UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

ONLINE NEWS CONSUMPTION HABITS AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA.

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A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES, FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND EDUCATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES. UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF THE MASTER OF IN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES (MEDIA STUDIES) DEGREE.

JULY, 2015

DECLARATION

STUDENTS DECLARATION

I, Mustapha Jimah declare that this dissertation with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Name of Student: Mustapha Jimah

Signature...

 Date……………………………...

SUPERVISORS' DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation of and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Name of Supervisor: Charles Owu-Ewie, PhD

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Date………………………...

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the immense help and tremendous support of my siblings, my two little "angels" Naimah and Shamimah, not forgetting my sweet mom, Madam Rosaline Gadonu.

My profound gratitude also goes to my supervisor Dr. Charles Owu Ewie, Dr. Andy Ofori-Birikorang, Head of Department, Communication and Media Studies. Ms. Joyce Mensah for her support and encouragement, my mates and lecturers of Communication and Media Studies Department. University of Education, Winneba.

Finally, I thank all my friends, especially, Stephen Cujo Feighan and Christiana Mintah Nyang and my benefactor Alhaji Yusuf Sumaila for their support and prayers.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Almighty Allah, my wife Mrs. Belinda Quist-Jimah, my "little angels", Naimah Sedinam Foluke Jimah, Shamimah Mawuena Funmilayo Jimah, my siblings and my mum, Rosaline Gadonu.

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of the Internet has brought about transformation in every sphere of human life. One area that this technology is transforming the world is the area of news consumption. The Internet has made it easier for news consumers to listen and read news at a click of a button. Online news is now consumed anytime and everywhere. This study aims at investigating the news consumption habits of students of the University of Education, Winneba. A questionnaire and semi structured interview was used for data collection. A sample size of 200 was used in the study. This research seeks to investigate the avenues students use to source news, the dominant websites students' access news, the kinds of news students' source online and the reasons why students choose online news against traditional media. Findings from the study reveals that majority of the students' use their mobile phones and other ICT gadgets to browse the Internet. Students also use the various platforms such as modems, wifi, data on their phones and the Internet cafes to access news on the Internet. Students browse for all kinds of news online; this includes politics, sports, entertainment etc. These kinds of news are sourced from both local and foreign websites. The study also revealed that the students go online to read news from traditional sources with online platforms. The work also highlights some of the challenges students encounter whilst using the Internet. The challenges which include unstable WIFI connections, high data charges and electricity challenges hinder the usage of the Internet by the respondents. The study also makes some few recommendations in order to help improve the current status quo. The recommendations include the University looking for alternative source of energy in order for the university to have constant electricity,

government giving tax incentives to telecommunication companies in return for a reduction in their data charges and improvement of wifi connections on campus.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Undergraduate students in Ghana have many choices when it comes to access to information in the media. Television, newspapers and radio are the traditional media sources of news that students have depended on over the years. With the advent of Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools like the computer, tablets, Ipads, mobile phones and Internet connectivity, students now have an option to source news online instead of the traditional media. This study examines students' usage of the Internet as a news source.

 This chapter thus presents the introduction, discuses the background of the study, the aims of the study, the problem statement and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the study

The Internet has revolutionised the ways in which consumers access and engage with news, whilst some traditional news outfits have suffered a decline in circulation and advertising revenues, consumers now have access to a wider range of sources than ever before, and are using these different sources in different ways (Oliver & Ohlbaum, 2013).

Obijiofor and Hanusch (2013) also argue that new technologies have transformed journalistic practices around the world resulting in newspapers adopting online technologies in order to stay relevant to current trends of news consumption.

According to a survey carried out by the Media Project in 2004, one in five people under the age of thirty view the Internet as their main source of information. (The Media History Project, 2004).

The findings of the Media History Project (2004), corroborate a report presented to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (The evolution of news and the Internet 2009) which describes the Internet as

> A critical source of information and news. "Reading news on line" is a favourite and increasingly important Internet activity. In terms of frequency of Internet activity it scores just below the most popular Internet activities: e-mailing and searching information about goods and services (P 43).

More people continue to cite the Internet than newspapers as their main source of news. The Internet has surpassed television as the main source of national and international news for people younger than 30 years. (Pew Research Centre, 2011).

Kode and Kode (2003) in supporting the assertion of other researchers avers that the craving for the Internet stems from its central role in ICT. They explained that the Internet provides access to free online journals, magazines and other information resources anytime and from anywhere for academic and research purposes.

Africa's Internet population is estimated at 240 Million as at 2013. Ghana's Internet usage stands at 4,378,878 representing 17% of penetration (Internet World Statistics, 2013).

In 2004 Ghana's Parliament passed into law an ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) policy. The policy represents the vision of Ghana in the information age and addresses 14 priority areas or pillars. Mangesi (2007) posits that the tertiary education sector is the most advanced in the deployment and use of ICTs in the country. All the major universities have computer labs with broadband connections making it easier for students to have access to the Internet.

The use of the Internet by students in their academic and social life is prominent due to the central role ICT plays in their daily activities. Globalisation, demand for persons with ICT skills in the job market and government's determination to ensure that students acquire some ICT skills during their training in school have all resulted in students usage of ICT.

This assertion is supported by Asamoah (2008) who posits that ICT has been incorporated into the school curriculum in Ghana, beginning with the pre-tertiary institutions. ICT is now a subject on the schools' timetable from primary to senior high school. The deployment of the Internet in tertiary institutions in Africa has caught up well.

Studies by Awoleye, Siyanbola and Oladipo (2008) in the area of Internet adoption and usage among undergraduates in Nigerian universities revealed that the Internet when put to proper use provides a great number of benefits. According to their findings, students believe that the Internet is an information database which helps them to search for information on a particular subject, widens knowledge and gives information on education, politics and social events. It is used for information

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development, enhances communication globally and also gives information about happenings around the world.

Tendai (2011) explains that the Internet is a key source of breaking news for journalist and provides a wealth of information for journalist. The email which is a function of the Internet has become a key tool in newsgathering; journalist use the email to contact their sources and also crosscheck facts with sources around the world. The development of the Internet has resulted in a change in how media organisations operate.

Olmsted, Rim and Zerba (2012) affirm that major media companies are investing their resources into creating new ways of reaching news audience through mobile platforms. They argue that the development of mobile news has a significant implication on consumers' news consumption patterns especially the younger generation who are still forming their news habit. Nguyen (2003) explains that online news has experienced an unprecedented growth since 1993 leading to most traditional news organisations drifting online. The Internet in this 21st century has reached the status of mainstream news medium even though its adoption is affected by challenges such as age, education, income, Internet experience, location of use, news habits and bandwidth. These studies indicated above do not address students' usage of the Internet as a source of news. It is for this reason that the present study sought to find out how students source news on the Internet. Identify the dominant websites students' source news. Find out the kinds of news students source from the Internet. Find out why students choose the Internet as their main source of news instead of the traditional media.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Tinio (2003) avers that ICT has provided students and teachers with new tools that enable improved learning and teaching. Geographical distance no longer becomes an insurmountable obstacle to obtaining education. Technology has made it easier for students and teachers to learn and be abreast of developments in other parts of the world through teleconferencing and other technologies made possible by the magic of the Internet.

Subsequently, there have been various studies on the use of Internet in the educational sector. Hinson and Amidu (2006) conducted a study on Internet adoption amongst final year students in Ghana's oldest business school and their findings reveal that students are very active users of the Internet. Most of them use the Internet for academic, social and business purposes.

Similarly, Amenyedzi, Lartey and Dzomeku (2011) also researched on the use of the Internet by students in Ghana. Hinson (2011), Kwarteng (2013), Buami (2013), Danso and Nimako (2013) have all conducted research on Internet usage by students. The findings of these researchers revealed the various purposes for which students use the Internet. Their findings reveal that students use the Internet for academic and other social activities.

In addition to these studies, Quarshie and Ami-Narh (2012) also did a study on the growth and Internet usage in Ghana and their findings reveal that 45.6 % of Internet users in Ghana use it for educational purposes whilst 33.75 also use it frequently for news. Other uses for the Internet in Ghana according to their study includes making

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purchases online, banking and stock trading, travel related issues, communicating online etc.

Considering their wide diffusion, mobile news media has helped audiences to consume news content anywhere, anytime, and in various forms (Dimmick, Powers, Mwangi &Stoycheff, 2011). This makes it easier for people to access news at anytime and anywhere through their mobile phones, laptops, Ipads and tablets.

From the literature perused so far, it is evident that little research has been done specifically relating to news consumption on the Internet by undergraduate students in Ghana. Most of the research done on students' usage of the Internet focused on the general usage of the Internet and not its use as a news source. Besides, news consumption habits of University students are an important area of study. This is so because it is not an area that is studied at length. The reason for this may be as a result of the large turnover in student population every year. Students graduate on a yearly basis and so the opinions of each group may also change yearly.

1.3 Objectives of the study

This research seeks to do as follows:

- Find out how students of University of Education, Winneba source news on the Internet
- Identify the dominant websites students' source news.
- Find out the kinds of news students source from the Internet.

- Find out why students choose the Internet as their main source of news instead of the traditional media.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. What avenues do students use to source news online?

2. Which dominant websites do students access on the Internet for news?

3. What kind of news do students source online?

4. Why do students choose the online news as against the traditional media?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Undergraduate students graduate from school to become first level managers in any organisation or institution that they find themselves. As a graduate, the student is supposed to use his initiative and skills acquired from school and his environment in the performance of his duties. In this era of globalisation and the advent of technology, it is important for students to be abreast of current affairs and other newsworthy information. The results from this study would bring to light news consumption habits of students and the various media students use whiles sourcing news.

This study would also help lecturers and the university community to know the news consumption patterns of students. It would also serve as an avenue for lecturers to have a fair idea of students' interest in current affairs and general knowledge.

Findings from this study would help the university in evaluating current arrangements regarding the provision of various media facilities for students' consumption.

Digital advertisers and online media platforms can also use the study to plan their online marketing strategies on products patronised by students.

This study would also contribute to the growing literature on the various usage of the Internet by tertiary students in Africa.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study is limited to the Winneba campus of the University of Education, Winneba and involves undergraduate students from level 100-400 offering ICT as their program of study. The ICT students were chosen due to their speciality and privy to relevant information in the area of study.

Students offering ICT at University of Education, Winneba are exposed to a lot of issues involving the use of technology; their programme of study requires that they use ICT tools in their academic work. The department has a computer laboratory with over 100 computers, these computers are used by the students to perform assignments, check their mails and other activities that would help them to understand their course. The students attend lectures at this laboratory and virtually spend most of their time at this laboratory.

The Winneba campus of the University is made up of three campuses namely; South, North and Central. The Winneba Campus was chosen for this study due

to its proximity to the researcher and also the ease with which I can collect data from the population under study.

1.7 Organisation of the Study

The study is presented in five Chapters. Chapter one provides a brief introduction to the study, identifies the background of the study, scope and the significance of the study. Chapter two reviews related existing literature and related theories. Chapter three explains the methods adopted for collecting and analysing data. Chapter four deals with analysis of the data gathered and Chapter five presents a summary of the study, recommendations, limitations and conclusions.
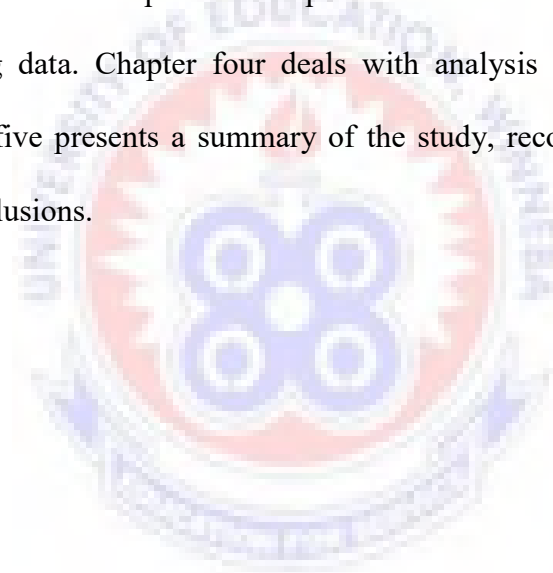
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing literature to reveal the extent to which they relate to the study in methodology and theory. The review explains how the Internet has become another medium for news consumption complementing the traditional sources of news; it also looks at the challenge post by the Internet to traditional sources of news and how it has expanded the frontier of free speech through citizen journalism.

2.1 Definition of News and Determinants of News Consumption

According to Ruggenberg (2007) defining what news is, is a difficult task because different scholars have defined news differently. Burton (2005) and Roscho (1975) as cited in Ruggenberg (2007), in defining what is news enquired whether the information that is obtained through the newspaper, television news or another news items is what is termed as news.

According to Burton (2005) news refers to a specific kind of media material. Ruggenberg (2007, p.27) defined news as "Information about political, historical, social or cultural events that recently happened in the world, considered interesting enough to be distributed to the public via different news media".

Roscho (1975) posits that the definition of news is a difficult task and suggested that people list important news events as news. He also argued that news has always been in existence before the most prominent news distributors and news media did. "News is continually sought and offered in the course of social communication because it is a

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necessary, and therefore valuable, commodity of social exchange." (Roscho, 1975,p.10).

News is defined by the *Oxford dictionary* as "repost of recent events that appear in newspapers or on television or radio." Or; "a person, thing or event that is considered to be interesting enough to be reported as news." (P.993)

The various definitions from the different scholars point to the fact that, there is no standard definition for what is termed as news. People would define news based on what they see or view as a news item.

Schroder and Larsen (2010) argues that in order for anyone to know the factors that determine whether people use a particular news medium or not, the concept "perceived worthwhileness" should be adopted. According to them, an individual's subjective implicit or explicit assessment of whether a medium is worth its while is a key determinant of news consumption. They explained that five factors constitute a medium's perceived worthwhileness and these factors are time available, the affordance of "public connection", price, normative constraints and participatory affordances.

The various media platforms used in this study meet the criteria set out by these researchers in determining the news consumption patterns of students.

Schroder and Larsen (2010) posit that a news medium may be considered commercially and socially viable if it has the ability to attract the attention and time of consumers. The medium should be able to meet the consumers' information needs in order for the consumer to be conscious of his environment. All the media platforms used in this study conform to the assertion made by these researchers.

2.1.1 Young Adults and Web-Based News

The youth are considered to be an important population when it comes to news consumption. This is so because they represent the future generation whose opinions and decisions are very crucial to the development of every nation. This assertion is supported by Olmsted, Rim and Zerba (2012) who emphasis that young adults are in their transition years of becoming adults and establishing their consumption patterns. In the next paragraph, the youth and their news consumption habits would be discussed in detail.

According to Freeman (2013) young adults are fairly intensive users of online news sites. Studies by (Wok, Tamam, Bolong & Ahmad, 2011), (Mehrabi, Hassan & Ali, 2011) all support the assertion that online news consumption amongst the youth is on the rise.

Rosengard, Tucker-McLaughlin and Brown (2010) posit that young people within the ages of 18-34 are more likely or are avid users of technology than any other age-group. This age group feels reluctant to access and share traditional news but are quick to turn to online news through newer models of information delivery.

Earlier studies by the Project for Excellence in Journalism points to the fact that the Internet has been very successful in terms of attracting young people to news consumption; something that the traditional media were having challenges with before the Internet existed (Project for Excellence in Journalism, 2004).

In supporting the findings of other researchers on the use of the Internet by young people, Lia Spyridou and Veglis (2007) maintain that the diffusion of innovation theory proposed by Rogers (1995) provides an insight into the tendency for young

people to become early adopters and also heavy users of the web compared to the older generation.

 They further argue that certain characteristics such as cosmopolitanism, level of education, age, income, "openness" to new channels of communication and media exposure all play a role in the adoption of the web for news. According to them the adoption of an innovation involves a decision making process that begins with awareness of the innovation, persuasion, decision, implementation and confirmation.

According to Tully (2003) as cited in Spyridou and Veglis, (2007), young people take up modern technology and incorporate them in their everyday lives more rapidly and more unceremoniously than others. He opine that opinion leaders and change agents exert influence on audience behaviour resulting in the incorporation of technology; other factors that encourage young people to adopt modern technologies include the incorporation of computer lessons into the curriculum and the adoption of new technologies by college mates   facilitating the diffusion of innovation.

Trombly (2013) conducted a study which revealed that young adults prefer the web mainly because it gives them control over their media experience. Due to the democratic nature of the web, young people feel comfortable surfing the web for information and other news items.

The same cannot be said about older folks; this is because older adults tend to be intimidated by the plethora of media choices available to them compared to young adults who are interested in using multiple media sources at one time and are not intimidated by the many varieties that the media offer (Bowman, 2003).

Freeman (2013) posits that factors such as gender and age influence the interest and usage of new media. She explained that young adults are not passive audience but make active media choices particularly about the type of news and media they prefer to access. The innovativeness that comes with the use of the Internet has led to a lot of university students adopting the Internet and using it for all manner of activities including news consumption.

According to Zervakou (2006) as cited in Lia Spyridou and Veglis (2008), 98% of university and post-graduate students in Athens own a computer, whilst six out of ten students make daily use of the web. The research also revealed that the students use the Internet for different purposes ranging from seeking information to the downloading of music. According to his research findings 57.3% of the students read news online. The findings show how students in other country are using the Internet to undertake various activities including reading of news online.

2.1.2 News Consumption and Choices

According to (Bogart, 1989; Butsch, 2008; Dayan & Katz 1992; Luhmann, 1996; Morley 1980; Thompson, 1995) as cited in Mitchelstein and Boczkowki (2010), news consumption is a central aspect of everyday life in modern societies. This has led to a major growth in online news consumption resulting in more people researching into that field of journalism.

Malthouse and Ksiazek (2012) argue that media consumption seems to have become an anywhere, anytime proposition. Yet, no one person uses all these media. Instead,

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people cope with the abundance of choice by relying upon relatively small subsets, or 'repertoires' of their preferred media.

Consumption of news sources is considered to be a habitual behaviour and also involves an active selection process. According to Diddi and La Rose (2010) who used the media attendance theory to study news consumption habits of people, a consumer is likely to lapse into habitual patterns of consumption to conserve mental resources, rather than constantly engaging in active selection, once he or she finds the initial selection to be satisfactory.

Mitchelstein and Boczkowki (2010) supported this position by arguing that online news consumers have not behaved radically different from traditional media audiences. They argue that empirical studies have shown that most users are still influenced by past consumption habits even though there has been a proliferation of sites and technology.

News consumption is considered to be an exploratory and a habitual process and one's existing news consumption patterns and preferences are likely to be indicative of how one might approach the adoption of a news platform (Chan-Olmsted, Rim & Zerba, 2012). This observation is supported by an earlier research by Westlund (2008) who argued that frequent users of online newspapers have been found to adopt online news at a higher rate than the general public while the readers of free dailies are more likely to use mobile news services.

Chan-Olmsted et al (2012) also points to the fact that mobile news users prefer more information-driven news content than softer news like lifestyle news. These mobile news users are also considered as heavy users of multiple news platforms, especially

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online news. This assertion is also supported by the fact that heavy news consumers have a higher desire to access news without space or time limitations.

2.1.3 Media Usage

According to Taneja, Webster and Malthouse (2012) two theoretical perspectives determine media choices. The first theory has to do with how structures such as program schedules shape media consumption.

The second perspective focuses on psychological factors like needs and preferences in determining media choices. Structural perspective on media use takes into consideration factors such as audience availability and access to media technologies in shaping audience behaviour.

The use of psychological factors to study people's media choices works on the assumption that, people are active agents who make purposeful, rational choices when they consume media. This assumption is reinforced by the 'uses and gratification' research, that sees media consumption as a mechanism to gratify individual needs (Katzet al., 1973, Peck & Malthouse, 2010; Ruggiero, 2000)

Ahlers (2006) used a customer model suggested by Frank Magid Associates to describe how news and information consumers have segmented themselves into four groups. These groups are "Online only" denoting a category of news consumers who consume online news only. "Multichannel" users are described as news consumers who use both online and offline news (TV or print) in equal proportion. The third group are known as "dabblers", this group go online occasionally for news but rely on

offline media. The last group in this classification is the "offline online", group; these kinds of news consumers are interested in getting their news information from newspapers, news magazines, or television. He concluded that the consumer–centric model developed by Frank Magid Associates aptly describes news usage behaviours across media and news consumers see media brands across media platforms to be complementary brand extensions. Convenience and personal preference for one medium over the other are some of the factors that guide the online and offline media properties of news consumers.

Chan-Olmsted et al (2012) asserts that habits play an important role in media usage behaviour of an individual. This assertion is ably supported even under the selection principle presumed in the uses and gratification theory. A person's media usage continues till there is a change in daily routines. This may as well apply to users of the Internet for news; these groups of people browse the Internet for news regardless of their location. There are no geographical barriers when it comes to online news consumption; this is so because of the power of the World Wide Web which transcends countries and borders.

According to Westlund (2008);Yuan (2011) as cited in Rosengard, Mc Laughlin and Brown (2014) current uses and gratifications research indicates that 21st century news consumers use multiple platforms to consume news, jumping from one technology to another depending on their news needs at a particular moment. Rosengard et al (2014) suggest that the use of multiple platforms for news has implications for the news organisations seeking to maintain revenue.

Fourie (2001) as cited in Ruggenberg (2007) avers that government, society and the media are the three forces that play a crucial role in the making of news and how people consume it. Ruggenberg (2007) further argues that the political system in which young consumers live in partly contribute to their news habits. He posited that four main press theories describe the role of the media in relationship to the political system of a country.

The authoritarian theory which applies to dictatorial regimes ensures that governments of such regimes introduce censorship laws to gag the citizenry from criticising the government. The theory points to the fact that the rights of the citizenry to choose what is of interest to them are curtailed and the government unilaterally decides for the citizenry. In contrast to the authoritarian theory is the libertarian theory, this theory hinges on freedom of speech and the values of democracy. Advanced democracies like the United States of America and United Kingdom are some of the countries that practice this theory.

Developing countries like Ghana, Nigeria and other African countries practising democracy have also adapted this theory. In Ghana, the 1992 Constitution has a chapter dedicated to the Media. Chapter 12 of the Constitution talks about the rights and responsibilities of the media in the current democratic dispensation. The media under the current democratic dispensation operates without interference from the state. Its activities are regulated by the National Media Commission and to some extent the Ghana Journalist Association. The Constitution debars the state from interfering in the day to day administration of the state owned media and various institutions have been established to resolve any infraction between the media and

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persons who feel aggrieved about any publication which is deemed to be slanderous or libellous to them.

The other two theories that Ruggenberg (2007) made mentioned of is the development theory and the democratic participant theory. He posited that these two theories are most applicable to the South African media. The democratic- participant theory encourages diversity and pluralism of the media. This theory takes into consideration minority interest and ensures that they are also represented on the media front.

According to the Ruggenberg (2007), the development theorist believes that the media has a role to play in the developmental process of every nation and according to the proponents of this theory; the positive use of the media in this direction would help promote national development.

To a large extent, Ghana's media landscape can be said to be practising the development theory and the democratic participant theory. Apart from the 1992 constitution upholding the human rights of every citizenry as stated explicitly in Chapter 5, Chapter 12 also ensures that the media (both state owned and the private press) are all protected by the constitution and other recognised bodies have been established to ensure a free press devoid of attack and sanctions from the state.

The media has also championed the cause of development by publishing stories on developmental programs and highlighting some of the challenges that the ordinary citizens face in their day to day activities. It has also been playing its role as the fourth estate of the realm by serving as check on the three arms of government. i.e. The Judiciary, Legislature and the Executive.

The credibility of news from a medium is very critical in sustaining consumers of news from that medium. According to Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2010), studies have been conducted on the credibility of online news against traditional medium (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Kiousus, 2001; Schweiger, 2000). The findings from these researchers and other scholars on this issue has been conflicting, while some scholars suggest that young users find online news credible, the same cannot be said about older consumers (Bucy, 2003;Metzger et al, 2003). Other users have reported credibility problems in online information (Flanagin & Metzger,2000;Savolainen, 2007). Other findings also revealed that more experienced users rate online news as more credible than less experienced users (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Johnson & Kaye, 2000; Johnson et al, 2007).

Stephen and Galak (2009) have also argued that social media, which serves as a source of news on the Internet and was earlier seen as the domain for young, technology savvy consumers who were faster to adopt new technologies is now a medium patronised by adults in the United States of America.

Their findings are supported by studies done by (Bernoff, Pflaum, & Bowen 2008; Miller 2009a; Owyang, Bernoff, Van Boskirk, Pflaum & Polance 2009). These findings make it important for researchers to critically examine and understand how social media in this case a news source operates alongside traditional media.

2.2 Online News Consumption

According to Dimmick (2003) the medium-centric approach to the study of online media and traditional media believe there is a displacement effect resulting in the Internet posing a threat to traditional media. His position was based on the theory of niche, which suggests that different media compete with each other depending on the types of content/ functionalities they display and also the situations in time and space in which they are available. This observation is supported by Westlund and Fardigh (2015) who maintained that new media would always have an edge over old media; they supported their assertion with the principle of relative constancy (PRC) of communication expenditures developed by Mc Combs (1972). According to Newell, Pilotta and Thomas (2008) as cited in Westlund and Fardigh (2015), saturation takes place when the appropriation of "new" media displaces the use of the media that was previously being used. This point to the fact that users of a particular media are prepared to switch to other medium, if they find the new medium to be serving their best interest at a particular moment.

On the contrary, other scholars have proffered a user-centric approach which suggests that the Internet and traditional media can complement each other.

 "There are enormous possibilities for cross-media use, such as with media multitasking and growing use of the mobile device as a second screen in front of television and or computer. Thus different media serve people's varied purposes" (Westlund & Fardigh 2015, P. 56).

Dutta-Bergman (2004) suggests that the user-centric approach which is grounded in the uses and gratification theory has found mostly complementary effects between online and traditional media. Westlund and Fardigh (2015) insist that some people may have relatively limited interest in news about some significant events and to such people one news platform may easily displace another based on factors such as cost and availability; other reasons may include the extraction of plentiful and diverse news about these events from a variety of news platforms.

2.2.1 Internet and other Media: Displacement and Complementary Effects

According to Kitamura (2013) the effects of a new medium on traditional media is a recurring topic for researchers studying mediated communication (e.g., Chyi, Yang, Lewis, & Zheng, 2010; Grotto & Newsom, 1982; Ha & Fang, 2012; Liebowitz & Zenter, 2012;Waal & Schoenbach,2010). He posited that the complementary effects or otherwise of the Internet on traditional media can be discussed through the concept of functional alternatives. Research works by Flanagin and Metzger (2001) revealed that features of the Internet such as information retrieval and information giving are used in ways similar to mass media channels including newspapers, televisions, books and magazines. Other studies by Ferguson and Perse (2000) examined the World Wide Web as a functional alternative to television using the uses and gratification theory. Their findings revealed that the web might be functionally similar to television, especially in its use for diversion, but might not be a similarly relaxing way to spend time.

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Lin and Salwen (2006) did a study which compared online and offline news access through the uses and gratification theory and their findings revealed that news websites serve a purpose for "information seeking" while print news media serve a purpose of "information scanning". Their findings support the school of thought which holds the view that the Internet plays a different role compared to the traditional media.

2.3 Online News as a threat to Traditional News Consumption

"It is becoming difficult for newspapers to survive in the US due to the Internet revolution. The influx of social and online media enables people to download or upload news/ information, pictures and videos." (David Gurien-Senior Writer of Cable News Network- GNA News 27 Aug. 2013). This observation is re-echoed by a report from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, "Like the cable and broadcast revolutions, the Internet revolution is redistributing the news audience in ways that has and will continue to benefit some news outlets while harming others" (Joan Shorenstein Centre on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, 2007).

The introduction of the Internet has impacted positively in every sphere of life, it has changed the way operators of traditional media are carrying out their activities. According to Patel (2010), the Internet has increased competition for the newspaper and revised the way news is distributed. She argues that the Internet has influenced advertising trends, consumer behaviour and the rise in disruptive technologies leading

to most traditional media outlets such as newspaper organisations integrating with the web in order for them to have an online presence. She further explained that the ability of the Internet to do away with geographical boundaries and it's characteristics as a tool with an extensive global reach poses a threat to traditional media.

Another characteristics of the Internet which is seen as a threat to traditional media is how it offers a wide range of information to its audience. The introduction of the Internet has also resulted in innovative ways of distributing news to consumers.

The Internet has led to a growth in news aggregators, these news aggregators make it easier for consumers of news to find the information they are looking for in the shortest possible time, other factors that have led to the rise in online news consumption as against traditional media include disruptive technologies (Patel, 2010).

Disruptive technologies are digital platforms that have been developed to keep up with transforming consumer demands; these technologies make online news easily accessible to readers. They include computers, tablets, cellular phones and e-readers.

Corrado (1996) as cited in Spyridou and Veglis (2007) supports the assertion that new communication technologies like the new media offers a wide range of information to its audiences resulting in them relying less on centralized content producers and raising the quality of democracy in the process.

The degree of displacement and complementarity between new media technology and the old may vary based on factors such as socio demographics. According to Nguyen (2003), young people are turning to the web for news and in some cases abandoning

traditional news media. The reason for this development is as a result of the multipurpose nature of the Internet. She pointed out that the Internet is not just for entertainment and news but it is seen as a crucial part of today's work; and a more dramatic dependence on this is a matter of course in the future.

The Internet has transformed news consumption habits of people, news consumers are gradually shifting from the traditional medium of radio and TV news and are now hooked up to news on the Internet through their mobile phones and other technological devices that makes it easier for them to access up to date news online. This development makes it an important area for studies.

Bird (2009) argues that fewer people read print newspapers and young people have changed their 'news habit'. People no longer set specific times in their days to 'keep up' with news. People no longer are eager to read the newspaper early in the morning or watch TV news broadcast later. This is so because of the innovativeness that technology has introduced to news consumption. Technology is the key driving force for the altering patterns of news consumption (Patel, 2010).

This observation is supported by earlier research works of (Costera Meijer, 2007; Raeymakers, 2003; Beekhoven & Van Wel, 1998; Huang, 2009) as cited in (Cauwenberg, D'Haenens & Beentjes, 2010). According to them, recent technological evolutions have resulted in a change in the lifestyles of young people who are interested in keeping up with current events which hitherto the traditional media have failed to keep up with. Young people are of the view that news is not an end in itself but a means for experiencing the world around them; this includes monitoring their

environment, giving meaning to their lives , identifying personal values for truth, getting a sense of belonging for conversation and inspiration (Costera Meijer, 2007; Huang, 2009).

 To reaffirm the increasing dominance of the Internet on traditional media, a study conducted by Pew Research Centre for the People and the Press in 2008 indicated that for over 10 years now, there has been a decline in news consumption through the traditional media while online audience have increased. This revelation sounds positive for the Internet but not quite good for the traditional sources. The success chalked by the Internet over the traditional media can be attributed to the current age of digitisation.

Again Lee and Carpini (2010) alluded to the fact that technological advancement and people's news consumption habits are changing as a result of the rapid growth in Internet penetration. According to Tewksbury (2003) as cited in (Lee & Caprini 2010), "new technologies are changing the nature of news reading and providing new opportunities for studying that behaviour" (p.695). They asserted that the future and impact of journalism as well as the nature of the Internet brings to the fore two key issues, institutional (i.e. News production and distribution) and individual (i.e. news consumption habits or patterns). Institutional issues which bother on news production and distribution may largely be attributed to factors such as resources, nature of the media and governmental control.

 Banerjee (2008) agrees with the earlier submission and argues that mainstream mass media are centralised, requires significant investment and can be heavily influenced

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by government through various mechanisms and forms of control. The same cannot be said of the Internet which is decentralised, requires low investment, provide greater interactivity and public participation and are much difficult to control.

Banerjee's argument is reinforced by Rosenstiel (2005) who stated that the Internet has gained popularity and acceptance in civil society. People are now free and have the opportunity to create their own news as well as get the other side of the story due to the limited control that comes with the deployment of the Internet.

Institutional issues such as governmental control of the media, lack of resources, audience participation and ownership in some jurisdictions have resulted in news consumers resorting to the Internet which gives the consumer a choice to be an active participant in the news process.

Picard (2009) asserts that social media tools provide an easy, affordable way for members of the public to take part in discussions with larger groups of people and draw attention to issues and topics that traditional media might have overlooked. Social media tools provide the users with an opportunity to express themselves and connect with likeminded people or people with similar interest.

The advent of the Internet has helped in expanding the frontiers of free speech and democracy. According to Howe (2011) the news is now a social experience in fresh ways for consumers. This is so because of the role social media has played in news consumption. People now use their social networks and social networking technology to filter, assess and react to news.

Leach (2009) affirms the socio-centric nature of online news. He further argues that the Internet encourages the formation of an online community with a voice to anyone digitally connected.

In supporting the earlier submissions of other researchers, Howe (2011) claims that the Internet offers an opportunity to minority interest and people espousing unpopular causes in the mainstream media. The Internet offers such people the opportunity to gather and share information and also stitch online communities together. This process is what has now been termed as citizen journalism.

According to Lasica (2003), citizen journalism is characterised by a number of attributes and these attributes differentiate it from professional journalism. Unpaid work, absence of professional training, often unedited publication of content and distinct story selection and news judgement are some of the attributes. When the people formerly known as the audience employ the press tools they have in their possession to inform one another, that is citizen journalism (2008).

Age is an important factor when it comes to issues bothering on media use. According to Westlund and Fardigh (2015) it is important to acknowledge two social dimensions (a) life course (Dimmick, Mc Cain & Bolton, 1979) and (b) generational belonging (Mannheim, 1952). They explained that research works on life course suggest that people have the tendency of changing their behaviour over a life time leading to both displacing and complementing effects. Generational belonging on the other hand suggests that people find it difficult to change the behaviours that they have formed in an early age. According to Westlund and Weibull (2013) as cited in (Westlund &

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Fardigh 2015) the two dimensions are very critical in explaining news consumption over time by using a predefined generational classification.

The current trend of young people adopting the Internet as their main source of news can be attributed to people's attitude towards the media. Nguyen (2003) argues that young people are turning to the Internet for news just as it happened with the introduction of television some years back.

The advantage that the Internet has over the television in this case is its multipurpose nature. The Internet plays a crucial role in people's daily life apart from it being used for entertainment and news. The shift from traditional to online media platforms among young news consumers can be better understood when we take into account technological evolutions which have resulted in today's high-tech environment and youngsters changing lifestyles. (Cauwenberge, Haenens & Beentjes, 2010).

This assertion is supported by (Costera Meijer, 2007; Raeymakers, 2003; Beekhoven & Van Wel 1998; Haung, 2009) as cited in (Cauwenberge, Haenens & Beentjes, 2010). For them young people deem it important to keep up with current events but find it difficult to follow events from the traditional media because that medium is unappealing.

Lee and Carpini (2010) posit that people's news consumption patterns are determined by the habits they developed during adolescence and young adulthood. These habits are influenced by personal, family factors and to a larger extent the media environment in which they grow up.

Palfrey and Gasser (2008) developed a model of "digital divides" and used that to describe contemporary Americans and their news consumption patterns. According to them, "Digital Natives" are those whose ages range from 18-29, this age group grew up at a time when the Internet was becoming more central whilst the newspaper, radio and TV news is declining. The major part of the lives of these "Digital Natives" is mediated by digital technologies.

"Digital Immigrants" are those whose age ranges from 30-64, they grew up in an era when Internet news was emerging, print news was still important and television and radio news dominated. "Digital Settlers" was described by Palfrey and Gasser (2008) as people whose age range from 65 and above. In the model that they developed, this group of people grew up in an analogue era where print news dominated, television and radio news was on the rise.

To Palfrey and Gasser (2008), the primary news medium that one grew up with would remain the primary news medium and the most frequented medium for that person. This finding confirms the work of Kundanis (2003) who stated that each generation comes of age with a new communication medium of which they are masters and for the millennial, the Internet is that medium.

According to other researchers, the emergence of the Internet has resulted in a decrease in the consumption of news in the traditional media. This situation is what they have termed as a displacement effect. Michelstein and Boczkowski (2010) explained that the displacement trend can be partly attributed to demographic factors

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such as age. The effect of this displacement is largely felt amongst young consumers who grew up with the introduction of the Internet.

This finding supports the work of Diddi and La Rose (2010) whose study of news habit formation among American college students revealed that members of "the first Internet generation are less likely to read newspapers than older people and less likely to watch network news" (2010: 197 and 205).

Nonetheless, some studies suggest otherwise. Displacement effects among young users might not be geographically homogenous. Hinson (2005) did a study on Internet adoption amongst final year students in Ghana's oldest business school in 2005 and his findings revealed that only 13% of students search all categories of information online.

Badu and Markwei (2005) also researched on Internet awareness and use at the University of Ghana. Their results revealed that Internet usage amongst University students is low and this they attributed to "lack of requisite skills or time to use them" (Badu & Markwei, 2005; P. 263).

The Internet plays a very important role in spreading information to the public, due to its flexibility; it allows people to break the time and space boundaries in both accessing and sharing new message to other people and the rest of the world. The freedom the Internet grants to its users makes them creative in the media environment. The sophistication of information that the Internet avails to its users is perceived to be a hindrance and a threat to broadcast and print media. Traditional media can only

survive by embracing new technology and restructuring the content to be more topical and relevant in this information age.

2.4 Internet as a Complementary Source to Traditional Media

Olmsted et al (2013) aver that previous research on online news and traditional news platforms has suggested both complementary and displacing effects of new technology. They argued that the user-centric approach grounded in the uses and gratification theories has found mostly complementary effects between online news and traditional news. This position is reinforced by studies done by Dutta- Bergman (2004) whose research work revealed that people who go online to source news, also follow news in the traditional media closely. He concluded that "the search for news information in a specific content area drives the consumption of specific news types across different media outlets."

According to Chi and Lasora (2002) as cited in (Michelstein & Boczkowski, 2010) online editions complement traditional sources; they argued that "the simultaneous use of the print and online editions suggested that to some extent print and online products complement each other" (2002: 103). This assertion is supported by Stephen and Galak (2009); they were of the view that social media has dramatically changed the media landscape by supplementing outlets to the extent that all these media outlets have an effect on marketing performance (e.g. sales).

In agreement to the assertion that online news complements the traditional media, Lia Spyridou and Veglis (2008) conducted a research using Greek journalism students to measure their online news consumption. The results from their research support the

assertion that there has not been any displacement effect by the new media on the traditional sources. According to their findings 66.7 percent of frequent readers of online news resort to newspapers 'very often'.

Their findings also revealed that even though online media and traditional media play complementary roles, there is evidence to show a decline in the consumption of television news amongst regular readers of news online. This confirms the position of media substitution theorist who argue that, a new medium is perceived as superior in satisfying people's information needs if it is likely to replace old media.

This assertion also supports the findings of Neustadtl and Robinson (2002) as cited in (Lia Spyridou & Veglis 2008) which states that light users of the Internet are more likely to watch TV for current affairs, while Internet users watch less TV than non users.

Salman, Ibrahim, Abdullah, Mustaffa and Mahbob (2011) are of the view that the younger generation prefer the new media as they are more interactive compared to the online version of mainstream. They also argued that the new medium has changed the way traditional media circulate their news, they made the argument that the traditional media having noticed the threat of new media to their existence, have started creating news online to reach new markets. This observation is evident in the way some of the traditional media organisations in Ghana have resorted to developing online versions in order to meet the demands of online news consumers and also forestall any challenge that the Internet would pose to their existence and relevance. The state owned print and electronic media have all established their presence online. For

example the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation has an online version (www.gbcghana.com) whilst the print media like the Daily Graphic also has an online version (www.graphic.com.gh) where it updates readers on current issues and news on a wide range of subjects. The private radio, print and TV stations in Ghana have not been left out in this development. Most of them have online versions where they post stories for readers to be abreast of the news of the day and any other information they deem relevant to the readers.

This revelation reinforces the work of Garrison (2001) whose research revealed that almost 90% of daily newspapers in the USA have embraced online technology and are using it to reach out to new markets.

Even though Salman et al (2011) argued that the new media is posing a threat to traditional media, they went on to explain that such a threat is manageable. They compared the newspaper industry in Malaysia to that of the United States of America and argued that Malaysians still prefer to get their news from traditional sources.

 This observation may be true in our circumstances; this is so because of the social, political and economic situations of Malaysia. Malaysia being a middle income country like Ghana may have similar patronage in terms of consumption patterns. The same cannot be said of the USA due to the high rate of Internet penetration in that country.

The United States of America with a population of 313,847,465, has a total number of 245,203,319 as active Internet users as at June 2012. Ghana with a population of 25,758,108 has 4,378,878 being the numbers subscribed to the Internet and Malaysia

with a population of 30,073,353 has an Internet population of 20,140,125. (Internet world statistics, 2012).

Rosengard et al (2014) aver that the traditional news habits of young people may not reflect their true desire to access and share news. They argued that even though young people are interested in news online through newer models of information delivery; they still interact with traditional media to authenticate whatever news they read online.

This assertion gives credence to a Pew research in 2010 which revealed that young people return to traditional mass media sources for confirmation and detail. Studies have been done by other researchers to confirm these findings (Purcell, Raine, Mitchell, Rosentiel & Olmstead, 2010; Sonderman, 2012).They pointed out that other scholars who have researched on the impact of mobile devices on traditional news suggest a symbiotic relationship.

According to these researchers, mobile users after discovering breaking news on their mobile devices later consult traditional media outlets online or otherwise to get detailed information about a news event (Ahlers, 2006; Lee & Ma, 2012; Yuan, 2011). The position of these researchers justifies the school of thought that holds the belief that the Internet serves as a complementary source rather than a threat to traditional sources.

Other research works have revealed that users' goals and interest shape consumption more strongly than medium attributes (Flanagin & Metzger, 2001). In this case, news consumers are more interested in the news more than the medium. Flavian and

Gurrea (2007) in their research on news consumption in Spain came out with findings which revealed that online news consumers are interested in seeking specific or up-to-date information and these findings may support the fact that news consumers may access a medium due to the information published on that medium and not necessarily the medium in question.

Even though the Internet or online news sources are playing a complementary role to the traditional media, its effect has changed the traditional media's role as a dominant agenda setting medium. This is so because online media has aided in the ease with information seeking and sharing among new consumers (Yuan, 2011). Brydon (2011) pointed out that one must understand the technical distinctions between various media forms before exploring the distinctions and complementarities between online media

Banerjee (2008) identified some of the features of traditional media to be highly centralised with significant investment and resources which are opened to governmental controls. He went on to explain that his observation about traditional media is contrary to the new media. The new media is decentralised, provides greater interactivity and public participation; it can be used for both point to mass as well as point to point and mass to point message distribution and requires very low investment.

This observation by Banerjee supports the position of scholars who argue that the Internet is complementing traditional media. Banerjee's work reaffirms the fact that where the traditional media has its shortfalls, the online media makes up for those shortfalls.

To buttress the point of earlier researchers, Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012) argue that institutional news media which is referred to as the fourth estate is using social media to enhance their role in news production and dissemination. Their research also revealed that networked individuals are using social media to source and distribute their own information in ways that has resulted in a growing independence from the traditional media and this is what they have referred to as an emerging "fifth estate". They posited that the "fifth estate" is developing a synergy with the fourth estate resulting in each medium complementing the other in this new news ecology.

2.5 The Way Forward for Traditional Media

From the literature reviewed so far, it is evident that the Internet to some extent has posed some challenges to the traditional media, yet the traditional media still plays an important role in the news consumption patterns of consumers. This revelation makes studying news consumption patterns of student an important area of study. The study will bring out students' perspective on media usage.

In their research on the impact of New Media on Traditional Mass Media, Salman et al (2011) proffered a solution to the perceived threat of the Internet to the traditional media in Malaysia. They suggested that the traditional media should improve their credibility, as it is now seen by a segment of society as a mouthpiece and a propaganda tool of the ruling government.

The recommendation suggested by Salman et al (2011) is very relevant to countries being governed by autocratic leaders, where free press is not guaranteed, the

government of such countries have control over the media and refuses to accept dissenting views. In Ghana, the 1992 Constitution has granted the media the freedom to operate without any interference from the state. The Constitution shields journalist and media houses from state interferences in the performance of their duties.

Gilbert (2002) also posits that the traditional media especially the newspaper industry can succeed by exploring online versions which should be separated from their core duties and this they can do through innovative ways such as creating new ideas, new value propositions and new ways of engaging customers. He suggested that the newspaper should build a strong online base by partnering search engines and Internet Service Providers to include access to digital newspapers in order for them to generate some revenue from their online sources.

This suggestion has been adopted by some traditional media houses in Ghana. Today, the Graphic Corporation and other media houses have an online version and a facebook account where they update their readers with news on latest happenings in Ghana, most of the media houses having noticed the importance of the Internet to their survival have adopted technology and are using it to enhance their productivity. This they do via hosting their websites online and updating readers about their activities, posting news items from their reporters and culling news from other news sources.

Two theories were used to conduct the study; the theories are Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT). TAM has been used in many studies as the theoretical basis for many empirical studies to explain user's

acceptance of Information System (IS) or Information Technology (IT) (Taylor & Todd, 1995; Venkatesh & Davis, 2000).

Agarwal (2000) using the Diffusion of Innovation theory (DOI) posited that "potential users make decisions to adopt or reject an innovation based on beliefs that they form about the innovation". Since this study aims at investigating factors affecting students' acceptance and intention to use the Internet to source news, this study proposes an integrated theoretical framework which blends TAM and DOI

2.6 Adoption of Technology

Adopting new innovations is one of the major areas in information technology that has been researched into extensively. This is so because most researchers are interested in interrogating the primary factors that influence people's acceptance of technologies and how they implement them in their activities (Almobarraz, 2007). Dillion and Morris (1996) define user acceptance as "the demonstrable willingness within a user group to employ information technology for the tasks it is designed to support" (P.4). Shin and Venkatesh (2003) examined different types of technology such as computers, VCRs and the Internet in their study and recommended that more attention should be paid to understanding how existing technologies   are currently being used by community members and how they interact with other technologies.

2.7 Technology Appropriation

According to Sey (2011), technology appropriation can be viewed in two ways; one school of thought believes that technology appropriation involves the simple adoption or use of a technology (Carroll, Howard, Peck, & Murphy, 2002; Desanctis & Poole,

1994; Silverstone, Hirsch, & Morley, 1992; Stewart, 2003;Surman & Reilly, 2003). Another school of thought also sees it as an unintended or unexpected tool (e.g. Bar, Pisani, & Weber, 2007; Eglash, 2004; Majchrzak, Rice, Malhotra, King, & Ba, 2000; Orilkowski, 1992). For the purposes of this study, technology appropriation may be defined to include user behaviour both expected and unexpected from the moment of adoption.

Technology appropriation critically examines how people engage with technology and the patterns of behaviour that emerges in the process. Researchers in this area of study have realised that there exist a gap between technology design and technology use. According to Heeks (2002) users need to adapt technology once it has been acquired. Users of these technologies are seen to be creative and innovative in making the technologies function according to their needs. A system or technology that satisfies user's needs emphasises satisfaction with the system or technology and it can be used as a perceptual or subjective measure of that specific system's or technology success. The usefulness or otherwise of the technology depends largely on how the user feels about that technology. With this assertion as a basis, the Diffusion of Innovation model (Rogers, 1962) and Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis 1989;Davis et al., 2003) were used to examine how undergraduate students are deploying the Internet in their news consumption patterns.

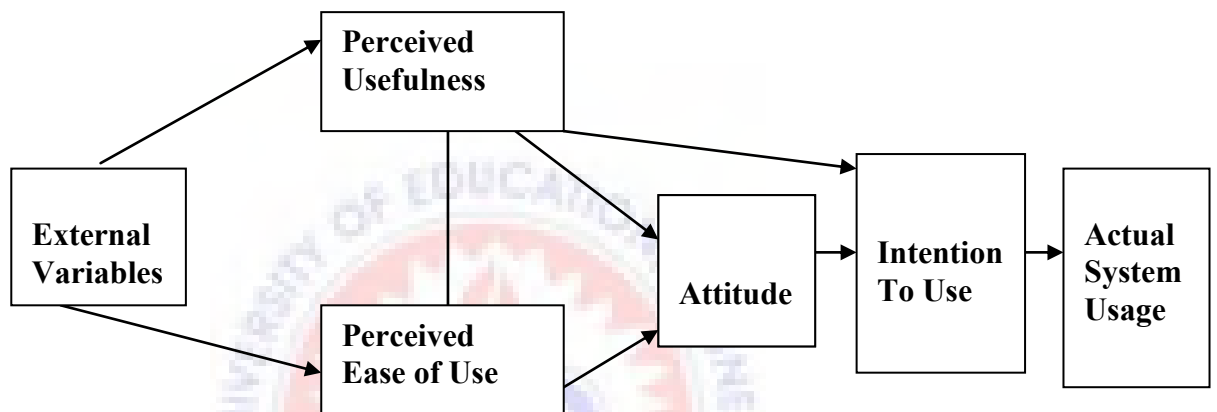## 2.8 Technology Acceptance Model

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) was developed by (Davis 1989; Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989). It was derived from the theory of Reasoned Action

(TRA) by (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). It offers a powerful explanation for user acceptance and usage behaviour of information technology (Ramayah Ma Ruf, Jantan & Mohmad, 2002). TAM is one of the most influential models which is used widely in determining the acceptance of IS/IT. The model has been used in many studies and has been expanded in the study of IS/IT, through various studies. It has been empirically proven to have high validity (Chau, 1996; Davis 1989; Mathieson,1991;Adams, Nelson &Todd, 1992;Segars &Grover, 1993; Igbara, 1992, 1995; Igbara, Zinatelli, Cragg & Cavaye, 1997; Jantan, Ramayah & Chin, 2001; Koay, 2002,Ramayah, Siron, Dahlan & Mohammed, 2002).

TAM theorizes that an individual's behavioural intention to adopt a system is determined by two beliefs, perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that a particular system would enhance his or her productivity while perceived ease of use is defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular system would be free of effort (Davis, 1989). According to Adams et al (1992) and Davis (1989), perceived ease of use has a direct effect on both perceived usefulness and technology usage.

An individual's behavioural intention to use an information system is very critical in determining a person's system usage. A person's attitude towards using a system is largely influenced by his behavioural intention. These attitudes are influenced by two beliefs namely perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use that a person holds about the use of a technology. Perceived ease of use has causal effects on perceived usefulness of a system. External variables can directly influence perceived usefulness

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and perceived ease of use (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Letchumanan & Tarmizi, 2011; Tobbin, 2012). Saga and Zmud (1994) suggest that an individual would adopt a technology provided it is convenient, useful and socially desirable even though he / she might not enjoy using the technology.

Figure 1: Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, et al 1989)

Subsequent research carried out by Venkatesh (1996) has proven that the mediating effect of attitude could be excluded from the model. According to him, empirical evidence has shown that the attitude element did not fully mediate the effect of perceived usefulness on intention to use. This has resulted in the refinement of the TAM.
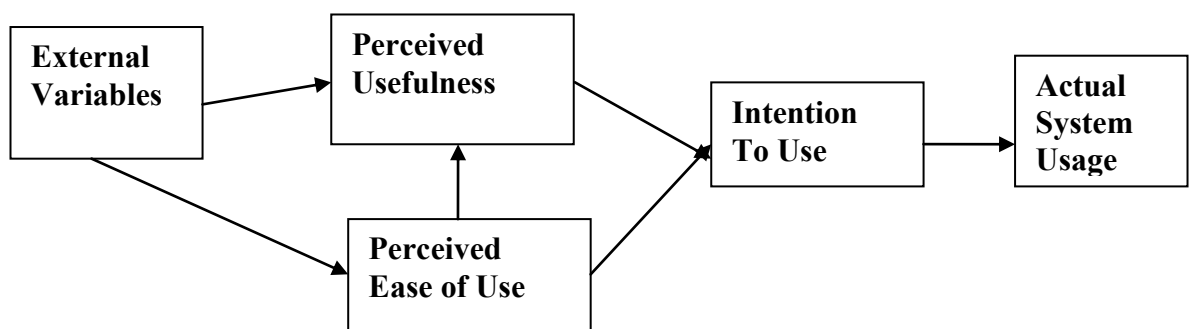
Figure 2: Refined Technology Acceptance Model (Venkatesh, 1996)

Some studies have been done using the refined TAM. Jantan, Ramayah and Chin (2001) used it to study the various factors influencing personal computer acceptance by small and medium sized companies. Wong (2001) extended the refined TAM in examining the impact of extrinsic and intrinsic motivational factors in influencing individual's acceptance of Internet job search. Other scholars have also used the TAM model to conduct a study on information systems. Basyir (2000) replicated the TAM in studying factors associated with acceptance of Internet shopping behaviour. Fok (2001) and Koay (2002) all used the TAM in studying people's adoption of technology.

According to Kwarteng (2013), various studies conducted by researchers have revealed some convergent results for the IT acceptance, but these results are contrary to findings on some of the determinants. Whilst most researchers have found perceived usefulness to be key determinant in IT acceptance, there has been mixed results for the perceived ease of use construct. (Adams et al., 1992, Igbaria et al. 1995, Hu et al.1999, & Nubisi et al. 2001).

Kwarteng (2013) argues that people, who perceive an information system (IS) as an easy tool to operate believe that, the tool (information system) is also useful. She further stated that the correlation between ease of use and usefulness is greater in the pre- implementation of an IS than its post implementation. She concluded that once people begin to actually use an IS, the variable, ease of use becomes less important in determining usefulness.

This assertion is contrary to what other researchers have also identified in their studies. Studies conducted by (Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Venkatesh et al., (2003) suggest that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine an individual's intention to use a system, with intention to use, serving as a mediator of actual system use. Perceived usefulness is also seen as being directly impacted by perceived ease of use.

2.8.1 Percieved Ease of Use, Perceived Usefulness and Actual Usage Behaviour

Davis et al (1989) first proposed perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) as the two major concepts of TAM and its unified model: the Unified Theory of Acceptance and use of technology (Venkatesh et al, 2003). The impacts of PEOU and PU on intention to use have been carried out by various researchers using the TAM in their research. The studies carried out with TAM includes E-Commerce (Gafen et al., 2003;Gefen and Straub, 2000; Plouffe et al., 2001), Internet (Oh et al.,2003; Vathanophas et al., 2008; Hinson, 2011), Online Banking (Yaghoubi & Bahmani, 2010), E-book readers (Lai& Chang , 2001, Letchumanan & Tamizi, 2011).

Perceived usefulness refers to " the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance" and perceived ease of use , "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free from effort" (Davis, 1989).There have been studies in recent times to empirically support the influence of PEOU and PU on intention to adopt or use , actual usage of

an information system (Lim & Ting, 2012; Laffey, Lin& Huang, 2006;Oliveira & Martins, 2011; Hinson, 2011).

The constructs PU and PEOU have been used to measure a number of attributes (Davis, 1989, Venkatesh et al, 2002; Igbal & Quareshi, 2012). PU was used to measure attributes such as productivity increase, performance increase, overall usefulness, time saving and increase in job performance. PEOU has also been used to measure attributes such as ease of control, ease of use, flexibility of use and clarity (Dalhberg et al, 2008). Studies by Hsu & Lin, (2008),   Mathieson, (1991), Iqal & Quareshi, (2012) have all validated these instruments.

2.8.2 Facilitating Conditions

In accepting a new technology, certain supporting conditions or the environment plays an important role in the successful implementation of that technology. Venkatesh et al (2003) defined facilitating conditions as "the degree to which an individual believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exist to support use of the system." In the context of the Internet as a news source, these facilitating conditions include factors that would contribute to students reading news online; these factors may include electricity to power the gadgets, availability of a strong wifi signal and a modem.

2.9 Diffusion of Innovation (Decision process)

According to Rambocas and Arjoon (2012), an innovation is an idea, practice or object that has distinguishable features perceived to be new. Diffusion is a process by which the innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the

members of a social system. It is dependent on the perceived characteristics of an innovation.

Lee (2004) defined diffusion to mean the process by which an innovation is adopted and gains acceptance by members of a certain community. He posited that a number of factors interact to influence the diffusion of an innovation.

Rogers (2003) states that adoption is a decision of "full use of an innovation as the best course of action available" and rejection is a decision "not to adopt an innovation" (p.177). Rogers defines diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (p.5).

According to Brown (1981) as cited in Salman and Hasim (2011) diffusion is the process by which change occurs whereby innovation spread from one locale or one social group to another. The two definitions identified certain key components which are listed as the innovation itself, how information about the innovation is communicated (communication channel), time and the nature of the social system into which the innovation is being introduced.

2.9.1 Attributes of Innovations

Rogers (2003) as cited in Almobarraz (2007) describes the innovation- diffusion process as "an uncertainty reduction process" (p. 232) and proposed attributes of innovations that help to decrease uncertainty about the innovation. The five characteristics that either increase or reduce the rate of acceptance of technological

innovation are relative advantages, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observeability.

1. Relative advantage: the degree of considering the innovation is better alternative of the applied object. The greater degree individual perceives the advantage of an innovation, the more rapid its rate of adoption.

2. Compatibility: the degree of the consistency of the innovation with the existing values, past experience, and needs for potential adopters. If an idea is inconsistent with the values of the society. It will not be adopted in the same rapidity when it is compatible.

3. Complexity: the degree to which the innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use. New ideas that are easy to comprehend are adopted more rapidly than those that required new skills.

4. Triability: the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on limited bases. The trial provides individuals with less uncertainty and gives them the opportunity to learn and practice by doing.

5. Observability is the degree to which the result of the innovation is visible to others. The visibility of positive results of the innovation enhances the possibility to be adopted.

2.9.2 Communication Paradigm of Diffusion of Innovation

An individual passes through an innovation decision process. This process involves information seeking and information processing activities starting from obtaining

initial knowledge about the innovation, to forming an attitude towards it, deciding to adopt or reject to implementing new idea and finally confirming the decision made (Rogers 2003).

Prior Conditions

1. Previous practice 2. Felt needs/ problems 3. Innovations 4.Norms of the social systems.

Communication Channels

| Knowledge (I) | Persuasion (ii) | Decision (iii) | Implementation (iv) | Confirmation (v) |

Adoption ──────► Continued

Characteristics
Adoption
Of the decision
Making unit
Discontnuance

Adoption
Perceived

Later

Characteristics of
the innovation

2. Rejection ──────► Continued
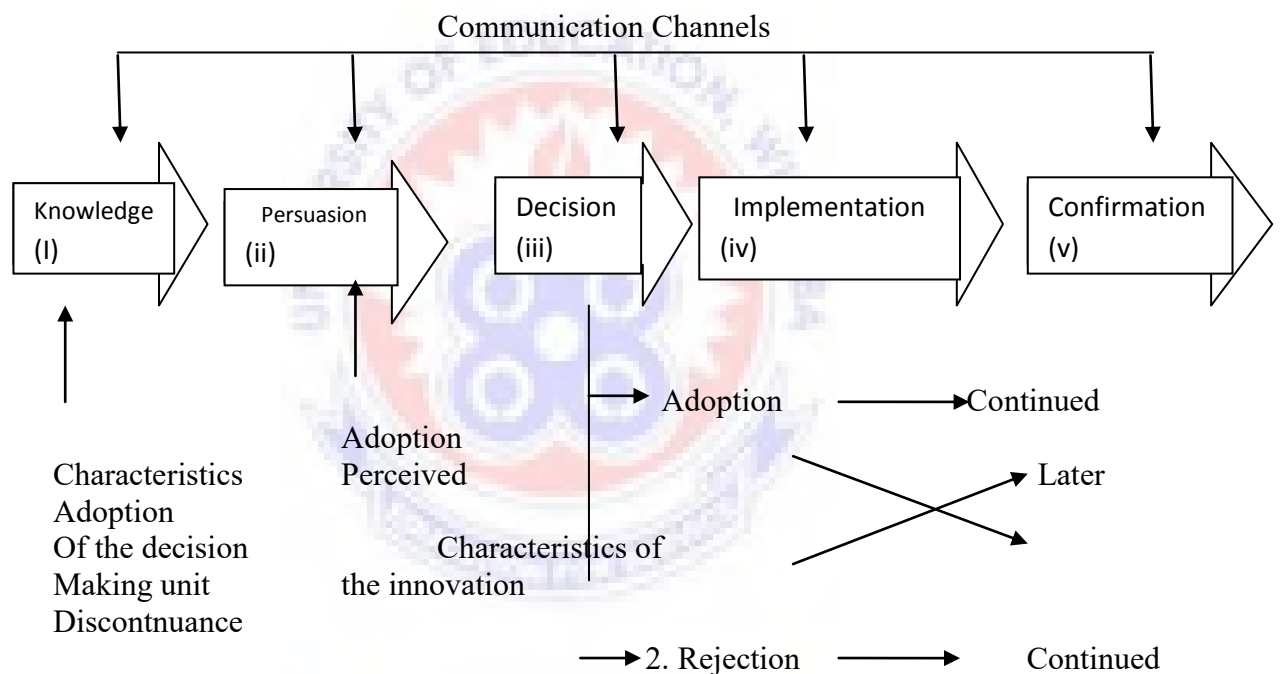
Rejection

1. Socioeconomic   1. Relative advantage

2. Personality variables   2.Compatibility

3. Communication behaviour   3. Complexity

4.Trialability
5. Observability

Figure 3. **Diffusion of Innovation model (Rogers, 2003.)**

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The model developed by Rogers (2003) consists of five sequential stages:

1. Knowledge occurs when an individual or other decision- making unit is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains some understanding of how it functions. The three kinds of knowledge identified are

   a. Awareness-Knowledge (information that an innovation exists).

   b. How –to- Knowledge (information necessary to use an innovation properly).

   c. Principles-Knowledge (dealing with the functioning principles underling how the innovation works).

2. Persuasion occurs when an individual forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude towards the innovation based on perceived characteristics of the innovation, such as relative advantage and complexity.

3. Decision occurs when an individual engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation

4. Implementation occurs when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation into use.

5. Confirmation occurs when an individual seeks reinforcement of an innovation decision already made, or reverses a previous decision to adopt or reject the innovation if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation.

2.9.3 Communication (DOI).

According to Rogers (2003) the elementary form of communication in diffusion of innovation consist of four process.

1. An innovation (in this case the Internet)

2. An individual or another unit of adoption that has knowledge of or has experience using the innovation.

3. Another individual that does not yet have knowledge of or experience with the innovation.

4. A communicating channel connecting the two units.

He states that mass media channels are means of communicating the innovation but emphasized that interpersonal channels and subjective evaluations play a role in persuading an individual to accept a new idea especially if the interpersonal channel links two or more especially, near– peers that are similar in socio-economic status or education (Rogers, 2003;Greenhalgh et al.,2004; Torre & Crowley, 2011). This paradigm of DOI is critically in finding out how students get to know of the gadgets used to source news on the Internet and their decision to use them or even ascertain its usefulness or its ease of use.

2.9.5 Summary

This Chapter reviewed related literature on the subject under study. Two schools of thought with varied opinions on the Internet and its relation to traditional media were discussed in detail. Two theories Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Diffusion of Innovation were also examined in relation to their usage in the study of

information systems/ Information Technology. The variables considered under TAM were the perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, actual usage behaviour. The communication paradigm of the DOI theory was also used to clearly explain the process that one would go through before making a decision to adopt a technological gadget for use in sourcing news on the Internet. Facilitating conditions which involve how certain activities or conditions aid the person adopting the technology to adopt the technology without much difficulty was also discussed. These variables were explored to find out how students adoption or rejection of technology may contribute to the use of the Internet to access for news

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used to collect data and how the data were analysed and presented. It includes the research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, procedure for data collection and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), qualitative researchers "seek to preserve and analyse the situated form, content and experience of social action rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformation" (p. 18). A descriptive survey was used as the design for the study, this method allows for inferences to be made about the characteristics with respect to the sample size.

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) aver that surveys are valuable exploratory methods which have the ability to capture demographic, behavioural, and attitudinal attributes. They asserted further that a survey can offer a comprehensive look at an entire social unit. This assertion is supported by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) who stated that the purpose of descriptive research is to observe, describe and document aspects of a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. According to them, in descriptive research, the events or conditions either already exist or have occurred and the researcher merely selects the relevant variables for analysis of their relationship.

Best and Kahn (1993) posits that descriptive survey is concerned with the conditions or relationships that exist, such as determining the nature of prevailing conditions, practices and attitudes, opinions that are held, processes that are going on or trends that are developed. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) also maintain that in descriptive research, accurate description of activities, objects, processes and persons is the objective. It was therefore, expedient to use the descriptive survey to find out the usage of the Internet as a news source by undergraduate students of the University of Education, Winneba. The researcher adopts a qualitative approach which gives the researcher the opportunity to collect and analyze numerical information statistically.

3.2 The Site

Students of the University of Education, Winneba have over the years relied on the traditional media (Radio, TV and Newspapers) as their main source of news and information. The University library and some departments subscribe to daily newspapers, journals and magazines for consumption by the University community.

There is a campus radio station that broadcast news and other pieces of information to the University community. The Junior Common Rooms of the various halls are also equipped with televisions for the viewing pleasure of students.

These media have been provided by the school authorities to help students remain current on national, international issues and other newsworthy programs. Apart from these medium, students have mobile phones, tablets, laptops, Ipads and other gadgets which are all tools that aid them to access the Internet for information and news.

The University of Education, Winneba was established in 1992 with its main campus in Winneba in the Central Region. The institution has three satellite campuses located at Ajumako, Mampong, Kumasi and over 20 study centres. The University has twenty-nine academic departments, centres and seven faculties.

The current student population is 40,033 with 27,522 being full time students. All the campuses of the University are connected to the wide area   network with access to the Internet. The University has also expanded Internet access through Wi-Fi coverage at the various campuses. (Ameyaw, 2013).

3.3 Target Population

Wimmer and Dominic (2006) define population as a group or class of objects or units. In distinguishing population from targeted population, Avorgah (2013) clarified that population refers to the entire group of homogenous entities from which the targeted population is drawn. She further explained that a targeted population can be drawn from a population when members of the targeted population have certain characteristics which are vital to the objectives of the study.

The targeted population for the study are undergraduate students of the Faculty of Science Education, to be precise, the Information and Communication Technology Education department. The department is located at the south campus of the University and according to information on the University's website; the department provides academic and technical support services for both staff and students for pedagogical and administrative purposes. It also manages the ICT infrastructure and resources of the University. The students are trained on a wide range of ICT

programmes, this includes website designing, blogging and the use of web 2 tool; apart from that the students also download some of their assignments online. This makes the department a very important area of study on issues regarding ICT and the Internet.

3.4 Sample Size

According to information from the basic statistics of the 19th congregation, the ICT department has a population size of 331 made up of 153 level 100 students, 116 level 200 students, 35 level 300 students and 27 level 400 students respectively.

A sample size of 200 was chosen for this study: out of this number, 40 were selected and placed in groups of 10 each for a focus group interview. This size was arrived at due to time and cost constraints. This sample size is informed by the position of Lindlof and Taylor (2002). According to them even though there is no rule for a "correct" sample size, researchers can develop an estimate by considering the scope of the project, the complexity of the research problem, the accessibility of potential participants and the time and resources that are available for working in the field.(p. 129)

3.5 Sampling Procedure

The purposive sampling method was adopted in this study. Oliver (2006) explained that purposive sampling is a form of non probability sampling in which decisions concerning individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research.

This sampling method was arrived at because it "necessitates researchers taking a decision about the individual participants who would be most likely to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth." (Oliver, 2006, p.245). Students pursuing ICT education at the University aptly fit the definition given in this context; these students are the most appropriate sample because they are the right population to contribute appropriate data in terms of relevance and depth to the subject under research. Purposive sampling becomes series of strategic choices about whom, where and how to do research. (Palys, 2008).

Palys (2008) avers that criterion sampling, which is a type of sampling under purposive sampling, allows the researcher to look for cases or individuals who meet a certain criteria. In this case the criteria used for sampling was that the respondents should be active users of the Internet. Although there was no fool proof strategy in identifying respondents who falsify data because they wanted to be included in the study, it was of the view that such respondents would provide inconsistent responses related to the technicalities of Internet usages and thus unknowingly give themselves up. Convenience sampling was also used to select some of the respondents for the focus group interview.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

Two methods were used in collecting data for this research work. A questionnaire and a semi structured interview were deployed in carrying out the study. Zohrabi (2013) pointed out that questionnaires are one of the primary sources of obtaining data in any research endeavour.

 A structured questionnaire made up of open ended and close ended questions was used to collect data for the study. The closed ended questions were geared towards eliciting specific answers from the respondents. It was also necessary to employ close ended questions in order to simplify the process and also meet the time needs of the students.

According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000), open ended questions are effective in eliciting further responses that would help to clarify an issue and this is what the few open ended questionnaires were meant to achieve. The questionnaires were designed in a way that ensured that it is "valid, reliable and unambiguous" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002.p.438).

According to Burns (1999) Interviews are a popular and widely used means of collecting qualitative data for any study. The use of focus group interview in this research work was due to the technicalities involved on issues bothering on ICT and the latent nature of the subject area. According to Carey (1994) as cited in Lindlof and Taylor (2002), one major reason of interviewing people in a group is to exploit the "group effect". Focus group interview was used in the study to ensure a complementary interaction among group members. This method was exploited due to the technical nature of the subject in question. The purpose of an interview "is to reveal existing knowledge in a way that can be expressed in the form of answers and so become accessible to interpretation." (Flick, 2006, p.160).

3.6.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part aimed at collecting demographic information on the respondents. This included age, sex and their year of study of the respondent. The second part focused on Internet usage amongst the respondents. This part of the questionnaire gathered information on the ICT and Internet literacy of the students. It also elicited response on the type of gadgets and other issues related to Internet usage for news consumption. The questionnaire comprised 24 items. The questionnaire was administered to 200 students who were selected for the study

3.6.2 Interviews

An interview guide was used to gather the necessary information required for data analysis. .A semi-structured interview was chosen for the study. This allowed for flexibility for both the interviewer and interviewee. This type of interview also allows the interviewee to provide more information (Zohrabi, 2013). In other to obtain more information, a simple and clear language devoid of ambiguity was used during the interview (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003).

In all 4focus group discussion were organised made up of 10 students each. The discussions were arranged in a cordial and a relaxed atmosphere. This arrangement helped in creating rapport with respondents and also helped in putting them at ease as suggested by Lindolf and Taylor (2002).

3.7 Procedure for data collection

The researcher in the company of two research assistants made up of students from the ICT department visited the offices of the ICT lecturers on two different occasions. After introducing myself to them, I explained my mission and requested their approval for me to administer my questionnaire to the students. I was offered the opportunity to address the class on my mission, after which the research assistants coordinated the distribution and collection of the questionnaires. This was done after the questionnaires had gone through pre-testing with some 10 students of IPMC in Accra. During the pre testing of the questionnaires, it was noted that questions 20 and 21 were supposed to elicit the same response. The questionnaire was modified and later administered to the intended population.

3.8 Data Analysis

The data collected were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Microsoft Excel 2010, a basic statistical software was used to process the quantitative data collected from the field. Aside that simple frequencies and percentages were also used in analysing the quantitative data. Open ended items and the interviews were analysed qualitatively with the three step process of content analysis as proposed by Hiseh and Shannon (2005) and used by Avorgah (2013). Content analysis is a technique used to analyse written, visual or verbal communication messages (Elo & Kyngas, 2008). Respondents responses were read and a list of key words and phrases were identified. Identical key words and phrases were placed into categories and the categories labelled with themes that best describe them. In order to achieve reliability, two

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graduate students and the researcher were involved simultaneously in the identification and categorisation of words and phrases into themes. The process involved an agreement between at least two analysts before a response was placed under a theme. To ensure credibility of the analysis, direct quotes were also used.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0   Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the research methodology used for the study. This chapter deals with the analysis of data collected from the field and discussions on the key findings. The study was conducted with the use of descriptive analysis and utilised descriptive statistics such as tables and charts. Relevant portions of interviews conducted were transcribed and analysed.

The chapter presents the data with tables, figures and interpretations. First of all, the content of this chapter encapsulates the demographic data of respondents. This is followed by data on students' usage of the Internet for news, the avenues they use to source news online. Results on the dominant websites students source their news from, the kinds of news students' source on the Internet and the reasons why they choose the Internet over traditional media. The data also elicits response on the perceived usefulness of the gadgets that students use to source news on the Internet. The amount of time they spend reading news online, challenges they encounter whiles sourcing news and lastly the credibility of the media.

The results were based on questionnaires and interview responses. With regard to the structure of presentation, the demographic data or profiles of students are presented first followed by results of questionnaires answered by the students based on the research questions. In addition to this, interview responses of respondents were also

analysed. Headings of the emerging issues are captioned on top of the tables following the interpretations of the findings; and below the tables are some quotations and comments which were tape-recorded from students during the study. The discussion of the research results was done taking into consideration the objectives and research questions set out for the study. Again, literature on online news and traditional media were relied upon for the discussion.

4.1   Demographic Profile of Participants

The demographic profile of respondents used for the questionnaire covered such areas as sex, age range and year of study of students. The tables and figures below indicate their responses.

Table 4.1   Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	frequency	percentage (%)
Male	142	82
Female	31	18
Total	**175**	**100**

As shown in table 4.1 above, responses from the questionnaire indicated that 82 % of the population used for the study were males whilst 18 % were females. A quick

reference to the general student statistics reveals that males constitute a larger portion of the student population.

Table 4.2   Age Range of Respondent

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
19- 25	112	65
26- 32	44	25
33- 38	15	9
39 and above	2	1
Total	**173**	**100**

Table 4.2 above show   the age range of respondents. The statistics reveals that students whose ages range from 19-25 years were 112 representing 65% of the total respondents. Those in the range of 26-32 years were 44 in all representing 25 % whereas those who were 33-38 years were 15 representing 9% and above 39 was 2 constituting 1%.

Even though the research was carried out in Ghana, the response from the data collected supports Palfrey and Gasser (2008)'s model of "digital divides," which portrays contemporary Americans and their news consumption patterns. They described young American's within the ages of 18-29 as "digital natives." They explained that this age group grew up at a time when the Internet was becoming more central whilst the newspaper, radio and TV news was declining. They concluded that

the major part of the lives of those they referred to as "digital natives" is mediated by digital technologies.

The responses also revealed that majority of the population sampled fall within those described as "digital natives." These people grew up during the Internet age. This group of people are in the age range of 18-29. They have embraced technology by using it to carry out many activities including sourcing news online.

Table 4.3   Current Year of Studies of Respondents

Year	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1ST	71	41
2ND	42	24
3RD	37	22
4TH	23	13
TOTAL	**173**	**100**

Table 4.3 illustrate the various year groups of the respondents. The findings reveal that 1st year students constituted a large segment of the respondents. Out of a total population of 173 respondents, 71 of them representing 41 % are in first year. The second year students were 42 in all representing 24 %. Third year students were made up of 37 students representing 22%. A total of 23 students representing 13% were in the fourth year. The fourth years' constitute the minority.
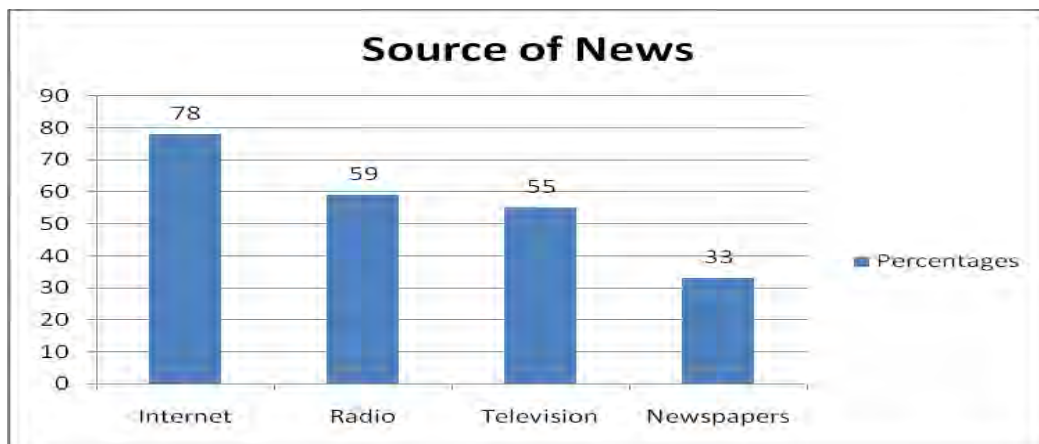
Figure 4.4 showing respondents news sources

Figure 4.4 above show the various media that students' source their news from. The results revealed that majority of the students rely on the Internet as their first choice. 78% of the respondents chose the Internet, followed by the radio which had 59%, television was next with 55% and newspaper recorded the least with 38%. This finding corroborates the 2013 report released by Pew Research Centre which states that Millennials are using the Internet as their main news source.

Table 4.4a   Amount of Time Students Spend Online

Time	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1-30 minutes	85	49
30-60 minutes	43	25
1-2 Hours	30	17
2 Hours	15	9
Total	**173**	**100**

Analysis of Table 4.4a indicates that 49% of the respondents spend about 30 minutes online. 25% spend one hour whilst 17% also spend 2 hours. Only 9 % spend more than 2hours online.

Research Question 1

What avenues do students use to source news online?

One of the objectives set out for this study was to investigate how students source news online. The reason for this question was to find out the processes students go through to source news online. The question was necessary because sourcing news online requires the use of technologies. These technologies aid the user to get online and seek any information that the person wants. Without these technologies, it would be impossible for anyone to access news online.

In an attempt to answer this research question, the respondents were made to answer a questionnaire after which a focus group interview was also used to elicit detailed response as to the processes involved in sourcing news online. Question seven of the questionnaire sought to find out from students, gadgets they use to source news online. This was a closed ended question that provided students with a list of gadgets to choose from.

There were questions on perceived usefulness and ease of use of these gadgets. The response from the follow up questions sought to justify or prove otherwise the theories used to carry out the study. The responses to the questions are analysed below.
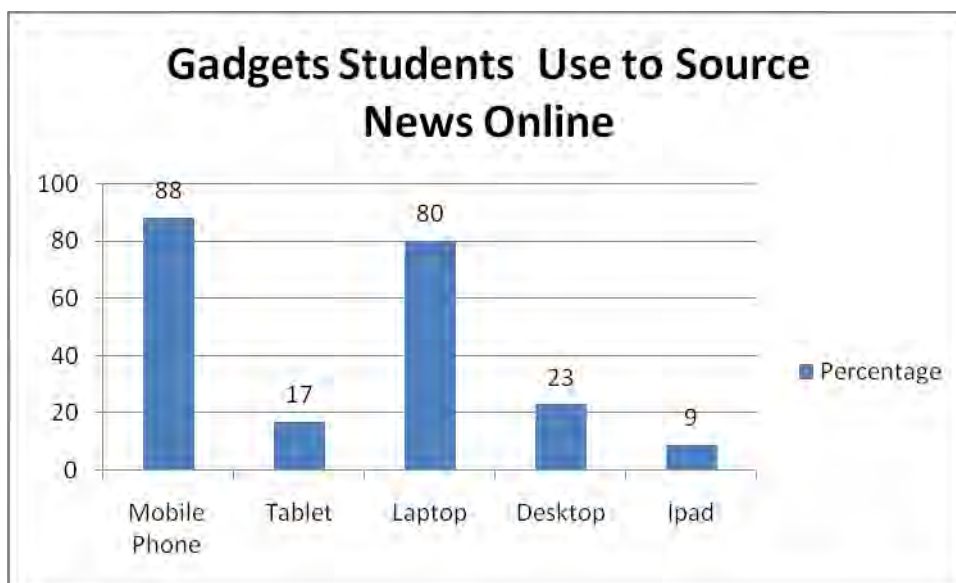
**Figure 4.5 Gadgets Students Use to Source News Online**

The results from the graph reveal that majority of the students use more than one gadget to access news online. Mobile phone usage by students was 88%., followed by Laptop which had 80%. From the response, 23% of the students use Desktop to source news was usage recorded 23%, tablets 17% and Ipad was 9%.

This result confirms Pew Research Centers' findings which state that most adults access the Internet on their mobile phones (State of the News Media, 2010). The increase in the number of students using laptop to access news online confirms a Pew research conducted in the United States of America which findings revealed that majority of young adults at the age of 18-29 own a laptop or notebook whilst quite a number also own a desktop which they use to browse the Internet. The use of these gadgets has made it easier for students to go online and source news.

In other to find out from the respondents, how they use these gadgets to access news online, the researcher posed a question which sought to elicit response on how

students connect their gadgets to access news online. Accessing news on the Internet does not only require gadgets but also a channel or conduit through which the platform can be accessed. The pie chart below details the various ways that students use to access the Internet.
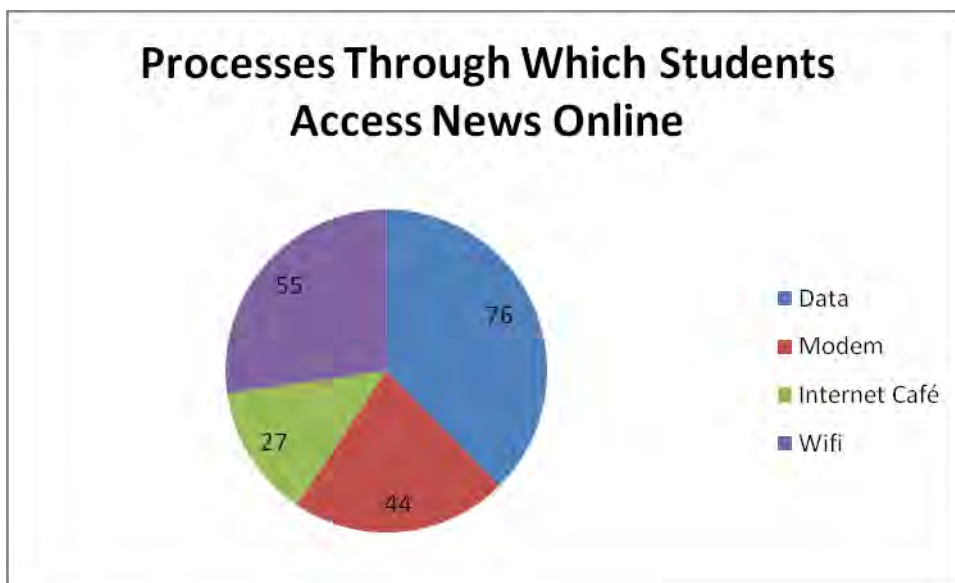
Figure 4.6 Processes Through Which Students Access News Online

After analysing the responses, the results indicated that majority of the students 76% access the news through the "data" on their mobile phones. This means students always subscribe to the Internet from their mobile telephone company. They buy "data"and use it to browse. Another major medium that students use to browse is the wifi. 55% of respondents said they really on the school's wifi to browse. According to the analysis, 44% of the students also access the Internet through their modems whilst 27% rely on Internet cafes as their main channel of accessing the Internet.

The response reinforces the earlier submission that most students use their mobile phones to connect to the Internet. It also supports the claim of Lenhart, Purcell, Smith

and Zickuhr, (2010) who asserted that "cell phone ownership is nearly ubiquitous among teens and young adults, and much of the growth in teen cell phone ownership has been driven by adoption among the youngest teens." (Pg. 6).

4.2.3 Perceived usefulness and ease of use of IT/IS

A close ended question which sought to elicit from respondents how useful they perceive the gadgets use to source news online and whether they encounter any difficulty whilst operating these gadgets produced the results listed in the table below.

Table 4.7a   Usefulness of the Gadgets Used in Accessing News Online

Usefulness	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Yes	151	87
No	15	8
Unsure	6	5
Total	173	100

Table 4.7b Difficulties Student Face Whilst Using these Gadgets?

Difficulty	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	32	18
No	137	79
Unsure	4	3
Total	**173**	**100**

The reason for these questions was to help the researcher relate the responses to the theories used for the research work.

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Diffusion of Innovation (DOI) theories have been used to study the adoption and usage of technology. TAM has been used widely to study how perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness of a technology largely contribute to its adoption. The DOI looks at how an innovation is spread within a defined area.

Five technological gadgets that people often use to browse the Internet were listed in the questionnaire and the respondents were asked to choose the ones they use to browse for news online. The usage of these gadgets by the respondents meant that the respondents have realised the usefulness of the gadgets, adopted it and are using it in their daily lives. This also means that the respondents have already gone through the 5

stages of adoption proposed by Rogers (1983). The five stages include (1) Awareness, (2) Interest, (3) Evaluation, (4) trial, and (5) Adoption.

In all 137 respondents 79% representing majority agreed to the usefulness of the gadgets they use to source news online. 32 respondents representing 18% did not find the gadgets useful whilst 4 respondents representing 3% did not respond to the question.

Regarding difficulties respondents face whilst using these gadgets, 105 respondents representing 93% of the sample size answered that they do not encounter any difficulty whilst using these gadgets. 67 respondents representing 6 % answered yes suggesting that they encounter difficulties whilst using the gadgets. 1 respondent failed to answer the question.

One of the respondents in the group said:

> I found my mobile phone and laptop very easy to use. I have been using my gadgets for some time now and I am very conversant using them to browse. The gadgets are useful because when I use them to browse online for news. I get my news instantly compared to the TV or Radio where I have to wait for the hour before getting to listen or read news.

Another respondent also stated that "I use my mobile phone and laptop to browse and because I have been trained on how to use them, I don't have any difficulty in using them."

"The gadgets are useful because they are easy to carry and also helps me to access the Internet with no impediments."

The findings support the works of Venkatesh and Davis, (1996) and Venkatesh et al., (2003) which posited that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use determine an individual's intention to use a system, with the intention to use, serving as a mediator of actual system use

In order to know the reasons why some of the respondents find it difficult using their gadgets to read news on the Internet, question 11 on the questionnaire was an open ended question which required the respondents to explain their response. Key words and phrases which form the responses were analysed and developed into themes. The themes include "slow connection," "network challenges," "Screen Challenges," "Virus" and "power challenges." The findings are given in the table below.

Table 4.8 Challenges that Come with the Use of these Gadgets.

Codes	Themes	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Network Challenge	41	61
2	Screen Challenge	12	18
3	Virus	9	13
4	Electricity	5	8
Total		**67**	**100**

Table 4.9 shows responses from respondents who face challenges whilst using these gadgets. In all 67 respondents stated that they face challenges with the gadgets they

use to source news online. The responses have been developed into themes and explained below.

1. **Network Challenges –** Respondents explained that the gadgets they use to browse the Internet sometimes connect slowly and this is a drawback to their usage of the Internet. This experience by the respondents illustrates Venkatesh et al (2003) definition of a facilitating condition. They defined it as "the degree to which an individual believes that an organisational and technical infrastructure exist to support use of the system." In this case, the network challenges encountered impedes their use of the technology. This also supports the conceptual framework of the researcher which also stipulates that certain conditions may facilitate the use of technology; in this case the condition identified serves as a drawback on the use of the Internet. If the network is working properly, respondents' access to the World Wide Web would be easy.

    Poor connectivity in this case may not necessarily come from the gadget but might be as a result of the service being provided by the Internet Service Provider and in some cases the mobile telephony companies. If the service providers are experiencing challenges with their network, this would definitely affect the speed with which one can receive data from these service providers. Apart from that, respondents use of the wifi on campus to browse the Internet, poses a lot of challenges whenever the wifi goes off, all these factors directly affects the usage of the Internet by students.

This revelation supports Popoola's (ND) research findings which revealed that poor connectivity affects the use of mobile phones by Nigerians to browse the Internet.

2. **Screen Challenges** – Depending on the gadget that one uses to browse the Internet, one may encounter challenges. A small mobile phone may have a small screen resulting in the fonts appearing smaller. In situations like this, it becomes difficult for the user to read the text that appears on the phone, so even though the person can access the Internet alright, the size of the fonts might deter him from using his phone to browse. When students are faced with such a challenge, the only option they have is to switch to another gadget with a bigger screen in order for them to be able to read the text.

3. **Virus -** According to techdictionary.com, a virus is a program that can "infect" other programs by modifying them to include a possibly evolved copy of itself. A program that infects a computer by attaching itself to another program, and propagating itself when the program is executed. A computer or information system gets infected by the files downloaded over the network. This is also a classical case of an external factor that affects the use of an Information Technology or an Information System. When this happens, the gadget gets corrupted and begins to malfunction.

4. **Electricity Challenges –** Most of these gadgets that the respondents use to browse the Internet require electricity to function, without it, it becomes impossible to use them. Ghana is currently experiencing energy problems and

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this is affecting all sphere of life including the academic sector. Students' usage of certain gadgets like their Laptops, Ipad, mobile phones depends on constant supply of electricity. The current energy crisis is affecting their use of some of these electronic gadgets. All the gadgets used for browsing the Internet need electricity for its usage; without electricity, it becomes difficult for respondents to use these gadgets. In instances like this, electricity which serves as a facilitating condition is nonexistent and situations like this might result in the respondents abandoning the idea to browse the Internet for news.

The analysis provided in tables 4.7a and 4.7b respectively supports the claim of many researchers on the Technology Acceptance Model which has been used in different domains and different situations to predict the behavioural intentions of persons to use a technology as well as the actual usage of a technology. The response from the two tables supports the claim that perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) as proposed by Davis et al (1989) coupled with facilitating conditions have the capability to determine the actual usage of a new technology, in this case the Internet.

Research Question 2

4.3 Which dominant websites do students access on the Internet for news?

An open ended question was employed to find out from respondents, websites they visit most often for news. The questions were specific as to which foreign and local websites respondents visit to source news. The reasons for this question were to find out from the respondents whether they really browse the

Internet for news and also identify the major websites they source their news from. The responses would also help the researcher in establishing whether these websites are represented in the traditional media or operate as a standalone.

The findings would also be vital in answering the last research question on whether the Internet is a threat to the traditional medium or complements the work of the traditional media.

Responses to the two questions were varied in terms of the websites the respondents visit for news. Below is a graph analysing the dominant websites listed by the respondents.
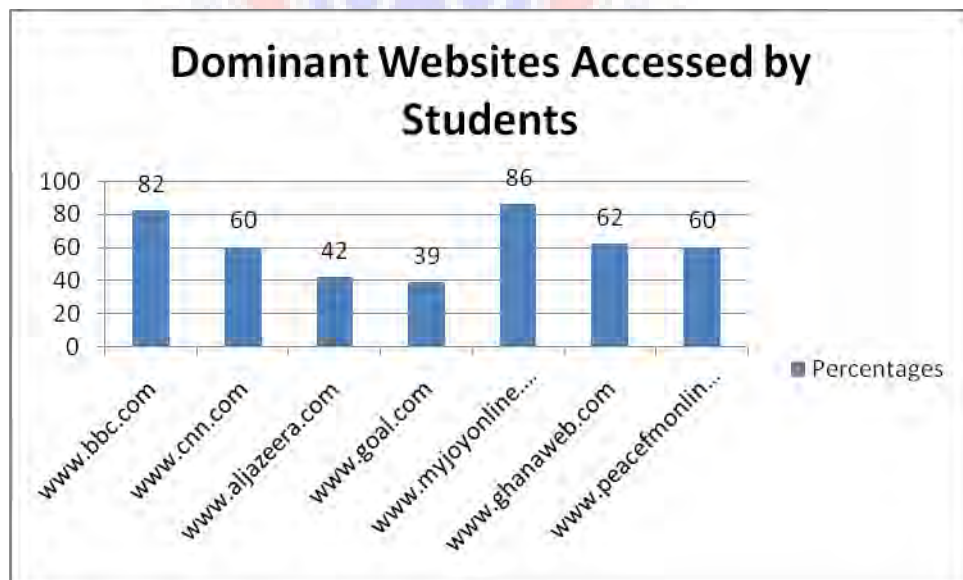

Figure 4.9 Dominant Websites Accessed by Students

In the foreign websites category, majority of the respondents listed the BBC website as their favourite foreign website, followed by CNN, Aljazeera and Goal.com. Goal.com is a website that specialises in publishing sports stories. Checks from www.alexa.com, a website which specialises in website ratings and the provision of commercial web traffic data reveal that the websites listed are amongst the most popular websites that people visit. Apart from these websites; the respondents also listed other foreign websites with contents ranging from politics, sports, entertainment etc.

Myjoyonline.com was listed by most of the respondents as the local website that they source news from; this was followed by Ghanaweb.com and peacefmonline.com respectively. These websites were verified with rankings from www.alexa.com.The findings from alexa.com, revealed that all the three websites listed by the respondents made it to their rankings.Ghanaweb.com which was ranked seventh, followed by myjoyonline.com at the eighth position and peacefmonline.com was eleventh.

This rating is contrary to the results from the respondents. The respondents rated myjoyonline.com higher than Ghanaweb.com. The finding implies that students are more comfortable sourcing news from websites with traditional media affiliations than those which do not have any.

4.4 Reasons why Respondents Visit these Websites

Questions 24 and 25 were open ended, the questions sought to find out from respondents why they visit these websites and how credible they regard these

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media. The respondents gave various reasons why they visit these websites. The responses were coded and themes developed out of them. The themes generated were "credible", "update", "in-depth", "multimedia" and "affiliations."
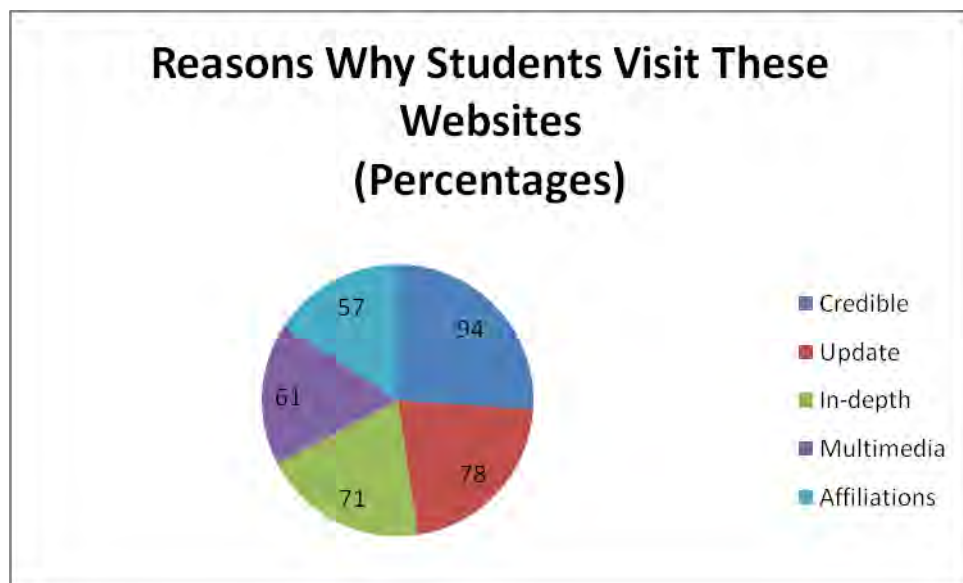
Figure 4.9a. Reasons Why Students Visit These Websites.

1. **Credibility –** From the responses analysed, majority of the respondents (94%) deem the web to be a credible source. According to them, whatever news they read online conforms to what is presented in the traditional media. This is so especially with websites affiliated to traditional media. They also claimed that most often what is posted on the web is factual because the editors add photos and videos in some cases.

2. **Updates –** The respondents also explained that the news on the Internet is always updated compared to the news in the traditional media. With the traditional media especially newspapers, it is very difficult to update the news

immediately. This is so because the newspapers are published once a day. With radio and TV, even though it is updated, the updates on the Internet are faster.

3. **In-depth** – According to the respondents, online news is very detailed and is devoid of embellishment. The same cannot be said of some radio and TV stations in Ghana. They explained that online news is very detailed and provides much information than radio and TV. One advantage that online news has over traditional sources is that it is not limited by time and space as compared to news from the radio and TV stations.

4. **Multimedia**- Some respondents also explained that they are fascinated by how online news combines text, audio and video in their presentation. The combination of text, audio and video at a go is absent in the traditional media.

5. **Affiliations** – According to some of the respondents, the websites that they source news online are affiliated to traditional media organisations operating press houses, Television and radio stations. They made mention of CNN, BBC, JOY FM and CITI FM which all have websites that publish contents online. For these respondents, they enjoy online sources of these medium because they can crosscheck whatever story is published with what the parent company has put out there.

With regard to the kinds of news, students search for online, the respondents gave multiple kinds of news that they seek online. The responses of the students are analysed below.

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Research Question 3.

4.5 What kinds of news do students source online?

The research question sought to find out from students the kinds of news they source online. The response to this question is represented by the graph below.
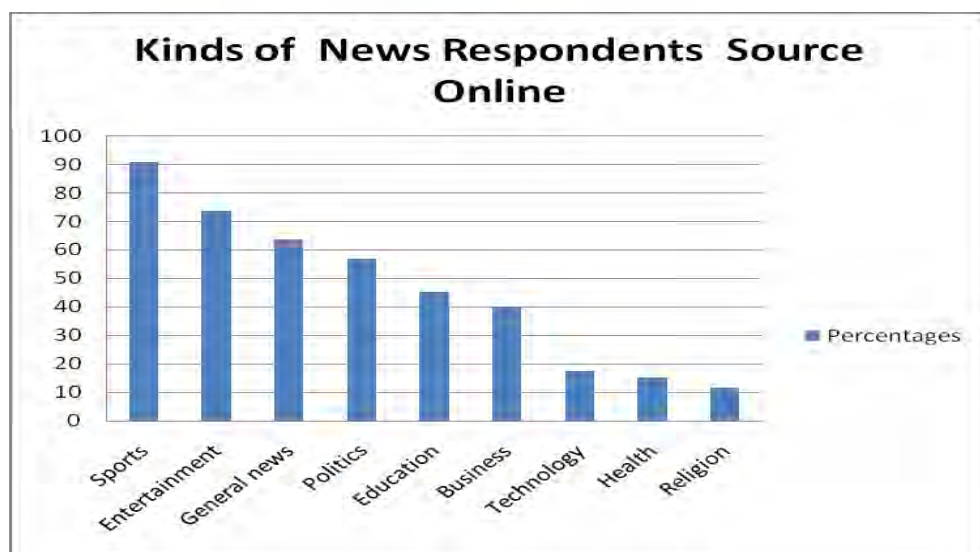
Figure 4.9 Kinds of News Students Source Online

From the graph displayed above, it is evident that, that online news reading among undergraduate students is very high. Students most often go online to read multiple kinds of news ranging from general knowledge to religion. Sports news enjoyed the highest readership, 91% of the respondents explained that they read sports news whilst religion was the least with 12%. The response also supports the position of Kundanis (2003) who asserted that each generation comes of age with a new communication medium of which they are masters and for the millennial, the internet is that medium.

Research Question 4

4.6 Why do Students Choose the Internet over Traditional Media?

It was important to gauge the respondents' opinion on their preference of the Internet over the traditional media. The response from this question would help the researcher to conclude as to whether the Internet has taken over from the traditional media or the Internet is complementing the traditional media.

One respondent during the interview stated:

> "With my smart phone, laptop and tablet, it is easier for me to read the news on these gadgets. In the morning when I wake up I check my mails, and receive news from websites that I have subscribed to through the RSS feed of these websites."

This response from the student suggests that the Internet has made it easier for most people to go about their activities. People who want to listen to news on the Internet can do so at any time since some of these websites send the news directly to them through their emails. People no longer waste their time to tune in to particular stations for news at a particular hour, but the news is sent to them directly by these websites when they register for such services. The Internet also allows them to listen to or read specific news items. This is so because some of these websites provide users the option to select the kinds of news the reader is interested in and provides them with that.

According to another respondent, the Internet is

> "A medium free to access at any particular time……" People use it most often because of the ease they have to surf for a particular kind of news they want. The Internet gives you the opportunity to access news at anytime you want but with Radio and TV; they have a particular time that they give you the news."

The response from this respondent suggests that the Internet has made it possible for people to have control on when and how they access their news. People do not wait on TV and Radio to give them the news, but would rather surf the Internet at their own will and time for news. It also emerged from that interview that people who surf the Internet for news, determine what kind of news they want to read by selecting the news items that suit their taste.

Another respondent said "I don't need to wait till it's an hour on the dot till I get to listen or read the news; I just connect any of my gadgets and am on."

This means that news on the Internet defies time; the news is published as and when it breaks. The news as published on these websites are available to readers for a much longer period and the same cannot be said of radio and television. These gadgets are transient and very difficult to make reference to whenever story is carried out there. The print medium operates differently from the broadcast. With the print, one can make reference to whatever story is published at any time and any day, but the challenge that comes with the print is that it takes so much time to search for a story published in the past. Another challenge with the print is how news stories are updated. It normally would take another day for stories to be updated. These two

characteristics of the print distinguish the Internet over print with regard to speed in searching for stories.

Another respondent explained that

> "with my mobile phone, I can access the Internet for news at any point in time. It is fast and easy browsing the Internet for news. I am also fascinated by the combination of visual, audio and print. It makes reading of the news very interesting."

The mobile phone makes it easier for users to go online at anytime and anywhere. With such a gadget, one can access the Internet for news with less difficulty. The views of the respondent affirms the position of Dimmick, Powers, Mwangi and Stoycheff, (2011) who suggested that considering their wide diffusion, mobile news media have helped audiences to consume news content anywhere, anytime, and in various forms. This makes news on the Internet timeless and ubiquitous.

Judging from the response to the research question, one can confidently deduce that the Internet has enhanced news delivery and helped in the growth of the media and media practice.

As to whether the Internet is posing a threat to the traditional media or complementing the work of the traditional media, one cannot give a definite answer. Various scholars have written on this subject and most of these research works have expressed varied opinions. Whilst researchers like Chi and Lasora (2003), Dutta-Bergman (2004) and Olmsted et al (2013) hold the view that the Internet is complementing the traditional media, other scholars like Nguyen (2003), Bird (2009) and Patel (2010) hold a contrary opinion. It is in this vein that the role of the Internet as a news source should

be put in a proper perspective. When the question was posed to the students on whether the Internet is a threat or complements the traditional media, varied responses were elicited from the respondents. According to one respondent.

"The Internet can somehow displace the traditional media in one way or the other but it's going to take a long time. Even though it (Internet) has been in the system for sometime now, most people are not conversant with it."

This statement confirms the findings of the International Telecommunications Union's statistics on Internet usage in Ghana. According to them as at 2011, only 2,085,501 representing 8.4% of Ghanaians use the Internet.

Another respondent also explained that

"Nowadays, people move about to get what they want and if the Internet is able to give you free access to it whilst you on the go, then it is displacing the traditional media."

According to the respondent there are certain specific current affairs programs that he listens on radio and always ensures that he listens to such programmes. This means that even though he is addicted to browsing the Internet for news, there are certain programmes that he listens on radio. This means that although students go on the Internet for news; there are certain programmes that they would prefer to listen to on radio. According to Bardoel and Deuze (2001), the Internet is a fourth kind of journalism next to radio, television and print. This statement supports the claim that the Internet has come to stay as one of the media repertoires available to consumers.

One key observation by the researcher was that most of the students browse websites affiliated to the traditional medium whenever they go online. This was demonstrated through the answers they provided for the earlier research question. This clearly shows that the traditional media has realised the threat posed by the Internet and are doing everything possible to forestall that threat.

One of the ways that the owners of these media organisations are countering these threats is through the establishment of a strong online presence. The current situation where we have a strong online presence of the traditional media should be seen as an attempt by these media houses to leverage the threat of the Internet and also take advantage of the current trends that technology offers the world to improve their coverage. Just as all other professions have embraced technology and are using it to transform their various sectors, the media seem to have also taken that course in order not to be left out of the "technology revolution."

It also emerged from the data gathered that students usage of the Internet for news is relatively higher than their use of the traditional media. This may be attributed to the various technological tools that are available to the current generation which makes it easier for them to go online.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Overview

This chapter presents the summary of the analysis based on the objectives of the study which are to investigate how students source news on the Internet, to identify the dominant websites students source news, to find out the kinds of news students source from the Internet and also why students choose the Internet as their source of news instead of the traditional media. Conclusions and recommendations are also discussed in this chapter.

5.1   Summary of Findings

The study revealed that students of the university read and listen to news through the various medium. Responses from students in this direction reveal that majority of the students browse the Internet for their news. The results also revealed that apart from the Internet, students' also access news from the traditional media and are active there. It was established from the study that 59% of the students listen to Radio for news whilst 55% also watch television for news. Newspapers recorded the lowest patronage of 38%.

Findings from the study also revealed that majority of the students own gadgets which they use to browse online. 79% of the students use their mobile phones to browse the

Internet, other gadgets that the students' uses include laptops, tablets, desktops and Ipads.

The study also revealed that 70% of the respondents' use the data on their mobile phone to browse the Internet. Apart from that, students sometimes also uses the school's wifi to connect to the Internet. Others also make use of modems and only 21% go to the Internet café to browse. All the students interviewed indicated that they use their mobile phones very often to browse because it is handy and portable.

According to the findings 88% representing majority of the respondents agreed to the usefulness of the gadgets they use to surf the Internet.

70% of the respondents also pointed out that they do not encounter any difficulty when using these gadgets. Even though it was evident from the responses that majority of the students do not face any challenge whilst using these gadgets, there were other conditions that affected the smooth usage of the Internet. These conditions were not as a result of the gadgets the students were using, they were more or less external factors that could not be controlled. These conditions include unstable power supply, which is as a result of the current load shedding crises being experienced all over the country.

Weak signals from the school's wifi connection, high data charges from mobile telephony companies and other factors such as virus on these gadgets and sometimes the size of the screen of their gadgets pose a challenge to them.

The study also revealed that majority of the students read sports news online, 91% indicated that they go online to surf for sports news, followed by entertainment,

general news and politics. Religious news was the least on the table. Only 12 % of students go online to read religious news.

Results from the data analysed revealed that students visit both foreign and local websites for news. Majority of the students listed the websites of BBC, CNN, Aljazeera and goal.com respectively as the dominant foreign websites they browse for news. Myjoyonline, Ghanaweb and Peacefmonline were the dominant local websites that these students visit for news. It is important to note that majority of the websites listed by these students are affiliated to radio and TV stations.

These revelations attest to the fact that the traditional media has a strong presence on the Internet. The traditional media is making their contents available to their audience online. It also means that the traditional media have realised the immense advantage of the world wide web and are taking advantage of it like any other institution.

This revelation defeats the argument that the Internet poses a threat to the traditional media; it rather reinforces the argument of researchers who have argued that the Internet compliments the work of the traditional media. With the low rate of Internet literacy, coupled with other challenges like high data charges and network challenges, it would be difficult for the Internet to serve as the main avenue for news. The current development where most radio and television stations are establishing themselves online makes that issue of a threat nonexistent.

5.2 Implications of Findings

University students are being trained to take up the mantle from the current crop of national leaders, under this fourth republic. There have been instances where graduates have been offered important positions in government. It is also important to note that graduates from the universities are seen as first level managers in every organisation. The training they acquire from school is to make them independent and critical thinkers. It would be unfortunate for the nation to train graduates who would come out of school and are oblivious of events around them and current happenings in the world. This is so because in this era of globalisation, it is crucial for the citizenry of every nation to be abreast of happenings around and in the world over.

The 21st century graduate must not be left out on events around the world; the graduate is better off being abreast of issues and news about the world rather than being unconcerned. It is important for these graduates to cultivate the habit of reading or listening to news in order for them to be empowered.

Results from the study shows that news consumption is high amongst students of the University of Education, Winneba and it is heart warming to note that the students use the various media to source news. This means that students are following events around the world and are well abreast of current affairs.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the results of the study:

Most of the university students rely on the Internet to do research, listen to news and also socialise, it is in this vein that the university's wifi should be seen as an important device; most students complained of the weak signals from the wifi.

It is important for the university to upgrade the wifi on campus. This would help students to have access to an uninterrupted Internet service on campus.

The university authorities should continue to supply newspapers and journals to departments and if possible, extend it to the halls for easier access by students. Students' should have access to newspapers at all the places accessible to them on campus.

The university should also think of alternative ways of generating power, the current energy crisis is having a negative effect on teaching and learning. The university should devise another way of generating power to supplement the current supply from the Electricity Company of Ghana.

The best option for the university is for the authorities to build a biogas plant and the use of human waste from the university community to provide power.

The university should do well to open more computer laboratories for use by students, the current situation where students from other departments get access to the ICT laboratories only when they have an ICT class is not the best.

The university should provide more ICT centres for the use of the general student body; these centres should be equipped with the state of the art facilities to help students use the Internet.

The government also have a role to play in the current situation. Most of the students explained that they use mobile phones to browse the Internet. Apart from that the students also use other gadgets like laptops and desktops. It behoves on government to do everything it can to ensure that students get access to some of these gadgets at a subsidised cost.

The government initiated a policy to supply free laptops to needy students some years back. It is important for the government to continue with this programme in order to help students acquire these gadgets for their wellbeing.

Students also complained about high tariffs bymobile telephony companies.There is the need for government to provide incentives in the form of tax rebate to mobile telephony companies who are willing to give subsidised tariffs to students.

The National Communication Authority (NCA) should also ensure that the mobile telephony companies address mobile phone users' complaint of bad network. If possible defaulting telecommunication companies should be fined.

5.4   Limitations to the Study

The research work focused on undergraduate students; however due to their area of specialisation, students from the ICT department were used in the study. These students use the computer and Internet in their coursework. The computer lab of the

school serves as their classroom. This makes it easier for them to have access to computers to study at any day. The inability of the researcher to involve students from the other departments was a big challenge. It is important to note that even though students from other departments also listen and read news; the researcher had to make do with the ICT students due to time, logistics and financial constraints.

5.5   Suggestions for Further Research

It must be stated that the research questions in the study were adequately answered and even though the findings could be generalized for the entire undergraduate population, a further research in that direction involving postgraduate students of the Communication and Media Studies department would also bring out their perspective on this issue.

5.6   Conclusion

The dissertation sought to address issues regarding news consumption among undergraduate students of the University of Education, Winneba. It is important to note that news consumption is an important aspect of the day to day activities of every human being. People listen to the news to get informed about happenings around them. It is also an avenue for people to know about events happening in the world. In this era of globalisation, it is important for every individual especially university students to know about events within and outside their countries. Having knowledge about issues happening in the world would help the students plan their lives whilst in school and prepare for the job market after school.

The present study aimed at investigating University of Education, Winneba. Students' usage of the Internet as a news source. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The sample survey method was used to gather the data. The study was carried out using students from the ICT education department. The total population was made up of the students from the ICT education department made up of students from level 100-400.

The researcher used purposive sampling techniques to select the respondents .The instruments used for gathering data were qualitative method comprising questionnaire with closed and open ended questions. An interview guide was used to interview some students as well. Due to certain latent and technical issues, it was important that the interview was used to augment the questionnaires. All the questions were in line with the research questions. A period of five months was used to gather data. Out of 200 questionnaires, 173 were retrieved. A focused group interview involving 4 groups made up of students from level 100-400 was used to gather data. Relevant data gathered from respondents were coded and scored. The descriptive statistics, frequency table and percentages, including thematic issues were used to present the data.

This investigation into the news consumption habits of students was necessary as it revealed the news consumption habits of students and the major challenges student face when using the Internet to source their news. The study revealed that undergraduate students faced a lot of challenges in terms of:

    i.   Wifi connectivity

   ii.   Unstable power supply

  iii.   Lack of ICT centres

  iv.   High data charges

   v.   High cost of gadgets

Largely, the challenges of these students are as a result of certain external factors which they have minimal control over.

The university serves as the link between academia and the outside world. After graduation, students are supposed to contribute their quota to national development.It is important that apart from the academic training students acquire, students must also ensure that they develop themselves socially in order to meet the demands of the outside world. Student can only acquire some of these traits by keeping abreast of happenings around them and one way that the student can do that is by listening and reading news. News consumption also improves the communication skills and creative faculties of students.

The University of Education, Winneba as a stakeholder has a role to play in seeing to the resolution of some of these challenges. An improvement in the wifi connection, regular power supply and adequate ICT centres are some of the measures the university can use in helping to resolve these challenges.

On the other hand, the government also has a role to play in addressing some of these issues. It is the responsibility of the government to ensure that students have access to ICT tools at a very affordable cost. It is important for the government to ensure that the mobile phone companies do not short change their customers by providing them

with high data tariffs and poor network connectivity. If these issues are addressed,

students would have less worry when browsing the Internet for news.

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APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaires

University of Education, Winneba

Department of Communication and Media Studies

This study seeks to examine the news consumption habits of students who use the Internet as their sources of news. Results from your responses will be used for academic purposes only and the information gathered treated as confidential.

Please answer all questions objectively and honestly as you can.

Internet as news sources and news consumption habits amongst University Students

1. Please indicate your Gender   Male [ ]   Female [ ]

2. Level

    ………………………………………………………………………………

    …

3. Age   19-25 [ ] 26-32 [ ]   33-38 [ ]   38 and above [ ]

4. Which of this well describes your level of knowledge in ICT ?

    literate [ ] A bit literate [ ]   Somehow literate [ ]   illiterate [ ]

5. Which of this well describes your level of Internet literacy

    literate [ ] A bit literate [ ]   Somehow literate [ ]   illiterate [ ]

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6. Where do you source your news from? (Tick as many as applicable)

   Internet [ ] Radio [ ] Newspaper [ ] TV [ ]

7. What Gadget do you use to browse on the Internet

   Mobile Phone [ ]   Tablet [ ] Laptop [ ] Desktop [ ] Ipad [ ]

8. Do you use the gadget to read news on the Internet

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

9. Do you find the gadget useful when using it to read news on the Internet

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

10. Do you face any difficult using the gadget

    Yes [ ] No [ ]

11. If   yes   please   explain
    ……………………………………………………………………

12. How do you access the Internet?

    Wifi [ ] Modem [ ] Internet Café [ ] Mobile Phone [   ] Data on your phone [

    ]

13. How many minutes do you spend on the Web reading or listening to the news

    1-30 Mins [ ] 30- 60 Mins [ ] 1-2 hours [ ] 2 hours or More [ ]

14. How often do you go online

    Everyday [ ] 2 days in a week [ ] 3 days in a week [ ] 4 days in week [ ] 5

    days in a week [ ] 6 days in a week [ ] Once in a week [ ]

15. What kind of news do you read from the Internet? Please state them.

…………………………………………………………………………

16. Do you cross check your online news with any of the traditional sources like radio, TV and Newspapers Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. If   Yes   please   specify   the   medium   and   why

……………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………….

18. If no why…………………………………………………………………

19. Are you satisfied with the news you read online

Yes [ ] No [ ]

20. If yes why………………………………………………………………

21. If no why..………………………………………………………………

22. Which foreign websites do you often visit for news? Please state them

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

23. Which local websites do you often visit for news? Please state them

……………………………………………………………………………………

……………………….

24. Why do you visit this / these websites for news? Please state your reasons

25. How credible is / are the medium that you source your news from. (Please state the medium and explain how credible you think that medium is)

APPENDIX B

Guideline Questions Prepared for Interview

1. What is your view on the Internet as a news source?

2. Do you believe the Internet can displace the traditional media?

3. What are some of the challenges you face when you source for news online?

4. What gadgets do you use to browse the Internet?

5. Is it easy to operate it?

6. Do you find it useful?

7. Which websites do you browse for news?

8. Why do you visit these websites?

9. Do you encounter any impediments whiles browsing the Internet?

10. Any other thing to add?