



Impact of Human Capital Development on Digitisation Process in the Media Industry

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Abstract

Digital transmission is surprisingly a great phenomenon in the transformation of the media industry in Nigeria. It allows media houses to effectively execute display capabilities to increase viewer interest through multicasting and broadcasting high quality channels on each frequency and to increase transmission and broadcasting for the interest of global views and technology. This study takes a comprehensive assessment of the impact of human capital development on digitization process in media industry in Nigeria. The study relied largely on descriptive statistics with data collected from both employees and customers of some selected media houses in Lagos State Nigeria. Data were collected through administration of questionnaires to the sample size drawn from the population. Data analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), while 5 point Liker scale was adopted for response rating. The study found that digitization would bring about employees productivity. It was recommended that business media in Nigeria should invest extensively on the training of their employees and try to improve employees' motivation.

Keywords: Communication technology, Commitment, Digitization, Labour mobility, Manpower skills.

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INTRODUCTION

The actual pace of digitization in developing countries will ultimately depend on the commitment of all media organizations to pursue policies that will promote human capacity development, investment on skills acquisitions and appropriate financing of skill acquisition and training programmes. There is a growing belief that the survival and sustainability of the digital technology in the transmission industry will be influenced by how much has the industry committed in terms of funding in the human asset perspective of the communication technology (Akinreti, Ojo, Odegbenle, Owolabi, Tsebee, Goke, Jegede, & Nwaolikpe, 2013).

Nigeria is faced with a lot of challenges ranging from infrastructure to manpower and ranging also from financial implication to sensitization issues. These are not all since it has become mandatory that the nations broadcast media must transit from analogue to digital system with other countries; and since there is already a set deadline for transition, the stage is set to unravel the challenges of the digitization process (Innocent & Uwaoma, 2012).

Digitization is a broad term spanning the media industry including the prints and the electronic media. It is the representation of an object, image, sound, document or a signal usually an analogue signal by a discreet set of its points or sample. The results of these processes are digital representation, digital image for an object and digital form for a signal (Akinreti et al., 2013). The results of these processes are digital representation, digital image for an object and digital form of a signal (Akinreti et al., 2013).

Policies to promote progress in this direction will seek a total and exhaustive explanation of the meaning, scope and workability of the digitization process. Digitization is a technological innovation has changed the scope of radio and television broadcasting in Nigeria. It is a process of transition from analogue to digital technology (Innocent & Uwaoma, 2012). Digitization allows information of all kinds in all formats to be carried with the same efficiency and also intermingled (McQuail, 2000). However, a mere comprehensive description of digitization was explained as a process or device that operates by processing information that is supplied and stored in the form of a series of binary digits (Robinson, 2004). Digital radio is the pure digital transmission medium that improves the sound quality of radio broadcasts, virtually eliminating statics, hiss, pops and fades and offers data display capabilities on receivers and opens up opportunity for multicasting, broadcasting multiple high-quality channels on each frequency.

A more definitive examination of digitization suggests its duality into radio and television. Digital television (DTV) offers viewers many interesting advantages. These include clearer pictures with better sound quality. It enhances the rectangularness of the screen (16.9 aspect ratios) unlike the traditional TV which is square (4.3 aspect ratios). The possibility of transmitting on a super-resolution high-definition television (HDTV) is enhanced by digitization of Television signals (Innocent & Uwaoma, 2012). Critics are equally skeptical of the purported benefits of digitization due to low level of human capacity building in the media industry. It is believed that there is presently lack lustra attitude on the part of the media house owners to create some basic infrastructure to meet the needs of the digitization process. Training of media personnel makes valuable additions to the digitization labour needs because skills acquired in the industry are not easily transferable to the labour market.

Arguments and empirical evidence have been presented in support of a positive net effect of human capital development for digitization. Solomon, Duce, & Harrison (2011) noted that the media business did not arise spontaneously and independently rather they emanated

systematically from the metamorphosis of the older media. This suggests that media businesses did not simply develop today but over many decades and therefore must be manned and sustained by personnel experts. Media activities include text graphics, sound video and animation.

Presently, there is great momentum toward digitization throughout the country. People are waiting to see the prospects and the beautiful messages associated with it. Productivity should be matched with skills development because what is involved in the process is enormous. These include in proving coverage of digital TV transmission, ensuring that bond width are available for wireless broadband services, enhancing sound and picture quality in particular HDTV, enabling more channels (additional contents) and giving unfettered access to digital radio transmission (Akinreti et al.,2013).

Digitization therefore raises many complex issues. There are questions of target time compliance, industry competitiveness, training and retraining of personnel, appropriate financing, structure of workmen compensation, stakeholder interest, consumer satisfaction and availability of digital televisions in the country. Akinreti et al. (2013) quoting Raymond Dokpesi noted that Nigeria media owners do not have a choice but join the moving train of digitization. Finally, supporters of digitization see it as a way to broaden the base of ownership and participation in the media industry thereby encouraging individual viewers to feel that they have a direct stake in the business. While contributing to domestic output and capital formation, digitization is also absorbing substantial amounts of resources and in many cases is imposing a heavy foreign exchange burden on the economy.

For instance, Startimes has upgraded its Digital Terrestrial Television (DTT) system to the latest technology the Digital Television Transmission 2 (DVB-T2) across the country (Nigeria). This technology allows its subservices more channels options, up to 70+ channels. It is actually designed to prepare subscribers and Nigerians generally for the digitization era (Akinretiet al., 2013). With the entrance of more private television and radio stations, digital content such as webcasts were introduced into air's and radio programmes of those stations. Radio stations such as Cool FM and Brilla FM, both privately owned outfits set the pace with Radio Nigeria, Ibadan broadcasting on www.radionigeria.org and www.radiolagosekofm.com. Many other broadcasters including Voice of Nigeria (www.voiceofnigeria.org), Channels Television (www.channels tv.com) and Nigeria Television Authority (www.nta.org) embraced webcasting, aimed at expanding their reach and visibility by viewers (Akinreti et al., 2013).

Again the entrance of cable and satellite pay TV stations such as Multichoice, DSTV, HiTv and Startimes have increased the market competitiveness and readiness for digitization. In each of these activities, human resources have a proper role to play both in operation and management. Therefore filling the skill gap is vital for the development of digitization process in the media industry in Nigeria. Therefore filling the skill gap through employees training, retraining and development is vital.

Objectives of the Study

The study adopted the following objectives to examine the impact of human capital development on digitization process in media industry. The specific objectives were as follows:

- To examine the impact of skill acquisition on the digitalization process in Nigeria;

- To assess the impact of financing on technology acquisition for media house digitization;
- To analyse the impact of digitalization in the media houses on employees work-life balance;
- To identify the impact of regulatory framework on the operation of digital media houses,
- To produce future academic reference research work on digitalization process in Nigeria

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to elicit vital responses relevant for the study:

- Can the introduction of digitized process increase the level of skills acquisition in the media industry?
- Is the level of working conditions in the media industry sufficient enough for the application of digital technology in Nigeria?
- Will the type of job content and ICT skills present in the media industry be effective enough to support the application of digital technology?
- Can digital technology bring about job satisfaction and improved health status to employees?
- Can the introduction of digital technology affect the family life balance of the employees in the media industry?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digitization is a mechanism commonly associated with the transmission process in the media industry (Udeorah, 2008). It is the representation of an object, image, sound, document or a signal usually an analog signal by a discrete set of its points or sample, the result of these processes are digital representation, digital image for an object and digital form for a signal (Akinreti et al., 2013). It is also a process or device that operates by processing information that is supplied and stored in the form of a series of binary digits (Robinson, 2004).

Digitization can occur in either radio or television. Digital radio is the pure digital transmission medium that improves the sound quality of radio broadcasts, virtually eliminating static hiss, pops and fades and offers data display capabilities on receivers and opens up opportunity for multicasting; broadcasting multiple high-quality channels on each frequency (Okpanachi, 2008). Hanson (2005) discloses that just as sound recording has moved to digital formats with CDs with MP3 files so is television in the process of going from analogue technology of Farnsworth and Zworykin to the computerized digital technology. He explained further that there are distinct digital formats; high-definition television (HDTV) is a wide screen format and features an ultra-clear high resolution picture with superior sound. The other digital format is standard digital television, TV, which will make it possible to broadcast up to six channels on the same frequency space that now carries only one channel.

The very feature that marks a successful switchover from analogue to digital transmission or broadcasting implies a major increase in the level of investment in equipment and gadgets, power supply and more importantly in human resources. As the complex and fragile equipment are coming in there is need for matching manpower. The task of training and retraining personnel to fit into the digital process pose a challenge to the race (Thechu & Uche, 2012).

An examination of the role of human resources in the digitalization process demonstrates that growth and continued sustainability of the media industry will strongly abide in human asset investment. Sudden access to a well-functioning labour market could have a variety of possible effects on the quality of digital transmission. A simple correlation between the level of human asset investment and the growth of the digital transmission industry suggests that possible determinants of media industry growth lies in the quality and level of technologies in the digitization process and capacity of human assets to manage the digital technologies.

In discussing the events leading up to the advent of digital technologies, it leaves no doubt that the process is more strongly committed to attendant value to the users-viewers and listeners in Nigeria. The advent of the digital technologies has meant not only a qualitative leap in the production and distribution tools used by the media but have also benefited users in particular as they have become active agents in the communication circuit (Krishnan in Akinreti et al. 2013).

Countries that have achieved advanced levels of digitization- mass adoption of connected digital technologies and applications by consumers, enterprises, and governments have realized significant benefits in their economies, their societies and the functioning of their public sectors (Sabbach, Friedrich, El-Darwiche & Singh, 2012). Achieving all these entail great empowerment of the personnel factor that is vital in bridging the gap between analogue and digital broadcasting. By implication empowerment according to Armstrong (2013) can:

- speed up decision making
- release the creative and innovative capacities of individuals
- provide for greater job satisfaction, motivation and commitment
- give people more responsibility
- enable individuals to gain greater sense of achievements from their work
- reduce operational cost by eliminating unnecessary layers and individuals can take prompt decisions having being empowered.

Thus the media revolution through digitization remains one of the most significant sources of manpower development in the broadcasting industry. What is seemingly important in the switchover mechanism is the establishment of an organisational support and legal framework that can help smooth the process. Rao (1990) in this regards stated that organizations should create learning and developmental culture where individuals continuously learn from their own experience and the various learning opportunities the organisation provides.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive research design. A descriptive research designs allows the researcher to describe the specific characteristics (Preko, 2012) such as cost of digitization, skills acquisition, employees working conditions, impact of operation on governance, receptivity, coverage and efficiency (Bunshak, 2006). Four hundred respondents working in 12 radio and television stations in Lagos were used as sample size out of a total population of 3200. The questionnaire was structured towards both open-ended and close-ended to allow the respondents the liberty to react to the questions posed by the researchers in an unrestricted manner. The sample size was determined with the aid of the stratified sampling method. In stratified sampling, the researcher controls the relative size of each stratum, rather than letting random processes

control it. This guarantees representativeness of fixes the proportion of different strata within a sample (Neuman, 2000).

The sample size comprises two hundred and fifty (250) employees of radio stations (160) and television stations (240) drawn from a population of three thousand two hundred employees of radio stations (1305) and television stations (1895) based in Lagos State. Responses were arranged in five-point Likert scale of strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Cross tabulation was used in this study, which is a table in a matrix format that shows the frequency distribution of the variables. Crosstab are heavily employed in survey research, business intelligence, scientific research etc. Job contents of those working in digitized media include technology skills, working environment and personal health, stress and satisfaction. Data analysis was made with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 20.0.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Table 2 presents the cross tab results as follows. Majority of the respondents in the radio (48% agreed, 44.4% strongly agreed) and television (66.67% agreed and 31.33% strongly agreed) believed that skills acquisitions were necessary for the quicker take off of digital technology in the country. On the issue of working condition, majority of the respondents in the radio industry did not agree that the present working conditions can support the application. A total of 56% (24% strongly disagreed and 32% disagreed) showed their disapproval while only 42% (36% agreed and 6% strongly agreed) supported the introduction of digital technology under the present working conditions. While under the television majority of the respondents (46.67% agreed and 18.67% strongly agreed) accepted that the present working conditions were sufficient enough to support the digital technology.

In the area of job content and ICT skills majority of the radio workers agreed (40.8% agreed; 46% strongly agreed) that improved job content and ICT skills re essential for the introduction of digital technology in the country. While a total majority of the respondents (110% agreed; 38% strongly agreed) were of the belief that improved job content and ICT skills will enhance quicker operation of digital media. Again the study farther disclosed that majority of the respondents (34.4% agreed; 39.6% strongly agreed) believed that improved job satisfaction and health status of the employees would bring productivity in digitized radio industry. The views were expressed by respondents drawn from the television industry (40% agreed and 32% strongly agreed)

In issues relating to family life balance majority of the respondents (36% agreed; 40% strongly agreed) disclosed that family life balance would be affected by the introduction of digital technology while 8% strongly disagreed, 16% disagreed. In response to whether labour mobility would be increased in the radio industry with the introduction of digital technology 52% agreed; 42% strongly agreed while 2% strongly disagreed and 4% disagreed. Whereas in the television authority majority of the respondents agreed 80% strongly agreed and 13.33% agreed while 2% strongly disagreed and 4.67% disagreed.

Again respondents were asked to react whether commitment and competency would be higher in both radio and television industry with the introduction of digital technology. In radio industry 60% agreed; 63.2% strongly agreed and 1.33% remained indifferent while in the television industry, 53.335 strongly agreed, 5.33% strongly disagreed and 8% disagreed. When a question to ascertain whether digitization would encourage professionalism in the radio and

television industry (20% agreed and 80% strongly agreed) believed that the digital technology would bring about professionalism in the industry while majority of the respondents (90% agreed and 58% strongly agreed) in the television believed that it would encourage professionalism.

The issue of quality transmission and patronage were presented to the respondents. In the radio industry a total of 35.2% of the respondents agreed; 62.8% strongly agreed; 1.6% strongly disagreed and 0.4% disagreed that digitization would improve quality of transmission, in the television industry 35.2% agreed; 62.8% strongly agreed; 1.6% strongly disagreed; 4% disagree. Finally respondents were requested to react to the issue pertaining to employees' productivity. Respondents in the radio industry 40% agreed; 60% strongly agreed digital technology would increase productivity of workers.

Table 1: Cross tab of ten variables on Matching manpower skills with digitization								
	Industrial sub sector		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Indifferent	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
1.		Skills acquisition						
	Radio	Frequency	5 (2%)	13 (5.2%)	1 (4%)	120 (48%)	111 (44.4%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	1 (0.67%)	2 (1.33%)	0 (0.0%)	100 (66.67%)	47 (31.33%)	150 (100%)
2.		Working conditions						
	Radio	Frequency	60 (24%)	80 (32%)	5 (2%)	90 (36%)	15 (6%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	15 (10%)	35 (23.33%)	2 (1.33%)	70 (46.67%)	28 (18.67%)	150 (100%)
3.		Job content & ICT skills						
	Radio	Frequency	5 (2.0%)	25 (10.0%)	3 (1.2%)	102 (40.8%)	115 (46%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.33%)	0 (0.0%)	110 (73.33%)	38 (25.33%)	150 (100%)
4.		Job satisfaction & Health status						
	Radio	Frequency	40 (16%)	20 (8%)	5 (2%)	86 (34.4%)	99 (39.6%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	10 (6.67%)	30 (20%)	2 (1.33%)	60 (40%)	48 (32%)	150 (100%)
5.		Family life balance						
	Radio	Frequency	20(8%)	40(16%)	0(0.0%)	90(36%)	100(40%)	250(100%)
	Television	Frequency	60(40%)	55(36.67%)	2(1.33%)	20(13.33%)	13(8.67%)	150(100%)
6.		Labour mobility						
	Radio	Frequency	5(2%)	10(4%)	0(0.0%)	130(52%)	105(42%)	250(100%)
	Television	Frequency	3(2%)	7(4.67%)	0(0.0%)	20(13.33%)	120(80%)	150(100%)
7.		Commitment & Competency						
	Radio	Frequency	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	2(1.33%)	90(60%)	158(63.2%)	250(100%)
	Television	Frequency	8(5.33%)	12(8%)	0(0.0%)	50(33.33%)	80(53.33%)	150(100%)
8.		Professionalism						
	Radio	Frequency	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	50(20%)	200(80%)	250(100%)
	Television	Frequency	2 (1.33%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	90 (60%)	58 (38.67%)	150 (100%)
9.		Quality transmission & Patronage						
	Radio	Frequency	4 (1.6%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	88 (35.2%)	157 (62.8%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (3.33%)	68 (45.33%)	77 (51.33%)	150 (100%)
10.		Employees Productivity						
	Radio	Frequency	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	100 (40%)	150 (60%)	250 (100%)
	Television	Frequency	2 (1.33%)	5 (3.33%)	0 (0.0%)	50 (33.33%)	95 (63.33%)	150 (100%)

DISCUSSION

In compliance with the total findings majority the findings in the radio industry (48%) and television (66.67%) agreed that skills acquisition is vital for digital technology application while majority of radio (36%); television (46.67%) supported improved working conditions. This supported by the findings of Akintunde and Anjo (2012). On job content and ICT skills majority of the radio (46%) and television (73%) agreed that it should be improved while majority of the radio (39.66%) and television (40%) desired better job satisfaction and health status.

A related example was provided in a study conducted by Akinreti et al. (2013). The majority of radio (40%) agreed while television (40%) disagreed that digital technology would not bring about better family life balance. This is supported by Bandi, Angadi and Shiyarama (2015) that digital can increase and decrease family life balance depending on the policy of the operating organization. Again it was indicated by the study that majority of the radio (52%) and television (80%) believed that digital technology encourage labour mobility in the country. A digitized media has the potential of transforming the society and presenting the labour force the opportunities of new choice (Sabbach et al., 2012)

Furthermore, it has been identified by the study that commitment and competency are relevant in digital technology. The majority of the radio (63.2%) and television (53.33%) accepted the fact that digital technology would increase employees' commitment and competency which was supported by Armstrong (2013). On the issue of professionalism, majority of the radio (80%) and television (60%) respondents agreed that digitization would create professionalism among the employees. Rao (1999) supported this finding that organization should create learning and developmental culture where individuals continuously learn from their own experience and thus become professionals overtime.

In the area of quality transmission and patronage, majority of the radio (62.8%) and television (51.35%) believed that digitization would increase the quality of transmission and patronage (Ihechu & Uche, 2012). Finally majority of the radio (60%) and television (96.67%) chose to say that digitization would bring about employees productivity (Bunshak, 2006; Armstrong, 2013)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is imperative that the conclusion would consider the findings as they become relevant to the application of digital technology in Nigeria. Significantly, digital process can only be operational and effectively impact positivity in the media industry if the level and quality of labour involved are improved. Many benefits have been identified with digitization and among the significant ones are receptivity, clarity in picture and sound. All these remain a function of well trained and retrained personnel, motivated employees and good working conditions.

However, the ability of the media houses to cope with these challenges including the cost of technology acquisition will depend largely on the financial support and patronage generated by the economy. It is therefore recommended that all business media in the country should invest extensively on the quality of their employees and try so much to improve their motivation because it was disclosed at a point that workers performed below average due to low morale.

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