NEW-AGE MEDIA: AN INEVITABLE TOOL FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Information Communication Technology has continued to develop irrevocably, and it has therefore changed man's modus operandi in terms of administering the public. Therefore, the new age media contextually is the use of ICT as a platform where people of various backgrounds express their divergent opinions and research outputs on issues relating to the advancement in public service delivery in ways that improve interaction with the state and subsequently propels sustainable development. Hence, this study seeks to examine the impact of media revolution on public administration in Nigeria. Qualitative technique was adopted and the finding from this paper revealed that one of the reasons why the new age media has become an inevitable tool for public administration in Nigeria is because the ICT has created an alternative method for the electorate to be able to monitor the implementation of public policies resulting in better quality of service delivery and increased satisfaction in governance outcomes. It therefore recommends and concludes that since technology has increased access to information in government business making it obvious that public administration is no longer limited to the political elites and bureaucrats ,it has become expedient for the academia in collaboration with ICT experts and the ministry of communications, Ministry of Information and Culture to work together in regulating corrupting information like hate speech and propaganda capable of riling up the people into insurgency or political violence

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The globalization of governance has already necessitated the application of digital technologies wherein online platforms are now available for the active participation and involvement of the electorate in the public policy making processes. However, the use of these platforms were predominant and prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic which forced governmental institutions and other relevant agencies particularly in Nigeria to adopt the new-age media in order to pragmatically manage the global crisis and subsequent crisis that may arise in public administration (Haleem, Javaid, Quadri and Suman, 2022).Hence, the new age media has tremendously influenced the manner of socio-cultural interactions in the world. In fact, the new age media has ballooned to encompass so many aspects of computing and technological advancements in communication. Thus, in recent times, the new age media has brought multi-dimensional changes in the world of communication. It has surpassed restrictions and boundaries, improved speed in communication, compressed and collapsed the world into a global village and improved the means of reaching large, heterogeneous audience in ways that enhance political participation and the active involvement in the policy formulation, evaluation and

implementation processes (Ireju and Emberru,2019) and so over the years, the transitional advancement in digital technologies and the increasing numbers of new media platforms have revolutionized the ways in which people engage in the administration of service delivery and local governance(Auwal,2015).

Therefore, as societies are getting transformed by the combined forces of industrialization, modernization and globalization, it has by extension affected governance in Nigeria in such ways that enable efficiency in public administration which leads to a just society for all. (Olojede, 2020).Hence, CT has largely impacted on public administration wherein the routine provision of services according to impersonal rules is conducted as opposed to clientelist arrangements (Chima and Kasim, 2015).And so, ICT has become an indispensable tool for public administration in Nigeria because it empowers and equips the electorates in collaborating with the administrators in solving the numerous political, economic and administrative quagmires plaguing the nation. Thus, as Nigeria faces unprecedented uncertainties in multifaceted ways that manifests as pervasive insecurity, ethnic crisis, social injustice and political violence, the new age media has become a necessity in order to deal with the peculiarities and challenges of the society in ways that transforms society.

This therefore reveals that since technology has increased easy access to unlimited information, making it obvious that governance is no longer limited to the political elites, bureaucrats and traditional institutions, It therefore means that the ICT has created an alternative method for public administrators to collaborate effectively with the people in ways that will bring solutions to the consequences of failed leadership which has negatively affected sustainable development in Nigeria (Aderogba and Alabi,2020).

Objectives of the Study

1. To Highlight the prospects of new-age media as an inevitable tool for public administration in Nigeria

2. To proffer solutions to the challenges of new age media for public administration in Nigeria.

CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS CONCEPT OF NEW AGE-MEDIA

Contemporary societies can no longer function without new-age media. In fact, the evolution of the new age media has brought a radical shift in governance and its strategies in curtailing national crisis. The concept of New -Age media refers to the application of micro-electronics, computers and telecommunications that offer new services for the enhancement of political and administrative participation in government's business. Thus, the new age media covers a wide range of avenues using ICT platforms such as blogs, interactive web journals, websites, Facebook, instagram, linkedin, twitter, podcasts, apps, zoom, video conferencing, web casting, voice notes, emails, YouTube, Skype and whatsapp platforms. Thus, contextually speaking, the new-age media implies the shift from the conventional means of political and administrative participation to the use of digital technology for the dissemination of public opinions that supports or criticizes government's policies, content creation that draws government's attention to certain inefficiencies in administration all for the facilitation of effective public service delivery in ways that reach a wider audience within the speed of light and this is made possible through the use of ICT (Igyuve and Obagwu,2020).

Hence, the new age media has become an integral part of public administration and connotes the digital computerization of local governance that enhances efficiency in policy making and policy actualization particularly from the grassroots. This suggests that no public institution can survive talk more of thrive without the new age media. In the light of this, the new age media has become inevitable in today's society because of its speed, ubiquity, efficiency and ease in networking, communication, policy making and formulation that propels good governance that leads to effective public administration and creates the chances for sustainable development (Aja, Chukwu and Odoh,2019). Fundamentally, the new age media presupposes a modern means of policy changes, dissemination of innovative ideas that transforms the relationship between government agencies and the citizens(Adelana,2019) through the use of digital applications (Lawal, 2019).Beyond that, the new age media has become very prominent because it has brought about the delivering of government services and advanced public administration in ways that has led to the emergence of a large community where people of diverse social backgrounds build socio-political institutions that advance the quality of public administration through grassroots collaboration and community development (Tayo, Adebola and Yahya, 2019).

The Prospects of New-Age Media as an Inevitable Tool for Public Administration in Nigeria

The new age media is regarded as an ICT based tool for strengthening public administration in Nigeria. In other words, the new age media is the use of ICT as a tool for achieving better governance. This implies that it is the development, deployment, and enforcement of the policies, laws and regulations necessary to support the functioning of public administration in Nigeria (Obodo and Anigbata, 2018). Thus, the new age media combined with democratic intents can make governments more responsive and connect with citizens to effectively meet public challenges and ultimately facilitate sustainable development. This reveals that the new age media enhances the capacity of public administration to increase the supply of the much-needed public value. For instance, the use of the new age media gives the citizens the autonomy to engage with public services at their own convenience and not just when government offices are opened and so the interactive aspects of new age media allows both citizens and bureaucrats the requisite platform to send and receive information which is a major transformational shift in public policy processes and functions (Adelana, 2019).

Secondly, the fight against cyber-crimes, militancy, terrorism, kidnapping, drug trafficking and genocide requires the vast use of the new age media. However, (Nosiri and Ndoh,2018) noted that one of the problems of public administration in Nigeria in combating Boko Haram for example is the poor utilization of ICT while the terrorists continue to launch attack with impunity by making use of the new age media in every of its operations. Thus, the poor or inadequate use of the new age media has made the effort of curbing trans-border activities along the Nigerian borders a complicated task. However, with the use of the new age media, the security agencies can be able to track down any trans-border criminal activities. Therefore, the use of ICT in security administration in Nigeria, if maximally utilized can enhance the protection of lives and properties and will quell the sabotage and espionage against the available security administration in Nigeria.

Similarly, other prospects of the new age media as an inevitable tool for public administration in Nigeria include: a free flow of information between departments, agencies and layers within government which will result in the total reduction of bureaucratic bottlenecks and hindrances, the routine provision of services according to impersonal rules as opposed to clientelist arrangements, the strengthening of intermediary

democratic institutions such as parliaments, local governments, Civil Society Organizations and independent media which will give room for direct participation of constituents in government's activities and also creates opportunities to combine traditional and modern methods of accountability (Onuigbo and Innocent,2015).Furthermore, the new age media has helped to improve transparency and control corruption in public administration. This was revealed by Adelana (2019) where he noted that the level of corruption in the public sector sharply decreases in countries where new age media is actively used. For example, a recent report on Bangladesh discovered that due to the computerization of the Railway reservation system, the number of black marketers decreased considerably. In the same vein, a survey in India has revealed that in the states where the new age media has been frequently used, the corruption rate has substantially dropped. Hence, due to the use of the new age media in some public sectors, the corruption rate in the Indian cities declined because of the transparency associated with the use of the new age media. Thus, the new age media compels complete honesty (particularly in relation to the procurement of government services which inadvertently exposes corruption and discourages administrators from engaging in corrupt practices (Onuigbo and Innocent, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

Banking organizations have been delivering electronic services to consumers and businesses remotely for years. Electronic funds transfer, including small payments and corporate cash management systems, as well as publicly accessible automated machines for currency withdrawal and retail account management, are global fixtures. However, the increased world-wide acceptance of the Internet as a delivery channel for banking products and services provides new business opportunities for banks as well as service benefits for their customers (BCBS, 2001). Notwithstanding the significant benefits of E-banking and its capabilities, it carries risks and challenges which must be recognized and managed by banking institutions in a prudent manner.

The speed of change relating to technological and customer service innovation in E-banking is unprecedented. Historically, new banking applications were implemented over relatively long periods of time and only after in-depth testing. Today, however, banks are experiencing competitive pressure to roll out new business applications in very compressed time frames, often only a few months from concept to production. This competition intensifies the management challenge to ensure that adequate strategic assessment, risk analysis and security reviews are conducted prior to implementing new e-banking applications (BCBS, 2001).

E-banking increases banks' dependence on information technology, thereby increasing the technical complexity of many operational and security issues and furthering a trend towards more partnerships, alliances and outsourcing arrangements with third parties, many of whom are unregulated. This development has been leading to the creation of new business models involving banks and non -blank entities, such as Internet service providers, telecommunication companies and other technology firms (BCBS, 2001). The Internet is ubiquitous and global by nature. It is an open network accessible from anywhere in the world by unknown parties, with routing of messages through unknown locations and via fast evolving wireless devices. Therefore, it significantly magnifies the importance of security controls, customer authentication techniques, data protection, audit trail procedures, and customer privacy standards (BCBS, 2001). Other E-banking related problems are user error, bad internet connections, access problems and security issues. Most of these problems may or may not outweigh the benefits.

METHODOLOGY

Documentary method was adopted for this study. Hence, data was sourced from national and international academic publications. These consisted of relevant textbook, inaugural lectures, conference proceedings and academic journals. The data gathered from the aforementioned method was analysed using qualitative descriptive technique.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The effective use of new age media in public administration propels national transformation and development which is influenced by the constitutional ethics and culture of the state. Therefore, the technological advancement or failure of a state depends on the priority given to advancement new age media in public administration. Hence, it is on this note that this paper recommends that since the new age media has spread its tentacles around various human endeavours through the use of blogs, podcasts, YouTube and other interactive digital platforms, it has become necessary that the relevant government agencies funds and grooms the civil servants so that they can be empowered to provide services effectively in ways that facilitate people centred participation that leads to sustainable development and the rescue of Nigeria from the consequences of failed leadership which will prevent the gradual collapse of public administration in Nigeria. Finally, since access to unlimited information cannot be totally controlled, it has become expedient for the academia in collaboration with ICT experts and the ministry of communications, Federal Ministry of Education and the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture to work together in regulating inciting information capable of triggering political violence, genocide or insurrection.

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