



Research Article

Analysis of New Media Integration and Readership Of Nigerian Newspapers: Evidence from Readers Resident Within FCT-Abuja, Nigeria

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the nexus between new media integration and readership of Nigerian Newspapers among readers resident within FCT-Abuja. It specifically described personal characteristics of newspapers' readers in FCT-Abuja; examined whether the new media integration has enhanced-or-reduced readership among readers; and ascertained whether the new media integration has enhanced-or-reduced patronage of print newspaper editions among readers. The study was anchored on Diffusion of Innovation, and Mediamorphophasis theories. The study was carried-out in FCT-Abuja. Data were collected from readers resident within FCT-Abuja using online questionnaire and a total of 384 respondents randomly responded. Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Finding revealed that the readers of Nigerian Newspapers were predominantly male (63.8%) between the age of 31-40 years (51.6%) with at least a Degree/HND/PGD certificate (89.6%), and mostly civil servants (42.7%). The majority (97.1%) of respondents sourced or followed news and other information on new media, while their choice of newspaper version was ranked as both print and online news (51.8%), online news only (42.2%), and print news only (6%). Furthermore, majority (73.8%) of the respondents confirmed that new media integration has enhanced their readership of Nigerian Newspapers but has simultaneously led to a decline in patronage of print newspaper editions (67.2%). The regression analysis further confirmed that integration of new media had positive/significant influence on readership of Nigerian Newspapers ($\beta=0.488$; $p\text{-value}=0.000$). Conclusively, integration of new media therefore has greatly enhanced readership of Nigerian newspapers but has simultaneously led to a decline in patronage of print newspaper editions.

Introduction

The Nigerian newspaper industry has historically served as a vital source of information, education, surveillance, and public enlightenment. It plays critical roles in shaping public opinion, promoting civic engagement, and facilitating national development through the dissemination of news on political, economic, religion, and social issues. However, the emergence and rapid expansion of new media technologies have transformed the traditional media ecosystem, altering how readers access, receive, consume, and interact with news contents.

The concept of new media integration as used in this study simply refers to the incorporation of digital and internet-based technologies, such as social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube Channel, Tiktok, LinkedIn, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Telegram, Messenger, and X), mobile Apps, websites, and other digital publishing platforms into traditional media operations to enhance content production, distribution, circulation, accessibility, and readers engagement. The advent of new media has given rise to what scholars describe as the "new media era" (Marian et al. 2022). Unlike traditional print newspapers, new media platforms provide instant access to information, interactivity, multimedia content, and real-time updates. Consequently, newspaper organisations across the World have increasingly integrated new media into their operations through online editions, mobile applications, websites, and social media platforms (Guo, 2023). This integration has no doubt created new opportunities for expanding readership while simultaneously posing threats to the sustainability of print newspaper circulation across the country.

Scholars have expressed divergent views

regarding the implications of new media integration for newspaper readership. For instance, one school of thought argues that new media threaten survival of traditional print newspapers by diverting readers and advertising revenues from print editions to online platforms. According to Okon et al. (2022), the penetration of new media has contributed to a decline in patronage of traditional print newspapers among readers in Nigeria. Nevertheless, the authors noted that most newspaper organisations have responded by establishing active online versions of their news content to sustain their relevance and readers.

Conversely, another perspective maintains that new media do not necessarily replace traditional print newspapers but rather transform and enhance their accessibility and readership. This argument is rooted in Fidler's mediamorphosis theory, which asserts that existing media adapt and evolve in response to technological innovations instead of becoming obsolete (Fidler, 1997). Available empirical evidence suggests that new media platforms have enabled newspapers to reach wider readers, especially younger and technologically savvy readers. Guanah et al (2026) observed that online newspaper platforms help preserve readership among lecturers of Dennis Osadebay University, Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria due to factors such as accessibility, convenience, and the availability of up-to-date information. Similarly, Olumuji (2024) established that demographic characteristics and internet penetration have become important determinants of newspaper readership patterns in Nigeria. Thus, as internet access continues to expand, readers increasingly combine traditional and digital sources of information, thereby reshaping newspaper readership behaviour in Nigerian. Despite the growing body of literature on new media and newspaper

readership, empirical evidence from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria, remains limited. Abuja occupies a unique position as Nigeria's administrative capital and hosts a highly educated, cosmopolitan, and digitally active population. The widespread availability of internet services and the high concentration of professionals and civil servants make the city an appropriate setting for examining how new media integration influences newspaper readership patterns.

Against this background, this study examines the integration of new media and its influence on the readership of Nigerian newspapers among residents of FCT-Abuja, Nigeria. Specifically, This paper will contribute to ongoing scholarly debates on the future of newspapers in the digital age and provide evidence-based recommendations for media practitioners, newspaper organisations, and policymakers in Nigeria.

This study was anchored on diffusion of innovation, and mediamorphosis theories. The diffusion of innovation theory was developed by Everett Rogers in 1962. The theory explains how new ideas, technologies, or innovations are communicated and adopted over time among members of social system. According to Rogers (2003), the adoption of an innovation is influenced by factors such as its perceived relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability. On the other hand, the mediamorphosis theory was propounded by Roger Fidler in 1997. The theory posits that communication media evolve and adapt in response to technological, social, and economic changes rather than becoming obsolete. According to the theory, new media technologies do not completely replace existing media; instead, traditional media transform and integrate new media technologies to remain

relevant (Fidler, 1997). Together, the two theories provide a comprehensive explanation of both the adoption of new media by news readers and the adaptation of newspaper organisations to evolving digital communication ecosystem.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study was to investigate the nexus between new media integration and readership of Nigerian newspapers: Evidence from readers resident within FCT-Abuja, Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To describe the personal characteristics of Nigerian Newspapers' readers resident within FCT-Abuja, Nigeria;
- ii. To examine whether the new media integration has enhanced-or-reduced readership of newspaper among readers' resident within FCT-Abuja; and
- iii. To ascertain whether the new media integration has enhanced-or-reduced patronage of print newspaper among readers' resident within FCT-Abuja.

Methodology

This study was carried out in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, being the administrative capital of Nigeria and one of the most cosmopolitan cities, hosting a diverse population comprising civil servants, business professionals, students, and other socio-economic groups. The city is characterised by relatively high literacy levels, widespread internet connectivity, and substantial access to both traditional and digital media platforms. These attributes make FCT-Abuja particularly suitable for this study on new media integration and readership of Nigerian Newspapers among readers. The study adopted a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design. Primary data were collected from newspaper readers residing within FCT-

Abuja through a well-structured online questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed using Google form and the link was disseminated through various social media platforms within FCT-Abuja, Nigeria between the periods of 1st October to 5th December, 2025. A total of three hundred and eighty-four (384) valid responses were obtained and used for the study. Data were analysed using descriptive

statistics (namely frequencies, percentages Likert-type of rating scale) and inferential statistics (linear regression analysis) to test influence of media integration and newspaper readership at a 5% level of significance.

Results and discussion
Socio-demographic characteristics of Nigerian newspapers readers

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of respondents' socio-demographic characteristics (n = 384)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Sex		
Male	245	63.8
Female	139	36.2
Age		
≤ 20 years	7	1.8
21 - 30 years	92	24.0
31 - 40 years	198	51.6
41 - 50 years	48	12.5
≥ 51	39	10.2
Educational Status		
O'level certificate	25	6.5
OND/FCE certificate or Equivalent	92	24.0
Degree certificate/HND/PGD	132	34.4
Postgraduate certificate	212	55.2
Occupation		
Business men/women	49	12.8
Civil servants	164	42.7
Artisans	57	14.8
Students	107	27.9
Farmers	7	1.8
Sourcing or following news and other information on new media		
Yes	373	97.1
No	11	2.9
Readership of online/print newspaper		
Yes	368	95.8
No	16	4.2
Preferred newspaper version read		
Print newspaper editions only	23	6.0
Online newspaper editions only	162	42.2
Both	199	51.8

Source: Field survey (2025)

The results in Table 1 revealed that the readers of Nigerian Newspapers were predominantly male (63.8%) between the age of 31-40 years (51.6%) with at least a Degree/HND/PGD certificate (89.6%), and mostly civil servants (42.7%). The majority (97.1%) of respondents sourced or followed news and other information on new media, while their choice of newspaper version was ranked as both print and online news (51.8%), online news only (42.2%), and print news only (6%). The predominance of male readers (63.8%) suggests that men continue to constitute a larger proportion of newspaper readers, a trend that has been reported in several Nigeria media studies where males exhibit greater interest in political, economic, sports, and general public issues commonly covered by the newspapers. The position of this study on gender distribution of the respondents aligns with the report of Olumuji (2024) who found that demographic characteristics, including gender, significantly influence newspaper readership patterns in Nigeria with male readers (65.1%) dominating the female counterparts.

The age distribution of the respondents reveals that readers were predominantly between the economically active age bracket of 31 and 50 years (64.1%). Individuals within this age bracket are generally active in professional, economic, and civic engagements, thereby increasing their demand for timely and credible information. This finding upholds Ayobolu (2024) study on online newspaper readership in Ibadan, which identified age as a major predictors of news consumption and online newspaper patronage with large proportion of the readers aged between 30-49 years (54.0%).

The greater proportion of the respondents possessing Degree/HND/PGD qualification and above (89.6%) suggests a strong relationship between educational attainment and newspaper readership. Education enhances literacy, critical thinking, and information-seeking behaviour, making educated individuals more likely to consume newspaper contents. Previous studies (Ayobolu, 2024, and Olumuji, 2024) consistently argue that newspaper readership is positively associated with higher educational levels.

Similarly, the finding noted that civil servants and business men/women constituted the largest occupational category (55.5%) of the respondents, possibly due to their regular need for current information within and outside their locality. This is not surprising given the concentration of government institutions and public-sector employees resident in FCT-Abuja and its environs. Civil servants often rely on newspapers for information relating to governance, public policies, politics, sports, and other socio-economic developments that may effect their professional duties.

Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of respondents (97.1%) confirmed that they sourced news through new media platforms. This demonstrates the transformative influence of new media on newspaper consumption in Nigeria. The result implies that new media have become the dominant channel through which readers access news and other related information. This position agrees with Maku and Rasheed (2019), who reported extensive use of online media for accessing daily news among Nigerians, and with Ayobolu (2024) who found high dependence on online and social media

platforms for news consumption.

The ranking of newspaper version further confirms the growing convergence between traditional print newspaper and digital journalism. More than half of the respondents (51.8) preferred both print and online editions of Nigerian newspapers, while 42.2% relied exclusively on online newspapers and only 6.0% depend solely on print editions. This suggests that rather than completely replacing print newspapers, new media have

encouraged a hybrid pattern of news consumption where readers combine the credibility and depth of print journalism with the immediacy and accessibility of online platforms. This finding upholds the mediamorphosis perspective advanced by Okon et al. (2022), who argued that Nigerian newspapers are adapting to digital realities through the integration of online digital platforms rather than experiencing complete displacement by new media.

Newmedia integration and readership of Nigerian newspapers

Table 2: Descriptive analysis showing whether the new media integration has enhanced or reduced readership of Nigerian newspapers among readers resident within FCT-Abuja

Statement items	Level of Agreement (%)					M	SD	Overall (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
New media platforms has encourage my followership of the Nigerian newspapers' contents.	7.3	9.6	29.7	42.2	11.2	3.40	1.05	68
The interactive features on new media platforms have enhanced my engagement with Nigerian newspapers' contents.	8.3	4.9	19.8	50.3	15.9	3.85	2.89	77
I am confident with the Nigerian newspapers as it adopts new media tools.	5.2	4.9	23.2	52.3	14.3	3.66	0.96	73.2
I spend more time reading Nigerian newspapers' content due to their presence on new media platforms.	4.2	3.6	16.7	53.1	22.4	3.86	0.95	77.2
Total						3.69	1.46	73.8

Note:M = mean; SD = Standard deviation; with 2.5 as cut-off point. Field survey (2025)

As indicated in Table 2, majority (73.8%) of respondents believed that new media integration has enhanced their readership of Nigerian newspapers. This implies that the availability of newspapers on websites, social

media, and mobile devices seems to have encouraged overall newspaper readership by making information readily accessible and convenient to users. This finding is in line with the mediamorphosis theory, which

argues that traditional media adapt and survive by integrating emerging media technologies rather than being completely displaced. It is also consistent with the report of Maku and Rasheed (2021), who found that online media had expanded newspaper readership among Nigerians, and Ayobolu (2024), who submitted that the convenience and accessibility of online newspapers increased readers' engagement. Similarly, Okon et al (2022) noted that new media

platforms have helped Nigerian newspapers maintain and expand their readership base.

New media integration and patronage of Nigerian newspapers

Table 3: Descriptive analysis showing whether the new media integration has enhanced-or-reduced patronage of print newspaper editions among readers' resident in FCT-Abuja

Statement items	Level of Agreement (%)					M	SD	Overall (%)
	1	2	3	4	5			
Availability of news contents on new media platforms has reduced my readership of print editions.	9.6	7.0	7.6	57.0	18.8	3.68	1.15	73.6
Despite the availability of news content on new media platforms, I still read print newspaper editions regularly.	17.7	29.7	14.1	22.4	16.1	2.90	1.37	58
New media platforms often provide sufficient and timely information, reducing my need to read print newspaper editions.	9.6	10.9	9.1	39.1	31.3	3.71	1.28	74.2
The adoption of new media platforms by newspaper organisations has negatively affected my consumption of print newspaper editions.	11.5	25.8	12.0	35.7	15.1	3.17	1.29	63.4
I rarely buy print newspaper editions because news is readily available on new media platforms.	8.3	9.4	29.9	42.4	9.9	3.36	1.06	67.2
Total						3.36	1.48	67.2

Note: M = mean; SD = Standard deviation; with 2.5 as cut-off point. Field survey (2025)

The result in Table 3 shows that majority (67.2%) of the respondents reported an overall decline in their patronage of print newspaper editions, suggesting that while new media integration may have increased overall readership of newspaper content, it has simultaneously reduced the demand for traditional print copies. This also implies that the convenience, affordability, immediacy, and accessibility of online new media

platforms have made online newspaper editions more attractive to readers, thereby diminishing reliance on traditional printed newspapers.

This finding is in line with the views of Taye et al (2017), who argued that the rise of new media and e-publishing poses significant threats to the survival of traditional print newspapers in Nigeria as readers increasingly

migrate to digital platforms. Similarly, Okon et al. (2022) and Aliagan et al. (2023) report that although new media have expanded access to newspaper content, they have also contributed to declining print newspaper circulation. The study further upholds Maku and Rasheed (2021), who observed that the

increasing use of new media for news consumption among readers has reduced dependence on print newspaper editions. Thus, the finding does not imply a decline in newspaper readership itself but rather a shift in the mode of consumption from print to digital formats.

Test of relationship between new media integration and newspaper readership

Table 4: Regression analysis showing relationship between new media integration and newspaper readership among readers resident in FCT-Abuja (n = 384)

Variable	Coefficient(β)	Stan.error	t-value	P-value
Constant	1.423	0.421	3.377	0.001*
Readership of print newspaper	0.488	0.013	37.581	0.00*
Adjusted R-Squared (R^2)	0.787			
F-statistics	1412.346*			

Note:* = Significant. **Source:** Field survey (2025)

The regression result in Table 4 further confirms that new media integration had a positive and statistically significant influence on newspaper readership ($\beta=0.488$; p-value=0.000); suggesting that increased integration of new media platforms such as websites, social media, and mobile applications enhanced overall readership of Nigerian newspapers among residents of FCT-Abuja. More so, the Adjusted R-Squared (R^2) of 0.787 implies that approximately 78.8% of the variation in Nigerian newspaper readership was explained by new media integration, while the F-statistics (1412.346) confirms the overall fitness and predictive strength of the model. This finding agrees with the mediamorphosis theory, which posits that traditional media evolve and remain relevant through adaption to emerging technologies. The finding is also in line with

Okon et al. (2022), who observed that new media platforms have expanded and sustained newspaper readership in Nigeria. Maku and Rasheed (2021) submitted that new media has positively influenced newspaper readership by providing easier and faster immediate access to news content. Similarly, Ayobulu (2024) observed that the accessibility and convenience of online newspapers significantly promote readership in Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study concludes that new media integration has fundamentally transformed newspaper readership among residents of FCT-Abuja, Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that newspapers readers are predominantly educated, economically active, and digitally connected individuals who increasingly rely on new media

platforms for news consumption. There is a significant shift in readers behaviour from traditional print newspapers dependent to digital and hybrid modes of news consumption. The study established that new media integration has enhanced overall readership of Nigerian newspapers by improving accessibility, timeliness, conveniences, and readers' engagement. However, this increased readership has simultaneously led to a decline in patronage of traditional print newspapers as substantial proportion of the readers reported declining consumption of print newspapers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends that:

1. Newspaper organisations should strengthen their digital presence by continuously improving their websites, mobile applications, social media platforms, to enhance and sustain readership.
2. Newspaper publishers should invest in innovative digital content delivery to attract and sustain readership.
3. Media practitioners should continuously monitor audience preferences and digital consumption patterns to ensure that newspaper content remains relevant, accessible, and responsive to the evolving information needs of the readers.

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