

The fierce competition between radio and podcast

 By [Rirhandzu Shingwenyana](#)

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Many things have changed over the years. Some of these changes are influencing how we engage and consume the media. And this is happening all over the world, including here in South Africa.



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This brings us to the question; what exactly has changed in how the audience consumes media?

The advent of digital media has brought a lot of modifications to the media landscape. Some of these changes have enhanced and while others are threatening the existence of some media.

Even though digital transformation was already taking place, the Covid-19 virus is speeding up the process.

I was recently browsing Twitter and came across a tweet that said 'Podcast is taking over radio,' and one of the

respondents replied and said 'Podcast never taking over the radio and there are numbers to support that radio is still the best media.'

This made me think: if indeed podcast is becoming mainstream media, what is going to make radio outdated.

Podcast in numbers

Let's look at the recent stats to help us understand the current media landscape - radio vs. podcast - in the South African context, and juxtaposition against the world. According to a report by [PB Podcast Black of 2019/2020](#) stated that Podcast in South Africa has increased by 43%.



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These numbers would have changed since then due to the current speed of digital transformation around. This is obviously due to technological transformation. It is predicted that the worldwide podcast audience is set to top the 1 billion mark by 2022, jumping to 1.3 billion users by the end of the following year.

Radio consumption has increased as well

Radio listenership has increased as well during the global Covid-19 lockdown. As people were forced to work from home. That means they needed to keep themselves informed about Covid-19 and other news in general.

Radio is one medium that you can listen to while doing something else. While online content could be manipulated to perpetuate fake information. Radio stations understand their job is to curate news and eliminate fake information. This makes it the perfect media for accessing credible information.

Access to the internet and online assets

The lack of internet access and the price of data in South Africa also play a role in impacting the use of online streaming platforms such as radio. Conversely, on the other hand, radio is a free-to-air media, unlike online platforms. And for that reason, radio continues to hold on as the best option over podcasts when it comes to audio streaming media.

Moreover, most podcast listeners are full-time employees. This indicates that the profile of the typical South African podcast listener is LSM 7–10.

Also, according to reports, in South Africa, the primary podcast listener is aged between 35-54 - in line with US stats - with the secondary listener aged between 25-34. The majority of podcast listeners have a household income of between R100,000 - R1m.

We can thus conclude this matter by saying that radio and podcasting will coexist for many years to come. Although the podcast industry is growing very fast all over the world including South Africa. The onus is on radio stations to come up with innovative ideas to remain relevant and competitive.

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