Nasarawa Journal of Multimedia and Communication Studies
ISSN: 2635- 3091, Volume 8, Number 1, December, 2025
website:http://njomacs.com

INFLUENCE OF CONVENTIONAL BROADCAST CONTENT AND STREAMING PLATFORMS IN CONTENT CONSUMPTION AMONG UNIVERSITY OF ABUJA UNDERGRADUATES

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Abstract

This study investigated the "influence of conventional broadcast content and streaming platforms in content consumption among University of Abuja undergraduates." In conducting this study, three objectives guided the study. The study was hinged on Uses & Gratification Theory. Likert-scale questionnaire was designed and administered to 397 (sample) respondents among University of Abuja Students. the sample was selected from 55,364 populations based on Taro Yamane formula. In the study, systematic sampling technique was employed to distribute the sample and descriptive survey method was adopted. The data collected were statistically presented and analyzed using descriptive analysis. The study revealed that there is a stark and decisive imbalance in media exposure. Streaming platforms, particularly YouTube, TikTok, and Netflix, have moved from the fringe to the very core of daily student life. They function as the default source for entertainment, information, and social connection. In direct contrast, conventional broadcast media namely television and radio have been relegated to the periphery of their media diet. The study therefore recommended that to directly address the finding of profoundly low exposure to conventional broadcast media alongside very high exposure to digital streaming platforms, broadcast media operators must urgently pursue a strategic digital transformation. The study further recommended that in an effort to respond to the clear pattern of consumption that shows a decisive preference for frequent, on-demand, and curated viewing over scheduled broadcast, the University of Abuja should formally integrate these digital platforms into its core functions.

Key words: Conventional Broadcast Content, Streaming Platforms, Uniabuja Students, Media Consumption Habits, Uses and Gratification

Introduction

Globally, the integration of media, telecommunications, and information technology has significantly transformed the landscape of content creation, distribution, and consumption in which the convergence has paved the way for the dominance of digital video streaming platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and HBO Max, displacing conventional television as the primary mode of entertainment and information dissemination (Lotz & Portals, 2017). As noted by Lobato (2019), the emergence of streaming services represents one of the most profound technological disruptions in the media industry, redefining access to audiovisual content through personalization, interactivity, and convenience. The rapid advancement of broadband and mobile internet technologies has further accelerated the adoption of Over-the-Top (OTT) platforms, allowing audiences to access a vast array of films, series, and documentaries at their convenience (Jo, Lee, & Cho, 2020).

Nieborg and Poell (2018) observed that streaming services have transformed various cultural sectors by digitizing production, archiving, and distribution, thereby creating an alternative ecosystem for content consumption. Unlike traditional broadcasting, streaming relies heavily on algorithmic data analysis and recommendation systems, enabling a more personalized user experience and fostering audience loyalty (Noam, 2021; Herbert, Lotz, & Marshall, 2018). According to Verma (2021), this model enhances user engagement while intensifying competition among media conglomerates worldwide. Consequently, conventional broadcasters face declining audience shares and advertising revenues, prompting them to reassess their programming and content delivery strategies (Vanessa, 2023). In Nigeria, as in many developing nations, the spread of digital infrastructure and mobile technology has fueled the growth of

streaming platforms, particularly among young audiences. The youth demographic characterized by high digital literacy and mobile phone penetration has become a leading driver of the shift from linear broadcasting to on-demand viewing (Onasanya, Ilupeju, & Adelabu, 2025). Nigerian broadcasters such as Channels Television and NTA have begun integrating hybrid models that combine live television with online streaming to maintain relevance and audience engagement (Onasanya, Ilupeju, & Adelabu, 2025). This hybrid approach allows viewers to choose between real-time broadcasts and on-demand access, providing flexibility and enhancing interactivity (Sun, 2025). However, the shift toward streaming is not without limitations. Afzal, Khan, Daud, Ahmed, and Butt (2023) noted that challenges such as inconsistent internet connectivity, data affordability, and subscription costs continue to restrict equitable access to digital content across socio-economic groups. Similarly, Nwaoboli (2023) observed that while global streaming giants continue to expand into developing markets, such expansion may marginalize local content producers who lack the resources to compete at the same scale. CABSAT (2024) highlighted that conventional networks increasingly adopt streaming technologies to adapt to evolving consumer preferences, while streaming platforms diversify their content portfolios to attract wider audiences. Burman (2023) emphasized that heavy investments in original programming and exclusive content by streaming companies have redefined the competitive landscape, making it imperative for broadcasters to innovate in order to sustain viewer engagement. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how students at the University of Abuja perceive the role of conversational broadcasting and streaming services, as well as its role in content consumption.

Objectives of the Study

This study primarily aims to explore the role of conventional broadcast content and streaming platforms in content consumption among university of Abuja undergraduates. Specifically, the research seeks to:

1. Ascertain the level of exposure of University of Abuja undergraduates to conventional broadcast media and streaming platforms.
2. Determine the frequency and pattern of content consumption from conventional broadcast media and streaming platforms among University of Abuja undergraduates.
3. Identify the major factors influencing students' preference for either conventional broadcast content or streaming platforms.

Literature Review

Conventional Broadcast and Streaming Platforms

Traditional broadcasting primarily encompasses radio and television (Auwal, 2021). It can be described as a conventional means of distributing information to diverse audiences, falling under the umbrella of mass media. This system has been operational since the advent of television. Broadcast television, in its traditional form, involves the dissemination of audiovisual content through radio frequency signals transmitted over the air (Baran, 2010). This process involves sending signals from a central source, such as a television station, to multiple receivers (television sets) within a specific coverage area. Conventional broadcast television refers to the long-standing method of delivering programming to a broad viewership. It operates by transmitting signals from broadcasting stations, which are then captured by antennas connected to viewers' televisions (Brain, 2006). This mode of television distribution has played a significant role in shaping global communication and cultural dynamics over the years.

Streaming platforms are digital services that provide multimedia content including films, television series, music, podcasts, and live broadcasts directly to users via the internet (Awati, 2022). Unlike conventional media distribution, which necessitates downloading files before playback, streaming enables instant access, allowing users to consume content in real time without storing it locally (Awati, 2022). Sayood (2018) explained that this process involves transmitting data in small segments, which are briefly held in a device's buffer before playback, ensuring smooth and continuous delivery. The rise of streaming services has been driven by their ease of use, broad accessibility, and extensive content libraries (Spilker and Colbjørnsen, 2020). These platforms are compatible with multiple devices, such as smartphones, tablets, computers, smart TVs, and gaming consoles, provided an internet connection is available. Leading examples include Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Hulu, Disney+,

Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube. While many operate on a subscription-based model, some platforms offer free, ad-supported alternatives or pay-per-view options for specific content.

According to Song, (2024), the evolution of streaming platforms traces back to the late 1990s and early 2000s, driven by advancements in internet technology and the widespread adoption of broadband. A pivotal moment occurred in 2007 when Netflix, originally a DVD rental company, launched its streaming service. This innovation revolutionized entertainment consumption by enabling users to watch films and television series directly on their computers, paving the way for the on-demand model that would later reshape the industry (Song, 2024). Over time, the streaming landscape diversified, incorporating not just films and TV programs but also music, podcasts, and live broadcasts. YouTube, established in 2005, emerged as the leading platform for user-created videos, while Spotify, founded in 2008, transformed the music sector by providing legal, instant access to songs (Birungi, 2022).

Media Consumption Habits

In recent years, the way people consume media has undergone substantial changes, driven by shifts in society and advances in technology. Digital platforms have revolutionized access to news and entertainment, moving audiences away from conventional media like TV and newspapers toward online content on mobile devices and computers. Younger demographics, particularly Generation Z and millennials, have been at the forefront of this evolution, exhibiting strong preferences for streaming services and social media over conventional television or print media. According to Deloitte Insights (2025), these groups maintain an average of five paid streaming subscriptions, reflecting a 20% increase in costs over the past year, yet they remain more likely to cancel services due to price sensitivity. The allure of platforms like Netflix and YouTube lies in their on-demand accessibility, which encourages binge-watching behaviors and caters to shorter attention spans. This trend aligns with findings from the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (2025), which highlights that 54% of U.S. adults under 35 now access news primarily through social and video networks, overtaking conventional journalism outlets for the first time. The convenience of personalized content libraries has fostered individualized consumption patterns, where users curate their media diets based on algorithmic recommendations rather than scheduled programming.

Social media's role in news dissemination has grown exponentially, though not without significant challenges to information integrity. The Reuters Institute (2025) reports that 22% of U.S. respondents encounter news through influencers like Joe Rogan, while younger audiences increasingly rely on personalities such as Hugo Travers in France or regional creators in Asia for commentary and updates. This shift raises critical questions about credibility, as these platforms often prioritize engagement metrics over factual accuracy. Misinformation remains a pervasive issue, with 58% of global respondents expressing concern over their ability to distinguish truth from falsehood online a sentiment particularly pronounced in the U.S. and African markets. Vosoughi (2018) corroborated these concerns, demonstrating how false news spreads more rapidly on social networks due to its sensationalist appeal. The erosion of trust in institutional journalism has been further exacerbated by political actors leveraging alternative media ecosystems to bypass traditional scrutiny, a phenomenon observed during the 2025 U.S. presidential transition. Media multitasking represents another defining characteristic of contemporary consumption habits, complicating assessments of true engagement and cognitive impact. The pervasive use of multiple devices simultaneously such as scrolling through TikTok while watching television has become normative, particularly among younger users. Research by Ophir, Nass, and Wagner (2019) underscores the detrimental effects of this behavior on concentration and memory retention, challenging conventional metrics like Nielsen ratings, which struggle to account for fragmented attention spans.

Empirical Review

Okafor & Adebayo (2018) conducted a study to analyze the media consumption patterns of undergraduates in South-West Nigeria, aiming to quantify the shift from conventional broadcast to digital streaming platforms. The research surveyed 500 students from six universities. Findings revealed that 78% of respondents primarily used streaming platforms like Netflix and YouTube for daily entertainment, citing on-demand access and

content variety as key motivators, while conventional television viewership was relegated to less than 20%. The study concluded that a significant generational shift away from scheduled programming was underway. It recommended that broadcasters develop robust digital on-demand services to remain relevant among youth audiences. Bello & Chukwuma (2019) explored the impact of economic and infrastructural constraints on streaming platform usage, specifically focusing on data cost and network reliability among University of Lagos undergraduates. The study surveyed 400 students. Results showed that 65% considered high data costs the most significant barrier to consistent streaming consumption, leading to strategies like downloading content during off-peak hours. The study concluded that internet affordability and reliability were critical determinants of digital media consumption. It recommended university-level interventions to improve campus Wi-Fi infrastructure and data subsidies.

Lawal & Ibrahim (2020) aimed to compare the perceived credibility of news on broadcast TV versus social media streams among Nigerian students. Using focus group discussions with 100 undergraduates, the research found that students trusted conventional broadcast news for its depth but perceived it as slow and biased, while they distrusted social media due to misinformation. The study concluded that students operate a hybrid consumption model, cross-referencing sources for verification. It recommended that broadcasters integrate the immediacy of digital media with their traditional editorial rigor to better serve the youth.

Giwa & Oni (2021) investigated the social dynamics of content consumption among undergraduates at the University of Ibadan, aiming to understand how platform choice influences social bonding. The research found that 70% of respondents participated in weekly "watch parties" on streaming platforms, which had become central to social interaction. In contrast, conventional broadcast viewing was largely an individual activity. The study concluded that the communal and interactive nature of digital platforms was a key driver of their popularity. It recommended that content creators and platforms develop more features that enhance shared viewing experiences.

Mohammed & Shehu (2023) researched the psychological effects of binge-watching on streaming platforms among undergraduates in Northern Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study aimed to correlate binge-watching with academic performance and mental well-being. Findings revealed a significant correlation for 45% of heavy users, linking binge-watching to poor academic performance, though regulated consumption was seen as a form of stress relief. The study concluded that uncontrolled streaming poses academic risks. It recommended digital literacy campaigns to educate students on mindful consumption habits.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research design, utilizing the descriptive survey method. The population comprised all undergraduate students of the University of Abuja, Nigeria, totaling fifty-five thousand, three hundred and sixty-four (55,364). The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamane formula for finite populations: $n = N / [1 + N(e)^2]$, where $N = 55,364$ and $e = 0.05$. The calculation yielded $n = 55,364 / [1 + 55,364(0.0025)] = 55,364 / 139.41 = 397.21$; thus, a minimum sample of 397 respondents was sought. The sampling procedure combined Stratified, Systematic Random, and Convenience techniques. First, the population was stratified by the university's 16 faculties. To select participating faculties, a Systematic Random Sampling technique was applied: from an ordered list of the 16 faculties, a sampling interval ($k = 16/4 = 4$) was set, a random start between 1 and 4 was chosen, and every 4th faculty was selected, resulting in the faculties of Communication and Media Studies, Education, Pharmaceutical Science, and Law. Finally, within these four faculties, the quota of 397 respondents was completed using a convenience sampling technique, approaching available undergraduate students in high-traffic areas. Copies of questionnaire were administered to these respondents, and the collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23, with descriptive statistics presented in frequencies, percentages, and tables.

Data Presentation

Based on the data collected through survey with regards to the "the role of conventional broadcast content and streaming platforms in content consumption among university of Abuja undergraduates.", data retrieved were subjected to quantitative analysis using statistical package for social science SPSS (Version 23).

RQ1: What is the level of exposure of University of Abuja undergraduates to conventional broadcast media and streaming platforms?

Table 1: Level of Exposure to Media Types and Use Purposes

Item	N (1)	R (2)	S (3)	O (4)	A (5)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
A. TYPE OF MEDIA								
1. Television	80 (20.2%)	95 (23.9%)	110 (27.7%)	75 (18.9%)	37 (9.3%)	2.73	1.25	Moderate
2. Radio	102 (25.7%)	115 (29.0%)	95 (23.9%)	60 (15.1%)	25 (6.3%)	2.47	1.22	Low
3. Hulu	210 (52.9%)	105 (26.4%)	52 (13.1%)	20 (5.0%)	10 (2.5%)	1.78	1.05	Very Low
4. Netflix	40 (10.1%)	35 (8.8%)	70 (17.6%)	132 (33.2%)	120 (30.2%)	3.64	1.32	High
5. Apple TV	250 (63.0%)	85 (21.4%)	40 (10.1%)	15 (3.8%)	7 (1.8%)	1.59	0.95	Very Low
6. YouTube	15 (3.8%)	20 (5.0%)	45 (11.3%)	152 (38.3%)	165 (41.6%)	4.09	1.03	High
7. TikTok	25 (6.3%)	30 (7.6%)	60 (15.1%)	140 (35.3%)	142 (35.8%)	3.87	1.18	High
8. Amazon Prime Video	180 (45.3%)	110 (27.7%)	65 (16.4%)	32 (8.1%)	10 (2.5%)	1.95	1.09	Low
B. **COGNITIVE NEEDS**								
1. To stay informed	20 (5.0%)	35 (8.8%)	85 (21.4%)	157 (39.5%)	100 (25.2%)	3.71	1.11	High
2. To learn new things	15 (3.8%)	25 (6.3%)	70 (17.6%)	165 (41.6%)	122 (30.7%)	3.89	1.05	High
C. **AFFECTIVE NEEDS**								
1. To relax and escape	10 (2.5%)	18 (4.5%)	55 (13.9%)	174 (43.8%)	140 (35.3%)	4.05	0.95	High
2. To pass time when bored	8 (2.0%)	12 (3.0%)	40 (10.1%)	180 (45.3%)	157 (39.5%)	4.17	0.90	Very High

D. **INTEGRATIVE NEEDS**								
1. To explore beliefs/identity	45 (11.3%)	70 (17.6%)	125 (31.5%)	110 (27.7%)	47 (11.8%)	3.11	1.20	Moderate
2. To reflect on goals	50 (12.6%)	75 (18.9%)	130 (32.7%)	105 (26.4%)	37 (9.3%)	3.01	1.19	Moderate
E. SOCIAL INTEGRATIVE NEEDS								
1. To connect with similar interests	30 (7.6%)	40 (10.1%)	90 (22.7%)	142 (35.8%)	95 (23.9%)	3.58	1.18	High
2. To participate in conversations	25 (6.3%)	45 (11.3%)	100 (25.2%)	150 (37.8%)	77 (19.4%)	3.53	1.15	High
Total Mean Score						**3.26**	**1.11**	**Moderate**

[1] Level of Exposure to Media Types, Use and Purposes Scale Interpretation: 1.00–1.79: Very Low, 1.80–2.59: Low, 2.60–3.39: Moderate, 3.40-4.19: High, 4.20-5.00: Very High.
[2] Scale Point Coding: N = Never, R = Rarely, S = Sometimes, O = Often, A = Always; Mean interpreted

The data in Table 1 provides a stark, two-tiered landscape of media exposure. On one tier, conventional broadcast media exhibit low to moderate engagement. Radio has the lowest engagement among major platforms (Mean=2.47), with over half (54.7%) of respondents stating they never or rarely listen. Television fares slightly better but is still only moderate (Mean=2.73), with 44.1% of students rarely or never watching. The second tier is dominated by digital streaming and social media platforms, which show remarkably high penetration. YouTube is the undisputed leader with a mean of 4.09, indicating that 79.9% of undergraduates use it often or always. TikTok follows closely (Mean=3.87), with 71.1% being frequent users. Netflix also commands a strong presence with a high mean of 3.64. In contrast, other streaming services like Hulu, Apple TV, and Amazon Prime Video have very low to low adoption, suggesting they are either less accessible, less marketed, or less appealing to this demographic.

Regarding the Uses and Gratifications, the motivations are clear and powerful. Affective Needs are the strongest driver. Using media to "pass time when bored" is a near-universal activity, scoring a "Very High" 4.17, with a massive 84.8% of students engaging in this often or always. Using media to "relax and escape" is similarly prevalent (Mean=4.05). Cognitive Needs are also highly rated; students actively use media to learn new things (Mean=3.89) and stay informed (Mean=3.71), demonstrating that these platforms are integral to both their academic and personal development. Social Integrative Needs are also significant, with students using media to connect with peers (Mean=3.58) and participate in social conversations (Mean=3.53). Integrative Needs (related to self-concept and identity) were the only ones to fall into the moderate range, suggesting that while media plays a role in identity exploration, it is a secondary function compared to entertainment, information, and social connection.

RQ2: What are the frequency and patterns of content consumption from conventional broadcast media and streaming platforms among University of Abuja undergraduates?

Table 2: Frequency and Pattern of Content Consumption

Item	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1. I frequently watch broadcast content.	85 (21.4%)	110 (27.7%)	92 (23.2%)	80 (20.2%)	30 (7.6%)	2.65	1.23	Moderate
2. I frequently use streaming platforms.	20 (5.0%)	25 (6.3%)	50 (12.6%)	152 (38.3%)	150 (37.8%)	3.98	1.09	High
3. I consume more on streaming than broadcast.	15 (3.8%)	20 (5.0%)	45 (11.3%)	165 (41.6%)	152 (38.3%)	4.06	1.02	High
4. I follow specific programmes/channels.	30 (7.6%)	40 (10.1%)	75 (18.9%)	160 (40.3%)	92 (23.2%)	3.61	1.16	High
Total Mean Score						**3.58**	**1.13**	**High**

[1] Frequency and pattern scale interpretation: 1.00–1.79: Very Low, 1.80–2.59: Low, 2.60–3.39: Moderate, 3.40-4.19: High, 4.20-5.00: Very High.
[2] Scale Point Coding: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

The data in Table 4 offers a definitive declaration of a new media hierarchy among undergraduates. The behaviour related to conventional broadcast content is tepid; the statement "I frequently watch broadcast content" received a moderate mean score of 2.65, and notably, 49.1% of respondents actively disagreed or strongly disagreed with it, signaling a clear lack of engagement. In direct opposition, the frequency of using streaming platforms is high (Mean=3.98), with 76.1% of students agreeing they are frequent users. This contrast is brought into sharpest focus by the response to the comparative statement, "I consume content more often on streaming platforms than on conventional broadcast media." This item garnered a high mean of 4.06, and a decisive 79.9% of the sample agreed or strongly agreed, leaving no doubt about their preference. Furthermore, the consumption pattern is not passive; it is active and intentional. The high mean score of 3.61 for "I follow specific programmes/channels" indicates that students are curating their own viewing schedules, subscribing to creators, and building habits around on-demand content, a behaviour that scheduled broadcasting does not support.

RQ3: What factors influence undergraduates' preference for either conventional broadcast content or streaming platforms?

Table 3: Factors Influencing Platform Preference

Item	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remarks
1. Preference based on content quality.	18 (4.5%)	22 (5.5%)	60 (15.1%)	187 (47.1%)	110 (27.7%)	3.88	1.03	High
2. Preference for greater control.	15 (3.8%)	20 (5.0%)	45 (11.3%)	170 (42.8%)	147 (37.0%)	4.04	1.02	High
3. Preference influenced by device type.	40 (10.1%)	55 (13.9%)	100 (25.2%)	135 (34.0%)	67 (16.9%)	3.34	1.23	Moderate
Total Mean Score						**3.75**	**1.09**	**High**

[1]Factors scale interpretation: 1.00–1.79: Very Low, 1.80–2.59: Low, 2.60–3.39: Moderate, 3.40-4.19: High, 4.20-5.00: Very High.
[2] Scale Point Coding: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

The factors influencing platform choice reveal a student body that is empowered, discerning, and values autonomy. The most significant driver of preference is the desire for greater user control, which achieved a high mean score of 4.04. A combined 79.8% of respondents agree that they prefer platforms that allow them to decide what to watch and when to watch it, a fundamental feature of streaming that broadcast media cannot provide. This is closely followed by content quality as a critical factor (Mean=3.88), with 74.8% of students agreeing that their choice is based on the perceived quality of the content available. This indicates that students are not just seeking convenience; they are making qualitative judgments about the media they consume. The type of device used such as phone, laptop, TV has a moderate influence on preference (Mean=3.34). This suggests that while the portability and ubiquity of smartphones facilitate the use of streaming platforms, the device itself is not the primary reason for selecting one platform over another. The device is an enabler, but the choice is driven by the content and the control it affords.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study elucidated a fundamental reorientation in the media ecology of University of Abuja undergraduates, decisively characterized by a migration from conventional broadcast media to digital streaming platforms. This shift aligns with broader generational trends where scheduled television and radio (Auwal, 2021; Baran, 2010) have been supplanted by on-demand, internet-based services (Awati, 2022), a pattern previously quantified among Nigerian students (Okafor & Adebayo, 2018). The data reveals that this migration is not passive but is driven by an active, gratification-seeking audience, as posited by Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory. Affective needs, such as relaxation and passing time, are the strongest drivers, followed by cognitive needs for learning and social-integrative needs for connection. Streaming platforms, with their personalized content libraries and algorithmic recommendations (Deloitte Insights, 2025), are uniquely engineered to satisfy this complex matrix of needs more effectively than the traditional broadcast model. Their utility is further enhanced by social viewing features, which have become central to student interaction (Giwa & Oni, 2021), and their compatibility with ubiquitous devices, despite persistent infrastructural challenges like data costs (Bello & Chukwuma, 2019).

Consequently, the contemporary media diet is defined by active curation and a paramount preference for user control, reflecting the autonomy-seeking behavior of a digital-native generation. Students overwhelmingly consume more content on streaming platforms, following specific creators and channels a behavior antithetical to scheduled broadcasting. This underscores a media landscape where choice is governed by a platform's capacity to deliver quality content and a personalized experience, a revolution catalyzed by the on-demand model pioneered by services like Netflix (Song, 2024). While this study notes the continued, albeit diminished, role of broadcast media for specific informational purposes, it is often within a hybrid consumption model where students cross-reference sources due to concerns over credibility and misinformation on digital platforms (Lawal & Ibrahim, 2020; Reuters Institute, 2025). The findings therefore validate the core U&G premise of the active audience, concluding that the central role of conventional broadcast media has been displaced by a streaming-dominated paradigm, fundamentally reshaped by the expectations for autonomy, personalization, and instant gratification.

Conclusion

This study, analyzing data from 397 University of Abuja undergraduates, concludes that a fundamental and decisive shift in media consumption has occurred, decisively moving the center of gravity from conventional broadcast media to digital streaming platforms. The findings demonstrate that streaming platforms like YouTube, TikTok, and Netflix are the dominant media channels, having dethroned traditional television and radio by fulfilling the core psychosocial needs of this digital-native generation more effectively. This shift is robustly explained by the Uses and Gratifications (U&G) theory, which frames students as active agents who rationally choose streaming for its superior capacity to gratify their high affective needs for entertainment and escapism, their cognitive needs for on-demand learning, and their social integrative needs for connection and cultural currency.

Ultimately, the preference for streaming rests on two synergistic pillars: a demand for high-quality, relevant content and a paramount desire for user control and convenience. The historical credibility of broadcast media is insufficient to compete with the personalized, on-demand, and socially-integrated utility of streaming platforms. Therefore, the study concluded that for University of Abuja undergraduates, the media landscape has been irrevocably restructured around a new paradigm defined by autonomy, personalization, and immediate gratification, leaving conventional broadcast media on the periphery of daily content consumption.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusive findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to help stakeholders effectively engage with the modern undergraduate audience. To directly address the finding of profoundly low exposure to conventional broadcast media alongside very high exposure to digital streaming platforms, broadcast media operators must urgently pursue a strategic digital transformation. This involves creating dedicated, on-demand mobile applications for their content and, most importantly, establishing original production units to develop snackable, platform-native content for TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram, meeting students where their attention is already focused.

To respond to the clear pattern of consumption that shows a decisive preference for frequent, on-demand, and curated viewing over scheduled broadcast, the University of Abuja should formally integrate these digital platforms into its core functions. Academically, this means supporting the creation of official university channels on platforms like YouTube for lecture supplements and tutorials. Administratively, it requires a shift to use social media for dynamic community storytelling and essential communications, aligning official messaging with the channels that dominate student daily media use.

Finally, to align with the key influencing factors of user control and content quality that drive student platform preference, content creators and marketers must fundamentally adapt their strategies. This requires moving beyond repurposed advertising to produce culturally resonant, high-quality content that is specifically crafted for the format and interactive nature of each digital platform. Authentically collaborating with student influencers and creators is essential, as this leverages the trusted, user-controlled networks that students have built and value, ensuring messages are received within a context of credibility and choice.

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