technology", they actually are more a part of radio's evolution than they are of its revolution (Bottomley, 2020:2).

## 2.2. African Language Stations (ALSs) in South Africa

Continuing from Teer-Tomaselli's 2019 argument that brings to the fore the subject of minimal available literature on radio in Africa, ALSs, which are part of the African language media network, have also not been fully studied in South Africa (Gunner, 2017). The need to explore these radio media is immeasurable given that ALSs constitute an ensemble of radio stations that target young and old South Africans from all backgrounds who speak and understand any South African official language that was previously disadvantaged (SABC, 2023). With an inference drawn from Hilmes's (2017) supposition of the ever-present role of media in shaping global history, South Africa's broadcast media have also influenced the country's political discourse as much as the politics have had on it. The role of media in influencing local and global political discourse is documented in media history, wherein the relationship between democracy and communication is highlighted (Park, 2018). Mhlambi's (2019) assertion with respect to governments' motives further strengthens the undeniable connection between South Africa's political history and African language media. The marginalization of South Africa's indigenous languages is a product of the country's colonial history (Kamwangamalu, 2016), and it is on this basis that dissociating South Africa's African language media under PBS from the country's past and present politics would be disingenuous.

Thus, Jacobs is cited by Gunnarsen (2007) as listing the following historical facts as having been influential in the configuration of media in South Africa: Britain's nineteenth century colonial rule; the development of the mining sector and this industry's desire to project itself in a favorable manner; the apartheid government's interest in developing party-political media based on ethnicity; the evolution of state broadcasting; and South Africa's transition into democratic rule in 1994. History has shown that colonial and apartheid South Africa's media policies were formulated with the aim of promoting division among individuals on the basis of language and culture so that the state could use separatism and racism to subdue African people (Moyo, 2010). Mhlambi (2019) hinted that the colonial government's idea of developing a broadcasting system

that would be in African languages in South Africa came about because the government wanted to 'encourage' Black Africans to participate in the Second World War while also influencing the type of content Africans consumed about the war. This politically charged rationale paved the way for the launch of the loudspeaker system in July 1940, reaching Black African audiences based in mining areas, hostels, and townships (Wiederroth, 2012). In 1960, with the adoption of the Broadcasting Amendment Act No. 49 of 1960, the SABC brought a more structured African language broadcasting system to the airwaves through a vernacular radio service called Radio Bantu, the role of which was to be an instrument of the government of the day to entrench policies (Lekgoathi, 2009). The Afrikaner Broederbond was indirectly given power by the government through the SABC Board of Governors to oversee the SABC and make decisions that were to the benefit of the regime (Lekgoathi, 2012). This self-serving approach came about as a retreat from the colonial government's earlier strategic stance of only broadcasting in a manner that catered exclusively to English and Afrikaans speakers while purposefully ensuring that indigenous African voices remained subdued at best and manipulated at worst (Potter, 2012). While the adoption of public broadcasting was theoretically meant to be independent of politics and economic motivation (Holtz-Bacha, 2021), the availability of such a strategic instrument as a potential arsenal for selfish political purposes was too appetizing for African governments to ignore. The use of state-controlled media, especially radio, by governing political parties for their own interests was normalized on the African continent (Mosime & Mhlanga, 2016).

Similarly, African language radio media were also seen to be instrumental in the dissemination of propaganda because radio's adaptability to local practices was pivotal in the exploitation of African traditions that had only been shared orally (Lekgoathi, 2012). This culture of sharing tales that shape beliefs was perceived to be the intended tool for shaping audiences' thinking. Audiences from disadvantaged societies tend to develop social relations and cultural intimacy with each other as a result of appreciating shared commonalities that are evoked in a public space upon hearing their language, religion, or any other intimate identifier that represents their identity (Mann, 2019). Even though the SABC had begun to broadcast in the African languages of isiZulu, Southern Sotho, and isiXhosa through the establishment of radio stations that broadcast in these languages, the foundation of such radio stations was premised on what the government regarded as a fair representation of tribal groupings in the country (Carver & Naughton, 1995). This government-driven agenda has been found to be consistent with the principles that founded the BBC, which were to establish a monopoly in the broadcasting environment whose sustainability would not be reliant on advertising and consumer-oriented content but on providing consumers strictly with what was deemed appropriate by the founders (Jenks, 2017). With more than 10 million radio sets available in the country, ALSs reach more than 70% of South Africa's radio consumers (Teer-Tomaselli, 2017). According to the Broadcast Research Council of South Africa (BRC), these radio stations commanded the following listenership, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Listenership of African language stations in the SABC (Adapted from the Broadcasting Research Council of South Africa (BRC), 2023)

Radio Station (ALSs)	Language	Listenership ('000s)
Ukhozi FM	IsiZulu	7,577
UmhloboWenene, FM	IsiXhosa	4,090
Lesedi FM	SeSotho	3,597
Mothering FM	SeTswana	3,077
Thobela FM	SePedi	2,727
Ikwewezi FM	IsiNdebele	1,166
Ligwalagwala FM	SiSwati	1,314
Phalaphala FM	TshiVenda	1,278
MunghanaLonene FM,	XiTsonga	1,367
XK FM	Xüntali (!Xü), Khwedam (Khwe), and Afrikaans	0.010
Total		26,193

The BRC further lists the order of the most favored programs and the content that listeners prefer listening to as music, news, phone-ins, religion, current affairs, soapies, advice columns, celebrity news, weather, sport, traffic, competitions and financial markets. Radio audiences appear to be moving from one station to another in search of these programming mixes. SABC ALS radio media cater for individuals of all ages, while having a focus largely on the 16- to 24-year-old and 25 to 49-year-old markets (BRC, 2021).

### 2.3. Generational Theory

Generational theory is premised on developing an understanding of the differences between generations of individuals and another (Wolf *et al.*, 2005). Using demographics as a basis for segmentation, marketers break down consumer markets using shared commonalities such as age (Holbrook & Schindler, 1996) to develop knowledge into generational groupings. The segmentation of markets based on generational groupings is stereotypical because of the camaraderie that is perceived to be shared by members of each particular segment (Jones *et al.*, 2018). Stereotypes are founded on the assumption that by

being born within a particular period, individuals have innate similarities in their beliefs, attitudes, ideas, and values (Brosdahl & Carpenter, 2011). These internal common traits are the product of external influences emanating from political, economic, social, and technological macro-environmental factors (Özkan, 2017). However, it is both impractical and unfeasible to expect external macro-environmental features to connect individuals of the world into “neat, homogenous groups” (Lappeman *et al.*, 2020:7). With globalization, migration and the dilution of homogenous societies on the rise—more now than ever before (International Organization for Migration, 2010), generational markets are clearly becoming diverse.

A deeper understanding of generational theory reveals that although consistencies and common traits may be shared by individuals belonging to a particular generational grouping, the distinctiveness of societies also develops potential differences among subdivisions of global intergenerational cohorts (van der Walt, 2016). To this end, scholars have since introduced region-specific terminology such as “Apartheid Generation”, “Struggle Generation” and “Transition Generation” in an attempt to curate contextualized equivalents of Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y cohorts, respectively, using a South African-specific lens (Lappeman *et al.*, 2020). Some scholars have argued that the psychological effects of geo-political events that took place in some countries have shown to have a propensity to result in their generational cohorts displaying different profiles from those presented by other cohorts in the rest of the world (Bauer *et al.*, 2017). This exemplifies that while generational cohorts are globally regarded as being formed by individuals who share similarities in characteristics, multiculturalism and socialization (Arsenault, 2004) also play a role in shaping unique markets. With van der Walt (2016) further using the end of apartheid as an example of a major event that would have socialized generational cohorts in a unique manner, it is apparent that South Africa’s generational markets, being by-products of such a historical episode, are likely to have attributes that are different from those noticeable from their generational cohort counterparts in the rest of the world.

#### **2.4. South Africa’s Generation Y Market**

South Africa’s Generation Y constitutes 35 percent (35%) of the total population of the country and forms 54 percent (54%) of the country’s working population, in a country with a population of almost 60 million individuals (Statistics South Africa, 2018). Statistics South Africa further revealed that almost 50% (50%) of the Generation Y market in the country were employed, and 16 million of these individuals had access to credit funding (Statistics South Africa, 2018; Transunion, 2019). The magnitude of Generation Y makes this

market more than twice the size of the generational groupings that precede it, and this, by extension, presents this cohort as an attractive prospect to marketers (Huntley, 2006). Considering that seventy percent (70%) of this market’s income is said to be consumed by satisfying personal wants and needs through the purchase of commodities such as travel and food (Albarran *et al.*, 2007), Generation Y presents itself as a fertile market to marketers.

While some scholars have argued that Generation Y continues to prefer the radio medium for music and information, common Generation Y literature emphasizes that this market prefers to engage through nontraditional digital media such as Twitter and Facebook; therefore, marketers would also need to follow them to those platforms (Ave *et al.*, 2015). However, considering Van Schalkwyk’s (2019:56) assertion that “South African Generation Y also grew up in one of the most unequal societies in the world and they are not yet free from poverty and inequality”, it requires scholars to recognize that this market’s unavoidable exposure to ALSs and their actual usage of media that are easily available and richly supported in this manner presents a dichotomy worth exploring.

#### **2.5. Factors Influencing the Actual Use of African Language Radio Stations - Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

Unique region-specific and socioeconomic elements need to be considered when exploring the use of mass communication media technology (Balbi & Winterhalter, 2013). This encompassing approach recognizes that even when consumers are driven by human- or psychographic-oriented influences when deciding on brands, products, and services to use, demographic influences are equally important (Krajina & Karalić, 2017). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis *et al.*, 1989) provides a framework that illustrates the combination of demographic and psychographic constructs that are instrumental in explaining and predicting the actual usage of technological products. TAM’s accuracy in explaining actual usage and intention to use was evident in Schepers & Wetzel’s (2007) meta-analytical model; in Chen & Huang’s (2016) “Domestic Technology Adoption: Comparison of Innovation Adoption Models and Moderators”; and in Lim *et al.* (2021) “How do digital natives perceive and react toward online advertising?” Implications for SMEs” where it was integrated with the Uses and Gratification theory and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011).

TAM originated in Fishbein and Ajzen’s 1975 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Rafidinal & Senalasar, 2021). The development of this theory originated from the need to predict individuals’ behavioral acceptance of technological advancements in

the workplace (Schiffman *et al.*, 2014). Fishbein and Ajzen suggested that actual usage is influenced by the combination of the attitude of an individual toward acting in a particular manner, beliefs associated with performing in line with that behavior, and the evaluation of outcomes (Bianchi & Andrews, 2018). With TAM, individuals' intention to use and subsequent usage of technological products results from their perception of the products' ease of use and usefulness (Roy *et al.*, 2018). Davis (1989) found perceived usefulness (PU), attitude (AT), Intention to use (IU), and perceived ease of use (PEOU) to assist in predicting the willingness to use newer forms of technology, in later studies, other variables emerged, such as perceived advantage (PA), behavioral tendencies (BT), subjective norms (SN), and the actual behavior of using (ABOU) or actual usage (AU). Perceived ease of use and usefulness are regarded as direct determinants of an individual's intention to use technological products, and PEOU is further regarded as a strong predictor of PU (Cheng & Yuen, 2022). Both perceived ease of use and usefulness are instrumental in explaining a significant proportion of the variance associated with intention to use (Mohr & Kühl, 2021).

Lien *et al.* (2021) argued that attitude is a behavioral construct that can be eliminated without adversely affecting the outcome of a consumer's intention to use and the actual usage. However, other forms of literature have always presented a positive relationship between consumer attitude toward using a product and intention to use it (Lee, 2010). Even though TAM does have its shortcomings, with some providing a detailed explanation about the formation of 'perceived usefulness' and 'perceived ease of use', this model has continued to adapt through studies that have been conducted with the incorporation of external antecedents and moderating constructs (E. Koh *et al.* (2010). TAM incorporates social influences such as subjective norms, which are key components of the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Venter *et al.*, 2012). Subjective norms and intention to use are constructs of an enriched TAM that enhance the prediction and explanation of consumers' usage of technological products (Alsaleh, 2017), such as ALS radio media. TAM has hardly been tested in the usage of mass communication media; however, the continued development of this theory increases the understanding of constructs such as perceived usefulness (Davis *et al.*, 1989) in technological media adoption. Studies related to connecting TAMs and communication technologies have been centered on the adoption of health-related information and communication technologies (Kang & An, 2020). The TAM model illustrated in Figure 1 recognizes this evolutionary adaptation of TAM and represents the effect of external variables manifested in subjective norms (SN) on both perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use, which in turn influence attitude (AT) and intention to use (IU) in the actual usage (AU) of technological products.

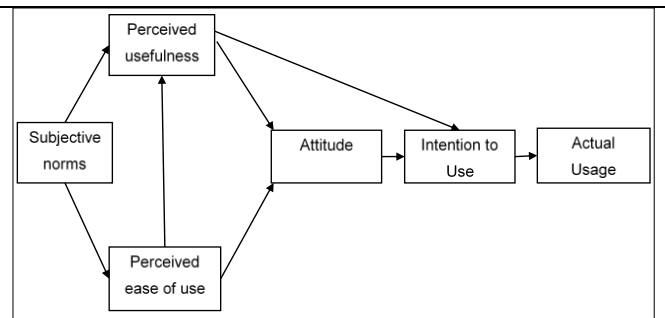


Figure 1. Technology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis *et al.*, 1989)

With the objective of determining Generation Y's perception of and actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa, a significance level of  $\alpha=0.05$  was used, and the following hypotheses were formulated:

*H01:* The usage of African language radio stations is not driven by a six-factor structure comprising of actual usage, intention to use, attitude, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and subjective norms.

*Ha1:* The use of African language radio stations is driven by a six-factor structure consisting of actual usage, intention to use, attitude, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and subjective norms.

*H02:* Intention to use does not have a positive effect on Generation Y's actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha2:* Intention to use does have a positive effect in Generation Y's actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H03:* Attitude does not have a positive effect on Generation Y's intention to use African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha3:* Attitude has a positive effect on Generation Y's intention to use African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H04:* Perceived usefulness does not positively affect Generation Y's intention to use African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha4:* Perceived usefulness positively affects Generation Y's intention to use African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H05:* Perceived usefulness does not have a positive effect on Generation Y's attitude toward African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha5:* Perceived usefulness positively affects Generation Y's attitude toward African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H06:* Perceived ease of use does not have a positive effect on Generation Ys perceived usefulness of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha6:* Perceived ease of use has a positive effect on Generation Y's perceived usefulness of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H07:* Perceived ease of use does not have a positive effect on Generation Y's attitude toward African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha7:* Perceived ease of use has a positive effect on Generation Y's attitude toward African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H08*: Subjective norms do not have a positive effect on Generation Ys perceived usefulness of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha8*: Subjective norms have a positive effect on Generation Y's perceived usefulness of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*H09*: Subjective norms do not have a positive effect on Generation Y's perceived ease of use of African language radio stations in South Africa.

*Ha9*: Subjective norms have a positive effect on Generation Y's perceived ease of use of African language radio stations in South Africa.

### 3. Research Design and Methodology

This study's research design and methodology are illustrated in the research methodology flowchart in Figure 2.

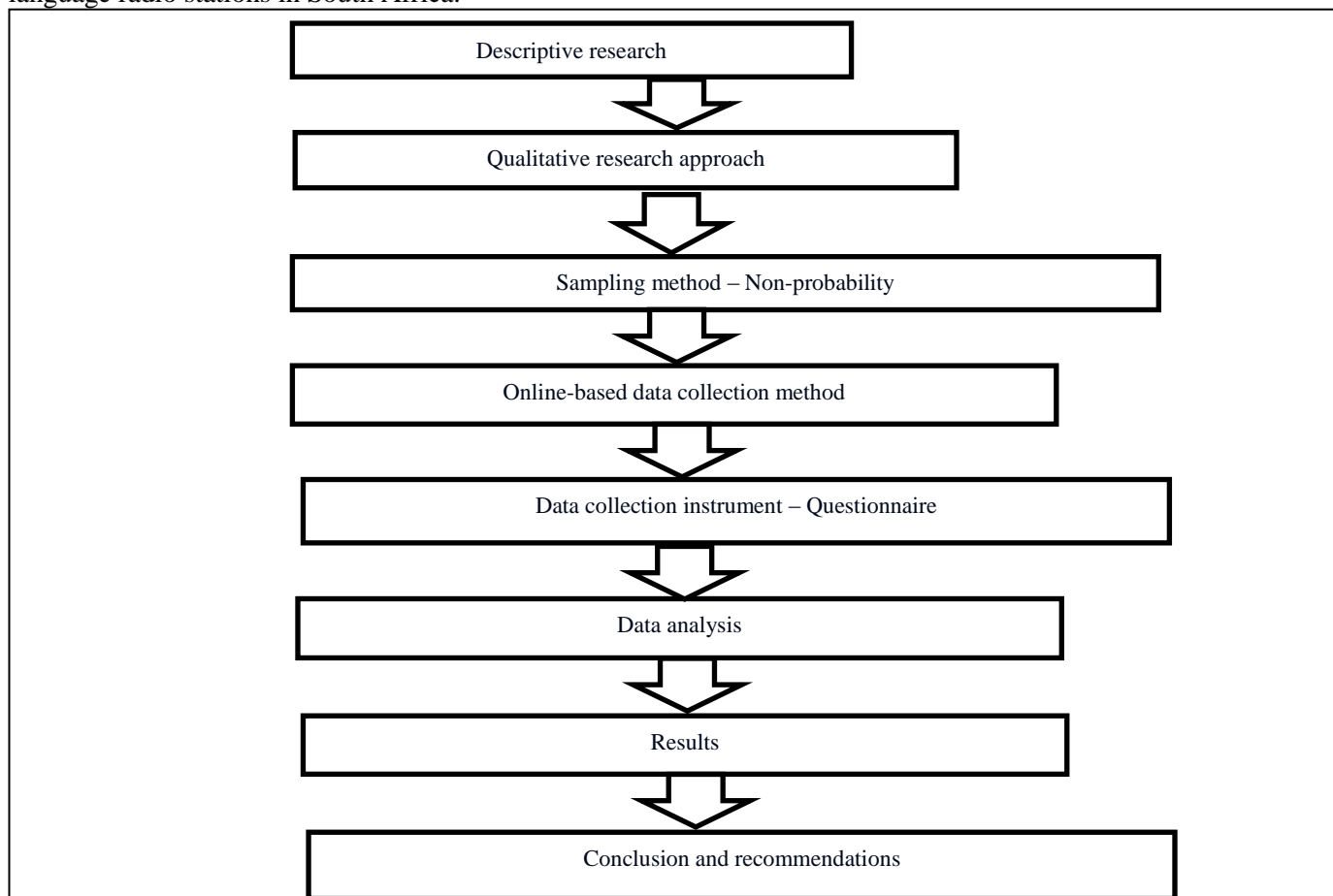


Figure 2. Research design and methodology flowchart (The authors)

When the purpose of the research is to establish deeper and detailed insights into an event, a particular situation, or a group of people (Tustin, 2005), a descriptive research design is appropriate. Primary data were collected through a quantitative research approach that followed the non-probability sampling method. For a research exercise with an extensive scope, reach, and need for extrapolation such as this one, a questionnaire was the favored research object (Kothari, 2004). According to Saunders *et al.*, opting for a questionnaire is best when there is confidence that the interpretation of its standardized pre-set questions will remain similar among respondents. Understanding that a questionnaire may be self-administered, interviewer-administered, computer-assisted, or hybrid (Petzer, 2011), this study opted for a self-administered one that used online-based platforms. Among the many advantages of web- and online-based connectivity data collection instruments

are those emphasized by Schonlau and Couper (2017), which allow for the use of complex instruments and measures that may not ordinarily be applicable through traditional means such as paper. An online link, as a result, was privately forwarded to conveniently sampled South Africans classified as Generation Y via social media and connectivity platforms, called Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, to channel respondents to the survey. Upon landing on the survey page, the sampled individuals found the cover page and were informed of the purpose of the study, the rules accompanying it, and their right to either voluntarily partake or withdraw participation at any time without facing prejudice. Upon respondents completing the questionnaire, they were thanked for their participation, and their questionnaires were securely sent back to the researcher through SurveyMonkey. A sample size of 500 respondents was found to be sufficient; out of the 500 distributed

questionnaires, 494 were returned and 350 were considered usable. The respondents' characteristics

were captured through Section A of the questionnaire and are reflected in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondent characteristics (n = 350) (The authors)

Variables		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
What is your gender?	Male	107	30.6
	Female	240	68.6
	Other	3	0.9
What is your age?	18-24	151	43.1
	25-29	101	28.9
	30-36	98	28.0
What is your race?	Black	272	77.7
	Colored	15	4.3
	Indian/Asian	34	9.7
	White	29	8.3
	Other	3	0.3
What is your first language?	Afrikaans	8	2.3
	English	85	24.3
	IisNdebele	72	20.6
	IsiXhosa	20	5.7
	IsiZulu	43	12.3
	Sepedi	44	12.6
	Sesotho	10	2.9
	Setswana	18	5.1
	SiSwati	21	6.0
	Tshivenda	10	2.9
	Xitsonga	19	5.4
	Other	3	0.3
	What is your province of origin?	Eastern Cape	17
Free State		11	3.2
Gauteng		118	33.7
KwaZulu Natal		31	8.9
Limpopo		59	16.9
Mpumalanga		100	28.6
Northern Cape		2	0.6
Northwest		4	1.1
Western Cape		8	2.3
Other		3	0.9
What is your highest education level?	Did not complete high school	4	1.1
	High school	120	34.3
	College graduate	41	11.7
	University Diploma	28	8.0
	University degree	95	27.1
	Postgraduate degree	62	17.1

According to the data gathered, gender representation was unevenly split: more females (68.6%) participated than males (30.6%), and a minority (0.9%) of participants fell within the 'other' category, stating 'gender fluid' and 'non-binary' as their gender. From the responses, 18–24 (43.1%), 25–29 (28.9%), and 30–36 (28%) were represented. The results of the study on the question of race were diverse: Black (77.7%, Colored at 4.3%, Indian/Asian (9.7% and White at 8.3%) respondents participated and indicated their affiliation. The majority of the sampled participants first language was English (24.29%), isiNdebele (20.57%), followed by Sepedi (12.57%) and isiZulu with (12.29%). Participation of the respondents in some languages was minimal, including SiSwati (6.00%), isiXhosa (5.71%), Xitsonga (5.43%), Setswana (5.14%), Sesotho (2.86%), Tshivenda (2.86%), and Afrikaans (2.29%). The majority of the sampled participants originated in Gauteng's provinces (33.7%) and Mpumalanga (28.6%). Some respondents, who were in the minority, cited Limpopo (16.9%), Kwazulu-Natal (8.9%), Eastern Cape (4.9%), Free State (3.1%), Western Cape (2.3%), North-West

(1.1%), and Northern Cape (0.6%) as provinces of origin. All respondents had formal education, and almost 90% had at least a high school education. Most participants completed high school (34.3%), a university degree (27.1%) and a postgraduate degree (17.7%). The highest level of education for some respondents was a college diploma (11.7%), a university diploma (8.0%), and a minority did not complete high school (1.1%). The actual use of African language radio stations by Generation Y was investigated in the questionnaire using closed-ended questions from AU1–AU4 (Al-Rahmi *et al.*, 2022) in Section B. Section C of the self-administered questionnaire was used to determine Generation Y's intention to use African language radio stations in South Africa through the use of questions IU1–IU4 (Nysveen, 2005; Shin, 2009). Attitude was measured in Section D using AT1–AT4 (Marakarkandy *et al.*, 2017), while Section E measured perceived usefulness with questions PU1–PU4 (Liu & Luo, 2022; Nysveen, 2005; Wang, 2015). Section F focused on perceived ease of use with PEOU1–PEOU4 (Marakarkandy *et al.*, 2017; Venter *et al.*, 2012) and subjective norms in Section G using

SN1–SN4 (Jin, 2014; Yoon & Rolland, 2015).

### 3.1. Reliability and Validity of the Measurement Model

Reliability analysis was conducted using the Cronbach alpha and composite reliability, and the results are summarized in Table 3. As indicated, all five of the four-item constructs (actual usage, intention to use, attitude, perceived usefulness and subjective norms) that were measured in the questionnaire received a Cronbach's alpha of above 0.885. For Construct 1 (actual usage), a Cronbach's alpha of 0.928 was computed. Construct 2 (intention to use) returned with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.939, which is above the minimum recommended value of 0.6 (Wiid & Diggines, 2013). A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.914 was achieved for Construct 3 (attitude), while Construct 4 (perceived usefulness) returned a value of 0.911. Construct 5 (perceived ease of use) initially returned an unsatisfactory Cronbach's of 0.301. This construct's 'item 4' was deleted, thus the construct was

reduced from four items to three items. The Cronbach's alpha value of the three-item Construct 5 (perceived ease of use) returned as 0.602, which is acceptable (Wiid & Diggines, 2013). The computation of the four-item Construct 6 (subjective norms) scale returned an acceptable Cronbach's alpha value of 0.885. In order to determine the internal consistency of a measure, composite reliability should be assessed. Recommended composite reliability values need to be higher than 0.70; however, values of 0.95 and above are regarded as redundant, while satisfactory to good internal consistency is derived from composite reliability values that are above 0.7 but below 0.95 (Hair *et al.*, 2011; Hair *et al.*, 2019). Composite reliability ( $\rho_a$ ) is presented in Table 3. The calculation of actual usage (0.930), intention to use (0.940), attitude (0.918), perceived usefulness (0.919), perceived ease of use (0.827), and subjective norms (0.888) returned values below 0.95. The results demonstrated that the measurement model had internal consistency, and the reliability of the model was thus proved.

Table 3. Reliability and composite reliability analyses (The authors)

Items	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability ( $\rho_a$ )
Actual usage	4	0.928	0.930
Intention to use	4	0.939	0.940
Attitude	4	0.914	0.918
Perceived usefulness	4	0.911	0.919
Perceived ease of use	3	0.602	0.827
Subjective norms	4	0.885	0.888
Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$			

Convergent validity was presented as an analysis method that compared similarities between tests and other tests that measure similar constructs (Saunders *et al.*, 2015). The validity test was performed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), where values above 0.50 were regarded as adequate (Hair *et al.*, 2014). AVE is considered by some scholars to be a more conformist estimator of validity, reflecting the amount of variance in suppressed constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The convergent validity analysis of this study returned higher AVE values for actual usage (0.824), intention to use (0.846), attitude (0.796), perceived usefulness (0.789), and subjective norms (0.744). The analysis produced a lower AVE for a construct, namely, the perceived ease of use (0.389). However, according to Fornell and Larcker (1981), even though a minority of constructs may have an AVE that is lower than 0.5, for as long as all Cronbach's alpha and the composite reliability values of the

measures are above the acceptable minimum levels, the measurement items should be seen as having strong internal reliability.

### 3.2. Data Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted in this study using primary data to confirm the theoretical model (Alavi *et al.*, 2020). IBM Analysis of Moment Structure (AMOS) version 28 was used to conduct CFA, and Table 4 presents the absolute goodness of fit. Fit indices that are used as part of the CFA to evaluate the overall model fit while also comparing to the fit of some baseline models (Schermelleh-Engel *et al.*, 2003) are the Chi-square, root mean square error and approximation (RMSEA), standardized root mean square residual (SRMR), goodness-of-fit, Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), normed fit index (NFI), relative fit index (RFI) and incremental fit index (IFI).

Table 4. Model fit indices (The authors)

Absolute and relative fit indices	Recommended values	References	Actual Usage	Intention to Use	Attitude	Perceived Usefulness	Perceived Ease of Use	Subjective Norms
Chi-Square p-value	>0.05	Barret, 2007	0.805	0.957	0.540	0.664	0.011	0.096
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	<0.07	Steiger, 2007	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.125	0.062
Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	<0.08	Hooper <i>et al.</i> , 2008	0.002	0.000	0.002	0.004	0.035	0.017
Goodness-of-Fit Statistic (GFI)	>0.95	Shevlin & Miles, 1998	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.999	0.991	0.993

Continuation of Table 4								
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	>0.90	Schumaker & Lomax, 2004	1.005	1.005	1.004	1.004	0.894	0.989
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	≥ 0.95	Hu & Bentler, 1999; West <i>et al.</i> , 2012	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.982	0.996
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	≥0.95	Hu & Bentler, 1999	1.000	1.000	1.000	0.999	0.980	0.994
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	>0.90	Bollen, 1989	1.000	1.000	0.998	0.997	0.877	0.981
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	>0.90	Bollen, 1989	1.001	1.001	1.001	1.001	0.983	0.996

While the five of the six chi-square results returned values that demonstrate good model fit, the chi-square is not the only measure that is critical in the model fitness test. Indices that include RMSEA, SRMR, GFI, TLI, CFI, NFI, RFI and IFI also presented values that are indicative of a marginal to good model fit. Mash *et al.* (2004) cautions against over-adhering to the minimum threshold fitness values as this may result in Type I error and, subsequently, in the incorrect rejection of an acceptable model. In order to minimise the occurrence of errors and improve model fitness, individual constructs are modelled in conjunction with each other in order to establish whether discriminant

validity has been achieved (Hooper *et al.*, 2008). Discriminant validity represents the degree to which one latent variable differentiated from the others (Rönkkö & Cho, 2022). In order to attain discriminant validity, a latent variable ought to account for bigger variance when placed against associated indicator variables, more than it accounts when placed against any other construct within the same model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 5 presents the discriminant validity, and with all variables accounting for the sought variances, the measurement model’s discriminant validity was proven.

Table 5. Correlation analysis and discriminant validity (The authors)

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Actual usage	0.907					
2. Intention to use	0.754**	0.919				
3. Attitude	0.641**	0.798**	0.892			
4. Perceived usefulness	0.678**	0.713**	0.784**	0.888		
5. Perceived ease of use	0.162**	0.233**	0.159**	0.133**	0.623	
6. Subjective norms	0.647**	0.681**	0.688**	0.712**	0.192**	0.862

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Correlation coefficient values may range between -1 and 1, and a positive correlation between two variables signifies that as the value of one variable increase, so does the value of another (Wiid & Diggines, 2013). The Pearson’s Product-Moment correlation coefficient was applied in constructing the correlation matrix and the results are outlined in Table 5. Correlation coefficient values which are greater or equal to ( $\geq$ ) 0.5 indicate a strong to perfect correlation, while those that are below 0.5 indicate a medium to small correlation. The results reflected positive correlations between each set of two constructs, at a significance level of 0.05. The correlation of constructs of the model is proven; as such, the model is fit for structural equation modeling

(SEM).

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Assessment of the Structural Equation Model

The assessment of the structural model was conducted in order to analyse the structural relationship between measured variables and compressed constructs in the study. The t-values, path-coefficients, and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) are a collection of test measures that were used in the assessment of the structural equation model, the results of which are provided in Figure 3.

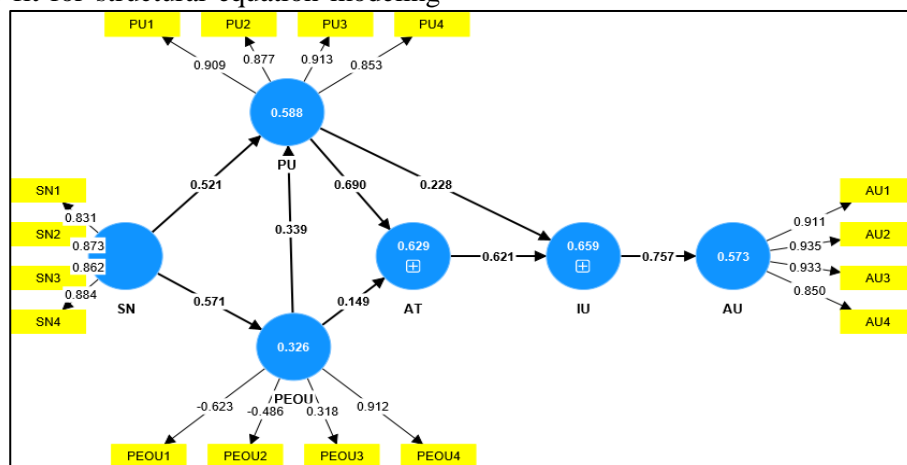


Figure 3. Structural equation model (The authors)

The results of the structural model were used to test hypotheses H02 to H09 of this study and the results are

outlined in Table 6. The hypothesised model for this study yielded results that are in support of the alternative statements. Table 6 below demonstrates that there is a proven effect between the tested variables in relation to Generation Y's actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa. With positive path-coefficient values, t-values above 1.96 and p-values below 0.05, positive relationships between intention to use and actual usage, attitude and intention

to use, perceived usefulness and attitude, perceived usefulness and intention to use, perceived ease of use and attitude, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness, subjective norms and perceived usefulness, and subjective norms and perceived ease of use were proven. Null hypotheses H02, H03, H04, H05, H06, H07, H08 and H09 may be rejected and their alternate hypotheses be supported.

Table 6. Structural equation model results (The authors)

Hypotheses	Relationship	Path-coefficient	t-value (T > 1.96)	p-value (p < 0.05)	Decision
Ha2	Intention to use (IU) -> Actual usage (AU)	0.757	29.355	0.000	Supported
Ha3	Attitude (AT) -> Intention to use (IU)	0.621	11.138	0.000	Supported
Ha4	Perceived usefulness (PU) -> Intention to use (IU)	0.228	3.897	0.000	Supported
Ha5	Perceived usefulness (PU) -> Attitude (AT)	0.690	0.051	0.000	Supported
Ha6	Perceived ease of use (PEOU) -> perceived usefulness (PU)	0.339	0.072	0.000	Supported
Ha7	Perceived ease of use (PEOU) -> attitude (AT)	0.149	2.391	0.017	Supported
Ha8	Subjective norms (SN) -> Perceived usefulness (PU)	0.521	11.374	0.000	Supported
Ha9	Subjective norms (SN) -> Perceived ease of use (PEOU)	0.571	6.297	0.000	Supported

The outcome of the structural model assessment was able to prove that the usage of African language radio stations is influenced by actual usage, intention to use, attitude, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and subjective norms, and thus inferring that H01 may be rejected and Ha1 be supported.

## 5. Discussion and Recommendations

Generation Y appeared to be nonchalant in their actual usage of African language radio stations; however, this market displays a positive intention to use these radio media which is something marketers need to convert into actual usage. Marketers ought to bear in mind that it is easy to retain current consumers than it is to attract newer ones. With a significant proportion of Generation Y consumers of African language radio stations who find it a pleasurable experience when listening to them, it becomes marketers' responsibility to ensure that time spent listening is increased. Misperceptions that Generation Y may have of ALSs could be influencing the ultimate perception this cohort has about these media, which may be affecting listening patterns. The perception of ALSs being outdated and irrelevant may be contributing to Generation Y's sentiments about these radio media. However, the theoretically positive relationship between intention to use and actual usage together with what has been observed in this study, signify an unavoidable opportunity to position African language radio stations favourably in Generation Y consumers' minds to ensure enhanced listening experience geared towards achieving extended consumption of these radio media. Generation Y respondents intend to listen to African language radio

stations. The entertainment that is provided by these media is an attractive factor that could be shaping the positive attitudes this consumer cohort has about them. The general positive attitude towards these media that has been evident throughout this study can serve as encouragement to marketers of African language radio stations. As ALSs continue to be desired by this consumer segment and the intention to increase consumption being evident, an opportunity exists for marketers and content curators of these media platforms to be more consumer-oriented. If marketers respond better to the needs of this market, they could bridge the gap between intention to listen and actual listening. Closing this gap would also mean incorporating contemporary means of consuming these media and inculcate digital platforms more in order to enhance consumption.

Drawing from Berry's (2014:3) argument that "the future of radio is the internet, not *on* the internet", African language radio stations need to see digital media as enablers that exist beyond the limitations of social media platforms, and not just as competitors. Strategic digital media incorporation could provide a solution to the challenge that appears to be linked to the perceived ease of use of African language radio stations. Respondents appeared to be holding a belief that these media do not provide an easy means of consumption. Given that younger consumers such as Generation Y have been observed to prefer digital media over traditional ones, an introduction of an omni-channel approach to consuming African language radio stations could provide the perceived ease of use that is being sought by consumers. According to Usman *et al.*

(2022), consumers tend to repel brands that are perceived to be complicated to use, which may lead to a search for alternatives that are perceived to provide easier means of consumption. Considering that perceived ease of use is linked to perceived usefulness and also to attitude, making African language radio stations easy to listen to may also increase brand loyalty through the increase in the positive attitude this market would develop. Instead of digital media being seen as competition for African language radio stations, these new platforms could be used to enhance the consumption of traditional ones. Essentially, being part of traditional media need not be associated with not being able to adapt to changing consumption patterns. With this approach, Natale's (2016) desire to have the usage of the term "traditional media" be more for descriptive purposes and not as part of the continued portrayal of these media as outdated would be realised.

African language radio stations continue to be perceived as useful by Generation Y consumers. Respondents' perceptions of usefulness may be interpreted to mean that this market find these media to be an important and worthwhile option to consider within the available options of media to consume. Marketers need to appreciate this and start investing more in understanding consumer perception of their individual African language radio brands. This may be conducted through quantitative and qualitative research of individual African language radio brands to ensure that participants' inputs are examined in order to develop insights into the elements that make them see these radio brands as useful. Marketers need to also take full advantage of subjective norms when marketing African language radio stations. Generation Y have indicated that important persons in their lives or in their social groups either listen to African language radio stations or have had an influence in their listening to these radio media. Influencer marketing may be used by ALSs and have these brands being advocated for by influential personalities among the Generation Y market. However, this form of marketing with respect to ALSs needs to be carried out through relatable "micro-influencers whose lives are small enough to be observed at close quarters", instead of "macro-influencer" celebrities that tend to be perceived by the market as detached from the brands they are endorsing (Olubodun, 2018:137). Marketing strategies should include the positioning of ALSs as "cool" yet relatable brands with which consumers should want to be associated. This approach will ensure that there is positive word-of-mouth communication amongst Generation Y which, potentially, would result in increased brand association and listenership for these media brands.

Given the demographic profile of the respondents, it becomes more important for marketers to start presenting their audiences differently to advertisers. African language radio stations have always been perceived to be consumed by individuals who are older and on the lower end of the socio-economic

measurement (SEM) scale. However, among the respondents of the study, 27.1% indicated that they had a university degree and 17.7% possessed a postgraduate degree. This study has revealed that almost 50% of the Generation Y market that listens to ALSs has a minimum of a university degree, and this indicates that Generation Y consumers of these media are a lucrative consumer market that needs to be favourably presented to advertisers in the banking, automotive, consumer goods and investment sectors. Generation Y consumers of ALSs need to be marketed as a consumer cohort that has immediate financial means and good economic prospect in the future. ALSs can further attract more consumers such as these through purposefully targeting institutions of higher learning through events, campaigns and talent scouting initiatives. The majority of Generation Y respondents in the study (43.1%) were between the ages of 18 and 24, and an equal split of around 28% between consumers of ages 25 to 29 and 30 to 36. ALSs marketers have a responsibility to retain the 18 to 24 consumer segment of Generation Y in order to build brand loyalty and audiences of the future.

## 6. Conclusion

Available literature continues to prove that new forms of media are growing in South Africa and appear to be a challenge to traditional ones, such as African language radio stations. However, the literature provided in this study provides a clear indication that radio has withstood the test of time and the uniqueness of South Africa's socio-economic and structural challenges continue to influence consumer behavior, making African language radio stations an essential form of media, even to young consumers such as Generation Y. South Africa's unique socio-economic conditions - which include the inadequate accessibility of the internet to the majority of the country's citizens (Presidency of South Africa, 2020) - are limiting the fast pace with which alternative media should be adopted. These factors provide an opportunity for traditional media to integrate alternative media in their offerings to consumer markets as a response to the changes evident in consumption patterns. While South Africa's younger consumer segments display interest in digital communication media, the continued consumption of African language radio stations signifies the relevance of these platforms to consumers such as Generation Y. This study evidenced that while ALSs remain part of traditional media, recognizing and adapting to audiences' changing media consumption habits should be the main focus in the quest to be relevant and elevate their importance to young consumers.

Marketers need to appreciate that the competition presented by alternative media has to be contextualized, so as not to underestimate the magnitude and continued usage of traditional media by South Africa's Generation Y. The combination of ALSs' geographic reach with new forms of media in South Africa's media scenery presents marketers with an opportunity to access

consumers who were previously inaccessible as well as those who prefer unconventional consumption patterns. The steady climb and prominence of digital media do not equate to the immediate demise of traditional media such as African language radio stations. ALS radios need to be better and more responsive to changes in consumer behavior. Interacting with a radio brand has become more than listening to its content, including the relationships consumers develop with the radio brands and the perceived exclusivity associated with consuming one brand instead of the other. In the 21st century, no mass communication medium can solely depend on its prowess for market growth and forgo the need to incorporate with others. This incorporation of media is necessary to move away from the product-oriented approach that has characterized marketing in the past to a more consumer-oriented one focused on satisfying market needs.

South Africa's Generation Y is a vast consumer market that continues to define itself. Understanding this market's heterogeneity and economic potential is essential from consumer behavior and generational cohort perspectives. The magnitude of this market presents opportunities for an increase in consumers of African language radio stations while also ensuring that this market's current and potential economic prowess is taken advantage of by marketers. While the continued growth in the use of digital media will continue to change media consumption in South Africa, Olubodun's (2018:143) assertion that culture and beliefs take time to change must be appreciated, and "the African consumer will remain a villager for the foreseeable future". The above means that mass communication media, such as ALS radio, will continue to enjoy a sizeable proportion of the country's radio market. Generation Y consumers in South Africa need understanding within the context of the country and the continent's unique circumstances. This study recommends that managers of African language radio stations must inculcate newer modes of reaching their audiences. Such an omnichannel approach to radio consumption will help meet the changing consumer needs. Marketers must also appreciate the uniqueness of the South African media landscape. Realizing how traditional media, such as radio, is valued by consumers will make it easier for marketers to recognize the affinity of African language radio stations with their consumers. African language radio stations are not as outdated as they tend to be perceived by marketers, so marketers must invest in understanding internal and external nuances shaping consumer usage of these radio media. Based on this, South African marketers should find it essential to develop insights into Generation Y's perception towards and actual usage of African language radio stations in South Africa.

## 7. Limitations and Opportunities for Further Research

The study adopted the convenience non-probability random sampling method due to practical constraints and budgetary limitations. To ensure wide geographical reach, social media platforms were used for data collection; this approach intentionally excluded Generation Y consumers not using social media connectivity platforms. In the future, the investigation into Generation Y's perception may be conducted across the country, using different sampling methods to gain insights into consumers who may not be using social media platforms. Given the limited literature covering South Africa's ALSs within the marketing discipline, a longitudinal research design may be used in future studies to explore how Generation Y's perception and actual usage of these media changes over time. Future studies may also investigate the influence of the theory of reasoned action (TRA) constructs on ALSs. A longitudinal investigation may also occur on how the constructs of the TAM and TRA integrated models influence Generation Y's perception and actual usage of African language service radio stations in South Africa. Scholars may further explore the internet and digital media effect on Generation Y's usage of African language radio stations in South Africa.

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