

MEDIA PREFERENCE AMONG STUDENTS OF KANO STATE POLYTECHNIC – NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined media preferences among students of Kano State Polytechnic during the 2016/2017 academic session. The study was informed by the inadequacy of literature on the topic in the developing countries; Nigeria inclusive. The Survey method was employed for this study and the data were collected using questionnaire. Three hundred and seventy-five (375) respondents were randomly selected from the total population of eleven thousand eight hundred and eighty-five (11,885) using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table. Data collected were analysed and interpreted, using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS), version 22. The study found that, with regard to media usage, Internet is the most preferred source of information for the respondents, followed by radio and television stations respectively. In this regard, majority of the respondents chose news website, Freedom radio and NTA channel respectively. Suggestion was made for future researchers to examine the media preferences among students of other tertiary institutions in Kano State and the relevance of such preferred media in their learning process.

Keywords: Media, Preference, Students.

INRODUCTION

According to Nigatu (2011), mass media –both print, broadcast and the Internet strive to attract the attention of the audiences. The consumption of daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television programs, particularly news programs, and the use of contemporary sources of information (the web, teletext, gsm services) are very important in any society. Thus, the media have occupied our everyday lives in an unprecedented manner. Media as an institution in the society provide and perform many functions such as education, learning and infotainment. Upon this, Uses and Gratification theory becomes relevant and very prominent in investigating why people are using a particular medium of information and theorize that different people have their different reasons for choosing a given media and why they prefer a certain media content over others.

The landscape of present mass media is changing speedily. The introduction of new media brings an intense competition between print and electronic media for capturing students' time and attention. The new players of electronic media have become the time eating machines and all are thrilling with one another for their supremacy(Loan, 2011).On the other hand, the electronic media spread rapidly in our lives and captured the attention of young people (Loan, 2011). These young people who are popularly known as “*Net generation*”, “*Z generation*”, “*Post-Millennials*” or “*Digital natives*” (Tapscott, 1998; Papert, 1996; Prensky 2001) neglect the traditional media and quickly embrace the new communication technology (Bruner, cited in Loan, 2011). These media users according to Tapscott have the following characteristics:

- i. They are born roughly between 1990s to date
- ii. They emphasize the right to information and learning; and
- iii. They are technology savvy.

The popularity of these new media technologies is posing threat to the old media. Thus, Loan (2011, p.156) buttressed that:

The new media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and blogs which are written and updated daily by worldwide readers catch the attention of high institutions students more frequently. In this media mix, the popularity and survival of traditional media is in danger. There is now a strong competition for survival and supremacy between new and traditional media outlets.

Studies on media usage among students in higher institutions are now becoming global phenomena. However, majority of these studies are based in Europe and America with Africa having the least (Bosch as cited in Musa, 2015; Loan, 2011). Some of these studies (Loan, 2009; Dykeman, 2008; Perryman, 1997) focused on the impact of new media on the traditional media

while others (Nigatu, 2014; Loan, 2011; Korzenny & Korzenny, 2007) focused on media preferences among the students in higher institutions.

Now with the emergence and development of new media, attentions of many researchers are on the students' use of new media. They ignore the relevance of the mainstream media in their life and learning process. As such, there is the need to examine the students' use of both new and mainstream media. This will help both government and advertisers to know the right medium to use whenever college students are to be targeted. Therefore, this study intends to bridge the gap of the previous studies that only focused on new media (Buhari & Ahmad, 2014; Edogoh et al., 2013; Ezeah et al., 2013; Ndaku, 2013; Omekwu et al., 2014). The study therefore investigated the students' media preferences and their choice of media contents.

The study is of immense importance as it will help the media proprietors to understand why students do or do not pay attention to their media channels. It will also benefit the Kano State Polytechnic as well as advertisers that want to reach the students at the lowest possible cost.

The scope of this study was limited only to students of the Kano State Polytechnic, who pursued their studies during the 2016/2017 academic session. The types of media to be examined included the Print (Newspaper and Magazine), the Electronic (Radio, TV, Internet, Social media). The study covered the unit schools of the Polytechnic; School of General Studies, School of Management Studies, School of Technology, School of Social and Rural Development, Rano and School of Environmental Studies, Gwarzo.

LITERATURE REVIW, THERORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Literature Review

A study carried out by Loan (2011) on media preferences of the net generation college students in India revealed that, comparing students' preferences between reading and electronic media activities, reading proved to be one of the top most activities only defeated by watching television and listening to music. The result also indicated that the electronic media is competing with the traditional media in different domains as activities like Internet surfing, online chatting and electronic games also are becoming the favorite preferences of the net generation students in developing countries over reading. The overall analysis of the result showed that a student spends 31.36 hours on electronic media like watching television, listening to music, surfing the Internet, playing electronic games and watching CDs/DVDs and 14.42 hours on reading per week. These findings slightly contradict the one of his previous studies (Loan, 2009), as this study examined the impact of new technology on reading habits and showed that, the radio,

television cell phone, computer and the Internet have captured a big slice of time and reading has taken a back seat.

Livingstone and Bovill (2001) in their study on children and their changing media environment found that time spent on television and audio media was significantly higher among respondents than the time spent on electronic games, video and books.

Gentile and Walsh (2002) conducted a normative study on family media habits and the findings showed the children in low income families paid more attention to mass media than their counterparts of higher-income families. The study further revealed that, the former watch more television, watch more movies, play more video games, and listen to the radio and CDs more than the latter

Korzenny and Korzenny (2007) conducted a study on media use in five cultural groups and reported that each of these five groups enjoyed old as well as new media and spend close to 20 hours a week on television, and yet another 20 hours on surfing the Internet.

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Canadian Newspaper Association (2006) highlighted the findings of the study 'Reading between the Lines' which showed that the time youth spent on surfing surpassed the time they spent watching television, listening to the radio or reading newspapers and magazines. According to this report, youth spent 3.5 hours surfing the net, 3.1 hours watching television, 2.4 hours listening to the radio, 1.5 hours reading a book, 0.7 hours reading a newspaper and 0.6 hours reading a magazine.

Theoretical framework

The current research attempted to find out students' media preferences, the uses and gratification theory was employed for the study.

The theory was first introduced and advanced by Katz (1959) when he advocated that the field of Mass Communication research should change its line of thought from 'How the Media Affect People' to 'What do People do with the Media,' (Popoola, 2010).

Katz, Bumber and Gurevitch cited in Popoola (2010) characterized a more comprehensive view of the uses and gratification theory as:

The social and psychological origins of needs, which generate expectations of the mass media or other sources, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure (or engagement in other activities), resulting in need gratification and other consequences, perhaps mostly unintended ones (p. 250).

Contrary to the early belief of bullet theory which tends to look at the audience as homogeneous, responding uniformly and inescapably to the powerful stimuli from the media and also perceived audience as passive in the communication process, uses and gratification theory perceives the recipient as actively influencing the effect process, since he selectively chooses, attends to, perceives and retains the media messages on the basis of his/her needs, beliefs etc, (Folarin, 1998).

Research Question

The research question of the study is:

- i. Which media channels do Kano State Polytechnic students prefer?

METHODOLOGY

Population of the Study

This study population comprised the entire students of Kano State Polytechnic, who were duly registered during 2016/2017 academic session. The total number of the population was eleven thousand eight hundred and eighty five (11,885) comprising the students of the five unit schools in the Polytechnic as presented below:

Table 1. Population of the Study

S/N	Schools	No. of Population
1.	School of Management Studies (SMS)	5,403
2.	School of Technology (SOT)	3,834
3.	School of General Studies (SGS)	2,022
4.	School of Social and Rural Development, Rano (SSRD)	316
5.	School of Environmental Studies, Gwarzo (SESG)	310
	Total	11,885

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The method of simple random sampling was adopted for this study as it was unbiased and guaranteed each element of the population an equal chance of being selected.

To ensure adequate sample representation for this study, the researcher used Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table. For a population of eleven thousand eight hundred and eighty five (11,885), a sample size of three hundred and seventy five (375) was considered appropriate (Krejcie, 1970).

Data Collection Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was purely questionnaire (primary data) given the size of the population.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used frequencies and percentages tables and figures were used to describe the statistics of the demographics of respondents which included unit school, gender, age, status program, level and also the research questions of the study.

RESULTS, IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Table 2. Are you generally interested in global affairs and local news?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid YES	270	82.6
NO	2	0.6
More interested than Not	55	16.8
Total	327	100.0

The result of table 2 above showed that majority of the respondents 270 (82.6%) stated that they were interested in global affairs and local news, while 55 (16.8%) were more interested than not. The result also revealed that 2 (0.6%) of the respondents stated that they were not interested in global affairs and local news. This showed that majority of the Kano State Polytechnics students are generally interested in global affairs and local news.

Table 3. Which type of media do you prefer?

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Television (Proceed to 3)	72	22.0
Radio (Proceed to 4)	78	23.9
Internet (Proceed to 5)	134	41.0
Print (Proceed to 6)	41	12.5
Total	325	99.4
Missing System	2	.6
Total	327	100.0

As regard to the question of which media the students preferred most, the result of the table above showed that majority of the respondents chose Internet as their most preferred media as it is viewed by 134 (41%) of respondents, followed by radio station which is viewed by 78 (23.9%) respondents, and then television which was viewed by 72 (22%) respondents. In addition, print media (newspaper and magazine) are read by small number of respondents, that is 41 (12.5). In general, it is found that Internet is the most preferred media of the respondents.

Table 4. Which is your most preferred television Channel?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	NTA	34	10.4
	ARTV	0	0.0
	AREWA 24	27	8.3
	Other Specify	11	3.4
	Total	72	22.0
Missing	System	255	78.0
Total		327	100.0

With regard to the most preferred television channel chose by the respondents, the greatest number of respondents 34 (10.4%) chose NTA station, followed by 27 (8.3%) respondents who chose Arewa 24 channel. Other (specified) television channel came third with the total number of 11 respondents (3.4%). Abubakar Rimi Television (ARTV) channel took the fourth stage with 0 (0.0%) respondents. The result indicated that, the majority of the students chose NTA as their most preferred television channel.

Table 5. Which is your most preferred radio station?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Radio Nigeria	10	3.06
	Freedom Radio	50	15.3
	Radio Kano	0	0.0
	Other Specify	18	5.5
	Total	78	23.8
Missing	System	249	76.2
Total		327	100.0

With regard to the most preferred radio station, the result of the table 5 above showed that the greatest proportion of the respondents 50 (15.3%) preferred Freedom Radio Kano. Other radio stations in Kano that were mentioned as other (specified) came second with 18 (5.5%)

respondents. The result also showed that 10 (3.06%) of the respondents preferred Radio Nigeria, while no respondent preferred to listen to Radio Kano Station. This indicated that most of the respondents who preferred Radio as their most preferred media listen to Freedom Radio Station.

Table 6. Which is your most Preferred sources of information on the Internet?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	News Websites	72	22.0
	Blogs	38	11.6
	Social Media Platforms	10	3.1
	Other specify	14	4.3
	Total	134	41.0
Missing	System	193	59.0
Total		327	100.0

With regard to the most preferred sources of information on the Internet, the result from the table above indicated that most of the respondents 72 (22%) chose news websites as their sources of information on the Internet, followed by blogs with 38 (11.6%) respondents. Other (specified) sources of information came third with 14 (4.3%) respondents. Social media platforms as the sources of information on the Internet are the least on the table which showed that 10 (3.1%) of the respondents viewed social media platforms as their sources of information on the Internet.

The result showed that most of the respondents used news websites to source information on the Internet.

Table 7. Which is your most preferred title in print media (Newspaper & Magazine)?

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Daily Trust	40	12.2
	News watch	0	0.0
	Vanguard	1	0.3
	Total	41	12.5
Missing	System	286	87.5
Total		327	100.0

Print media were the least among the type of media preferred by the respondents in table 7 with 41 (12.5%) respondents. Proceeding to question 6 or step 6, the result of the table 7 showed that the proportion of the respondents 40 (12.2%) chose Daily Trust as their source of information in the print media. It also showed that 1 (0.3%) respondent viewed Vanguard as their preferred print media. News Watch and other (specified) newspapers and magazine came third with 0 (0%)

respondents. The result of this study found that Daily Trust was the most preferred print media of the respondents.

Print media were the least among the type of media preferred by the respondents in table 4.12 with 41 (12.5%) respondents. Proceeding to question 6 or step 6, the result of the table 4.12 and figure 4.6 showed that the proportion of the respondents 40 (12.2%) chose Daily Trust as their source of information in the print media. It also showed that 1 (0.3%) respondent viewed Vanguard as their preferred print media. News Watch and other (specified) newspapers and magazine came third with 0 (0%) respondents. The result of this study found that Daily Trust was the most preferred print media of the respondents.

An analysis of the table 4.13 also revealed that the average of the most preferred title print media for the sampled respondents was 1.04 with a standard deviation of 0.31, the level of dispersion among the respondents was not very wide.

The outcome of the study also revealed that majority of the respondents were from the School of Management Studies and large number of them preferred Internet as their source of information, followed by the respondents from School of Technology who also preferred the Internet as their source of information and then School of General Studies. School of Environmental Studies, Gwarzo and School of Rural Development, Rano had less respondents and most of them preferred radio and print media. This might be due to the fact that, there is no stable power supply and strong Internet connection in their school location.

The outcome also showed that majority of the female respondents who were married preferred radio channel as their source of information while their counterparts who were not married preferred Internet as their source of information. The findings also indicated that majority of the male HND students were between the age of 30 years and above and preferred television as their source of information.

Generally, the result of this study found that majority of the respondents who were between 20-24 years preferred Internet as their source of Information and those between 30 years and above who were mostly married preferred Television and Radio as their source of information.

Implications of the findings to advertisers

The findings of this study provided valuable insight for advertisers, as it indicates strong association between the media preference, age, gender, marital status and school's location of the respondents.

Majority of the respondents (95.4%) are within the age bracket of 15-29 years and they chose Internet as their most preferred media in which males (69.4%) are more than the females

(30.6%). Comparing the gender preferences, the females are more inclined towards electronic media than males and males are associated more with the Internet culture than female counterparts. In this, majority of the married females (9.5%) preferred radio and television while their married male counterparts (7.0%) preferred Internet and television.

Finally, the findings revealed that, the rural students are more associated with newspaper and radio than urban students while urban students are more associated with the Internet than their rural counterparts.

From the foregoing, it is apparent to the advertisers that, whenever they want to target the “*Net generation*”; “*Z generation*”, “*Post-Millennials*”, or “*Digital natives*”, Internet would be the best medium. And when they want to reach married males and females, they should use Internet and Television respectively, and that the best way to reach rural students is to use radio and newspaper.

Advertisers are also to note that, as a new channel of communication, they must find ways to leverage Internet’s value and match that value with their consumers’ needs and also they cannot ignore the relevance of mainstream media such as radio and television.

Discussion

Data gathered provide insight into the media channels that Kano State Polytechnic students prefer. Media channels were examined at four levels. This study found that significant number of (41%) of respondents used Internet as their preferred media channel and only few (12.5%) used print media as their preferred media channel.

The result of this study also confirmed that Internet is the most preferred media channel by the students of Kano state polytechnic. The majority of the students from the School of Management Studies, School of Technology and School of General Studies are using Internet for 48 hours or more per week. While majority of students from School of Environmental Studies Gwarzo and School of Rural Development Studies, were using the Internet for 10 hours or more per week. This indicated that School of Management Studies, School of Technology and School of General Studies students were dominant in the highest category.

The results also indicated that majority of the respondents (67.5%) expressed what they liked most about their preferred media as its cheapness, its ability to provide current information, its comfortability and its audiovisual nature.

The results also revealed that, majority of the respondents (39.5%) enjoyed surfing the Internet and online chatting because they derived pleasure from it. While others (21%) expressed that, they enjoyed listening to radio for its being more credible and its ability to use both local and English languages.

The result indicated a higher accessibility of Internet among younger age groups and that can be partly explained by their better knowledge of English. This finding is consistent with previous

results by Niagatu (2014), Loan (2011), which found that students use Internet on daily basis as their preferred media channel for the purpose of searching for information related to their subject and sending and receiving mail and searching for daily news.

The group of 30 years and above stand out by virtue of being very active consumers of both television, radio and print media. They are the keenest readers of newspapers and that probably explained the lower frequency of watching TV news in this cohort, compared to two older groups. At the same time, 30 year-old and above have high reflexivity with respect to news media, demonstrated by strong perception of the advantages as well as risks of the Internet. Many literatures have supported this findings (for example, Nigatu, 2014; Loan, 2011). While others such as Belson (1961) found that university students could not do without newspaper and that newspaper was responsible for creating and generating reading habit among the students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The primary objective of this study is to find out the media preference of Kano State Polytechnic students. To address this, relevant data are collected and analysed and from the analysis, results are obtained and discussed. From the discussion of the results, the following conclusion was drawn:

1. The result of this study showed that with regard to media usage, Internet and radio stations are the major information sources of the respondents. Among radio stations, Freedom radio FM is the most chosen station. However, other (specified) radio stations not mentioned in the list are second most chosen stations by the respondents. In addition, students use Internet on daily basis. The use of the Internet as a source of information is becoming rampant, but in general, it is used more by younger participants, which is in line with general trends.

Recommendations

1. As a way of encouraging students, a full computer system should be provided by the various colleges with a defined schedule on when students can access the Internet to browse, or even unlimited access, as obtained at the universities in the developed countries. This is in view of the fact that students who are constrained by paucity of research materials in libraries will enjoy the luxury of having a viable option through access to the internet. Also, such an opportunity will facilitate online discussion between students and lecturers.

2. Media proprietors especially in broadcast media should embrace modern technology by creating online presence to enable all categories of their audience have same chance of accessing them.
3. Students devoted much of their time in the Internet, it is important that they maintain a healthy balance between how much time they spend on social media, and how much time they spend on their academics.
4. Kano State Polytechnic management should consider the Internet as an important channel when it comes to advertising application forms for new intakes or announcement targeted at its students.

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