

Impact of ICT Tools on the Effectiveness of News Gathering and Reporting among Ogun State Council of Journalists

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Abstract

This study focused on the impact of information communication technology tools on the effectiveness of news gathering and reporting among the Ogun State Council of Journalists. The objectives were to assess the effectiveness of the use of information communication technology tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists, To ascertain the implications of the use of information communication technology tools on journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists, To investigate the limitations to effective use of information communication technology tools on the process of news gathering and reporting among members of Ogun State Council of Journalists. The study was anchored on technological determinism theory. A quantitative survey method was adopted, fifty three (53) respondents were randomly selected through available sampling techniques. Data gathered were analysed using simple percentages, and frequency counts, while statistical computation and hypotheses testing were done with STAT 12.1 and linear regression. Findings showed that ICT tools aid in the process of news gathering and reporting, it has also paved the way for new innovative methods in information processing. This indicates the benefits of the use of ICT tools for news gathering and reporting among Ogun State Council of Journalists members. However, one of the limitations discovered was the poor remuneration of journalists.

Keywords: Information communication technology (ICT) tools, news gathering and reporting, journalism practice, rapid development.

Introduction

The transformation in the media world today, characterised by the implementation and utilisation of information communication technology tools, can be said to have had a profound impact on the practice of journalism. (Akarika, Ukpe, & Kierian, 2022). It has emerged as an undisputable force to reckon with. Information communication technology tools have enabled the process of information dissemination across geographical boundaries, reforming the ways human beings interact as well as creating a global interconnectedness that enables individuals to communicate seamlessly with others worldwide (Ubong, 2023). According to Ufot, Akarika, and Ukpe (2023), the current media landscape seems to suggest that convergence is more of a case of evolution than revolution, at the level of news production. Ufot *et al* (2023) also opined that it is a result of this that the media industries are converging traditional news organisations and expanding into new media, Newsrooms and journalists are moving from the era of single-media to using information communication technology tools in news gathering and reporting (Ufot *et al.*, 2023). This trend in the use of ICT tools suggests employment growth, as well, as the deployment of ICT tools in news dissemination, to achieve better work competence,

precision, as well as quick operations of news processing.

Information communication technology tools can be seen as tools that have significantly assisted in the acceleration and cost reduction of information dissemination. Before, there was usually a time gap between when an event occurred and when it reached the public (Ubong, 2023). The significance according to Ubong (2023) was more apparent in print media than in broadcasting which is credited with the speed of dissemination of information. ICT tools can be said to have reinforced nearly every aspect of the media operation in contemporary times, from news gathering, and sourcing to news writing and editing. With the aid of the Internet, journalists can browse websites to source national and international news without the stress of going all out to get such information. Consequently, information communication technology tools have continued to reshape the media world (Ubong, 2023). As noted by Awati, and Pratt (2023), information communication tools enable the adoption of modern computing in communication and information dissemination. It permits and enhances the electronic processing, transmission, and dissemination of information (Ubong, 2023). Howarth (2023) argued that



information communication tools have been harnessed to enhance public services, foster business growth, and expand social networks in developing countries. Howarth maintained that over 75% of the global population has access to mobile phones, with nearly 7 billion mobile-cellular subscriptions worldwide (Howarth, 2023). ICT tools can, therefore, be said to have left their mark on economies, governments, and societies worldwide; they have also revolutionised the media landscape. Information Communication Technology tools have equipped reporters with advanced tools, which enable them to streamline the gathering, processing, and dissemination of information. This has greatly paved the way for the rapid dissemination of news. Findings from a study conducted by Ibayum (2021) on information and communication technologies on news gathering and reporting in selected radio and television stations in Jos, Plateau State showed that a substantial number of journalists in the Jos Plateau stations exhibit proficiency in the use of ICT in their news-reporting tasks. The findings also established that ICT tools have greatly impacted news, the study was anchored on technological determinism and diffusion of innovation theories, the survey research method was utilised to collect data on news gathering and reporting process in the selected

stations. The study was anchored on technological determinism and diffusion of innovation theories. Accordingly, this study assessed the effectiveness of ICT tools in the news gathering and reporting process among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists. The study was premised on the technological determinism theory developed by Marshall McLuhan (1964) cited in Jan, Shakirullah, Naz, Khan and Khan (2020). This theory associates a greater role of technology in media. This can be seen in the various ways in which innovative technologies employed by the media have been reshaping people's ways of life in society as well as how society operates. Media technology can be said to have advanced and changed the process of information dissemination in society people not only consume information on a timely basis but also take part in the process of information generation and dissemination due to the interactive nature of media technology. Journalist now employs different forms of ICT tools in the process of gathering, processing and disseminating information in society.

Research Questions

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

Hypothesis

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

H₁: There is a positive benefit of using ICT tools in the process of news gathering and the growth of journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists.

Literature Review

Journalism and Information Communication Technology Tools

The employment of ICT tools in modern-day journalism practice can be said to be a contributing factor in the process of information dissemination. It also creates a network that enables journalists to discharge duty with ease. ICT tools have created a good communication process between journalists on duty and their news audiences, who are the end consumers of information. ICT tools have helped in bringing closer, communicators and receivers. This is

evident in the rapid feedback mechanism it paved the way for. This makes the communication process interactive and participatory. Consequently, when ICT tools are well incorporated into the process of gathering and reporting, news activities will be transformed better and this will encourage cable-enhanced centres that will aid journalists 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



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

Desktop/Laptops: These are commonly used ICT tools in the process of news writing and reporting. It can be used for editing pictures and graphics to go with news stories. There are other uses such as for communication, computation, record keeping and other related journalism work. (Bruntha, Subaithani & Shabana, 2024).

Digital Camera: This is also used in news gathering and reporting. It is used for the documentation of important events in the process of news gathering.

Electronic Mail (e-mail): A system of sharing information that entails the exchange of textual messages and computer files that can be conveyed using communication networks such as the Internet. It is a popular method of communication, especially in the workplace, it can be used to transfer and receive information in the form of video, audio, or photographs, (Ayoola, 2020),

Internet: This is a global interconnectivity of computers and a network of computers computer that uses uniform communication procedures to provide

information and communication services. The Internet assists in the process of exchanging, sending and

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

Mobile Phone: This is also known as a hand-phone or cellular type of telephone system. It can be moved easily and quickly from place to place. It can receive calls over a radio frequency the mobile phone serves as one of the ICT tools that is reshaping and revolutionising journalism in recent times.

Multimedia Message Services (MMS): A standard way of sending messages. MMS combines various types of messages such as vocals, signals, gestures, animated images and pictures, texts etc., in a single communication experience,

Wireless Application Protocol (WAP): This is a description for a fixed communication protocol to standardise the manner wireless devices, such as mobile phones and radio transceivers, can be used for internet access, including email, the web, newsgroups and instant messaging. It permits easiness and promptness in information delivery from the Internet to mobile phones (Techtarget, 2024)

Methodology

This study focused on registered members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists. A quantitative (survey) research design was used with a questionnaire as an instrument for collecting data. The quantitative design was considered appropriate since it allows the act of surveying and getting direct responses from the targeted audience of the study. The population comprises the registered members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists, fifty-three (53) respondents were randomly selected through the available non-probability sampling technique. This technique was adopted because of the difficulty encountered in getting the total number of registered members, hence questionnaires were self-administered

by the researcher to the available journalists at the council secretariat. The sixteen (16) item questionnaire was divided into two parts. (A) Demographic data of respondents and (B) statements to measure questions 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 analysed using descriptive statistics of simple percentages, and frequency counts, while statistical computation and hypotheses testing were done with STAT 12.1 statistical package and inferential statistics of linear regression.

Results



Table 1: Demographic Analysis of Respondents

N O	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 show that 47(89%) of the respondents were male while only 6(11%) were female. The table shows that 44(83%) fall under 35 to 50 years while others are (20-35 (4 (8 %), and 51 upward are 5(9%). Further analysis from the demographic analysis also shows

that (47%) and (36%) hold BSc and MSc degrees while only (17%) are HND holders. Meanwhile, the table above indicates the years of experience of the respondents as 3-10 years (36%), 11-20years (43%), 21 years upward (21%) while (6%) work 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 the Ogun State Council of Journalists?

	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
With the aid of ICT tools, such as the internet, and 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 phones and, the internet, have paved the 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 mail, and 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 2 above shows that ICT tools such as the internet, and mobile phones aid in the process of news gathering with (33%) and (68%)

responses respectively. Further responses also indicate that ICT tools pave the way for improvement in the standard of journalists 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 the Ogun State Council of Journalists?



	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
Adoption of ICT tools paves the way for regular training of journalists on ICT literacy and productivity usage	10 (19%)	31 (59%)	5 (9%)	7 (13%)	0 (0%)	53(100%)
The 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 methods of information processing	21 (40%)	32 (60%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	53(100)
ICT tools have 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 that the adoption of ICT tools paved the way for regular training of journalists on ICT literacy and productivity usage while only a few cent were processing. According to Table 3, ICT tools also influence the process of news gathering and reporting among journalists.

undecided and few also disagree. Meanwhile, all the respondents believe ICT enables timelines and immediacy of information delivery as well as encourages improved methods of information

Table 4: Measure III (RQ3): What are the limitations to the effective use of ICT tools in news gathering and reporting among the 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 of 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, the Inability to afford ICT tools (25% & 36%), poor remuneration (26% & 45%) and the high cost of maintaining 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	
*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$							

Source: Authors computation from STAT12.1, 2023.

The results of the Ordinary least square (OLS) linear regression show that Information communication technological tools have a positive impact on the process of news gathering and reporting as well as journalism practice among members of the Ogun State

Council of Journalists with a coefficient 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 in the process of news gathering and reporting for the growth of journalism practice among members

of the Ogun State Council of Journalists.

Hypotheses Testing

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

H_1 : There is a positive benefit of using ICT tools in the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists.

Decision Rule: The result of the linear regression shows the relationship between information communication technology tools in the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists. It was found that information

communication technology tools have a positive relationship with the process of news gathering and reporting and journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists with a 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 the Ogun State Council of Journalists and accepts 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 the Ogun State Council of Journalists".

Discussion

From the findings, it was discovered that (89%) of the respondents are male, this may be a result of the male gender picking more interest in journalism than females, Respondents between 35-50 (83%) also form a larger percentage 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 indicate that all respondents (100%) agree that ICT tools such as multimedia messaging, the internet and mobile phones aid in news gathering and reporting. It has also paved the way for the improvement in the quality and standard of the profession (97%) of the respondents affirm this.

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

remuneration of journalists also constitutes a major limitation.

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

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

Conclusion



Based on the findings, this study concludes that ICT tools have paved the way for better news gathering, processing and dissemination among the members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists. It has helped improve work proficiency through immediacy and timeliness in the process of information dissemination. Though the 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 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 in the process of news gathering and reporting and the growth of journalism practice among members of the Ogun State Council of Journalists. Based on the findings, this study recommends that:

1. Regular training and re-training of journalists through seminars and conferences on the efficiency of ICT tools should be a continuous process and not a one-off, for journalists to stay updated on innovations.
2. There is a need for better welfare packages 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 a further increase in the growth of journalism practice.

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