

**USE AND GRATIFICATION OF NEWS CONSUMPTION ON
SOCIAL MEDIA AMONG THOMAS ADEWUMI UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS**

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the research project titled **“Use And Gratification Of News Consumption On Social Media Among Thomas Adewumi University Students ”** was carried out by **Olasehinde Bolade Daniel**. The project has been read, and approved as meeting the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science degree (B.Sc.) in Mass Communication in the Department of Mass Communication, Thomas Adewumi University, Oko, Kwara State.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the almighty GOD who is on the throne, the owner and sustainer of my Life. Also to my Beloved mother, Late Professor Grace Iyabo Olasehinde for teaching me on how not just to catch a fish, but to own a sea with the fishes inside rather than giving me a fish. You were my everything, I LOVE you so much, even in death you still remain my Hero and role model and I miss you dearly.

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Abstract

This research provides a comprehensive analysis of the news consumption patterns among students at Thomas Adewumi University, emphasizing the role of social media as a primary news source. The study is anchored in the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which explores the motivations behind students' preferences for digital platforms over traditional media outlets. Through a mixed-method approach involving surveys and focus group discussions, the study identifies several key factors influencing this shift. Speed and immediacy of news updates, the interactivity of platforms, and the personalized nature of social media contents are identified as the main drivers of this trend. Additionally, the research explores the potential drawbacks of relying on social media for news, including the widespread concerns about misinformation, echo chambers, and the declining trust in traditional media sources. The findings reveal a significant shift in news consumption habits, with a large proportion of students expressing scepticism towards the objectivity of traditional news outlets, and a growing preference for the more participatory and customizable nature of social media news feeds. The study concludes by recommending the implementation of enhanced media literacy programs within the university curriculum to equip students with the critical skills necessary to navigate the complex digital news landscape. These findings contribute to the broader understanding of media consumption in the digital age and provide valuable insights for media practitioners and educators in adapting to the changing dynamics of news dissemination and consumption.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the background of the study, statement of problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and scope of study, the significance of the study and definition of terms.

1.1 Background of the study.

Uses and gratification theory in media studies research on news consumption habits among university students review of relevant studies on social media use for news consumption.

In recent years, the landscape of news consumption has undergone a significant transformation, largely due to the proliferation of social media platforms. Among university students, particularly those at Thomas Adewumi University, this shift is particularly pronounced. As digital natives, students are highly immersed in social media environments, utilizing platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat not only for socializing but also for accessing news content. Understanding the motives behind their use of social media for news consumption is essential for several reasons.

Firstly, investigating the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among Thomas Adewumi University students provides insights into the evolving patterns of media consumption among the younger demographic. This understanding is crucial for media organizations and policymakers in tailoring content and dissemination strategies to effectively reach and engage with this audience.

Exploring the motivations driving news consumption on social media sheds light on the perceived benefits that students derive from these platforms in terms of information seeking, social interaction, entertainment, and personal identity construction. By uncovering these gratifications, educators and media professionals can develop more targeted approaches to promote critical thinking, media literacy, and responsible digital citizenship among students.

Investigating the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among university students contributes to the broader scholarly discourse on media effects and audience behavior. By examining how individuals actively select, interpret, and respond to news content on social media, researchers can advance theoretical frameworks such as the Uses and Gratifications Theory, which emphasizes the active role of media consumers in seeking out media content to satisfy specific needs and desires.

Globally, it is reported that the youth form the bulk of the users of the social media. Perrin (2015) asserts that 90% of young adults, within the age bracket 18-29, use social media fully in the United States. These demographics, who find it difficult to think of a life without the internet, have a penchant for limitless connections that defy geographical boundary as they seek for “ways to connect virtually to everyone in the world” (NIRA, 2016). The social media has opened a gateway of opportunities for the youth for social interaction, information creation and exchange, connection and self-expression beyond geographical definition (Ogunkola, 2018). This probably explains why a global scholarly searchlight has been beamed on social media usage among youths especially of college age for an in-depth examination of what motivates and or sustains their continuous attachment to the social media. Many of the studies adopt the propositions of the Uses and Gratification Theory to question what motivates the youth to get attached to the social networking sites.

The attempts to make a sense of the bond that subsists between the young demographics and social media have been cross as well as cross countries . These studies seek to know the youthful needs that social media gratify and what motivates the continuous use of these internet enabled social networking sites. In Nigeria, just like the rest of the world, the trend of the social media adoption among youth, who form the core number of college students, is reportedly high. According to available statistics, the scope of Nigerian internet penetration cuts across 103.67 million (Premium Times, 2018) and 75% of the figure is on one social media platform or the other. This expansive coverage makes a case for establishing a trend of the needs of social media use and adoption among the young users. There are a number of studies on social media adoption and use among youths and especially university undergraduates in Nigeria, however, there seems not to be a coherent and deep attempt at examining the needs and gratifications that social media meet for the young population. This scholarly gap supports the imperative of using the U&G approach to probe the needs and motivations for the continuous use of social media by the Nigerian youths. This is the gap that this study seeks to fill by providing a basis for examining what motivates undergraduates of a privately funded university to adopt social media and the gratifications they derive from their use. Specifically, the researchers seek to investigate the kinds of social networking sites the college students of the selected university adopt and then ascertain the motivations that lead them to make use of these sites in order to determine the difference between the gratifications sought and gratifications obtained

1.2 Problem Statement.

In recent years, the proliferation of social media platforms has revolutionized the way individuals consume news content. This shift in news consumption behaviour raises significant questions about the motivations and gratifications driving individuals to engage with news on social media, particularly within the context of higher education institutions such as Thomas

Adewumi University (TAU). Understanding the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among the TAU community is essential for several reasons.

As social media platforms increasingly become primary sources of news for many individuals, it is crucial to comprehend the specific needs, motivations, and gratifications that drive students, faculty, and staff at TAU to consume news content through these channels. By identifying these factors, educational institutions like TAU can tailor their communication strategies to better meet the informational and social needs of their community members.

Exploring the use and gratification of news consumption on social media within the TAU context can shed light on the preferences and behaviours of individuals in a specific cultural and educational setting. Factors such as demographic characteristics, academic interests, and social connections may influence how TAU stakeholders engage with news content on social media platforms. understanding the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among the TAU community can inform the development of strategies to enhance media literacy and critical thinking skills. As social media platforms often present a mix of news, opinion, and misinformation, equipping TAU students, faculty, and staff with the tools to discern credible sources and evaluate information can foster a more informed and engaged campus community.

Investigating the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among TAU stakeholders can contribute to the broader scholarly discourse on media effects and audience behaviour. By examining how individuals at TAU select, interpret, and derive satisfaction from news content on social media, researchers can advance theoretical frameworks such as Uses and Gratifications Theory and contribute empirical evidence to the evolving field of media studies.

In conclusion, the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among the TAU community is a multifaceted phenomenon that warrants in-depth investigation. By exploring the motivations, preferences, and outcomes associated with news consumption on social media within the TAU context, this research aims to provide valuable insights for educational institutions, media practitioners, and scholars alike.

1.3 Research Objectives.

1. To explore the patterns of news consumption among Thomas Adewumi University students on social media
2. To identify the motivations and gratifications sought by students when consuming news on social media platforms.
3. To examine the implications of social media news consumption for traditional news outlets and journalism practices.

1.4 Research Questions.

1. What are the primary motivations driving Thomas Adewumi University students to engage with news content on social media?
2. How do Thomas Adewumi University students perceive the credibility and reliability of news sources on social media?
3. How do Thomas Adewumi University students balance their desire for entertainment and information when consuming news on social media platforms.

1.5 Scope of Study.

This study is based on uses and gratification of news consumption on social media among Thomas Adewumi University, Oke Students. Specifically, the study will focus on use of social media such as WhatsApp and Facebook for news consumption. The entire students of the Faculty of Management and Social Sciences of Thomas Adewumi University, Oke will be the population of this study.

1.6 Significance of Study.

1. Contribution to the existing literature on media studies, particularly in the context of social media and news consumption.
2. Insights for media organizations and content creators on effectively engaging university students through social media platforms.
3. Informing university administrators and educators about students' media habits for curriculum development and campus communication strategies.

1.7 Definition of Terms.

1. Use and Gratification :

Use and gratification theory is a mass communication theory that focuses on how individuals actively choose media content to fulfil their specific needs and desires.

Use and gratification theory emphasizes the active role of media consumers in selecting media content that satisfies their needs for information, entertainment, personal identity reinforcement, and social interaction.

2. Social media:

Social media refers to online platforms and tools that allow users to create, share, and exchange content, ideas, and information, as well as to engage in social networking.

Social media encompasses digital platforms and applications that enable users to generate and share content, interact with others, and participate in virtual communities, fostering communication and collaboration.

3. WhatsApp:

WhatsApp is a popular messaging application that allows users to send text messages, voice messages, images, and videos, as well as make voice and video calls over the internet.

WhatsApp is a cross-platform instant messaging service that enables users to communicate with individuals and groups, offering features such as multimedia messaging, voice calling, and end-to-end encryption for privacy.

4. Facebook:

Facebook is a widely-used social networking platform that allows users to create personal profiles, connect with friends and family, share updates, photos, and videos, and engage with content from other users and organizations.

Facebook is a leading social media platform that facilitates online social interaction, content sharing, and community building through features such as profiles, timelines, news feeds, and groups.

5. Twitter:

A social networking and microblogging online service that allows users to send and receive text-based messages or posts of up to 140 characters called “tweets.”

Twitter is a free social networking site where users broadcast short posts known as tweets. These tweets can contain text, videos, photos or links. To access Twitter, users need an internet connection or smart phone to use the app or website, Twitter.com.

6. Thomas Adewumi University:

Thomas Adewumi University is a private university located in Oko-Erin, Kwara State, Nigeria, established to provide quality education and promote academic excellence across various disciplines. Thomas Adewumi University, often abbreviated as TAU, is a Nigerian higher education institution committed to fostering intellectual growth, research, and community development through its academic programs and initiatives."

7. News Consumption:

News consumption refers to the process of accessing, processing, and engaging with news content from various sources, including newspapers, television, radio, websites, and social media platforms.

News consumption encompasses the activities individuals undertake to acquire information about current events, trends, and developments, typically through traditional and digital media channels.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction.

The chapter two of consist of Conceptual Review, Empirical review, Theoretical Review.

2.1 Conceptual Review

It is presumed that the radical changes brought in the aspect of communication through information and communication technology's revolution has affected immensely the dissemination of news in every nation around the globe. Both the ICT based and print media have brought information closer to their audience. The number of people consuming news via traditional sources (print, television, radio) has declined, while the audience for online news has increased (Caumont, 2013). This evolution in media practice is also unequivocally evident in the developing countries of Africa such as Nigeria. The migration of newspapers and television outfits to the web has been consequently accompanied with that of its readership and viewership respectively (Chukwu, 2014).

Studies have examined the perception and use of online news by college or university students and youths in general, the findings from these studies have also taken various forms. For example, a study by Kang (2009) examined the diffusion of online news use and credibility among undergraduates and graduate students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The study points out how the developments of communication technologies have made it possible for a great variety of individuals to have access to and use the internet. Findings from the study showed that the internet and online news are widely adopted and used by various users particularly those that are young and convenience was identified as the most important factor responsible for the use of online news. Another study carried out by Clark (2010) on the news

consumption habits of students at the University of Nebraska revealed that the rate of news consumption by students who participated in the survey for this research was generally low with about 69% of students that participated in the survey either not spending time reading news or spending less than 15 minutes in a day reading news. The internet was identified as the medium mostly used by students that consume news, students in higher level and students in the Journalism department of the school were also seen to consume news more.

Madniet al. (2013) investigated the perception of students of University of Sargodha about online newspapers. Based on a sample of 300 students from the university, findings showed that a large number of students read online newspapers to get information and most of them students prefer to read newspapers online. Many of the students pay less attention to news with crime content but much attention to political and sports news. The study of Akosile (2010) on online newspaper consumption among staff and students of University of Ibadan, Nigeria shows that active users of online newspaper are young (below 40 years), and the general perception of online newspaper among respondents is positive and not dependent on external factors. Akosile (2010) also identified irregular power supply and cost of access as the reasons for the irregular news consumption on the internet. These factors were also identified in a study carried out by Patrick (2010) on internet access and use among students of the University of Ilorin, Nigeria as the causes of irregular access to the internet by these students. In another study carried out by Attuquayefio and Addo (2014) on ICT adoption by students of Methodist University College Ghana, effort expectancy and facilitating conditions were seen to be significant predictors of the behavioural intention of students to use ICT while social influence and performance expectancy were insignificant.

The dependence on digital media sources along with the use of social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter for actively exchanging information including news is increasing (Bahket al., 2010; Bergstrom and Wadbring, 2012). For example, findings from the study of

Emil and Fredrik (2015) show that Smartphone is the most popular device used for news consumption by students in Technical University of Mombasa in Kenya. The number of students interested in consuming news was also found out to be more than those that are not interested; the proportion of students that consume news using the internet on their smart phone was higher than those that do not. The use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter was also found to be relatively high among the students. In another study carried out by Howe (2012) it was found out that individuals under the age of 35 years relied heavily on their social networks for tips and alerts on news stories around them; social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter have also helped to expose people to news stories that they would have missed or overlooked. The study found that 61% of the respondents that participated in the survey for the research clicked on at least one shared news article daily on their social media platforms. Of that percentage, 76% were between the ages of 18 – 34 years. According to Caumont (2013), younger Americans most especially those between the ages of 18 to 29 years cite the internet as their main source of news consumption. Findings from this study also showed that social media has grown as a source of news, smart phones and tablets were also found to be the major ICT tools used for news consumption on the internet while the young people were found to generally get less news than the adults.

2.2 Theoretical Framework.

Uses and Gratifications Theory

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is a Mass Communication theory that focuses on the needs, motives and gratifications of media users. The theory states that media consumers are NOT passive consumers of mass communications; rather, they play an active role in media consumption.

The theory is attributed to researchers Jay G. Blumler and Elihu Katz. In 1974, they published “The uses of mass communication: Current perspectives on gratifications research”, which painted a complete picture of the Uses and Gratifications Theory. The theory originated, however, with the research of Harold Laswell.

Uses and gratifications theory asserts that people use media to gratify specific wants and needs. Unlike many media theories that view media users as passive, uses and gratifications sees users as active agents who have control over their media consumption.

The Uses and Gratification theory discusses the effects of the media on people. It explains how people use the media for their own need and get satisfied when their needs are fulfilled. In other words, it can be said that the theory argues what people do with media rather than what media does to people. Also, this theory is in contradiction to the Magic Bullet theory, which states that the audience is passive. This theory has a user/audience-centred approach. Even for communication, say – interpersonal, people refer to the media for the topic to discuss among themselves. By referring the media, they gain more knowledge and exposure to the world beyond their limited eyesight.

Uses and gratifications was first introduced in the 1940s as scholars began to study why people choose to consume various forms of media. For the next few decades, uses and gratifications research mostly focused on the gratifications media users sought. Then, in the 1970s, researchers turned their attention to the outcomes of media use and the social and psychological needs that media gratified. Today, the theory is often credited to Jay Blumler and Elihu Katz’s work in 1974. As media technologies continue to proliferate, research on uses and gratifications theory is more important than ever for understanding people’s motivations for choosing media and the gratifications they get out of it.

Uses and gratifications theory relies on two principles about media users. First, it characterizes media users as active in their selection of the media they consume. From this perspective, people don't use media passively. They are engaged and motivated in their media selections. Second, people are aware of their reasons for selecting different media options. They rely on their knowledge of their motivations to make media choices that will help them meet their specific wants and needs.

2.2.1 TV Selection and Personality.

Uses and gratifications' emphasis on individual differences has led researchers to examine the way personality impacts people's motivations for using media. For example, a study by the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University looked at personality traits like neuroticism and extroversion to see if people with different traits would identify different motivations for watching television. The researcher found that the motivations of participants with neurotic personalities included passing the time, companionship, relaxation, and stimulation. This was the reverse for participants with extraverted personalities. Moreover, while the neurotic personality types favoured the companionship motive most, extraverted personality types strongly rejected this motive as a reason to watch TV. The researcher judged these results to be consistent with these two personality types. Those who are more socially isolated, emotional, or shy, demonstrated an especially strong affinity for television. Meanwhile, those that were more sociable and outgoing saw TV as a poor substitute for real-life social interactions.

2.3 Uses and Gratifications and New Media

Scholars have noted that new media includes several attributes that weren't part of older forms of media. Users have greater control over what they interact with, when they interact with it, and more content choices. This opens up the number of gratifications that new media

use could satisfy. An early study published in the journal *Cyber Psychology & Behaviour* on uses and gratifications of the internet found seven gratifications for its use: information seeking, aesthetic experience, monetary compensation, diversion, personal status, relationship maintenance, and virtual community. Virtual community could be considered a new gratification as it has no parallel in other forms of media. Another study, published in the journal *Decisions Sciences*, found three gratifications for internet usage. Two of these gratifications, content and process gratifications, had been found before in studies of the uses and gratifications of television. However, a new social gratification specific to internet use was also found. These two studies indicate that people look to the internet to fulfil social and communal needs.

Research has also been conducted to uncover the gratifications sought and obtained through social media use. For instance, another study published in *Cyber Psychology & Behaviour* uncovered four needs for Facebook group participation. Those needs included socializing by staying in touch and meeting people, entertainment through the use of Facebook for amusement or leisure, seeking self-status by maintaining one's image, and seeking information in order to learn about events and products. In similar study, researchers found that Twitter users gratified their need for connection through the social network. Increased usage, both in terms of the amount of time one had been active on Twitter and in terms of the number of hours per week one spends using Twitter, increased the gratification of this need.

There are several needs and gratification for people. They are categorized into five needs.

1. Cognitive needs
2. Affective needs
3. Personal Integrative needs
4. Social Integrative needs

5. Tension free needs

1. Cognitive needs:

People use media for acquiring knowledge, information, facts, etc. Among the audience, some have the thirst to acquire intellectual and academic knowledge. This is not a very common phenomenon. Different people have different needs. For example, quiz programs on television give on factual knowledge; to know about current affairs people need to watch the news regularly; search engines on the internet are also very popular since people can browse for any topic easily under the run with no time restriction.

2. Affective needs:

It includes all kinds of emotions, pleasure and moods of the people. People use media; say television, to satisfy their emotional needs.

The best example would be when people get emotional or sometimes even they cry for a sad scene while watching the movie/soap opera.

3. Personal Integrative needs:

This is the self-esteem need. People use media to reassure their status, gain credibility and stabilize. So people watch television and assure themselves that they have a respectable status in society. For example, people watch advertisements in the media like jewellery ads, furniture ads, apparel ads, etc. and buy these products so that they can change their lifestyle. Hence the media helps them to do so.

4. Social Integrative needs:

It encompasses the need to socialize with family, friends and relations in society. For social interaction nowadays, people do not seem to gather socially during weekends instead

they have turned to social networking sites on the internet such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr etc. to satisfy their needs.

Another example is people may start watching a particular programme, not because they have any self interest, but because their neighbour/friend watches it such that both the parties may have something in common to discuss.

5. Tension free needs:

People sometimes use the media as a means to escapism from the real world and to relieve from tension and stress.

For example, people tend to relax while watching television, listening to the radio, surfing the internet, etc. In fact, media has the power to grab audience mind since it makes them feel connected with the situation and characters emotionally.

Note: The needs are specific in nature to the individual and how the media satisfies the need is subjective. For example, some people may watch the news to relax while others may get tensed or agitated by the same. The media is the same, but people use it for different needs.

On television, most people watch reality shows nowadays not only its popular, but because of the following reasons:

1. It is more realistic.
2. It provides entertainment.
3. It is more interesting.
4. There are new concepts cropping up every now and then.
5. Viewers can participate as well in many ways while sitting at home.
6. Controversies are extensively covered.
7. Sensationalism brings in more viewers.

2.3.1 Application to News Consumption on Social Media:

When applied to news consumption on social media among TAU students, the use and gratification theory elucidates several motivations and gratifications:

1. Information Seeking:

TAU students leverage social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram to stay abreast of current events, both locally and globally. The convenience and accessibility offered by social networks enable them to access news updates seamlessly.

2. Entertainment:

Social media platforms seamlessly integrate news content with entertainment elements such as engaging visuals, memes, and short videos. TAU students are drawn to news consumption on social media not just for information but also for the entertainment value it offers, seeking out content that is engaging and shareable.

3. Social Interaction:

Social media platforms foster social interactions and discussions around news topics. TAU students utilize social media to share news articles, engage in conversations, and exchange viewpoints with their peers, thereby fulfilling their social needs while consuming news content.

4. Personal Identity:

Through sharing and engaging with news content on social media, TAU students express their personal values, beliefs, and identities. They may align themselves with specific news sources or narratives that resonate with their worldview, reinforcing their sense of identity in the process.

5. Surveillance:

Social media platforms enable TAU students to monitor news developments in real-time, keeping them updated on unfolding events. By following news accounts, hashtags, or trends, they maintain awareness of critical issues and trends.

2.3.2 Implications and Future Research Directions:

Understanding the motivations and gratifications underlying news consumption on social media among TAU students holds significant implications for media practitioners, educators, and policymakers. By discerning students' preferences and motivations, media organizations can tailor their content and delivery strategies to better cater to their audience. Moreover, integrating social media literacy and critical thinking skills into the curriculum can empower students to navigate the vast landscape of online news content effectively

Future research endeavours in this domain could explore the influence of demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, socioeconomic status) on students' news consumption habits on social media. Additionally, longitudinal studies could track the evolution of news consumption patterns over time and assess the impact of social media use on students' civic engagement and media literacy skills.

2.4 Critics of the Uses and Gratifications Theory?

The primary critiques of Uses and Gratifications theory have been:

1. James Lull (2002) - Criticized the main assumption that people seek out media to satisfy a personal need, especially to entertain themselves - as audiences don't accept always the content of media. Further, not all media are meant to provide gratification or to satisfy a need for entertainment, audiences don't always benefit from the use of media, and they don't take on in media consumption willingly and independently.

2. Ien Ang argues that the theory tends to focus on individual needs, disregarding the social context. Also the content of media is ignored and especially the quality of the message which is delivered, while there are no clues about how users perceive those message and what they get from them.
3. E. Katz (1987) noted that the theory relies exclusively on self-reports of media users, which may be distorted due to people's inaccuracy or external influences.
 - The uses and gratification theory does not bring into consideration the power of media.
 - It is more audience-oriented study.
 - Positive point of the uses and gratification theory is it focuses attention on individuals in the mass communication process.
 - It mainly focuses on people's selectivity on media content rather than its unintended effects in their minds.
 - Researches of this theory conclude the results are subjective rather than objective.

2.5 Empirical Framework

Shah et al., (2001) The free stream of information is essential to an active public sphere and, for most people, media first newspaper, then television, and now the internet is the major source of news information (Graber, 1984). This study explores news media consumption and needs gratification. Mainly this research focuses on the patterns of news media consumption and needs gratification of university students. Patterns of news media consumption are related to information from different media platforms e.g., television news radio news is related to social interaction, and patterns of consumption are related to amusement, distraction, and destructive impact on commitment.

According to killing, Henning's and Linger (2012) computerized open and millennial is the term that suggests that youngster's tendencies for utilization the new media are essentially more widespread than tendencies for old age people and different individuals utilize a different type of media for various purposes. Szekely and Nagy (2011) stated that concerning both data and diversion content, the internet considers a medium for the youngster.

People of different age groups consume different news media for social relationships, amusement, identification, and observation (Blumler & Katz, 1974; Hamid and Ali, 2021). Currently developing new technology and increasing the use of the internet, they used different offline and online platforms for News (Ullah & Haq, 2017). Shareef Mukerji, Dwivedi, Rana, and Islam (2019) further added that the new generation used news media for getting updates regarding education, Jobs, entertainment, sports and want to find out the solution to the problem they face in daily life.

Elareshi & Gunter (2012) Traditional media refers to medium of news and information that was used before the advent of the internet. Print media, television, and radio are all examples of traditional media. The conventional methods of journalism can be regarded as deceased, but not the media itself. All it requires is a breath of new life, to gain back its notoriety and viewership (Shehrayar, 2021). The new breath refers to the need for traditional media to communicate through current platforms such as social media networks, blogs, and YouTube channels.

Tabassum and Amin (2021) at present majority of traditional news media organizations adapting new approaches to meet their viewer's demands and nearly all traditional media organizations have an online web for social media consumers in this way they grab the attention of viewers in a new manner. The main reason for reading newspapers was to get current information on issues of interest however the interesting part of the study was that

the respondent reported that they face some challenges in the process of trying to access information through online platforms. These challenges include poor electricity supply to poor devices, lack of constant online access, among others. The research also recommended some measures that will make access to information through online platforms easier. Among the recommended solution included imprudent power supply and upgrading the internet infrastructure in the country.

Ullah, Baber, & Rehman (2020a) Radio is a general medium of news, education, and information in developing countries (like Asia, Africa, and Latin American states). It is so attractive because they broadcast different designed programs like, (talk shows, music, local information, news) in the local language.

Baber & Ullah (2020) Radio is still considered is the main medium for communication in Pakistan, especially in rural areas, because of excessive load shedding and lack of Television signals in rural areas. It is especially common in metropolitan areas because it broadcasts the most recent songs and music (Ullah, 2018). Many foreign radio stations like Voice of America, Mashall Radio, and BBC are also active in the KPTD region and they are broadcasting many programs on national, local, and international issues.

According to Tandoc and Johnson's (2016) study that during the different conflict and violent events, students and youth get breaking news first from social media special from Twitter. Twitter use has become commonplace in journalistic practice for both news organizations and journalists to share the news and engaging audiences.

Adebiyi and Olayiwola. Even though the Uses and Gratifications Theory was primarily meant to investigate the needs and gratifications for which audience consume certain media platforms, there have been extensive works on the Uses and Gratifications for social media. Whiting and Williams (2013) probed why people use social media

examining the motivations, needs and gratifications that make people adopt social media platforms. Drawing from the review of literature on the uses and gratifications of the internet, the researchers identify ten themes of uses and gratifications to which people put the social media. These included.

1) **Social interaction:** a need that is met when people use social media to interact and connect with others.

2) **Information seeking:** when people are enabled to seek information on social media.

3) **Pass time:** a need that is gratified when people use social media at their leisure time to while away time.

4) **Entertainment:** when people meet their entertainment needs through social media.

5) **Relaxation:** this describes the need met when surfing the social media makes people feel relaxed and take away their minds off worry.

6) **Expression of opinions:** this points at using social media to express opinions and thoughts.

7) **Communicatory utility:** refers to a need satisfied when social media give people things to talk about with others.

8) **Convenience utility:** this is a need that is gratified because of the availability and accessibility of social media.

9) **Information sharing :** it is a need gratified when a social media user is given the chance to share information about themselves to others.

10) **Surveillance/knowledge about others:** when social media enable people to watch what other users are doing.

The uses and gratifications typified by Whiting and Williams (2013) appear more general to social media even though many of the illustrations are drawn from Facebook. Specifically, Mantymäki and Islam (2016) studied Facebook and described the needs fulfilled by users. The researchers listed the four gratifications to include social enhancement, exhibitionism, voyeurism and interpersonal connectivity.

The four categories could be equated to some of the types of needs listed by Whiting and Williams (2013). Social enhancement and interpersonal connectivity are positive sides of social interaction while exhibitionism and voyeurism are negative aspects of information sharing and surveillance needs. Quan-Haase & Young (2010) investigated and compared needs and gratifications obtained from Facebook and IM by university undergraduates. The researchers worked on the premise that social media users do a complementary use of different platforms. This implies that users would add a new social media platform which possesses certain features that the one they use does not have. This gave rise to differentiating between gratifications sought and gratifications obtained. Quan-Haase & Young (2010) described gratifications obtained as “those gratifications that audience members actually experience through the use of a particular medium” and gratifications sought as “those gratifications that audience members expect to obtain from a medium before they have actually come in contact with it.” This, in essence, implies that a shortfall in expectation difference between gratifications sought and obtained from a social media platform would lead to adoption of another. Alhabash & Ma (2017) investigated motivations and uses of four social media platforms- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat. The researchers reported cross-platform motivations to include self-documentation, social interaction, entertainment, passing time and convenience. However,

it was as well observed that each of the four social media platforms has its own areas of strength in terms of motivations. Alhabash & Ma (2017: 5) rank the social media platforms and argue that “Snapchat leads in the five motivations, followed by Instagram, Facebook and Twitter respectively.” It was further revealed that for self-expression, Instagram is the slight leader, while Snapchat tops the table for medium appeal. Karimi et al. (2014) extended the uses and gratifications of social media discourse to the level of a cross-country study. The researchers did a comparison of motivations, which prompt students in higher institutions across Iran, Malaysia, United Kingdom and South Africa. The researchers deliberately sought to study what motivates students in different higher institutions in different cultural contexts so as to find out how cultural differences influence motivations. The study found that peer influence and pressure is the leading motivation for joining SNSs across the four countries studied. Other motivations included networking, finding classmates, finding course information and jobs as well as dates. A probe of gratifications obtained by the students studied yielded different gratifications obtained on country basis. Iranian students ranked information seeking as number one while Malaysian students pointed to interpersonal utility. On the other hand, UK students chose convenience and South African students selected pass time. With the number of studies finding a link between social media and Uses and Gratifications Theory, it is established that the theory has the capacity to provide a template to interrogate the needs, motivations and gratifications of the SNSs users. This, in a way, agrees with West & Turner’s (2010) conclusion that U&G theory is relevant and applicable to social media use and can provide a framework for probing needs and gratifications of social media users

The Use and Gratification Theory (UGT) originated in the 1970s as a response to traditional media theories that viewed audiences as passive receivers of media messages. UGT posits that individuals actively select media content to fulfil specific needs and desires, thereby

playing an active role in their media consumption. This theory emphasizes the agency of media consumers and highlights the importance of understanding their motivations, preferences, and behaviours.

2.6 Motivations for News Consumption on Social Media:

1. Convenience:

Social media platforms offer unparalleled convenience, allowing users to access news content instantly from their smartphones or other devices. This convenience is particularly appealing to university students, who often have busy schedules and limited time for traditional news consumption methods.

2. Social Interaction:

News consumption on social media facilitates social interaction and engagement through features such as comments, likes, and shares. For university students, social media serves as a virtual space for discussions, debates, and networking, enhancing their sense of belonging and community.

3. Personalization:

Social media algorithms analyze users' behavior and preferences to tailor their news feeds, ensuring that they are exposed to content aligned with their interests. This personalization enhances the relevance and engagement of news content for university students, making it more likely that they will continue consuming news on these platforms.

2.6.1 Implications for news consumption on social media.

1. Filter Bubble and Echo Chambers:

The personalized nature of social media algorithms may lead to the formation of filter bubbles and echo chambers, where students are exposed only to news content that aligns with their existing beliefs and preferences. This can reinforce ideological polarization and limit students' exposure to diverse perspectives.

2. Information Credibility:

The prevalence of misinformation and fake news on social media poses challenges to students' ability to discern credible sources and evaluate the reliability of news content. This underscores the importance of media literacy education and critical thinking skills to help students navigate the vast amount of information available on social media platforms.

3. Attention Span and Engagement:

The addictive nature of social media platforms can impact students' attention span and cognitive abilities, leading to decreased academic performance and productivity. It is essential for students to develop strategies for managing digital distractions and maintaining a healthy balance between online and offline activities.

4. Social Comparison and Well-being:

Excessive use of social media for news consumption may contribute to feelings of social comparison, envy, and inadequacy among students, negatively impacting their mental health and well-being. It is crucial for students to cultivate self-awareness and

mindfulness to mitigate the negative effects of social media use on their psychological and emotional well-being.

5. Active Citizenship:

While social media can empower students to engage with news and current events, there is a need to promote critical engagement, activism, and responsible citizenship among university students. By encouraging students to question authority, challenge dominant narratives, and advocate for social change, educators can foster a culture of active citizenship and civic participation.

6. Entertainment:

Social media platforms offer a diverse range of multimedia formats, including videos, memes, and infographics, which make news consumption more entertaining and engaging for university students. This entertainment factor is particularly appealing to younger demographics who prioritize engaging and visually appealing content.

7. Information Seeking:

University students use social media as a primary source of information, not only for news but also for academic research, career opportunities, and personal interests. Social media platforms provide access to a vast array of news sources and perspectives, enabling students to stay informed about current events and trends relevant to their studies and personal lives.

8. Gratifications Sought by University Students:

Informational Gratification: University students seek news content on social media to satisfy their need for information and knowledge about various topics, including politics, science, technology, and culture. By consuming news on social media, students can stay informed about current events and developments in their fields of study.

9. Social Interaction Gratification:

Social media platforms fulfil students' need for social interaction and connection by providing opportunities to engage in discussions, share news articles, and connect with peers who share similar interests and opinions. These social interactions enhance students' sense of belonging and community within their social networks.

10. Entertainment Gratification:

The entertaining nature of news content on social media platforms, such as engaging visuals, catchy headlines, and interactive features, gratifies students' desire for entertainment and enjoyment. By consuming news in an entertaining format, students are more likely to engage with the content and share it with their peers.

11. Self-expression Gratification:

Social media enables students to express themselves, share their opinions, and participate in discussions about news topics that matter to them. By engaging in self-expression on social media, students can assert their identities, express their values, and connect with others who share similar perspectives.

12. Cognitive Gratification:

Consuming news on social media stimulates cognitive processes such as critical thinking, analysis, and information processing, satisfying students' intellectual curiosity and desire for mental stimulation. By engaging with news content on social media, students can develop their analytical skills and expand their knowledge about complex issues.

2.6.2 Exploring Future Research Directions in University Students' News Consumption on Social Media

1. Longitudinal Studies:

Conducting longitudinal studies to track students' news consumption habits and behaviours on social media over time can provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of social media use on their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours.

2. Intervention Strategies:

Developing intervention strategies and educational programs to promote media literacy, critical thinking, and responsible social media use among university students. These initiatives can include workshops, seminars, and online resources aimed at equipping students with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate the digital media landscape effectively.

3. Platform Design:

Collaborating with social media platforms to design features and algorithms that promote diverse perspectives, credible sources, and responsible news consumption habits among users. By incorporating principles of transparency, accountability, and user empowerment into platform design, developers can create a more ethical and user-friendly social media environment.

4. Cross-cultural Research:

Conducting cross-cultural research to explore variations in news consumption behaviours, motivations, and gratifications among university students in different cultural contexts. By comparing and contrasting news consumption patterns across cultures, researchers can gain a deeper understanding of the cultural factors that shape students' media preferences and behaviours.

5. Ethical Considerations:

Addressing ethical concerns related to privacy, data usage, and algorithmic bias in the context of news consumption on social media among university students. It is essential to uphold principles of fairness, transparency, and accountability in the design and implementation of social media platforms to protect users' rights and promote a more ethical digital media environment.

Understanding the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among university students is crucial for elucidating the motivations, preferences, and behaviours that drive this phenomenon. By exploring the complex interplay between individual needs, social interactions, and media technologies, researchers and practitioners can develop strategies to promote informed, responsible, and meaningful engagement with news content on social media platforms.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of Research Design, Research Method, Population, Sampling Techniques, Sampling Size, Instrument for Data Collection, Procedure for data collection and Procedure for data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

This study is a cross sectional study, which employed the phenomenological research design. The research design provides abundant data about real life people and situations (De Vaus, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). According to Creswell 2013, Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focuses on the commonality of a lived experience within a particular group. Typically, interviews are conducted with a group of individuals who have first-hand knowledge of an event, situation or experience. The interview(s) attempts to answer two broad questions: What have you experienced in terms of the phenomenon? What contexts or situation have typically influenced your experiences of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013)?

With roots in philosophy, psychology and education, phenomenology attempts to extract the most pure, untainted data and in some interpretations of the approach, bracketing is used by the researcher to document personal experiences with the subject to help remove him or herself from the process. One method of bracketing is memoing (Maxwell, 2013).

This method facilitates an explorative understanding of people's beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives on a diverse range of topics and also in obtaining stories of personal experiences and their connotations (Prior, 2017; Vasquez, 2014). Hence, the phenomenological research design suits this study as the researcher intends to understand and look into the qualitative perspectives and lived experiences of the respondents through their own personal narrative.

3.2 Research Method

This study adopts the qualitative research method. According to Punch (2013), qualitative research generally includes data in form of words rather than numbers. Qualitative research can provide important insight into interpersonal relationships. Through interviews and participant observation, researchers examine romantic partnerships, friendships, customer-service encounters, superior–subordinate and doctor–patient relationships (Real, Bramson, & Poole, 2009), learning why people engage in such relationships, the way their interactions emerge and change, and how they evidence their feelings for each other. Qualitative studies can also illuminate the “dark side” of relationships, including conflict, emotional abuse, and deviance (Olson, Daggs, Ellevold, & Rogers, 2007).

Qualitative research is useful for understanding a range of societal issues that arise from particular cultural contexts (Drew, 2001; Covarrubias, 2002; LaFever, 2007). The qualitative analysis of today’s stories and yesterday’s historical documents is integral to understanding significant societal events such as social movements (Pompper, Lee, & Lerner, 2009). Furthermore, issues such as ethnicity, race, gender, and sexual orientation can be understood, critiqued, and transformed through contextual studies that examine how demographic categories are ever-changing and communicatively constituted (Trethewey, 2001).

3.3 Population

Prabhat and Meenu (2015) defines population of a study as the parent group from which the sample of the study is drawn. It often connotes all the members of the target of the study as defined by the aims and objectives of the study. Population consists of all the units about which we would collect data (Epstein & Martin, 2014). The current population of Thomas Adewumi University is projected at about 500 students at the time of this study, but the faculty in consideration has a total population of about Eighty (80) students. Therefore, the population

targeted for this study are the students of Management and Social Sciences Faculty of TAU in Oko Irese, Kwara State.

3.4 The Sample Size

Sample size refers to any portion of a population selected for the study and on whom information needed for the study is obtained (Awoniyi; Aderanti & Tayo, 2011). Basically, sampling helps the researcher to work with reasonable size of elements since it is difficult to do so with the entire population (Akinade & Owolabi, 2009). Creswell (2012) recommended between 5 to 25 informants for a phenomenological investigation. Therefore, a sample of fourteen (14) inter-departmental students ascribes as representative of the entire college under this study, who are visible in the East Campus of the University premise. They represents the study population to collect richer and deeper responses from. A small sample size allows more communication with the respondents enabling longer and follow up interviews (Thomson, 2010) and an in-depth qualitative research (Boddy, 2016).

3.5 The Sampling Procedure

The study adopts the non-probability sampling due to the insignificance of randomization relating to the selection of the sample from the population of interest, restricting the participation in the study to a selected specific number of people (Etikan, 2016). It also supports this research as it does not seek to formulate generalizations that mirrors the entire population (Etikan, 2016). This research employed the combination of two sampling techniques; purposive sampling and snowball sampling technique.

The Purposive Sampling technique enables an intentional selection of respondents based on the qualities of the respondents. With purposive sampling, the researcher chooses her respondents based on her judgment (Parveen & Showkat, 2017). Purposive sampling is suitable

for qualitative studies where the researcher is interested in informants who have the best knowledge concerning the research topic (Creswell, 2013).

The most frequently employed definition of snowball sampling, suggested by Patton (1990), Atkinson and Flint (2001), Cohen and Arieli (2011) and Bhattacharjee (2012), is as a sampling method in which one interviewee gives the researcher the name of at least one more potential interviewee. That interviewee, in turn, provides the name of at least one more potential interviewee, and so on, with the sample growing like a rolling snowball if more than one referral per interviewee is provided. Snowball sampling uses a small pool of initial informants to nominate, through their social networks, other participants who meet the eligibility criteria and could potentially contribute to a specific study (David & Morgan, 2008). Prior to conducting the interview, the researcher contacted numerous friends to assess the faculty known social media contents creator and user to be sure they met the requirements of the study. The researcher and interdepartmental students then decided on a date and location for the interview.

3.6 Research Instrument

This research employed semi-structured interviews as data collection. This is the most common type of interview where researchers aim to get specific information so they can compare it to other interview data. This requires asking the same questions for each interview, but keeping their responses flexible. This means including follow-up questions if a subject answer a certain way. Interview schedules are commonly used to aid the interviewers, which list topics or questions that will be discussed at each interview (Dawson, 2019).

Semi-structured interview is a data collection approach that the interviewer is not obligated to adhere to exact formal questions. The interviewer is expected to ask open-ended

questions while giving room for conversation with the respondents (i.e. interviewees) instead of direct question and response structure.

- The interview was employed to investigate the patterns of news consumption among TAU students on social media, identify the motivations and gratifications sought by students when consuming news on social media platforms and examine the implications of social media news consumption for traditional news outlets and journalism practices. Interdepartmental students with experience in contents creation and use of social medial platforms are the samples for this study since they have experienced the phenomenon of in question, and therefore, are rich sources of information and experience.

This research selected the semi-structured interviews as it allows the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding whereby the respondents respond towards a pre-set list of open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). Generally, these interviews are expected to be conducted between 30 minutes to an hour (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). To gain a more effective way of collecting the data, the interviews was be recorded as Jamshed (2014) argues that using strictly handwritten notes during interviews can become unreliable, risking the loss of important points pertaining to the data.

The interview commenced by employing background questions that are non-threatening such as stories of how the couple met, and explanation of their particular cultural background. Beginning with these fundamental questions provided the interviewer the opportunity to develop rapport with the interviewee. Then, the interview progressed to questions about the impacts of dyadic cultural /communication differences in their relationship, factors that contributes to relationship dissatisfaction, methods adopted by couples in conflict management, and how partners integrate their dyadic differences and create a unique relationship of their own.

The instrument for this study is interview guide. An interview is a conversation between a researcher and a participant involving a transfer of information to the interviewer (Cresswell, 2012). The interviews was conducted with fourteen (14) interdepartmental students from the three faculty under study: Economics, Mass Communication, Business Administration, accounting, Criminology. The questions that would be asked during the interviews would be a reflection of the context of the research objectives that have been stated in the first chapter of this study. The required data from the interview are; information about news consumption habits, motivations and Gratifications, and Impact on Traditional Media. Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008)'s outline of interview questions was used as a guiding tool during the framing of the questions. The interview questions for this study is open ended to facilitate the respondents to answer freely.

3.6.1 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

In ensuring the validity and reliability of this study, the concept of trustworthiness was considered. Trustworthiness or truth value of qualitative research and transparency of the conduct of the study are crucial to the usefulness and integrity of the findings (Cope, 2014). Trustworthiness refers to the degree of confidence in data, interpretation, and methods used to ensure the quality of a study (Pilot & Beck, 2014). In each study, researchers should establish the protocols and procedures necessary for a study to be considered worthy of consideration by readers (Amankwaa, 2016).

There have been debates within the literature as to what constitutes 'trustworthiness' in qualitative research and how this ought to be defined and ensured through research protocols (Leung, 2015). Nonetheless, the concept has been agreed to be a necessity within research (Connelly, 2016) and the most referred to criteria of creating and ensuring trustworthiness is by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Guba and Lincoln (1994), which include four main

components: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability. According to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for establishing credibility, researchers must ensure that those participating in research are identified and described accurately. Credibility deals with the focus of the research and refers to the confidence in how well the data addresses the intended focus (Polit & Beck, 2012).

Dependability refers to the stability of data over time and under different conditions. Conformability refers to the objectivity, that is, the potential for congruence between two or more independent people about the data's accuracy, relevance, or meaning. Transferability refers to the potential for extrapolation. It relies on the reasoning that findings can be generalized or transferred to other settings or groups. The last criterion, authenticity, refers to the extent to which researchers, fairly and faithfully, show a range of realities (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Polit & Beck, 2012).

3.9 Method of Data Analysis

In the domain of qualitative research there are several approaches for analysing data (Roller, 2019). Some examples of established methods for analysing qualitative data are content analysis, thematic analysis, open coding, narrative analysis, discourse analysis, and phenomenological analysis (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017; Walia, 2015).

The first step towards analyzing the data is to complete transcribing all interviews. The qualitative data was prepared in thematic analysis using Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS---NVIVO) in the thematic analysis style, and representative quotes (codes) from the interviewees. Thematic analysis examines the views of different respondents, captures similarities and differences and also establishes unanticipated insights (Brooks, King & Wearden, 2014). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that thematic analysis

enables examination of the data collected, locating repetitive patterns of meaning as a result. The presentation, interpretation and discussion of findings will be done in line with the interview research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of the evolving news consumption habits in the digital age, shedding light on the factors that drive users towards specific platforms, content formats, and sources, while also exploring the underlying motivations and trust mechanisms that govern their engagement with news.

4.1 News Consumption Habits

4.1.1 Preferred Platforms for News Consumption

4.1.1.1: Preferred Social Media Platforms

Inf. BA2 primarily uses Instagram for news.

Inf. BA2's choice reflects a preference for the visual and user-friendly format of Instagram.

"I stay informed the most about current events through Instagram the most." (Inf. BA2)

Inf. BA7 relies on Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram for news.

Inf. BA7 shows a preference for multiple social media platforms, indicating a broad reliance on digital sources.

"Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram." (Inf. BA7)

Inf. Acc1 uses Twitter and Instagram as primary sources and WhatsApp occasionally.

Inf. Acc1 also favors social media, with a focus on Twitter and Instagram for news.

"I make use of Twitter and Instagram as my primary source of news, sometimes WhatsApp group or someone's status." (Inf. Acc1)

Inf. Crim9 uses Instagram and WhatsApp primarily.

Inf. Crim9 shows a preference for Instagram and WhatsApp, aligning with a broader trend of using social media for news.

"Instagram and WhatsApp." (Inf. Crim9)

Inf. Crim11 uses Instagram and Facebook.

Inf. Crim11's choice highlights the role of Instagram and Facebook in their news consumption habits.

"Instagram and Facebook." (Inf. Crim11)

Inf. Crim12 uses Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook.

Inf. Crim12 utilizes multiple platforms for diverse news sources.

"Instagram, WhatsApp, and Facebook." (Inf. Crim12)

Inf. Crim13 uses Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook.

Inf. Crim13's reliance on multiple social media platforms reflects a comprehensive approach to news consumption.

"I make use of Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook for news consumption." (Inf. Crim13)

4.1.2 Trust in News Sources

4.1.2.1 Following Reliable Sources

Inf. BA2 trusts information when shared by credible bloggers and widely circulated.

Inf. BA2 relies on social proof and the credibility of bloggers for verifying news.

"I trust information on social media, when the information is circulating, when trustworthy bloggers post about the news that has been spreading." (Inf. BA2)

Inf. Acc1 follows reliable sources like NetNiaja.

Inf. Acc1's selective approach underscores the importance of source credibility in news consumption.

"Few of them like NetNiaja, people that he knows that follow regular news, reason I follow them is because they are more reliable than others." (Inf. Acc1)

Inf. BA7 relies on reputable sources like PUNCH and VANGUARD.

Inf. BA7 prioritizes established news outlets for trustworthy information.

"If the information is from reliable sources such as online PUNCH, VANGUARD, and other reliable news sources." (Inf. BA7)

Inf. Crim12 follows journalists and trusted news sources like CNN and AIT.

Inf. Crim12 emphasizes following specific trusted sources for credible information.

"Yes, I do. I follow journalists on social media such as Seun Akinbaloye and my news sources CNN, AIT." (Inf. Crim12)

Inf. Crim13 follows specific journalists and sources to ensure reliability.

Inf. Crim13's selective following indicates a focus on reputable and well-researched news sources.

"Yes, I follow several specific news sources and journalists on social media. I do this because it allows me to get news directly from reliable sources and trusted reporters." (Inf. Crim13)

4.1.2.2 Verifying Information

Inf. Acc1 verifies news by researching it after encountering it on social media.

Inf. Acc1 demonstrates a cautious approach by cross-checking information to avoid misinformation.

"First of all, after seeing news from a media source that I am following, I do some research on it in order to know if it is reliable or not." (Inf. Acc1)

Inf. BA2 follows journalists like Tunde Egnodes and Fox News for credible information.

Inf. BA2 relies on known journalists and sources for verification of news credibility.

"Yes, I follow a journalist on social media called 'Tunde Egnodes and Fox News.'" (Inf. BA2)

4.1.3 Engagement with News Sources or Journalists

4.1.3.1 Lack of Specific Following

Inf. Crim9 does not follow specific news sources or journalists.

Inf. Crim9's passive engagement indicates a broader approach to news consumption without focusing on particular sources.

"No I don't, I don't really follow journalists on social media." (Inf. Crim9)

Inf. Crim11 also does not follow specific journalists.

Inf. Crim11's lack of specific following shows a less focused approach to news.

"No I don't, I don't really follow journalists on social media, I am not really interested." (Inf. Crim11)

4.1.3.2: Following Specific Sources

Inf. Crim12 follows trusted sources like CNN and AIT.

Inf. Crim12's approach to following specific sources indicates a strategy to ensure news credibility.

"Yes, I do. I follow journalists on social media such as Seun Akinbaloye and my news sources CNN, AIT." (Inf. Crim12)

Inf. Crim13 follows specific journalists and news sources to get reliable information.

Inf. Crim13's selective following reflects a preference for well-researched and credible news.

"Yes, I follow several specific news sources and journalists on social media. I do this because it allows me to get news directly from reliable sources and trusted reporters." (Inf. Crim13)

4.2 Motivations and Gratifications

4.2.1 Reasons for Choosing Social Media for News

4.2.1.1 Convenience and Shareability

Inf. BA2 is motivated by the convenience of accessing news on social media.

Inf. BA2 values the easy access to news provided by social media platforms over traditional media.

"Firstly helps me stay updated without the need for traditional media, social media brings easy access to news through Instagram, Twitter, Facebook." (Inf. BA2)

Inf. BA7 values social media for its ease of access and reliability.

Inf. BA7's preference reflects a focus on the practical benefits of using social media for news.

"I choose social media because it is more easier, and reliable." (Inf. BA7)

Inf. Acc1 finds social media convenient and prefers it over traditional media.

Inf. Acc1's preference for social media highlights its convenience compared to traditional news outlets.

"More convenient and I also don't like making use of the traditional outlet." (Inf. Acc1)

Inf. Crim9 values the ease of sharing information on social media.

Inf. Crim9's choice of social media reflects its convenience in information dissemination.

"Because it is easier to carry and share information." (Inf. Crim9)

Inf. Crim11 prefers social media for its speed and ease of sharing information.

Inf. Crim11's preference for social media emphasizes its efficiency in news sharing.

"It is easier to share information and faster." (Inf. Crim11)

Inf. Crim12 finds social media more convenient than traditional media options available at the university.

Inf. Crim12's preference for social media highlights its convenience compared to other sources.

"Social media makes it easier to access, it is easier than the available traditional media." (Inf. Crim12)

Inf. Crim13 prefers social media for its convenience and accessibility.

Inf. Crim13's choice is driven by the practical benefits of social media in accessing news.

"I prefer social media because it is convenient and easily accessible compared to traditional media." (Inf. Crim13)

4.2.1.2 Preference for Specific Content Formats

Inf. BA2 prefers the visual nature of Instagram for news.

Inf. BA2's choice highlights the appeal of visual content in news consumption.

"I prefer Instagram for the visual content it provides." (Inf. BA2)

Inf. Crim12 values the video and photo content available on social media platforms.

Inf. Crim12's preference reflects an appreciation for multimedia content in news.

"I prefer the video and photo content available on social media." (Inf. Crim12)

4.2.2 Factors Influencing Trust in News

4.2.2.1 Source Credibility

Inf. BA2 trusts information from widely circulated posts and reputable bloggers.

Inf. BA2's trust is influenced by the credibility of the source and the popularity of the news.

"I trust information that has been shared widely and posted by trustworthy bloggers." (Inf. BA2)

Inf. Acc1 relies on known and reliable news sources for credibility.

Inf. Acc1's approach shows a preference for established and trusted sources to verify news.

"I follow sources like NetNiaja, known for their reliability." (Inf. Acc1)

Inf. BA7 trusts information from established news outlets like PUNCH and VANGUARD.

Inf. BA7's trust is aligned with following traditional, reputable news sources.

"I trust PUNCH, VANGUARD, and similar established news outlets." (Inf. BA7)

4.3 News Consumption Habits

4.3.1 Primary Source of Information

4.3.1.1 Reliance on Social Media

Inf. Eco9, Inf. MC3, Inf. MC4, and Inf. MC8 primarily rely on social media for staying informed about current events. This indicates a shift from traditional news sources to digital platforms.

All informants demonstrate a strong preference for social media, reflecting its dominant role in their news consumption habits.

"I make use of Social Media." (Inf. Eco9)

"I stay informed through means of social media." (Inf. MC3)

"I make use of social media platform." (Inf. MC4)

"I stay informed through social media." (Inf. MC8)

4.3.1.2 Preferred Social Media Platforms

4.3.1.3 Platforms Used

Inf. Eco9 favors WhatsApp and Instagram for news consumption, showing a preference for real-time updates and personal interactions.

Inf. MC3 uses Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, with Twitter being the main source for news, suggesting a strategic use of multiple platforms.

Inf. MC4 prefers YouTube and WhatsApp for news, indicating a preference for video content and messaging capabilities.

Inf. MC8 primarily uses Twitter, highlighting a preference for real-time updates and concise information.

The informants' choices of platforms reflect a variety of needs, from real-time updates and video content to interactive features.

"I primarily use WhatsApp and Instagram." (Inf. Eco9)

"I make use of Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok; I make use of Twitter for primary news consumption." (Inf. MC3)

"I primarily use YouTube and WhatsApp." (Inf. MC4)

"I primarily make use of Twitter." (Inf. MC8)

4.3.2 Engagement with News Sources or Journalists

4.3.2.1 Following Specific Sources

Inf. Eco9 follows specific journalists like Tunde Egnodes for accurate and straightforward reporting.

Inf. MC3 follows established news organizations and journalists, including Al Jazeera, CNN, AIT, and Seun Akinbaloye, due to personal aspirations in journalism.

Inf. MC4 follows Vanguard for reliable updates, reflecting a proactive approach to staying informed.

Inf. MC8 follows Seun Akinbaloye for his straightforward reporting and relies on reputable outlets like Punch for verification.

The informants' selective following of specific journalists and organizations highlights their emphasis on credibility and reliability.

"Yes, I follow journalist like Tunde Egnodes, he says things as they are, fact." (Inf. Eco9)

"Yes, I do. I follow Al Jazeera, CNN, AIT, and for journalists, I follow Seun Akinbaloye. I follow them because I aspire to be a journalist." (Inf. MC3)

"I follow Vanguard online on social media and I follow them to stay informed. To know what's happening, if I am negligent about what is happening I can be a victim of mishap." (Inf. MC4)

"Yes I do, Seun Akinbaloye because he is a straightforward person." (Inf. MC8)

4.3.3 Trust in Information

4.3.3.1 Verifying Credibility

Inf. Eco9 relies on established news platforms like Punch and Vanguard for credibility verification.

Inf. MC3 uses social feedback (likes and comments) to gauge the credibility of news.

Inf. MC4's reliance on social media is partly due to limited access to traditional media.

Inf. MC8 relies on reputable outlets like Punch and dismisses unverified information.

The informants' methods for verifying news highlight the importance of credibility and the role of social feedback in assessing information.

"I make use of Punch, Vanguard and any other trustworthy platform." (Inf. Eco9)

"I look at the likes and comments; if the majority of the comments are saying it is fake, then it is." (Inf. MC3)

"In the hostel, we don't have television; our only means of getting information about what is happening globally is through social media." (Inf. MC4)

"If it is not carried by Punch or any reliable sources or platform, I don't believe it." (Inf. MC8)

4.4 Motivations and Gratifications

4.4.1 Reasons for Using Social Media for News

4.4.1.2 Convenience and Speed

Inf. Eco9 values social media for its ease of access and speed in delivering news.

Inf. MC3 uses social media due to limited access to traditional media, highlighting its role as a necessary alternative.

Inf. MC4 uses social media to stay informed and avoid potential risks.

Inf. MC8 values social media for its speed and perceived reliability.

Convenience and speed are key motivators for the informants' preference for social media over traditional media.

"Social media makes it easier and faster to get news." (Inf. Eco9)

"That is the only access I have for now; if I find a newspaper, then I will read, but currently, it is only social media." (Inf. MC3)

"I stay informed, so as not to be a victim of mishap." (Inf. MC4)

"Because it is faster and reliable." (Inf. MC8)

4.5 Limited Access to Traditional Media

Inf. MC3 and Inf. MC4 highlight limited access to traditional media as a reason for relying on social media.

Limited access to traditional media drives the reliance on social media as a primary source of news.

"That is the only access I have for now; if I find a newspaper, then I will read, but currently, it is only social media." (Inf. MC3)

"It has been long I have watched news on TV. Since we are in the age of digital, for TV once they take light you won't use the TV again, but as long as you are online on your phone, you receive news on social media." (Inf. MC4)

4.5.1 Staying Informed to Avoid Risks

Inf. MC4 uses social media to stay informed and avoid risks, reflecting the importance of timely information for personal security.

The need to stay informed to avoid risks is a significant motivator for using social media.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

The research explored the news consumption habits and motivations of individuals in the context of the increasing reliance on social media platforms. The findings reveal several critical themes that provide insight into the participants' preferences, trust in sources, and engagement with news.

4.6.1 News Consumption Habits

4.6.1.1 Preferred Platforms for News Consumption

Participants primarily rely on social media platforms such as Instagram, Twitter, WhatsApp, and Facebook for news consumption. This preference underscores a significant shift from traditional news sources to digital platforms, with a strong emphasis on the visual and user-friendly nature of these platforms, particularly Instagram. The diversity of platforms used suggests that individuals value both real-time updates and the ability to interact with content.

4.6.1.2 Trust in News Sources

Trust in news sources is heavily influenced by the perceived credibility of the sources and the method of verification. Participants tend to follow specific journalists, reputable news outlets like CNN, AIT, PUNCH, and VANGUARD, and rely on social proof to gauge the reliability of information. This indicates a cautious approach to news consumption, where verification through additional research or reliance on established sources is common.

4.6.1.3 Engagement with News Sources or Journalists

There is a noticeable divide in participants' engagement with news sources. Some follow specific journalists and news outlets closely to ensure they receive reliable information, while others take a more passive approach, consuming news without particular regard to the source. This variation in engagement reflects differing levels of news literacy and interest in maintaining an informed perspective.

4.6.2 Motivations and Gratifications

4.6.2.1 Reasons for Choosing Social Media for News

Convenience, speed, and the shareability of news are the primary motivations for participants choosing social media over traditional media. The ease of access to news and the ability to stay informed quickly are highly valued. Additionally, the limited access to traditional media in some cases drives the reliance on social media, particularly among those who find it challenging to access newspapers or television news.

Sub-theme 4.6.2.2 Factors Influencing Trust in News

Source credibility remains a crucial factor in determining the trustworthiness of news. Participants are more likely to trust information from well-known journalists and established news outlets. The study highlights that trust is not only built on the reputation of the source but also through the cross-verification of information and the social feedback received on posts, such as likes and comments

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of news consumption habits among young Nigerians, focusing on their utilization of social media platforms. The findings offer valuable insights into the evolving media landscape and the role of social media in shaping public discourse.

This research examined the news consumption habits, motivations, and trust factors among individuals, particularly focusing on their reliance on social media. The study found that social media is the preferred platform for news consumption due to its convenience, speed, and accessibility. Instagram, Twitter, and WhatsApp emerged as the most popular platforms. Trust in news is primarily influenced by the credibility of the source, with participants showing a preference for following reputable journalists and news outlets. Additionally, participants' engagement with news sources varies, with some actively following specific journalists, while others adopt a more passive approach.

1. Social Media Dominance:

Social media platforms have become the primary source of news for young Nigerians, surpassing traditional media outlets. This shift reflects the increasing accessibility and convenience of social media, particularly for the younger generation.

2. Critical News Consumption:

Despite the ease of access, young Nigerians demonstrate a critical approach to news consumption. They actively verify information from reliable sources, conduct

independent research, and engage with diverse perspectives. This behaviour highlights the growing media literacy among this demographic.

3. **Diverse Motivations:**

The decision to consume news on social media is driven by a variety of factors, including:

- **Convenience and Accessibility:** Social media platforms offer easy access to news, making it a convenient and efficient way to stay informed.
- **Diverse Perspectives:** Social media provides exposure to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints, fostering a more nuanced understanding of current events.
- **Community and Engagement:** Social media platforms facilitate interaction with friends, family, and like-minded individuals, creating a sense of community and shared experiences around news consumption.

5.2 Challenges and Opportunities

While social media offers numerous benefits, it also presents challenges such as the proliferation of misinformation and the potential for echo chambers. Addressing these challenges requires enhanced media literacy education and efforts to promote fact-checking and critical thinking.

However, social media also presents opportunities for engagement and civic participation. By leveraging social media platforms, young Nigerians can connect with news sources, participate in discussions, and contribute to public discourse.

Conclusion:

The findings indicate a significant shift in news consumption habits, with social media becoming the dominant source of news for many individuals. This shift is driven by the convenience and speed offered by these platforms, as well as the ease of sharing information. However, the reliance on social media also raises concerns about the verification of news and the potential spread of misinformation. While participants generally trust news from credible sources, there is still a need for greater awareness and education on how to critically evaluate information encountered online.

This study underscores the pivotal role of social media in shaping the news consumption habits of young Nigerians. While acknowledging the challenges associated with social media, the findings also highlight the opportunities for positive engagement and civic participation. Promoting media literacy and critical thinking skills is essential to ensure that young Nigerians can navigate the complexities of the digital media landscape and make informed decisions.

By understanding the evolving dynamics of news consumption among young Nigerians, policymakers, educators, and media professionals can develop strategies to promote media literacy, combat misinformation, and ensure that social media serves as a valuable tool for civic engagement and democratic participation.

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the news consumption habits of young Nigerians, revealing the significant role of social media platforms in disseminating information and shaping public discourse. The findings demonstrate that social media has become the primary source of news for this demographic, surpassing traditional media outlets.

While social media offers convenience and accessibility, the study also highlights the importance of critical thinking and media literacy. Respondents exhibited a cautious approach to news consumption, verifying information from trusted sources and conducting independent research. This underscores the need for continued efforts to promote media literacy among young Nigerians.

Furthermore, the study identifies the diverse motivations driving news consumption on social media, including convenience, accessibility, and the desire to stay informed. These factors contribute to the growing prominence of social media as a news source.

In conclusion, this study highlights both the opportunities and challenges presented by social media in the context of news consumption. While social media offers a wealth of information and diverse perspectives, it is imperative for young Nigerians to develop critical thinking skills and engage with news content responsibly. By addressing the challenges and leveraging the opportunities, Nigeria can harness the potential of social media to promote informed citizenship and democratic participation.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study on the use and gratification of news consumption on social media among Thomas Adewumi University students, several recommendations can be made to enhance the quality and effectiveness of news consumption for students:

1. **Media Literacy Education:** Promote media literacy education to equip young people with the skills to critically evaluate news content on social media.
2. **Fact-Checking Initiatives:** Support initiatives that promote fact-checking and debunking misinformation on social media platforms.

3. **Collaboration with News Outlets:** Encourage collaboration between traditional news outlets and social media platforms to ensure quality and reliable content.
4. **Government Policies:** Develop policies that support responsible use of social media for news consumption and address issues like misinformation.
5. **Further Research:** Conduct additional studies to explore the long-term impact of social media on news consumption habits and its implications for journalism and civic engagement.

By addressing these recommendations, Nigeria can harness the potential of social media for news dissemination while mitigating its challenges and ensuring a more informed and engaged citizenry.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide

Introduction:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. This research aims to understand how Thomas Adewumi University students consume news on social media. The interview will be confidential, and your responses will be used for research purposes only.

Part 1: News Consumption Habits

1. Can you describe how you typically stay informed about current events?
2. Which social media platforms do you primarily use for news consumption (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)?
3. Do you follow any specific news sources or journalists on social media?
If so, why or why not?
4. How do you decide whether to trust the information you see on social media as news?

Part 2: Motivations and Gratifications

1. Why do you choose to consume news on social media platforms?
2. What are some of the benefits you find in getting your news from social media? (e.g., convenience, engagement, diverse perspectives)
3. Does social media news consumption fulfill any specific needs or desires for you? (e.g., staying informed, feeling connected, entertainment)
- 4.

Part 3: Impact on Traditional Media

1. How has your use of social media for news consumption changed the way you interact with traditional media outlets?

2. In your opinion, how has social media impacted the way news is reported and consumed?

3. Do you see any potential challenges or downsides to relying on social media for news? (e.g., misinformation, bias, echo chambers)

Closing:

1. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience consuming news on social media?

