Effects of Radio Listening on Loneliness, Well-Being, and Cognitive Outcomes

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**INTRODUCTION**


**PRELIMINARY FINDINGS**

Research explored during undergraduate studies suggests listening to the radio has the potential to positively influence psychological outcomes. Qualitative responses from 35 – 65-year-old population (N=130, M=50.5) indicate improved feelings of loneliness, well-being, and cognition [7].

Radio can provide social exchange without literal contact or direct engagement. Strong implications that radio has multifaceted meaning to the consumer and provides unmeasured social reward e.g., not exclusively musical identity, or news/sport preferences [6].

This research is designed to provide further understanding about radio listening’s impact upon psychological outcomes. It will do this by:

1. **Secondary analysis** [8]
2. **3-group intervention study**

**AIMS**

This research has three specific aims:

1. To examine loneliness, well-being, and cognitive outcomes of UK adult age groups spatiotemporally.
2. To extend understanding about broadcaster/listener relationships to explore if loneliness is a dominant reason for listening to the radio.
3. To understand the effects of radio listening on loneliness, well-being, and cognitive outcomes across UK adults age groups (ages 30 years +, 65 years +)

**METHOD**

**Secondary Analysis**

Secondary analysis of UKHLS data using waves 2010 – 2015 across the UK adult population (N >30,000). This will establish an understanding of the loneliness, well-being, and cognitive outcomes in the over 30+ age groups spatiotemporally [8].

**Intervention Study**

Participants

900 participants across 2 populations:

- 30+ years N = 450
- 65+ years N = 450

3 intervention groups: N = 150 each

**Intervention Groups**

**Group 1:** Experienced listeners asked to listen to the radio for 10 hours per week for 3-months (N = 300).

**Group 2:** Inexperienced listeners asked to listen to the radio for 10 hours per week for 3-months (N = 300).

**Group 3:** Inexperienced listeners asked to listen to an information booklet about the history of radio over a 3-month period (N = 300). They will receive booklet about the potential benefits of listening to the radio at follow-up.

**Measurements**

- Questionnaires will be provided at four intervals: baseline, 1-month, 3-month, 1-month post-intervention.
- Initial questionnaire will measure radio listening habits. Participants will be placed into one of three intervention groups based upon their responses. 3 subsequent questionnaires will capture their engagement with the intervention.
- Measures for loneliness, well-being, and cognition will be taken at all four intervals.

**Materials**

Radio Listening – Music Use and Background Questionnaire [9] and Measurement of Internet Delivered Audio Services Questionnaire [6] have been adapted to reflect this study. Additional questions informed by literature [10, 11]. Total of 49 questions.

**Loneliness** – Lubben Social Network Scale [12] and UCLA 4-Question Scale [13, 14].

**Total of 12 questions.**

**Well-Being** – General Health Questionnaire 12-Question [15], physical and mental health questions from Mini-Mental State Examination 4-Question [16], Subjective Social Class Scale 1-Question [17]. Satisfaction with Life Scale 4-Question [18] and WEMWBS 13-Question [19]. Total of 30 questions.

**Cognition**

- Breakfast Task [20, 21] and Healthy Aging Brain Care Monitor 26-question [22]. Total of 1 task and 26 questions.

**Analysis**

- Repeated measures ANOVA, in-group ANOVA, and regression analysis will be performed using STATA17.

**NEXT STEPS**

Intervention study opens to participants 1st May 2024 and will remain open until 1st December 2024. Individuals over the age of 30 years are desirable. Radio listening is not obligatory, and no musical/radio experience is required to participate.

**Academic engagement with the study is welcomed, should you wish to receive updates please contact k.netleton@bradford.co.uk**

Secondary analysis of UKHLS continues, confirmed results ascertaining levels of loneliness, well-being, and cognition across the middle and older age groups expected December 2024.

Public relations with broadcasters and audience members will continue to play an important role throughout the research. Systematic review forthcoming 2025.

Community radio broadcasts to discuss Effects of Radio Listening anticipated Summer 2024 with two Yorkshire based radio stations [23].