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In exploring the genre of podcast show notes I have decided to broaden my genre to podcasts in general. For this genre I have developed the following research question: *How do podcast formats and content effect listener engagement and retention?* To fully and properly answer this question I am going to use a combination of qualitative research methods: podcast I will be using podcast analyses, podcast listener surveys and interviews with podcast creators on their structure and why it works. Each method presents distinct benefits and drawbacks that will enhance my understanding of the podcasting genre. Content analysis will serve as my primary research method, focusing on various podcast episodes across different genres, such as true crime, comedy, and educational content. This setup will allow me to deeply examine the structure, themes, and presentation styles of the podcasts I am studying. The main benefit of using content analysis is that they provide a complete examination of how different parts of the podcast, such as episode length, tone of voice, and guest appearances from other known creators all contribute to consumer engagement. A potential drawback of this research method is the personal bias of interpreting and rating podcast content and even sections of that content. This bias in research may lead to bias in my final analysis (Driscoll). However, this will not be my only research method as in addition to content analysis. I plan to conduct structured listener surveys to gather as much quantitative data to back up or debate my qualitative research on audience preferences and behaviors. Digital surveys through Google will help me identify which podcast formats and topics listeners enjoy most. The advantage of digital surveys is the ability to get lots of responses with minimal effort. However, simple surveys may not be able to capture the complete depth of personal experiences or ones emotional connections with specific podcasts. This fact potentially limits the richness of the data collected (YouTube, "Qualitative research methods" 2:08). Finally, I will attempt to conduct interviews with podcast creators to evolve my understanding of their ways of engaging their respective audience. These interviews should help me to explore the creators' different perspectives on what they believe makes their work successful. The main benefit of attempting interviews is that I might get the opportunity to gather very in-depth and tested qualitative data that could help readers and me understand the thought processes behind mainstream podcast productions. However, interviews could be very time-consuming to obtain and may not represent the broader podcasting community (YouTube, "Qualitative research methods" 3:12). By combining the aforementioned methods, I will analyze 5 successful podcasts and their most popular episode to date. Then I will distribute survey links to all my class forums that I can do so on. Then I will try to get a basic email interview with each podcast I selected. This mixed-methods approach will allow me to enhance the validity and reliability of my research. Each method should contribute uniquely to the research, while the interview may be impossible I will try my best and if I can’t get the interview I will replace this data with something else of equal persuasive value. By balancing the results of these data sources I hope to uncover powerful insights into the changing landscape of podcast creation and what makes podcasts successful.