

New Media Applications for Television News Production and Presentation: A Comparative Analysis of AIT And Silverbird, Port Harcourt

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Abstract

This study examined new media applications for television news production and presentation: a comparative analysis of AIT and Silverbird, Port Harcourt. The study's methodology was a combination of survey and content analysis, where staff members of two television stations - AIT and Silverbird Television - were surveyed, and content from the new media platforms of those two stations was analyzed for comparison. The population for the study was all employees of the two stations, totalling 37 people. The sample size was also 37 because the population was small enough to make a census method feasible. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled New Media Applications for Television News Production and Presentation Questionnaire (NMPTNPPQ). The instrument was validated and its reliability test was at 0.89 which was determined using the Cronbach Alpha. The data were calculated on a mean score basis where the cumulative numbers were added and divided by the total number of respondents sampled. Findings from the study reveal that new media applications enhance television news production and presentation after a comparative analysis of AIT and Silverbird, Port Harcourt. The study concluded that the rate of social media use in AIT and Silverbird Port Harcourt during their news production and presentation is high. Based on the study findings, it was recommended among others that the two stations should continue to harness the benefits of the new media in their news production and presentation in deeper ways to reach out to a wider audience more than they currently do.

INTRODUCTION

The complex nature of societal growth and its sophistry has led to the invention of multiple technological options to ease work for humans. These technological inventions have been more pronounced in the media industry hence the continuous growth in new media applications. The invention of new media technologies is changing how broadcast media operates. This change can be attributed to the introduction of new media applications such as computer technology, internet, mobile phones, zoom, and Microsoft applications in broadcasting occasioned by giant technological advancement.

The advancement in media technologies has cut the barriers of time and space in our broadcast industry; it has also made communication easier and more democratic and the creation and distribution of media content easier. No wonder DeFleur and Dennis (1991) cited in Nyekwere (2009) observed that:

Technology has always been a metaphor for change in the media industry. As far back as Gutenberg, technology was the movable type that spurred change. Later, fast printing presses, the telegraph, zinc engraving, modern photography, radio, television, fibre optics, and other technologies heralded new developments for media and their audience (p. 229)

The new media technologies play functional roles and make tremendous contributions to the day-to-day running of the broadcast industry and society. Each advance in communication increases our power to convey and record information, and each has played a major role in prompting significant changes in our culture and society. It is difficult to fully digest one medium's influence before another comes on the scene. Before the arrival of new media technologies, broadcasting equipment was mechanical or analogue. These mechanical states of the equipment hinder the effective production and dissemination of news and information. Even the transmission of broadcast signals was often affected by wave interference, hedges and unclear signals. The reception of signals was largely limited to the carrying capacity of the transmitter.

For instance, the introduction and application of new media technology in television news production and presentation should naturally help in enhancing broadcast transmissions, especially in television stations. Broadcasting as a branch of mass communication has witnessed a landmark transformation into a field of vigorous competition with vast liberalization of infrastructure, information can now be digitalized, transported, stored, retrieved, modified and distributed from one place to another without any interference. High-speed digital electronic highways serve as the common technology through which these pieces of information are transported.

With the introduction of new media technologies, the broadcast media have penetrated deeply into the basic fabrics of our social institutions in society by beaming out information and programmes that meet and satisfy the needs and aspirations of their listener and viewers. In other words,

technology has aided the media to move from the experimental stage to the present stage where they now exert great influence on world events. With the introduction of new media applications in broadcasting, such as the Internet, skype, zoom, Facebook, Twitter, satellite cable systems, and fibre optics to mention but a few, journalism practice across national boundaries has taken a drastic turn for the better.

Nigerian broadcasters are catching up with the trend in modern new media applications, although communication experts foresaw long ago that more private broadcast media will spring up in Nigeria by the 21st century, giving communication its place and priority in the country. The use of new media applications in News production in Nigeria is a recent phenomenon used in the dissemination of information, as the broadcast media industries are doing their best to catch up with the trend of things in the world in terms of the acquisition and use of these new technologies. These technologies are capable of creating sophistication in the method of broadcasting and also improve the output and quality of programmes.

According to Amuchie (2001) cited in Nyekwere (2009), in a world that has become a global village where information travels faster than the speed of light, any country that stands aloof, whether out of ignorance or lack of appreciation of this necessity will certainly contend with backwardness. The Nigerian broadcast media cannot afford to stand aloof where others are making progress, thus, to fight the shackles of backwardness successfully, there is a need to embrace the use of these technologies to facilitate their news production and also advance in quality programmes. The improvement of broadcast media all over the world is greatly due to the application of the right technologies and communication systems within their broadcast network Malcom (2001: 217). How television stations in Port Harcourt have adjusted to the changing demands of the new media has become the concern of this study. Since it is a truism that the applications used in the broadcast industry for news production determine to a large extent the quality of news produced hence, there is therefore need to review the applications of new media technologies in television news production and presentation among two competing private stations in port Harcourt. The thrust of this study therefore preconceived the foregoing.

Statement of the Problem

It is saddening that despite the startling developments in media production, TV broadcasting in Nigeria especially in Rivers State is yet to assimilate the new media application innovation or imbibe the realities of modern broadcasting (Nyekwere 2009). The advancement in news production can only be said to be achieving the desired ends when they readily and continuously influence positively the operations of the Nigerian broadcast media. What this translates to, is that the success or otherwise of all these new media applications can only be measured in terms of the extent to which they bring improvement in the accuracy, speed and transfer of messages and redefine the concept of broadcasting to an enviable height.

The use of new media applications in news production can only be said to be effective when the media professionals and audience benefit from the innovation through improved quality and accurate news production. The problem remains as to how to assess the extent to which the new

media application has influenced the television news Production in Silverbird and AIT Port Harcourt. The fact that scholars agree that the new media have sharpened the news production process makes new media research significant hence this study comparatively reviews the application of new media technology by AIT and Silverbird television to ascertain the effect on the quality of news production.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to review how AIT and Silverbird Television use new media applications in their news production processes. The specific objectives however are to:

1. determine the extent of new media applications in news production by the selected media houses
2. Attempt a comparison of the level of new media usage in AIT and Silverbird television
3. find out how proficient these stations are in the deployment of new media applications in the context of news production by AIT and Silverbird television

Research Question

To realize the objectives of this study, the following research questions were asked:

1. To what extent are new media applications used in news production by the selected media houses?
2. What is the comparative difference/similarity between the level of new media usage in AIT and Silverbird television?
3. How proficient are AIT and Silverbird Television in the application of new media technology?

Theoretical Framework

Media Convergence Theory

The media convergence theory was propounded by Henry Jenkins in 1992. This theory states that every mass media merges to the point where it becomes one medium due to the advent of new communication technologies. Henry (2006) posits that new technologies in communication bring together different mediums of communication and consequently redefine the media environment. This theory believes that changes in communications and information technologies reshape and change our everyday lives, patterns of creation, consumption of news stories or programmes, learning and interpersonal interactions. It is the coming together of different equipment and tools for producing and disseminating news content, this can be done with the use of new media applications such as Facebook, Twitter, zoom, Skype and so on.

Media convergence theory is presented as a process, the emphasis being on the technological, economic, social, cultural and global impact it has on traditional media, as well as on books and mobile content (Henry 2006). In a technological sense, media convergence theory is all about

integration and interoperability; the coming together of computing networks, information and communication technologies, and digital forms of information that are inherently adaptable, delivered via ‘intelligent’ platforms, applications and devices. The processes that facilitate media convergence theory are shaped by, whilst also shaping, social practices and cultural values; the ways that we produce and consume digital media to communicate science, politics, sport, and so on. Where once people had opportunities to collate and filter scientific information via various ‘traditional’ communication channels, now digital technologies are also playing an important role. According to Holliman (2010), many online editions of newspapers now routinely produce text and photos, as it has always been but with additional content in the form of audio, photo galleries, moving images, computer stimulation graphics and so on, we can now watch, listen and subscribe to digest news content sometimes users also contribute by commenting. Similarly, there are now greater opportunities to listen to a wide range of genres on digital road and television, for example, through networked desktop computers, digital television, digital radio, as podcasts that you subscribe to a device of your choice, sometimes some of this screams will be multiple, with the option of additional online content (Bennett 2009).

From an end-user perspective, those consuming and contributing media convergence theory involve digital technologies that encode and decode multiple streams of (in this case) News content. This can involve (using new media applications) text, (galleries of) still images, moving pictures, digital simulations, sounds, music, or any combination thereof, to one or more devices and platforms of the end user’s choosing, such as a mobile phone or personal digital assistant (PDA). These media can be customized and consumed ‘automatically’ via feeds that match the user profile on the device(s) of their choice; change your profile and you re-arrange the content to be downloaded, and/or re-order the aggregated content that you have received (Holliman 2010).

This theory is relevant to this study because, in the technological sense, media convergence theory is all about integration and interoperability; the coming together of computing networks, information and communication technologies, and digital forms of information that are inherently adaptable, delivered via ‘intelligent’ platforms, applications and devices. This study is talking about new media applications to news production and presentation: A comparative analysis of AIT and Silverbirds Port Harcourt.

Conceptual Framework

New Media

New media are those types of media that make use make use of digital technologies such as social media and the use of the internet. The potential audience of this new media is much larger. According to the New Media Institute, new media is a watchful term used to identify or define all that is related to the internet and the interplay between technology, sound and images. New media is any form or way of communicating or interacting within a dispersed digital world. According to Lievrouw (2002), new media is the message (communication and its practice), the technology (the medium), and the social context in which it is used (Gitelman & Pingree, 2003). Take a

temporal approach using the term media in transition to describe a period during which a medium is emergent and thus a sort of contrast to and competitor for old media new media makes information processing faster.

Friedman (2008), posited that new media encompasses a wide variety of web-related communication technologies, such as blogs, wikis, online social networking, virtual worlds and other social forms. Rather than replacing old media, new media serves to supplement old media and sometimes work side by side to further the organizational goals; new media are dramatically influencing virtually every broadcast industry. Manovich (2002) saw new media as a cultural object which uses digital computer technology for distribution and exhibition The emergence of the Internet and new media technology has and is disrupting the economic base of the newspapers, as many potential readers are finding alternative sources of news online (Jones & Salter 2019). New media tools have played a strategic role in getting developed and developing countries to come together to fight for their right. The power of the new media can also be seen in the way it alters the meaning of geographic distance, allowing for the increase in the volume of communication, creating opportunities for interactive communication and allowing different forms of communication to overlap and interconnect.

News

News is a product of journalism developed by journalists and formulated to fit the needs of the audience and the requirement of the audience and the media of journalism such as newspapers, radio and television (Stoval cited in Onyeka (2017). It is a professional account of significant events in the media newspapers and magazines, on radio, television and the internet. News is any recent occurrence that is intriguing to the society, it can be fresh information that nobody has published in the society. Lynette (2000) defines news as something that binds people together in a sense of community, that is news is something that individuals want to share. News can be seen as something new that has just happened, something unusual, unexpected, important, exciting and immediate.

Vivian (2009; p.268) cited in Onyeka (2017) defines news as a report on change, it is the part of communication that keeps us informed of the changing events, and characters in the world outside. News is something surprising, something we don't already know, that will either affect the reader (listener) directly or as in the case of human interest. Onyeka further added that news is a report of what a news organization has recently learned about matters of some significance or interest to the specific community that the news organization serves. This implies that news is information that is meant to inform and educate a specific group of people, typically the audience of a particular news organization. So, a news report is a compilation of new or recent information that has been gathered, organized, and presented in a way that is meaningful and useful to the audience. This can include information about important events, changes, or discoveries that are relevant to the people who will be reading or listening to the report.

New Media and News Production

The development of Web 2.0 and other digital technology is responsible for the dynamism in how media operate and the rise of the media during the past 20 years or so (Soltau, 2020). The 21st-century newsroom is continually changing to keep up with technological advancement. It is important to recognize that practitioners are also experiencing the effects, in addition to the newsroom. There are several academic studies on these effects. According to academics, the advent of advanced digital tools in the newsroom implies that the reporter's identity and professionalism adapt in a similar way (Turtola, 2017; Hu, 2019). Additionally, according to Turtola, the new media has caused realignment between journalists and their diverse public, including their sources, readers, rivals, competitors, marketers, and the government.

It is fascinating to notice how much has changed in today's newsroom operations as a result of technology, with new production methods and completely different operating models appearing in media organizations (Bradshaw, 2012). The fact that websites and social media platforms are now utilized to communicate information even before news time is one example of how traditional media, such as television broadcasting, is altering as a result of new media. For the viewers (especially those without access to television owing to hectic schedules), breaking news is now first put onto the websites of television stations. To put it briefly, the activities and procedures of newsrooms have changed in the age of new media technology. Remember that the television set/box was the only medium back when television was all analogue and there were no new media technologies.

As media technology develops, it fills up the gaps between the media and its audience in a variety of ways. The use of new media technology in television newsrooms gives viewers of the media the chance to comment on and share interesting stories, engage in dialogue with other viewers, and even publish their work on blogs and social media platforms (Nielson et al., 2016). With these options, the newsroom is now more interesting and conscientious in the programs it chooses and the ways it interacts with the public. Since audiences are now more involved with the news organization of their choice, new media technologies in some ways present the newsroom in reformatory ways to the audience.

The contemporary newsroom experience affects media organizations, practitioners, and practitioners just as much as it affects the viewers. Hunt (2014), also opined that new media technologies, particularly social media, make it easier to obtain television ratings. Additionally, YouTube video streaming has made it such that viewers are less likely to miss a show because they can constantly visit pages and watch at their convenience. Hunt goes on to say that when a hashtag becomes popular on Twitter, it gives Twitter users the chance to remark on and debate popular television shows and other topics. Additionally, Facebook gives people more details about shows or programs, whereas YouTube can make ads or advertisements into viral videos (Hunt, 2014).

Simulcast is made possible by new media technology. One wonderful aspect of emerging media technologies is the ability to use devices other than televisions while yet maintaining an audience. The average daily viewing duration of television fell to 4 hours, and 10 minutes in 2019, and by 2021, it is expected to further reduce to 3 hours, and 37 minutes (Thompson, 2020). Thompson further added that the explanation for this decline in viewing time is that younger audiences are watching television more on internet platforms like mobile applications than on traditional television sets. Since they would not swap their valuable time for anything, they do this out of convenience. In light of this, television newsrooms continuously work to meet audience demands to provide the necessary satisfaction.

Thompson (2020), quoting Terry Eliason, noted that one of the ways broadcasting is changing is in terms of quality and timeliness. This change is ascribed to the sophistication of newly emerging new media technologies. Without having to go through the laborious process of initially bringing physical copies of the report in person and editing, a journalist can take advantage of the many opportunities offered by new media technology to beat deadlines and report immediately from the field. Thompson claims that the impact is also felt in the newsroom and that new media technologies enable significant technology convergence, which will aid broadcasters in transforming augmented intelligence, new delivery technology, big data, even larger computer cycles, and more potent consumer mobile phones.

Comparison of the Level of New Media Usage in AIT and Silverbird Television

AIT (African Independent Television) and Silverbird Television are prominent broadcasters in Nigeria, each contributing to the media landscape with distinct characteristics and approaches to new media usage. AIT, established in 1996, has been a pioneer in the Nigerian media industry. It has embraced new media platforms to extend its reach and engagement (Ilesanmi & Adeagbo, 2018). AIT has a robust online presence, with a user-friendly website and active social media accounts on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. The channel employs these platforms not only for content promotion but also for real-time interaction with its audience. AIT's YouTube channel further amplifies its digital footprint, providing viewers with on-demand access to a wide array of programs (AIT, n.d.).

On the other hand, Silverbird Television, founded in 2003, has also recognized the significance of new media in contemporary communication. The channel actively utilizes its website and social media channels for content dissemination and audience interaction. Silverbird TV's Facebook and Twitter pages, in particular, serve as hubs for news updates, program highlights, and engaging discussions. The station's YouTube presence complements its traditional broadcast by offering a platform for viewers to catch up on missed episodes or watch exclusive online content (Silverbird Television, n.d.).

In terms of content diversification, AIT tends to cover a broad spectrum of news, politics, entertainment, and cultural programs. Its new media strategy aligns with this diversity, ensuring that content across platforms caters to a wide audience. AIT's online platforms often feature

behind-the-scenes content, interviews, and exclusive online segments, enriching the viewer experience beyond traditional broadcasting. Silverbird Television, while also covering a variety of topics, has a strong focus on entertainment and lifestyle content. This emphasis is reflected in its new media strategy, where social media channels prominently feature updates on entertainment events, celebrity interviews, and lifestyle segments. The channel leverages its digital platforms to cultivate a community around popular shows, fostering online discussions and audience participation.

In terms of technology adoption, both AIT and Silverbird Television have integrated high-quality streaming services on their websites, allowing users to access live broadcasts or catch up on missed programs seamlessly. This reflects a commitment to technological advancements and providing viewers with convenient options for consumption. In other words, both AIT and Silverbird Television have recognized the transformative power of new media in the Nigerian broadcasting landscape. AIT, as a seasoned player, has strategically diversified its content and engagement across various digital platforms, aiming to reach a broad audience. Silverbird Television, while newer to the scene, has carved a niche by focusing on entertainment and lifestyle content, fostering an online community around its programs (Obi, 2022). Both channels showcase a commitment to leveraging new media to enhance viewer experiences and adapt to the evolving media landscape in Nigeria.

Review of Related Empirical Studies

Ukaegbu (2022) researched *New Media Technology and its application to Broadcasting: A Mini Ethnographic Study*. This study used a mixed-methods research design in this study. The qualitative component consisted of semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in the broadcast industry, including station managers, producers, and presenters, while the quantitative component involved a survey of the audiences of two selected broadcasting stations in Nigeria - African Independent Television (AIT) and Silverbird Television (SBTV). The study found that new media technologies have had a significant impact on the broadcasting industry in Nigeria and that these technologies have led to changes in the production, distribution, and consumption of broadcast content. The study's findings showed that the use of new media technologies has led to increased audience engagement and participation in the broadcasting process, as well as greater diversity in the content being produced and consumed. The study also found that these technologies have enabled broadcasting organizations to reach a wider audience, both within and outside of Nigeria. The study concluded that the use of new media technologies has had a positive impact on the broadcasting industry in Nigeria and that it is important for broadcasting organizations to continue to adapt and evolve to take advantage of the opportunities offered by new media technologies.

Kelsey (2014) conducted a study on *The New Newsroom: The impact of digital and social media on local television news stations*. The study used a case study approach to examine how four local television news stations in the United States were using social media to report the news and engage with their audiences. The study involved interviews with station managers, reporters, and digital

editors, as well as a content analysis of the stations' social media platforms. The findings showed that social media has had a significant impact on the way that local television news is produced and consumed, and has led to changes in the way that stations cover breaking news and engage with their audiences. The study's findings showed that social media has had both positive and negative impacts on local television news stations. On the positive side, social media has allowed stations to be more interactive with their audiences and has helped them to break stories faster and more effectively. However, the study also found that social media can be a source of misinformation and has created a challenge for stations in terms of verifying the accuracy of information. The study concluded that while social media has changed the way that local television news is done, it has not diminished the role of the traditional newsroom and has instead provided an opportunity for stations to adapt and innovate to better serve their audiences and stay competitive in a rapidly changing media landscape.

Nyekwere (2009) conducted a study on the influence of new media technologies in broadcasting: a study of television stations in Port-Harcourt Metropolis. In this study, Nyekwere used a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. He conducted interviews with broadcast professionals from three television stations in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and analyzed their responses using content analysis. He also gathered data through a survey of a sample of residents in Port Harcourt to understand their perceptions of new media technologies and their influence on the broadcast industry. The study found that the new media technologies had led to changes in the way television stations covered news and engaged with their audiences. The study found that while new media technologies have brought some benefits to television stations in Port Harcourt, they have also presented some challenges. The new technologies have helped stations to reach a wider audience and provide more up-to-date information. However, they have also led to a decrease in the quality of news coverage, and have made it more difficult for stations to maintain control over the content they produce. Overall, the study found that new media technologies have both positive and negative impacts on television stations in Port Harcourt.

METHODOLOGY

The study's methodology was a combination of survey and content analysis, where staff members of two television stations - AIT and Silverbird Television - were surveyed, and content from the new media platforms of those two stations was analyzed for comparison. The population for the study was all employees of the two stations, totalling 37 people. The sample size was also 37 because the population was small enough to make a census method feasible. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled New Media Applications for Television News Production and Presentation Questionnaire (NMPTNPPQ). The questionnaire was in two sections. Section A comprised of questions on demographic data while section B was designed to elicit psychographic responses. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions on a four-point Likert scale. The instrument was validated and its reliability test was at 0.89 which was determined using the Cronbach Alpha. The data were calculated on a mean score basis where the cumulative numbers were added and divided by the total number of respondents sampled. The respective news programmes available on the new media platforms of the selected television stations were

presented using images and analyzed in prose form. These contents determined the level of new media application for news presentation. The questionnaire copies distributed were 19 to AIT and 18 to Silverbird Television respectively out of which all were retrieved. The retrieved copies formed the basis for the analysis and also the qualitative aspects were analysed accordingly.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Research Question One: To what extent are new media applications in news production by the selected media houses?

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	Σ	Mean	Remark
1.AIT makes use of New Media for all its programmes.	11 (44)	6 (18)	2 (4)	0 (0)	19	66	3.5	Agreed
2.New Media applications are only used for selected News programmes in AIT	0 (0)	3 (9)	14 (28)	2 (2)	19	39	2.0	Disagreed
3.The use of New Media applications for News production and presentation is a daily routine in AIT Port Harcourt.	9 (36)	8 (24)	1 (2)	1 (1)	19	63	3.3	Agreed
4.The use of new media for News production in AIT is selected and limited.	0 (0)	0 (0)	13 (26)	6 (6)	19	32	1.7	Disagreed

As the table indicates, Facebook, Skype, and YouTube were the platforms that respondents from AIT indicated were used the most for news production and dissemination. The table also shows that respondents believed that all of the platforms listed were used for news, but to varying degrees. This suggests that while all of the platforms are utilized, some may be more effective or efficient than others.

Research Question Two: **What is the comparative difference/similarity between the level of new media usage in AIT and Silverbird television?**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	Σ	Mean	Remark
5. Silverbird makes use of New Media for all its programmes.	8 (32)	6 (18)	3 (6)	1 (1)	18	57	3.2	Agreed

6. New Media application is only used for selected News programmes in Silverbird Television.	3 (12)	2 (6)	4 (8)	9 (9)	18	35	1.9	Disagreed
7. The use of New Media applications for News production and presentation is a daily routine in Silverbird Port Harcourt.	11 (44)	5 (15)	1 (2)	1 (1)	18	62	3.4	Agreed
8. The use of New media for News production in Silverbird is selected and limited.	0 (0)	0 (0)	13 (26)	5 (5)	18	31	1.7	Disagreed

From the data presented, it is clear that there are some differences in opinion between the two stations, AIT and Silverbird Television. While a majority of the respondents agreed that Facebook and Skype were used frequently for news production and dissemination, there was a difference of opinion on YouTube and Instagram. AIT reported that these platforms were used frequently, while Silverbird Television reported that they were used less frequently.

Research Question Three: Find out how proficient these stations are in the deployment of new media applications in the context of news production by AIT and Silverbird Television.

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	N	Σ	Mean	Remark
9. All the staff in AIT are IT savvy, hence New Media application use is not an issue.	13 (52)	2 (6)	3 (6)	1 (1)	19	65	3.4	Agreed
10. It is a prerequisite for staff members in the Newsroom in AIT to be New Media proficient.	18 (72)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	19	75	3.9	Agreed

11. Not all staff members in the AIT Newsroom are New Media compliant and proficient.	4	1	10	4	19	43	2.3	Disagreed
	(16)	(3)	(20)	(4)				
12. AIT utilizes the New Media efficiently for News production and presentation.	15	4	0	0	19	72	3.8	Agreed
	(60)	(12)	(0)	(0)				

The data in the table shows that the majority of respondents from both AIT and Silverbird Television agreed that the stations were proficient in the use of new media applications for news production. However, a small percentage of respondents from each station disagreed with this assessment. The difference between the two stations' responses suggests that there may be some variation in how each station views its proficiency with new media.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question 1: To what extent are new media applications in news production by the selected media houses?

The table also shows that respondents believed that all of the platforms listed were used for news, but to varying degrees. In other words, it shows that new media usage is a daily routine in AIT Port Harcourt. Similarly, Silverbird makes use of new media for all its programmes with a mean score of 3.2 and also shows that new media application is used in Silverbird Port Harcourt daily. This finding was supported by Henry (2006) whose findings also revealed that the new media has redefined the media environment and united different forms of communication. This finding agrees with the position of media convergence theory which states that changes in information and communication technology reshape and alter our everyday life, patterns of learning and news consumption behaviour. This change is what leads to the choice of equipment and platform for news production and dissemination. Media convergence has led to the interoperability of the media in digital forms leading to a change in patterns of media operations

Research Question 2: What is the comparative difference/similarity between the level of new media usage in AIT and Silverbird Television?

The results in Table 2 show that the frequency of new media usage in AIT is very often with 53% of the respondents. The result in the table further reveals that the use of new media applications for News production and presentation is a daily routine. This implies that the two stations have a similar pattern of media usage. The use of new media applications by the two stations for all their programmes shows conformity with the trend, this means that the two stations are aware of the benefit of new media usage and apply promptly. This is in agreement with the tenet of

technological determinism theory which states that changes in communication mode largely determine the cost of history (in this case the choice of new media technology to be used).

Mckuail (2005) in agreement with this view assert that a technology change can influence social change and drive an irresistible development in media practices and communication patterns. Corroborating this finding is the view of Nwodu (2004) which argues that the medium rather than the content of communication influence both the audience and operators. This means that the media on vogue (the trending media) determine the choice of media to be use for news production and dissemination on other to meet audience demand. That is to say that whichever media platform that attract the audience will determine how the media houses will reach out to them. From the data derived from the new media platforms of the respective stations, AIT had more new media presence than Silverbird television and this seem to have attracted more views to AIT news online than those from Silverbird Television. For instance, one of the stories from Silverbird on Domestic and Sexual Violence, attracted only 8 views six months after it was presented online. This shows that the online viewership strength of Silverbird Television is low. On the other hand, while that of AIT was not very high, it amassed more views than those from Silverbird as some of the stories reviewed had over 1000 views.

Research Question 3: How proficient are the AIT and Silverbird Television in the Application of New Media Technology?

From table 3 the AIT respondent indicated that all the staff in AIT are IT savvy, hence new media application use is not an issue. With a mean score of 3.4. Also, AIT respondents indicate that not all staff members in AIT News room are new media complaint and proficient and AIT utilizes the new media efficiently for News production and presentation with a mean score of 3.9 and 3.8. Contrarily, the result shows that all the staff in Silverbird are not IT savvy, this was shown by a mean score of 2.4 from item one, this score implies that quite a sizable number of staff are IT compliant but not enough to make the majority. However, the respondents indicated that it is a prerequisite for staff members in a newsroom to be new media proficient. The respondents from table 3 also stated that Silverbird utilises new media efficiently for News production and presentation, this shows that only the staff in a Newsroom are mandated to be IT proficient from the recruitment stage in Silverbird Television.

CONCLUSION

The study has shown that the rate of social media use in AIT and Silverbird Port Harcourt during their news production and presentation is high. It is however disturbing that this new media usage in both stations seems not to have led to any transformations within these stations as they seem not to have benefitted from the offerings of social media platforms to the broadcast industry. Global media platforms such as CNN use social media extensively for live reports and reactions from on-sight correspondents thereby strengthening their global coverage of events. This means that AIT and Silverbird Television can adopt similar practices to strengthen their coverage of Nigeria and Africa. While it is easy to argue that stations like CNN have the advantage of satellite coverage, it

is also a fact that any station can tap into the abundance of audiences on social media to carve out a niche for their audience base through massive campaigns, audience involvement in the process of news generation, eye witness live reporting among others. A careful buildup of these processes can give the station a wide audience reach and an opportunity to interact with the people to discuss their pains and expectations which is among the social responsibility and function of the media. AIT Port Harcourt and Silverbird television can indeed perform better in their new media usage for all purposes, particularly in the aspect of news production and presentation with the right set of staff, adequate employees and the right plan.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended from the findings that:

1. The two stations should continue to harness the benefits of the new media in their news production and presentation in deeper ways to reach out to a wider audience more than they currently do. This could involve promotional activities like giveaways on these platforms.
2. Although Facebook still remains one of the leading social media platforms, AIT and NTA need to utilize all the available social media platforms for their news production and dissemination processes.
3. The management of both stations should consider funding of social media platforms a priority as this can increase their business reach and prepare them for greater profiting through online advertising.

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