

Influence of Social Media on Youths' usage of Traditional Mass Media in Nigeria

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Abstract

The social media are very popular means of public communication mostly among the youths all over the world currently. This paper investigated the influence of social media on the youths' usage of traditional mass media in Nigeria. The study was conducted using survey research method with sample size of 500, multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to draw samples and questionnaire was used as instrument of data collection. The study revealed that social media create wider links enabling youth audiences using them to access traditional mass media online. Thus, social media widen the horizon of media convergence. Also, the study found that youths use social media to date, indulge in cybercrimes, discuss national issues like economic, politics, and socio-religious matters; but most of them do not use the media to communicate to their national leaders on aforementioned issues. Based on the results, the researchers recommend that the government enact laws to guide the youths' uses of the social media in Nigeria.

Keywords: Communication, convergence, Social media, traditional mass media, use

Introduction

Technologies engineer the birth of new means of human communication from age to age, invention of any mass medium heralds more media options for the audience. The advent of a novel mass communication channel creates room for varieties and preferences for the audiences' uses of the media. It creates the loss of audience or "additional fragmentation of audiences," (Moe & Syvertsen, 2007, p.158), to the hitherto means of public communication and breeds more consumers to the media market. However, many media pundits agree that no new form of mass medium had ever displaced the existing one prior to it.

For instance, magazine emerged into the media field and never dislodged the newspaper, which came earlier, television with all its influences could not displace radio which was before it and both of them with their strengths could not displace the print media. If there were no iota of panic with the introduction of each of the aforementioned communication channels, there was certainly a gamut of worries of media displacement when the internet surfaced into the scene. Yet as a medium the internet has not been able to deplete the existence of any prior means of public communication in Africa, not even the 'oramedia' (African traditional system of communication)!

It has rather succeeded succinctly in improving the operations and activities of most other mass media giving birth to a trend popularly called media convergence today. So, the emergence of a mass medium has been a milestone that enhances human communication at different points in time.

However, in this era, the pinnacle of technological improvement on the modes of communication is perhaps climaxed in the discovery of the technologies which begot the social networking sites or the social media sites. The internet comingled with other modern technologies and telecommunications provided the social networking sites to the modern society. So, the sites could be seen as the offshoots of what Agba (2005, p. 26) termed 'compumedia,' a coinage which Agba (2001, p. 41) describes as "new communication technologies that bring together computer technology and telecommunications technology." Gandy (1989, p. 64) cited by Agba (2005) further adds that, "the marriage of computers and telecommunication is the material force in the new technology of communication..."

By their nature the social media have peculiar characteristics that make them probably more appealing to the audience than the conventional media. The veracity of this assertion could be perceived in the pace of the growth of the social media sites over the few years of their emergence. For example, *Facebook*, which is the acclaimed most popular channel among the social media reached over one billion users within ten years of its existence as a medium of communication in the world. The medium attained a "total of 1.23 billion users" in just a decade of its birth (*The Guardian*, 2014). Other social media sites have similar

significant number of users within their short span. This level of wider spread of the media among the people has never been seen in any other earlier means of communication.

The invention and the use of modern communication devices are rapidly changing the whole mass media landscape and communication enterprise in the universe presently. This very development brought by technologies is affecting the means of assembling, delivery or dissemination and reception of mediated messages today. The internet-led technological advancement is gradually and steadily bringing the entire human race into one monolithic entity in terms of the speed at which mediated communication circulates among people all over the globe. The major technological breakthrough which facilitates the quick sharing of information and messages from person to person(s), from the mass media to people and or from people to the mass media is the discovery of the social media as well as their usage. These new means of interactions have greatly changed the media uses by the audience, the journalists and the mainstream media's relation with the audience. The social media have altered the basic processes involved in news gathering and dissemination in the world. With that, the audience pattern of news consumption especially with regard to the contents of the traditional mass media is envisaged to be affected.

By the efficiency of their uses, openness for the users' participation in the interaction with each other, the social media have created their own brand of audience of persons and groups lumped from different parts of the globe. The multiple alternative means of communication provided by the social media perhaps prompts *Awake!* (2012, p. 4) to state that, "never have there been so many options for keeping in touch." Another edition of the publication also adds that, "...text messages, online social networks, chat rooms- there has never been a time when the means of communicating were so numerous and easy to come by," *Awake!* (2010, p. 3). With the foregoing indicating the speed of the growth of the social media and their availability to the audience in the world, the issues are what is their influence on youths' usage of the existing media?

How frequent do the youths use the social networking sites and what do they often do on the new media genre? There is a need to unearth the sway of the prevalence of social media on their youth users' uses of conventional mass media in the universe presently. This could be done through systematic inquiries into the phenomenon.

Statement of problem

With the prevalence of the new media technologies, there is a change in the media choice of the youths globally, Nigeria inclusive. A researcher like Broddason (2006, p. 105) gives credence to the above view by noting that, "there is general agreement among media and communication scholars that a monumental shift is occurring in the media and communication habits of young people." The rate at which they cling to the use of social media is quite alarming, this leaves people in doubt whether the new channels of communication would utterly displace or at least reduce the youths' patronage of the mainstream media.

Presently, the youths' much reliance and choice of the social media is not hidden at all. Invariably, these new media's ability to exert influence on the use of the conventional media is an unarguable reality. According to Aja (2011, p.4) "traditional media organizations such as radio, television, newspapers and magazines seem to have lost prominence and their audience..." "Their news and information, as the European Society of Professional Journalists (2004, p.1) observes, are being increasingly circumvented by users who... use alternative media sources."

From the foregoing, the mainstream media's losing of grip on the youths' and the general usage of the prior existing channels of communication is an envisaged phenomenon. This kind of expectation is usually nursed by the people with the introduction of a new means of public interaction. That perhaps informed why Broddason (2006, p. 116) argues for instance that "there is ... some suggestion of television being replaced by... the "new media."

Therefore, the challenge now is that the influence of social media on youths' uses of conventional mass media in Nigeria is hitherto buried in obscurity. Another problem is finding out whether the social media usage enhances the youths' interaction with the country's leaders. Also, it is important to systematically ascertain other purposes which the social media accomplish for the youths. These outlined points are the problems which this study has empirically investigated and provided answers to them.

Objectives of the study

The following are the objectives which guided this study:

1. To find out the influence of social media on youths' use of traditional mass media in Nigeria.
2. To find out whether social media usage enhance the youths' interaction with Nigerian leaders
3. To examine other purposes which the social media engender the youths to engage in

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this paper include:

1. What is the influence of social media on Nigerian youths' use of traditional mass media?
2. Does social media usage enhance the youths' interaction with Nigerian leaders?
3. What other purposes do social media engender Nigerian youths to engage in?

Theoretical framework

This paper finds expression on technological determinism theory propounded by McLuhan (1962), who Baran and Davies (2012, p. 273) quoted as stating that "changes in communication technology inevitably produce profound changes in both culture and social order." For Adler (2006, overview, paragraph 1) the theory, "Technological determinism (TD), simply put, is the idea that technology has effects on our lives." From the submissions, the relevance of this theory to this paper stems from the point that social networking sites as technological inventions used in human communication have visible effects on the media users presently. The social media have brought revolutions in the people's daily means of interaction. Also, the accessibility of the social media makes human mediated-communication to be a minute-to-minute matter. This is because all the forms of social media could be accessed through Third or Fourth Generation (3G or 4G) internet-enabled mobile phones, ipads, iphones, blackberries.

With these new communication technologies, the youths like other audiences could send and or receive information at a whirl-wind pace across the globe. The social media bring the users closer to each other, the distance notwithstanding, as well as alter how the conventional media messages are received by the audience. Therefore, the social networking sites have their contributions on the communication of the users, just like McLuhan in Agba (2002, p. 255) asserts that "the medium is the message... each medium activates a particular mixture of the senses, which makes the form of the medium, rather than the message, determine ways of perceiving and articulating understanding."

The perception which the social media provoke among their users is different from the one the conventional mass media could ignite within their own audiences. For example, from the manner which the youths used the social networking sites for mobilization of themselves during the mass revolts in the Middle East, fondly known as 'Arab Spring,' it could be deduced that they (the social media) possess the potentials for instantaneous provocation of the people. That was evident in how the youths galvanized via the social media as they embarked on the said serious uprising.

Also, social media triggered similar reaction among Nigerians in their response to federal government's removal of fuel subsidy early January 2012. Nigerians in cities like Kano, Kaduna, Lagos and Abuja mobilized themselves quickly through the social networking sites to protest against the decision. The immediate response which was activated terrified everyone. With these scenarios mentioned, one could visualize the immediate responsiveness which the social media could rouse among their users.

Moreover, one of the tenets of technological determinism theory that makes it germane to this study is that "each technology has a ... particular communication forms, contents and uses," (McQuail, 2010, p.103). The social media as new communication technologies have distinctive communication forms, contents and forms which distinguish them from other media. These features are perhaps what give the new media their own special appeals which are why their audiences use them. For instance, it is quite clear that the social networking sites are interactive and participatory in nature. A good number of Nigerian youths use one or more social media channels for the purposes of exchanging personal or group information, messages, pictures, movies, and sharing of life experiences among others.

In the work conducted in (2009), which was entitled 'the impact of the internet on users,' Bakker and Sádaba succinctly explain that:

The fact that technologies are used in a social context and have to fulfil existing needs cannot be emphasised enough (Castells, 2001). The use of a technology is better explained by looking at the user than at the possibilities and potentials of the technology. Choosing a 'Uses and Gratifications' approach (Katz, Blumler & Gurevitz, 1974; McQuail, 2005) instead of a technological-deterministic perspective, however, does not mean that technologies have no impact on users. It would be very hard to argue that the Internet has not affected the way in which people work, study and look for information or communicate with others (Bakker and Sadaba, 2009, p. 86).

It goes to mean that the new media (social networking sites) exercise some powers on their users' patterns of exchanging information, opinions and messages. Due to the interactive feature of the media, they offer their users distinct flavour of communication unlike what is obtainable from other media genre. Bakker and Sadaba found out in their work that the internet has some effects on their users' usage of other mass media. Also, the researchers report that, "the most visible effect of Internet use on other media is the use of traditional media by the so-called Net-generation. In general, the younger generation's use of

traditional media, particularly of newspapers, but also of radio, television and recorded music has dropped,” (Bakker & Sadaba, 2009, p. 86).

We essentially examined in this work, the uses of social media by Nigerian youth and how they influence the young people’s usage of traditional mass media for communication. As media forms, the social media unlike other communication channels enable their users to be participants in generating the media contents. So, social media democratize information gathering and dissemination processes for the people. It implies that, “the needs, interests and aspirations of the receiver ...,” (Folarin, 2002, p. 34), is guaranteed by the use of the new media technologies.

In a study entitled ‘the impact of television and the internet: are we constructed by socially instituted technologies or is technological determinism itself a construction?’ Featherstone and Burrows (1995) cited by Laskewicz (2008, paragraph 6), having observed the series of effects of the new communication technologies in all walks of life note that:

Technology is beginning to mediate our social relationships, or self-identities and our wider sense of social life to an extent we are only just beginning to grasp. The portable telephone, the portable fax, the notepad computer and various other forms of electronic/human augmentation have become ‘essential’ for social life in the ‘densely networked centres of the global cities’ and, increasingly, beyond.

In the same view, Capra (1990) cited in same work by Laskewicz (2008, paragraph 7) stated the obvious realities which the new communication devices have brought into human habitat as he asserts that, “technological growth is ...seen as determining our life styles, our social organizations, and our value systems... This has led people to believe that technology determines the nature of ...our social relations.” With the modern technologies for interactions, one who has a phone that can connect to the internet and knows how to use it is qualified to be a producer of social media and or conventional media contents. The new media technologies’ influences on the audience with regard to information gathering and dissemination presently was the reason Eide (2007, p. 27) argues that “it is possible for an individual to be his or her own journalist, his or her own editor.”

The reality stands that as a novel communication genre the social networking sites could have an influence on the youths’ use of the mass media. New communication technologies command certain inclination leading to their preference by the audience. This is because as social animals human beings always crave for innovations that impact on their means of interaction. McQuail (2010, p. 102) argues that there is a tendency to concentrate on social change of a particular new “communication technology and to subordinate other variables.”

Research Methodology

Survey research method was adopted for this study; the reason for the choice of the method was because people’s views and opinions on the subject matter constitute the source of the primary data used for the paper.

The population of this study constitutes all postgraduate students of the University of Nigeria, residing in the institution’s postgraduate hostel (UNN-Odili PG Hostel) located in Nsukka Campus. The hostel has an estimated number of 177 rooms with each being occupied by three students as roommates. That is to say 177 x 3, this gives a total number of 531 students living in the basement, first floor to the fourth floor making up the hostel. Also, another estimated 70 students reside in the extra-large rooms called extensions in the hostel. Thus there is an estimated sum of 601 students in the whole hostel comprising extension rooms, basement rooms, rooms in the ground floor, second floor, third and fourth floor.

The choice of these students was because given their level of educational attainment most of them are users of the social media and there is often an internet service within the hostel that enables students use the new media more; both on their personal computers as well as on their cellular phones.

The sample size of the study is 500 chosen in accordance with the rule given by media researchers, Wimmer and Dominick (2011, p.103) who directs that one guideline recommended for a multivariate studies like this “is as follows: 50=very poor; 100=poor; 200=fair; 300=good; 500=very good; 1,000=excellent” (Comprey & Lee, 1992).

The sample technique involves a multi-stage sampling technique which was chosen as both the probability and the non-probability sampling techniques were applied in the selection of the sample elements.

By the application of simple random sampling (pick without replacement), students occupying the second floor and the fourth floor were selected. With the use of simple random sampling (pick without replacement) again, ground floor and third floor were selected too. So, the basement and the extension rooms were systematically not selected.

Through the use of quota sampling technique, we chose to study equal number of the male and the female students within the chosen floors. Based on that, students on the four floors (ground floor and fourth floor for male; second and third floors for female) initially selected using simple random sampling were subsequently chosen. Each of the floors has one hundred and twenty legal occupants, thus the four floors have four hundred and eighty students.

Also, we used quota sampling to randomly select ten students from the basement and another ten students from the rooms in the extension; this brings the total number of the sample to 500 students from the hostel.

The instrument of data collection for the paper was the questionnaire. Part of the contents of the instrument was structured using the Modified Likert-type Scale (proposal 2) as recommended by Nworgu (1986) cited by Nworgu (2006, p. 146)

because we (the researchers) deemed it most suitable for meeting the objectives of this work. With this modified scale the responses were assigned values as follows: Strongly agree=4, Agree=3, Disagree=2, Strongly Disagree=1 and Undecided=0. Moreover, other contents of the instrument were structured using close-ended questions.

For test of validity, a draft of the measuring instrument was submitted to a senior lecturer in mass communication that went through it and pointed out certain facts to be added as well as others to be removed. After that, by face validation, he confirmed that it has comprehensible statements that could elicit appropriate answers to the research questions of the study.

Reliability of the measuring instrument was ascertained by administering a pre-test questionnaire randomly to selected respondents within some of the rooms in the hostels. The result of the pilot test was not presented in the analyses in this paper, as it was used for confirming the reliability of the measuring instrument.

We distributed five hundred copies of questionnaire and four hundred and ninety were intelligibly filled, returned and were used for the analysis. For data presentation and analysis, a pie chart with simple percentages was used for analyzing the age, other demographic data such as religious background and marital status of the respondents were analyzed using a table and simple percentage; while tables with mean and standard deviations were used in the analyses of responses of the respondents on their views about items presented on the corpus of the questionnaire.

We made use of two trained research assistants who helped in the administration of the instrument equitably among the students who reside in the hostel. The research assistants administered the instruments at the respondents' rooms.

Instrument of data collection was the questionnaire. With the exception of items for demographic data of the respondents and items on tables one and three, the other items on the questionnaire were framed using the Likert scales pattern. The format (scale) is very useful for easy ascertaining of the level of the respondents' responses vividly. Nworgu (2006, p. 140) clearly states that in using the Likert scales "an individual is expected to indicate his degree of agreement or disagreement with the statements." The nature of the topic under study makes it imperative that the Likert scale was the best measuring scale adopted.

Data presentation and analyses

The data obtained were presented in charts and tables. Quantitative analyses were done using mean and standard deviations with 2 and 2.5 as their cut-off points respectively. It is important to note the following which were used in the data analysis of this work. Qualitative analysis was done using full lexis description. The following are important to be noted as used in the paper.

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, U= Undecided, M = Mean, St.De.= Standard Deviation, Decision= Yes or No. To get the Mean cut off point = $(SA+A+ SD+D+U) \div 5$, i.e. $(4+3+2+1+0) \div 5$; therefore, the mean cut-off point = $(10) \div 5 = 2$.

To get the standard deviation cut-off point = $\sqrt{\frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2}{n-1}}$

$$\frac{(4-2)^2 + (3-2)^2 + (2-2)^2 + (1-2)^2 + (0-2)^2}{5-1}$$

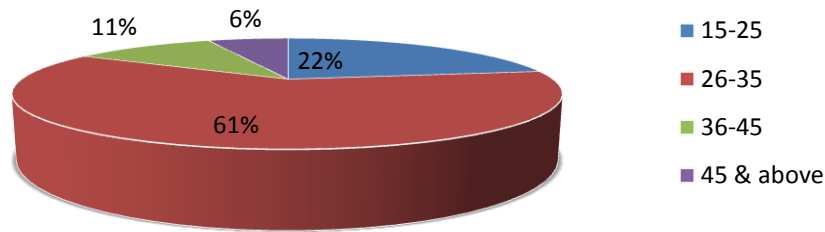
$$\frac{2^2 + 1^2 + 0^2 + 1^2 + 2^2}{4} = \frac{4+1+1+4}{4}$$

Therefore the standard deviation cut-off point is $10 \div 4 = \sqrt{2.5}$

Data interpretation

The relevant demographic data of the respondents were presented below:

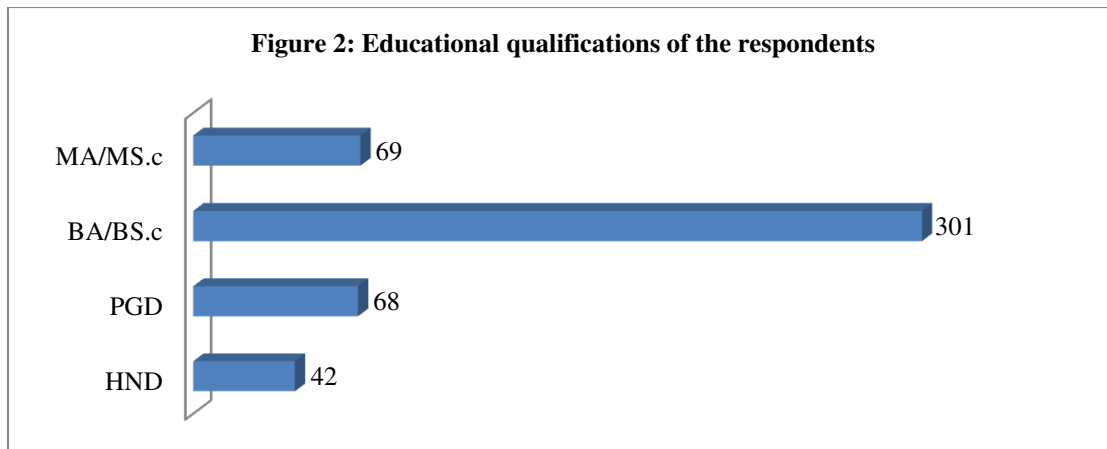
Figure 1: Age distribution of respondents



The researchers' field work, 2014

From the data in figure one above there is a preponderant of respondents in age brackets of 26-35, which represent 61% of the sample; that was followed by those in ages 15-25 representing (22%); followed by respondents in the ages 36-45 (11%) and the last were those in the ages of 45 years and above which represent (6%) of the sample.

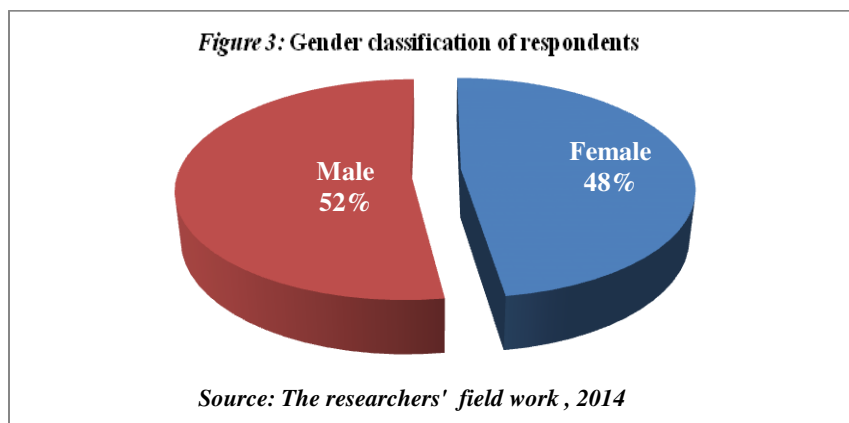
Figure 2: Educational qualifications of the respondents



Source: The researcher's field work, 2014

From the data presented on the chart above, respondents holding BA/BSc (Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science) numbering 301 dominated the sample, they were followed by holders of MA/MSc (Master of Arts and Master of Science) who are 69 in number; that was followed by respondents who hold PGD (Postgraduate Diplomas) and the last which has the least number of respondents is the holders of HND (Higher National Diploma).

Figure 3: Gender classification of respondents



Source: The researchers' field work, 2014

The data on figure three above show that 251 respondents representing 52% accepted that they were males, while another 229 representing 48% were female. This means that greater part of the respondents were males. Perhaps, more copies of the questionnaire that were not completed properly were from the female respondents, because equal pieces of the instruments were administered among the female and male respondents.

Table 1: Accessibility to social media and traditional mass media: Indicate the media you have access to below: Ascertaining whether the respondents have access to both the traditional media and social media

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Media</i>	<i>Responses</i>
1.	Social media like: <i>Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube</i>	480
2.	Traditional mass media like: Radio, Television, magazine, Newspaper	471
3.	None of the above	-

Source: The researchers' field work, 2014

From the table one above, 480 respondents accepted that they have access to the listed social media including: *Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube*; while 471 respondents agreed that that they had access to traditional mass media like: Radio, Television, magazine, Newspaper. More respondents' acceptance of having access to the social media channels than the traditional mass media as indicated on table 1, shows the greater popularity of the former over the latter among the youths. Then rejection of 'None of the above' option demonstrates that the respondents make use of the media for the various roles which they (the media) play for their audiences.

Research question 1: What is the influence of social media on youths' usage of traditional mass media in Nigeria?

Table 2: Items on this table were used to proffer answer to research question one of this paper

<i>ITEMS</i>	<i>STATEMENTS</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>U</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>St. D</i>
1.	With social media Nigerian youths read magazines more online than the print editions now.	163	287	9	7	14	4.2042	.79926
2.	With social media, the youths read newspapers online more than the print versions now.	311	141	6	9	13	4.5167	.84481
3.	With social media, the youths listen to radio stations online more than terrestrial stations.	37	41	192	199	11	2.7813	.92069
4.	With social media, the youths watch televisions online more than terrestrial stations presently.	33	39	197	202	9	2.7563	.89359

Source: The researchers' field work, 2014

The data for item one on table two above show a mean score of 4.2042 and standard deviation rate of .79926. The high mean rate recorded was because in their responses to the statement, 'with social media Nigerian youths read magazines more online than the print editions now,' greater respondents (163 and 287) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The low standard deviation score was recorded due to that fewer respondents (9, 7 and 14) chose the options (D, SD and U) which have the lowest point on the scale used for the study. The result indicates that the respondents accepted the statement on item one of the table above.

The data for item number two on table two above show a mean score of 4.5167 and standard deviation of .84481. The high mean score recorded was because in their responses to the statement 'with social media Nigerian youths read newspapers more online than the print editions now,' greater respondents (311 and 141) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The low standard deviation score was recorded because fewer respondents (6, 9 and 13) chose the options (D, SD and U) which have the lowest point on the scale used for the study. The result indicates that the respondents accepted the statement on item two of table two above.

The data presented on item number three of table two above has a mean score of 2.7813 and standard deviation of .92069. The mean rate recorded on the item was not high enough like the one on item two because in their responses to the statement, 'with social media, the youths listen to radio stations online more than terrestrial stations.,' greater respondents (197, 202 and 9) chose the options (strongly disagree, disagree and undecided) which have the lowest weight (2, 1 and 0) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The standard deviation score gotten was a bit high because fewer respondents (37 and 41) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) on the scale used for the study. The result indicates that the respondents rejected the statement on item three of table two above.

The data on item number four of the table two above has a mean score of 2.7563 and standard deviation of .89359. The mean rate obtained on the item was not high enough compared to the one on item one or two above because in their responses to the

statement, ‘with social media, the youths watch televisions online more than on terrestrial stations,’ greater respondents (192, 199 and 11) chose the options (strongly disagree, disagree and undecided) which have the lowest weight (2, 1 and 0) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The standard deviation score recorded was a bit high because respondents up to (33 and 39) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) on the scale used for the study. The result shows that the respondents declined to the statement on item four of table two above.

Table 3: Research question two- Does social media usage enhances the youths’ interaction with Nigerian leaders? **Research question three-** What other purposes do social media engender Nigerian youth to engage in?

Table three below contains the items used to answer research questions two and three of this paper.

ITEMS	STATEMENTS	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean	St.D
1.	The youth use social media to interact with Nigerian leaders on national affairs.	33	39	177	222	9	2.7438	.93804
2.	The youth use social media to discuss national issues like politics, economy and religious matters.	201	199	36	38	6	4.1479	.95022
3.	Nigerian youth use social media to date	172	293	5	7	3	4.3000	.62782
4.	The youth use social media to indulge in cybercrimes.	301	141	16	9	13	4.4750	.86897

Source: The researchers’ fields work, 2014

The data on item one of table three above have a mean score of 2.7438 and standard deviation of .93804. The mean rate recorded for the item was not high enough like the one on the immediate preceding item because in their responses to the statement, ‘the youths use social media to communicate to their leaders on national affairs,’ greater respondents (177, 222 and 9) chose the options (strongly disagree, disagree and undecided) which have the lowest weight (2, 1 and 0) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The standard deviation recorded was a little high as respondents numbering (33 and 39) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) on the scale used for the study. The result shows the respondents’ rejection of the statement on item one of table three above.

The data for item two of table three above have a mean rate of 4.1479 and standard deviation of .95022. The high mean score recorded for the item was because in their responses to the statement, ‘the youths use social media to discuss national issues like politics, economy and religious matters,’ greater respondents (201 and 199) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The low standard deviation score was recorded due to the fact that fewer respondents (36, 38 and 6) chose the options (D, SD and U) which have the lowest weight on the scale used for the study. This result means that the respondents accepted the statement on item two of table three above.

The data displayed on item three of table three above show a mean rate of 4.3000 and standard deviation score of .62782. The high mean rate for the item was recorded because in their response to the statement, ‘Nigerian youths use social media to date,’ greater respondents (172 and 293) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The low standard deviation score obtained was due to that fewer respondents (5, 7 and 3) chose the options (D, SD and U) which have the lowest point on the scale used for the study. The result indicates that the respondents accepted the statement on item three of table three above.

The data presented on item four of the table three above have the mean score of 4.4750 and standard deviation of .62782. The high mean score for the item four was recorded because in their response to the statement, ‘the youths use social media to indulge in cybercrimes,’ greater respondents (301 and 141) chose the options (strongly agree and agree) which have the heaviest weight (4 and 3) respectively on the scale used for this paper. The low standard deviation score was recorded due to the fact that fewer respondents (5, 7 and 3) chose the options (D, SD and U) which have the lowest point on the scale used for the study. This result is an indication that the respondents accepted the statement on item four of table three above.

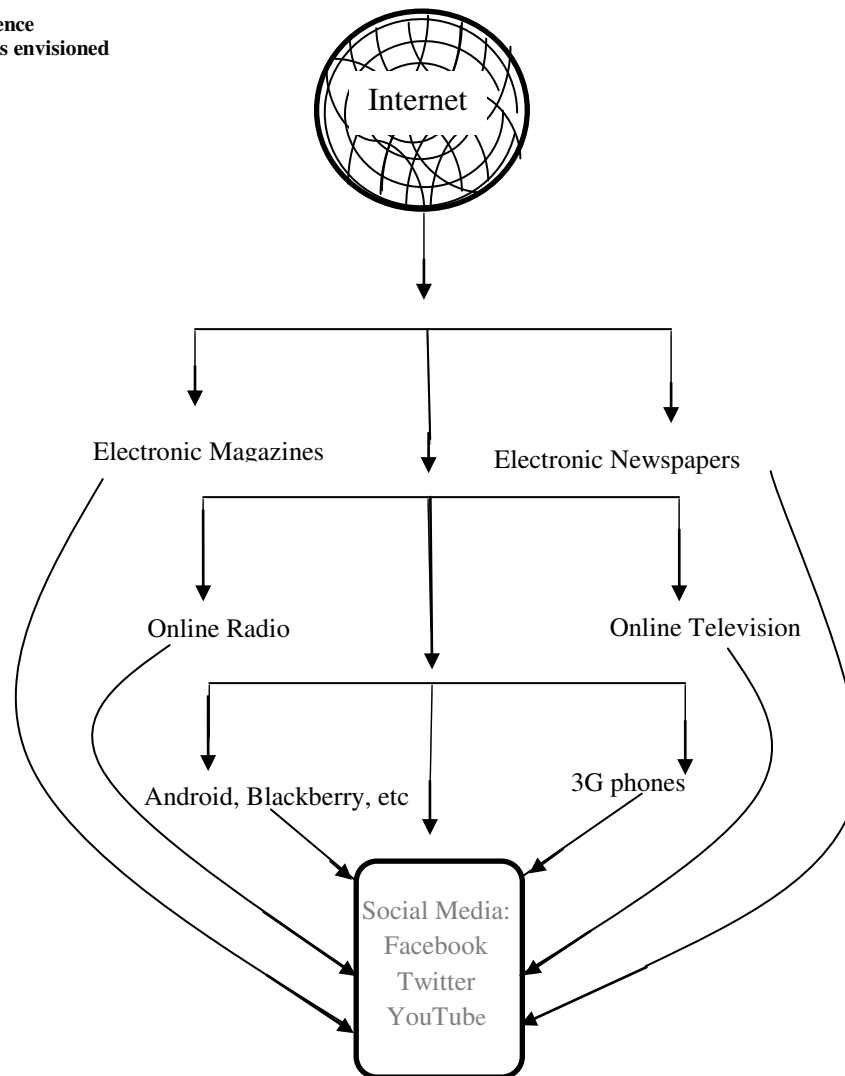
Discussion of findings

This paper has empirically found out certain facts about the subject matter of the study. The work was set to find out basically the influence of youths’ usage of social media on their use of traditional mass media- magazines, newspapers, radio and the television. From the data obtained in the study, the influence of the youths’ use of the social media on their use of each of the conventional mass media in Nigeria has been factually established.

This study found out that with the use of social media, Nigerian youths access traditional mass media online. This was ascertained as greater percentage of the respondents accepted that, Nigerian youths access traditional mass media through the social media. This finding is in line with the submission of Edogor (2012, p. 23) that “to better reach their target audiences effectively, most mass media organizations (both the broadcast and the print) in the world presently are connected to the social media in much similar manner like the individual members of the society.” So, the use of the social media, offers Nigerian youths easy access to the traditional mass media, which have connections with the former and solicit their audiences to follow them on the links. This

link of the traditional media with the social media is what Edogor (2012, p.73) found out and notes that now, “...there is a convergence of the social media with other media genre, as illustrated in the diagram below”

Figure 4: Social media convergence with other conventional media as envisioned by Edogor (2012, p. 73)



Also, the paper has found out that with their use of social media, Nigerian youths presently read magazines more online than they read the print versions. This implies that there shall be a reduction on the sales of printed magazines. One of the most likely adverse effects of this finding is that with the prevalence of the social networking sites available to the youths, there may be a reduction in copies of magazines circulated in Nigeria. This could lead to loss of funds that would have been generated by the magazine publishers from sales of the hard copies of their publications. Also, it could induce higher cost of production, in the sense that printing business deals with the logic of the more number of copies produced, the less the cost per copy rate.

Similarly, another finding revealed that like the case of magazines, the youths' use of social media make them read online versions of newspapers more than the hard copies. This scenario is quite incredible because with the array of contents of printed newspapers, it is ordinarily envisaged that the youth could read more of them than the online. It is in common knowledge that most printed newspapers have plethora of advertisements and other contents that may not be in the online versions. But that reality notwithstanding, this paper's finding proved that the youths read newspapers more online.

The next finding disclosed that the youths' use of the social media to access radio online do not significantly affect their listening to terrestrial radio stations. With the finding, it is instructive to state that terrestrial radio stations still reasonably hold their listenership among the youth population in Nigeria. It means that young people's use of social media to access online radio do not affect to a large extent their tuning to terrestrial radio stations. One of the implications is that open-to-air radio stations still commands the popularity they used to have among the audience. The point supports the view that, “in Nigeria, research evidence shows that the use of radio as a medium of information is truly widespread...” (Okunna, 1992; Okigbo, 1990; Sobowale and Sogbanmu, 1984), cited by Okunna (1999, p.69-70).

In another finding, the paper made a revelation akin to that of the preceding paragraph. The youths' use of social media to access televisions online has been ascertained as not having significant bearing on their watching of terrestrial televisions. From these findings, a salient fact is that the youths' use of social media gives them a gateway to access the conventional media online.

The findings above used to answer research question one of this paper have shown that the influence of the youths' use of the social media on traditional media is squarely linking them together as illustrated in the diagram on figure 4 above. The import is that with social media, there is a form of media convergence between them (social media) and traditional mass media, as the latter creates links on the former and direct their audiences to access them on the link. For instance, many media organizations in Nigeria currently have *Facebook and Twitter accounts* like the individual persons used to. They notify their audiences to follow them up on those links they have on social media, apparently because, the traditional mass media have seen the high rate of the youths' use of the new media.

However, in accessing the traditional media through the online links in social media, most of the youths do not often access radio and television stations as they do on magazines and newspapers. So, definitely terrestrial radio and television stations in Nigeria still have their grips on their youth-audiences in spite of their (the youths') heavy presence on the social media. This is unlike magazines and newspapers which the greater number of the youths accepted that through the social media, they could access them more online. The consequence of this would be that after reading the online versions via the social media, the youth-audiences might not bother to buy the papers.

Furthermore, this study found out other communication purposes which the social media serve the Nigerian youth for. In that regard, it has been established that the youths use the social media to date. This finding is an eye-opener which proves that the youths use the social media to initiate and nurture opposite-sex relations in the cyberspace. With a finding of this nature, it becomes imperative that the age through which young people are permitted to use any of the social media platforms be scrutinized in a developing country like Nigeria. This very finding is akin to part of the results of Haridakis and Hanson (2009, p. 329-330), who submitted after their study entitled 'social interaction and co-viewing with *YouTube*: blending mass communication reception and social connection,' that the group they studied, "viewed *YouTube* for purposes of leisurely entertainment."

The finding in the immediate preceding paragraph is also similar to that of Ahmad (2011) who noted that viewers visiting some *YouTube* sites expose themselves to pornography and such a site could jeopardize ...morality; however, he pointed out that, "it is not possible for the user to fall into the *YouTube* porn site without being notified." The findings obtained here show that the youths use the social media partly because of the pleasure and fun they get from dating on some of the sites. With this finding it could be extrapolated that the youths' over-exposure of themselves to virtual environment would influence their physical relationship with the opposite sex. This essentially justifies one of the reasons for application of technological determinism theory on this study.

Also, one striking revelation made from this study is that greater respondents accepted that they indulge in cybercrimes through their usage of the social media. This result quickly brings to mind the bizarre story of a Nigerian lady, Cynthia Osokogu, who was allegedly killed by her friends on one of the social media sites (*Facebook*), who promised to sell some goods at cheaper rates to her, Kaydee (2012). This kind of revelation justifies the submission of Baran (2010, p. 272) who succinctly observed that, "technology can be used in ways beneficial and otherwise...technology is a double-edged sword. Its power - for good and for bad - resides in us, (the users)," bracketed emphasis ours. The social media as technological inventions were primarily discovered to ease human means of interactions, but unscrupulous individuals could apply the new means of communication towards realizing their personal immoral objectives.

Additionally, the findings of this paper reveal that most of the respondents accepted that the youths use the social media to discuss national issues. This finding is an encouraging fact in Nigerian youths' use of the new media. This means that they use to have brainstorming on certain issues about national matters through their use of the social media. This would be essential for them to garner useful ideas that could be implemented for the betterment of the nation. Therefore, social media provide a forum for the youths to discuss relevant national matters, as McQuail (2010, p. 149) noted that the mass media as a whole do when he remarks that, "mass media often provide topics of conversation for discussion and thus help to lubricate social life in families, workplaces..."

This paper's revelation that Nigerian youths use the social media to discuss some national issues among themselves is cheering, be that as it may, they (the youths) do not use the media to communicate with the country's leaders on affairs of the nation. It is interesting to learn here that most Nigerian youths do not use the new media to communicate to their national leaders. This should be worrisome because with the interactive nature of the social media; it is logical to expect that the youths would be applying them as instruments of reaching their national leaders, in this modern era, that can be described as digitized democracy.

It is pertinent to note that this last finding provides another window for further scientific enquiry to unearth why the youths do not use the social media to interact with their leaders on the essential affairs of the nation.

Theoretical contributions

Some findings of this research have shown how the social media hold sway on the social interactions of Nigerian youths in various dimensions. This was bared where the paper revealed how the youth apply the new means of public communication for: Accessing conventional media online, indulging in cybercrimes, exchange opinions on some affairs of the nation as well as use the social media for creating relations with opposite sex. These possibilities created by the social media for their youth users attest to the fact that new media technologies produce some efficacious changes on human lives and communication presently. Thus, the findings of the study add more value and vigour to the technological determinism theory which this paper was anchored upon. This was evident as it lucidly paints a picture of the correlation between the subject matter and the theory. With the findings of the paper, the relevance of the theory readily comes to mind, so they (the findings) firmly espoused the validity of technological determinism theory.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is germane that we recommend to newspaper and magazine publishers in Nigeria that:

1. They devise strategies in their social media links that would redirect the attention of their youth audience to seek hard copies of the magazines or the newspapers after reading the online version. This would enable them make more money from sales.
2. They should use more of their online versions as channel for advertisements targeted to the youths.

To the Nigerian Government, we recommend that:

- a. They regulate the age at which certain young people are allowed to use the social media. This suggestion stems from the point that the youths admitted that they use the social media platforms to date. Sequel to this, government has to liaise with social media network providers to create an age barrier restricting Nigerian minors from using the social media until they attain a ripe age of reasoning as provided by the constitution of the country and her other relevant laws. This shall be instrumental toward forestalling pregnancy out of wedlock which is capable of truncating many a youth's education and future in a country like Nigeria.
- b. They ascertain why the youths do not interact with the country's leaders through the social media that provide wide rooms for people to be reached especially the young people who use them (social media) more often for interactions.

To the academic community, we recommend that:

1. They embark on more social scientific inquiries to unravel the specific cybercrimes the youths commit using the social media platforms.
2. Through other researches, they ascertain the contents of national matters the youths discuss on the social media and know whether such matters are relevant for the country's general positive development interests or they are geared towards negative issues. If the latter is the case, then a campaign has to be embarked upon to nip the trend in the bud now before it becomes too late.
3. They have to find out why the youths do not use the social media to reach their leaders and make appropriate recommendations as corrective measures to remedy that attitude that is inimical to the youths' political participation in the democratic governance in the country now.

Conclusion

From the findings of this paper, it has been revealed that youths' use of the social media is not a threat to their use of the traditional mass media generally, because the former create links where the users could access the latter. However, it was found out that the youths use less of the social media links to access radio and television stations than they use newspapers and magazines. The result of this study has also shown that Nigerian youths apply the social media to discuss national issues and use the new media to indulge in cybercrimes; however, they do not use the new media to communicate to their leaders. From the findings of the study, useful recommendations were made to the media industries, the government and the academia.

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