

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM, THE INTERNET, AND THE UNKNOWN GUNMEN IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract: This paper examines the use of internet for investigative journalism and Security surveillance of ungoverned spaces in Nigeria that has become a hideout for unknown gunmen. The paper sees internet as a veritable tool in the hand of investigative Journalists to unravel concealed information and the identity of militias, in order to promote orderliness in society. The work was anchored on three theories of mass communication. They are technological determinism, the social responsibility and Uses and gratification theories. Journalists and media personals in the armed forces are encouraged to use internet to improve the art of investigative journalism and as a tool to tackle the present insecurity in Nigeria.

Key words: Internet, Investigative Journalism, Unknown Gunmen

Word Count: 124

Introduction

Investigative journalism could be defined as an original, proactive process that digs deeply into an issue or topic of public interest (Horrie, 2008). It is an act of producing new information or putting known information together to produce new insights. Spark, (1999) sees investigative journalism as strategic way of revealing secrets or uncovering issues surrounded by silence. The unknown gunmen phenomenon in Nigeria recently calls for investigative action.

The unknown gunmen in Nigeria are unidentified men with dangerous weapons killing, rapping, kidnapping citizens for ransom. Although the identity of these people is well known as Fulani militias, but Nigerian government and the media addressed them as unknown gunmen. We are living in an era of information and communication technology where almost every hidden mystery could be unraveled using the internet and telecommunication system. What is internet?

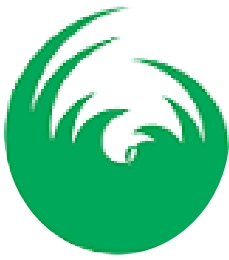
The Internet offers investigative journalists new way of getting information and reporting news. It opens access to global communities communication which may provide alternate sources to those in online journalism. It impacts on production processes with radio, television and print journalism practices converging through digitization on the internet towards a new hybrid profession – e-journalism. With faster computers, newer compressed media devices and easier access to conceal information, criminal hideout and conversation interception, the work of investigative journalists becomes more sophisticated, interactive variants of the older ways of operation. As a result of the perceived practical benefits of the Internet for journalists, there is a relation between the manner in which journalists estimate the usefulness of the internet for finding news sources, information on criminal activities and others. The diversity of accessible channels for obtaining useful and concealed information is continually expanding through the internet (Pavlik, 2001). Another

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functional improvement provided by the internet is the apparent efficiency gain. Journalists experiencing advantages of internet use in their daily work, such as time saving, improved accessibility, and speed (Grabowicz, 2003; Haas, 2006; Edafejirhaye 2019). Yet another important change in journalism due to the rise of the Internet, is the change in the workload of journalists (Bardoel, 2002; Deuze, 2002). Journalists are expected to be ever more flexible and multi-skilled. Hence this paper focuses on the uses of internet in investigative journalism.

Literature Review

The Unknown Gunmen

Findings from surviving victims of the unknown gunmen show that the unknown gunmen are Fulani militias imported into Nigeria by Buhari and his cohorts during 2015 election. These evil elements spread over Nigeria from North to the South, West to the East of Nigeria perpetuating their criminal activities as Edafejirhaye, Ogunwuyi and Olawunmi, (2022) observed. The activities of the so-called unknown gunmen have been orchestrated by the Boko Haram, Islamic State in West Africa, banditry and militant Fulani herdsman. Consequently, criminal activities of these nefarious groups have created untold security challenges in Nigeria more predominantly in the North and recently in the Western and Eastern parts of the country. These terrorists have made the country a hub of various forms of terrorist attacks which includes: suicide bombing, car bombing, shooting of military aircraft, attack on Prisons, military base and other security formations. Others are launching of rocket propelled grenades, assassinations, abductions and kidnapping, disguising and hijacking also attacking public squares, government buildings and installations, churches and mosques, schools, bridges, Police stations, military barracks and installations as well as market squares and prisons to free inmates particularly their members incarcerated.

In the North Eastern Nigeria, available statistics show that about 350,000 people have been killed. An estimated 3

million people were displaced in the Lake Chad Basin and more than 310,000 estimated Nigerians made refugees since 2009 in their own country.. Apart from the nefarious activities of the Boko Haram set, militant Fulani Herdsmen have repeatedly unleashed their terror on farming communities in the North Central and Southern part of Nigeria. In the year 2014 to 2020, Edafejirhaye, (2021) opines that groups of heavily armed Fulani herdsmen reportedly killed more than 100 villagers in Kaduna State, 69 villagers in Katsina State, and 37 villagers in Benue State and 20 in Delta state in separate attacks. These large casualty counts per attack remain high, as over 100 people were killed in clashes in Southern Kaduna in one incident alone in early 2017. Over 50 worshippers were brutally massacred in Owo Catholic Church, Ondo state in the month of June 2022. As at August 2; 2022 the number casualty in Ibo land alone from January to July is over 7000 according to Sahara Reporter August 2; 2022. While the dissidents are operating freely the Buhari government is doing nothing to apprehend the people. Some sources claimed that the President Buhari in Aso Rock is a fake one and that he is one of the sponsors of the unknown gunmen for the purpose of fulanizing Nigeria as he finances projects in Niger Republic (Opera News Aug. 2; 2022, Phonix News August 1; 2022; BBC July 25; 2022, Punch Aug.3; 2022). To the government the militias are unknown gunmen; but through investigative Journalism their identity has been unraveled.

What is Investigative Journalism?

Several scholars have attempted a definition and description of investigative journalism. Most of them agree that it is a style of journalism that goes beyond the usual coverage of incidences, press conferences and press statements; rather, it seeks to unearth the hidden information of vices, malpractice, corruption and misdemeanor that may injure society.

Investigative journalism could be defined as an original, proactive process that digs deeply into an issue or topic of



public interest (Horrie, 2008). It is an act of producing new information or putting known information together to produce new insights. Spark, (1999) sees investigative journalism as strategic way of revealing secrets or uncovering issues surrounded by silence. It looks beyond individuals at fault to the systems and processes that allow abuses to happen and how such could be corrected in societies. It bears witness and investigating ideas as well as facts and events and at the same time providing gradation context and explaining not only what, but why the event happened. Investigative journalism is not always about bad news, and not necessarily requiring undercover techniques – though it often is, and sometimes does.

Horrie (2008, p.114) sees investigative journalism as a generic form of journalism in which the journalists or newspaper initiates the story, based on a suspicion of wrong-doing, rather than simply reporting in a more passive and disinterested way the routine news of the day, or unscheduled disasters and accidents. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007, p.153) opine that investigative reporting involves not simply casting light on a subject but also usually making a more prosecutorial case that something is wrong. And that investigation could result in official public investigations about the subject or activity exposed in a way that may also produce “the first rough draft of legislation” that eventually outlaws certain forms of wrongdoing such as corruption, killing, robbing and others.

Classical examples of investigative journalism that resulted in official public investigations include the Washington Post’s Watergate scandal investigation that forced the resignation of US President Richard Nixon in 1974. This reporting was only possible through the protection of a source whose identity was kept secret for 30 years (McFadyen 2008, p.140).

Recent examples of investigative journalism that resulted in official public investigations and prosecution in Nigeria include the case of Salisu Buhari who was sacked from

National House of Representative for certificate forging by claiming to be a graduate of Toronto University in Canada (Nwanbueze, 2005 p.165). Other cases of certificate forging by some notable politicians in Nigeria are still very fresh in our memory.

Common wrongs investigated by journalists include; “sex, corruption and personal scandals financial wrong doing, political corruption, (and) enrichment in public office” (Coronel, 2010, p.112). In some cases, investigative journalists “start or re-ignite debate on provoke political action over some issues officially concealed” (Horrie, 2008, p.114). Coronel argues that investigative journalists need to look beyond individuals:

The best investigative work exposes not just individuals, but also systemic failures. Investigative reports show how individual wrongs are part of a larger pattern of negligence or abuse and the systems that make these possible. They examine what went wrong and show who suffered from the mistakes. They probe not just what is criminal or illegal, but also what may be legal and overboard but nonetheless harmful (Coronel, 2010, p.113).

Original investigative reporting involves tactics similar to the ones used by the police. It uncovers information not yet gathered by others in order to inform the public of events or circumstances that might affect their lives. Interpretative (investigative) reporting develops as the result of careful thought and analysis of an idea as well as dogged pursuit of facts to bring together information in a new, more complete context that provides deeper public understanding. Reporting on investigations develops from the discovery or leak of information from an official investigation already underway or in preparation (Kovach and Rosenstiel, 2007, p.146-7).

Because of its nature of “comforting the afflicted and afflicting the comfortable” (Spark, 1999, p.6) observes that investigative journalism often place news workers in conflict with the powerful elites, the rich and the corrupt who seek to conceal information. Scholars who have



written on ethics of journalism such as Sanders (2010), de Burgh (2008), Kieran (2000) and Frost (2011) agree that in some situations where the flow of information is suppressed by the powerful elites, journalists are left with no option but to engage in questionable tactics—hide identity, deceit, invade privacy of individuals and even buy information from whistle-blowers so as to expose wrongdoing against the society.

Alao & Alao, (2017) opine that investigative journalism never provides an instant story. It goes through recognised stages of planning and reporting, and has to work to accepted standards of accuracy and evidence. Investigative stories have to be based on the work of the journalist and (where resources permit) his or her team. Although an investigative story can start with a tip, simply reporting the tip, or publishing the secret document that is anonymously sent to you is not investigative journalism. In fact, doing such a thing may be both lazy and careless. It carries huge risks, since you have not investigated the identity, motives of your source or the authenticity of the evidence. You may end up defaming someone, printing lies or being framed up by somebody's agents. Instead, you must develop hypotheses about what the tip means and plan additional research, decide on the relevant questions, and go out to ask them. You must see evidence, and hear and analyse answers for yourself, and go beyond simply verifying the tip.

The Required Qualities of Investigative Reporter.

The following qualities were outline by Horrie, (2008); Spark,(1999) and Alao & Alao, (2017).

1. Passion

Most investigative journalism is a passion-driven, time and energy-consuming venture that will get your editor impatient and powerful people annoyed with you. If you like a stable income with regular promotions; if your deepest wish is a management position with matching salary and if you enjoy being invited to dinners and parties

given by VIPs in your country or community, then investigative journalism is probably not for you. But if you enjoy challenges, have a passion for truth and justice, and want to serve your readership or audience with stories that matter, no matter how much time and energy it costs you – and even if some powerful people will end up becoming unfriendly to you – then, by all means, go for it.

2. Curiosity

The skill and the art of asking questions is where investigative journalism starts. The questions can be about events in the news, or about things you see or hear about in your day-to-day life.

3. Initiative

As we've noted, many newsrooms operate on limited resources and all run on tight deadlines. So an investigative idea you mention at a news conference won't always be instantly adopted, particularly if it is un-formed and vague. You need to take the initiative, do your own preliminary checking and shape the idea into a solid story plan. If your newsroom still isn't interested, you may need to take further initiative in identifying support (such as an investigative grant) for the work needed.

Logical thinking, organisation and self-discipline

Investigative reporting takes time and, because of the legal risks it often carries, must be verified down to the smallest detail. So you need to become a careful planner to make the best use of your time, and obsessive about checking and re-checking everything you discover, and making sure your story fits together.

4. Flexibility

An investigation can take unexpected turns. Sometimes the question you began by asking turns out to be a dead-end, or opens the door on another, far more interesting but less obvious question. You need to be prepared to rethink and redesign your research when this happens, and not stay wedded to your first ideas.

5. Team work and communication skill



So good contacts and networking form part of your teamwork. And you'll need to be a good enough communicator to ensure that the team understands the purpose of the story and the standards (accuracy, honesty, confidentiality) expected of everybody on it.

6. Well-developed reporting skills

This doesn't mean you have to have a degree in journalism. But you need enough of either training or experience, or both, to know how to identify sources, plan story research, conduct good interviews (and sense when an answer doesn't ring true), and write accurately and informatively. You also need to know when you are out of your depth, and have the humility to ask for advice or help. If you are relatively inexperienced, good team working (again) will help you to tap into the skills of others when this happens. Sometimes, people who don't have a reporting background do have these skills. Researchers and community workers have often also been trained to interview and identify and sift facts, although they may need the help of newsroom workers to package a story attractively and accessibly for readers, listeners or viewers.

7. Broad general knowledge and good research skills

Understanding the context of your investigation can help you avoid dead ends and spot relevant facts and questions. But if your investigation takes you into an unfamiliar area, you must be able to familiarise yourself with at least the background, conventions, terminology, role-players and issues of that area quickly. The ability to have a searching, informative conversation with an expert, use computer search engines, or locate and skim-read useful books are all vital here. Above all, you must read everything, whenever you have the time. You never know when a bit of background will prove useful for your work.

8. Determination and patience

Investigative reporting will bring you up against all kinds of obstacles, from sources who disappear and records that don't exist, to editors who want to kill the story because it

is taking too long or costing too much. Only your own motivation and determination will keep the story going until it is published.

9. Fairness and strong ethics

Investigative stories may put the security, jobs or even lives of sources at risk. They also risk putting their subjects at similar risk if reckless accusations are made. So an investigative reporter needs to have a strong, explicitly thought out set of personal ethics, to ensure that sources and subjects are treated respectfully and as far as possible protected from harm. In addition, newsrooms that support investigative stories need to be guided by ethical codes and have a process in place for discussing and resolving ethical dilemmas. Sometimes public trust is your best protection, and you may lose this if you behave unethically.

11. Discretion

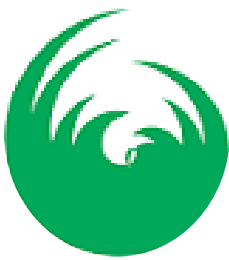
Gossips do not make good investigative reporters. As we've seen, loose talk can put the investigation and lives at risk. But in addition, it can provoke commercial rivals who will then scoop your story, or alert interviewees before you get a chance to talk to them. In a whole range of ways, talking too much can sabotage the story.

12. Citizenship

Investigative journalists are often attacked as 'unpatriotic', but they are not. It is believed that what they investigate and discover is driven by concern for the public interest and what will make societies better. Zambia-based journalist Edem Djokotoe warns: "You might have the best research and writing skills in the world, but if you aren't driven by personal convictions to contribute your skills to your society as a citizen, your story will lack purpose and heart." (ufuophu-Biri, 2006).

13. Courage

It isn't only subjects and sources that are at risk. Reporters may be threatened with legal action or violence, jailed, or even assassinated for their investigations. In the face of these risks, you may succumb to pressure and censor yourself. You need to believe in what you're doing, have



the courage to carry on, and if possible have personal and professional support structures (for example, family or partner, religious community, counsellor, legal advisor, supportive editor and team) in place in case times get tough.

Theoretical framework

This paper is anchored on three theories of mass communication – Technological determinism theory, Uses and gratification theory and Social responsibility theory of the press.

Technological Determinism theory

Technological determinism theory is defined as an approach that identifies technology, or technological advances, as the central cause of element in processes of social change (Croteau and Hoynes, 2001). Technological determinism is a reductionist theory that presumes that a society's technology drives the development of its social structure and cultural values. The term is believed to have been coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857–1929), an American sociologist. The most radical technological determinist in the United States in the twentieth century was most likely Clarence Ayres who was a follower of Thorstein Veblen and John Dewey. William Ogburn was also known for his radical technological determinism (Talabi, 2015).

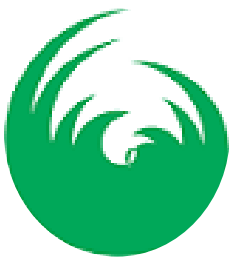
According to McQuail (2005), technological determinism theory lies on the following assumptions:

1. Communication technology is basic to societal change. It is the life blood of any society.
2. Technology drives change in all forms of media industries.
3. Each technology is tilted towards particular communication forms, contents and uses.
4. The sequence of invention and application of technology influence social change.
5. Communication revolutions engender social revolutions.
6. New media undermines old bases of power.

As a theory, technological determinism explains that when new systems of technology are developed; the culture or society is immediately changed to reflect the senses needed to use the new technology. It predicts that with every new technological equipment, members of the society change and adapt to that technology. They probably will dispose of older technological equipment and rush to get new ones. One of the first major elaborations of technological determinism according to Solo-Anaeto & Babafemi, (2015) came from the German philosopher and economist Karl Marx, whose theoretical framework was based upon the idea that changes in technology and productive technology are the primary influence on the organization of social relations, and that social relations and cultural practices ultimately revolve around the technological and economic base of a society. Marx's position has become embedded in contemporary society, where the idea that fast changing technologies alter human lives is all-pervasive. In the same vein the advent of internet cause major revolution in the way investigative journalists operate nowadays. It injects new blood into investigative journalism in terms of access to concealed information, the speed of networking with other investigative reporters in foreign countries and the accuracy of information one desires. One is forced to ask this question: Is internet about to take the job of investigative reporters?

Uses and Gratification Theory

The 'Uses & Gratifications' (U&G) theory focuses on factors influencing motives for use and outcomes for people's media-related behaviour (Newhagen & Rafaeli, 1996). This research tradition assumes that people's use of media is determined by the degree to which this use of media does indeed satisfy people's needs (Palmgreen, Wenner & Rosengren, 1985). This approach allows for investigation of motivational access and online skills, choice of applications and diversity, or lack of these among journalists. It can be assumed that journalists, just like any other user group, use media strategically, and therefore



will employ the Internet for different purposes. They will select Internet applications based on how well each option helps them to fulfill specific tasks or goals (Cho, Zuniga, Rojas & Shah, 2003). This implies that the degree of Internet use is related to benefits or 'professional gratifications' that journalists expect to find, or have experienced before. The Internet use by journalists depends on the perceived usefulness in their daily journalistic activities. When a new technology enters the daily routines of an organization and is used for the same purposes as older technologies, journalists will prefer the technology which better fits the particular needs of journalistic practice. Previous research (Garrison, 2000, 2003) demonstrated that the Internet as a 'new' technology is seen as a good alternative for the older technology because the characteristics of the former tend to better fit their basic needs in daily newsroom routines. Journalists view the value of the Internet mostly in terms of the speed with which a wider variety of information sources becomes available. Hermans, Vergeer and Pleijter (2009) show that in 2002, the perceived utility of the Internet is strongly associated with Internet use. Whenever practical advantages were attributed to the Internet (e.g., increased efficiency, easier disclosure, and verification of information), Internet use was higher. Looking at the Internet use of journalists in their occupational situation means that we will concentrate on the use within their work situation. Satisfaction of needs is defined within the news production process, and concentrates on the function as a tool for gathering information.

Social Responsibility theory

The main thrusts of the theory according to (Nwanwene, 2005; Anaeto, Onabajo & Osefiso 2008; Ojobor, 2002; McQuail, 1987) are: that the media should accept and fulfill certain obligation to the society. One of the obligations of the media is the watch dog role in society to check evil by publishing the truth. When the truth is hidden

the investigative reporter goes extra mile to dig out the truth in the interest of the public.

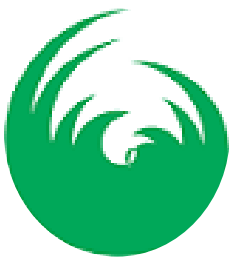
Another Principle of the theory is that through professional standard the media own the public the obligation of truth, accurate, objective and balance information. The focus of the theory as an anchor to this paper is that freedom of the press carries concomitant obligations and the press which enjoy such privileged position is obliged to be responsible to the society for certain essential functions such as waging war against corruption, exposing criminal activities through investigative reporting. It is the obligation of the press to unravel dubious and questionable activities of the unknown gun men to promote security and orderliness in Nigeria.

The justification of these theories in this paper is that the internet as a technology has come to stay to be used by investigative reporters to improve their investigative competency. And as a responsible fourth estate of the realm of governance to society the press should carry out their obligation of using the internet to advance the interest of the society in truth, accurate and balance reporting.

The Internet

The Internet is the global system of interconnected computer networks that use the Internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to link computer devices worldwide. It is a network of networks that consists of private, public, academic, business, and government networks of local to global scope, linked by a broad array of electronic, wireless, and optical networking technologies. The Internet carries a vast range of information resources and services, such as the inter-linked hypertext documents and applications of the World Wide Web (WWW), electronic mail, telephony, and file sharing (Nwabueze, 2005; Ufuophu-Biri, 2006).

Agba, (2001: p.55) sees the internet as the global network that links most the world computers. This linkage is only for those computers that are connected through telecommunication access providers. In the vein,



Nwanjinka, (2004: p.78) defines internet as computer networks that are attached to one another via telecom pathways that facilitate the exchange of information, data and files all over the world. While corroborating this position, Obadina, (2000: p.29) opines that the internet is a revolution which paves way for marginalized and economically underdeveloped nations with an opportunity to get into international playing field in order for them to have access to an array of information that can help modernize their lives and societies to enhance African civilization. Nwanwene, (2005) agrees with Marshall McLuhan that the internet has turn the world to a global village events in one location can be immediately observed on any part of the world. For instance, the marriage of Prince Harry was viewed worldwide through BBC cable network on the 19th May 2018. This was made possible because of the internet. Most traditional communications media, including telephony, radio, television, paper mail and newspapers are reshaped, redefined, or even enhanced by the internet, giving birth to new services such as email, internet telephony, internet television, online music, digital newspapers, and video streaming websites. Newspaper, book, and other print publishing are adapting to website technology, or are reshaped into blogging, web feeds and online news aggregators. The internet has enabled and accelerated new forms of personal interactions through instant messaging, Internet forums, and social networking. Online shopping has grown exponentially both for major retailers and small businesses and entrepreneurs, as it enables firms to extend their "brick and mortar" presence to serve a larger market or even sell goods and services entirely online. The internet has become accelerate engine for information sourcing and quick investigative tool in investigative Journalism today.

Uses of Internet for Investigative Journalism

The internet is one of the most powerful instruments in the media world in terms of unraveling conceal information. It is also a factor to reckon with in today global village

making all kinds of information readily available worldwide. It is the information highway which connects people, places, data, pictures and facts of various types in the global village. Journalists' job of sourcing for news information became easier with the advent of internet. Investigative journalists use the internet in the following ways:

Information Sourcing

The basic purpose of the internet is to furnish people around the universe the opportunity to have access to any kind of information any place any time. An investigative reporter could be working on security issue on particular person in Nigeria and at the same use the internet to source for more information on the same subject from any country in Europe, Asia or America. Is it a matter of getting into the website of the desired organization in that nation and get the details required (Ufuophu-Biri, 2011; Nwanbueze, 2005; Edefejirhaye, 2011).

Confirmation of Facts and Claims

Nwanbueze, (2005), identifies another important use of internet in investigative journalism as a tool for confirmation of facts and claims of individuals. For instance, the false claim of Salisu Buhari certificate from Toronto University, Canada was unraveled through investigative journalism. The investigative journalist contacted the school through the net and the criminal act was exposed. The cost of sending reporters to Canada was prudently saved by the media organization.

Making News Stories Factual and Richer.

Idowu & Oyinlola, (2011), in their compendium of various investigative reports, documented in their book “ TELL: Courage in Print” that they not only use face-to-face interview style but most cases resort to internet to boost the stories with facts and exhumed conceal matters. Some of such stories are: The Wages of sleaze, page 117; IBB's Regime as Fraud, page 243; Rascals in paradise, page 514; Squandering of mandate, page 537 and A Plethora of stolen mandates, page 580 just to mention but few.



Facilitates Research

Nwanbueze, (2005) sees the convergence of the print media as blessing which enhances and facilitates online media research and editing of news stories faster.

Networking Avenue for Local and foreign journalists

The internet has become a link between local and foreign journalists for exchange of information and data (Nwanbueze, 2005, EDAFEJIRHAYE, 2016; Idowu & Oyinlola, 2011). Foreign reporters could ask Nigerian reporters to investigate an issue and get back to them through the net and vice versa.

Internet Facilitates News Production

The ancient ways of writing and sending stories for publication have been revolutionized by the internet. The use of fax machine and telegram is outdated. News stories and pictures could be sent from the field using mobile tablet right from scene of events (McQuail, 2005; Ufuophu-Biri, 2006)

Live Coverage of Events

The internet is now a veritable instrument in the hand of investigative reporters for live coverage of interviews, video-conference and distance video phone-in programmes. The information gathered in these ways could enrich investigative publications (Baran & Davis, 2009).

Internet is a tool to fight corruption

Globalization and the financial system revolutionized by internet online money transaction made it easier for investigative reporters to use the net to uncover conceal monetary deals. Stolen public fund transfer to foreign countries could be accessed and promptly intercepted (Idowu & Ayinlola, 2011; Nwanbueze, 2005).

Internet as a Tool to Combat Insecurity

1. I-Phone Tracking: Leader of the Umbrella body of Yoruba Self-Determination Groups, Ilana Omo Oodua, Professor Banji Akintoye, recently unveiled a Mobile Application designed to track kidnapped anywhere in Yoruba Land. In a statement by his Communications

Manager, Mr. Maxwell Adeleye, the Mobile Application and Alert System, named PAJAWIRI is said to be able expose criminal elements wherever they are with their victims once the victims have the application installed in their phones either on or off line (Vanguard Dec. 27; 2021). For those who do not have smart phones (android, iOS or iPhone), there has been designed a hand-held alert device named AFINIHAN to work equally as effectively as the Pajawiri on the i-Phone. “AFINIHAN a tiny hand-held device that is able to perform wonders. This tiny device has been efficiently tested and will be available for purchase at affordable price.

2. Drones: Utilisation of drones in managing the spaces will go along way in fishing out the criminals.

3. Helicopters, Telescopic CCTV cameras and Military aircraft could be used to monitor the movement of the criminals.

4. Satellite System : This technology could be used to monitor the activities of the dissidents from the sky. This would be a proactive measure from the government in the manning the ungoverned spaces in Nigeria.

5. Telescopic camera that can see through bush and the forest. This hand-held equipment has the capability to see through the bush over three kilometers. With this the hideout of the unknown gunmen will be unraveled.

3.4 Is internet taking over the duties of investigative journalists?

With the above uses of internet in investigative journalism can we say that the internet is taking over the job of typical investigative journalist? The answer is no. The internet is even enhancing the job of the reporters, although there are some advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages and disadvantages of internet in investigative journalism

Alao & Alao, (2017:p. 32-34) highlight the following advantages and disadvantages of internet in online/investigative journalism.

Advantages of internet in investigative journalism.



1. Internet promotes fast access to information.
2. It prepares special platform for verification and compares of information received.
3. It gives room for investigative journalists to become more dynamic in their practice.
4. It enables reporters to communicate and disseminate information with ease.
5. It creates a platform for immediate feedback or quick response from audience.
6. It exposes journalists to international environment to quicken his understanding on events around the globe.
7. Internet promotes judicious use of fund in media organization. It helps to reduce the cost of transportation to move around to get and confirm information.
8. It creates open access for freedom of expression. This enables anonymous authors and publishers to hide their identities to publish in the net.

Disadvantages of internet in investigative journalism

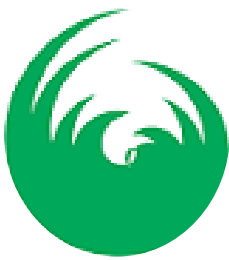
1. As a result of open access to information dissemination and reception, internet can abort meaningful investigation. A good example is the incident of Offa bank armed robbing in Kwara state, Nigeria. While the detective police are still carrying out their investigation various pictures took by individuals and CCTV camera started appearing in the internet and social media (footage video of robbing. www.pulse.ng. June 5; 2018).
2. There is hardly room for privacy as information travels several computers or server before getting to destination.
3. Internet service is working at the mercy of telecommunication providers. Users therefore; depend on the availability of network. In Nigeria where there is much fluctuation of network service access to information become difficult or delay.
4. Electricity supply in many countries like Nigeria could hamper operation of computer system visa-vis internet service. But there is hope in solar power.

5. The internet encourages cultural imperialism and westernization
6. It gives room for misconduct such as cyber crime, impersonation and financial fraud.
7. It opens the door to ritualists and occultic activities that easily initiate youth into blood money rituals in the name of “yahoo boys” (Premium Times, June12; 2018; The Punch Newspaper, June 12; 2018).
8. It eliminates the gate keeping function of the media which stands as a peculiar feature that guard against unprofessional activities.

Regardless of the above disadvantages of the internet, the net remained the best platform for investigative journalism.

Conclusion

It seems that the perceived benefits of practical improvements of the internet are cogent reasons for investigative journalists to continue to use the internet. This observation is in accordance with the assumptions formulated in the technological determinism, social responsibility and Uses & Gratification theories. Journalists use Internet applications more often when they think the tool fulfills their needs to do their job. In this paper this relation is exemplified in two ways: first, the expansion of new sources of information, and secondly, perceived improved efficiency. Furthermore, looking at journalistic values, such as credibility of internet sources and accuracy of journalism, in relation to the rise of journalists' use of internet applications, the observation indicate that journalists' competency in investigative journalism will be greatly improved upon. The conclusion is that a positive experience with the internet, improving daily news-gathering processes for fast-tracking new ideas, sources, and informants as well as perceived improved efficiency on unraveling concealed information, criminal hideout affect how journalists use those internet applications. Thus, the practical benefits are enough



reasons for journalists to adopt digital technologies in investigative journalism.

Recommendations

From the discussion above, the following recommendations are hereby proffered.

- i. The need for the Federal Government of Nigeria to develop a single holistic policy document addressing the issues of ungoverned spaces in line with the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- ii. The urgent need for the FGN to fund technologies in the security sector, which is to be used as a major means of manning ungoverned spaces in Nigeria
- iii. The need to train and retrain the media personnel in the armed forces on how best to use these technologies as well as interpret data gathered from them.
- iv. To establish a central data generating/storage centre for the military/paramilitary as regards ungoverned spaces and thereafter constitute a joint task force to act on the information gathered.
- v. The Nigeria President must have undivided loyalty to pursue the one Nigeria project by giving total support to the security of the Nigeria citizens.



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