ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Preference of Twitter and NTA in Entertainment during Covid-19 Lockdown: A Study of Civil Servants in Anambra State

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Abstract

This study was initiated to Compare Social Media and Television Entertainment among civil servants in Anambra State during the COVID-19 Lockdown. The media, (both traditional and new) have become a veritable source of entertainment and an integral part of today's world. The social media, however, depend on mobile and web-based technologies to create highly interactive platforms through which individuals and communities create, share, co-create, discuss and modify content. The theoretical framework was the uses of gratifications theory which states that media consumers use media for various purposes based on their goals and needs. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The research adopted Survey design using the questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Probability sampling was employed using simple random sampling to draw a sample of 382 civil servants based on the recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The questionnaire copies were administered using face-to-face method to ensure retrieval. Validity and reliability were ascertained through a pilot study conducted at Ihiala with 20 respondents. The data were presented in tables and percentages. Explanation building techniques were applied. The study found a significant relationship between the Twitter and NTA entertainment though most of the respondents prefer social media for entertainment because of its flexibility. The study concluded that there is an existing positive relationship between the social media and television entertainment among those who use them because both mediums are used for entertainment and getting information. It was also found that both platforms have mainly positive and minimal negative effects on their users.

Keywords: Entertainment, NTA, Social Media, Twitter, Civil Servants, COVID-19

Introduction

With the multiple definitions that can be ascribed to the television, the layman can easily describe it as that which enables him to see and hear. Nasarimhamurthy (2014) defines it as a medium of mass communication, which is simply a wireless communication; television displays the images of people, products, etc. It is an audio-visual device that is used for conveying messages from a source to a large heterogeneous audience. Television circulates pictures and sounds around the world as people with television can sit in their homes and watch various events going on in and around their various environments. This has made the television the predominant medium of mass entertainment in the second half of the twentieth century and arguably the most powerful medium in the world today as people tend to associate themselves with it (Doughty, Rowland, & Lawson, 2012).

Although the television has existed for a longer period, the monopoly it enjoyed has been depleted by the emergence of the social media. The Social media are avenues or mediums for social interaction, which apply highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media use web-based technologies to transform and broadcast media monologues which are transformed into social dialogues. They are characterized by the democratization of knowledge and information which transform people from content consumers to content producers. According to Danny Shea (2010), Social media are elements of the new media which have become the highest activity on the Internet.

Steven, Huan, and Frank (2016) assert that:

> The use of Twitter has become an increasingly common practice using second screen devices such as laptops and mobile phones. Viewers collectively annotate and provide commentary for their favorite programs in real time, often using show-specific tags and keywords. For fans, the act of "tweeting" the real-time annotation and discussion of television shows on Twitter can provide an instant, online forum for connecting with others watching the same show, making TV viewing an even more social experience. This emerging practice has also caught the interest of television networks and advertisers.

The rapid growth of social media activities that has been observed in recent decades is indicative of its entry into mainstream culture and its integration into the daily lives of many people.

Narasimhamurthy (2014) observes that entertainment industries have been working in tandem with the advancement of social media. He adds that modern generation spends much time visiting social networking sites, watching full-length television shows, watching full-length movies, watching video clips on YouTube and other tools, instant messaging, etc. Obviously, social media is a linking device that allows people to multitask during their entertainment experiences by relating with others and sharing their opinions (Narasimhamurthy, 2014). Supporting this fact, Fang (1997) notes that the widespread penetration of the Internet and the establishment of the WWW and digital forms of communications facilitated through merger of computers and telecommunications network has been envisaged as the major communication revolution.

Suffice it to say that the new age medium has become one of the core means of mass communication medium for the new generation. The contemporary social media creates its importance such that leading our lives without it will be difficult to this younger new generation (Christopher, 2017).

This research is limited to use of television and social media for entertainment among civil servants in Anambra State during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Statement of the Problem

The masses are faced with problems that social media and television entertainment pose which is the amount of productive time spent watching or surfing the Internet or chatting with online friends. This is alarming and as Putman (2000) suggests, such exposure drives down people's civic participation because entertainment compels attention and can become addictive. It has great impact on communication as it has become part of people's existence. Ominicore (2019) reports that 69 million participants on twitter are from the United States of America with an estimated 326 million global monthly participants. This research examines the relationship between social media and television in entertainment with focus on the NTA and twitter. The future of communication has been predicted to depend to a great degree on electronic modes. Academics, business men and professionals in various fields propose various uses of social media and new media generally. These and many more decisions will be made based only on available data concerning these media.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What is the relationship between NTA and Twitter in entertainment?
2. To what extent does NTA provide more entertainment than Twitter?
3. To what extent is watching NTA more entertaining than surfing the net on your twitter account?
4. What are the impact of NTA and Twitter entertainment on civil servants in Anambra state during COVID-19 lockdown?

Theoretical Framework

This study has the uses and gratifications theory (U & GT) as its underpinning. This theory emerged in the 1940s as a basis for studying gratifications that attracted media users (Katz, Haas & Gurevitch,

1973). The assumption is that media users consider the benefits accruing from media interaction in solving their problems and meeting their needs (Rousseau, Eggermont, & Frison, 2017). According to Heerden and Jordaan (2017), the theory also accepts that individuals from diverse backgrounds have different choices of media and that people differ in their reasons and motivations for Social Network Sites (SNS). The U & GT is considered adequate for this research because it explains that people use social media to satisfy various needs, including entertainment which is critical for human existence, especially amongst users of SNSs (Katz, Haas,& Gurevitch, 1973).

CONCEPTUAL DISCOURSE

Television

Television has developed to become a veritable tool for the transmission of social values and norms in a society. People's interests are built into television entertainment programmes which include movies, music videos and reality shows. Baran (2009) says that television has changed the way we organize the furniture in our homes and our world view about our immediate environment.

Television has been proven to have significant influence on people even although it can also be educative. Miles and Anderson (1999) aver that by the age of 18, an average adolescent will have spent more time watching television than any other activity besides sleep. This is especially true when they have unrestricted access to the television. Television has become a recurrent factor in shaping and deciding what people are and what we will become. While seeing man's entire activities as being divided into work and play, Folarin (2005) says that one constant criticism of television in Nigeria is its focus on entertainment rather than on development purposes. Steele and Brown (1995) identify three main reasons why media influence should receive keen attention:

- Young people spend more time with the mass media than they do in school or with their parents.
- The media is full of portrayals that glamorize risky adult behavior such as excessive drinking and sexual promiscuity.
- Parents and other socialization agents have arguably shirked their responsibilities when it comes to directing youths away from risky forms of behavior; thereby allowing the media a more fundamental influence.

Social media

Buettner (2016) explains that Social media are computer mediated tools that allow people or companies to create, share, exchange information, career interest, ideas, pictures/ virtual communities and networks. Studies have found that a vast majority of 18-to-34-year-olds are prone to utilizing social networks such as Facebook and Twitter at the same time as watching a movie in a theatre or in their home because they believe that it would actually invigorate their experience.

Social Media communication takes different forms and instances. Entertainment sectors like cinema, music industry, sports and other, utilize not only traditional mediums like television, radio, publications to reach its audience, but also online methods to reach possible target. Social media play an important role in the entertainment industry.

Huge percentages of online users are using social networking sites. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube, Google+, Linkedin and MySpace are being extensively used and they are efficient in reaching many audiences with great speed and lot of content offering the capability of interaction (Buettner, 2016). These facts give the opportunity to the users to connect with each other, build a brand, create customers' relationship management and manage their reputation. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) sums it up by seeing social media "as a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content."

Through Social media, people can easily exchange valuable information which can improve their career interest, ideas, etc. It also helps in sending pictorial illustrations of ideas. There are several forms of social network; theseinclude: 2go, Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, You Tube, and

Google+. Twitter is one of the leading social sites used by people today. This site allows users to tweet short messages on their walls which attract comments from other users. Users can follow others by tweeting back.

Apart from being an access point for entertainment, social media has become a point of distribution for the developers, brands, television networks, etc. when it comes to providing entertainment. Facebook and Google+ are among those that try to become ubiquitous as much as possible to achieve an encompassing goal and to be the social layer of the web at large. The different social media sites, instead of being a single destination, strive to follow where their users go. Though communication might still be an important factor, it will never be effective when people see no entertainment value in it. Although social media will continue to change in its every aspect as time goes by and the technology keeps on getting more advanced, it will continue to influence and change how people view and adhere to news and entertainment.

COVID-19 and Lockdown

COVID-19 is the acronym for the Corona virus disease that emerged in Wuhan province in China in December 2019. The virus which was dominating lives according to Chaplin (2020) was ravaging the whole world to the extent that the WHO declared it a pandemic on 11th March 2020. Experts say the virus causes major respiratory diseases and has no cure yet, although washing with soap or detergent destroys the virus. Authorities like Van Doremalen (2020) aver that it can be transmitted during the asymptomatic incubation phase (this is estimated to occur in 50–60% of cases) and for up to two weeks after the onset of symptoms. Evidence published by the WHO in March 2020 indicates that work on vaccines is developing fast adding that the Agency had identified two vaccines in phase 1 trials and 42 in preclinical development. A review published on 9 April by Thanh described 115 candidate vaccines, of which the development status is unknown for 37.

The disease is so much dreaded that Worldometer (2020) reports that in as short as 6 months, over 7 million persons have contracted the virus resulting in 434,796 deaths while 4,272,909 recovered from the virus. Over the same period, Nigeria recorded only 53477 cases and 1011 deaths from COVID-19. By 12th October 2020, WHO records show that there have been over 37 million cases of Corona virus disease in over 210 countries and districts. The devastating effect of COVID-19 without a cure brought about lockdown as a way to contain the pandemic. Lockdown is a requirement for people to stay where they are, usually due to specific risks to themselves or to others if they move about freely (Wikipedia). Extensive lockdown was issued by various countries. Although Nigeria was not badly affected by the pandemic, government introduced strict lockdown as part of measures to contain the spread of the COVID-19 among other protocols. Part of Federal government directives which Anambra State adopted includes:

Imposition of curfew from 8pm (later from 10pm) to 4am;
Closure of schools at all levels from primary to tertiary;
Suspension of all religious gatherings and meetings;
Closure of international and domestic airports;
Limitation of any form of gathering including burials, birthday parties and weddings to a maximum of 20 persons;
Reduction of market days to a few days in a week;
Reduction in public transportation carrying capacity to a maximum of 70%;
Closure of state borders to reduce inter-state transmission and;
Reduction in weekly working hours in the public service.

All these resulted in boredom, forcing people to seek relief which culminated in entertainment through the media.

Empirical Review

Cheng and Chen (2016) studied the relationship between social media site Facebook and TV ratings drawing from audience factors of entertainment.

Based on the context of Taiwan television network programmes, this study collected data for Facebook likes, shares, comments, and posts for three genres of: how entertaining the social media contents were and television shows and their Nielsen ratings over a period of eleven weeks. This study of 130 sample applied multiple regression models and determined that the key social media measures correlate with TV ratings. Thus, TV shows with higher number of posts and engagement are likely to relate to higher ratings and results to being entertaining with special in drama shows. Subsequently, this study constructed the TV prediction models with measures for Facebook. The results suggested that social media is doing a good job of entertainment and TV network should be motivated to invest in social media and engage their audience and analysts can use social media as a mechanism of extant forecasting.

Kuan-Yu Lin and His-Peng Lu (2011) in a study of 402 samples, applied network externalities and motivation theory to understand the usage of Social Networking Sites among college students, using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Approach. They found that "Enjoyment" was the most influential factor for the increasing usage of Social Networking Sites among the college students.

Willie and Chioneso (2019) researched on the motives influencing Facebook usage amongst international students at a rural campus in South Africa. He adopted a quantitative approach and applied descriptive and inferential statistics to answer the research questions of the study. The respondents (n = 158) were international students enrolled at a rural university campus in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa during the 2016 academic year. Findings show that motives for Facebook usage were found to be positively related to Facebook entertainment.

Methodology

The study adopted survey research design with the questionnaire as instrument for data collection. Probability sampling was employed using simple random sampling. The population of civil servants in the state is estimated at less than seventy-five thousand. Based on recommendation of Krejcie and Morgan (1970a), 382 is appropriate.

Sample were selected through a multi-stage process using lucky dip. One local government area was chosen from each of the 3 senatorial zones. From the LGA a town was then chosen. The towns that emerged are: Umuoba Anam for Anambra East LGA in Anambra North senatorial zone; Amawbia in Awka South LGA for Anambra Central and Nnewi Ichi in Nnewi LGA for Anambra South.

The questionnaire copies were administered using face-to-face method to ensure retrieval. Validity and reliability were ascertained through a pilot study conducted at Ihiala with 20 respondents.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Analysis of demographic data

Items 1-4 in the questionnaire answered questions on the demography of the respondents.

Table 1: Response Frequency Percentage

Demographic Information		Frequency	Percent %
Sex	Male	210	55
	Female	172	45
	Total	382	100
Age	18-25 YRS	171	44.8
	26-33 YRS	133	35.0
	34-and above	78	20.2
	Total	382	100.0
Education	Basic/ SSCE	96	25
	Diploma	115	30
	HND/Degree	113	29
	Masters	58	16

The demographic information table reveals that, in general, there were 382 participants of which 55% were males and 45% were females. Also for the 18-25 years of age range 171 (44.8%), 26 - 33 years were 133 (35.0%); and 34 and above were 78 (20.2%). On the educational attainment, people with basic education and SSCE were 96 (25%); Diploma 115 (30%); HND/Degree 113 (29%) and Master's Degree and above were 58 (16%).

Table 2: How often do you watch television?

Options	Frequently	Partially	Not at all	Total
Respondents Count	319	63	0	382
% within respondents	84&	16%	0	100.0%

From the above table, 84% (319) of the respondents watch television frequently, while 16% (63) partially watch television. This means that a greater majority of the respondents watch television regularly and are in a position to discuss the issue in hand.

Table 3: Which of the social media do you frequently use for entertainment?

Options		Facebook	WhatsApp	Twitter	Others	Total
Respondents	Count	95	104	167	16	382
	% within respondents	25%	27%	44%	4%	100.0%

The table above shows that 25% (95) of the respondent use Facebook more, 27% (104) use WhatsApp more, 44% (167) use Twitter more, while 4% (16) use other social media more. Therefore, most of the respondents depend on the Twitter for entertainment.

Table 4: Why do you watch NTA?

Options		Entertainment	Political News	Sports	Others	Total
Respondents	Count	118	97	129	38	0	382
	% within respondents	31%	25%	34%	10%	0	100%

From the above table, 31% (118) of the respondents watch NTA for entertainment, 25% (97) for politics, 129 (34%) because of news, and 10% (38) because of sports. It is clear here that a majority watch NTA because of entertainment and news.

Table 5: Why do you use Twitter?

Options		Information	Interaction	Education	Entertainment	Total
Respondents	Count	127	47	56	152	382
	% within respondents	33%	12%	15%	40%	100%

The above table shows that 33% (127) of the respondents use tweeter for information, 12% (47) for interaction, 15% (56) for educational purpose, 40% (152) for entertainment respectively. Therefore, majority of the respondents use Tweeter to get information and entertainment.

Table 6: How does NTA affect you?

Options		Positive	Negative	Both	Total
Respondents	Count	363	0	19	382
	% within respondents	95%	0%	5%	100%

The table above shows that 95% (363) of the respondent said television affects them positively while 5% (19) said television affects them both positively and negatively.

Table 7: How does Twitter affect you?

Options		Positive	Negative	Both	Total
Respondents	Count	277	32	73	382
	% within respondents	73%	8%	19%	100%

The above table shows that 73% (277) respondents said social media affects them positively, 8% (32) said negatively, while 19% (73) of the respondents said social media affects them in both positive and negative ways.

Table 8: What category of content do you find in both NTA and Twitter?

Options		Educational	Information	Entertainment	Others	Total
Respondents	Count	128	109	145	0	382
	% within respondents	33.5%	28.5%	38%	0%	100%

From the above table, 145 (38%) of the respondents said they do find entertainment in both NTA and Twitter; 128 (33.5%) said they do find informational contents in both, while 109 (28.5%) said they do find entertainment in both contents. Thus, most respondents 145 (38%) of the total respondents get entertainment in both NTA and Twitter.

Table 9: What positive things do you learn from NTA?

Options		Empowerment & Religion	Politics and Entertainment	Current Affairs	Total
Respondents	Count	Programmes			
	% within	81	211	90	382
	respondents	21%	55%	24%	100%

The above table shows that 81 (21%) said they do learn about empowerment and religious programmes on television; 211 (55%) of the respondents said they do learn about politics and entertainment on television, while 90 (24%) of the respondents said they access current affairs.

Table 10: What positive things do you learn from Twitter?

Options		Entertainment & Current Affairs	Online Marketing	Sharing & Receiving Information	World & the Society	Total
Respondents	Count	171	29	160	22	382
	% within respondents	45%	8%	41%	6%	100%

The table above shows that 171 (45%) of the respondents do learn about entertainment and current affairs from Twitter; 29 (8%) respondents said they do online marketing; 160 (41%) respondents said they share information on social media, while 22 (6%) of the respondents said the positive thing about social media is knowing about the world and their society.

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 is a summary of the demographic information showing that of the 382 participants, 210(55%) were male while 172 (45%) were females. For the age spread, respondents between 18-25 years of age were 171 (44.8%); 26-33 were 133 (35.0%) and 34 and above were 78 (29 0%). On educational attainment, 96 (25%) attained basic literacy and SSCE; Diploma 115 (30%); HND/Degree 113 (29%) and Master and above 58 (16%).

The findings from table 2 showthat 319 (84%) of the respondents watch television f requently while 63 (16) watch partially. The data gathered also provides that for entertainment, 95 (25%) of the respondents adopt the Facebook; 104 (27%) use WhatsApp; 167 (44%) rely on Twitter and 16 (4%) use other social media handles. On the reasons why they watch NTA or Twitter, 129 (34%) said it is for News; 118 (31%) entertainment; 97 (25%) for politics and 38 (10%) for sports. This shows that a majority take to News and Entertainment. This agrees with Folarin (2005)who asserts that the mass media, most especially television, have gradually become part of our daily lives and have formed the major sources of entertainment adding that people use mass communication more as play than as work, more for pleasure and entertainment than for information and serious work. On the effect of these media channels, 363 (95%) say that the NTA has a positive effect on them while 19 (5%) said it has both negative and positive effects. For the Twitter, 227 (73%) agree that it has a positive effect; 32 (8%) said it has a negative effect while 73 (19%) said it has both positive and negative effects. 128 (35.5%) take to educational content, 109 (28.5%) adhere to information content and 145 (38%) seek entertainment form these media channels.

The study also found that 211 (55%) respondents learn about politics and entertainment on NTA; 90 (24%) learn about current affairs; whole 81 (21%) learn about empowerment and religion. Also, from the Tweeter, 171 (45%) learn about entertainment and current affairs; 160 (41%) use it for sharing and receiving of information; 29 (8%) get opportunity for online marketing and 22 (6%) use the Twitter for world events and society. This strengthens the view of Mark (2017) that in the present day, new generation of today is more connected with the entertainment industry through technology and social media is the swiftest and most economical way to reach them.

The researcher therefore concludes that both NTA and Twitter are very effective in entertainment because people do use both to get entertained.

Conclusion

This study has been able to show that though NTA and Twitter provide entertainment, most people prefer the Twitter as social media for entertainment and other socialization purposes. Being anchored in

the uses of gratifications theory, which says that media consumers use media for various purposes based on their goals and needs, the study concludes that there is an existing positive relationship between twitter and NTA in entertainment as indicated by the users as the users get the power to decide which to use. The findings also indicate that the goals and needs of the users are based mainly on entertainment. It was also found that both platforms have mainly positive and minimal negative effects on their users.

Recommendations

This study recommends that:

1. Twitter followers should expand and make good use of converged media which Twitter and other social media provide.
2. Civil servants in Anambra should not be limited to one or few sources of entertainment and the likes when there are numerous sources.

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