

## Review Article

# Eserinune McCarty Mojaye\* and Oludare Ebenezer Ogunyombo Online media and global communication research in Nigeria

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**Abstract:** The growth of global online media necessitates a better knowledge of how these media affect the world. Communication researchers have examined how rhetoric and globalization interact dynamically; how information spreads through cross-cultural interactions, and how a growing global media landscape affects culture, society, economy, and politics. However, no study has aggregated the areas of focus of such studies in order to establish a trend of the discussion of online media and global communication scholarship in Nigeria. In this essay, we offer a pathway for understanding approaches to scholarship in online media and global communication in Nigeria. We review all articles on online media and global communication that were published in two Nigerian academic journals, *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* between 2015 and 2021 using our content categories of authorship, theory/theories used, study population, method of study and research focus. We found that social media, which has proved to be a very hot area of research among scholars worldwide, also occupied the pride of place among Nigerian scholars and that collaboration in research, which is a major way of growing and advancing knowledge, was also significantly common among Nigerian communication researchers. On the low side, however, we found, among others, that lack of funding was a major issue in Nigerian communication research as none of the 73 articles that we analyzed was funded.

**Keywords:** communication research; global communication; online media; Nigeria

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# 1 Introduction

The growth of global online media such as social media, blogs, mobile applications, podcasts, messaging apps, video streaming sites, necessitates a better knowledge of how these global media affect the world. Communication researchers have examined how rhetoric and globalization interact dynamically (Ogunyombo 2016; Stuckey et al. 2016); how information spreads through cross-cultural interactions (Macharia 2019), and how a growing global media landscape affects culture, society, economy, and politics (Magack and Kuria 2021; Short-Miller et al. 2017). In Nigeria, studies have examined the use, implications and limitations of online media and global communication (Abdulrauf et al. 2016; Ademosu and Alade 2019; Akpan and Epepe 2019; Cookey and Otakore 2019; Ezeh and Ono 2016). However, no study has aggregated the areas of focus of such studies in order to establish a trend of the discussion of online media and global communication scholarship in Nigeria. This essay seeks to close that gap as it offers, through its analyses, a pathway for understanding approaches to scholarship in online media and global communication in Nigeria. The essay espouses the areas of focus, themes, theoretical applications and methodological approaches of research on the use and applications of online media and global communication in Nigeria. The essay will help researchers all over the world to deepen their knowledge of communication studies and trends in Nigeria especially as it relates to the field of online media and global communication.

Online and global communication studies deal with how information is transferred across geographical and social divisions. They examine how culture, politics, media, economies, health, and relationships are influenced by communication in the age of globalization. These examinations cut across how different professions, governments and other stakeholders are adopting, adapting and engaging in online and global communication with the aim of unearthing issues of importance that may influence future use or provide broader perspectives for acceptance. Apparatus for conducting these studies include global advertising campaigns, political speeches, journalistic news reports, social media posts, press releases, books and conventional print publications. Scholars in the discipline examine the dynamic interaction between globalization and rhetoric, examining how information travels through cultural exchange and how a rising global media influences culture, society, economy, and politics (Ha 2022; Masters' in Communication 2022).

The academia in Nigeria has not been left out in studying online and global communication. “Nigeria is the most populous, wealthiest nation on the African continent” (Soyinka 2006 p. 217). With a population of 206.13 million in 2020, Nigeria tops the next most populous country, Ethiopia, which has a population of 114.96 million by almost 80%. And among all the countries of the world, Nigeria accounts for 2.64% of the world’s population (United Nations 2022). Nigeria also stands out as the largest former British colony in Sub-Saharan Africa with a land area of 910,770 square kilometers (Worldometer 2022). In the communication discipline in Nigeria, there are four major associations of scholars and professionals. These are: the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), Nigeria Chapter; the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN); the Association of Media and Communication Researchers of Nigeria (AMCRON); and the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR). The four associations have publications in the form of journals, book series and thematic books that examine issues on online and global communication. For instance, the African Council for Communication Education (Nigeria Chapter) has *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* – a biannual journal that publishes papers from its annual conferences. The Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN) has the *ACSPN Book Series*- a yearly publication that features papers that are presented at its yearly conferences and an online journal – *Communication Cultures in Africa*. The Association of Media and Communication Researchers of Nigeria (AMCRON) has the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR) – a biannual journal that publishes scholarly articles from all over the world; while the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR) has the *NIPR Journal* – a yearly publication of the Institute that features papers from scholars and professionals in the field of public relations in Nigeria.

In this essay, we review two of the four journals – *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (TNJC) and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR). Our reasons for this choice are that these two journals are biannual, print, and have proved to be the most regular and consistent of all the journals. The JCMR, for instance, has consistently published and released its two issues per year in April and October of every year since it started publication in 2009. For both journals, we take 2015 as our starting year. We chose 2015 as our start year because that year marked Nigeria’s internet users’ exponential growth from 5.0 million users in 2005 to 67.0 million users thus making the country the 8th in the world in the hierarchy of internet users (Central Intelligence Agency 2022).

## 2 About TNJC

*The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (TNJC) is a scholarly, academic, professional and interdisciplinary journal of the African Council for Communication Education (ACCE), Nigeria Chapter. It is devoted to research and professional practices in all functional areas of communication. It is published in the tradition of the well-known international journal of the ACCE, the *Africa Media Review*, a quarterly journal of communication based at the headquarters of the pan-African organization, ACCE, in Nairobi, Kenya.

TNJC publishes one volume per year with two issues in each volume. The first issue in each volume focuses on relevant and contemporary issues in all areas of communication including print journalism, broadcast journalism, PRAD (public relations and advertising) or the more encompassing concept, marketing communication, business and organizational communication among others. The second issue of each volume focuses on the theme and papers presented at the annual conference of the ACCE. Well researched articles from any part of the world are welcome in this peer-reviewed journal, including reviews of current books that are related to communication in Nigeria, Africa, and the world in general (African Council for Communication Education 2022).

## 3 About JCMR

*The Journal of Communication and Media Research* is a peer-reviewed journal published in April and October of each year by the Association of Media & Communication Researchers of Nigeria (AMCRON). The journal is addressed to the African and international academic community and it accepts articles from all scholars, irrespective of country or institution of affiliation (Journal of Communication and Media Research 2020).

The focus of JCMR is research, with emphasis on quantitative and qualitative studies that use any or a combination of the acceptable methods of research. These include surveys, content analysis, and experiments for quantitative studies; and observation, interviews/focus groups, and documentary analysis for qualitative studies. The journal seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of communication and media studies and welcomes articles in all areas of communication and the media including, but not limited to, mass communication, mass media channels, traditional communication, organizational communication, interpersonal communication, development communication, public relations, advertising, information communication technologies, the Internet

and computer-mediated communication (*Journal of Communication and Media Research* 2021).

## 4 Method and process

We reviewed and analyzed articles published in the two major journals of communication published in Nigeria. The study population was *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* (TNJC) published by the African Council for Communication Education, Nigeria Chapter and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* (JCMR) published by the Association of Media and Communication Researchers of Nigeria. For *The Nigerian Journal of Communication*, we analyzed all the issues published from 2015 to 2020 (as at the time of writing, the 2021 issues have not been released). Thus, in total, 9 volume of the TNJC were analyzed; while for the *Journal of Communication and Media Research*, we analyzed all the regular issues published from 2015 to 2021 which gave us a total of 14 issues. In 2016, the JCMR published three issues – the two regular issues and one special thematic issue devoted to development communication and entertainment media, but we did not include the special issue in the analysis because of what it was – a special thematic issue. Our categories were authorship, theory/theories used, study population, method of study and research focus.

The study of global communication examines how information is shared across social and geographic boundaries, as well as how, in the age of globalization, communication influences and is influenced by culture, politics, media, economies, health, and relationships across regional, national, and global contexts. We operationalize Online Media as any form of media that is distributed through the Internet, including but not limited to websites, blogs, etc.; Digital Media as any form of media that relies on an electronic device for its creation, distribution, viewing, and storage; Social Media as websites and programs that emphasize collaboration, sharing of content, engagement, and community-based feedback; and Citizen Media as content created by individuals who are not professional journalists. The data from the analysis are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

It is interesting to note that each of the issues of *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* that we reviewed had something to say on online media and global communication. Though the number of articles on the theme is relatively small, one can safely deduce that with an average of about 32%, Nigerian scholars are interrogating issues of online and global communication.

The *Journal of Communication and Media Research* had a total number of 55 articles over the seven-year period, but 19 of these articles were written by non-Nigerians while 34 were written by Nigerians and two by Nigerians in

**Table 1:** TJCN articles on online media and global communication.

S/N	Journal issue	Total number of articles	Number of articles on online media and global communication
1	Vol. 12 No. 1, 2015	13	2 (15.4%)
2	Vol. 13 No. 1, 2016	12	2 (16.7%)
3	Vol. 14 No. 1, 2017	10	2 (20.0%)
4	Vol. 15 No. 1, 2018	15	4 (26.7%)
5	Vol. 15 No. 2, 2018	19	8 (42.1%)
6	Vol. 16 No. 1, 2019	14	2 (14.3%)
7	Vol. 16 No. 2, 2019	14	6 (42.9%)
8	Vol. 17 No. 1, 2020	10	9 (90.0%)
9	Vol. 17 No. 2, 2020	9	2 (22.2%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>37 (31.9%)</b>

**Table 2:** JCMR articles on online media and global communication.

S/N	Journal issue	Total number of articles	Number of articles on online media and global communication
1	Vol. 7, No. 1, April 2015	16	2 (12.5%)
2	Vol. 7, No. 2, October 2015	16	0 (0.0%)
3	Vol. 8, No. 1, April 2016	14	6 (42.9%)
4	Vol. 8, No. 2, October 2016	16	3 (18.6%)
5	Vol. 9, No. 1, April 2017	16	2 (12.5%)
6	Vol. 9, No. 2, October 2017	23	4 (17.4%)
7	Vol. 10, No. 1, April 2018	20	2 (10.0%)
8	Vol. 10, No. 2, October 2018	17	2 (11.8%)
9	Vol. 11, No. 1, April 2019	18	3 (16.7%)
10	Vol. 11, No. 2, October 2019	22	5 (22.7%)
11	Vol. 12, No. 1, April 2020	13	1 (7.7%)
12	Vol. 12, No. 2, October 2020	15	2 (13.3%)
13	Vol. 13, No. 1, April 2021	14	2 (14.3%)
14	Vol. 13, No. 2, October 2021	11	2 (18.2%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>36 (15.6%)</b>

collaboration with non-Nigerians. The non-Nigerian authors were mostly citizens of the United States, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The two international collaborations were between (1) one Nigerian and two Malaysians and (2) one Nigerian and two Kenyans. Since the focus of this essay is on articles written by Nigerians, the 19 articles written by non-Nigerians were excluded.

However, the two articles written in collaboration with non-Nigerians were included because in both cases, a Nigerian was the lead author. Thus, a total number of 36 articles published by the JCMR were analysed. Put together, the two major Nigerian scholarly journals on communication, *The Nigerian Journal of Communication* and the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* published a total number of 73 articles on issues of online media and global communication over the seven-year period of 2015–2021. This is quite significant as it shows that Nigerian scholars, just like their counterparts all over the world, are keenly interested in researching into and interrogating issues of online media and global communication.

## 5 Analysis

Dominick (2009) noted that the Internet's influence is pervasive as we increasingly use online tools to perform information gathering and dissemination, electronic commerce, and community operation. Such vast use and application were reflected in the dimensions of studies published on online and global communication in Nigeria as reflected in the editions of TNJC and the JCMR that were reviewed. The topics treated by the authors used keywords that spread across digital media, social media, media convergence, the internet, online advertising, online public relations, new media, online/e-learning, online shopping, online newspapers/magazines, cybercrime, globalization and digital marketing. These keywords are generally reflected in the titles of the articles to give an insight to the readers on what variables the author/authors examined in the research. In our analysis, we combined these key words into seven major areas, namely, social media, digital media, online media, new media, the Internet, globalization, and ICTs. These areas served as our content categories with which we analyzed the articles. Table 3 shows the frequency of articles published under each category in each of the journals.

Social media, which has proved to be a very hot area of research among scholars worldwide, also occupied the pride of place among Nigerian scholars as 23 articles representing 31.5% of the total articles analyzed focused on social media issues. Following on this is the digital media which accounted for 17.8% of the articles. Online media and the Web/Internet jointly took the third position with 12 (16.4%) articles each. However, it appears (from the data) that the discourse of globalization issues is of very low interest among Nigerian communication scholars as only 1 (1.4%) of the articles published in the selected journals over the seven-year period was on globalization.

**Table 3:** Topics on online media and global communication commonly published in both TJCN and JCMR.

Topic	TJCN	JCMR	Total
Social media	11	12	23 (31.5%)
Digital media	8	5	13 (17.8%)
Online media	6	6	12 (16.4%)
The web/Internet	5	7	12 (16.4%)
Information and communication technologies (ICTs)	6	2	8 (11.0%)
New media	1	3	4 (5.5%)
Globalization	0	1	1 (1.4%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>73 (100%)</b>

## 6 Paper authorship

Most of the articles reviewed in TNJC on inline and global communication were co-authored. Out of the 37 articles identified, 10 (27.0%) were published by a single author, 16 (43.2%) by two authors and 11 (29.7%) by three or more authors. All authors of articles in TNJC were Nigerians. Articles in the JCMR also followed a similar pattern as 12 (33.3%) were by a single author, 9 (25.0%) by two authors and 15 (41.7%) were by three or more authors. This trend showed that collaboration in communication research in Nigeria is getting adequate attention as this has been identified as a major way to grow and advance knowledge. A study by Ductor (2014) showed that greater collaboration leads to higher academic productivity. According to Yeo and Lewis (2019), “reasons for collaboration are varied and the decision is sometimes serendipitous. More often, collaboration arises when people have overlapping interests and a combination of complementary skills. Authors who have similar interests and experiences may want to collaborate as the process often leads to synergistic creativity.” A co-author can also act as a constructive companion, pointing out flaws and challenging assumptions. Finally, teamwork helps authors to share the weight and finish the task in less time, especially for major publications such as books.

## 7 Theoretical approaches used by authors

Worldwide, researchers usually underpin their studies with theories. A theoretical framework connects the researcher to existing knowledge and provides a basis for the researcher’s hypotheses and choice of research methods. This is no exception



in the communication discipline as Miller (2005) posits that communication theories equip researchers with tools needed to answer empirical, conceptual and practical communication issues.

Communication researchers in Nigeria, as found in the TNJC and JCMR articles, anchored their research on online and global communication on existing theories. While some of the authors based their studies on one theory, others underpinned their studies with two or more theories. The use of theories also reflects a mix of old and new theories which may be categorized as the pre-internet era theories and the post-internet within the context of online and global communication research. According to Kahn and Dennis (2022), the internet became more commercial and more of a public utility in the 1980s. Some pre-internet era theories used by authors such as Alozie and Alozie (2016), Babatunde and Olayinka (2019), Guanah et al. (2019), Muhammad (2018), Ogaraku and Archibong (2017), Ogunyombo et al. (2017), Onwunali et al. (2020), Oyewole (2016), Talabi et al. (2016); include the technological determinism theory of Marshall McLuhan (Jan et al. 2020), the uses and gratification theory of Elihu Katz (Blumler and Katz 1974), diffusion of innovation theory of Everett Rogers (Rogers 2003), gatekeeping theory of Kurt Lewin (Lewin 1943) and the inoculation theory by William J. McGuire (McGuire 1961) Post-internet era theories used by authors such as Aduloju (2018), Wogu (2018), Nkwam-Uwaoma and Asemah (2020), Atakiti et al. (2019), and Ukonu et al. (2021) include the media equation theory by Byron Reeves and Clifford Nass in 1996 (Binus University 2016), unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) by V. Venkatesh, M.G. Morris, G.B. Davis and F.D. Davis in 2003 (Ayaz and Yanartaş 2020) and the interactive global media theory.

Despite the difference in time, many communication researchers in Nigeria found a creative way to combine the pre-internet era theories and the post-internet era theories with some communication models as they explored communication phenomena in online and global communication studies. In other instances, two pre-internet era theories, two post-internet era theories or one theory from each era were combined by the researchers. For instance, Udoakah and Nda (2020) in examining the acquisition and utilization of digital media in the teaching and learning of mass communication in tertiary institutions in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, combined the technology acceptance model, the technology organization environment framework and the diffusion of innovation theory to provide a theoretical basis for the study. The combination allowed them to explore the perceived usefulness and ease of use side-by-side the rate and process of adoption of the new communication technology in an organization such as a tertiary institution. In investigating the attitude of television journalists in south-south Nigeria toward citizen journalism, Ashong and Ekeanyanwu (2018) hinged

their study on the gatekeeping theory and the democratic-participant-media theory. The assumptions of the theory helped them to ascertain the criteria used by television journalists to determine the acceptability of citizen reports as they examine the influence of citizen journalism which is a democratized system of citizen reporting that is largely facilitated by advanced communication technology on the practice as professional journalists.

In other instances, two models were combined such as what was obtained in the study of Akpan and Epepe (2019) which combined the Network Advertising Model (NAM) and the Technological Acceptance Model (TAM) in examining the awareness and usage of online advertising channels by small business owners in select cities in Nigeria. The combination of the models was sufficient to explain the proposed small business and online advertising conceptual model by the authors in the study as they analyzed their findings.

Other theories and models that were used by the researchers include the cultivation theory, E-value theory, theory of media richness, value chain theory, new media theory, media systems development theory, knowledge gap theory, observational learning theory, media framing theory, integrated model of behavior prediction theory, adaptive structuration theory, elaboration likelihood model, disruptive innovation theory, two-way symmetric communication flow model, encoding/decoding theory, social category theory and social judgment theory.

However, while agreeing that the combination of multiple theories has great values, such new combinations of theories may produce new perspectives. Additionally, such combinations, as noted by Cairney (2013) may raise important ontological, epistemological, methodological, and practical issues that may need to be addressed to ensure disciplinary advancement. This observation provides a valid insight for further research on how communication researchers can align and reconcile issues raised in this regard.

Overall, of the 37 articles of the TNJC that were reviewed, 21 used one theory or model, 11 used two theories/models while five had no theory or model because they were conceptual papers. The pattern was the same, but slightly different in the JCMR where 24 of the 36 articles reviewed, used theories to support their assumptions while 12 had no theories. Of the 12 that had no theories, six were conceptual papers (which is understandable) while six which were empirical papers had no theories to support their assumptions. This is sadly interesting as it shows that 16.7% of the articles had no theoretical foundation to support their empirical assumptions and methods. Of the 24 articles that used theories, 10 used a mono theory/model while 12 used two or more theories/models.

## 8 Population and methods used by authors

Establishing a defined method of research in social sciences is very important because whenever the researcher fails to adequately set out the process and procedure for achieving the aims and objectives of the research, conducting the study may become complicated and where a result is achieved, such findings may not be reliable. A well-defined population is as good as what a researcher will adopt as the methodology for conducting research. In essence, proper population identification and delineation make a researcher's procedure for data gathering easier. Most of the populations/samples used in both the TNJC and JCMR articles that we reviewed consisted of students (particularly undergraduate students), teachers and university lecturers. In the JCMR, for instance, undergraduate students were the populations studied in 12 (40.0%) of the 30 empirical studies. Other categories of the population that were studied included journalists, professionals, youths, men, women and general population. The spread showed a fair distribution of audiences across the different strata of the Nigerian public.

Most of the studies reviewed were empirical studies. While some were exploratory, others attempted to examine the cause-and-effect of online media content and activities on different issues and across different disciplines. In the TNJC, 31 (83.8%) of the 37 articles reviewed used the survey method. In the JCMR, 30 (83.3%) of the articles reviewed were empirical studies while 6 (16.7%) were conceptual papers. Of the 30 empirical studies, 23 (76.7%) used the survey method either as a stand-alone (in 20 of the articles) or in combination with other methods (as in 3 of the articles). Thus, it can be safely concluded that the survey method was the most popular method used by authors of articles on online media and global communication published in the major Nigerian journals during the period under review. Also, in the JCMR, 25 (83.3%) of the articles used the mono method while 5 (16.7%) used two or more methods. Other methods used included content analysis, in-depth interviews, focus group discussion, textual analysis, and observation. However, in both the TNJC and JCMR, none of the articles reviewed used the experiment method which goes to show that experiment is not a popular method of research among Nigerian communication scholars.

Questionnaires were the most used instrument of data collection while some authors (Aduloju 2018; Obono 2016; Oluyemi 2018; Omosotomhe and Olley 2018; Talabi et al. 2016; Uwalaka 2019) combined them with focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observation in a triangulation. We also noticed that a significant percentage of the empirical studies employed purposive

sampling either as a stand-alone method of population selection or in a combined method such as in a multi-stage sampling format.

## 9 Research focus of the authors

The research focus for online and global communication in both the TNJC and JCMR articles reviewed can be divided into four major areas: Media Use Studies, Media Influence Studies, Media Content Studies, and Media Technology Adoption Studies.

### 9.1 Online media usage studies

Since the coming of the internet to Nigeria, many researchers have shown interest in exploring how people use the internet and what benefits they derive from such use. Nigerian researchers have not relented in probing issues that could lead to identifying phenomena that could serve as a pathway to understanding why people use the media, particularly the digital media in the way they do. Many of these studies have been explored across different fields such as sports, health, politics, culture and the economy. Both the TNJC and JCMR did not lack in articles that address the issue of media use as regards online and global communication. For instance, Ugande and Kusugh (2017) explored the uses and gratifications of social media among residents of Makurdi in Benue State of Nigeria. In the same vein, Oyewole (2016) examined ownership and use of mobile audio-visual devices among Christian students of a Nigerian university; Izuogu, Nwachukwu and Ugwu examined the uses and abuses of social media during the 2015 political campaigns in Nigeria; while Mukhtar (2018) examined the uses and preference of social media platforms among youths in Kano State, Nigeria.

In sports, Agbo (2015) assessed the use of social media for sports communication in the south-eastern states of Nigeria to identify how social media has been deployed to harness the sporting talents and sports development in that region of Nigeria. Okoro and Epepe (2017) further explored how demographic factors affect online usages, particularly as it regards online advertising for small and medium scale businesses in Nigeria.

In health, Akpunne and Uzonwanne (2020) examined problematic smartphone use as a predictor of depression, anxiety and psychological distress among Nigerian undergraduate students; while Ogunesan and Adeniji (2021) examined the relationship between social media use and depressive thoughts among undergraduate students in Nigeria.

In education, communication researchers have also explored the use of online media and resources in research and the completion of academic works. Ogunyombo and Onwubere (2018) in their study examined how undergraduates in Nigerian universities use online resources in the communication research even as Chukwuma (2018) and Oluyemi (2018) probed the challenges associated with such usage, particularly for the learners and the teachers. Studies in this area have been extended to online media usage among journalists (Omosotomhe and Olley 2018), online media usage for environmental communication and management (Akpoghiran et al. 2018), online and internet usage in health communications (Jibril et al. 2018), online usage in migrant issues (Badmus et al. 2019; Wilson and Batta 2019) and social media usage in political participation (Anyanwu and Orji 2020; Izuogu et al. 2017).

## 9.2 Online media influence studies

Media influence and media effects are subjects connected to mass media and media culture's influences on individual or audience views, attitudes, and behavior (Jacobs 1992). Mass media, whether written, televised, or spoken, reaches a large audience. The function and impact of mass media in shaping modern culture are fundamental concerns in cultural studies. With online and global communication, these influences are growing and have also become the subject of research by authors in communication journals published in Nigeria. For instance, in the area of advertising, Ogunyombo et al. (2017) explored the influence of social media advertisements on purchase decisions of Nigerian undergraduate students; while Nnaane (2018) examined the influence of new media on media planning and buying among advertising practitioners in Lagos state and concluded that online tools such as Google Analytics are influencing media planning and buying in Nigeria.

In journalism, Nababa and Ya'u (2017) explored the influence of social networking sites on citizen journalism in Nigeria while Talabi et al. (2016) focused on influence of online newspaper editions on the readership of the print editions of the same newspapers and found that reading online edition of newspapers reduced hardcopy readership while the younger the age, the greater the tendency to read more of online editions of newspapers and the older the age of the reader, the greater the tendency to read more of hardcopy. Guanah et al. (2019) in exploring the influence of online newspaper content on journalism practice among professionals to understand the challenges of such influence, found that the credibility of user-generated content as news is a challenge.

In other areas, Anyanwu and Orji (2020) examined the influence of social media on political participation among residents of south-eastern Nigeria; Oke et al. (2020) studied how health messages disseminated through the social media influence health decisions among young people in Uyo, headquarters of Akwa-Ibom State of Nigeria; while Uwalaka and Nwala (2020) studied the influence of social media messages on expectant mothers in Port Harcourt. And, using the Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling Approach, Abdulrauf et al. (2016) examined the influence of cognitive engagement and youth online political participation in Nigeria.

### 9.3 Online media content studies

The internet has brought about many changes in communication. It has widened the communication scope and created new opportunities. It has made the voices of the voiceless to be heard and broken the boundaries hitherto created by the traditional media (Asogwa 2020). These changes in communication dynamics, particularly in online media and global communication have resulted in researchers' interest in investigating what kind of media content is available online with the hope of distilling the themes, narratives or phenomena that such content may create or have created. Ufuophu-Biri (2020) examined the Internet as a correlate of migration to foreign countries among Nigerian youths; while Ademosu (2020) focused on a discourse analysis of two online environmental communication campaigns. Given the capabilities of communication (language and words), the sensitivity of "place" and the value it holds in determining how people react to the environment, the study evaluated the discourse of environmental communication campaigns and how language is used to emphasize the contexts and frames of "place". Cookey and Otakore (2019) using the national discourse on the national grazing bill in Nigeria, examined online reports and audience commentaries across selected online platforms and found that the audience reacted negatively to the bill based on the contents read on the online platforms.

Online video clips and memes also came under the scrutiny of Nigerian scholars in the online and global media articles reviewed. Ezeh and Ono (2016) examined aspects of online social discourse of the popular video clip "There is God" of the wife of a former President of Nigeria, Mrs. Patience Jonathan. The video footage which was first reported on Channels Television on YouTube on the 4th of May, 2014, immediately went trending on major social networking sites that about 30 million Nigerians downloaded it in two days; making Google to rate it as the most watched non-musical video on YouTube within just 72 h

(Ezeh and Ono 2016). Using imagery to communicate was the focus of Ademosu and Alade (2019) in their study on speaking through online memes.

## 9.4 Media technology adoption studies

The adoption of new technologies has been studied for over 30 years, and Rogers describes one of the most common adoption models in his book, *Diffusion of Innovations* (Sahin 2006). Diffusion is the process through which new ideas, technologies, products, or processes are spread among members of a social system over time through communication channels (Kreps 2017). A technology, according to Rogers, is a system for a mechanical activity that minimizes the uncertainty in the cause-effect linkages involved in reaching the desired result (Sahin 2006). Adoption of a new idea, behaviour, or product (i.e., “innovation”) does not happen simultaneously in a social system. Rather it is a process whereby some people are more apt to adopt the innovation than others therefore, how these digital communication technologies have been accepted and adopted has been studied by communication researchers in Nigeria. For instance, Odiegwu-Enwerem et al. (2019) examined how students of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) are adopting the deployment of instructional videos online, aimed at providing a better learning experience for the students. Alemoh and Ogba (2019) further investigated how the adoption of web-based media could be adopted in bridging the knowledge gap on migration and inclusiveness.

Atakiti et al. (2019) examined the ease of use, perceived usefulness and adoption of television streaming in Nigeria. In health, Onyechi and Obono (2015) examined the potentials of social media use for HIV/AIDS campaigns; Alonge et al. (2017) examined the perceived effectiveness of social media platforms for HIV/AIDS communication among Nigerian undergraduates; while Adetakun et al. (2021) examined diffusion of issue framing in response to the COVID-19 social media agenda in Nigeria.

## 10 Funding

In all the 73 articles that we reviewed, none declared that the research was funded. This is very significant as it goes further to underscore the fact that many Nigerian scholars and researchers lack funding for their research endeavors.

## 11 Discussion

Generally, most of the empirical papers used manual calculations like Taro Yamane to arrive at their sample size. It would have been expected that with the availability of online software for sample calculation, many would have used such software, particularly as they study online and global communication. The reason for this perceived apathy toward the use of online sample calculation software may be of interest for further studies on the adoption of technological innovations for research among communication scholars.

Some of the studies also present challenges in their methodology. For instance, in the study by Akpan and Ekpe (2018), despite stating that the study was meant to investigate the use of social media news among residents of Akwa Ibom state, the authors generated and circulated an online poll which they admitted had responses that were outside the scope of the research, raising issues of validity. Another major observation is the choice of theories or models to serve as a basis for the research. For instance, in the study by Enwerem et al. (2018), the authors hinged the study on the technological determinism theory which states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another. Whereas, from the objective, the assumption of the technology acceptance model which is an information systems theory that models how users come to accept and use technology would have helped more with linking the analysis with the phenomenon studied in the article. However, it must be admitted that there exists a thin line between some of the assumptions of the theories and models that are enough to confuse an author in making a choice.

In the studies of Kediehor and Uchenunu (2020) and Akpan (2020), it was observed that the objectives appear to be the same thus presenting a challenge for analysis. For instance, in the Kediehor and Uchenunu (2020) study, research objective No.3 was “to what extent have Udu community in Delta State applied digital media in their political and democratic events? Whereas, research question No.4 asked “how have the Udu dwellers used the digital media to participate in their democratic and political issues? From the standpoint of analysis, the two questions may have the same answer, therefore, becoming a repetition.

## 12 Conclusion

Despite the significant efforts made by Nigerian authors in studying online and global communication, some issues that require the attention of further



research have been identified. The first issue identified was that of cumbersome paper titles, which made some of the titles clumsy. In certain instances, the variables were not well stated in the titles to help the reader quickly grasp the direction of the study as observed in Okoro and Epepe (2017), Akpan and Ekpe (2018), and Chukwuma (2018). When the topics are not well stated, there will likely be a disconnect between the topic and the objectives as observed in Ashong and Ekeanyanwu (2018) and Pepple et al. (2020).

Online and global communication research has become a mainstay in communication research in Nigeria. Across different institutions, many communication scholars have attempted to examine phenomena that discuss patterns, trends, adoption, uses and influence of communication on Nigerians and situations in society. The Nigerian Journal of Communication (TNJC) showcases many of these studies and presents an opportunity for the exchange of ideas among scholars. However, to further meet up with the global standards set for communication research, issues of appropriate topics and process-driven methodology must be adequately addressed so that studies published in the journal can pass the test of validity and reliability and be replicated across continents.

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