



Media Consumption Habits among Students of Select Higher Educational Institutions in Ibadan, Nigeria

¹Adenike Omotayo Okeya-Olayinka & ²Elizabeth Temitope Afolabi

^{1&2}Department of Broadcasting Information and Media Science, Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Ajayi Crowther University, Oyo

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0603-1855>

<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-9616-2466>

*Corresponding Author: omotayookeya@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Background: Media consumption habits has to do with the recurring patterns, preferences and behaviours that an individual or demographics exhibits when engaging with various forms of media as it dictates the content that people choose to absorb, how they access and what they do with it.

Objective: The study examined the Media Consumption Habits of Students in Higher Institutions in Ibadan. The objective of the study was to identify students' media habits in the selected universities in the Ibadan metropolis, southwest, Nigeria.

Method: The methodology used for the study was the descriptive survey method. While the research instrument used was the Self-administered questionnaire to collect relevant information from the students, however, a total number of three hundred and twenty-six questionnaires were administered and a simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The data gathered were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 in the form of tables, percentages and frequency count.

Result: Social media platforms enable users to communicate, build relationships, and gain popularity. While social media connects students with peers and faculty, the rise of digital platforms has led to increased online content consumption, including streaming services, podcasts, and news outlets. This study also shows the effects of media habits on undergraduates in Ibadan and found that media use encourages learning, provides information, influences lifestyle, and entertains, but can also lead to procrastination and addiction. Interestingly, media use does not affect self-esteem or lead to loneliness.

Conclusion: This study concludes that undergraduates primarily use the Internet for browsing and social media, with minimal engagement in streaming, downloading, and reposting content.

Unique Contribution: the study has offered new insight into how policymakers can use the study results to develop evidence-based policies and guidelines to promote healthy media consumption habits among students, ensuring their academic success and overall well-being. In addition, guiding media literacy and responsible media use

Key Recommendation: The study recommended that Media literacy training should be done to integrate media literacy into the university curriculum to educate students on responsible media usage, critical thinking, and online safety.

Keywords: Content Consumption, Media Habits, Media Consumption, Media, Students, Social Media,



INTRODUCTION

The media is crucial in nation-building. Research has indicated that they are channels used in disseminating information simultaneously to a large, heterogeneous, anonymous, and scattered audience. According to Nwabueze (2014), mass media's traditional role in any society is to inform, educate, and entertain is so crucial that societies can hardly progress meaningfully without these channels of mass communication. This is apparently why the third president of the United States of America, Thomas Jefferson while underscoring the importance of the press in society in one of his speeches stated: "... were it left for me to choose whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I shall not hesitate a moment to choose the latter ...” (cited in Ahmed, et.al 2020, p.130). According to Nwabueze (2014), the roles that the media perform in a society best characterise them as they educate, inform, and amuse through news, features, and commentary in the press. The media also create documentaries, plays, current affairs programs, public service announcements, magazine shows, and other types of radio and television programming. The media serves as a channel for bringing voices, opinions, and lifestyles into the public eye. Over the last decade, Africa has seen a significant increase in Internet media use by urban and rural groups to obtain and disseminate information for social and economic objectives.

Scholars have also opined that the media landscape has significantly transformed in recent years, with the proliferation of digital platforms and technologies. This evolution has profoundly impacted communication patterns and media consumption habits, particularly among the younger population, including students in higher institutions of learning. Media outlets like film, television, newspapers, and new media platforms are found to be an integral part of human lives that exercise certain levels of influence on their viewers or users (Asemah, 2011; Nwafor et al., 2022). Access to some form of mass media by many institutions has increased consumption among all students. According to Kamerer (2013), “Despite our daily need to work, sleep and eat, media use dominates how we spend our days. Young minds are controlled and directed by media discourse towards the formation of opinions or attitudes on important social issues like gender, caste, class, religion, and so on. Fan club cultures, hero-worship, imitation of favourite stars, dressing, food habits, and mannerisms are results of media consumption that are common among the younger generation, especially students.

The media landscape has significantly transformed in recent years, with the proliferation of digital platforms and technologies. This evolution has profoundly impacted communication patterns and media consumption habits, particularly among the younger population, including students in higher institutions of learning. Plenty of literature emphasizes the significance of studying media habits and their effects on academic performance. For instance, Junco and Cotton (2012) found that excessive use of social media platforms negatively impacts students' academic achievement. Similarly, studies exploring the influence of media exposure on mental health have reported associations between heavy media consumption and increased levels of depression and anxiety among university students (Primack et al., 2017; Aligwe et al., 2017; Vannucci et al., 2017). These studies predominantly focus on Western countries and do not fully capture the unique context of Ibadan, Southwest Nigeria. Considering the cultural and socio-economic



context of Ibadan, Southwest Nigeria, it is essential to understand how media habits shape the lives of students, as they can influence their educational experiences, social interactions, and personal development. There are specific factors unique to the Nigerian context, including cultural values, economic disparities, and access to digital technologies, which might impact media consumption habits among students. Moreover, exploring the relationship between media exposure and academic outcomes can inform the design of interventions and strategies to promote healthier media consumption patterns among students, ultimately enhancing their academic success and overall well-being. This tailored approach to managing media consumption among students in Ibadan, Southwest Nigeria is crucial, given the changing nature of media platforms and their potential influence on academic performance.

However, there is a dearth of empirical research that specifically examines the media habits of students in higher institutions in Ibadan, SouthWest Nigeria. This study aims to fill this gap and shed light on the media habits of students in this region, exploring the utilisation of various media platforms, the frequency of media usage, and the duration of media exposure. Hence, this study seeks to address the research gap by investigating the media Consumption habits of students in higher institutions in Ibadan, Nigeria.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate students' media consumption habits in the selected Universities in Ibadan, Nigeria.
2. To examine the effect of media consumption habits on students in selected higher institutions in Ibadan, Nigeria.
3. To examine the factors that predispose students' media consumption habits in the selected Universities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Uses and Gratifications Theory is highly relevant to the study as it deals with media habits of students in higher institutions. This theory posits that people are actively involved in media usage and interact highly with communication media to satisfy their needs and desires. It suggests that media use is goal-directed and that individuals use media to satisfy specific gratifications. The theory also emphasizes those gratifications sought (expectations of gratifications) are different from gratifications obtained (needs satisfied by media use). In the context of social media, the Uses and Gratifications Theory has been used to understand the motives behind problematic social media use among university students. It has also been applied to examine the role of individual differences in loneliness among secondary school students on social networking sites. Therefore, the Uses and Gratifications Theory can provide valuable insights into the motivations and gratifications of students' media habits in higher institutions, helping to understand why and how they use media.

Media Habit: A Concept

The mass media are often referred to as the watchdog of society, because of their 'Bark' when something arises (Asemah, 2011). Scholars have opined that to some extent, the media are a



beacon of flashlight, shining a light on dark corners that some would prefer to ignore while UNESCO (2005, p.33) is of the news that the media have a crucial function as the sector of the society that can promote vigilance towards the rule of law. This simply shows that media habit refers to the repeated patterns of media consumption and engagement that individuals develop in their day-to-day lives. As a society, we have become increasingly reliant on various forms of media, including television, radio, print, and digital platforms, for information, entertainment, and staying connected. Our media habits shape the way we interact with the world, influence our thoughts, beliefs, and behaviours, and have a significant impact on our overall well-being. One important aspect of media habits is the amount of time spent consuming media. Research suggests that the average person spends a significant portion of their day engaging with media, such as watching television, browsing the internet, or using social media platforms. For example, a study by Nielsen found that in the United States, adults spend around 11 hours and 6 minutes per day interacting with media in various forms (Nielsen, 2021).

Adgate (2021) is of the opinion that media habits has undergone a sweeping change driven by streaming content and other digital media platforms, especially among younger age groups. As media continues to fragment, developing a successful strategy is becoming a more challenging task with each passing year. Despite the fragmentation and the challenge of reaching young adults, many advertisers continue to market to this demographic, since young adults have a greater lifetime value as consumers than older demographics. Hence, marketers continue to pay a premium ad rate to reach them. According to Tokunaga (2020), media habits provide an alternate explanation to rational-based models of media selection. These habits are learned media routines emerging after repeated media consumption that are cued by internal or external stimuli. Media habit formation involves the complex storage of specific media-related behavioural sequences as mental representations in memory. Tokunaga furthermore explains that these behavioural sequences are automatically initiated given salient cues without conscious self-instruction. Media habits can be interpreted as both good and bad behaviours with variations of strength in either direction. Bad habits, however, have received far greater attention in research on media habits, and they have been understood as deficient self-regulation of media use, problematic media use, and even media addictions. Once a media habit is imprinted, it could have positive or negative effects on media consumers' lives. Good media habits are responsible for social connectivity and relational success, whereas bad media habits are tied to relational failures and occupational or academic troubles.

The development of media habits is influenced by various factors, including societal norms, family influences, and peer pressures. For example, children often adopt the media habits of their parents or family members, which can have long-lasting effects on their media consumption patterns (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013). Additionally, individuals may also develop media habits based on their desire for escapism, entertainment, or to satisfy their social and emotional needs (Livingstone, 2021). While media can provide numerous benefits, it is important to be mindful of one's media habits, diversify sources, and be aware of the potential negative effects excessive media consumption can have on mental health and personal relationships.



Media Habits and Nigerian Students

One important aspect of media habits among Nigerian students is the amount of time spent consuming media. Research suggests that Nigerian students spend a considerable amount of their day engaging with various forms of media. For instance, a study by Ezejimofor, Uchendu, and Okonkwo (2019) found that Nigerian university students spend an average of 4.6 hours per day using the internet for activities such as social media, online gaming, and online video consumption. Another study by Adesina and Aminu (2019) reported that Nigerian students spend approximately 2.5 hours per day watching television. Media, as well as forms of communication, are also a concern to many students because of the level of distraction they create among Nigerian Students (Greenfield & Subrahmanyam, 2008). This has caused distractions during instruction time and has harmed the learning environment. Das, and Sahoo, (2010) reported on transition difficulty among students. Suleiman (2014) asserted that academic adjustment has dimensions and that the transition for students from tertiary institutions is greatly influenced by contemplation on their way to take responsibility for their paths. The development of media habits among Nigerian students is influenced by several factors.

One significant factor is the availability and affordability of media technologies. With the increasing penetration of smartphones and internet access in Nigeria, students have more opportunities to engage with media content (Ajiboye & Ajiboye, 2015). Moreover, societal and peer pressures play a role in shaping media habits, as students often emulate the media consumption patterns of their peers or are influenced by societal trends (Olabisi & Olaoye, 2017). The use of media has now become comprehensive and widespread among students. (Zahid., Ahmad, Syed. & Faisal, 2016). they further stated that the most popularly used are Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google+, Skype, and Facebook. On all of these social media platforms, a user's profile allows the users to communicate information with each other and allows users to build on their own maintain relationships and become popular as well. It is also used to connect with other students and members of faculty within and outside the classrooms. Nigerian students also engage with traditional media sources, such as television, radio, and newspapers.

Television remains a popular medium among Nigerian students, with a particular interest in local and international news, movies, and music videos (Irekefe, 2014). Radio is also widely consumed, especially for music and entertainment programs (Asamoah, 2017). However, with the rise of digital platforms, students are increasingly accessing content online, including streaming services, podcasts, and online news outlets. The impact of media habits on Nigerian students is multifaceted. On one hand, media can provide educational resources, foster social connections, and entertain. For example, access to online educational platforms and social media groups enables students to collaborate, gain new knowledge, and expand their horizons (Okorafar, 2017). Media also plays a role in shaping cultural identity, promoting Nigerian music, movies, and cultural expressions (Emejuru et al., 2020). However, excessive media consumption or reliance on certain types of media content can have negative consequences. Studies have shown that heavy social media use among Nigerian students can lead to reduced academic performance, addiction, and mental health issues (Adebowale & Ismail, 2017; Nwaolikpe, 2018).



Moreover, exposure to misinformation and fake news through social media can also impact critical thinking skills and contribute to the spread of false information (Okemini & Udomboso, 2019). To develop healthier media habits among Nigerian students, it is important to promote media literacy and critical thinking skills. Educational institutions, policymakers, and parents can play a role in educating students about media literacy, fact-checking information, and promoting a balanced approach to media consumption. Students can benefit from setting limits on screen time, diversifying media content, and engaging in offline activities such as hobbies, sports, and face-to-face interactions.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research method was used. The questionnaire was used as an instrument of data collection. The population of the study comprised students of the University of Ibadan 33,000 (203), the Polytechnic Ibadan 18,000 (110), Dominion University 758(5) and Lead City University 13,045(80) for the 2022/2023 academic session where 398 respondents opinion was surveyed. For this research, Simple Random Sampling was employed so that all population elements will have an equal chance of being selected for the sample. A total of 398 copies of questionnaires was distributed to respondents in the four (4) selected institutions. Distribution of copies of questionnaires were done based on percentage proportion.

DATA PRESENTATION

Research Question 1: What is the Media consumption habit of students in the selected Universities in Ibadan, Nigeria?

Table 1: Purpose of Using Mass Media

	Frequency	Per cent
Seek Information	108	33.1%
Education	56	17.2%
Make friends	18	5.5%
Entertainment	141	43.3%
Others	3	.9%
Total	326	100.0%

This result shows that the majority of the respondents use mass media for entertainment purposes followed by information seeking.

Table 2: Activity engaged in the most when online

	Frequency	Per cent
Browsing the internet	138	42.3%
Using social media platforms	117	35.9%
Streaming content	34	10.4%
Reposting content I see online	15	4.6%
Downloading	21	6.4%
Others	1	.3%
Total	326	100.0%



This result shows that activities most of the participants in this study engage when they are online browsing, using social media platforms and streaming content.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of media consumption habit on students in selected higher institutions in Ibadan, Nigeria?

Table 3: Effect of Media Consumption Habits on Students

	SD	D	U	A	SA
Media influences my lifestyle	21(6.4%)	65(19.9%)	13(4.0%)	134(41.1%)	93(28.5%)
Media encourage me to learn more	5(1.5%)	14(4.3%)		198(60.7%)	109(33.4%)
Media is addictive	6(1.8%)	80(24.5%)	10(3.1%)	142(43.6%)	88(27.0%)
Media consumption causes procrastination	9(2.8%)	52(16.0%)	12(3.7%)	156(47.9%)	97(29.8%)
Media educate me on things happening around me	3(0.9%)	8(2.5%)	2(0.6%)	137(42.0%)	176(54.0%)
Media is Entertaining	1(0.3%)	4(1.2%)	1(0.3%)	150(46%)	170(52.1%)
Media is Informative	3(0.9%)	3(0.9%)	2(0.6%)	124(38.0%)	194(59.5%)
Without media I am lonely	64(19.6%)	124(38.0%)	17(5.2%)	67(20.6%)	54(16.6%)
The use of media affects my self-esteem	100(30.7%)	135(41.4%)	31(9.5%)	45(13.8%)	15(4.6%)

Findings in this study show that media consumption causes procrastination among respondents in this study. In addition, it also shows that majority of the respondents did not see the use of media to overcome loneliness.

Research Question 3: What are the factors that predispose students' media consumption habits in the selected Universities?

Table 4: Factors Predisposing Media Consumption Habits of Students

	SD	D	U	A	SA
Unemployment	68(20.9%)	158(48.5%)	6(1.8%)	65(19.9%)	29(8.9%)
Peer pressure	78(23.9%)	163(50.0%)	6(1.8%)	64(19.6%)	15(4.6%)
To have fun	11(3.4%)	48(14.7%)	8(2.5%)	183(56.1%)	76(23.3%)
Work-related	20(6.1%)	78(23.9%)	11(3.4%)	157(48.2%)	60(18.4%)
Obtain information about the country	2(0.6%)	8(2.5%)	2(0.6%)	162(49.7%)	152(46.6%)
Entertainment	5(1.5%)	15(4.6%)	5(1.5%)	153(46.9%)	148(45.4%)

Findings show that the majority of the participants in this study are not using media because of their unemployment status. It was also found that peer pressure was not among the reasons why respondents use the media.



DISCUSSION

The outcome of this research shows that undergraduates in Ibadan are familiar with different mass media, however, the majority of the undergraduates are very familiar with social media, television and radio. In using different mass media, undergraduates use mass media majorly to entertain themselves, seek information and educate themselves. Although they use mass media to make friends, however, very few respondents use media to make friends. The use of media has now become comprehensive and widespread among students. Supporting the findings in this study, Oluwole, Ogunnaike, and Oni (2019) reported that Nigerian tertiary students heavily rely on media platforms for various purposes. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp are the most frequently used media channels. Of the different media, the most popularly used are Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google+, Skype, and Facebook (Zahid et al., 2016).

Investigation of activities mostly carried by undergraduates include browsing on the internet and using social media, while very few engage in streaming content online, downloading and reposting content they see online. On all of these social media platforms, a user's profile allows the users to communicate information with each other and allows users to build on their own maintain relationships and become popular as well. It is also used to connect with other students and members of faculty within and outside the classrooms (Zahid et al., 2016). However, with the rise of digital platforms, students are increasingly accessing content online, including streaming services, podcasts, and online news outlets. The impact of media habits on Nigerian students is multifaceted (Okorafar, 2017).

The outcome of the effect of media habits on students shows that the use of media by undergraduates in Ibadan encourages them to learn more and educate them on happenings around them, serves as an avenue to obtain information, influences their lifestyle, promotes procrastination, entertains them, and can lead to addiction. It was however found that the use of media does not affect the self-esteem of undergraduates, nor does the non-usage of media make them lonely. It was found that the media habit of undergraduates is affected by their gender, level and marital status; however, their Age, Type of Institution, Faculty and Religion have no significant effect on their media habits. In the study of Njeze (2013), it was found that more male than female students use media. The author's choice of wording and emphasis suggests a slightly positive tone towards the benefits of media habits, highlighting their potential to encourage learning, education, and information gathering. At the same time, they also acknowledge the potential drawbacks, such as procrastination and addiction. Furthermore, the factors that predispose media habits among undergraduates in Ibadan shows that the use of media by undergraduates in Ibadan is to have fun, obtain information about their country, for entertainment purposes, and based on their work. It was found that media use has no relationship with the unemployment of undergraduates or peer pressure. Ibadan.



CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results, the study concludes that that undergraduates primarily use the Internet for browsing and social media, with minimal engagement in streaming, downloading, and reposting content. The study recommended that Media literacy training should be done to integrate media literacy into the university curriculum to educate students on responsible media usage, critical thinking, and online safety.

Ethical clearance

Ethical consent was sought and obtained from the participants used in this study. They were made to understand that the exercise was purely for academic purposes, and their participation was voluntary.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Authors' Contributions

Adenike Omotayo Okeya-Olayinka conceived the study, including the design, Elizabeth Temitope Afolabi collated the data, and Adenike Omotayo Okeya-Olayinka handled the analysis and interpretation and also wrote the initial manuscript. All authors have critically reviewed and approved the final draft, and are responsible for the content and similarity index of the manuscript.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Disclosure

The author(s) declare that no generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) or AI-assisted technologies were used in the writing, analysis, or preparation of this manuscript.

Data availability statement

The datasets on which conclusions were made for this study are available on reasonable request.

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