

- 2141 - 5277

Journal of
COMMUNICATION
and
MEDIA RESEARCH

Vol. 3 No. 2
October 2011

**MEDIA ISSUES
IN PRINT
AND BROADCAST**

**JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA
RESEARCH**

ISSN 2141 - 5277

Vol. 3, No. 2

October 2011

VISION

To be a foremost, scholarly, indexed, peer-reviewed and most-read journal emanating from Nigeria, portraying knowledge, intellect and learning to all humankind irrespective of gender, affiliation and nationality.

MISSION

To portray the intellect, knowledge and potentials of Nigerians and Africans to the rest of the world; and also bring similar attributes of all humans all over the world to Nigeria and Africa; through every responsible media of communication; in a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship for the advancement of scholarship and development of the human race.

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ISSN 2141 - 5277

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ABOUT JCMR

The *Journal of Communication and Media Research* is a research-based and peer-reviewed journal published twice-yearly in the months of April and October by Delmas Communications Limited for the Department of Mass Communication, Delta State University, Abraka. (The two issues are produced concurrently and released simultaneously, though independent of each other, in the month of October.) The journal is addressed to the Nigerian and international academic community and it accepts articles from all scholars, irrespective of country or institution of affiliation.

The focus of the *Journal of Communication and Media Research* is research, with a bias for 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.

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- Articles should not be longer than 8000 words – notes and references inclusive, and must have an **abstract** of not more than 200 words and **five key words**.
- The title and author's biographical details (name, university/department, address, position/title, telephone, e-mail) should be identified on the title page only. It is mandatory to supply telephone and email addresses.
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- Referencing should follow the APA style and all references should be listed, in strict alphabetical order, at the end of the article.
- Papers must be rich in references and literature citations. However, except in rare circumstances, references and literature citations should not be above 10 years. In any case, citations below the year 2000 will not be accepted.

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- Papers are to be submitted at our website <http://www.jcmrdelta.com> or by e-mail to deltajournal@yahoo.com (as a Word document attachment using Microsoft Office Word).
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- Author(s) shall be responsible for securing any copyright waivers and permissions as may be needed to allow (re)publication of material in the article (text, illustrations, etc) that is the intellectual property of third parties.

JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH

ISSN 2141 - 5277

Volume 3 No. 2

October 2011

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Influence of Newspaper Ownership Identity on Readership among Residents of Ibadan, Nigeria

MUYIWA POPOOLA*

Abstract

This research was devoted to studying the Influence of Newspaper Ownership Identity on Readership in Nigeria. The apparently untested hypothesis that ignited this research was that people read newspapers because of geographical origins of newspaper proprietors. Testing the hypothesis, survey research method was used to ascertain readership of three national dailies by residents of Ibadan, the capital city of Oyo State Nigeria, who hail from the ethnic areas of the owners of the selected newspapers. The newspapers selected for the study were the *Nigerian Tribune*, *Daily Trust* and *Daily Sun*. The sample size for the study was 240 respondents and the questionnaire was used as the major data collection instrument. Consequently, the study revealed that that a high percentage of the respondents read newspapers everyday. However, contrary to mere speculations, it was gathered from the research that many of the respondents were aware of the ownership identity of the newspapers they read, but in spite of this, the ownership identity of the newspapers they read was not a determining factor as far as their choice of newspaper is concerned. The research shows that the ownership identities of newspapers have little or no effect on newspaper readership. The research also reveals that majority of the respondents read their choice of newspapers because of their availability and reach within their location.

Key Words: Newspaper, Ownership, Readership, Identity.

Background

The "media" is a very wide term, and it is used to refer to a medium or vehicle by which information or messages are passed from the sender to the receiver. Daramola (2003:95) cites Rockeach and Littlejohn (1992:341) as stating that "the media are organizations that distribute cultural products or messages that affect and reflect the culture of the society." Apparently, it is through the media that information is gathered about happenings and occurrences in people's immediate environment and the world at large. The media seem everywhere; the media can provide information about almost everything we want to know about. perhaps this is why Croteau and Hoynes (2000:3) state that "the media surround us, our everyday lives are saturated by the radio, television, newspapers, books, the internet, recorded music, magazines and more." The media provide a wide range of information, made available to us through different media. In the world today, people are so familiar with the media and people gather information from the media subconsciously,

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in this light Croteau and Hoynes (2000:3) state that "our intimate familiarity with the media often allows us to take them for granted. They are like the air we breathe, ever present yet rarely considered." Many times we are unaware of using the media in our day to day lives; the media has become a part and parcel of our daily activities, we use the media constantly for different purposes. The media has two broad categories. Daramola (2003:95) states that "the media can be classified into the print and electronic media." He further states that the print media include newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, and comics, while the electronic media include the radio and television.

Many people may find it difficult to appreciate the activities of the media, their importance as well as their significance to the society. It might be good for such people to imagine what the world will be like without the media. There have been many arguments as to whether the impact of the media is a positive or negative one, and whether or not the media have replaced other important institutions in the society. On this basis Croteau and Hoynes (2000:5) state as follows:

Indeed some argue that the media have become the dominant social institution in contemporary society, supplementing the influence of older institutions such as educational systems and religion. However, one way to recognize the importance of the media in our lives is to imagine life without the media. Imagine that you wake up tomorrow in a kind of "twilight zone" parallel society where everything is the same except that the media don't exist... If the media were eliminated nothing else would be the same, our entertainment will be different, and we will not follow sport teams in newspapers...

Based on this, it becomes logical to feel that there are so many things that will be different in this world if the media do not exist. If there were no televisions, newspapers, magazines, radios among others, the world will appear as a totally different place. This is because most of the information gathered is usually from the media, and if this is so, the society will be difficult to operate if they do not exist. A newspaper is a print medium. The Encyclopaedia (1990:384) defines a newspaper as a publication devoted chiefly to presenting and commenting on the news. According to the dictionary, a newspaper is a set of large printed sheets of paper containing news, articles, advertisements etc, and published every day or every week. Bittner (1989:22) makes reference to an analytical description of the characteristics of a newspaper which consists of all the necessary and acceptable criteria for determining a true newspaper as proposed by a German scholar. He states as follows:

In 1928 a German scholar, Otto Groth, developed a set of fine standards that modern scholars generally hold as acceptable criteria for determining a true newspaper. Groth's first standard was that a newspaper must be published periodically at intervals not less than one week. Secondly, mechanical reproduction must be employed; thirdly, anyone who can pay the price of admission must have access to the publication. Fourthly, it must vary in content and include everything of public interest to everyone. Finally, publications must be timely with so continuity of organizations.

This analysis gives a comprehensive account of all that determines a true newspaper. A newspaper is not just any publication containing news or information, rather a publication that meets this prescribed standard. It is however important to note that newspapers do not exist in a vacuum, there are those in charge of their production, publication and circulation. In this light, newspaper ownership becomes a factor to reckon with.

Ownership in this context refers to the fact of owning a newspaper. A newspaper may be owned by a single person or a group of people, depending on the ownership structure. There are quite a number of newspapers in Nigeria today, and they are owned by different people or different entities. Based on Daramola's (2003:140) submission, there can be government ownership, individual (private) ownership, joint venture, religious ownership and association ownership. The type of ownership of any newspaper will determine to a very large extent how that newspaper will operate. In the light of this, Croteau and Hoynes (2000:49) state that "owners of media companies have direct control over media products and thus are able to exert political influence by promoting ideas that enhance their interest." This shows that the owners of any newspaper determine what is published in that newspaper and what is not published there. The news usually published is of the owners' interest and propagates and promotes their image and activities. However it is important to note that the relationship that exists between the government and the media is very crucial, as this relationship determines how truly contributory to development the media will be. In respect of this, Okoye (2003:3) agrees that, "the relationship between the government and the media in any given society is of utmost importance". There are many newspapers in Nigeria today, amongst the numerous Nigerian newspapers today; we have the Nigerian Tribune, New Nigeria, and Daily Trust newspapers. These three newspapers are those that will be considered for the purpose of this study.

Profile of the Selected Newspapers

As gathered from the website of The *Nigerian Tribune*, the newspaper appears as the oldest surviving private newspaper in Nigeria. The newspaper was established in November, 1949 by one of Africa's foremost nationalists, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who hailed from Ogun State, in the SouthWest geo political zone of Nigeria. *Nigerian Tribune* was structured, since inception, to cater for the interest of the common people. From the onslaught of colonialism and through a turbulent experience, arising from the three-year Nigerian Civil War to a long period of political dislocation within the Nigerian nation resulting from a long period of military interregnum, *Nigerian Tribune* has emerged as one of the most credible mouth-piece of the teeming Nigerian masses. The newspaper is a daily publication and it is sold for ₦150 per copy.

As gathered from the website of *Daily Sun* Newspaper, the proprietor of the newspaper is a former governor of Abia State, Nigeria, Orji Uzor Kalu. Abia State is domiciled in the SouthEast geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The newspaper was an offshoot of The Sun Publishing Limited which was incorporated on March 29, 2001 to undertake the business of printing and publishing. As claimed by the management of the newspaper, The Sun Publishing Limited puts in place, a cutting-edge distribution strategy- to cover the nation's large landmass of 923,700 square kilometers. It creates eight zones – Abuja, Kano, Jos, Enugu, Ibadan, Benin, Aba and Lagos to meet distribution and marketing objectives. Within these zones, a number of towns have been designated as distribution hubs. From the Lagos base, *The Sun* is presently distributed in 260 towns including the 36 state capitals. These distribution points are reached by air and by the use of distribution vans.

As gathered from the web site of *Daily Trust* Newspaper, the proprietor of the newspaper is Mallam Kabir Yusuf who hails from Katsina State, Nigeria. Katsina State is located in the Northwest geo-political zone of Nigeria. The head office of the newspaper is in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. The newspaper is being published daily and it has a national spread.

Statement of Problem

Newspapers are of great importance to the society. Concurring to this statement, Baker (1973:10) notes that "in a democratic society, the newspapers are regarded by many as essential if democracy is to prosper. Every citizen must have a full account of events made available to him if he or she is to be informed and be a responsible voter". Newspapers are very essential to enable people make crucial and very important decisions. In a democratic society, people need to have detailed information to know how to place their votes. Democratic societies need a clear and truthful account of events, their background and their causes, a forum for discussion and informed criticism and a means whereby individuals and groups can express a point of view or advocate a course. According to Baker (1973:10) "the responsibility for fulfilling this needs rest in large measures upon the press" that is the newspapers and the periodicals, which are the main sources from which information, discussion and advocacy reach the public. Newspapers also play educational roles. They help to educate the people on issues going on around the world. A major instrument for this is the editorial in the newspaper. People get educated by reading newspapers which provide great amount of educative information to members of the society. Newspapers help in playing these roles effectively. They make positive impacts on the society and its development.

Sharma (2004: 35) also notes that "the best way to appreciate the role that newspapers play in our society would be to imagine what it would be like if, all of a sudden, newspaper never existed". He asks the following rhetorical questions:

How would we know the investigative and interpretative stories behind certain events? How would scandals in politics and government be effectively tackled and exposed? Who would be the voice of the voiceless and the spokes person for the people? How will the surveillances functions as well as the watchdog functions be performed effectively? Newspapers perform all these functions more appropriately and effectively than other news media by keeping us knowledgeable about the latest news in our own regions and around the world.

Thus, it is logical to posit that the newspaper is significant in every social-political system. It is also sacrosanct from the above discussion that any meaningful impact of the newspaper on the society is determined by readership of newspaper among other factors and variables.

Consequently, the problem of this research was rooted in the assumption that the ownership identity of a newspaper has an influence on the readership of that newspaper. Since the ownership identity of newspapers differ one from another, and some people prefer one newspaper to the other, the question therefore is, is the ownership identity of a newspaper a determinant factor of the readership of certain newspapers over others? Does the ownership identity of a newspaper determine how the newspaper is circulated and where it is made available for readership? Consequently, the problem of this study bothered on how to ascertain the relationship between the ownership identity of a newspaper and the readership of that newspaper, and also to determine the magnitude of such an influence on readership.

Research Questions

Based on the articulation of the research problem, this study shall seek answers to the following research questions:

1. Do people read newspapers?
2. To what extent do people read newspapers?

3. Does the ownership identity of a newspaper determine the readership of newspaper that people read?
4. To what extent does readership of newspapers owing to ownership identity affect readership?
5. Does any relationship that can be established between ownership identity and readership have any implications for circulation?

Significance of the Study

This research was significant to the discovery of whether the ownership identity of a newspaper has an impact on the readership of that newspaper. It would help to know whether the impact it may have is a positive or negative one. In either case, this research would help to portray the implications of the positive or negative impact that the ownership identity of a newspaper may have on the readership and circulation of that newspaper. The research was conducted to help in knowing whether the ownership identity of a newspaper is a determinant of newspapers people read, or if it does not determine it at all. It will help discover other factors that determine newspapers people read, as well as those factors that affect the readership and circulation of newspapers.

Scope of Study

Knowing that in carrying out the research, it was too wide to cover the entire nation. It was also extremely tasking and very time consuming to be able to carry out an accurate research on the entire nation due to limitations posed by time, money and other factors. Therefore, the research was limited to Ibadan, the capital city of Oyo state, and the second largest city in sub-Sahara Africa. The study covered only people that are resident in Ibadan. Only three of the numerous newspapers in Nigeria were selected for the research and these included the *Nigerian Tribune*, *The Sun* and *Daily Trust*. The reason for choosing these three out of the numerous newspapers that are being published in Nigeria is because of the ownership identity of these three newspapers which reflect the three most important ethnic and geographical bases in Nigeria, namely the Yorubas, Igbos and Hausas. The *Nigeria Tribune* represents the Yoruba Newspaper ownership; the *Daily Sun* newspaper represents the Igbo Newspaper ownership while the *Daily Trust* newspaper represents the Hausa Newspaper ownership.

Theoretical Frame Work

Uses and Gratifications Theory:

According to Baran (1995:224), "The Uses and Gratifications theory has its origin in the early audience studies of radio series in the 1920's. It however actually became empirical in 1940's when Lazarsfeld, Starton and Berelson commenced empirical investigation into theory". The uses and gratifications theory is an effect theory that strives to examine and evaluate the effect of the media on the audiences. The theory is anchored on the use of mass media messages from the receivers' point of view. Its emphasis is on what people do with the media rather than what the media do to their audiences. In the quest to find out what peoples use the media to do rather than then the effect that the media have on their audiences, Baran (1995:224) quotes Palmgreen, Wenner and Rosengren who submit that "studies have shown that a variety of audience gratification and effect approach are related to a wide spectrum of media effects including knowledge, dependency, attitudes, perceptions of social reality, agenda setting, discussions and various political effects" this may imply that the media, rather than having a direct impact on the audience members, audience members select the media they use depending on the effect they want such media to have on them. The effect that the media have on their audiences reflects in the different kind of things people do, they use the media in different way and it affect their attitudes and perceptions about life in one way or the other. It may

be quite notable that what some media help certain people to achieve determines the particular media they patronize. Supporting this fact Blumler (1979:18) states that "many scholars have investigated the subject and are of the view that an active audience uses mass media messages to achieve specific goals and that this desire to obtain specific benefits from the mass media influences peoples choices of which media organ to patronize in the quest to gratify certain needs" looking at the print media in Nigeria, there are quite a number of newspapers. It will be logical to state that it is impossible for a single person to patronize every single newspaper on a daily basis; however, because of this impossibility to patronize all newspapers produced at the same time, people may have to make a choice as to which newspaper to buy. The question therefore is, what is the factor that affects the procurement of a particular newspaper at the expense of the other? Does the kind of messages that people acquire from certain newspapers encourage them to buy it regularly? Do some newspapers present views that are distasteful to some audience members thereby making them not to patronize them? Do people buy newspapers based on how much knowledge of what they will read will affect their lives, views perceptions and opinions? Could the ownership identity of a newspaper be a likely factor that determines the newspapers that some people buy? Based on the Concepts Assumptions and Propositions of the Uses and Gratifications Theory, it may be logical to say that different individuals will make any of the choice that have been stated above based on the benefits that they are likely to get from whatever choice they make.

Methodology

The survey research method was used for the research. The method was adopted as appropriate because it provides the researcher with opportunity to ask direct and specified questions that are pertinent to the study that is being carried out. According to Gbolagunte and Popoola (2003:26), the survey technique is the most commonly used among behavioral scientists. Based on this, looking at the nature of this research, it focuses on measuring the behavior of various individuals as far as ownership identity and newspaper readership and circulation is concerned, consequently, the survey research method was adjudged the most suitable research method for the study.

Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all Ibadan residents who are literate enough to read newspapers meaningfully. These people who are inhabitants of Ibadan hailed from numerous ethnic groups in Nigeria, especially from the geographical bases of the owners of the three newspapers selected for this study. This was because the research sought to discover whether various individuals read their choice of newspapers because they identify with the ownership of that newspaper or not.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Since the research was limited to Ibadan residents in Oyo State alone, simply because covering a larger range was extremely tasking and very time consuming as well as financially demanding, the probability sampling method and the non-probability sampling methods were used. The probability sampling method used was the cluster sampling method. According to Gbolagunte and Popoola (2003:44) the cluster sampling method helps to cluster and stratify ones population into known attributes before one begins to sample in the manner of any other chosen sampling method. For this reason therefore, the cluster sampling method was used to determine where those individuals that made up the population of the study could be found. It is however noticeable that in the city of Ibadan, the three major ethnic groups that form the population of the research cluster in different parts of the city. The Yorubas cluster in the Oyo State Secretariat, the Igbos cluster in areas like Aleshinloye and Dugbe markets while the Hausas are easily

located in the Sabo area. For that purpose therefore, these highlighted areas were selected and questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in these places. In order to select the target respondents from these different locations, purposive sampling method was used to select eight (8) out of twenty-one (21) ministries in the Oyo State Secretariat. The purposive sampling method enables the researcher to purposefully include some categories of people in his research and exclude others. Consequently, these ministries were chosen purposely with the aim of seeking after only Yoruba people who are literate enough to read newspapers meaningfully. The eight ministries that were selected included the following; Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Planning Commission, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Environment and Housing. Out of these eight (8) ministries, the purposive sampling method was also used to select ten (10) Yoruba people who are literate enough to read newspapers meaningfully, from each of the ministries. A total number of eighty (80) Yoruba people were selected. The purposive sampling method was also used to select eighty (80) Igbos, forty (40) were selected from Aleshinloye market, while the other forty (40) from Dugbe market. The purposive sampling method was also used to select eighty (80) Hausa's who are literate enough to read newspapers meaningfully, from Sabo. The numbers of questionnaires administered include a total number of two-hundred and forty (240). However, only two-hundred (200) were properly filled and collected.

Presentation and Analyses of Research Findings

As earlier stated, the sample size for the study was 240. However, 200 copies of the questionnaire were appropriately filled and returned. Five basic research questions (as previously stated) were answered using data gathered through the utilized data collection instrument- questionnaire.

Research Question 1

Do People Read Newspapers?

Item 7: Do you read Newspapers?

Table 1: No of Respondents who read newspapers?

Variables	No Of Respondents	Percentage%
Yes	186	93%
No	14	7%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that one-hundred and eighty-six (186), 93% of the respondents read newspapers and fourteen (14), 7% do not read newspapers. This is an interesting discovery. It shows that the newspaper as a medium of mass communication is popular and prevalent among the residents of Ibadan. Also, it is evident that newspapers are being circulated in Ibadan, the Capital city of Oyo State.

Research Question 2**To What Extent Do People Read Newspapers?****Item 8: How often do you read newspapers?****Table 2: Frequency of Newspaper Readership among Respondents**

Variables	No Of Respondents	Percentage %
Daily	103	51.5%
Two/Three Times Aweek	64	32%
Weekly	17	8.5%
Monthly	16	8%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that one-hundred and three (103), 51.5% of the respondents read newspapers daily, sixty-four (64), 32% read newspapers two/three times a week, seventeen (17), 8.5% read newspapers weekly and sixteen (16), 8% read newspapers monthly.

Item 3: Which of these newspapers do you like to read?**Table 3: Type of Newspapers Respondents like to read?**

Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Nigerian Tribune	61	30.5%
Daily Trust	25	12.5%
Others	58	29%
Daily Sun	34	17%
None Of The Above	22	11%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that sixty-one (61), 30.5% of the respondents like to read Nigerian Tribune twenty-five (25), 12.5 % like to read Daily Trust, fifty-eight (58), 29% like to read other newspapers, thirty-four (34), 17% like to read Daily Sun while twenty-two (22), 11% read none of the newspapers. This discovery buttresses the Concepts, Assumptions and Propositions of the selective exposure theory of mass communication.

Item 10: Are you aware of the Ownership of the Newspaper that you read?**Table 4: Respondents Awareness of the Ownership of the Newspapers they read**

Variables	No Of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	98	49
No	102	51
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that ninety-eight (98), 49% of the respondents were aware of the ownership of the newspapers they read and one-hundred and two (102), 51% were not aware.

Item 11: Who owns your choice of newspaper?

Table 5: Owners of the Choice of Newspapers of Respondents

Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage%
The Government	20	10%
A Private Individual	62	31%
A Group of Individuals	16	8%
I Don't Know	102	51%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that twenty (20), 10% of the respondents were of the opinion that the government own their choice of newspaper, sixty-two (62), 31% opined that a private individual owns their choice of newspaper, sixteen (16), 8% opined that a group of individuals own their choice of newspaper while one-hundred and two (102), 51% stated that they do not know who owns their choice of newspaper.

Research Question 3

Does the ownership identity of a newspaper determine the readership of newspapers that people read?

Item 12: Do you read your choice of newspaper because of its ownership?

Table 6: Readership of Respondents based on Ownership

Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage%
Yes	41	20.5%
No	159	79.5%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that forty-one (41), 20.5% read their choice of newspaper because of ownership identity, while one-hundred and fifty-nine (159), 79.5% do not read their choice of newspapers because of any ownership identity. This discovery is very crucial to the problem of this study. Obviously, newspaper ownership identity is not a sufficient factor of newspaper readership.

Research Question 5

Does any relationship that can be established between ownership identity and readership have any implications for circulation?

Item 15: Do you read newspapers because of its availability and reach within your location?

Table 7: Newspaper Readership of the Respondents based on its availability and reach within their location?

Variables	No of Respondents	Percentage%
Yes	105	52.5%
No	95	47.5%
Total	200	100%

The table above shows that one-hundred and five (105), 52.5% of the respondents read newspapers because of its availability and reach within their location while ninety-five (95), 47.5% do not read newspapers because of its availability and reach within their location.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question One

Do People Read Newspapers?

From the data that were gathered as expressed in table 7 and 9 93% of the respondents claim to read newspapers 30.5% Of the respondents claim to read the Nigerian Tribune, 12.5% claim to read Daily Trust, and 29% claim to read the Daily Sun while 17% of the respondents claim to read other newspapers. This simply shows that a high percentage of individuals read newspapers. The table shows that the number of those that prefer to read the Nigerian tribune among other newspapers is relatively high. It also shows that the readership of the daily trust newspapers among Ibadan residents is quite low compared to the readership of other newspapers. The table also shows that besides the Nigerian Tribune, Daily Trust and Daily Sun newspapers, more than a quarter of the respondent read other newspapers. This helps to show that people still read newspapers and also helps in buttressing Baran's (2007:81) statement when he wrote that "newspapers were at the centre of the nations drive for independence, and have a long history as the people's medium".

Research Question Two

To What Extent Do People Read Newspapers?

From the data that were gathered as expressed in table 8 51.5% of the respondents claim to read newspapers every day, and 32% claim to read newspapers twice or three times a week. 8.5% claim to read newspapers weekly and 8% claim to read newspapers on monthly bases. This simply shows that over half of the respondents read newspapers every day while the number of those who read newspapers weekly or monthly put together is relatively low compared to the number of those that read newspapers either daily or twice or three times a week. This shows that people read newspapers to a large extent. However in spite of Ngwoke's (2007:12) submission that ".... Reading is one area that is particularly problematic..." this research proves that the reading level of Nigerians seems to be improving.

Research Question Three

Does The Ownership Identity of a Newspaper Determine the Readership of Newspapers that People Read?

Based on the data presented in tables 10 and 12, 49% of the respondents are aware of the ownership of the newspapers that they read while the remaining 51% are unaware of the ownership of the newspapers that they read. The table also shows that 79.5% of the respondents do not read newspapers because of the ownership while only 20.5% of read newspapers because of the ownership of the newspapers. From this information it can be deduced that quite a large number of people are aware of the ownership of the newspapers that they read and a slightly larger number are unaware but only a very few of these people read the newspapers they read because of the ownership identity of that newspaper. This shows that the readership of a newspaper is not determined by its ownership identity. In spite of the statement made by Croteau and Hoynes (2000:77) that "the government in all nations serve as an organizing structure that can to varying degrees constrain or promote the free activities of the media". This research shows that people still do not consider the ownership identity of the newspaper they read as a necessary factor that determines the newspapers they buy.

Research Question Four

To What Extent Does Readership Of Newspapers Owing To Ownership Identity Affect Readership?

From the data present in tables 10 and 12, 49% of the respondents are aware of the ownership of the newspapers that they read while the remaining 51% are unaware of the ownership of the newspapers that they read. The table also shows that 79.5% of the respondents do not read newspapers because of the ownership while only 20.5% of read newspapers because of the ownership of the newspapers. From this information it can be deduced that ownership identities of newspapers have little or no effect on newspaper readership, considering the fact that more than half of the respondents are not even aware of the ownership of the newspaper that they read let alone use it as a determinant factor in determining which newspaper to read or not.

Research Question Five

Does Any Relationship That Can Be Established Between Ownership Identity And Readership Have Any Implications For Circulation?

From the data present in table 15, 52.5% of the respondents read newspapers because of its availability and reach within their location while the remaining 47.5% do not read newspapers because of its availability and reach within their location. Initially, it has been noted that the relationship that exist between newspaper readership and ownership identity is almost neutral and not really implicative. Based on this submission, the relationship that exist between ownership identity and newspaper readership does not have any implications for circulation.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Based on the outcome of this research, it is hereby recommended that:

1. Further research in the area of newspaper readership and circulation should be carried out so as to discover other factors that are affecting newspaper readership and circulation and also to proffer solutions to the problems affecting newspapers and bring an abrupt end to the issues of decline in newspaper readership.
2. Since ownership identity appears not to be a factor affecting newspaper readership and circulation, it is important to keep it that way. The reason for this is that tribalism on its own appears to be a major problem that affects Nigerians, and the newspaper industry can be considered lucky that this presumed factor that causes discrimination has not been found as a factor that affects the choice of newspapers that people read.

This study of the impact of media ownership identity on newspaper readership and circulation has made it possible to ascertain the relationship between ownership identity and newspaper readership. The study brings about the scholarly position that the ownership identity of any newspaper is not a strong and sufficient factor that determines newspaper readership.

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