

Citizen Health: A Conditional Stake Linked to Traditional Media
(An Investment-Based Reading of Health Media)

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to describe the features of the concept of citizen health in its various dimensions (physical/bodily and psychological/mental), as well as its key determinants such as nutrition, sports, and tourism. It also examines its relationship with the mediating and functional roles of traditional media, including print media (press), audio media (radio), and audiovisual media (television). This is achieved by addressing a set of analytical stages to diagnose the media process in its different components—both from a technical/communicative perspective and a functional/media-oriented one—through a descriptive tabular approach. The purpose is to understand the characteristics of these channels and activate them to achieve effective health communication, whereby citizens can access reliable health information, preserve their well-being, and, on the other hand, enable the state to reduce its efforts—particularly financial expenditures directed toward treatment—and redirect them toward the development of the health sector, ultimately improving citizens’ living standards.

To achieve the intended scientific objectives of this study, the following three research axes will be addressed:

1. The descriptive features of the concept of health media.
2. Investment dimensions in the characteristics of print media to preserve citizen health.
3. Investment dimensions in the characteristics of print media to preserve citizen health.
4. Investment dimensions in the characteristics of print media to preserve citizen health.

Keywords:Media – Citizen Health – Health Media – Press – Radio – Television – Health Determinants.

Introduction

The media intervenes in promoting citizens’ health alongside the healthcare sector, assuming the responsibility of delivering awareness, preventive, and therapeutic information related to health—whether psychological, physical, or even spiritual. This is achieved through mobilizing various traditional media channels: print media (press), audio media (radio), and audiovisual media (television), in order to carry out a strategic mission—namely, raising citizens’ awareness about all matters related to health, such as nutrition, sports, and others. This issue is considered one of the fundamental challenges for every state, including the Algerian state. Indeed, preserving citizens’ health enables the state to save substantial financial resources that would otherwise be directed to the healthcare sector, particularly treatment whether through providing medications or covering treatment abroad (Abdelatif, 1965). The development and advancement of societies are closely linked to the health of their citizens, as they are the key actors in achieving such progress. Conversely, the issue of health requires nothing more than a carefully planned awareness policy as a preventive stage against diseases, rather than constructing massive hospital infrastructures crowded with citizens who have been deprived of proper media guidance to inform them about what should and should not be done to maintain their health. Providing citizens with information about health—such as healthy nutrition, sports, and tourism—with the aim of preserving it, is a strategic step that can only be achieved through continuous and supportive means accompanying the citizen. The success of this endeavor largely depends on the media, which functions as the arteries that have woven their networks into every home in the Algerian state and reached every individual in society. By exploiting their unique characteristics, these media channels can deliver the maximum amount of information to citizens rapidly and efficiently.

Based on the theoretical framework presented in the introduction of this research paper, we seek to answer the following central research question:

How can the characteristics of traditional media be effectively utilized to preserve citizens’ health?

From this main question, several sub-questions emerge:

1. What are the descriptive features of the dimensions of the concept of citizens’ health?
2. How can the characteristics of print media be utilized to preserve citizens’ health?
3. How can the characteristics of audio media be utilized to preserve citizens’ health?
4. How can the characteristics of audiovisual media be utilized to preserve citizens’ health?

First Section: Descriptive Features of the Concept of Health Media: This part of the study is divided into two sections:

First: Health Media: Health media is a form of specialized media that aims to disseminate awareness and knowledge about a specific health issue in order to influence behaviors and attitudes, and to promote proper health practices and their outcomes (Selkh & Mnacer, 2017).

Moreover, health media is considered one of the specialized fields within media and communication studies. It has emerged as a form of developmental media carrying guidance and awareness content aimed at disease prevention (Al-Mashaqba, 2012). It is defined as “a type of media specialized in the field of medicine and health, concerned with conveying ideas and facts about diseases, traumas, and deformities—their causes, development, prevalence, methods of diagnosis, and ways of prevention and treatment. It is thus a process of delivering news about various medical and health issues and events with the aim of guiding, informing, and educating individuals.” (Abu Samra, 2010) It is also the process of presenting news about various medical and health issues and events with the aim of guiding, educating, and raising awareness among individuals (Abu Samra, 2010). Health media also encompasses all means that work to provide society with accurate news, reliable health information, and sound scientific knowledge, helping to build a preventive and therapeutic health culture. This process is based on four elements: the sender, the message, the subject of the message, and the communication medium (Al-Shaalan, 2014, p. 54).

This type of media performs a set of functions (Qazzadri & Amirat, 2022) through three media stages, as illustrated in the following descriptive diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 1: Functional Stages of Health Media

Stage	Function	Details
Stage One	Educational Function	-Disseminating facts about diseases -Disseminating facts about the causes of diseases -Disseminating methods of transmission of infectious diseases -Disseminating how diseases are diagnosed -Disseminating methods of disease prevention -Disseminating ways of treating diseases -Disseminating global experiences and best practices
Stage Two	Awareness Function	-Creating health awareness -Warning against the risks of diseases -Warning against the dangers of epidemics
Stage Three	Health Education (Cultural) Function	-Promoting health values -Promoting preventive health values -Promoting therapeutic health values

Source: Authors’ own work

Health media, through performing the functions outlined above, seeks to achieve the following objectives (Khadhour, 2015):

- Providing citizens with new concepts about health (nutrition, sports, etc.) and diseases in line with modern discoveries.
- Equipping citizens with methods and approaches that help them maintain their health.
- Simplifying health-related information and facts.
- Increasing citizens' knowledge and awareness of health issues.
- Influencing citizens' behaviors and patterns of conduct regarding health issues.
- Instilling positive attitudes, ideas, and perspectives toward illness or injury, and encouraging continuity in treatment until recovery.
- Correcting incorrect attitudes, habits, and behaviors by transforming them into healthy ones.
- Enhancing citizens' awareness of their responsibility toward improving and maintaining their health.
- Assisting citizens in understanding the practices and habits necessary to preserve and improve their health.

These objectives confirm that what is truly spent on health awareness programs and campaigns (as health media) is effectively saved in healthcare budgets (Al-Baiz, 2015).

Second: The Concept of Citizens' Health through Health Media

In general, the concept—at the level of meaning—can be divided, according to the following descriptive diagram, into:

**Descriptive Diagram No. 2:
 The Semantic Structure of the Concept of Citizens' Health**

First		Second			
Public Health		Personal Health			
1	2	1	2	3	4
Preventive health structure (Water / Air / Environment)	Therapeutic health structure (Medical personnel) and (Medical infrastructure)	Psychological (Social)	Mental (Social)	Physical (Nutritional)	Spiritual (Religion)

Source: Authors' own work

As the relationship between personal health and health media can be further detailed, it can be presented in Figure 3 as follows:

**Descriptive Diagram No. 3:
 The Semantic Structure of the Concept of Citizens' Health**

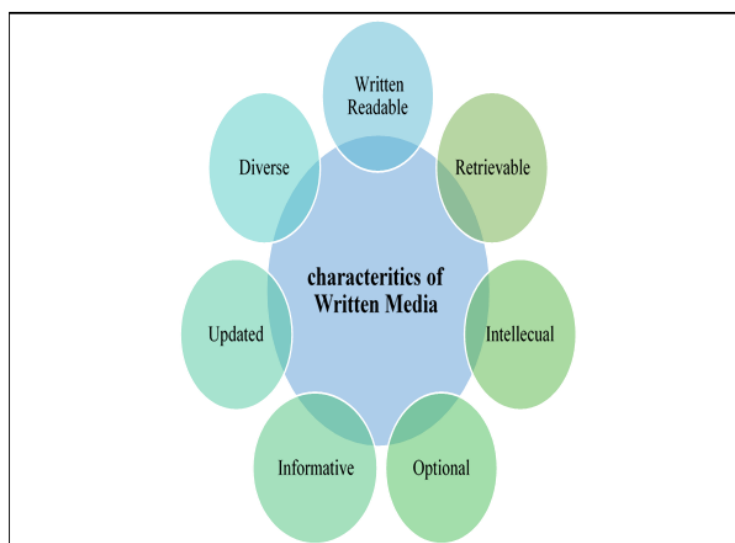
Personal Health											
Type of Health		1. Mental / Psychological Health					2. Physical Health				
Stages of the Health Communication Process											
1	Health Awareness Communication	Environmental	Social	Nutritional	Sports	Recreational	Tourism-related	Religious	Sports	Environmental	Nutritional
2		Preventive Health Communication									
3		Curative Health Communication									

Source: Authors' own work

Axis Two: Features of Investing in the Characteristics of Print Media to Preserve Citizens' Health

Print media The printed word allows the reader to control the timing and opportunity of reading, and enables them to revisit its content carefully... Through national and regional newspapers, as well as various magazines, some countries have been able to support and develop their national healthcare programs...” (Chaabani, 2026) This highlights what distinguishes the press as a form of written media: it is an information medium par excellence, endowed with a set of communicative and instrumental characteristics that qualify it to win a strategic media stake in delivering health information to citizens. We will summarize these features in the form of descriptive diagrams as follows:”

Descriptive Diagram No. 4: Characteristics of Print Media



Diverse: Headlines, Language, Topics, Journalistic formats.

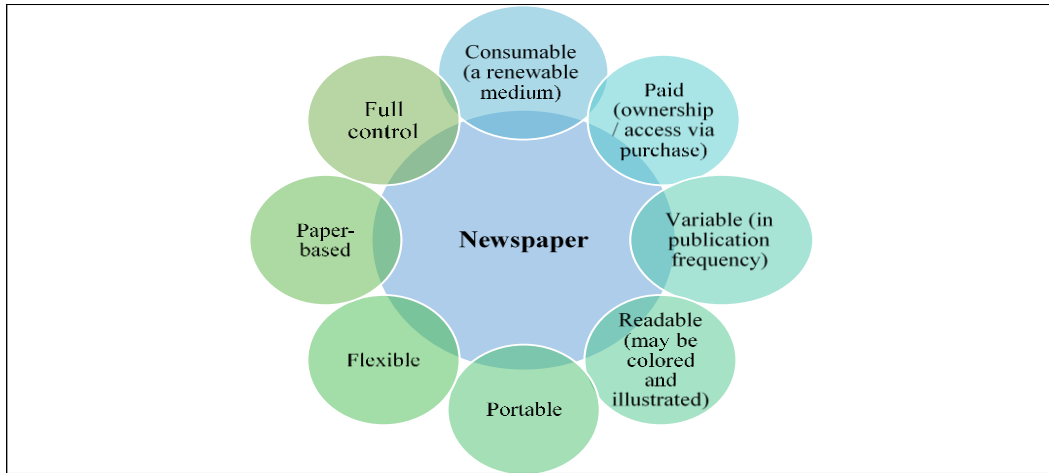
Written / readable: Colored / Illustrated.

Updated: Medium and content.

Source: Authors' own work

These communicative behaviors, in the use of the newspaper/press as a traditional written medium by the reading audience, can be described in the following diagram:

**Descriptive Diagram No. (05):
 Characteristics of the Written Media Medium (Newspaper)**



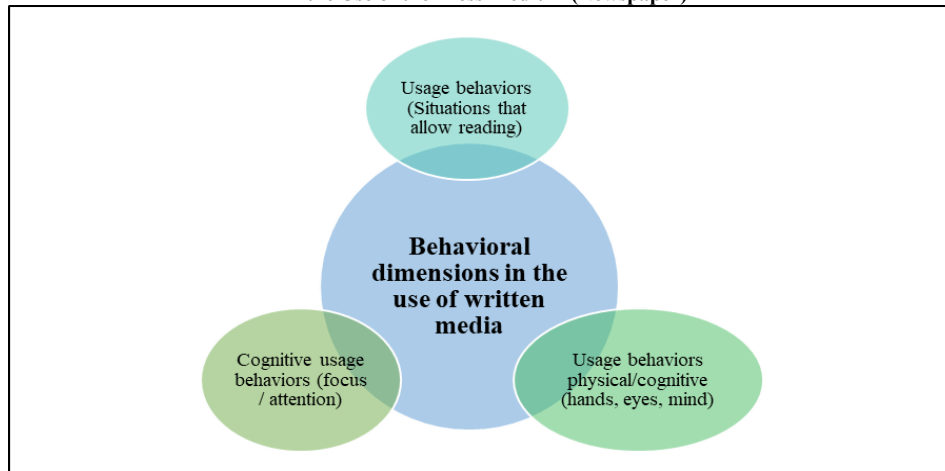
Diverse: Headlines, Language, Topics, and Journalistic formats)
Written / Readable: Colored / Illustrated)

Renewable: Both the medium and the content.

Source: Authors' own work

These communication behaviors in the use of newspapers as a traditional print media by the reading audience can be described in the following diagram:

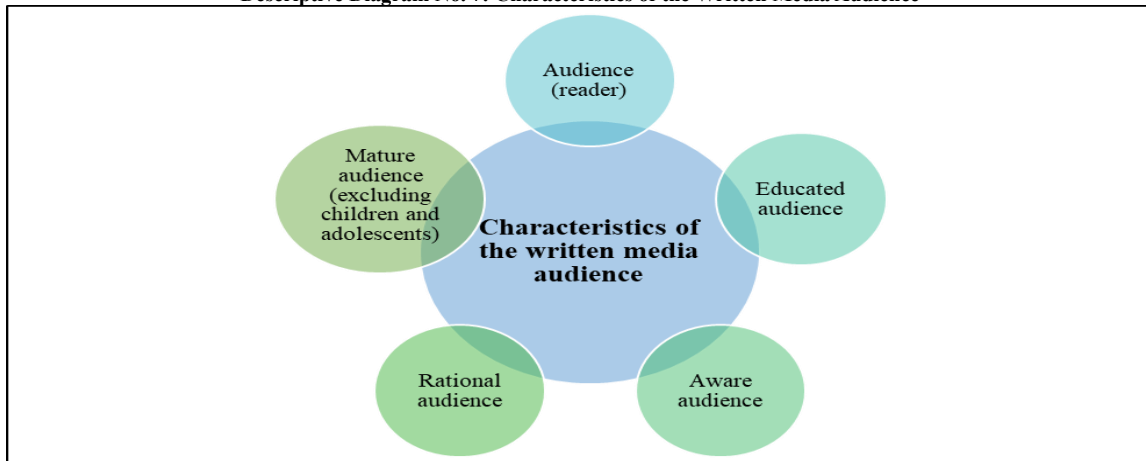
**Descriptive Diagram No. 6: Behavioral Dimensions
 in the Use of the Press Medium (Newspaper)**



Source: Authors' own work

This type of traditional media addresses a distinct audience compared to that of audio media and audiovisual media, whose characteristics can be identified in the following diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 7: Characteristics of the Written Media Audience



Source: Authors' own work

Traditional written media offers the audience a range of choices that make the reader, as part of this media audience, a consistently loyal follower of this medium. We can illustrate this "control panel" of choices provided by written media in the following figure:

Descriptive Diagram No. 8: The Reader's Control Panel in the Newspaper



Source: Authors' own work

Media objectives related to citizens' health can be achieved by activating what is referred to as health media, conveyed through traditional media by investing in all its characteristics and various dimensions, as illustrated in the following descriptive diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 09: Features of Investing in the Characteristics of Written Media to Preserve Citizens' Health

	Health communication process	Print media
Medium	Specialized medium	Production of specialized magazines
	Media campaigns	Regular
Message	Specialized programs (sections)	Fixed (regular sections)
	Volume of content (specialized/general content)	Balanced with overall volume
	Ratio (space/time) of specialized vs general content	Balanced
	Frequency of content publication	Regular
	Form of presented content	Creative presentation
	Health advertising spots	Activated
	Language of content (terminology vs community language)	Terms / translation (repetition)
Media personnel	Nature of content	Simplification
	Health media training (universities)	Activation of specialization
Communication strategy	Strategic plan	Necessary, well-studied strategy (based on real indicators of health communication)
	Strategy principles / medium	Activation of success principles
	- Functional characteristics of the medium (principles)	
	- Characteristics of the message (principles)	
	- Characteristics of the communicator (principles)	
	- Principles of repetition / intensity / frequency	
	Strategy principles / communicator	Activation of success principles
Strategy principles / message	Activation of success principles	
Strategy principles / time – funding	Activation of success principles	
Evaluation	Activation of periodic evaluation	

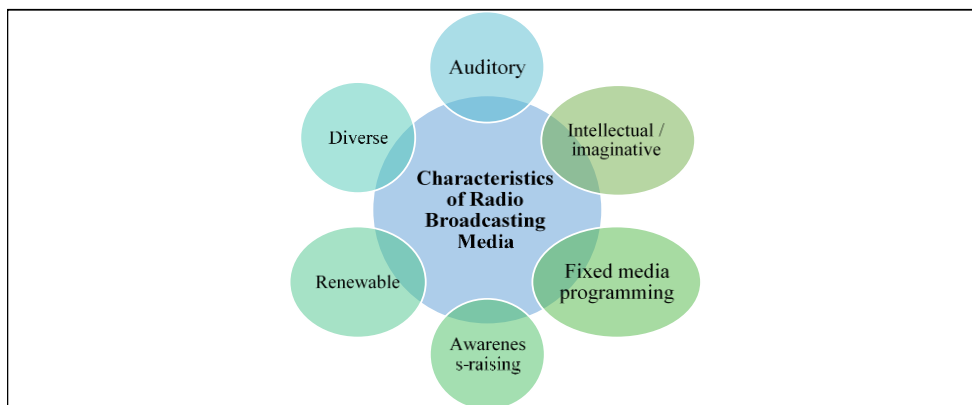
Source: Authors' own work

Axis Three / Features of Investing in the Characteristics of Audio Media to Preserve Citizen Health

It is considered one of the most important mass media and among the most widespread, broadcasting through the airwaves to individuals. It is also one of the most influential media, due to the relationship that develops between the medium (the broadcaster) and the listener. Radio is defined, according to Ibrahim Imam, as "the organized and intentional dissemination, via radio, of news, cultural, educational, commercial, and other types of programs, received simultaneously by listeners across different parts of the world, individually or collectively" (Abu Asba', 1995). Radio broadcasting, as an audio medium, is particularly distinguished as an awareness-oriented form of media. It possesses a set of communicative and instrumental characteristics that qualify it to achieve a strategic media role in delivering health information to citizens—whether physical, psychological, or mental. Furthermore, the specific nature of radio broadcasting allows listeners to engage with it without interrupting their sensory or physical involvement in their daily activities (Liliane, Alain, Martine, & Charles, 2000).

In general, this medium differs from print and audiovisual media through a set of distinct characteristics, as illustrated in the following diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 10: Characteristics of Radio Broadcasting Media



Diverse: Channels, Language, Topics, Radio programs)

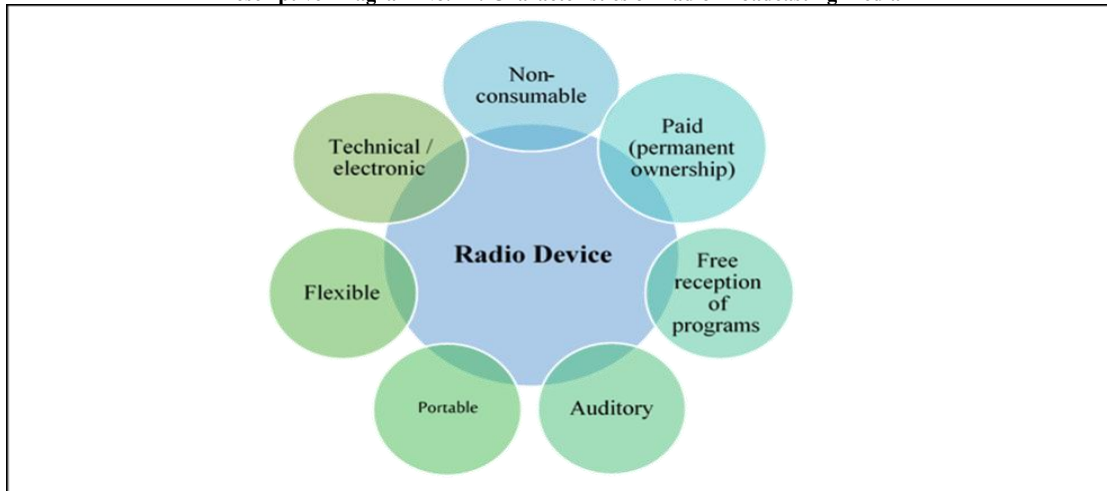
Auditory: Sound / Music)

Renewable: Conte

Source: Authors' own work

Traditional radio media is considered suitable for achieving the goal of preserving citizen health due to its reliance on the radio device, whose characteristics enable it to reach the largest possible number of listeners without geographical or cultural barriers. In addition, it is regarded as a companion device for many daily human activities such as household tasks, driving, and others. These characteristics can be illustrated in the following diagram:

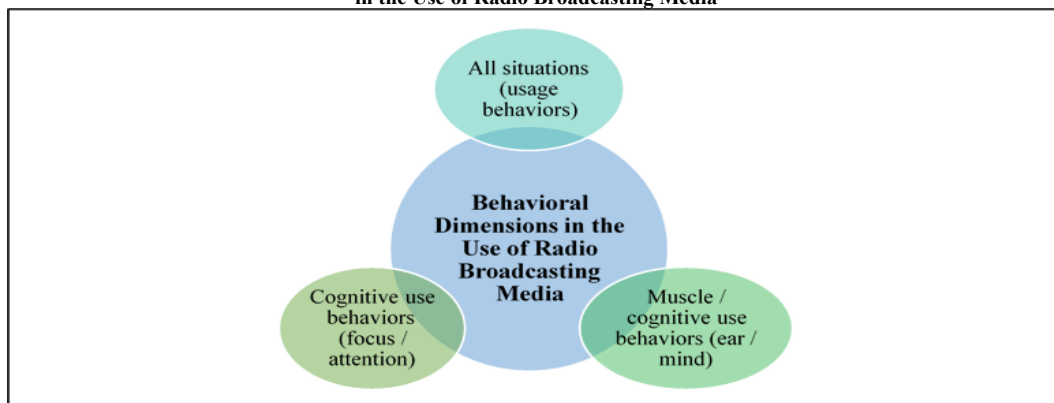
Descriptive Diagram No. 11: Characteristics of Radio Broadcasting Media



Source: Authors' own work

Traditional radio media is characterized by specific communication-use behaviors. The behavioral dimensions associated with using radio or the radio device can be described as follows:

Descriptive Diagram No. 12: Behavioral Dimensions in the Use of Radio Broadcasting Media



Diverse: Channels, Language, Topics, Radio programs.

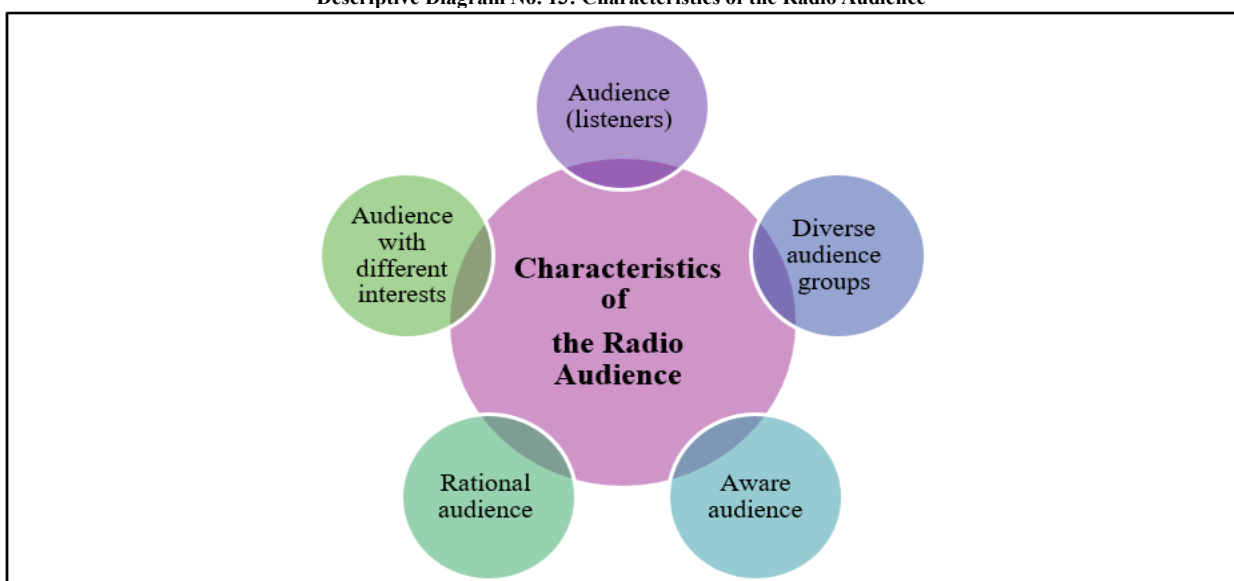
Auditory: Sound / Music.

Renewable: Content.

Source: Authors' own work

The audience reached by radio is broader than that of print media; consequently, the target audience of radio broadcasting in general, and health radio communication in particular, differs in its composition and characteristics. This leads to the identification of the main features of the listening audience, as illustrated in the following diagram:

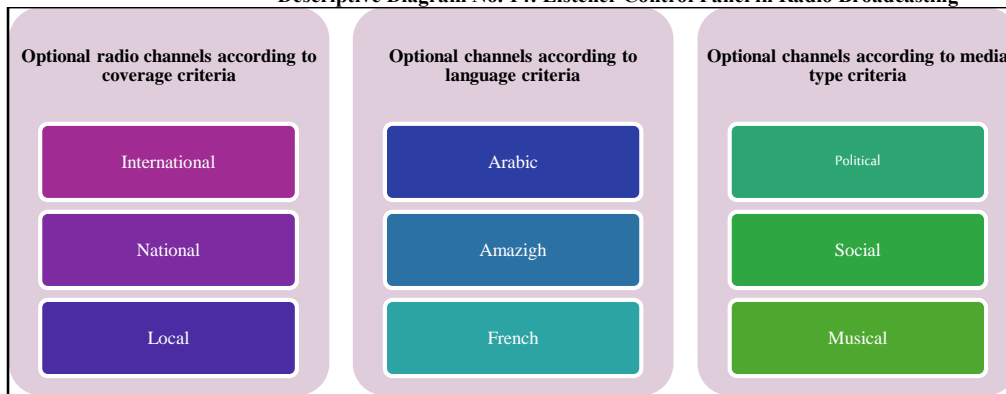
Descriptive Diagram No. 13: Characteristics of the Radio Audience



Source: Authors' own work

Traditional audio media offers the audience a range of choices that make the listener loyal to this medium. This “control panel” of options provided by radio broadcasting can be illustrated in the following diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 14: Listener Control Panel in Radio Broadcasting



Source: Authors’ own work

It is possible to invest in the technical and communicative characteristics in the field of citizen health through activating what is known as health communication, which is conveyed by traditional Algerian media, including the press, radio, and television. This is illustrated in the following descriptive diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 15: Features of Investing in the Characteristics of Audio Media to Preserve Citizen Health

Health communication process		Radio	
Medium	Medium (Specialized)	Specialized programs	Specialized programs
	Media campaigns	Regular	Regular
Message	Specialized programs (segments)	Daily (programs)	Daily (programs)
	Volume (amount) of content / general content	Balanced with overall volume	Balanced with overall volume
	Ratio (space/time) of specialized content to general content	Balanced	Balanced
	Frequency of content publication	Regular	Regular
	Format of presented content	Creative presentation	Creative presentation
	Health advertising spots	Activated	Activated
	Language of content (terminology) compared to the language of society	Terms / translation (Terminology writing – repetition)	Terms / translation (Terminology writing – repetition)
	Nature of content	Simplification	Simplification
Media personnel	Health media training (universities)	Activation of specialization	Activation of specialization
Communication strategy	Strategic plan	A well-studied strategic necessity (based on realistic indicators of health communication in Algeria)	A well-studied strategic necessity (based on realistic indicators of health communication in Algeria)
	Strategy principles / medium: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional characteristics of the medium (principles) Characteristics of the message (principles) Characteristics of the communicator (principles) Principles of repetition / intensity / frequency 	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles
	Strategy principles / communicator	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles
	Strategy principles / message	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles
	Strategy principles / time – funding	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles
	Evaluation	Activation of periodic evaluation	Activation of periodic evaluation

Source: Authors’ own work

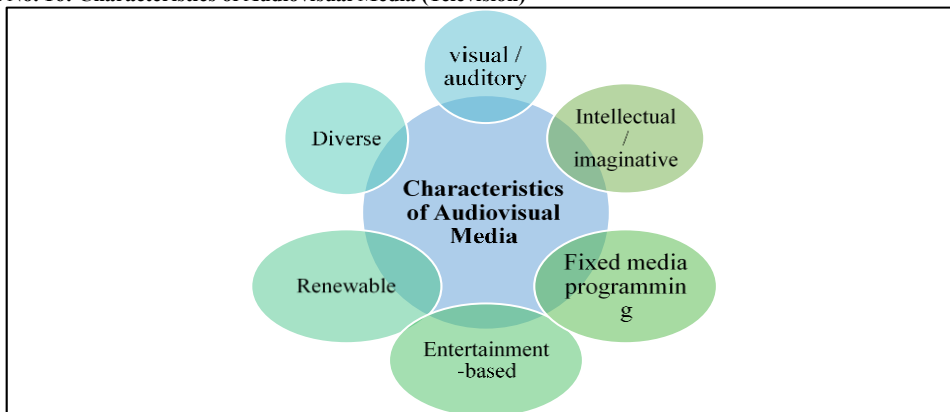
Axis Four / Features of Investing in Audiovisual Media Characteristics to Preserve Citizen Health

Audiovisual media is considered one of the most important and most influential forms of media, due to the major changes it has brought compared to other media tools. It has created a wide-ranging media revolution in terms of impact and dimensions, and has opened the door to major technological developments in the field of communication and information.

Television has become a social phenomenon, with a clear and profound influence in all areas of human life. This led R. Silverstone to describe it as “magical, complex, and full of contradictions.” Indeed, we live in what is not coincidentally called the “age of television.”

Television, as an audiovisual and highly entertaining medium, is characterized by a set of media features that enable it to achieve a strategic communication goal: delivering health information to citizens. These characteristics can be represented in the following descriptive diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 16: Characteristics of Audiovisual Media (Television)



Diverse: Channels, Language, Topics, TV programs)

Audiovisual: Sound / videos / Texts.

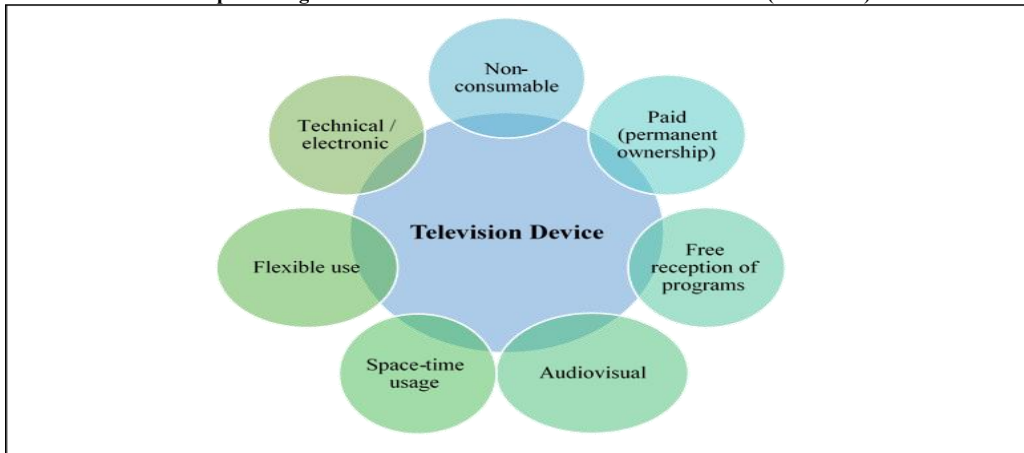
Renewable: Content

Source: Authors’ own work

Television broadcasting is regarded as a key traditional medium for achieving the objective of maintaining public health, due to its reliance on the television set, whose powerful characteristics enable a three-dimensional impact through addressing the eye, the ear, and the mind. This allows it to reach a wide audience without geographical, cultural, or even physical (bodily) barriers, thereby contributing significantly to health awareness and education (Brik, 2012).

The characteristics of this audio-visual medium can be illustrated in the following diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 17: Characteristics of Audiovisual Media (Television)

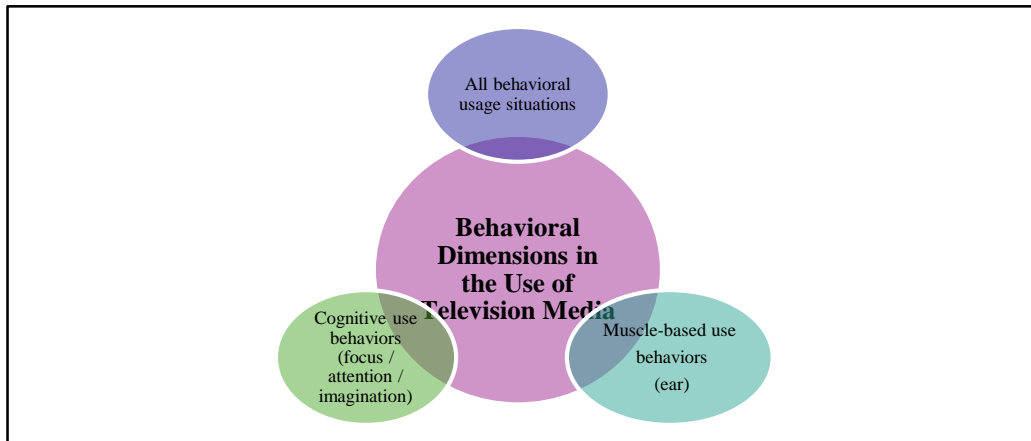


Source: Authors' own work

The communication behaviors associated with using television as a traditional audiovisual medium by the viewing audience can be described in the following diagram:

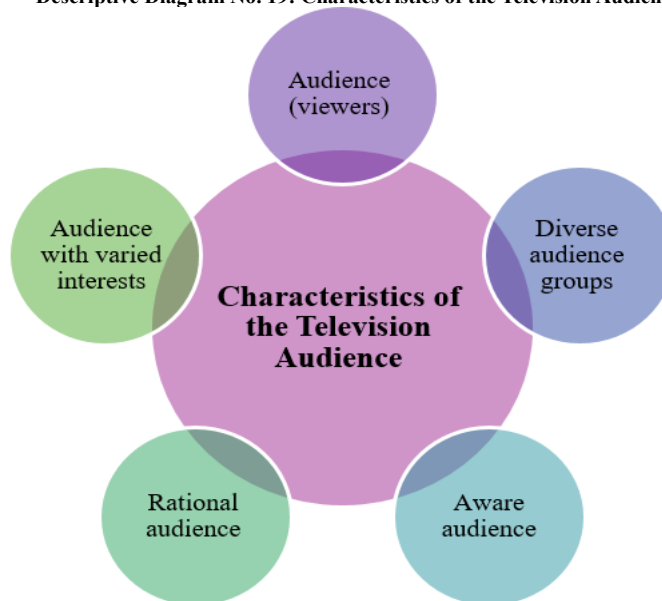
Descriptive Diagram No. 18: Behavioral Dimensions in the Use of Television

Source: Authors' own work



The audience reached by television continues to expand more and more compared to audio media, which leads to differences in the target audience of audiovisual media in general, and health radio communication in particular. Accordingly, the characteristics of the viewing audience can be outlined in the following diagram:

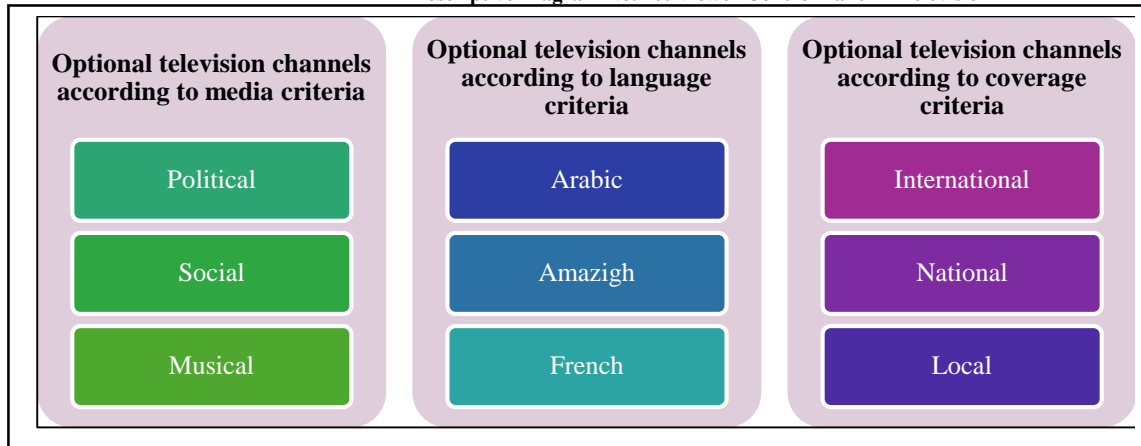
Descriptive Diagram No. 19: Characteristics of the Television Audience



Source: Authors' own work

Traditional audiovisual media offers the audience a range of choices that make the viewer loyal to this medium. This "control panel" of options provided by television can be illustrated in the following diagram:

Descriptive Diagram No. 20: Viewer Control Panel in Television



Source: Authors' own work

Descriptive Diagram No. 21: Features of Investing in Audiovisual Media Characteristics to Preserve Citizen Health

Medium	Health communication process		Television	
		Medium (Specialized)	Specialized programs	Specialized programs
	Media campaigns	Regular	Regular	
	Specialized programs (segments)	Daily (programs)	Daily (programs)	
	Volume (amount) of content / general content	Balanced with overall volume	Balanced with overall volume	
	Ratio (space/time) of specialized content to general content	Balanced	Balanced	
	Frequency of content publication	Regular	Regular	
	Format of presented content	Creative presentation	Creative presentation	
	Health advertising spots	Activated	Activated	
	Language of content (terminology) compared to the language of society	Terms / translation (Terminology writing – repetition)	Terms / translation (Terminology writing – repetition)	
	Nature of content	Simplification	Simplification	
Media personnel	Health media training (universities)	Activation of specialization	Activation of specialization	
Communication strategy	Strategic plan	A well-studied strategic necessity (based on realistic indicators of health communication in Algeria)	A well-studied strategic necessity (based on realistic indicators of health communication in Algeria)	
	Strategy principles / medium:	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Functional characteristics of the medium (principles) Characteristics of the message (principles) Characteristics of the communicator (principles) Principles of repetition / intensity / frequency 			
	Strategy principles / communicator	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles	
	Strategy principles / message	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles	
	Strategy principles / time – funding	Activation of success principles	Activation of success principles	
	Evaluation	Activation of periodic evaluation	Activation of periodic evaluation	

Source: Authors' own work

Conclusion

Media can perform a function toward its audience within the same society that is very similar to the role of a mother within a family. A mother strives to care for her children and works diligently to raise their awareness through guidance such as “do’s and don’ts,” in order to protect them from anything that may harm them. The same applies to the media, which disseminates health awareness information to protect and care for citizens. Regardless of the outcomes of this process—whether within the family or within society—there are always effective strategic principles that can be applied to achieve results that are mostly positive. Therefore, whatever the descriptive features that outline health communication—whether in terms of its success or its shortcomings in achieving the goal of preserving citizen health—there remains strong potential to rely on these media tools through the application of effective strategic principles in order to achieve the intended objectives of health communication.

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