

## EFFECTS OF ICT ON NIGERIAN FILM AND BROADCAST MEDIA

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### Abstract

*The importance of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the contemporary world cannot be over-looked. It is presently influencing every aspect of our lives particularly in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It plays vital roles in education, business, religious and more importantly, entertainment sector. This paper focuses on how ICT has advanced the film and the broadcasting industry using Nigeria as a case study and it also looked into the evolution of newspaper, radio, television and internet broadcast (Whatsapp, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, Spotify etc) thereby pointing out how Information and Communication Technology has improved broadcasting and film production in Nigeria. Quantitative method of research was adopted and interviews were conducted in the course of this research. Additional data were collected from journals, articles and internet resources in order to arrive at an appropriate conclusion. Media Evolution theory, a concept of evolution that creates a theoretical framework for studying the history of media and suggesting new concepts and questions about media extinction, survival, and co-evolution was adopted as the theoretical guide for this research work. The research concludes by recommending that all broadcasting and film houses should be abreast of the development in ICT on daily basis and strive to know how it can enhance their duties by making their jobs accessible to the world.*

**Keywords:** *ICT, media, broadcast, digital, terrestrial.*

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### Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has revolutionized the media industry. It has radically transformed information gathering and dissemination in film industry, radio and television broadcasting. ICT is a form of technology that is used to transmit, store, create, share or exchange information. This includes technologies like radio, television, video, DVD, telephone (both fixed line and mobile phones), satellite systems, computer and network hardware and software. It also encompasses the equipment and service associated with these technologies, such as videoconferencing and electronic mail.

ICT is a force to be reckoned with in the 21<sup>st</sup> century because it has caused and continues to cause major changes in the way we live. The ICT has ignited and revolutionized the film and broadcast industry, most especially in immediacy and timeliness of news. With ICT, information spread infinitely becomes faster and cheaper and readily available.

Broadcasting is the act of sending out information through TV or radio stations to a huge audience. The concept of broadcasting primarily covers radio and TV channels but many observers have asserted that newspapers also serve as realistic platforms through which information can be transmitted to a larger audience of readers. Having this in mind, it is reasonable to highlight the origin of newspapers while tracing the evolution and history of broadcasting in Nigeria. While film production is the process by which series of still photographs projected in a rapid subsection onto screen by means of light is made, filmmaking involves a number of complex and discrete stages including an initial story, idea, or commission through screenwriting, casting, shooting, sound recording and pre-production as well as production and post-production.

For the purpose of this research, we shall investigate how the ICT has advanced the film and the broadcast industry in Nigeria.

### **Keywords Explained**

#### **ICT**

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is an augmentational term for Information Technology (IT) which stresses the role of unified communications and the integration of telecommunications and computers, as well as necessary enterprise software, middleware, storage and audiovisual, that enable users to access, store, transmit, understand and manipulate information. Yekini Nureni (11) posits that ICT can be seen as:

the application of computers and telecommunications equipment to store, retrieve, transmit and manipulate data, often in the context of a business or other enterprise. The term is commonly used as a synonym for computers and computer networks, but it also encompasses other information distribution technologies such as television and telephones. Several industries are associated with information technology, such as computer hardware, software, electronics, semiconductors, internet, telecom equipment, e-commerce and computer services.

ICT is also used to refer to the union of audiovisual and telephone networks with computer networks through a single cabling or link system. There are large economic incentives to merge the telephone network with the computer network system using a single unified system of cabling, signal distribution, and management. ICT is an umbrella term that includes any communication device, encompassing radio, television, cell phones, computer and network hardware, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and appliances with them such as video conferencing and distant learning. ICT also includes analog technology, such as paper communication, and any mode that transmits communication.

#### **Media**

Media can be seen as the various mediums through which Information, Communication, Technology are being passed across from one person(s) to another. There are different types of media such as print media, screen media, online media and many more. This is a tool or communication outlet used to store and deliver information or data. It can also be seen as the main means of mass communication through which broadcasting and publishing can be achieved either through print, screen or internet means.

Nity and Gaurav Singh (129) state that:

Media reflects our society, how it works and what it constitutes. With the advancement in technological area, our society has also observed the expansion in the thoughts and ideas of people. Every single invention starting from the printing press to the latest smartphones our society has accepted it. Earlier people used to communicate things with the help of sketch and print forms but as time passes the medium became more advanced.

Media reflects every society and day to day activities of human race. Media has developed through various advancement of technology starting from the analogue era to digital era, i.e. from writing (paper) to printing (digital). Media does not only serve as a medium of information as it also serves as a means of entertainment. It is also a means by which the voice of the society can be heard.

### **Broadcast**

Broadcast is the transmission of a television or radio program or a situation when something is made widely known to the public through a means called mass communication or media. Broadcasting, according to Mani Sakthvel, is an “electronically generated signals transmitted by wireless means and carrying a specifically assembled and scheduled program for the reception by general public” (24). Broadcasting can also be said to be the distribution of audio or video content to a dispersed audience via any electronic mass communications medium.

### **Digital Terrestrial Television**

Digital can be described as the system that generates and processes binary data. Computers are fundamentally digital machines because they process information that has been encoded as binary values either one that is positive (represented as 1) or one that is non-positive (represented as 0). These values, called bits, are combined to form bytes that serve as the foundation for all computer systems. Every computerized devices such as mobile phones, laptops, some television sets, decoders, calculators, etc. are digital devices. Digitalization is part of the main developments which technology has brought to the world. This present world is a digital world as almost every technology makes use of digitalization to operate such as media industry, entertainment industry and even sport industry, etc. Digitalization has, in many dimensions enhanced the development of broadcasting and film industry in Nigeria as will be explained further in this research.

Akujobi Ekeocha posits that “the deployment of Digital technology in broadcasting has transformed and revolutionized the traditional approach to broadcasting” (7). Terrestrial Digital Television is liable for the ongoing transition from analogue to digital technology. Digital terrestrial television broadcasting is a technique whose technology is based on the transmission of audiovisual media information by bit streams. Digital television is presently an integral part of the information superhighway developed to deliver large amounts of information at very low cost compared to analogue technology and can be fully integrated into completely digital transmission networks.

### **A Brief History of Broadcasting in Nigeria**

Nigeria’s history of broadcasting dates from the 18th century when “Iwe Iroyin fun Awon Egba ati Yoruba” was introduced in the former Southern Protectorate of the country. Basically, broadcasting is a formal means of sending out information to a massive audience and for this objective to be achieved, media platforms – such as newspapers, radio and TV stations –are always required. In discussing Nigeria’s history of broadcasting, it is important to distinguish between the origins of the three commonest broadcasting mediums which are the newspapers, TV and radio stations.

#### **i. The Evolution of Newspapers**

It is no longer news that newspapers emerged as the first formal medium of broadcasting in Nigeria. In 1859, “Iwe Iroyin fun Awon Egba ati Yoruba” translated in English as “A Newspaper for the Egbas and the Yorubas” became the foremost newspaper to be launched in Nigeria. Introduced by Christian Missionary, Reverend Henry Townsend, the newspaper was aimed at instituting a literacy scheme for the Egba and the Yoruba people. The earliest editions of the newspaper were predominantly read by Nigerian dignitaries, most especially in the present-day South West, Nigeria.

With the advent of “Iwe Iroyin”, Nigerians were stimulated to launch more newspapers and this has aided the continued existence of the newspaper industry in Nigeria. Following the footsteps of “Iwe Iroyin”, some of the

prominent newspapers that emerged included: The Lagos Standard, Lagos Time and Gold Coast Advertiser, Nigerian Tribune, Lagos Weekly Record, The West African Pilot, Anglo-African and African Messenger.

The emergence of the aforementioned newspapers contributed immensely to the history of broadcasting in Nigeria. Moreover, they triggered many Nigerians to engage in journalism and this clearly gave a good number of journalists the grace to uphold activism and nationalism by kicking against British colonialism. Significantly, freedom fighters and nationalists began to emerge and newspapers served as great avenues for them to oppose British colonialists.

## **ii. The Evolution of Radio Broadcasting**

1933 marked the beginning of radio broadcasting in Nigeria with Lagos being the site of the foremost Radio Distribution System (RDS). Under the control of the Department of Post and Telegraphs, the radio system was designed mainly to function as a reception base for the British Broadcasting Corporation. About two years after its establishment, the radio system had its name modified into Radio Diffusion System. In the course of the World War II [1939 – 1945], the radio system served broadcasting purposes.

In 1939, precisely 6 years after the first radio system, another radio system known as Ibadan Station was established. 1950 marked the first real inception of Nigerian Broadcasting System (NBS) in Nigeria and this gave the country a significant level of radio broadcasting. At the time, the broadcasting services of the NBS spanned across several Nigerian cities including: Ibadan, Enugu, Lagos, Kaduna and Kano.

Going by the provisions of the Bill of the House of Representatives, 1956 marked Nigeria's attainment of its first broadcasting corporation. After many years, the establishment of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria came about and in the early 1990s, the country established its first external radio service named 'Voice of Nigeria'.

## **iii. The Evolution of TV Broadcasting**

Television broadcasting seems to be the most cherished medium of broadcasting in Nigeria. Its history can be traced back to the late 1950s when the former Western Region launched Nigeria's foremost TV signal. Precisely, 1959 marked the beginning of television broadcasting in Nigeria with Western Nigerian Television being the first TV station established in the country.

With the intent of providing an avenue for regional schools lacking adequate teaching staff, the former Western Region set up the Western Nigerian Television. Following the footsteps of the Western Regional government, the Eastern Regional government set up its television broadcasting system with the primary aim of promoting formal education within its jurisdiction. Meanwhile, the said broadcasting system was created in 1960. Only two years after the move by the Eastern Regional government, the Northern Regional government launched its TV broadcasting system with the intent of promoting education within its jurisdiction. Established in 1962, the TV system was given the name "Radio Television Kaduna".

At the start of operation, all the three regional TV systems stuck with their primary objectives but in later years, each of them was eventually commercialized. TV stations in Nigeria operated under the governance of the Nigerian Federal Government until 1992. This monopolization of TV stations by the Federal Government was abolished through the creation of the National Broadcasting Commission with the provisions of the Decree number 38. In reality, this marked a significant change in Nigeria's broadcasting history as private individuals were granted the freedom to own Media and TV broadcasting systems.

## **iv. The Evolution of Internet in Nigeria**

The internet is obviously one of the popularly used broadcasting mediums in Nigeria. It is not as popular as either the TV or radio broadcasting mediums but it remains a relevant broadcasting medium in the country. In Nigeria, the evolution of the internet can be traced back to the mid-1990s. Considered the lowest-developing broadcasting

medium in Nigeria, the internet has remained operative in Nigeria since 1996. Over the years, more than 40 certified internet service companies have been established in Nigeria.

### **Modern Broadcasting in Nigeria with Digital Technology**

Without doubts, Nigeria is in the trend of modern broadcasting as practised in many parts of the world. Digital technology has integrated the idea of broadcasting and Nigeria is not lagging behind in exploiting the benefits associated with this. No learned person would doubt the fact that digital technology has made it possible for people to enjoy broadcasting regardless of where they are in the world. Today, information travels rapidly across media platforms like TV, radio, and newspapers. The rapid growth of modern technology has facilitated the spread of TV channels and radio stations. Interestingly, Nigeria is not excluded from the countries that have taken the advantage of modern technology to improve broadcasting.

Over the years, Nigeria's broadcasting industry has grown massively with a plethora of media channels like daily newspapers, TV systems and radio stations. Today, radio stations are found in every of Nigeria's 36 States. There are more than 60 radio stations in Nigeria with some States having multiple radio stations. More than 20 of these radio stations are under private ownership while 40 are owned by the government. International transmission is obviously one of the exciting features of modern broadcasting and Nigerians have been gaining access to it since 2007.

TV broadcasting is considered the most popular aspect of broadcasting in Nigeria and there is barely a Nigerian household especially in cities, where you will not find at least one TV set. In Nigeria, TV broadcasting is much more admired than radio broadcasting and there are a significant number of TV channels in the country. About 70 of Nigeria's entire TV channels are owned by the Nigerian government while a considerable number of other TV channels are under private ownership. Also noteworthy is that Nigerians have been gaining access to satellite subscriptions since 2007.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Media evolution is adopted as the theoretical tool to probe into this research. This is a theory that explores the issue of media evolution focusing on a variety of compelling examples in media history, ranging from the telephone to the television, the radio to internet, and addressing a series of notoriously vexing questions about the nature of technological change. Russell Neuman (1) posits in *Media, Technology, and Society: Theories of Media Evolution* that:

If we want to understand how the Internet is likely to evolve, perhaps we should take a long, hard look at the bizarre evolution of the infrastructures and institutions of the past century – newspapers, telephony, movies, radio, television, satellite-based cable TV, early digital networks.

The above assertion sheds light on how the media did not evolve outside the internet and how the internet also did not evolve outside the media; in discussing media evolution, we shall also be talking about internet evolution which is the reason why the development of the media cannot be discussed without making reference to the impact of the internet. It explains that the evolution of the internet has advanced the media from newspapers to early digital network. This theory of media evolution is a guide used in probing into the transitional stages of the Nigerian broadcasting and film industry. This theory also discusses their developmental stages and how the ICT has advanced them right from the analogue age to the early digital age.

### **How ICT has Advanced Broadcasting in Nigeria**

ICT which is an offshoot of the digital technology, internet to be precise, has helped and developed broadcasting tremendously in Nigeria. Through ICT, there are numerous internet services and social media accommodating lots of radio and television channels which now make it easy for everyone to have access to television, radio and

newspaper broadcast without having a radio set, television set or buying newspaper. Every piece of information needed could be got just within seconds through the use of computer or mobile phone, using the internet.

However, many of the government owned broadcasting stations are not yet fully digitalized as they still practise in the terrestrial broadcast system. Despite still operating with terrestrial system of broadcast, the ICT has in many ways advanced their operations because unlike before when a content is to be aired on Television or Radio, such content will be burned on Compact Disc (CD), VHS, or Radio Cassette which will be submitted to the library and later be transferred by hand to the technical room where it will be played through a CD Player. The main problem with CD is that it is not too reliable as any hand-touch on the transmitting area can have a negative effect on it and it will hinder the smooth playing of the disc. Many terrestrial broadcasting stations have advanced from using CD player and discs in their transmission to the use of internet network whereby soft copies of contents can be sent straight to the computer system of the library and the librarian will send through network to the technical room where it will be streamed and broadcast. Some content developers and creators might not even have any reason to visit broadcast stations before submitting their contents as it can be forwarded through electronic means such as electronic mail, websites and social media. Almost all content developers and creators now have YouTube Channels, Instagram Handles, etc where they can upload their work where librarians of any broadcasting station can easily download the content from. Such content can be put on private channels where the whole world may not have access to it rather than the broadcasting station that the content was created for.

There are so many social media such as Whatsapp, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, Spotify, Video Cloud, Vimeo, that have become platforms where most television, radio and newspaper companies have various channels where they broadcast contents in their stations. Every newspaper company in Nigeria now has websites where people can access every piece of information they print. Radio and Television stations too are also on social media using YouTube, Facebook, etc where they stream their activities live from their studio for audience accessibility. Many Television stations now have mobile applications that people can download on their phone to watch programme broadcast.

Many government owned broadcasting corporations in Nigeria are digitalized but not fully yet, as they still practise terrestrial digital broadcast, while many of the private broadcasting corporations are fully digitalized; ICT has totally shaped their mode of operation as they did not need to operate like the government broadcasting stations, hence making broadcast less expensive for them because there are lots of cost that digitalization has reduced for them. During one-on-one interview with the Director General of Broadcasting Service of Ekiti State, he stated that if their station is fully digitalized they will not be spending much money on diesel to power their heavy duty generators and some other expenses will also be cut down. A fully digitalized broadcasting will not need a very big TV or Radio station as that of Terrestrial digital broadcasting station. What will be needed is a studio where live and recorded programmes can be recorded, an editing studio where all programmes will be edited and a technical room where programmes can be uploaded straight to the internet. Good examples of broadcasting stations that still practice terrestrial broadcast despite having channels on cable network are Broadcasting Service of Ekiti State (BSES), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), Ogun State Television (OGTV), Broadcasting Service of Oyo State (BCOS), Osun State Broadcasting Corporation (OSBS) while Channels, CNN, TVC, etc operate hundred percent digitalization.

Radio too, started from analogue and has grown to become digital. ICT has not only advanced Television broadcasting, it has also advanced broadcasting on radio too as we now have radio applications on various android, java and other types of mobile phones. With the aid of ICT, we now have radio stations on the internet which may not necessarily need a very big space to run; just a well sound-proofed room can serve as a good studio for a digital radio station as it only needs an internet connection to run. Such a radio station does not need a frequency like other radio stations; all it needs is a web page or URL.

### **A Brief History of Film Production in Nigeria**

Film production is a lengthy, multi-step process of making movies that can sometimes take years to complete. Film productions go through five main phases. The first step of film production is the developmental stage, where all the initial details of the movie are figured out before entering pre-production, which focuses on research, casting, and

location scouting. After pre-production, shooting can commence. Shooting time varies between projects, and the type of film you are making (short or feature-length) will determine the length of the production.

After concluding shooting, the post-production phase commences, where footage is edited and arranged into a complete narrative. The production then moves into the distribution phase, and the final product is sent to theaters, DVD, or a streaming service.

According to Fisayo Okare in [www.total-fact-about-nigeria.com](http://www.total-fact-about-nigeria.com), Cinema in Nigeria started during colonial times in the 1900s, though mostly for foreigners rather than indigenous Nigerians. In 1903, Herbert Macaulay, a Nigerian nationalist and Lagos socialite, invited Mr. Balboa of the Balboa Film Company of Spain to showcase his silent feature films at Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos Island. This is recorded as the first time a movie was screened to a Nigerian audiences. Silent film already gained full maturity in Europe in the 1900s, so European film exhibitors toured the world with their films; it was both a marketing effort and cultural export. But only certain foreign movies were screened in the cinemas, and cinema-goers consisted of foreigners and elites. This was because the British did not want their colonies to be exposed to information that could make them more sensitive

The Nigerian version of movie productions started over fifty years ago with the like of Latola Films (1962) and Calpeny Nigeria Ltd. Historically, Latola Films was the first and earliest film production company in Nigeria and started movie production as far back as 1962. Calpeny Nigeria Ltd spearheaded the production of the first Nigerian film, *Kongi's Harvest*, based on a play written by Wole Soyinka.

As far back as 1980, most movies produced in Nigeria were either short plays or culled from a book; the major problem was resources and adequate equipment. Despite all of that, the Nigerian film industry thrived. The name Nollywood was coined to resemble the big shots in the industry, Bollywood and Hollywood which are the Indian film industry and that of American respectively. Men like Kenneth Okonkwo, Kanayo O Kanayo and Bod-Manuel Odogwu are the Nigerian version of die-hard actors. They made the impression of what a film looks like; they starred alongside other selected Igbo casts in the earliest of Nigerian home video entitled, *Living in Bondage*, Produced by Kenneth Nebue. During this period, films were shot with VHS cameras and edited in television studios using a couple of (extinct) VCR machines.

<https://totalfactaboutnigeria.com> in "History of Nigerian Filmmaking" states that several others that participated in the making of Nollywood (behind the scene) includes Ola Balogun, Eddie Ugbomah, late Heurbert Ogunde, Adeyemi Afolayan a.k.a Ade Love (Kunle Afolayan's father), Ladi Ladebo, Moses Adejumo, Adebayo Salami and Afolabi Adesanya. These men who formed The Yoruba Travelling Theatre Groups, took their works beyond the stage and delved into movie production using the Celluloid format, as far back as 1970. They were actually the first Nigerian filmmakers, although their several movies actually never made it big. These great men made movies like "Kongi's Harvest" in 1971, "Bullfrog In the Sun" in 1974, "Bisi Daughter of the River" in 1977, "Jaiyesimi" in 1980, "Cry Freedom" in 1981 and many other great movies in the seventies and eighties.

The early nineties, of course, brought "Living in Bondage", "Circle of Doom and Glamour Girls"; all of these Nigerian movies were funded and produced by Kenneth Nneue – now addressed as Evangelist Kenneth Nneue. The Nollywood that we know today had its expansion and influx of smart young actors and actresses in the early part of the twentieth Millennium, where great actors and actresses were shot into limelight. The likes of Genevieve Nnaji, Richard Mofe Damijo, and Stella Damascus saw an opportunity in the acting world, that is, role interpretations and took it. Nkem Owoh's comic movies have been very popular, even before then. The likes of Pete Edochie, Enebeli Elebeuwa, Peter Bunor, Alex Usifo, Clint da Drunk, Saint Obi, Olu Jacobs, as well as Liz Benson would never be counted out of the history book of Nollywood.

### **How ICT has Advanced Film Production in Nigeria.**

Before, the only means for film showing or film distribution in Nigeria was through live showing (Cinema), VHS, and later advanced to VCD and DVD, but the advent of the ICT really developed and advanced film production in Nigeria as movie producers and makers do not necessarily need to travel anywhere to market their film these days. They can sit in the comfort of their homes to market their films online; they only need to upload the film online and

they can make enough money even more than selling the film at retail level. The internet provides global accessibility for the film and through this, film makers make more money through subscriptions downloads, and streams.

Presently, there are numerous video hosting websites where producers can sell their films to the whole world through the use of internet such as YouTube, Netflix, Video Cloud, Spotify, etc. Through these means, within few seconds of uploading, the whole world can get to watch the film unlike the distribution by retailing which can take years before getting to some places.

There are various film platforms where film/movie can be sold and seen apart from the above. There are platforms on the digital television network that only engage in film business in Nigeria such as African Magic Yoruba, Igbo, Epic, Hausa, Family, and Showcase, Trybe, Orisun, ROK 1 and 2, and many more. These channels and other online platforms are on cable network of DSTV, GOTV and STARTIMES and have helped film producers and marketers in removing the stress of traveling miles to market films. It has also helped in removing the cost of production such as mass duplication of discs or VHS for marketing and also production of thousands of film Jackets. Films are now being transferred through electronic means to marketers who in turn sell to various digital platforms and almost every home can access it, most times through subscriptions.

There are numerous ways in which the ICT has advanced film production in Nigeria of which another one which is very important is that movie makers can enrich their knowledge by learning more about filmmaking through the use of internet. There are so many tutorials on how to make film on the internet which will save the cost of travelling from one place to another as learning through technology keeps advancing every day and film makers can avail themselves of learning new trends in filmmaking.

## Conclusion

The ICT is the latest development in technology in the universe which successfully makes the whole universe a global village. Through this, many developments have been made to Nigerian broadcasting and film production which made it easier for broadcasting and film companies to reach their targeted audience within few seconds. This research has been able to highlight how the ICT has been able to advance broadcasting services and film production in Nigeria. It is highly recommended that broadcast and film houses keep enriching their knowledge through ICT development which can improve their mode of operation in order to make their work easier and their products easily accessible to the world.

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