

Influence of online media on newspaper readership among Nigerians: A study of Abeokuta North and South local Governments, Ogun state, Nigeria

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Abstract

A field survey entitled influence of online media on newspaper readership among Nigerians with a focus on Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State, Nigeria was studied in 2016. The study adopted a survey research method to generate data from respondents, using a simple random sampling technique in selecting the respondents. The area of the study was limited to Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State, Nigeria. Findings revealed that a very high percentage (74.1%) of the respondents from the two local governments use online media to access daily news and other sundry information. Of this percentage, another 66.3% of the respondents frequently visit online newspaper sites on a daily basis. This underscores the fact that online media wield a great deal of influence over the hitherto newspaper readership pattern of the respondents. However, it is worthy of note that despite this high influence, a significant number of the respondents (71.2%) still use both the newspapers and online contents to complement each other; an indication that printed newspapers are yet to be relegated to the background or forced into extinction. Based on the findings, the study recommended that the print industry must creatively exploit and holistically embrace the features and benefits of online media to make it work in their favour and not against them. Moreover, with the incessant publication of unverified media contents that are now prevalent on online media landscape, especially social media platforms, it is suggested that further studies be carried out on the extent to which information received from online media is perceived to be credible.

Keywords: online media, newspaper readership, Nigerians

Introduction

The last twenty-five years or more have witnessed a rapid transformation of media to the ones which are predicated upon the use of digital technologies, such as the internet. The tide has drastically changed. The rise of new media has increased communication between people all over the world. It has allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, video, pictures and other user-generated contents. The mass media consumers now have different options through which they can access media contents without necessarily buying the hardcopy newspapers (Talabi, 2011) [3].

Nwanguna, (2015) [2] argues that the “emergence of new digital technologies signals a potentially radical shift of who is in control of information, experience and resources”. Also, he further averred that “we are witnessing the evolution of a universal inter-connected network of audio, video and electronic text communications that will blur the distinction between interpersonal and mass communication; and between public and private communication” It is, therefore, no news, that through online media, niche audiences have been created and that people now have more options of what to view and read; as online media have opened up new ways of consuming news. Media audience can now read and watch news on various multi-media platforms which consequently has led to media fragmentation and specialized audience. Moreover, it should also be highlighted that today’s media is now more of demand-led rather than supply-push. With the help of various devices and technologies, media consumers can now personalize and control media interactions. Multiple media streams can now be consumed simultaneously. Media

consumers can read e-mails, send texts or whatsapp messages, facebook or even tweet at the same time.

This unprecedented wave of change in the way news is now being consumed across the globe, in this day and age, has not spared the mainstream media landscape in Nigeria. Media consumers in the country now seem to be drifting towards accepting the new technology as a new pattern of their newspaper readership, while the traditional way of reading newspaper by the conventional readers also appears not to be going into oblivion or even total extinction in a hurry.

As a result of all these dynamics and intricacies that accompany the use of the new media, journalists “are increasingly being forced to produce marketable content in order to stay afloat in a highly competitive global market driven by ICTs.” The print media organizations too have devised means to integrate the use of internet into every aspect of their operations. Some of these new attempts include a change in the *modus operandi* by the print journalists in disseminating information by designing contents suitable for both print and online media. They have also set up the online versions of their printed newspapers to cater for the interests of their online users.

Consequent upon the technological drift in the mechanics of media processing, production and distribution, occasioned by the internet, the nature of the traditional media audience as well as the reach and circulation strength of the conventional newspapers have been redefined and substantially affected. It is, therefore, against this backdrop that this study seeks to find out the extent at which online media have influenced the newspaper readership of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State, Nigeria. The

study equally sought, among other things, to:

1. Identify the reasons for the adoption of online media as a pattern of newspaper readership
2. Find out the benefits and challenges inherent in the use of online media as a pattern of newspaper readership.
3. Determine if the information needs of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State, through the use of online media as a pattern of newspaper readership, are satisfied.

Research Methodology

Research Design

A survey research design was adopted for this study. National Open University (2016) ^[1] stated that survey research is the study of a portion or sample of a specific population (e.g. magazine subscribers, newspaper readers, television viewers, people of a community or state etc.) while Talabi (2009) ^[4] affirm that survey can be used to investigate problems in realistic settings. Thus, its adoption, as the most appropriate research design for the purpose of this study.

Population

A population is therefore the aggregate of all the cases that conform to some designated set of specifications. Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the population consisted of all members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments, in Abeokuta North and South Areas of Ogun State, in Nigeria. In Abeokuta North, the total number of staff in the Local Government is five hundred and fifty (550) (source: Administration and General Services Department), while in Abeokuta South, the entire staff strength there is five hundred and ninety-four (594) (source: Administration and General Services Department). This makes a total population of one thousand, one hundred and forty-four, (1,144).

Sample Size

In order to scientifically determine the appropriate number of samples to be selected for the study, a survey monkey calculator method with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error was adopted. Therefore, from the total population of one thousand, one hundred and forty-four (1144) members of staff from the two local governments of the study areas, two hundred and eighty-eight (288) were selected as the sample size. This implies that, a sample size of one hundred and forty-four (144) was randomly selected from each of the two local governments study areas.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted a simple random sampling technique. This is a method in which samples are selected through a process that guarantees each element in the population the chance of being selected. It also makes the selection of every possible combination of the desired number of cases possible.

To this end, in selecting the sample size, from the total population of one thousand, one hundred and forty-four (1,144) members of staff of both local governments, a simple random sampling technique was employed to select equal representatives from the two local governments. This means that one hundred and forty-four (144) respondents were

randomly chosen from each local government, amounting to a total of two hundred and eighty-eight (288) as the sample size. (Source: Survey Monkey Calculator Method).

Instrument for Data Collection

The study employed the use of a specially designed, 25-item questionnaire, as a research instrument to gather data from the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into two segments, that is, the demographic and psychographic sections.

In the Demographic aspect, five (5) questions relating to the age, gender, marital status, departments and educational status of respondents which helped to provide background information on them were asked, while the psychographic aspect contained twenty (20) items which included a 5-point liker scale, designed to capture the research questions/hypotheses.

Administration of Instrument/Data Gathering Procedure

The questionnaires were personally administered to the respondents under the supervision of the researcher. This was to ensure to some extent, that the respondents were properly guided to minimize errors in the filling of the questionnaire. Two hundred and eighty-eight (288) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and collected upon completion by the researchers.

Method of Data Analysis

The method of data analysis that was employed in analysing and interpreting the data collected from the respondents was a Simple Percentage and Table Frequency Method; as well as Statistical Package for Social Science Analytical Method (SPSS). The data were analysed using the above analytical tools to construct tables, compute figures and statistically analyse relationship between variables in order to determine differentials in the results obtained from the data collected.

Results and Discussion

Data Presentation

A total of two hundred and eighty-eight (288) copies of the questionnaire were administered in Abeokuta North and South Local Government Areas in Ogun State, Nigeria, to members of staff of the two local councils. The data collected from the two local government areas were presented separately into two distinct segments each, (Demographic and Psychographic Data).

The data were first presented in a table by table format to statistically describe them in percentages in the first hand; while the second segment analysed and discussed the research questions and the hypotheses raised for this study by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) analytical tool.

In Abeokuta South, of the one hundred and forty-four copies of the questionnaire administered (144), one hundred and thirty-five (135), representing 93.75% were valid.

Equally, in Abeokuta North, of the one hundred and forty-four (144) copies of the questionnaire that were administered there, one hundred and forty-three copies (143), representing 99.3% were Valid.

Data Distribution and Analysis

Table 1: Gender

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Male	90	44.3
Female	113	55.7
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table, the gender distribution shows that 90 of the respondents, that is, 44.3% were male while 113 respondents which are 55.7% were female. This implies that majority of the respondents were female.

Table 2: Age in Years

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	40	20.0
31-40	74	37.0
41-50	62	31.0
51-60	24	12.0
Total	200	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The table 2 above indicated the age distribution of the respondents. 40 of the respondents, which is 20% were between 20-30 years, while 74 of them, which represents 37% were between 31-40 years category. 62 of the respondents, which represent 31% were between 41-50 years old, while 24 of the respondents, representing 12% were between 51-60 years. This implies that majority of the respondents (74) fell under 31- 40 years.

Table 3: Marital Status

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Single	39	19.3
Married	145	71.8
Separate	5	2.4
Divorced	10	5.0
Widowed	3	1.5
Total	202	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table which illustrates the marital status of the respondents, 39 which represents 19.3% of the respondents were single; 145 (71.8%) of the respondents were married. Those whose marital status shows that they are separated were 5 (2.4%); those divorced were 10 (5.0%), while those that are widowed were 3 (1.5%) of the respondents. This implied that majority of the respondents (145) were married.

Table 4: Educational Background

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	1	.5
Secondary school leaving certificate	36	18.0
Tertiary education	163	81.5
Total	200	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The above table shows the different levels of the educational background of the respondents. 1 (.5%) of the total respondents is illiterate. 36 (18%) were senior secondary school certificate holders while 163 (81.5%) of the respondents are tertiary institution certificate holders. This

shows that majority of the respondents (163) were graduates of tertiary institutions.

Table 5: Units/Departments

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Finance/supply	21	10.9
General services/administration	48	24.9
Budget, planning, research & statistics	15	7.8
Primary health care	19	9.8
Agriculture/natural resources	16	8.3
Works & housing	10	5.2
Water & environment	19	9.8
Community & social development	7	3.6
Education, information & sports	27	14.0
Internal audit	11	5.7
Total	193	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

This table points out the various departments/units the respondents are drawn from. It shows that 10.9% of the respondents were in the Finance/Supply unit, 24.9% respondents were in General Service/Administration unit, 7.8% respondents were in Budget, Planning, Research & Statistics unit, 9.8% respondents were in Primary Health Care unit, 8.3% respondents were in Agriculture/Natural resources unit, 5.2% respondents were in Work and Housing unit. 9.8% respondents were in water and Environment unit, 3.6% respondents were in community and social development unit, 14% respondents were in education, information and sport unit while 5.7% of the respondent were in Internal Audit unit. This implies that majority of the respondents were from General service/Administration unit.

Analysis of Psychographic Information

Research Question 1: To what extent do online media influence the newspaper readership of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Government in Ogun State?

Before determining the extent to which online media influenced the newspaper readership pattern of the two local governments under investigation, an attempt was made to establish those who use online news media and those who use to read newspapers among the respondents.

Table 6: Respondents' Answers To Whether Or Not They Use Online Media Or Read Traditional Newspaper?

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	206	74.1
No	72	25.9
Total	278	100

Source: field survey (2016)

Thus, the above table shows that 206 (74.1%) of the respondents use online media while 72 (25.9%) of the respondents do not use online media for news item. Therefore, the latter category is not relevant to this study.

Table 7: Frequency of Respondents' Visits to Online News Sites.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	134	66.3
Sometimes	36	17.8
Rarely	5	2.5
Once a while	27	13.4
Total	202	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The question in table 7 sought to find out influence of online media on the hitherto newspaper readership pattern of members of staff of both Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State; and if it does, to what extent is the influence. Answers to this question as indicated in table 7 above shows the frequency at which the respondents visit online newspaper sites. It reveals that 66.3% of the respondents visit online news sites every day. 17.8% of the respondents visit sometimes, 2.5% rarely visit online news site while 13.4% respondents visit once in a while. This implies that majority of the respondents visit online news sites every day. An indication that online media influence the newspaper readership pattern of members of staff of both Abeokuta North and South Local governments. However, it should be pointed out that despite the great extent of influence that online media wield on newspaper readership pattern of the respondents from both local governments, as shown in table 7 above, a lot of respondents still use other media channel, especially traditional newspaper to complement the service of online media for news as indicated in the table below.

Table 8: Respondents' Answers to Whether Or Not They Use Only Online Media to Read Newspaper.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	69	34.0
No	134	66.0
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table 34% of the respondents use only online media to read newspaper while 66% of the respondents do not use only online media to read newspaper. This shows that majority of the respondents (66%) do not use only online media to read newspaper.

Table 9: Respondents' Answers To Whether Or Not They Use Both Traditional Newspaper And Online To Read News To Complement Each Other.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
YES	141	71.2
NO	56	28.8
Total	198	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table, 71.2% of the respondents use both the traditional newspaper and online media to read news while 28.8% of the respondents use only online media to read news. This is an indication that majority of the respondents use both traditional newspaper and online to read news to complement each other.

Research Question 2: What are the reasons for the adoption of online media as a pattern of news readership?

Table 10: Respondents' Reasons for Using Online Media to Read Newspaper.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
It is cheap	19	9.4
Real time update	35	17.2
Readily available	45	22.2
Multi-media platforms	12	5.9
All of the above	90	44.3
Others, please specify	2	1.0
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016).

The question in Table 10 attempted to know the various reasons respondents advances for their decision to adopt online media instead of hard copy newspapers as a pattern of their newspaper readership.

The answers to the question thus reflected different reasons for the respondents' preference for online media to read news. The statistics indicated that 9.4% of the respondents use online media to read news because it is cheap. 17.2% respondents use it because of its real time update. 22.2% respondents use it because it is readily available. 5.9% respondents use it as it offers multi-media platforms. 44.3% of the respondents use online media for all the above reasons while 1.0% respondents use online media to read newspaper for other reasons. This signifies that majority of the respondents use online media because of all of the reasons mentioned above.

Research Question 3: What are the benefits and challenges of using online media as a pattern of newspaper readership?

Table 11: Respondents' Answers to Whether Or Not Online Media Offers Its Users Opportunity to Participate In Media Discourse.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	88	43.3
Agree	94	46.3
Disagree	12	5.9
Strongly disagree	6	3.0
Undecided	3	1.5
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016).

Research Question 3 aimed at shedding more light on what the respondents consider as benefits and possible challenges they experience in the course of accessing online media to read news. Tables 11-15 therefore highlighted different benefits that motivate the respondents' choice of online media to read news while Tables 16-19 emphasized the likely challenges the respondents experience while using online media to read news.

Thus, in Table 11, 43.3% of the respondents strongly agreed to the statement. 46.3% respondents agreed. 5.9% of the respondents disagreed. 3.0% respondents strongly disagreed while 1.5% of the respondents were undecided to the above statement. This implies that majority of the respondents (89.6%) are in agreement with the statement that online media offers its users opportunity to participate in media discourse.

Table 12: Responses of Respondents to Whether Or Not Online Media Allows Its Users to Self-Publish News Through Blog Posts And Other Platforms.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	75	37.3
Agree	94	46.8
Disagree	22	10.9
Strongly disagree	8	4.0
Undecided	2	1.0
Total	201	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table, 37.3% of the respondents strongly agreed that online media allows its users to self-publish news through blog posts and other platforms. 46.8% respondents

agreed. 10.9% of the respondents disagreed. 4% respondents strongly disagreed while 1% of the respondents were undecided to the above statement. This implies that majority of the respondents (84.1%) agreed with the above statement that online media allows its users to self-publish news through blog posts and other platforms.

Table 13: Respondents' Answers to Whether Or Not Online Media Gives Its Users Opportunity to Interact With One Another.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	89	43.8
Agree	82	40.4
Disagree	23	11.3
Strongly disagree	8	3.9
Undecided	1	.5
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The answers to the above question showed that 43.8% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above statement. 40.4% respondents agreed. 11.3% of the respondents disagreed. 3.9% respondents strongly disagreed while .5% respondent was undecided to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (84.2%) were in agreement with the above statement that online media gives its users opportunity to interact with one another.

Table 14: Respondents' Answers to Whether Or Not News Can Be Accessed From Multiple Sources on Online Media.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	103	51.0
Agree	87	43.1
Disagree	10	5.0
Strongly disagree	2	1.0
Total	202	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

From the above table, answers to the question shows that 51% of the respondents strongly agreed that news can be accessed from multiple sources on online media. 43.1% respondents agreed. 5% respondents disagreed while 1% of the respondents strongly disagreed to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (94.1%) strongly agreed to the above statement that news can be accessed from multiple sources on online media.

Table 15: Respondents' Answers To Whether Or Not News Can Be Transmitted Using Multi-Media Platforms Such As Texts, Whatsapp, Tweet, You Tube, Audio, Video, Etc At The Same Time.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	104	50.7
Agree	78	38.0
Disagree	16	7.8
Strongly disagree	6	2.9
Undecided	1	.5
Total	205	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The answers to the question above as indicated in the table, shows that 50.7% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above statement. 38% respondents agreed. 7.8% of the respondents disagreed. 2.9% of the respondents strongly disagreed while .5% of the respondents was undecided to the above statement. This implied that majority of the

respondents (88.7%) are in agreement with the above statement that news can be transmitted using multi-media platforms such as texts, WhatsApp, tweet, audio, video, etc at the same time.

Table 16: Responses of Respondents to Whether Or Not Weak Internet Connection Always Affects Smooth Use of Online Media.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	89	44.1
Agree	92	45.5
Disagree	13	6.4
Strongly disagree	6	3.0
Undecided	2	1.0
Total	202	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

Answers to the question as revealed in the table above shows that 44.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above statement. 45.5% respondents agreed. 6.4% of the respondents disagreed. 3% respondents strongly disagreed while 1% of the respondents were undecided to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (89.6%) agreed to the above statement that weak internet connection always affects smooth use of online media.

Table 17: Respondents' Answers to Whether Or Not High Cost of Data Subscription Sometimes Prevents Users from Accessing News Online.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	71	35.1
Agree	92	45.5
Disagree	34	16.8
Strongly disagree	5	2.5
Total	202	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The above table shows that 35.1% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above statement. 45.5% respondents agreed. 16.8% of the respondents disagreed while 2.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (80.6%) agreed to the above statement that high cost of data subscription sometimes prevents users from accessing news online.

Table 18: Responses of Respondents to Whether Or Not One of the Challenges of Using Online Media Is Low Electricity Power Supply.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	81	39.9
Agree	96	47.3
Disagree	20	9.9
Strongly disagree	6	3.0
Total	203	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

Answers to this statement, as shown in the above table, indicate that 39.9% of the respondents strongly agreed that one of the challenges of using online media is low electricity power supply. 47.3% respondents agreed. 9.9% respondents disagreed while 3.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (87.2%) were in agreement with the above statement that one of the challenges of using online media is low electricity power supply.

Table 19: Respondents’ Answers To Whether Or Not Online Media Sometimes Publishes False, Unverified News/Information.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	55	27.4
Agree	92	45.8
Disagree	35	17.4
Strongly disagree	11	5.5
Undecided	8	4.0
Total	201	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The above table shows that 27.4% of the respondents strongly agreed to the above statement, 45.8% respondents agreed. 17.4% of the respondents disagreed. 5.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 4.0% of the respondents were undecided to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (73.2%) agreed to the above statement that sometimes, online media publishes false, unverified news/information.

Research Question 4: Do online media, as a pattern of newspaper readership satisfy the information needs of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State?

Table 20: Respondents’ Answers to Whether Or Not Online Media Do Not Satisfy Information Needs of Users As It Is Not As Detailed As Traditional Newspaper.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	29	14.4
Agree	62	30.8
Disagree	57	28.4
Strongly disagree	37	18.4
Undecided	16	8.0
Total	201	100.0

Source: field survey (2016)

The Research Question 4 above was an attempt to determine whether or not online media as a pattern of newspaper readership satisfy the information yearnings of members of staff of Abeokuta South Local Government.

The answers to the question as indicated in the above table, show that 14.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that online media do not satisfy information needs of users as it is not as detailed as traditional newspaper. 30.8% respondents agreed. 28.4% respondents disagreed. 18.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 8.0% of the respondents were undecided to the above statement. This implied that majority of the respondents (46.8%) disagreed with the above statement that online media do not satisfy information needs of users as it is not as detailed as traditional newspaper.

Discussion of Findings

The demographic analysis (Gender) of the respondents from both Abeokuta North and South Local Governments indicated that majority of the respondents from the two local governments were females (113) which represents 55.7% as shown in Table 1. Also, data gathered regarding the age category of the respondents pointed out that majority of the respondents (74), that is, 37% fell within the age bracket of 31- 40 as clearly shown in Table 2. This presupposes that in this study, youths and young adults use the internet to visit newspaper sites more than any other age categories.

It was also established through the data gathered from the two local governments, that the marital status of majority of the respondents (145) indicated that they are married, as illustrated in Table 3. Also, it was established in Table 4 that most of the respondents (163), representing 81.5% are graduates of one tertiary institution or the other.

The final analysis of the demographic features of both Abeokuta North and South Local Governments also revealed that most of the respondents that were randomly selected came from the Administration/General Services unit (48), that is, 24.9%, as indicated in Table 5.

Research Question One: To what extent do online media influence the newspaper readership of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments in Ogun State?

It is significant to note that answers to Research Question One from the two local governments were woven round the key question in Table 7, as indicated above, which sought to know how often respondents visit online newspaper sites:

However, it is pertinent to establish right from the outset, the category of respondents that use online media to read news and those who do not. To this effect, Table 6 above revealed the statistics in this regards. This clearly showed that (206), which represents 74.1% of the total respondents use online media to read newspapers while (72), which is, 25.9% do not use online media to read new and as such, are not relevant to this study.

Therefore, it is apparently evident that a very high percentage of the respondents (74.1%) from the two local governments use online media to read news. Thus, this further cements the pivotal role media convergence and technology play in today’s new dispensation of media production, distribution and consumption of media products; and that the new media has been widely accepted and largely diffused through cultures of Nigerian society.

Research Question Two: What are the reasons for the adoption of online media as a pattern of newspaper readership?

In an attempt to answer the above research question, which sought to find out why members of staff of both Abeokuta North and South Local Government prefer online media as a pattern of their newspaper readership, different reasons as indicated by the respondents were thoroughly examined.

The data collated from the two local governments, as contained in Table 10 above, suggested that 9.4% of the respondents use online media to read newspaper because it is cheap. 17.2% of the respondents uses it because of its real time update. 22.2% of the respondents uses it because it is readily available. 5.9% of the respondents uses it as it offers multi-media platforms. 44.3% of the respondents use online media for all the above reasons while 1% of the respondents use online media to read news for other reasons. This signifies that majority of the respondents (44.3%) use online media because of all of the reasons mentioned above.

Research Question Three: What are the benefits and challenges of using online media as a pattern of newspaper readership?

Research Question 3 sought to find out what the respondents consider as benefits and possible challenges they experience in the course of accessing online media to read news. Tables 11-15 therefore highlighted different benefits that motivate

the respondents' choice of online media to read news while Tables 16-19 emphasize the likely challenges the respondents experience while using online media to read news.

Findings from the two local governments, according to the above Tables 11-15, indicated that the majority of the respondents agreed that all the benefits highlighted in these tables are what they derive in the course of using online media to read news. On the other hand, majority of these respondents also agreed to all the possible challenges users experience while using online media to access news as contained in Tables 16-19 above.

The findings of this Research Question 3 is a further attestation to the responses obtained in Research Question 2, which testify to the fact that media users choose the media that will satisfy and gratify their information needs and desires. It buttresses the position that media consumers deliberately choose the media that can offer them one benefit or the other. This outcome solidifies more, the significance of the principles of Uses and Gratification.

Research Question Four: Do online media, as a pattern of newspaper readership, satisfy the information needs of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments, in Ogun State?

This last Research Question was an attempt to find out whether or not the respondents from the two local governments are satisfied with the information/news they receive from online media. The answers to this question, according to the data gathered from the two local governments and as contained in Table 20, showed that 14.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that online media do not satisfy information needs of users as it is not as detailed as traditional newspaper. 30.8% respondents agreed. 28.4% respondents disagreed. 18.4% of the respondents strongly disagreed while 8% of the respondents are undecided to the above statement. This implies that majority of the respondents (46.8%) disagreed with the above statement that online media do not satisfy information needs of users as it is not as detailed as traditional newspaper. In other words, this majority are of the opinion that online media satisfy their information needs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The focus of this study, as aforementioned, was to examine the influence of online media on newspaper readership pattern of members of staff of Abeokuta North and South Local Governments, in Ogun State.

From the study, findings revealed that there are clear indications that online media have influenced, to a very large extent, the newspaper readership pattern of members of staff of both Abeokuta North and South Local Governments, in Ogun State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is, therefore, suggested that the communication network providers like MTN, GLO and 9MOBILE, should improve on the quality of the internet service they render to consumers, so that media users can begin to have a feel of a better online media experience.

It is equally expedient on the part of the regulators of the communication industry to rise up to the task of checking the excesses of the network providers from charging exorbitantly for the cost of data used by consumers in accessing the

Internet. In addition, the regulators should ensure that these network providers offer data package that are of equal value for money and competitive with what is obtainable in other saner climes.

Finally, the present raging tide of publishing false, unverified information/news, especially by untrained, unprofessional individuals that have become journalists overnight, should be nipped in the bud. The National Communication Commission (NCC), Nigeria Broadcasting Commission, Nigeria Union of Journalists and other relevant authorities should formulate policies that will discourage and forestall such professional misconducts that are shaking to its foundation, the very essence and ethics of journalism profession.

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