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Revisiting Family Television Viewing Culture in the Digital Age: The Role of Streaming, Technology and Changing Habits

Kelvin Inobemhe
Glorious Vision University, Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria
ORCID iD: 0000-0001-5748-0066
inobemhekelvin@gmail.com
(Corresponding Author)

Sharifatu Gago Ja'afaru
Glorious Vision University, Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria
ORCID iD: 0009-0009-1334-1684
sharifatujaafaru@gmail.com

Daniel Ekhareafo
University of Benin, Edo State Nigeria
ORCID iD: 0009-0000-8317-2569
ofomegbe.ekhareafo@uniben.edu

Abstract

Family television viewing time was a cherished tradition that members of the unit, particularly the parents were intentional about. The digital age is one with several impacts on human lives and activities. Accordingly, people are becoming increasingly attached to their digital devices such as mobile phones, tablet computers and more. Therefore, this study was conducted to examine family television viewing culture vis á vis the idea of content creation examining how this affect family television viewing culture. The study was conducted based on systematic literature review. Findings showed that there are significant changes in the TV viewing culture noticeable amongst which are in the area of a shift from the traditional broadcast to on-demand content and streaming services, the social media factor, and the appreciation of the co-viewing and co-creation capacity of the new era. Additionally, the researchers revealed that digital media and associated technologies also played a significant role in the changing narratives of family TV content viewing. With the technologies, content creation has been simplified and the space liberalised just as audiences are not just mere passive consumers of contents but now active creators. There are effects associated with this development. The researchers concluded that though there are noticeable changes in the culture of family viewing television, it is simply not the end

of an era where families converged to see entertainment and news because of the new ways of co-viewing enabled by technological innovations. The researchers recommended partly that families must understand the place of family and make time to bond even in the face of technological advancement.

Introduction

The family being the micro-reflection of the society is considered the cradle of unison and a critical agent of socialisation chiefly on the grounds that members were able to converge and share valuable time together creating a bond of some sort. Nickerson (2024) described the family, first, as agent of socialisation because it happened to be the first group to which a child is exposed at birth and then may need to learn from – and considering this position, greater time is spent within the unit. Accordingly, the unit may be comprised of young children that live with their biological parents or even some raised by adopted guardians. However, all are made to learn basic values and norms from their parents who also ensure that emotional care and support is provided to aid emotional stability and growth.

Family time is a cherished time considered by the majority of members of the unit. Aahir (2023) noted that one of the most cherished memories of childhood could just be the profound pleasure derived from enjoying television shows and movies as a family unit. The implication of the foregoing assertion is that family television time affords every single member the chance to share laughter, plays, tears and joy with one another creating lasting memories some will bear for a long time.

Such family get-togethers in front of the television (family TV viewing time) were popular and accepted as a practice for a number of reasons. It was primarily on the grounds that the programming was basically appropriate for persons of all age categories (Allen & Thompson, 2024). In Nigeria, the opportunity to share family time in the evening through games and storytelling while glued to one television station brought family members together and foster greater unity and family values (Ufuophu-Biri, 2020). It became a unique experience when family members discuss television shows and programme the next day in their various ways. This helped build that sense of family life and bond for one another. Therefore, each family unit ensured that there was no break with the "family televising viewing tradition."

According to Gillin (2019), television is regarded as a powerful medium that brings family members together, and such scenario has a number of benefits such as the benefits offered by educational television, support efforts at staying current as a family unit, broaden cultural horizons (depending on the contents and origin), embrace the fun of TV fandoms, establish and nurture connection, strengthening family ties, enable the learning and understanding of a language, improve mental health, provide cost-efficient entertainment for members, fight temptation, relieve stress, getting inspired, and inspiring a love for reading. When we put all of these together, it reveals one strong thing in respect of the influence of TV on family life and that is the fact that the unit gets to stay and learn or experience new things together.

Prior to the information age, media content consumption was largely a family or communal affair depending on the status. Though the pattern and way leisure time is spent by a family is determined by the parent, it can also be an indicator of social status (Kraus et al., 2020). The need for creation has been identified as one of the functions of leisure time as individual members of the unit strive to recover and get relief from daily stress, take a rest, and partake in activities with health benefits (Vážanský, 2001). This is a critical motivation for relaxation time with family members which involves seeing movies and watching TV together, especially in the evenings. Findings from a study conducted by Kraus et al. (2020) showed watching TV, gardening, reading, vising cinemas, and taking trips in form of visits as some of the leisure time activities of some European countries like Latvia, Czech Republic, Ukraine, Germany, Slovakia and Poland.

However, family leisure time, especially the one spent watching TV is one that has several benefits to the entire unit. It has been referenced to have strong link with family cohesion and the strengthening of family relationships (Kraus et al., 2020). Time has passed yet the idea of watching TV with family members especially children, is still a valid point of family life and time. In addition to providing a sense of love and connection, the act of watching TV with children also makes memories, create shared experience and provide the space to engage them in conversations where parents can share values and get them motivated. The idea that they tend to provide more information when they feel loved and trusted is a unique one that family television viewing can validate.

Television as a family-uniting medium is being pushed back into the corner (Coughlan, 2018). The reasons are numerous but one that stands out is the innovation of technology. Innovations in digital technologies, especially in the aspect of information and communication technology (ICT) have revolutionised the information world. The technologies offered in the era brought great changes to what has now come to be known as the information age. The way humans send, receive and access information in the era happened to be greatly modified largely due to the numerous tools offered in the age and time – new media, social media and many more are examples. The preference for solitary use of ICTs by family members is found to be a negative effect in our contemporary society (Hänninen et al., 2017) and this explains why family TV viewership may be on the decline.

The heartwarming activity is said to have evolved significantly over the years (Aahir, 2023). Digital technologies are leading the way in the evolution seen in family television viewership in modern era. According to Qian and Hu (2024), digital technology and the Internet have had the deepest kind of influence on people's lives and family life is also part of the aspect facing the most impact. Separating the once united micro-unit of society has been the most remarkable and noticeable impact of the digital revolution in the family life. Accordingly, Qian and Hu averred that digitalisation of family has occurred alongside other significant changes in the family life and such include gender revolution,

commercialisation, individualisation, and of course, deinstitutionalisation. Aside the role played in the foregoing by Internet and digital technologies, individuals are also deliberating about these issues knowingly or unknowingly. This is where content creators matter in the discourse.

Increasingly, social media platforms have become significant and offer opportunities for content creation assuming the status of broadcast platforms through which traditional content producers approach the younger audiences (Fry, 2021). Platforms such as TikTok, Twitch, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter (now X) are explored by numerous content creators to dish out all manner of contents ranging from documentaries to drama, reality TV shows, vox pop, short comedy skits and so on. This act seems to have taken away the shine from traditional mode of broadcasting to social media platforms where majority of young people are active users making them consumers of contents.

Studies revealed that persons of younger ages spend as much as nine hours daily on social media platforms (Rubin, 2023; Wallace, 2015). A recent study conducted by *Gallup* showed that teenagers dedicated an average of 4.8 hours of their time per day to social media (Adgate, 2023; Rothwell, 2023). This implies that there are high chances that they will likely not have dedicated time to honour the invitation to a family-time for an opportunity of watching television together. This is arguably a direct link to a diminishing family television viewing culture from that dimension. In other words, there might be a direct connection between the time spent on social media and utilisation of digital technologies to abandonment of family time like watching TV together as a unit. Against this backdrop, the probing question is considering the evolution of technology and the content streaming possibility, what are the effects on the state of family television viewing culture? Could it be a sign of the end of an era of family connection? Therefore, this study sought to ascertain the state of family television viewing culture in the digital age.

Statement of the Problem

Family time is disappearing (Akor, 2013; Ekwune, 2025; Nnachi et al., 2020) and it is especially the case since the advent of digital technologies and ICTs. Devices such as mobile phones, tablet computers and laptops are portable, and users can easily travel with them. Consequently, they became the access points to access contents of both the traditional media forms and the new media. For instance, e-copies of a national daily in Nigeria or elsewhere in the world can be read using the mobile phone or computers either in portable document file (PDF) format or non-linear format posted on the website of the media organisation. In addition, jpeg images and videos posted by television stations are also accessible via the same platforms (the websites) and through same means (the mobile devices). This in its own is considered both a development in the right direction and in a way a curse to family time.

From another perspective, the rise of social media and the Internet has birthed a number of content creators all over the world. The Internet liberalised the industry and brought on a media landscape that is decentralised which birthed the "creator economy" (Bukasa, 2024). Accordingly, individual members of society are empowered to become active creators of content using channels created by technological advancements to distribute their contents, breaking the age-long monopoly of the traditional media conglomerates. It is even more so that these dissemination channels such as social media and the Internet have significant amount of users in our world. For example, statistics shows that as of March 2023, 157.5 million Nigerians had access to the Internet (Orufa, 2023). This is coupled with the over 36 million people that are social media users in the country (Kemp, 2024). These numbers add to the base of audiences that access the contents of active players in the creator economy in our digital age.

There is a shift away from family television viewing culture because individual members of the family unit have mobile devices – like phones, laptops, palmtops, and tablet computers coupled with their access to the Internet. Through these digital means, they are able to access contents created by digital content creators promoting isolation for individual members to be on their own and consume media content. Adeleke (2016) contended that the dissolution of family time is widespread in urban Africa and may be linked to the fragmented TV cube to mobile phones and laptops. This study sought to address the pertinent question of what the future of family television viewing culture holds considering the advent of contents creation, its popularity, and the pervasive use of streaming technologies.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this were to:
1. Examine the narratives in the changing family television viewing culture.
2. Evaluate the place of digital media-enabled streaming and technology in the changing habits in family television culture

Conceptual Review

Content Creation

The concept of content creation is not novel. However, social media and digital technologies make it appear to be new owing to the liberalisation of channels of communication and information dissemination. Content creation is a process that involves research, strategic idea, and crafting the conceptualised ideas into some collateral of high value and promoting the pieces to a target audience and may take the form of blogs, web pages, videos, infographics and social media posts (Brafton, n.d.).

By the foregoing understanding of the concept, it is deductive that it is a strategic idea of some sort, and the process involves high level of creativity and hard work on the part of the content creators. Creators that create content that captivates and is relevant may attract visitors to their social media platforms or official website – making them good channels for information dissemination and advertising by corporate organisations.

According to Indeed Editorial Team (2023), content creation is a process whereby informational content pieces are put together and created into different forms such as e-books, blog posts, white papers, and infographics. It follows a systematic process and so research may be conducted, ideas crafted, strategic ideas generated, and the content promoted with the target audience in mind. Perco (2023) sees the content creation as the process that leads to creation of different media forms that appeal to a target audience and that the process involves a number of steps starting from ideation stage to the point where the pieces put together are promoted. In the art are different experts who may be required to contribute their own expertise toward a successful content. In the chain of content production are strategists whose main function may be to pinpoint relevant content ideas that are in sync with the goals of a marketer or business. Others may be video producers and editors, writers that need to show creativity by stringing pieces together to make captivating content.

Family Television Viewing Culture

The concept of "family television viewing culture" is a compound term made of a number of words and so it is appropriate to treat in components in order to arrive at a suitable understanding. Whereas family is a micro unit of society in which children are born and raised, television is the medium that helps in the transmission of moving images as well as sound. The family is a group of persons bind together by the ties of blood, marriage, or adoption living together as a single household and engaged in interaction in their various social positions as parents, spouses, siblings and children (Barnard, 2024). According to Fisher and Noll (2024), television is an aspect of the mass media that is based on delivering moving images and sound from the source to the receiver through electronic means. On the grounds that TV extends the senses hearing and vision far and beyond the limits of physical distance, it is considered to have had a significant impact on society.

Viewing refers to the ability see a thing. It could also be about being seen from/in a particular place. And culture is the way of doing something – generally referred to as a way of life. Therefore, viewing culture in this context is the established pattern or way of seeing something by a people. Television viewing culture, therefore, can be seen as the established way people watch or see programmes on television. And these programmes may range from news bulletins, documentaries, docu-comedy and many different traditional media programme genres. Television in modern times is

delivered in several ways to the screens of the audience and these could be terrestrial radio waves (over the air), cable, satellites, streaming platforms via the Internet, and optical recording tools on Blu-ray discs and digital video disc otherwise known as DVDs (Fisher & Noll, 2024).

Family television viewing culture as a concept, therefore, can be conceptualised as the act that involves group of persons bind by blood, adoption or marriage living together, taking out of their daily time to sit together to watch programmes and movies on television. It is considered a culture because it has been observed over time and has become part and parcel of the entire gamut of activities of the family. Therefore, it is their way of life and observing it matters a lot to them. However, there has been a shift from this tradition in the era of mobile phones, tablet computers and the Internet. This informed this study because of the need to ascertain whether it is the end to an era of a "family cultural practice."

Theoretical Framework

The technological determinism theory and media convergence theory provide the theoretical framework for this study. The technological determinism theory credited to Marshal McLuhan postulates that media technologies play a significant role in shaping how people act, think and ways society operates as we transcend one technological era to another (Griffin, 2000). According to Beiro (2023), smartphones have been described as one of the greatest benefits of advancement in technology as they provide reach and communication opportunity. This study is on content creators and changing family television viewing culture. The technological determinism theory is the theoretical framework to help us understand how technology determines the way we create and consume contents as families in contemporary society. It also explains how technology influences the television viewing habits of members of the family unit.

Media convergence theory is based on the concept of media convergence which, according to Flew (2025), is about the interconnection of communications and information technologies, the computer networks and media content. The theory explains that on account of the digital media like social media and the Internet, traditional media forms such as radio, television, newspapers and even magazines are merged resulting in a changing media landscape in which boundaries between the different media platforms are blurred. Some of the key aspects of this theory include technological convergence, content convergence and industry convergence. According to Jenkins (2004), technological convergence is about the fusing of different technologies creating opportunities for seamless content distribution across different platforms. On the other hand, content convergence is the creation and dissemination of content across multiple media platforms while industry convergence means that industries categorised under traditional media are now merged with digital media companies. This theory provides this base for this study to explain the blurring lines between traditional and digital

media and how the converged media content and technology results in the changing habits to family television viewing culture.
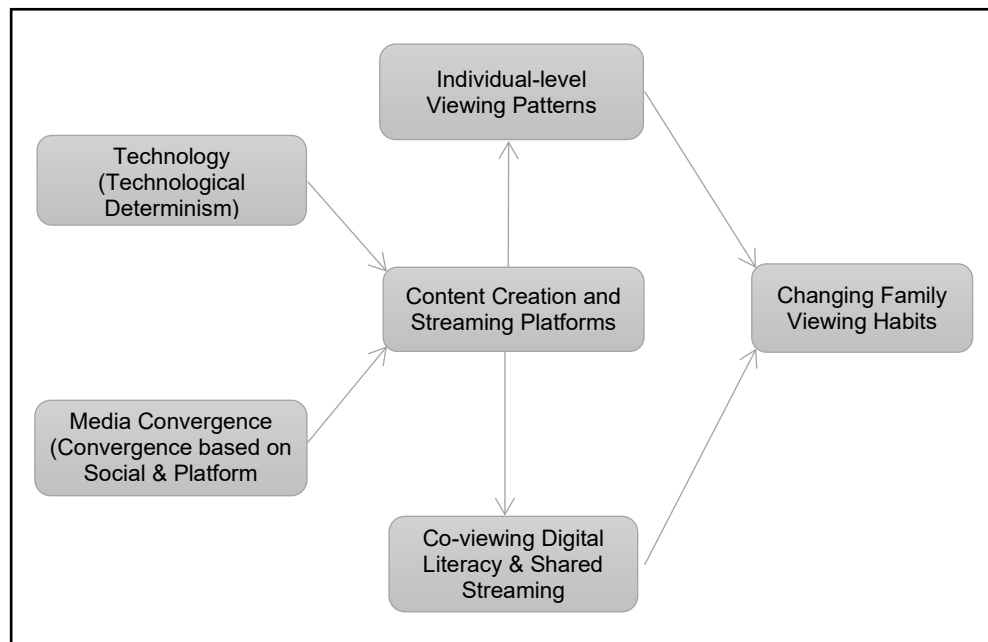

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: Influence of Technology and Media Convergence on
TV Viewing Culture

Methods

The research design for this study was systematic literature wherein systematic procedures were adopted to analyse existing data from research. Systematic literature review is a research method upon which researchers rely to collect and analyse available research studies such as in books, conference proceedings, articles, dissertations through a systematic procedure (Carrera-River et al., 2022; Pati & Lorusso, 2018). Accordingly, the review of literature for this study was systematic and procedural. The researcher manually conducted a search of relevant literature on three main databases – Web of Science, Scopus and ResearchGate. The choice of latter among the other major ones was premised on the large volume of research outcomes from Nigerian researchers available therein. The search words for the study include keywords like "Family Television," "Changing Viewing Culture," and Content Creation in Nigeria." The search returned over 122,000 relevant articles. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were introduced to arrive at the final selection of articles for this study. The inclusion criteria for the publications include the type, date of publication and the language. However, publications released before the year 1999 were excluded. The justification for this time series was to capture the place of technology factor in the changing habit towards family television viewing culture since the early 2000s. Final selection of the articles in the manually conducted process yielded 46 articles. This implies that n = 43.

Analysing the data in the selected articles involved extracting and analysing information to address the research objectives. To avoid bias and ensure transparency, the researchers relied on structured methods. The strength of the articles selected, evidence found to support the strength were part of the quality assessment criteria adopted in the analysis of the articles before a final selection was made.

Results

The results of this study are streamlined and analysed based on the themes presented and discussed below:

Changing Narratives in Family Television Viewing

Family time spent seeing a movie or watching television is a cherished moment because of a number of values attached to it. A major reason is that programmes to which they are exposed help organise family interaction – and though there are some other programmes that may decrease family interaction, most were developed to increase the act, and this may lead to the notion that many contexts accompany family TV viewing because each create unique patterns of family interaction (Brodie & Stoneman, as cited in Morley, 1999). However, the family TV viewing culture is changing, no doubt, all thanks to time. In its actual sense, time is a unique factor in relations to changing phenomena and is always based on a number of factors (Prevodnik & Vehovar, 2023). This is because what it was yesterday may not be same with what it is today and then what it will be tomorrow and the nearest future.

The narrative around the culture of family television viewing has seen significant changes in the past two decades or thereabout. The changes seen in the culture reflect a shift in societal values, evolving viewer habits as well as technological advancements seen within the period. A major shift is that of a change from shared experience to individual viewing. According to Courtois and Nelissen (2018), there are emerging alternative social patterns that favour screen technologies other than those in the living room, and this is even in the face of robust family television viewing. The implication of the foregoing is that despite the continuity of family television viewing, there seem to be other alternatives that have emerged, and these are about viewing television as individuals using other screen technology which is a direct reference of the use of mobile phones, computers and tablets. In its actual sense, the rise of personal devices and platforms offering streaming services, there is increase in situations where family members watch content separately rather the age-long practice of gathering around a single television set.

Another key change in the family television viewing culture is from the perspective of a shift from broadcast to on-demand viewership. No doubt that there is a decline in the traditional broadcast

patterns of media consumption among families (Vanattenhoven & Geerts, 2015). Family most frequently explores the on-demand features available in televising viewing in modern times, and this is informed by choice and freedom to choose what programming to see on television. This is in disregard for family time where members are able to converge and see the same content on the big screen. It is against this backdrop that Ross (2024) explained that the world has seen a dramatic transformation in the way entertainment is consumed because of the world of content now at the fingertips due to the evolution of broadcasting in the modern era. Ross (2024) detailed the different eras of television evolution from the era of radio waves to that referred to as the golden age, and then the arrival of TV, the rise of cable and satellite, and that of digital revolution which is the streaming era.

In the digital era, there is personalised content, social media and the growth of podcast as major features of broadcasting (Ross, 2024). In the era streaming enabled the possibility of binge watching where narrative, dramatic and suspense-filled contents can be viewed in sequence with focus and over a long period (Fatemi, 2022). And this has spurred increase diversity and representation where television is all about movies and shows displaying more diverse characters, perspective and storylines that reflect the complexity of contemporary society. Put in another way, content creation is in contemporary society and time focused on diversity. According to Shabo (2023), research efforts in the past decade have shown that there is a seeming improvement in inclusive and diverse representation in film and television. This is another major change seen in the 21st century family television viewing with a focus on content streaming.

Additionally, there is also the case of the rise of streaming services and attendant change in role of parents. The changing times are presenting tougher times for parental control decision process (Moss & Waddell, 2023). In no small measure, streaming platforms like Hulu, Netflix, and Disney+ are transforming family television consumption patterns as personalised recommendations and niche content are in the offering. These platforms have created access to abundant content now available to the TV viewing public (Bouqueau, 2024; Carroni & Paolini, 2020; Pakhliwal, 2023). Consequently, parents have increased responsibilities and new roles to navigate and regulate their children's TV/content viewing habits. This is important to ensure a balance in exposure to education and entertainment content.

There is another angle of co-viewing and shared experience being rediscovered by families coupled with integration of digital media literacy. It was thought that watching TV as a family is a thing of the past but recent revelations from novel research efforts show otherwise as results indicate that co-viewing on connected television keeps rising (Fangel, 2024). According to Fangel (2024), television viewing habits that are non-linear are disappearing giving way to individual content consumption and this is based on a study conducted by Ipsos and Google. The liberties ensured by the new ways of co-

viewing also call for some form of literacy on the use of digital media. It is based on the concept of digital media literacy which focuses on critical analysis of media contents (Zhuri & Arif, 2024). Accordingly, families must realise the impact of digital technologies and consider issues like cyberbullying, online safety, and the idea of digital native and citizenship in media and TV content consumption.

The evolution of traditional family values is another key change seen in family television viewing culture in the digital age. In an increasing fashion, movies and TV shows continue to depict non-traditional family structures, and this is a reflection of the diversity in the modern family unit while normalising and lessening stigma with such structures (Ade & Long-Crowell, 2023). To a reasonable extent, Disney animated films have continued to portray familial interactions in their content (Zurcher et al., 2018) which implies that there no break from the known tradition of depicting and enacting family life to further strengthen the unit.

The impact of social media and influencer culture is another major change in the family TV viewing culture. According to Nnamene (2021), social media seemingly have influence on family because members of the units continued to get addicted to platforms. The implication of the foregoing is that more time is spent on platforms when compared to that spent with family. Accordingly, influencers also weigh considerable influence on their followers especially the younger generation of users (Muhammad, 2022). And they are part and parcel of the family unit – which implies that the influence is greater and wider than anticipated. This forms part of the narratives in the changing landscape in family TV viewing culture because people and technology shape content consumption.

Digital Media, Content Creators and the Changing Family Television Culture

One cannot simply wish away the influence of digital media and technologies in respect of the changing family television culture. This is chiefly because every other thing changing alongside family television culture is centered on technology. In no small measure, technology has a strong influence on the way contents are produced and distributed in the modern era. According to Jeljeli et al. (2022), technology especially social media platforms, plays a huge role in the production of audio-visual contents. So, there is an increase in content options for the audience. A vast array of content is in offering because of digital technologies and this is just to cater to diverse interests and age groups.

Personalisation is thought to be another possible way digital media and content creators contributed to the changing family TV viewing culture, and this birthed the idea of content personalisation in the digital media era. It has been described as the way for growth for media streaming service providers (Dodda, 2022). According to Dodda (2022), personalised content is one of the

numerous ways through which players can gain competitive edge in the era where media and entertainment space has become crowded. The implication of the foregoing is that personalisation of content is seen as the future. In respect of family TV viewing culture, being able to personalise content means that members of the family will set their preferences and watch their favourite programmes individually.

Digital media has also provided the grounds for new creators and more voices in the content creation sphere. According to Collins (2023), technology has opened door for democratisation of content creation which has provided opportunities for people to transform their passions into professions. Through the availability of digital technologies and the digital media factor, content creation is democratised and new and diverse voices emerged. Democratisation of content refers to a situation whereby ordinary users (rather than the established and traditional content providers in the industry) have the enablement to produce, edit, personalise, and distribute digital media (Chandler & Munday, 2011). Additionally, Ledo (2023) asserts that small studios and individual creators are able to produce content with millions as audience members and this has widened the entertainment and media landscapes. This has also added significantly to the way family access contents.

A shift from passive to active viewing for audiences is another important area of consideration in the changing family TV viewing culture. This is mainly done through interactive content and social media that combine to encourage audience participation and engagement. In the real sense, interactive contents are more effective (Barreto, 2024). It is an established notion that the audience is now an active creator of content through participation. Accordingly, the audience has moved from being a passive content consumer to active content creator (Eltringham, 2014). This is somewhat akin to the active audience theory that individual audience members are not passive consumers but actively engaged in making a meaning out of text which in itself is an active process. According to Chandler and Munday (2011), the active involvement of the audience in the process involves comprehension, perception, interpretation, evaluation, and response.

Changing the role of traditional TV organisation/outlets is another demonstration of a changing family TV viewing culture. Traditional TV outlets are no longer the sole source of new and entertainment as digital media has become a vibrant competitor in the information era. According to (Anyanwu et al., 2024), there was an era when the traditional media outlets were dominant but not anymore. However, they are still considered sources of authentic and reliable news (Fotopoulos, 2023; O'Neil, 2022). As for entertainment, the space is now liberalised as digital media platforms leverage on the internet and social media to create content for a global audience with streaming platforms paving way for diverse and original content posing a serious challenge to cinema and traditional TV (Sharma,

2023). This also alters family TV viewing culture in some ways as individuals engage in content based on preferences.

Evolution of family viewing habits in the area of access is a significant area of consideration in respect of changing family TV viewing culture and the digital media and content creators' factors. Families are now at liberty to watch content across multiple platforms, environments and devices. In essence, they are able to access content through diverse platforms like social media, streaming platforms and many more (Berman, 2023; McGraw, 2024; Stasi, 2019). YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Netflix, Hulu and more are some of the prominent social media and streaming platforms for the current digital era. Family members are also able to see content at flexible times in the office, at home, in their various bedrooms and not necessarily the living room anymore (this is the essence of the liberalised environment of access). Additionally, mobile technologies can also grant families access to content bringing about new ways of accessing content and modifying family TV viewing culture.

Families are motivated to co-create and collaborate. Influenced by the level-playing field and the surge in content monetisation by technology companies, families are not just interested in contents only but actively engaged in production and distribution of content. No doubt that technology has helped a great deal in the family quest for bonding (Sadowski & Eklund, 2021). A lot of families create and share content together across social media platforms. Family members are able to produce materials with their private smartphones to tell their own stories thereby creating content for a target audience (Thimm, 2023). This has altered content consumption for most families. In addition, it is belief to fosters scenarios where co-creation and bonding is prioritised in the actual sense as they may sit together to watch their editions which is a valuable family practice.

There is also the influence on the increase in influencers marketing. Social media influencers promote products, services and content and this shape viewing choices (Erwin, 2023). Content creators rely heavily on digital media and new media technologies to be successful at what they do; creating content for the newfound audience segment. As they do this, they become favourite on-screen personalities of people's family members. This has created influencers in their own right which in turn encourages influencers marketing. This also impacts on the family because each member may have one or more influencers they follow. The implication is that they may not fancy content or ads wherein their favourite celebrity is not featured. This hampers significantly family TV viewing culture in our contemporary society.

A study conducted by Courtois and Nelissen (2018) revealed that even in the face of a robust family television viewing, there is the emergence of alternative social patterns that favour individual viewing and that this has led to lower closeness between generations. Younger people that watch

television together were seen to have higher levels of closeness with others, the study further showed. This also implies that a lot of young persons spend so much time on the Internet. This is closely related to the one conducted by Egielewa and Umolu (2022) where findings showed that while children spent an average of 6 hours daily communicating with the use of mobile phones, their parents spend 3.7 hours using devices to communicate.

There is a strong correlation between TV viewing by parents and the children's screen time, studies have shown (Bassul et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2015). This is an indication that the more parents stay glued to their screens bet television or mobile phone, the more their children will also do similar or same act. In a study conducted by Brignall and van Valey (2005) findings showed that individuals have gotten so used to the Internet to the point that they neglect family time showing a preference for technological gadgets over family. This is a validation of the point that technology plays a significant role in the way we act and this stems from the technological determinism theory.

Related to the foregoing result is the one that the way humans interact with one another in modern time has greatly been altered by the Internet factor (Ahuja, 2023). This significant shift has changed a lot of things including time spent with family on and off prime time. According to the findings of research by Kirkorian et al. (2009), there is a decrease in both quality and quantity of the interaction between parents and their children once TV is considered to be in the background. It is actually the negative impact of TV on development. This is also in line with the findings of a study by Keating (2011) where exposure to electronics especially TV to have negative impact on their development. And in a world where the exposure is now on a personal level, then the effect may be magnified.

Accordingly, in an era where there are abundant content materials on account of a surge in content creation enabled by the digital revolution, the issues are exacerbated. For instance, in a study conducted by Uche et al. (2020), findings showed that entertainment-enabled digital communication resources/technologies and television have occasioned family audience segmentation making scenarios for family meeting to view contents a difficult situation. This is similar to that of Ufuophu-Biri and Ijeh (2022) which showed that digital entertainment tools coupled with television has segmented members of the family with negative effect on unity. This is an issue for society because as the cradle of human development, families must enjoy a bond for proper growth and development of children.

Discussion

From the studies reviewed above, it is evident that there is a close relationship between the rise in content creation, streaming, social media adoption and their use as channel of information and communication, and of course, the shift from a modestly traditional family television viewing culture.

These are linked on both the surface and the depth of the matter. From different perspectives ranging from the change in media content consumption patterns to that of the technological mediation effects, the links are visible. A notable one is that of a familial viewing to individual viewing culture. This encapsulates the major changes seen in this regard. New media technology tools like mobile phones and computers bridged the gaps and enabled individual access and view of contents across different platforms. The fact that contents can also be created in simplified and multidimensional ways creates another notable situation in the changes seen in family TV viewing culture in contemporary society.

The Internet creates a global form of converged communities where the virtual is preferred to the physical. According to Duarte (2024), the world generates about 402.74 million terabytes of data each day. And the world currently has over 5.44 billion internet users across the world an indication of 67.1 percent of the population of persons in the world (Petrosyan, 2024). The figures are massive and so may imply that a large amount of contents ranging from comedy videos to family reality contents and live sessions created and recorded by individual content creators are available to subscribers on the Internet with free access in most cases. This is on the basis of what known content creators generate on a daily basis. It is also in line with the assumption of technological determinism theory on account of the opportunities created by technologies in the way contents are produced in contemporary society.

Technology is, therefore, a major part of the changing times and it does shape how things are done in the content creation and streaming sphere. From the simple devices like the mobile phones, tablet computers, video cameras to the complex ones like the Canva, Audacity, Google Trends, Grammarly and many more used for producing contents, the space is becoming liberalised and complex as well. The space is liberalised because many individuals now venture into the art of content creation creating different types of content. Complex because breaking into the sphere has become tough for beginners as they may need to vigorously pursue followership, views, engagements and more to stay relevant. These are also necessary to survive in the business of content creation.

Family members now more than ever are made to follow influencers and pages on the web and Internet just to catch up with content in the form of entertainment and news. They equally need to have new media technology tools like mobile phones and also have access to the Internet to access virtual spaces where the contents are posted. This is an emphasis on the place of technology in the changing culture of family TV viewing. Therefore, it suffices to state that the point of technology being a factor in the changing times of content creation and streaming coupled with the changing family TV viewing culture mirrors the assumption of the technological determinism on the powers of technology to shape how humans think, act and see things in society.

Though there is a shift in the TV watching culture, research revealed that a number of households still use TV to watch children shows with top 10 of such being streaming services (Swinburne University of Technology, 2022). This implies that streaming might as well be the future of family television viewing culture. Though there may be no room for sitting together to see movies and watch television in most cases, streaming services will help families catch-up on same shows creating opportunities to have something to talk about at dinner time. This is another unique twist to the diminishing culture of family television viewing culture that was once popular with families all over the world.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall, this study has highlighted a significant relationship between digital content creation, technology, streaming and modern TV viewing culture where there is less consideration of family time. There is no gainsaying that the information era characterised by the growing ICTs and new media capabilities created opportunities for individuals to venture into content creation. Audiences of modern technology-enabled contents are part and parcel of the family unit and as they take interest in such contents, be it entertainment or news; there is an attendant drift from the established norm of watching TV together as one unit. This is on account of new media technologies like mobile phones; the laptop and tablets are mostly personal use which promotes individual viewing over the group. Nevertheless, it is not the end of an era in respect of family TV viewing. While there is significant change in the TV viewing cultures by families occasioned by the digital creation factor and digital media access, there is still an element of a positive correlation between the two as families can co-view using technology enabled by streaming services.

The researchers recommended that:
1. Family members must understand the important place of the family and still create opportunities to converge as one unit to see content so as to create space for bonding and quality communication. Smart TV and other digital technologies can be used to make this happen as streaming platforms can be accessed via multiple family-friendly technology devices.
2. Technology companies should continue to advance research endeavours that could promote family TV viewing culture for the preservation of the cradle of human development. This is more so owing to the "established" and "known" that such could promote quality communication and bonding.

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Authors' Bio

Kelvin Inobemhe is a lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication, Lagos Campus of Glorious Vision University, Nigeria. He currently pursues a PhD in the main campus of the same university. He holds a Master of Science (MSc) degree from Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria. He has authored and co-authored several books. The researcher is well-published in reputable national and international journals. His research interests include new media, journalism and political communication. He is a member of professional bodies such as the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR), African Council for Communication Education (ACCE) Nigeria and International Communication Association (ICA) Nigeria. Mr. Inobemhe can be contacted through his emails: inobemhe@nsuk.edu.ng or kelvin.inobemhe@gvu.edu.ng; ORCID https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5748-0066; Google Scholar https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=-J10k6gAAAAJ.

Sharifatu Gago Ja'afaru is a doctoral student at Glorious Vision University, Ogwa, Edo State, Nigeria. She had her degrees in Mass Communication at the University of Jos, Bayero University, Kano and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education at University of Maiduguri, Nigeria. Her research interests are in peacebuilding communication, journalism, new media and gender studies. She has published widely in scholarly journals of national and international purview. As part of her interest in media peacebuilding, she was selected as a media content producer for UNDP Nigeria and produced a documentary for the organisation titled "That Peace May Reign". She was a correspondent for Unijosechoonline and a freelance writer for the Nigerian Standard Newspaper, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. Ja'afaru is a member of Association of Communication Scholars & Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN).

Daniel O. Ekhareafo PhD is an associate professor and Acting Head of the Department of Mass Communication, University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. He has widely published scholarly works in local and international journals. Dr. Ekhareafo has authored and co-authored several books while serving in various capacities on editorial boards.