



HARNESSING THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TOOLS ON THE PROCESS OF NEWS GATHERING AND REPORTING AMONG MEMBERS OF OGUN STATE COUNCIL OF JOURNALISTS

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Abstract

This study focused on the rapid development of information and communication tools on the process of news gathering and reporting on journalism practice in Ogun State. The objectives were to assess the effectiveness of the use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists, To ascertain the implications of the use of ICT tools on journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists, To investigate some of the limitations to effective use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. The study was premised on technological determinism theory. Quantitative survey method was adopted, fifty three (53) respondents were randomly selected through available sampling technique. Data gathered were analyzed using simple percentages, frequency counts, while statistical computation and hypotheses testing were done with STAT 12.1 and linear regression. Findings showed that ICT tools aids in the process of news gathering and reporting, it also paved way for new innovative method in information processing. The results of the Ordinary least square (OLS) linear regression also indicates that Information communication technological tools has a positive implication on the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice with the co-efficient of (0.109). This indicates that, there are benefits in using ICT tools for news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. However, one of the limitations discovered was poor remuneration of journalists.

KEYWORDS: Information communication technology (ICT) tools, news gathering and reporting, journalism practice, Rapid development. Processing

Introduction

Information Communication Technology tools (ICTs) has been a force in the improvement of the way journalism is being practiced. It has greatly encouraged and continue to encourage revolution of journalism profession, particularly in the way timeliness and immediacy is now evident in information dissemination, Asigwe (2012). ICT tools, which entails news methods that journalists now use to collate information as well as for reporting through computer networks, facilitate and enhance electronic means of processing and dissemination of information. (Rodriguez & Wilson, 2000; ESCAP, 2000).

Okoye (2000) cited in Adigwe (2010) **aver** that computer technologies has improved the process of sourcing for news editing and reporting. With the aid of the Internet, journalist can browse websites to source for national and international news without stress of going all out to get such information. Undeniably, the relevance of ICT tools for news gathering, processing, and dissemination cannot be overemphasized. Samadar (1995) speaking on this submits that ICT tools helps facilitate the process of creating, storing, managing and disseminating information through electronic methods. ICT tools which came into existence as a result of innovation in technological know-how are visible in their functional usage in the process of assessing information and communication through the Internet. As far as the digitization is concerned, the usefulness in the application of ICT tools in journalism practice is not small. With the use of ICT tools, news reporting has become timely, while it also helps reduce the space restrictions. The use of ICT tool has transformed news processing, news packaging, and news reporting through the use of ICT tools. (Marcelle, 2000; Ogunsole & Aboiyade, 2005).

Arguably, application of ICT tools in journalism is to facilitate the enabling environment for improvement of timeliness and immediacy in the method of news gathering, processing and dissemination. Soforowa (2009) cited in Adigwe (2010) opined that ICT tools entails the integration and application of innovative technologies in computer for the



purpose of timely information and communication dissemination to a consumers who are diverse and heterogamous in nature without much delay. Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools are component that are useful in processing and presentation of raw data into useful information. It simplifies news gathering, processing and reporting, that pave way for timeliness and immediacy in information. Information can therefore be said to be a crucial input as well as the final output of journalism practices because it is transformed from raw data through processing to useful pieces of information. (Adigwe 2010; Samah et al 2009 & Geetila et al 2008).The use of ICT tools in journalism as evidently reformed news processing, and dissemination of information.

However the trends in ICT tools suggests growth in the employment, deployment of ICT tools in news dissemination, in order to achieve better work competence, precision, as well as quick operations of news processing.

Earlier, findings from a study conducted by Adigwe (2012) on the impact of information and communication technology (ICT) on news processing, reporting and dissemination on broadcast stations, showed that various benefits and challenges are connected with the use of ICTs in news processing in broadcast industry in Lagos State. The study also found out that ICTs creates opportunity for widespread electronic and immediacy in news delivery.

Hence, this study assess the effectiveness of the use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists.The study was premised on technological determinism theory. Developed by Marshall McLuhan in (1962) cited by in Anaeto, Onabanjo & Osifeso (2008), this theory basically emphasis how various innovative technology employed by the media has been reshaping peoples ways of life in a society as well as how the society operates. Media technology can be said to have advanced and changed the process of information dissemination in the society people not only consume information on timely basis, but also take part in the process of information generation and dissemination due to the interactive nature of the media technology. Journalist now employs different forms of ICT tools in the process of gathering, processing and dissemination information in the society.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is the effectiveness of the use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?
2. What are the implications of the use of ICT tools on journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?
3. What are the limitations to effective use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?

Hypothesis

1. H₀: There is no positive benefit of using ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists.
2. H₁: There is a positive benefit of using ICT tools on the process of news gathering and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists.

Literature Review

Journalism and Information Communication Technology Tools

Employment of ICT tools on modern day journalism practice can be said to have a contributing factor in the easier way on the process of information dissemination. It also creates a network that enables journalists discharge duty with ease. ICT tools has creates a good communication process between journalists on duty and their news audiences, who are the end consumers of information. ICT tools has helps in bringing closer, communicators and receivers. This is evident in the rapid feedback mechanism it paved way for. This makes communication process interactive and participatory. Consequently when ICT tools are well incorporated in the process of gathering and reporting, news activities will be transformed better and this will encourage cable enhanced center that will aid journalist in the process of more advanced methods of news processing through electronic means.

Forms of ICTs and Computer Assisted tools useful in the field of journalism

Internet: This is explained as a global interconnectivity of computers and network of computers computer that uses uniform communication procedures in other to provide information and communication services. Internet assists in the



process of exchanging, sending and receiving of information. The use of the internet in the field of journalism can improve timeliness and immediacy of news productivity Mimbi & Bankole (2015) cited in Ayoola, (2020)

Computer: Electronic device that operates with the control of instructions stored in its own memory that can accept data(input) ,process the data according to specified rules, produce information (output),and store the information for future use.

Mobile Phones: A type of telephone system that can be moved easily and quickly from place to place. The mobile phone serves as one of the ICT infrastructures that is reshaping and revolutionizing journalism in recent time. Bittner (1989)

Electronic Mail (e-mail): A system sharing information that entails the exchange of textual messages and computer files that is transmitted via communication networks such as the Internet. E-mail is a popular method of communication, especially in the workplace. It is a system equivalent of postal mailing services, it can be used to transfer and receive information in the form of video, audio, or photographs, (Ogbomo & Ogbomo; 2008; Nwosu, 2004; Oketunji 2000, Ayoola, 2020)

Wireless Application Protocol (WAP): This is an interface between mobile phones and the internet. It allows simplicity and speed in information delivery from internet to mobile phones (William and Sawyer; 2003).

Multimedia Message Services (MMS): This combines various types of messages such as vocal, signals, gestures, animated images and picture, texts etc., in a single communication experience, William and Sawyer; 2003).

Methodology

This study focused on registered members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. Quantitative (survey) research design was used with questionnaire as instrument for collecting data. The quantitative design was considered appropriate since it allows the act of surveying and getting direct response from the targeted audience of the study. The population comprises of the entire registered members of Ogun State Council of Journalists, fifty-three (53) respondents were randomly selected through available nonprobability sampling technique. This technique was adopted because of the difficulty encountered in getting the total number of registered members, hence questionnaire were self-administered by the researcher to the available journalists at the council secretariat. The sixteen (16) item questionnaire was divide into two part. (A) demographic data of respondents and (B) statements to measure question drawn from the research questions, using the five point Likert rating scale (Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Neutral (N); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD)).Data gathered were analyzed using descriptive statistics of simple percentages, frequency counts, while statistical computation and hypotheses testing were done with STAT 12.1 statistical package and inferential statistic of linear regression.

Results

Table 1: Demographic analysis of Respondents

NO	Variable		Frequency	Percentage	Total
1	Gender	Male	47	89%	47(89%)
		Female	6	11%	6(11%)
		Total	53	100%	53(100%)
2	Age	20-35	4	8%	4(8%)
		36-50	44	83%	44(83%)
		51-upward	5	9%	5(9%)
		Total	53	100%	53(100%)
3	Education	HND	9	17%	9(17%)
		BSc	25	47%	25 (47%)
		MSc	19	36%	19(36%)
		Others	-		
		Total	53	100	53(100%)
4	Years of work	3-10years	19	36%	19(36%)
		11-20 years	23	43%	23(43)
		21yrs upward	11	21%	11(21%)
		Total	53	100%	53(100%)
5	Media Org	Newspaper	3	6%	3(6%)



	Radio	25	47%	25(47%)
	Television	19	36%	19(36%)
	Others	6	11%	6(11%)
	Total	53	100%	53(100%)

Source: Researchers field study, 2023.

Demographic analyses of respondents from table 1 above shows that 47(89%) of the respondents were male while only 6(11%) were female. The table shows that 44(83%) fall under the 35 to 50 years while other are (20-35 (4 (8 %), and 51 upward are 5(9%). Further analysis from the demographic analysis also shows that (47%) and (36%) holds BSc and MSc degree while only (17%) are HND holder. Meanwhile the table above indicates the years of experience of the respondents as 3-10 years (36%), 11-20years (43%), 21 years upward as (21%) while (6%) works with newspaper, (47%) work with radio, (36%) television and others are (11%).

Table 2: Measure I (RQ1): To what extent is the effectiveness of the use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
With the aid of ICT tools, such as internet, mobile phones, news gathering, processing and dissemination of information has become easy for journalists in Ogun State.	17 (32%)	36 (68%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53 (100%)
ICT tools such as mobile phone, internet, has paved way for improvement and quality in the standard of journalism practice in Ogun State.	17 (32%)	33 (62%)	3 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53 (100%)
Regular use of ICT tools such internet, electronic mails, multimedia message services leads to work proficiency.	8 (15%)	39 (74%)	6 (11%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53 (100%)

Source: Authors field study, 2023

Interpretation

Analysis from table two above shows that ICT tools such as internet, mobile phones aids in the process of news gathering with (33%) and (68%) responses respectively. Further response also indicate that ICT tool pave way for improvement in the standard of journalist with (32% & 62%) while only (6%) are neutral on that statement.

Table 3: Measure II (RQ2): What are the implications of the use of ICT tools on journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?

Statements	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Adoption of ICT tools pave way for regular training of journalists on ICT literacy and productivity usage	10 (19%)	31 (59%)	5 (9%)	7 (13%)	0 (0%)	53(100%)
Use of ICT tools enables timeliness and immediacy in information dissemination	21 (40%)	32 (60%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53(100%)
Regular use of ICT tools encourages news innovation and improved method of information processing	21 (40%)	32 (60%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53(100)
ICT tools has positively influenced the process of news gathering ,processing and news reporting	24 (45%)	29 (55%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53(100%)

Source: Authors field study, 2023

Interpretation

Table 3 above indicates that an overwhelming percentage of the respondents (19 % , 59%) strongly agree/agree that adoption of ICT tools pave way for regular training of journalists on ICT literacy and productivity usage while only few percent were undecided and few also disagree. Meanwhile all the respondents believes ICT enables timelines and immediacy of information delivery as well as encourages improved method of information processing. According to table 3, ICT tools also influences the process of news gathering and reporting among the journalists.



Table 4: Measure III (RQ3): What are the limitations to effective use of ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists?

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Lack of adequate training and knowledge to operate ICT tools limits the effect use ICT tools	0 (%)	10 (19%)	3 (7%)	31 (59%)	9 (17%)	53 (100%)
Inability to afford ICT tools	13 (25%)	19 (36%)	0 (0%)	6 (11%)	15 (28%)	53 (100%)
Poor remuneration of journalist	14 (26%)	24 (45%)	7 (13%)	8 (15%)	0 (0%)	53 (100%)
High cost of maintaining ICT tools	23 (43%)	20 (38%)	0 (0%)	7 (13%)	3 (7%)	53 (100%)

Source: Authors field study, 2023

Interpretation

From table 4 above, Inability to afford ICT tools with (25% & 36%), poor remuneration (26% & 45%) as well as high cost of maintain ICT tools (43% & 38%) are some of the things limiting the effective use of ICT tools among the journalists

Linear Regression

JP	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
ICT	0.109	0.06	1.82	0.075	-0.011	0.228	*
Constant	1.436	0.13	11.07	0.000	1.175	1.696	***
Mean dependent var		1.660	SD dependent var			0.299	
R-squared		0.061	Number of obs			53	
F-test		3.313	Prob > F			0.075	
Akaike crit. (AIC)		21.950	Bayesian crit. (BIC)			25.890	
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$							

Sources: Authors computation from STAT12.1, 2023.

The results of the Ordinary least square (OLS) linear regression shows that Information communication technological tools has a positive impact on the process of news gathering and reporting as well as journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists with the co-efficient of 0.109. i.e., this also implies that an increase in the use of ICT tools will lead to an increase in the further growth of journalism practice. Therefore, there are benefits in using Information Communication Technological tools on the process of news gathering and reporting for the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists.

Hypotheses Testing

1. H_0 : There is no positive benefit of using ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members Ogun State Council of Journalists
2. H_1 : There is a positive benefit of using ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists

Decision Rule: The result of the linear regression shows the relationship between information communication technology tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. It was found out that information communication technology tools have a positive relationship with the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists with the value of 0.109. Therefore, the study rejects the null hypothesis H_0 "There is no positive benefit of using ICT tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists and accept the alternate hypothesis H_1 "There is a positive benefit of using ICT



tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists”.

Discussion

From the findings, it was discovered that (89%) of the respondents are male, this may be as a result of male gender picking more interest in journalism than female, Respondents between 35-50 (83%) also forms larger percent of respondents why (37%) have spent between 11-20 years on the profession. With (47%), most of the respondents work with radio stations. Meanwhile responses to research question one indicates that all respondents(100%) agrees that ICT tools such as multimedia messaging, internet and mobile phones aids in news gathering and reporting .It has also paved way for the improvement in the quality and standard of the profession (97%) of the respondents affirms this.

Further findings from research question two shows that with the adoption of ICT tools, there has been new innovative method in processing of information.as well as timeliness and immediacy in information dissemination with (100%). From research question three, some the limitations to the use of ICT tools were discovered to be lack of effective training, though with (19%) but it can be seen as a limitation to effective use of ICT tools in the processing of news gathering and reporting, Poor remuneration of journalists also constitutes major limitation.

The results of the Ordinary least square (OLS) linear regression also shows that Information communication technological tools has a positive impact on the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists with the co-efficient of 0.109. i.e., this implies that an increase in the use of ICT tools will lead to further increase in the growth of journalism practice. Therefore, there are benefits in using Information Communication Technological tools on the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists.

The result of the linear regression hence indicates that, there is relationship between information communication technology tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among of Ogun State Council of Journalists. It was found out that information communication technology tools have a positive relationship with journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists with the value of 0.109.

Conclusion

Based on the finding, this study concludes that ICT tools has paved way for better way of news gathering, processing and dissemination among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. It has helped improved work proficiency through immediacy and timeliness in the process of information dissemination. Though inability to afford ICT tools and the maintenance of ICT tools constitutes some of the limitations to the effective use of ICT tools, ICT tools still, have positively impacted on the process of news gathering and reporting as well as journalism practice in Ogun State. Therefore, there are benefits in using Information Communication Technological tools on the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. Based on the findings, this study recommends that:

1. Regular training and re-training of journalist through seminars and conferences of the efficiency of ICT tools should be a continuous process and not one-off, for journalists to stay updated on new innovations.
2. There is the need for better welfare package and incentives for journalists on regular basis, to serve as further encouragement for the journalists.
3. Professional ethics should be maintained while giving room for an increase in the use of ICT tools which will lead to further increase in growth of journalism practice.



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