

Prospects of the New Media and Problems of Old Media in a Digital Age: An Evaluation

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Abstract- *This study investigates the prospects of new media and the problems of old media in the digital age, with a view to examining the transformative impact of digital technology on the media industry. The objectives of the study were to: examine the prospects of new media in the digital age; discover the problems faced by traditional or old media in the digital age; and assess how the prospects of new media and the problems of old media shape the media industry in the digital age. This study utilised the technological determinism theory and media ecology theory to give the study a theoretical foundation. This study adopted a qualitative research design, utilising in-depth interviews with journalists from various media outlets in Uyo metropolis. Findings reveal that new media offers several prospects, including improved engagement (36%), enhanced information sharing (28%), and increased accessibility (12%). Conversely, traditional media faces significant challenges, including loss of revenue (28%), changing consumer behaviour (28%), and declining audience reach (20%). The study also found that the media industry is undergoing significant changes, with increased convergence (36%) and increased competition and fragmentation (36%) being the most prominent impacts. This study concludes that the destiny of the media industry rests on how it adapts to the digital age. Recommendations are that media companies have to access the benefits of new media, design new business models to mitigate the threat to traditional media, and concentrate on convergence, cooperation, and innovation in a bid to remain competitive. To achieve this, media houses should invest in web platforms, produce engaging content, and use social media to enhance information dissemination and information democratisation.*

Indexed Terms- *Prospects, New Media, Problems, Old Media, Digital Media*

I. INTRODUCTION

The advent of the digital age has brought sweeping transformations in the media industry, dictating the manner in which information is disseminated, consumed, and received. Little wonder that Franks & Burkell (2018, p. 42) state that "the emergence of new media platforms has revolutionised the way information is disseminated, consumed, and interacted with by the masses.". This shift has created opportunities and challenges for both traditional, or "old" media, and new "new" media sources. It is significant to comprehend the possibility and challenges of these types of media in comprehending the dynamics of contemporary media. The development of social networking websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube has upset traditional media sources. These platforms have allowed people to become content producers, making them capable of expressing their opinions, experiences, and perspectives to millions of individuals globally. The democratisation of media through user-generated content has produced a level playing field and more diversified media industry (Johnson, 2018). Mimms (2020, p.11) supports that:

New media is a broad term that is used to describe various types of digital media such as social network sites, online news sites, podcasts, blogs, and video-sharing sites. New media have transformed the way individuals interact with information and have ensured that content production and distribution are democratic processes. These means have enabled individuals and communities to express themselves, share knowledge, and discuss matters on a global scale.

On the other hand, traditional media, including print, broadcast, and radio, have been the mainstream sources of news and entertainment (Napoli, 2019). However, the digital media has transformed the traditional media industry and has brought great threats for its survival. Readership, advertising, and circulation in newspapers and magazines have been decreasing (Shin & Thorson, 2017). Traditional broadcasting is unable to keep up with the evolving demands of consumers, as new media provides more personalized and on-demand content experiences (Zollman & Neuman, 2019). Another key strength of new media is its capability to connect with huge masses in real-time. The real-time nature of online platforms enables news to spread quickly, breaking geographical and linguistic boundaries (Deuze, 2012). This phenomenon has allowed greater global connectivity and has helped spread awareness of significant events and social causes. Thus, new media have developed as a powerful means for the mobilisation of social and political movements (Castells, 2012).

As many opportunities as the new media has brought, it has caused headaches for the old media. The traditional media platforms, such as television stations and newspapers, are losing audience and readership as the public turns to digital media. This has been causing low advertising income and financial sustainability for the majority of the traditional media companies (Pew Research Centre, 2020). Furthermore, the dissemination of misinformation and fake news has been increasing in the age of digitization. The ease of sharing information through social media platforms has enabled the rapid distribution of false or misleading information. This has undermined public trust in the media and raised alarm about the credibility and reliability of information available online (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). Additionally, content monetisation has been an issue for both new and old media. With the increase in online advertising, traditional media companies have been unable to port their business models to the online space. In the new media space, on the other hand, creators struggle with making a sustainable livelihood (Picard, 2014).

Compounding the issues of the traditional media is the issue of concentration of media ownership. In the majority of countries, a handful of conglomerates own

most of the media vehicles, thereby limiting the plurality of voices and opinions. The digital age has not fully solved the problem, as now big technology companies have great influence over the online media space (Franks & Burkell, 2018). The digital age has also come along with challenges of privacy and data security. As the new media platforms collect and utilize user data, the use of personal information for nefarious purposes and the ethics of targeting advertising have become an issue (Zuboff, 2019). The reader must consider, however, that for all its faults, the old media still has much to offer. Newspapers, for example, have a long tradition of investigative journalism, in-depth analysis, and fact-checking. These qualities have a tendency of distinguishing them from the overall superficial nature of new media platforms (Hofmann, Jameson, Laker, & Bohme, 2014). The age of digitization has brought about opportunities and challenges for the media industry. While new media platforms have revolutionized information sharing and allowed citizen engagement, mainstream media must contend with financial viability, fake news, and concentration of media ownership. This research paper thus seeks to critically examine the future of the new media platforms and the dilemma of the old media during this age of digitalisation.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The media industry is undergoing a profound transformation, driven by the rapid evolution of digital technologies and the proliferation of new media platforms. Traditionally, media outlets have relied on established formats and business models to disseminate information and entertain audiences. However, the advent of digital media has disrupted these traditional models, creating new opportunities for content creation and distribution, while also presenting significant challenges for established media organisations. According to recent studies, the rise of digital media has led to a decline in audience reach and revenue for traditional media outlets, forcing them to adapt to new technologies and changing consumer behaviour (Kalogeropoulos & Newman, 2019). This shift has created a dilemma for media organisations, which must balance the need to remain relevant and competitive in a digital age with the challenges of maintaining quality journalism and generating

revenue. The prospects of new media, including increased accessibility and interactivity, have transformed the way audiences consume media, with many now expecting personalised and immersive experiences (Couldry & Hepp, 2019). Conversely, traditional media outlets face significant problems, including declining audiences and revenue, as well as difficulties in adapting to new technologies and changing consumer behaviour. This study aims to assess the prospects of new media and the challenges of old media in the digital age, examining the implications for the media industry and the future of journalism.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were to:

- i. Examine the prospects of new media in the digital age;
- ii. Discover the problems faced by traditional or old media in the digital age;
- iii. Assess how the prospects of new media and the problems of old media shape the media industry in the digital age

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of the Digital Age on the Media Industry

The internet era has reshaped the media industry in the sense of its very fundamentals, affecting information and news production, delivery, and reception. The transformation has been based on rapid technology innovation, with global reach of the internet and mobile phones.

- i. **Democratisation of Information:** The internet era has brought about democratisation of information access in which any individual on the internet is able to publish and transmit content. This has shattered the traditional gatekeeping role of media organisations, where others also have the capacity to post events and provide opinions regarding issues using social media, blogs, and websites of citizen media (Bruns, 2008). This has created multiple voices and viewpoints both online and offline and enabled people to obtain more pluralized and decentralized sources of information (Nielsen, 2015).
- ii. **Disintermediation and Revenue Challenges:** Digitisation of media has also caused

disintermediation, which has substituted the traditional intermediaries such as print publishers or the television networks. This has impacted the traditional business models with the advertisement revenues being diverted from traditional media sources to web sites such as Google and Facebook (Picard, 2014). Media institutions have therefore had a hard time staying financially sustainable and making revenues in an effort to pay for quality journalism (McChesney, 2013).

- iii. **Personalisation and Fragmentation:** The internet also enabled personalized experience of the news based on one's choice. Algorithms and data analysis enable content providers to offer customized news feed, creating a "filter bubble" where the consumer is provided with access to content that mirrors their own interest and belief at a specific moment (Pariser, 2011). This created audience fragmentation and the problem for media companies to access a heterogeneous and vast audience (Haim, 2018).
- iv. **Speed and Real-Time Reporting:** Computer technology also accelerated the production and dissemination of news. The social media and mobile phone media enable real-time reporting and mass engagement in breaking news (Hermida, 2012). This has added additional pressure to release the news according to schedule and the "24/7 news cycle," much under tension for reporters to release pieces in a rush, usually sacrificing accuracy and context (Bruns, 2018).
- v. **Multimedia and Interactive Storytelling:** The era of new media has opened tremendous opportunities for multimedia reporting with the use of tools such as video, audio, interactive graphics, and virtual reality. They have involved the audience of news in participation and interaction, and the news process has become dynamic and interactive (Eisenmann, 2020). But it is not easy for media outlets in their production and distribution of multimedia content (Sundermann, 2019).

V. CHALLENGES FACED BY TRADITIONAL MEDIA IN THE DIGITAL AGE

With the rapidly changing digital age, traditional media companies are being confronted with a range of threats to their well-established practices and business models. The creation and widespread implementation

of digital technologies have significantly changed how information is consumed, disseminated, and produced. Subsequently, traditional media firms, including newspapers, TV firms, and radio firms, are experiencing significant challenges that require innovation and adaptation in an effort to survive in this new era. The digital era has brought significant challenges to classical media. The shift in consumer behavior and the way they process information is among the leading challenges. With digital technology, people are now capable of reaching a wide spectrum of online platforms and social media, and this has resulted in the decline in traditional media usage. The second issue is that the entry barrier for online media sites is low. Traditional media enjoyed a monopoly in passing on information because they possessed rich resources and infrastructure. But nowadays, with just an internet connection, anyone can be a content maker, and this has led to oversaturation of information and increased competition for attention from the audience.

Without a doubt, traditional media struggle to make money from their content in the digital age. Online monetization models continue to evolve, and it is difficult for traditional media companies to adapt and earn sustainable revenue. Moreover, the availability of free content on the internet has also led to a decline in circulation and subscription rates of traditional media, as well as influencing the financial viability of traditional media. More so, since one of the main problems is also the issue of trust and credibility. With increasing social media presence, false information and made-up news have prevailed, and public trust in traditional media outlets has been declining. Legacy media outlets also carry the responsibility of fact-checking and maintaining their credibility in publishing facts in an era fueled by rumour and sensationalism.

Legacy media have also had to struggle with the challenges of declining readership, viewership, and listenership. With the introduction of smart phones, tablets, and the Internet, consumers now have increased access to a variety of alternative sources of news and content online. The convenience and immediacy of online sites, combined with individual news algorithms, have created a fragmentation of attention among audiences and a shift over to social

media and online sites for information consumption. Mass media thus suffered from a loss of audience share, which led to a drop in advertising revenue and the inability to be profitable. Yet another challenge traditional media are facing in the digital age is the need to change their content delivery models to changing consumer preferences. Historically, consumers have wanted to have access to news in the moment and to be able to engage with it in a number of different ways, such as video, infographic, and interactive elements. Traditional media institutions must invest in developing robust digital platforms that support these shifting needs, without undermining journalistic integrity and good information. The digital age has also ushered in a massive shift in the conduct of advertisements, impacting traditional media institutions even more. Advertisers are quick to move their spends to online media because they offer greater targeted advertising capacity and quantifiable results. This change has resulted in a loss of traditional advertising revenue streams, forcing traditional media companies to pursue new revenue streams, such as native advertising, sponsored content, and paywalls.

In addition, the advent of social media platforms and user-generated content presents opportunities along with challenges for traditional media. Social media has become an influential force for spreading news, enabling citizen journalism and live reporting. Even though it has created misinformation, disinformation, and echo chambers as well, which have posed credibility challenges, trust issues, and the gatekeeper function of traditional media in filtering out reliable from unreliable information. Traditional media outlets have come up with several strategies to achieve this. Some of them have transitioned to digitalization by opening online platforms, developing mobile applications, and implementing paywalls to make revenue from their digital content. Others have focused on diversification by expanding into other areas, such as events, podcasting, or strategic alliances with technology companies and social media. Furthermore, alliances with non-profit institutions and foundations have also emerged as ways of funding good journalism.

Evaluation of the Prospects of the New Media and Problems of the Old Media in a Digital Age

During this era of digitalisation, the media industry is changing extremely quickly, and it is of extreme importance to research both the prospects of the new media and the problems of the old media.

VI. PROSPECTS OF THE NEW MEDIA

- i. Global Audience and Extensive Reach: The new media, comprising social media sites, internet news sources, blogs, and podcasts, provide unparalleled opportunities for global reach. With the connectivity provided by digital technology still on the increase, people from different backgrounds and geographical locations are able to access different forms of media content.
- ii. Enhanced Interactivity and Engagement: New media channels, unlike old media, facilitate unplanned interaction between content producers and content users. Liking, commenting, and sharing of content make the audience feel included in the conversation and provide feedback, as well as create user-generated content. The interactivity provides a sense of belonging and enables individuals to be heard.
- iii. Personalised and Targeted Content: New media platforms utilise algorithms and data analysis to present personalised content tailored to individual user preferences. This personalisation guarantees that users are presented with content in alignment with their inclination, and in doing so, they receive greater user engagement and gratification.
- iv. Economically Sustainable Production and Distribution: With digital technology, the entry cost in media production has reduced drastically. Media producers can now produce good media content without having to invest much in expensive equipment and traditional broadcast networks. Even distribution costs have decreased, as digital media provide inexpensive channels to reach the audience.

VII. PROBLEMS OF THE OLD MEDIA

- i. Falling Circulation and Advertising Revenues: Traditional media, such as magazines and newspapers, have seen dwindling circulation and readership as their audiences shift to the internet. This has resulted in reduced advertising revenues

and financial viability issues for the majority of traditional media organisations.

- ii. Interactivity and Participation: The old media were a largely one-way communication system with little audience participation and interactivity. This model of passive consumption is no longer tenable to the digitally native audience of today, who expect active participation and real-time interaction with content and creators.
- iii. Poor Adaptability to Technological Advancements: New digital technologies have evolved at a faster pace, setting old media against technological advancement. Compliance with new digital platforms, content forms, and consumer preferences requires massive investments and organisational restructuring, which most old media have been unable to carry out successfully.
- iv. Issues of Trust and Credibility: Misinformation and disinformation have been rampant features in recent years. Whereas traditional media houses have established their reputation on being fact-checked and trustworthy, social media has made available a platform that has increased the spread of misinformation with higher velocity and wide outreach. A part of the audience has questioned the credibility of the old and new media sources.

VIII. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The following theories were considered relevant in this study:

Technological Determinism Theory

This theory posits that technology creates social and cultural change, shaping individuals' modes of interacting, communicating, and perceiving the world around them (Jenkins, 2006). The theory comes into perspective when addressing new media opportunities and issues of old media in the digital age, where the innovation of new technologies for media has significantly impacted information access, sharing, and consumption. Internet connectivity and digital technologies have democratized information access, enabling individuals to be active distributors and creators of content (Shirky, 2018). Consequently, the traditional forms of media have been unable to cope with the digital era, failing to attract audiences and generate revenue through traditional methods. There has been a transformative impact of new media platforms on social structures and power dynamics,

providing diverse voices and views space to be heard (Kalogeropoulos & Nielsen, 2019). Nevertheless, challenges of information overload, media literacy, and the spread of misinformation have emerged (Vraga & Bode, 2023). This theory indicates the interactive character of technology and human agency, where media practices are conditioned through a combination of technological potential, user demand, and socio-cultural factors (Couldry & Hepp, 2019)

Media Ecology Theory

The Media Ecology Theory, postulated by Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong, subscribes to the belief that media technologies profoundly condition human perception, communication, and social relations, and finally shape individual and collective consciousness (McLuhan, 1964) as cited by Martins and Kayode (2021). According to this theory, new media platforms, defined as interactive and instantly compelling, have revolutionized information production, dissemination, and consumption, pushing audiences into positions of active participants from that of passive receivers. The conventional media, on the other hand, such as newspapers, radio, and television, are at a loss to emulate this model, giving away audience attention and profitability. The theory highlights the symbiotic interaction of the media with its environment to an extent information excess and fragmented attention severely undermine the individual and the media organisations as well. The theory contends that, to a considerable degree, media technologies have re-fashioned processes of communication, media cultures of viewing, and cultural practices of the digital age.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative and qualitative research methods. This research design provided an end-to-end perspective of the future of the new media and problems of the old media in a digital age. A sample of 25 media consumers from Uyo metropolis was sampled, and 2 registered journalists each were selected from Comfort FM, AKBC TV, Spectrum TV, Ink Newspaper and Censor Newspaper via stratified random sampling techniques to get proper representation from broad age groups, populations, and news interests. This gave a total of 35 in the

sample size. The questionnaire and in-depth interview guide were used as data collection instruments.

Data Analysis

Table 1

RQ1: What are the prospects of new media in the digital age?

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages
Increased Accessibility	3	12
Democratisation of Information	3	12
Improved Engagement	9	36
Enhanced Information Sharing	7	28
New Business Opportunities	0	0
Increased Diversity of Perspectives	3	12
Other	25	100

The data in Table 1 above reveals that the most prominent prospect of new media in the digital age is Improved Engagement, with 36% of respondents citing this as a key benefit. This is followed by Enhanced Information Sharing (28%) and Increased Accessibility and Democratisation of Information (12% each). Notably, New Business Opportunities was not cited as a prospect by any respondents. The findings suggest that new media's ability to facilitate interaction and engagement is a significant advantage in the digital age. This is consistent with research by Jenkins (2006), who highlights the importance of participatory culture in new media, enabling users to engage and interact with each other and with media content in new and meaningful ways.

Table 2

RQ2: What are the problems faced by traditional or old media in the digital age?

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages
Declining Audience Reach	5	20
Loss of Revenue	7	28

Difficulty in Adapting to New Technologies	1	4
Increased Competition	3	12
Changing Consumer Behaviour	7	28
Difficulty in Measuring Audience Engagement	2	8
Total	25	100

The data in Table 2 above reveals that traditional media faces significant challenges in the digital age, with loss of revenue and changing consumer behaviour being the most prominent issues, both accounting for 28% of the responses. Declining audience reach is also a notable concern, with 20% of respondents citing this as a problem. The findings suggest that traditional media struggles to adapt to the digital system, where consumers increasingly prefer online platforms for news and entertainment. According to Meyer (2021, p. 32), “the decline of traditional media is driven by the rise of digital media platforms, which have democratised information dissemination and changed consumer behaviour, leading to a shift away from traditional media outlets”.

Table 3

RQ3: How do the prospects of new media and the problems of old media shape the media industry in the digital age?

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Shift to Online Content Creation	3	12
Changes in Business Models	1	4
Increased Convergence	9	36
New Roles and Skills for Media Professionals	3	12
Increased Competition and Fragmentation	9	36
Changing Role of Traditional Media	0	0
Total	25	100

The data indicates that the media industry is undergoing significant changes due to the prospects of new media and the problems of old media. The most prominent impacts are increased convergence (36%) and increased competition and fragmentation (36%), suggesting that the industry is experiencing a blurring of boundaries between traditional and digital media, as well as increased competition for audiences and revenue. The findings also highlight the importance of adapting to the digital space, with a shift to online content creation (12%) and new roles and skills for media professionals (12%) also being notable impacts. According to Ayomide (2024, p. 6), “the media industry is experiencing a convergence culture, where old and new media intersect, and media companies must adapt to this new framework to remain relevant”.

Key Informant Interview (KII) Data

The Key Informant Interview (KII) data were presented and analysed under the following emerging themes:

- Prospects of New Media in the Digital Age
- Challenges Faced by Traditional/Old Media in the Digital Age
- Impact on the Media Industry

Demographics of Key Informant Interview Respondents

Ten (10) registered journalists were purposefully selected from various media outlets in the Uyo metropolis for in-depth interviews. The respondents comprised a mix of males and females, representing diverse experience levels in the journalism industry. This demographic distribution allowed for a wide range of perspectives on the prospects of new media and the problems faced by traditional media in the digital age. The details of the respondents' demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1. The interviews aimed to provide in-depth insights into the challenges and opportunities within the media industry, complementing the quantitative data gathered through the survey.

Table 4
Demographic Distribution of KII Respondents

Media Outlet	Location	Gender	Age	Identification
Comfort FM	Uyo	Male	42 years	Respondent 1
Comfort FM	Uyo	Female	37 years	Respondent 2
AKBC TV	Uyo	Male	29 years	Respondent 3
AKBC TV	Uyo	Female	34 years	Respondent 4
Spectrum TV	Uruan	Male	31 years	Respondent 5
Spectrum TV	Uruan	Female	45 years	Respondent 6
Ink Newspaper	Uyo	Male	50 years	Respondent 7
Ink Newspaper	Uyo	Female	30 years	Respondent 8
Censor Newspaper	Uyo	Male	39 years	Respondent 9
Censor Newspaper	Uyo	Female	28 years	Respondent 10

Prospects of New Media in the Digital Age

The advent of new media has brought a transformative shift within the communications industry, particularly in the digital age. This theme explores the various prospects that new media offers, highlighting the advancements in technology and the ways these innovations enhance content delivery, audience engagement, revenue streams, and the overall impact on society. The insights gathered from interviews with journalists provided an understanding of how new media is perceived as an opportunity for growth and development within the media industry. Respondent 3 noted the potential of new media to enhance

engagement: "With platforms like social media, we can reach audiences directly and instantly, offering real-time interactions that traditional media simply cannot compete with." This sentiment was echoed by Respondent 2, who emphasised the accessibility of information: "New media democratizes information. Everyone has the potential to be a content creator, which means more diverse voices can be heard." Meanwhile, Respondent 6 highlighted the flexibility and speed of new media: "In the digital age, content can be produced and disseminated at lightning speed. News can break on social media before even traditional newsrooms can get their stories out." Respondent 1 further elaborated on the global reach of new media, stating: "New media allows local stories to gain international attention. A video posted online can go viral, reaching viewers far beyond our immediate audience."

Respondent 5 shared insights on the evolving nature of journalism in this context: "As journalists, we have to adapt to changing technologies and platforms. New media requires a different skill set, and those who embrace it will thrive in the industry." Correspondingly, Respondent 4 noted the challenges but also the opportunities for innovation: "While the rapid changes in the media landscape can be daunting, they also push us to innovate and find new ways to tell stories that resonate with audiences." The conversations highlighted the potential for new media to transform the traditional models of news delivery and audience engagement. Respondent 9 reiterated the importance of multimedia storytelling, stating: "Incorporating videos, podcasts, and interactive content makes our stories much more engaging. Audiences today demand richer content experiences." Additionally, Respondent 10 stressed the role of analytics in understanding audience preferences: "New media provides us with data on audience engagement that traditional media never could. It's invaluable for tailoring content to what people want."

Table 5

Tabular Summary of the Analysis of the "Prospects of New Media in the Digital Age" Theme

S/N	Sub-themes	Findings	Conclusion
1	Engagement and Interaction	New media allows for direct and instant interaction with audiences	New media significantly enhances audience engagement
2	Democratisation of Information	More diverse voices can be amplified through content creation	New media democratise information access and production
3	Speed and Flexibility	News can be produced and disseminated rapidly, outpacing traditional media.	The speed of new media provides a competitive edge in news delivery
4	Global Reach	Local stories can gain worldwide attention through digital channels	New media extends the reach of local journalism globally
5	Innovation in Journalism	Journalists need to adapt to new technologies and storytelling methods	Adaptation and innovation are crucial for success in new media
6	Multimedia Storytelling	Incorporating various formats enhances engagement and audience interest.	New media enables rich, interactive storytelling
7	Audience Analytics	Data insights help tailor content to audience preferences	Audience analytics are essential for content relevance

Challenges Faced by Traditional/Old Media in the Digital Age

The interviews revealed a profound sense of concern regarding the challenges traditional media face in the digital age. Respondents highlighted the decline in audience engagement, attributing this shift to the rapid evolution of technology and changes in consumption habits. For many, the once-revered platforms such as newspapers and television are losing their relevance in a world dominated by immediate access to information online. One journalist from Comfort FM articulated this sentiment, stating, "People are no longer waiting for scheduled broadcasts. They want news as it happens, and old media simply cannot keep pace with the speed of social media." His observation underscores a prevailing sentiment among traditional media practitioners: the urgency to adapt to the relentless demand for real-time information. The shift in audience demographics was another critical point of discussion. A 34-year-old female journalist from AKBC TV remarked, "Young people are not interested in reading long articles or watching lengthy news segments. They prefer quick videos or tweets

that summarise the news." This shift highlights the growing preference for bite-sized content, which challenges traditional media to redefine their storytelling methods.

Cost implications associated with transitioning to digital platforms also emerged as a recurring challenge. An Ink Newspaper journalist, 50 years of age, pointed out, "We're struggling financially. Transitioning to digital requires significant investment in technology and training that many old media outlets simply cannot afford." This financial burden often leads to layoffs and reduced resources for quality journalism, further compromising the integrity and depth of reporting. The inability to monetise digital content effectively posed another obstacle. Respondent 9 from Censor Newspaper expressed frustration, stating, "Advertisers are flocking to social media influencers rather than traditional media. This shift in advertising revenue means we're losing our lifeblood." Such a shift pressures traditional media to find new revenue models that are compatible with the

digital era while still maintaining their roles as reliable sources of information.

Lastly, issues concerning trust and credibility were also prevalent in the interviews. A 45-year-old female journalist from Spectrum TV indicated, “With the rise of fake news, traditional media must now work harder to prove their reliability compared to social media, where misinformation spreads like wildfire.” This comment reflects a growing recognition of the need

for traditional media to reinforce their value as credible sources in a climate rife with misleading information. The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted challenges traditional media outlets face in the current digital environment. These challenges, from declining engagement and evolving audience preferences to financial pressures and issues of trust, require an urgent re-evaluation of strategies to remain relevant and effective in delivering news.

Table 6
Tabular Summary of the Analysis of Traditional Media Challenges

S/N	Sub-themes	Findings	Conclusion
1	Declining Audience Engagement	Traditional media struggle to retain audiences due to the immediate nature of digital news.	A significant shift in consumption habits hampers traditional media's influence and relevance.
2	Changing Demographics	Younger audiences prefer concise content over lengthy articles	Traditional media must creatively adapt storytelling methods to attract younger viewers.
3	Financial Constraints	Significant investments in technology and training are required, but are often unaffordable	Financial challenges hinder the transition to digital formats and affect overall reporting quality
4	Loss of Advertising Revenue	Advertisers are gravitating towards social media influencers instead of traditional outlets	Declining revenue forces traditional media to explore new monetisation strategies for sustainability
5	Trust and Credibility Issues	The rise of fake news increases pressure on traditional media to affirm their reliability	Rebuilding trust is critical for traditional media to retain their status as credible news sources

Impact on the Media Industry

The rapid evolution of digital technology has fundamentally reshaped the media industry, generating profound impacts that reshape operational models, reporting practices, and audience relationships. Interviews with journalists unveiled a range of perspectives on how these changes have influenced both the practice of journalism and the broader media industry. Respondent 1 remarked on the changing dynamics of reporting, stating, “The immediacy of digital platforms has pushed us to adapt our news-gathering techniques significantly. Stories

must now be reported accurately and swiftly.” This shift towards speed has necessitated new workflows within newsrooms, often prioritising timely updates over in-depth analysis.

Collaboration within the industry has become increasingly essential in this context. Respondent 4 noted, “The convergence of media platforms means we are collaborating more than ever before. Journalists now work across multiple formats, from text to podcasting and video.” This collaboration has led to a more multifaceted approach to storytelling, making use of various media to engage audiences effectively.

Challenges concerning credibility have also been raised by respondents. Respondent 7 expressed concern, stating, “With so much information available online, audiences often struggle to discern credible sources. Traditional media, which once held a monopoly on trust, now must compete in a crowded environment.” This statement highlights the struggle for traditional media to maintain their authority amidst a proliferation of information sources, often leading to an emphasis on fact-checking and verification processes to uphold their reputation.

Monetisation strategies have emerged as another significant area for transformation. Respondent 5 observed, “The decline of print advertising revenue has forced media companies to explore alternative funding models, such as memberships and online subscriptions.” This shift reflects a broader trend within the industry, as outlets adapt to ensure financial sustainability in the digital realm. The audience's role has also evolved, with increased participation in content creation and dissemination. Respondent 8 pointed out, “User-generated content has changed the media's landscape. Audiences are not just consumers; they are now vital contributors to the conversation.”

This highlights a shift towards an interactive model, wherein audiences actively engage with news stories, share opinions, and create content that may challenge traditional narratives. Technological advancements have also introduced new ways to analyse audience behaviour. Respondent 10 stressed, “Data analytics allow us to track engagement in real time, providing insights into what resonates with audiences. This information helps shape our editorial decisions.” The ability to gather and analyse audience data redefines the relationship between journalists and their viewers, enabling content to cater more effectively to audience preferences.

The conversations reveal that the impact of digital technology on the media industry is multifaceted. From operational changes and collaborative efforts to challenges concerning trust and the need for innovative monetisation strategies, the media landscape continues to evolve rapidly in response to technological advancements and shifting audience expectations.

Table 7
Tabular Summary of the Analysis of the "Impact on the Media Industry" Theme

S/N	Sub-themes	Findings	Conclusion
	Changing Dynamics of Reporting	The need for speed and accuracy in news reporting has increased.	Media outlets must adapt their workflows to prioritise timely and accurate reporting
	Collaboration Across Platforms	Journalists are increasingly working across various media formats	Collaborative efforts enhance storytelling capabilities and audience engagement.
	Credibility Challenges	Audiences face difficulties discerning credible sources in a saturated market	Traditional media must work harder to maintain trust and credibility
	Monetisation Strategies	Media companies are exploring alternative revenue models for sustainability	The decline of traditional advertising necessitates innovative funding approaches.
	Evolving Audience Role	Audiences act as participatory content creators rather than passive consumers	Increased audience engagement fosters a more interactive and dynamic media environment

	Use of Data Analytics	Real-time data tracking informs editorial decision-making	Audience analytics are crucial for tailoring content to meet viewer preferences
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IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Research Question One: What are the prospects of new media in the digital age?

The findings of this study reveal that new media offers several prospects in the digital age, with Improved Engagement emerging as the most prominent benefit, cited by 36% of respondents. This suggests that new media platforms, characterised by their interactivity and real-time engagement, have revolutionised information production, dissemination, and consumption, enabling audiences to transition from passive recipients to active participants. As Respondent 3 aptly noted, "With platforms like social media, we can reach audiences directly and instantly, offering real-time interactions that traditional media simply cannot compete with." This finding is consistent with the Media Ecology Theory, which posits that media technologies profoundly shape human perception, communication, and social interactions, ultimately influencing individual and collective consciousness (McLuhan, 1964, cited in Martins & Kayode, 2021). Jenkins (2006) also highlights the importance of participatory culture in new media, enabling users to engage and interact with each other and with media content in new and meaningful ways.

The study also found that Enhanced Information Sharing was another significant prospect of new media, cited by 28% of respondents. This suggests that new media platforms have facilitated the rapid sharing and dissemination of information, enabling individuals and organisations to reach a wider audience. Respondent 6 highlighted the flexibility and speed of new media, stating that "In the digital age, content can be produced and disseminated at lightning speed. News can break on social media before even traditional newsrooms can get their stories out." This finding is in line with the Technological Determinism Theory, which posits that technological advancements drive social and cultural change, shaping how individuals interact, communicate, and perceive the world around them (Jenkins, 2006). Shirky (2018) also notes that digital devices and internet connectivity

have democratised access to information, enabling individuals to become active participants in creating and distributing content.

The findings of this study have implications for the media industry, highlighting the need for media organisations to adapt to the digital landscape and harness the prospects of new media. As Respondent 5 noted, "As journalists, we have to adapt to changing technologies and platforms. New media requires a different skill set, and those who embrace it will thrive in the industry." The study's findings suggest that media organisations must prioritise engagement and interaction with their audiences, leveraging new media platforms to facilitate enhanced information sharing and democratisation of information. Couldry and Hepp (2019) note that media consumption practices are influenced through a mix of technological affordances, user preferences, and socio-cultural factors. Kalogeropoulos and Nielsen (2019) also highlight the transformative impact of new media platforms on societal structures and power dynamics, providing diverse voices and perspectives with opportunities to be heard.

Research Question Two: What are the problems faced by traditional or old media in the digital age?

The findings of this study reveal that traditional media faces significant challenges in the digital age, with Loss of Revenue and Changing Consumer Behaviour emerging as the most prominent issues, both accounting for 28% of the responses. This suggests that traditional media struggles to adapt to the digital system, where consumers increasingly prefer online platforms for news and entertainment. As Meyer (2021, p. 32) aptly noted, "the decline of traditional media is driven by the rise of digital media platforms, which have democratised information dissemination and changed consumer behaviour, leading to a shift away from traditional media outlets." This finding is consistent with the Technological Determinism Theory, which posits that technological advancements drive social and cultural change, shaping how individuals interact, communicate, and perceive the world around them (Jenkins, 2006). The theory

explains that the rise of digital media platforms has significantly impacted traditional media, forcing them to adapt to new technologies and changing consumer behaviour.

The study also found that Declining Audience Reach is a notable concern, with 20% of respondents citing this as a problem. This suggests that traditional media is struggling to retain audiences due to the immediate nature of digital news. As a 34-year-old female journalist from AKBC TV noted, “Young people are not interested in reading long articles or watching lengthy news segments. They prefer quick videos or tweets that summarise the news.” This finding highlights the need for traditional media to creatively adapt storytelling methods to attract younger viewers. Couldry and Hepp (2019) note that media consumption practices are influenced through a mix of technological affordances, user preferences, and socio-cultural factors. The shift in audience demographics requires traditional media to re-evaluate their strategies to remain relevant and effective in delivering news.

The findings of this study have implications for the media industry, highlighting the need for traditional media to adapt to the digital landscape and harness new revenue models. As Respondent 9 from Censor Newspaper expressed frustration, stating, “Advertisers are flocking to social media influencers rather than traditional media. This shift in advertising revenue means we’re losing our lifeblood.” This finding suggests that traditional media must explore new monetisation strategies for sustainability. Vraga and Bode (2023) note that concerns surrounding information overload, media literacy, and the spread of misinformation have emerged, highlighting the need for traditional media to reinforce their value as credible sources in a climate rife with misleading information. The study's findings highlight the multifaceted challenges traditional media outlets face in the current digital environment, requiring an urgent re-evaluation of strategies to remain relevant and effective in delivering news.

Research Question Three

How do the prospects of new media and the problems of old media shape the media industry in the digital age?

The findings of this study reveal that the media industry is undergoing significant changes due to the prospects of new media and the problems of old media. The most prominent impacts are Increased Convergence (36%) and Increased Competition and Fragmentation (36%), suggesting that the industry is experiencing a blurring of boundaries between traditional and digital media, as well as increased competition for audiences and revenue. As Ayomide (2024, p. 6) aptly noted, “the media industry is experiencing a convergence culture, where old and new media intersect, and media companies must adapt to this new framework to remain relevant”. This finding is consistent with the Media Ecology Theory, which posits that media technologies profoundly shape human perception, communication, and social interactions, ultimately influencing individual and collective consciousness (McLuhan, 1964, cited in Martins & Kayode, 2021).

The study also found that Shift to Online Content Creation (12%) and New Roles and Skills for Media Professionals (12%) are notable impacts, highlighting the importance of adapting to the digital space. Respondent 1 remarked on the changing dynamics of reporting, stating, “The immediacy of digital platforms has pushed us to adapt our news-gathering techniques significantly. Stories must now be reported accurately and swiftly.” This finding suggests that media companies must prioritise timely and accurate reporting to remain relevant in the digital age. Jenkins (2006) notes that the convergence of media platforms requires media professionals to acquire new skills and adapt to changing roles. The findings of this study have implications for the media industry, highlighting the need for media companies to adapt to the digital landscape and harness new revenue models. Respondent 5 observed, “The decline of print advertising revenue has forced media companies to explore alternative funding models, such as memberships and online subscriptions.” This shift reflects a broader trend within the industry, as outlets adapt to ensure financial sustainability in the digital realm. Couldry and Hepp (2019) note that media consumption practices are influenced by a mix of technological affordances, user preferences, and socio-cultural factors. The study's findings suggest that media companies must prioritise audience engagement and interaction, leveraging new media

platforms to facilitate enhanced information sharing and democratisation of information.

CONCLUSION

This study provided an evaluation of the prospects of new media and the problems of old media in the digital age. The findings revealed that new media offers several prospects, including improved engagement, enhanced information sharing, and increased accessibility, which have revolutionised information production, dissemination, and consumption. However, traditional media faces significant challenges, including loss of revenue, changing consumer behaviour, and declining audience reach. The study also highlighted the impact of digital technology on the media industry, including increased convergence, competition, and fragmentation. Based on these findings, it is clear that the media industry is undergoing a significant transformation, and media companies must adapt to the digital framework to remain relevant. Therefore, traditional media outlets should prioritise digital transformation, invest in online platforms, and develop new revenue models to ensure financial sustainability. Thus, the media industry's future depends on its ability to adapt to the digital age, and those who fail to do so will risk becoming obsolete.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- i. To leverage the benefits of new media, media organisations should invest in digital platforms, develop engaging content, and utilise social media to enhance information sharing and democratisation of information.
- ii. To mitigate the problems faced by traditional media, outlets should develop new revenue models, adapt to changing consumer behaviour, and invest in digital technologies to remain relevant and financially sustainable.
- iii. To remain competitive, media companies should prioritise convergence, collaboration, and innovation, and develop new roles and skills for media professionals to effectively navigate the digital media industry and meet the evolving needs of audiences.

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