

**ASSESSMENT OF BROADCAST JOURNALISTS' KNOWLEDGE AND
UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL BROADCAST EQUIPMENT: A CASE
STUDY OF DELTA BROADCASTING SERVICE, ASABA**

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ABSTRACT

In November 2017, the Delta State government commissioned the digital radio and TV studio of the Delta Broadcasting Service in Asaba. The implication of this is that the analogue equipment in the station will have to gradually give way to the digital ones. Although the government of Delta State has not provided sufficient digital broadcast facilities for the broadcast journalists, it is expected that practicing journalists will become knowledgeable and key into the new development by learning the use of the digital broadcast equipment, regardless of the government provisions. Hence, the study interrogated the level of knowledge and utilization of digital broadcast equipment and also the challenges facing the use of digital broadcast equipment among broadcast journalists in Delta State Broadcasting Service. Four major variables, namely, knowledge, utilization, challenges, and solutions, were placed under scrutiny using the census sampling procedure of a survey to examine 100 respondents spread across two departments in DBS, Asaba. The study found, amongst many other things, that there is a high level of knowledge and utilization among journalists in DBS, Asaba, as regards digital broadcast equipment, while inadequate skilled manpower, funds, training, and equipment were the major challenges facing the use of digital equipment in the station. The study therefore recommended that there is a need to intensify training and retraining of digital broadcast journalists and that the government and well-meaning people of Delta prioritize the funding of digital equipment at the station.

Keywords: Broadcast Journalists, Knowledge, Utilization, Digital Broadcast Equipment, Delta Broadcasting Service (DBS)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The invention of the Internet and digital gadgets seem to have revolutionized communication. The advent of digital facilities has not only brought improvement but also quality and speed to the way people communicate across the globe. The application of these facilities can be seen in almost every aspect of human endeavor. The business of journalism in this century has taken cognizance of New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs) (Nwammuo & Abiodun, 2018), and digital broadcast equipment has also taken centre stage in modern-day broadcasting. As the transformation of the mass media landscape by information and communication technology (ICT) has opened a vista of opportunities and challenges for journalists (Asadu, 2009), the availability and multiplicity of digital broadcast equipment have begun to penetrate the world of broadcasting and are currently being used by several broadcasters across cultures. As ICTs have the potential to transform the broadcast media by improving the quality of broadcast contents, the extent of their application seems inadequate among Nigerian broadcasters and, as such, needs to be looked into. Therefore, in this new and technologically driven world, broadcast journalism has continued to prove interesting and challenging, and modern-day journalists need to succeed in a lot more ways (Nwammuo & Abiodun, 2018). Since these technologies and digital broadcast equipment may still be alien in some areas, this work interrogates the extent to which the broadcasters in Delta State Broadcasting Service try to adopt the use of state-of-the-art equipment in gathering, packaging, and disseminating news and other relevant information to the public. Indeed, broadcast journalism practice in the modern world has experienced a paradigm shift necessitated by changes and innovations in information technologies. One can see that journalism is experiencing a renaissance in communication, and the Internet is a rapidly evolving medium disparate from traditional media and is redefining the conventional process (Nwammuo & Abiodun, 2018).

These demonstrate that a very important area in today's broadcasting world is the technology and equipment for the transmission of media messages. Modern technology has revolutionized the shape and dimensions of broadcasting. Modern technologies are today enhancing and facilitating the communication process, as well as helping in the generation and dissemination of information more efficiently to a highly dispersed audience around the world. The catalyst for the transformation of media newsrooms is modern technology (Otorede & Oyewole, 2013). These technologies have further enhanced media credibility, reliability, and even affordability and accessibility, as newsworthy events can be reported simultaneously as they unfold with little or no interference, and the audience's access to the stories is at a relatively affordable cost. For instance, the Internet has made journalism practice easier via the exchange of messages with professionals and experts in various disciplines, and these have introduced a new market and new form of journalism in which journalists specialize as online journalists, content managers, and editors for some websites and media organizations. These technologies have also refurbished the obsolete face of media newsrooms; the new sophisticated computers have replaced the old, time-consuming, and outdated ones.

Besides, technological advancements in various aspects of human endeavour seem to be moving in geometric progression, considering the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The introduction of computers for information gathering, processing, and dissemination forms the basic nucleus for this advancement and provides the