

*Evaluating the Impact of the Red Crescent Society Radio Podcast from the Audience's Point of View in Public Education and Increasing the Level of Public Awareness*

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Abstract

**INTRODUCTION:** In this research, the impact of the Red Crescent radio podcast has been evaluated from the audience's point of view in public training and increasing the level of public awareness.

**METHODS:** The current research is a quantitative-qualitative (mixed) research based on field data from the opinions of the radio podcast audience of the Red Crescent Society of Iran, in which it has been tried to evaluate the effectiveness of using podcasts as an educational method both quantitatively and qualitatively using thematic analysis.

**FINDINGS:** The results of the research show that podcasts and audio content can be used as a low-cost educational method and with the ability to spread quickly among the general public due to the lack of time allocation and the possibility of learning in different environments, the possibility of quick and free publication and the possibility of developing easy access to the audience. The audio appeal of podcasts increases especially when it is narrated in the form of a story and several narrators. The production of a podcast with purely educational content should not be longer than 20 minutes.

**CONCLUSION:** The results of the studies indicate that content-oriented podcasts can be boring for learners if they last more than 20 minutes. Production of audio content can be used as an educational method in public education if the created content has enough details. Considering that the majority of learners have more educational ability through visual content, making videocassettes can be a more suitable way to transmit educational content. Unfamiliarity with the resources and the low interest in public education is due to the lack of advertising, the majority of the audience is not familiar with Red Crescent public education.

**Keywords:** Podcast; Public education; Public awareness; Radio; Red Crescent Society

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Introduction

There are serious gaps in education in our society, and these gaps are sometimes aggravated by the hegemony of cyberspace. Citizens, especially our educated class, have lost the possibility and opportunity for self-centered study and education in many public affairs due to their high dependence on cyberspace. (1) All countries that are in the transition and development stage are trying to provide public and universal education to citizens in the context of government organizations. (2) A significant part of these training has been assigned to the Red Crescent Society of the country, which aims to improve the

general knowledge of the people in the face of the crisis. (3) Different forms have been considered for this training so far, which can be mentioned using the capacity of Broadcasting, holding training courses in different cities, publishing magazines, etc. In the mentioned situation, providing a new educational method that can have a greater impact on society is considered an important issue. Considering the access of a huge part of society to the Internet and cyberspace, active presence in these networks can be very helpful, but again, this issue cannot be assumed as an achievement of an educational method, because in these spaces we often face with a

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multitude of news and information, and the audience prefers certain educational contents to other contents. (4)

One of the most attractive methods of providing educational content is audio podcasts. (5) Considering the so-called "dead" times that people have when they are in transit, stuck in traffic, or even when they are doing something at home, podcasts can be considered as a tool without time cost for the audience (6) But just producing a podcast will not mean welcoming the audience. Currently, there are more than 230 active podcasts in Iran, and their reception is very different. (7) Therefore, the main issue is to create a way of communicating with the audience with the help of a model of audio training that will strengthen communication with them. (8) For this reason, as a first step, we should take an active presence in the field of podcast production and in this way, by producing different content, evaluate the reception and impact on the audience. We will use basic, supplemental, and creative podcasts to gain a significant amount of public reception. Because the audience of these podcasts will be limited, we will also use the combined method in podcast production. The data of this research relies on two methods. First is the educational content that is provided to the audience for evaluation. At this stage, we use the library method. The second stage of data collection uses the field method, which includes measuring the opinions of the audience and collecting information on the number of podcast visits in the cyberspace.

The main problem of the current research is to evaluate and identify the possibilities, obstacles, and opportunities through which public education can be accessible to a larger number of citizens through audio. The main goal of this research will be to compare the level of reception of audio content and its effectiveness with textual content. In this research, we answer the question of what effect do podcasts have on increasing the level of public awareness. And what factors in the audio content can attract the audience? The hypothesis of the research will be based on the fact that podcasts have a great influence over other methods of public education, and due to better accessibility, they provide the possibility of communicating with the audience and making more impact.

## Methods

In this research, the statistical population has been selected by the "complete enumeration" method. Due to the low size of the statistical population and its closeness to the size of the possible samples, as well as trying to reduce the error rate, complete enumeration has been used. The size of the statistical population was 42 people and the same number was used to determine the sample size.

The current research is based on the production of 15 episodes of a radio educational program. This episode has been published in the cyberspace with a time interval and with a different production tone and literature. The produced radio texts and topics are taken from all the available content, including articles, books, conversations, infographics, and even interviews that have somehow tried to show a facet of public education related to the field of Red Crescent Society activities. After producing these 15 steps, a qualitative questionnaire has been designed, which includes a set of questions about the produced podcasts as well as public education learning methods. Based on the present questionnaire and the surveys they have conducted, the researchers have tried to examine the strengths and weaknesses of public education through podcasts and audio files. Thematic analysis method that is mainly used for analyzing interviews and raw texts has been used to analyze the data. Based on this method of analysis, we will seek to identify patterns of effectiveness or weakness of public education through podcasts. In fact, the researcher is looking for a quantitative explanation of the qualitative data obtained through interviews.

## Findings

The findings of this research have been obtained around two big questions, which are:

- What effect do podcasts have on increasing the level of public awareness?
- What factors in audio content can attract the audience?

In the process of research, eleven questions, which were explained by two big questions, were the basis of the interview, which determined the opinion of the podcast audience in the following areas:

- Reasons for less use of audio content

**Table 1.** Themes of the first question

Row	Main theme	Repetition	The concept of central organizer
1	Public education not being a priority	29	Lack of educational policy
2	Lack of advertising and encouragement of the public	24	Lack of educational policy
3	lack of time	21	Lack of educational policy
4	Unfamiliarity with educational resources	12	Lack of educational policy

**Table 2.** The number of positive and negative answers to the second question

Row	Positive answers	Negative answers
1	10	32

**Table 3.** Themes of the third question

Row	Main theme	Repetition	The concept of central organizer
1	Podcast	40	Unfamiliarity with educational resources
2	Text and pictures	15	Unfamiliarity with educational resources

**Table 4.** Themes of the eighth question

Row	Main theme	Repetition	The concept of central organizer
1	Podcast	34	The importance of podcasts in daily education
2	Film	5	The importance of podcasts in daily education
3	Study	3	The importance of podcasts in daily education

•The level of reception of public education content

- Learning methods of public education
- The impact of podcasts on the spread of public education
- Comparison of the effectiveness of audio, video and text teaching methods
- Comparison of the possibility of correct transmission of audio and video content
- Examining the reasons for the continuation of learning in public education
- Examining the strengths and weaknesses of the podcast in Red Crescent public education

First question: In your opinion, what are the most important reasons for the low acceptance of public education?

In response to the first question, the interviewers gave four main answers about the reasons for the low acceptance of public education, which shows that public education has no place in the educational program of families. That is, there is no need for self-education about the issues of public education without the intervention of the advertising element. The fourth reason for the low acceptance of public education, as shown in the table, is a lack of familiarity with educational resources. This reason is one of the least frequent among the themes mentioned by the respondents, and it means that there is no request for educational resources or no research has been done in this regard. (9) The existing theme codes lead the

result of this question to a more basic theme, which is the lack of educational policy in the field of public education.

Educational policy in this regard should include things that firstly show the necessity of education and on the other hand, make educational resources available to the public in different ways. The purpose of the first question was to understand whether public education is welcomed in any form or not. In the following, we examined the main reasons that cause acceptance and non-acceptance, so that before starting the main discussion of the effectiveness of podcasts, we have a general familiarity with the public's interest in public education. Therefore, based on the current research, it can be said that the statistical population does not have much desire or knowledge about public education in general by any method.

Second question: Do you have enough time and patience to study and learn general education every week? Why?

To clarify the first question, the second question has been proposed in more detail. The respondents indicated that they do not want to learn weekly. 76% of the respondents against only 24% of the respondents do not want to receive training for the reasons given in the following tables. The lack of time, the lack of importance of the subject compared to other educational matters, as well as the distance from the incident are the most important reasons received from the themes

of the interviews. But the people who answered positively have mentioned two very important reasons.

According to them, public education is necessary and should be learned as a basic need. Now it is better to compare the reasons for the two groups. The important difference between the two views comes from the understanding of educational necessity. Now, if we return to the first question, where the theme of not being a priority has been repeated 29 times, we understand the importance of advertising and the necessity of public education. Therefore, based on these two questions, it can be said that what is important before creating content is showing the public's need and necessity for public education. (10)

Question number 3: How many methods have you used to learn public education?

The interviewers in the first and second questions indicated that they did not have much desire for public education. In the third question, this sign turns into certainty. All the interviewers, because they mentioned Radio Fanous, mentioned it as a learning method, and only 15 people from the community of 42 people used other learning methods before listening to the podcasts. In other words, 73% of the statistical population did not use any method for public education before listening to the podcasts. Therefore, it can be understood that the audience has very little familiarity with educational methods and the main reason for little familiarity with educational methods is lack of familiarity with educational resources.

Question number 4: According to the experience of Radio Fanous and the availability of other educational content, in your opinion, what are the most effective methods of public education in order: text, sound, video, and image?

In the answer to this question, each repetition means one person. 24 of the interviewees have emphasized that the most effective method of general education includes a complete educational set of sound, image, text, and video. In addition, 13 people have chosen podcast as an effective method. 5 people have chosen the film and significantly none of the interviewers considered the text as an effective method for teaching. Therefore, 57% of the respondents have pointed to combined training, 31% to audio training, and 12% to video training. If it is possible to find the

relationship between the production of educational content in these four methods, a meaningful relationship can also be established between the interest in public education and the type of educational products. The main meta-theme in this question is the production of mixed and diverse content to promote public education.

Question number 5: In your opinion, what is the role of Radio Fanous in learning public education? What are the advantages and disadvantages of Radio Fanous for more learning?

Regarding the disadvantages of the Radio Fanous' podcast, 46 theme codes have been identified and categorized into four main themes. About 38% of the respondents believed that the transmission of the main concepts in Radio Fanous was not very successful and the explanations were vague in details. Audiences believe that to convey and understand some concepts accurately, it is necessary to provide the necessary images to the audience in a step-by-step manner. Although not all audiences have such an opinion; the relative majority believe that the podcast has a serious defect in conveying educational concepts, especially in first aid.

The second theme also follows a main meta-theme. 30% of the audiences say. It is difficult to convey the essence of education through a podcast. The meaning of the essence of education is to some extent the same as the details of education. The emphasis of the audience is that if the purpose of training is to learn a set of decisions, actions, and reactions when an incident occurs, the podcast cannot have that educational mission to fulfill its purpose accurately and correctly. Nearly 22% of the audiences believe that there is not enough time allocated for every issue and topic on Radio Fanous. The meta-theme of this reference is the incompleteness of the educational content. More than 10% of the audience has mentioned the irregular broadcasting of radio episodes. Irregularity means the uncertainty of the time intervals of podcast publication, which causes the audience to have incomplete access to an educational collection.

Question number 6: In your opinion, between text, video, and image, which items are more educationally interesting?

The sixth question makes the opinions of the audience much clearer. A comparison between educational methods can bring us closer to understanding the model that is intended by the

audience. In this question, podcast is not among the options. Nearly 59% of the audience prefers to use movies in the absence of podcasts. More than 34 percent believe that the image is a method that has more educational appeal. Only about 8% consider the attractiveness of educational content through text. Our emphasis in this question is the attractiveness of an educational method that has obtained the above results. In the following, we will point out the significance of these answers despite the limitation of the subject.

Question number 7: In your opinion, besides the text, video, and image, does Radio Fanous convey the training in a more correct way or other methods of conveyance the content?

61 theme codes have been identified for question number 7, which is categorized into four main themes. This time, the podcast has also been proposed as an option; but the response of the audience is not quantitative but qualitative. Among the topics raised, more than 33% believed that podcast is a better option as a complementary and representative method. Therefore, the first theme has no direct reference to the question. However, the second theme, which includes 37% of the themes, believes that other teaching methods convey the content more accurately. The third theme specifies the method considered in the second theme. 32% of subjects have mentioned their preference for the film over other educational content. A very small percentage of subjects have also generally referred to the need to combine podcasts with images, which, although it has little to do with the question, has pointed out the incompleteness of the podcast method for conveying content indirectly.

Question number 8: Which method do you prefer to use for public education on a normal and daily basis?

In the previous questions, the audience mentioned that they are usually not interested in public education continuously, but in question number 8, by considering the same question as default, the audience is asked to express their preferred method. The results of this question are very important. 84% of the audience prefers to use podcasts as an educational method daily. In the previous questions, it was seen that the audience found the podcast method to transmit content incomplete and mostly welcomed the film method, but in this question, only 10% of the audience is willing to watch movies daily. As we

continue to examine the questions, we will show important points about the pattern of connections between the answers. It is also worth noting that nearly 6% also consider the method of studying daily.

Question number 9: If we imagine public education as a process that every person is required to learn, which method do you think will cause the continuation of learning in education?

Question number 9 also has a limitation. What method can lead to the continuation of learning? The answers are not too unexpected. Audiences have not paid much attention to question limitations. 75 theme codes have been identified. 35% of subjects believe that podcasts are a way to get familiar with public education. 31 percent also believe that podcasts lead to the development and learning of public education, but there is no mention of continuation of training. It may seem at first glance that the question is ambiguous, but the answer of the first interviewees caused several interviews to be raised by the researcher with emphasis on limiting the questions, but the main themes of the respondents did not change.

The respondents have pointed out the themes that are the characteristics of educational content that can be continued. 25% of the subjects also mentioned the richness of educational films, but it does not mean to prefer the film to other methods, but the features necessary to produce educational content are stated. If we pay attention to the fourth theme, nearly 9% of the themes mentioned the ability to publish images. Therefore, it should be concluded that the right method includes a method that has all the above four characteristics. But is it possible to specify a preferred method from the point of view of the audience? The method of answering and the themes in the interviews speak of their unwillingness to prefer one method. However, in a quantitative analysis, it can be said that audio, video and image are the preferred methods in order.

Question number 10: In your opinion, what are the most important strengths and weaknesses of the Radio Fanous podcast?

Although these questions do not add new themes to the existing data, from the point of view of confirmation of other available data are important. As mentioned before, audio content does not have the necessary ability to convey details in the field of public education from the audience's point of view. In fact, except for the

last one, which is mentioned about the publication order, the three main disadvantages of podcasts in the educational field are the inability to transmit educational details, which were repeated in the previous questions. The same is true for podcast features. New, interesting and effective are the three main features of podcasts, but the newest theme mentioned here is that there is no need to devote specific time to listen to podcasts. Although this strength is mentioned in a small number of themes; it is one of the most important reasons for the popularity of podcasts.

Question number 11: What actions can lead to the improvement of the Radio Fanous podcast?

In their interviews, the audience has made some suggestions with examples. It was mentioned earlier that one of the defects of Radio Fanous was irregular broadcasting; but in the proposed actions, regular and varied publication was the most repeated in the themes. Integration with images, expansion of content, and use of multiple speakers were recurring themes. Apart from the last technical proposal, proposals No. 2 and 3 are very meaningful and are very effective in troubleshooting the publication of podcasts as well as the effectiveness of podcasts in public education.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Disregarding public education as a special issue, this research confirms many of the research findings regarding podcasts as an educational method, and in many cases, it has added more precision to the research findings of this field. Increasing the efficiency of education, the desire of the audience to continue learning through podcasts and the fact that podcasts are more attractive than textual content are among the most important findings of this research, which are in agreement with previous research. The inability of podcasts to convey educational details in the field of public education is one of the important findings of this research, which has not received much attention in previous research.

What has been obtained from this research is that podcasts and audio content can be used as a low-cost educational method and with the ability to spread quickly among the general public due to the lack of time allocation and the possibility of learning in different environments, the possibility of quick and free publication, and the possibility of developing easy access to the audience. This

case is important because the research results show that the audience faces a lack of time and unfamiliarity with the resources to follow these trainings. Therefore, because you can listen to podcasts at different times, such as driving, walking, cycling, and doing daily tasks, it is a very effective listening method. Audiences prefer to listen to podcasts instead of reading educational texts in this field. The audio appeal of podcasts is much greater, especially when it is narrated in the form of a story and by several narrators. On the other hand, producing a podcast with purely educational content should not be longer than 20 minutes.

The results of studies indicate that content-oriented podcasts can be boring for learners if they last more than 20 minutes.

Considering that the majority of learners have more educational ability through visual content, making videocassettes can be a more suitable way to transmit educational content. Many of the audience stated that not educational details cannot be conveyed through the podcast, which shows that the audio content is not clear for many of the audience and learners prefer to accelerate and deepen their learning process with the help of visual content.

One of the important reasons for the slowness of public education, the lack of familiarity with resources and the lack of interest in education, is due to the lack of advertising; the majority of the audience is not very familiar with Red Crescent Society education. Therefore, because podcasts play a large role in the development and popularization of education if it is accompanied by advertising, it can make a significant part of society familiar with the basic foundations of education and provide the basis for increasing the general knowledge of the society. Production of audio content can be used as an educational method in public education if the created content has enough details. Otherwise, podcasts will only serve to illustrate the importance of the issue, not convey educational details. In addition, audio content should be presented in a variety of ways and with sufficient time. The brief content only describes the issue generally and cannot prepare people to deal with the risk. If complementary content is provided to the audience at the same time, it can be claimed that podcasts can convey educational details.

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### Conflict of Interests

Authors have no conflict of interests.

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