



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**The Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media on Journalistic Practice:
Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate in Focus**

By

Demeke kebede Belay

December, 2017

Addis Ababa

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**A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University, Graduate School of Journalism and
Communication in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of
Arts in Journalism and Communication**

Advisor: Zenebe Beyene (Ph.D)

December, 2017

Addis Ababa

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and all the sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Approval

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Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my heart-felt gratitude to my advisor, Dr. Zenebe Beyene for his invaluable advice, constructive suggestions and corrections throughout my thesis work that gave the paper its present shape. This thesis could not have been written without him who not only served as my advisor but also encouraged me and has been so friendly and supportive.

My gratitude also goes to Ato Tenaw Alemu (Assistant Professor), and all the staff members of the graduate School of Journalism and Communications, Addis Ababa University.

Special thanks must also go to my wife, Dr. Tsegereda G/Medhin as well as my daughters , for their unreserved encouragement and love. And my all family (Ayaye's home and Abi's home), thank you!

My thanks are due to my friends Yoseph, Thomas, Daniel, Gera, Habtamu G/Michael and Zerihun, who, in one way or another, added value to this research. I would also like to thank all my staff members at the National Eye Bank of Ethiopia, especially Wro. Lemlem Ayele.

Finally, I really appreciate all the respondents of the research, EBC's and FBC's management members and staffs, who helped me beyond my request!!

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Abstract

The Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media on Journalistic Practice: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate in Focus

By Demeke Kebede

Addis Ababa University, 2017

The main objective of the study was to assess "the opportunities and challenges of social media on journalistic practice: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) in Focus". The study examined the rate of journalists' social media utilization for their day to day journalistic practice, how social media is changing the ways in which journalists' information gathering and reporting process, and what are the opportunities and the challenges for journalistic practice in the age of social media. Data was collected using mixed (qualitative and quantitative) method. Questionnaire, In-Depth Interview and Focus Group Discussion was deployed in study during May, 2017 - August, 2017. The findings of the study showed that all respondents (241- 100%) prefer Facebook. Most of the FGD participants and Interviewees also confirmed that Facebook is their first choice, and You Tube is their next preference. Even though the majority, 213 (88.38%), of respondents are into the social media for information purpose, only 157 (65.7%) journalists are using for journalistic practice. Among theses 157 respondents, almost half of them (49.68%) sometimes use it and only 2.54% often visit it. The majority of FGD participants and Interviewees also agreed as they are not often uses social media for their practice. Therefore, the use of social media for journalistic purpose is not that significant, though it's increasingly growing by the day. The finding also reveals that, of the total 241 respondents, 175 (72.61%) and the majority of FGD participants as well as Interviewees believes the social media presents both challenges and opportunities. Helping as a means for agenda dissemination and source of agenda, information gathering and reporting, being an alternative platform for the journalists themselves as well as their media organizations, accessing immediate feedback from audiences and networked opportunity with professionals are among the opportunities. On the one hand, social media is challenging big agendas by diverting trivial issues, hate speeches, defamations and fake news. Finally, the study finds out, despite recognizing the significance of the social media, both journalists and the media houses have not been exploiting the potential of the social media to the best of their interest. Therefore, it needs proper training, attention and leadership both from the media houses, journalists, researchers, educational institutions as well as policy makers.

List of Acronyms

- AAU** - Addis Ababa University
- BBC** - British Broadcasting Corporation
- CNN** - Cable News Network
- EBC** - Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation
- FBC** - Fana Broadcasting Corporate

Definitions of Terms

The definition of the following terms in the study is as follows:

Agenda Setting: Agenda setting is the idea that what the public thinks about is set by the media.

Information Gathering: the process of collecting information about something.

Journalistic Practice: The practice of journalism in information gathering, reporting, writing, recording and editing, agenda setting, getting interaction with audiences, editorial meeting, and disseminating programs or news through different platforms.

Mainstream Media: is a term used to refer collectively to the various large mass news media that influence a large number of people, and both reflect and shape prevailing currents of thought. or the conventional media like EBC and FBC.

Newsroom: is the central place where journalists—reporters, editors, and producers, along with other staffers—work to gather, edit and produce news to be broadcasted.

Participants: the focus group members and interviewees who had participated in the research.

Respondents: all the research target journalists who had participated in the research.

Social Media: social networks, like Facebook, You Tube, Twitter and LinkedIn and others.

Chapter One

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

News consumption today is not the same as pre-satellite news when people waited for their morning papers or sat down at an appointed time for the evening news on television. News consumption today is not the same as pre-internet news when people tune into events happening around the world through 24-hour television news channels. More recently, a growing number of readers, viewers and listeners are going online for their news. Television, newspapers and radio are still here but there is a growing competition from interactive social media (Alejandro, 2010: 5). Thomas (2013:51), also said that social media are becoming an alternative means for information gathering and dissemination around the globe.

Contrary to their important advantages to the people, these massive social media reporting through text, video, blogs, pictures, status updates and live news feed and event reporting over facebook, twitter, MySpace, and micro blogs poses serious challenges for any news room in any media house around the world. On the other hand, these new media platforms are also great opportunities if the media houses develop new sets of skills and strategies that enable them exploit these new found technologies as best as possible. According to Thomas (2013:51),the social media have particularly transformed the gathering, processing and dissemination of information. It also allows citizens to report on events happening around them given they have smart phone and strong internet connection.

This global phenomenon applies to Ethiopia as the expansion of internet penetrates the Ethiopian media landscape. Now the traditional media have lost their sole grip on information, and their power to report news whichever way they like to. Citizen journalism is challenging the traditional media in the country. In fact the traditional media here are playing a great role in addressing public information even though they already are suffering from a trust deficit because of the emergence of social media. Currently, the scale of the challenge for the traditional media even gets bigger. On the other hand, the social media also offers great opportunities to gather news tips and public agendas from a range of sources on the social media. It also makes life easier for media houses as it provides multiple platforms for reporting and dissemination. Therefore, this study examined the challenges and opportunities in the Ethiopian media context focusing on EBC and FBC, the two largest broadcast media houses in the country.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

New-media technology causes serious impact on established journalism. The vast bulk of public and commercial media are changing, as the new media fluxes its new found power in the media landscape. The new media offer the opportunity to transform the news media into a more open, interactive and useful forum for information and debate (Shirky, 2008:72). As news becomes non-linear and open-sourced, journalism is changing in many ways. The new media are more than posting comment on a blog or sending out photo to a website.

In the old days, a reporter was given a lead or went out to find a story. Today, many stories are received third hand (sometimes even fourth or fifth hand) through Facebook posts or Tweets so that by the time a story is assigned to the reporter, the story in some form or another is already out there in the social media universe. The reporter now has to take that into consideration and find different angle to the story that is not yet being talked about. As to the notion of scoops and breaking news, a lot of tips or leads these days are from the web or what's "trending" in social networks like Twitter, Facebook or its popularity on search volume patterns in search engines like Google or Bing (Alejandro, 2010: 9).

Journalists are forced to accelerate the traditional journalistic process because people now want real time information (www.v3con.com, retrieved March 15,2017). People want the information as soon as the journalist or the media outlet receives it. So to sit on a story until it is complete is to risk being out-scooped by competitors or even worse to be dubbed slow by the public (Shirky, 2008:26). It is now a necessity to give the audience bits of information at a time, as soon as the information is available, added Shirky. In this era of 21st century journalism, no media outlet can afford to wait. Why? Traditionally, media outlets compete to out-scoop each other but today if they hold on to a story too long, they run the risk of being out-scooped by amateurs such as bloggers, citizen journalists and twitterers.

Generally, the media and communication scientists agree that, the current technological landscape shows tremendous promise and present numerous opportunities for news and its practitioners. Opposite to their opportunities, social media poses a serious challenge. The fake news which circulates in social media erodes public trust and credibility. These pose critical impact on the traditional media in Ethiopia as is the case elsewhere.

In a country like Ethiopia, where the media has no effective power of serving as a watchdog to the government and where it is illegal and impossible to carry on political discourse openly and freely, the role of Social Media in breaking this swamp and using as an alternative means of information is of paramount importance (Tesfaye, 2013:30). These social media rooms host various political news and views including patriotism, democratic system, good governance, election, and opinion regarding public policies. As to Tesfaye's conclusion, in Ethiopia, the social media has become a viable option and people started to turn onto it. It implies that, social media can be a challenge on audience share to Ethiopian Media.

According to Ethiopian Reporter Amharic Newspaper (21 December 2016 edition), quoted Ethiopian Government Communications Affairs Office and Ethio Telecom, Ethiopia's Internet penetration reaches 13.6 million in 2016. Among these Internet users, 4.3 million local Ethiopian and 2 million Ethiopian Diasporas use different social media outlets, especially facebook. In addition, IT News Africa 2016 reports, in contrary remarks, with the total of 330 million internet users in Africa and over 44% of them on Facebook. With 3.7 million Facebook users, Ethiopia ranked 7th place among African countries. Therefore, it is outwardly possible to say that, using social media for alternative means to disseminate news and programs to audiences can give media houses and journalists an enormous advantages.

But, the researcher doubts, EBC and FBC journalists as well as the media houses are effectively using the opportunities of social media for journalistic practice. Therefore, it tries to see how they understand the new media, what real time challenges they are facing and how equipped to exploit the opportunities in their practice.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objectives

The general objective of this thesis is to assess, the opportunities and challenges of social media in journalistic practices focused on Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the study incorporate:

- To explore the extent of journalists' Social Media utilization for their journalistic practice,
- To examine how social media is changing the ways in which EBC's and FBC's Journalists information gathering and reporting process,
- To assess the advantages/opportunities and disadvantages/challenges of social media for journalistic practice, and
- To suggest mechanisms to overcome the challenges to perform journalistic practice in the age of social media.

1.4. Research Questions

The research attempts to answer the following questions:

- How often EBC and FBC journalists are using social media for their journalistic practice?
- How social media are changing the information gathering and reporting process?
- What are the advantages/opportunities and disadvantages/challenges of social media for journalistic practice?
- How do journalists perceive the emergence social media for their activity and media houses ?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The social media are the new technological phenomena. And there is a shortage of research materials about the integration of social media and traditional media in Ethiopian context. Therefore, the study is significant to contribute to fill the knowledge gap in understanding the general characteristics of the use of social media utilization in journalistic practice. It is also important to point up the opportunities social media asserts and the challenges of social media which affects the day to day practice of media professionals.

This study would also establish a background for understanding on how EBC and FBC are using social media as an alternative platform. It helps to know the major opportunities they gained and the challenges they faced to measure their reality in the global context. It helps these media houses to expand the best experiences and to put proper solutions for the drawbacks.

In addition to the above, the study can help policy makers to have a better insight how social media is changing the process of information flow. It helps them to understand that, how the social media agenda are raised and processed as well as expand by opinion leaders. Therefore, they can understand how the country's media landscape is using social media in setting public agenda that have a greater impact to the nation.

The result can also be used as a framework for other researchers to have a ground information about the study target media houses and journalists. It can help them to escalate their research in the area, especially the challenges and opportunities social media in contrary to Ethiopian mainstream media context.

1.6. Scope of the Study

According to the data found from Ethiopian Broadcast Authority (2016), there are a total of 31 radio stations which are broadcasting nationwide, regional, and community level. And also there are 3 Television stations which are broadcasting nationally and internationally. The rest 5 are regional television stations. As per the data, approximately 3000 employees are working for Ethiopian based broadcast media (both in public or government and private media).

EBC and FBC are the old and huge media houses in Ethiopia by having a grand total of more than 1200 reporters, it is almost half of the nations' data. And from them, 795 journalists are working at the headquarters of EBC and FBC in Addis Ababa, the rest are working for branches offices at regional cities. It can be understood that, how vast it is.

Above all, the researcher observes, EBC and FBC had a wide range of geographical coverage, broadcasts their stories in multiple languages and have a variety of platforms, i.e radio, television and website as well as social media accounts.

Due to the above reasons, the research is generally designed to analyze the opportunities and major challenges of social media for journalists working in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate. The study does not include other media professionals and their practice as well as EBCs and FBCs regional offices to make the research manageable and generalizable. Therefore, the horizon of the study is delimited to only at the head quarters, Addis Ababa, operational surroundings of EBC and FBC.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

Social media are new technologies and the researcher couldn't find enough researches and materials in accordance with Ethiopian mainstream media context, as per the need. No study has also been conducted with regard to the level of journalist's use of the social media too. Therefore, lack of secondary sources has somehow limited the opportunity to cross triangulate the findings of various researches outputs.

In addition, since social media technologies are a new phenomena, there was a confusion on the selection of theoretical framework which are best suits to social media research.

During data collection, some of targeted journalists were at field work and it has made difficult to gather more data.

Besides, the study did not include all journalists in EBC and FBC as well as Other Media Professionals as the sampled group because of the financial and time constraints. What is more, some respondents were also unenthusiastic to express their views transparently.

1.8. Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter gives an introduction on background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study.

The second Chapter reviews the literatures, i.e. the theoretical framework of the study and issues that are related to journalists and social media utilization for their journalistic practice.

The third Chapter presents discussions on the methodology employed to conduct this study and the reasons why the researcher has chosen quantitative and qualitative methodology.

The fourth Chapter discusses the analysis and presentation of the data. This chapter discusses all the data collected from respondents.

Finally, chapter five provides the summary of major findings, conclusion and recommendations.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2. Introduction

This chapter deals with the overview of scholarly works on the social media, global media, the role of the social media in the processes of journalistic practice, the historical development of the social media, the internet industry in comparison with other media, the common application area of the social media, and associated opportunities and challenges. An introduction to the arguments of relatable theories to the theme of the study would also be discussed and it is written under American Psychological Association (APA) style as below.

2.1. Understanding Social Media

2.1.1. Evolution of Internet (New Media)

The Internet is the most recent of the mass media. It is still rapidly evolving and changing, just as radio did in the 1920s and television in the 1950s (Hanson,2011:213).

Like radio, the Internet was not conceived initially as a mass medium. Instead, the first wide-area computer networks were designed to enable academics and military researches to share data. But these early users soon found that the most useful benefit of the network was being able to send electronic mail to one another instantly (Ibid).

Although the earliest components of the Internet were in use by 1969, the Net was limited largely to interpersonal communication until 1991, when Tim Berners-Lee released the World Wide Web as an easy and uniform way to access material on the Internet. E. Hanson (2011:213) added, how Internet grows immediately. Since then the Internet has become a medium unlike any other because it is the only one that incorporate elements of interpersonal, group, and mass communications.

2.1.2. The Rise of Social Media

With the coming of the new media, people who have long been on the receiving end of one-way mass communication are now increasingly likely to become producers and transmitters. From Indy media to the future BBC, the distinction between information producers and consumers will become increasingly difficult to draw (Creeber and Martin, 2009:18). As experiments with global citizenship

go forward, the empowerment offered by distributed, networked digital communication may become shared more widely.

The long-term picture of new media or mass media information flows is not easy to predict. Mass media news outlets are struggling with changing gate-keeping standards due to demands for interactive content produced by audiences themselves. Ordinary citizens are empowered to report on their political experiences while being held to high standards of information quality and community values. In the long run, these tendencies may be the most revolutionary aspects of the new media environment (Bennett, 2003:3).

In exploring the distinctions and complementarities between the new media and mainstream mass media, one must understand the technical distinctions between these various media forms (Banerjee, 2008:42). Mainstream mass media are typically highly centralized, require significant investment and resources and can be heavily influenced by governments through various mechanisms and forms of control

The new or alternative media on the other hand, as Banerjee (Ibid) elaborates, have radically different characteristics. The new media such as the Internet can be used for both points to mass communications as well as point-to-point and mass to point message distribution. They are also extremely de-centralized, require very low investment, provide greater interactivity and public participation and are much more difficult to control.

With this scenario, it is therefore not surprising for the new media to gain popularity and acceptance in civil society. People are now free, and have the opportunity to create their own news as well as to get the other side of the story by getting news from the Internet, which is seen as free from control (Rosenstiel, 2005:18)

Thomas's (2013:47) idea can be best suitable to conclude the Internet/New media evolution. He says, in this age of camera and video phones, and permanent Internet access, there is the very reliable possibility that whenever a newsworthy event occurs somewhere remotely public, it is recorded and reported by a technology wielder that just happens to be present.

2.1.2.1. Social Media: Definitions

Social media have been defined in various articles by various researchers. Among them, Kaplan & Haenlein (2010:26) defined it as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological

and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.

According to online journalism lecturer, Mindy McAdams (2012:7), social media can be defined as digital systems that enable people, identified by profiles, to share information. Unpacks this definition further by stating that the use of the word ‘digital’ is important as it indicates online technology. In fact, consumer-generated content – including popular social network sites such as Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Twitter – have recently become one of the foremost online communication channels (www.pewresearch.org: retrieved may, 2017).

In addition to these, another researcher Abdool puts her thought about social media:

Social media is largely defined as a group of internet-based applications built on the web, allowing the creation and exchange of content. The internet has not replaced getting out, gathering information and documents, and talking face-to-face to people during research, but in a time of information overload, the internet has made readers and viewers a part of the news gathering process (Abdool, 2015:19).

Furthermore, Reuters describes, “Social media is a term used to describe the type of media that is based on conversation and interaction between people online. Social media are media designed to be disseminated through social interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.”

From the definitions above, we can understand that, social media applications are web-based applications that allow people to create online profiles to share and receive content often generated by users themselves.

Also, the information shared through social media is two-way communication as compared to traditional media, which is described as a one-way flow of information. Social media would not be social media without profiles. Profiles allow us to friend/unfriend, follow/unfollow and include or exclude people from conversations (Abdool, 2015:20).

Kenya’s Journalism professor, Erneo Nyakundi Nyamboga, wrote several researches on social media. On one of his literature, he said this about the increasingly growing global acceptance of the social media: "Over the last five years, social media has gained popularity all over the world. Almost everyone uses Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, You Tube and other forms of social media both for social

and professional purposes. Although not everyone has gotten on board with the social media giant, it has shaped how people around the world communicate with one another" (Nyamboga, 2014:89).

In addition to that, information that was once considered off limits and inaccessible by an "average" person is now disseminated within shortest period possible, he noted. Because internet/new media outlets like Twitter, You Tube and Facebook are easily accessible to millions of people globally and they are effective platforms to disseminate headline news to mass audience.

Generally, the social media have become beneficial and increasingly essential communication channels, says Professor Jim McNamara. It is because of:

- The increasing use of social media as sites of news and information among an increasing percentage of people;
- The heavy use and reliance on social media among young demographics in particular;
- The extensive sharing of news and information that occurs through social media and social networks, extending the audience of mass media;
- Referrals to major news sites that frequently come through social media (e.g., in online conversations and posting links);
- The growing use of social media for customer, employee and citizen initiated public communication, including comments about brands, products and services.

2.1.2.2. Social Media: Forms/Types

Social media takes on many different forms including magazines, internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, micro blogging, wikis, podcasts, photographs or pictures, video, rating and social bookmarking. With the world in the midst of a social media revolution, it is more than obvious that social media like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Orkut, MySpace, Skype etc., are used extensively for the purpose of communication (Nyamboga, 2014:89). This form of communication can be with a person or a group of persons (Eberhardt, 2007:32).

Below is a brief discussion of some of social media forms:

i. Facebook

Facebook is a popular, free, social networking website that allows registered users to create profiles, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends or contacts, family and colleagues (<http://whatis.techtarget.com/definition/Facebook>: retrieved may,2017).

Facebook sprung from its roots as a school-based social network to become the most popular social networking site in the world with more than 200 million members (Nyamboga, 2014). In the beginning of 2009, Mark Zuckerberg, founder of Facebook, equated Facebook to a nation; he said Facebook would be the eighth largest country in the world. As of 2010, it would stand as the third largest country in the world, right behind China and India and ahead of the United States with a “population” of 700,000,000 users.

Currently, <http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/> (2016) reports, Facebook is still the leading social network in 129 out of 137 countries analyzed, with near 1,6 billion monthly active users. It has 540 million users in Asia Pacific (+44 million since last December), 323 million in Europe (+12 million), 219 million in USA & Canada (+6 million), 509 million in the rest of the world (+38 million in six months).

A few keys to Facebook’s success are: its ability to appeal to both people and businesses; the success of Facebook’s developers network, which has turned facebook into a thriving platform; and Facebook Connects ability to reach out to the rest of the web and provide a single login that works across multiple sites (Nyamboga, 2014:89).

Abdool also says, within each member's personal profile, there are several key networking functions. The most popular is called the Wall, which is a virtual bulletin board. Messages left on a member's Wall can be text, video or photos. Another popular component is the virtual Photo Album. Photos can be uploaded from the desktop or directly from a smart-phone camera (Abdool, 2015). There is no limitation on quantity; however, facebook can remove inappropriate or copyrighted images. An interactive album feature allows the member's contacts known as “friends” to comment on each other's photos and identify and tag people in the photos.

Another popular profile component is “status updates”, a micro blogging feature that allows members to broadcast short announcements to their friends. All interactions are published in news feed, which is distributed in real-time to the member's friends. Facebook also provides its users with a “Check in” feature from a smart phone. This allows users to post their location from where they are and can see their friends’ new post any time (Abdool, 2015:7).

ii. Twitter

In 2006 three college dropouts developed Twitter, a new medium that combines elements of mobile text messaging, online instant messaging, and a good dose of blogging. It has more than 5 million

people regularly answering the questions, “what are you doing?” in 140 characters or less. Evan Williams, Jack Dorsey and Biz Stone started micro blogging Twitter service as a project while they were working for the podcasting company Odeo.

Twitter is a free, social networking micro blogging service that allows registered members to broadcast short posts. These short messages are called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast tweets and follow other users' tweets by using multiple platforms and devices (Abdool, 2015:7).

The default settings for Twitter are public. Unlike Facebook or LinkedIn, where members need to approve social connections, anyone can follow anyone on public Twitter. To weave tweets into a conversation thread or connect them to a general topic, members can add hash-tags to a keyword in their post. The hash-tag, is expressed as #keyword (<http://whatis.techtarget.com>).

Micro-blogging allows people to publish short messages to other subscribers of a specific web service. According to Nyamboga (2014:90), the most famous micro-blogging service is Twitter. There were over 500 million Twitter users by March 2012.

The writer of a book called Mass Communication, Ralph E. Hanson, elaborates how twitter evolution is impactful in communication. “Twitter is designed to let people communicate with their friends, family, and coworkers using messages, known as ‘tweets’ (E.Hanson, 2011)”. He added that, the 140 characters limit of tweets is essential to its success.

Twitter is a key new communication technology because it bridges the gap between mobile phones, mobile Internet, and traditional computer-based Internet access.

Twitter has quickly become an important tool for journalists. When breaking news occurs in any part of the world, Twitterers quickly agree on a tag that organizes the material comprising a hash mark and a short word. Once you have the “hashtag”, you can then use Twitter’s search engine to filter out everything but those tweets that are intending to comment on or report on a news event (Alejandro, 2010).

This social media platform, as per <http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/> 2016 report, has more than 320 million active monthly users.

iii. YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing website created by three former PayPal employees in February 2005. Users can upload, view and share video with this medium (Nyamboga, 2014:90).

YouTube has over 1 billion website visitors per month and is the second most popular search engine behind Google, <http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/> 2016 reports.

iv. Blogs

One of the easiest ways that journalists can pass information and express themselves is to have a personal blog. Journalists also have blogs, which they use to dialogue and get feedback. Journalists can also use blogs to write about something that they are passionate about (Nyamboga, 2014:90).

The integral element of a blog is dialogue and actively encourages feedback and comments. Journalistic blogs tend to have a personal flavor and informal writing style where someone can express their own opinions (Schaefer, 2012).

v. Google+

Google+ aims to make sharing on the web more like sharing in real life (Schaefer, 2012). Google+ has joined the big leagues registering 418 active million users as of December 2015.

vi. LinkedIn

Founded on December 14, 2002, and launched on May 5, 2003, LinkedIn is one the most popular social media site for professional networking. The website is available in 24 languages and has over 400 million registered users. LinkedIn is great for people looking to connect with people in similar industries, networking with local professionals and displaying business related information and statistics (<http://vincos.it/world-map-of-social-networks/>).

vii. Instagram

Instagram is a visual social media platform. The site, launched on October 6, 2010, has more than 400 million active users and is owned by Facebook. Many of its users use it to post information about travel, fashion, food, art and similar subjects. The platform is also distinguished by its unique filters together with video and photo editing features. Almost 95 percent of Instagram users also use Facebook.

2.2. Social Media and Journalism

For many years the media evolution from print to radio, to TV and now online media has continued to influence mass opinions and perceptions. However, the emergence of social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube has taken this very concept a step further, with some arguing that

social media now shape the opinions, perception and actions of the majority whose opinions were previously shaped by information from traditional and mainstream media houses (Thomas, 2013:24).

According to Thomas, today's web and the new media underpin the ability to create instant communication sensations. From Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and a collection of blogs, a news statement can advance from zero to 20 million viewers overnight. The viral nature of this highly social, user-driven environment enables complete strangers to connect over common beliefs, desires or interests and together creates winners and losers (Ibid).

In what we refer to as the "information age" or "digital age" our technological advancements in the area of ICT have helped overcome limitations of time and space in communication, information sharing and networking.

The emergence of social media has made it possible for anyone with access to technologies, such as a smart phone and/or any mediated technology to gather, process and disseminate information to others. In the electronic media world, anyone with such facilities can make their own broadcasts, thus doing the work of conventional journalists. In his work, Tayeebwa (2016) cited in Bubuli (2014:6) notes how social media sites rival traditional media such as newspapers and television as sources of news and information. On his part, Abdelhay (2012:13) argues that the role of traditional journalists has in recent years diminished because of the emergence of citizen journalism as afforded by new technologies.

Tayeebwa (2016) cited in Naughton (2013:25) to explain the increasing power of Twitter as a news-sharing outlet, observing that it had become 'the de facto newswire for the planet.' Other scholars such as Kirkpatrick (2010) point out the increasing role of social networking sites, notably Facebook, in sourcing and disseminating journalism content. And yet, scholars such as Meyers et al. (2012) remain skeptical arguing that reports produced by citizen journalists lack the rigor afforded by professional journalists.

Despite the many challenges, both inherent to the profession and accorded by the emergence of social media, Unwin (2012) points to the freedoms that new media technologies offer for people to communicate across spaces and times, a phenomenon he refers to as the 'space-time liberty'. Such freedoms are more limited using traditional mass media. He also points to developments in mobile telephony with Internet capabilities that make it possible for ordinary citizens to share information and news that was previously a preserve of journalists, what he refers to as the 'access liberty'.

The Internet, so central to the effectiveness of social media, has brought the world and its inhabitants closer together. The field of news, where there was such notable distance between broadcaster or journalist and reader, has also found itself more familiar.

In general, social media adds a lot of opportunity for the contemporary journalism. As per Newman (2009), here are some of the advantages:

- Extended newsgathering possibilities mainly pictures, but also including leads on stories, usually through live blog reporters engaging directly with networks.
- A single copy-tasting function for social web activity, saving time elsewhere in the organization and reduced scope for mistakes.
- An accumulation of credit within communities like Twitter, including a significant number of links back to their websites or broadcasts

To sum up, what makes social media of particular interest to journalism is how it has become influential as a communication and news-breaking tool (Alejandro, 2010:22).

2.2.1. News and Social Media

According to Newman (2009), there are three key reasons for the growth of news and information in social networks:

The first one is facebook created news and activity feed in September 2006, which has become a default setting on a user's homepage. This has encouraged more linking to mainstream news sites. It has since made it easier to include links and recommendations from other news- related sites.

The second reason is mainstream audiences are now using social networks and they have brought their interests and preoccupations, including the sharing of news. Facebook's dramatic growth in global audience (December 2007–December 2008) came from people aged 35-49.

And the third reason is websites have provided icons or buttons to allow easy sharing and linking. Audio video integration with YouTube has proved a huge boom because of the younger demographic; now news sites are doing the same.

The above justifications can convince that broadcasting the news through social media is becoming popular and is viable for all mediums, including live broadcasting.

2.2.2. Social Media and Breaking News

Media today, as we know, has significantly changed from what traditionally was the practice with social media dramatically shaping the way news is consumed, distributed and reported.

The trend, as Tayeebwa (2016:27) explained, especially among the youth, the elite, and urban dwellers who are the majority social media users, is increasingly turning away from traditional media houses to social media sites for news updates consequently allowing users to share news stories, images or videos, and to discuss news issue or event.

In addition to sharing news on social media, some are also covering the news themselves, by posting photos or videos of news events. This practice has played a role in a number of recent breaking news events. ‘So what does the future hold for journalism?’ asks Tayeebwa (Ibid) in his research. He concludes that, almost unanimously, most social media users will boldly agree that breaking news, often considered the bread and butter of news outlets, is struggling and being replaced by social media channels.

While it is true that, Twitter and other social media sites have disrupted the way news breaks, it has also been argued that information that “breaks” on social media sites is often still not considered “news” by the general public until mainstream media confirms it through valid sources.

2.2.3. Social Media Application in Media Houses

Newman (2009) describes the rise of social media as constantly mutating and evolving; just when you think you have nailed it, a new combination emerges, changing perceptions again. But whatever the precise definition, there are three underlying reasons why mainstream media organizations are seriously taking social tools and networks increasingly.

- **Telling better stories:** Building on Dan Gillmor’s insight that there is always someone who knows more than you do, news organizations are crowd sourcing comments, pictures, videos insights and ideas. This supplements and complements their own newsgathering sources and enriches their output.
- **Making better relationships:** Engaged users tend to be more loyal and spend more time, making them more valuable to advertisers or for promoting and selling other company services.

- **Getting new users in:** With audiences spending more and more time with social networks, these have become the obvious place to look for the ‘hard to reach’ or reconnect with former loyalists.

The new format of online news broadcasting has come to include various types of UGC (User Generated Content) such as: polls, message boards, have your say, comments on stories, Q&A’s, blogs, reader blogs, your media your story (Thomas, 2013, cited Hermida and Thurman 2008).

- **“Polls”** are defined by very specific questions that can be answered through a multiple choice or a binary response.
- **“Message boards”** are online spaces where readers can pursue debates and conversations on diverse topics usually instigated by users.
- **“Have your say”** is similar to “Message boards” but with the main difference that usually the ones posting a question are the journalists to which readers can send versatile answers.
- The **“Comments on stories”** format permits users to contribute with their own thoughts on a story.
- **“Q&As”** represent a certain type of online interview guide, with questions submitted by readers for journalists or other guests.
- **“Blogs”** are generated by one or more writers with shared opinions and interests and allow readers to post comments on each news story.
- **“Reader blogs”** represent a new format launched in 2006 by The Sun, the UK’s best selling daily newspaper, on their official website. This allows readers to create their own blogs on diverse broadcasting servers.
- **“Your media”** is a selection of photographs, videos or other types of media submitted by users on online media galleries and reviewed by journalists.
- **“Your stories”** are online spaces where readers can send in stories that are valuable to them and can be newsworthy for a certain audience. (Thomas, 2013: 19)

2.2.4. International and Local Media’s Social Media Experience

Now a day, many news companies have turned their community editors into social media editors and have developed strategies for distributing content in social networks and for using social data to drive improved navigation experiences on their own websites. In the process, both the practice of journalism and the resulting output has become more open and more interactive – with many more opportunities for dialogue with audiences (Newman, Dutton, & Blank, 2009:12).

Let's take a glance at BBC, CNN, EBC and FBC:

2.2.4.1. British Broadcasting Corporation – BBC

Since the Asian Tsunami and the London bombings, (the BBC received 22,000 emails and text messages, and more than 300 photos, in addition to a number of video sequences shot on mobile phones on the day), when audience footage led the main news bulletins for the first time, the BBC has invested heavily in encouraging audiences to contribute direct experiences of major events. It established a well-staffed user-generated hub, to process and authenticate audience material as well as to engage more deeply with audience members to co-create content, write articles and shoot photo series (Newman, 2009:15).

Newman added, in an average week, the team processes over 10,000 email comments, 1,000 stills and up to 100 video clips; considerably more on a significant story such as the dramatic snowfalls in February 2009 (65,000 pictures submitted). The hub, i.e. the social media hub, also acts as a broker and adviser to television and radio programs looking for case studies and audience contributions, answering around 20 queries a day from across the BBC.

Sam Taylor, who is the BBC Social Media Team Manager, told Newman that BBC is using social media for its best. We never claim they have a scientific basis and we are fully aware of the flaws and the holes, but you do get an immediate and real sense of what is going on. It helps make an informed editorial judgment, in the way that you would with a tape full of vox pops(Newman, 2009:9)

Newman (Ibid) concluded that, there is a growing focus at the BBC on finding ways to improve the quality of interaction, whilst at the same time managing ever-increasing volumes. Production teams support star bloggers by picking out interesting comments and adding pictures and links to articles, but in a climate of increasingly tight funding, the resource dilemmas are likely to grow, with hard choices needing to be made over the value of different types of participation.

2.2.4.2. Cable News Network - CNN

Like other leading news organizations in this study, CNN has been on a journey in its attitude to user participation through social media. According to Newman (2009), one of the first to adopt message boards, CNN closed them down when it found that the low quality of the discussion was undermining

its reputation. Today CNN allows users to ‘sound- off’ about stories and blogs, but in a way that is strictly controlled through moderation.

From the beginning, CNN has focused on the newsgathering potential of its worldwide audience, regularly soliciting for videos, pictures and comments on breaking stories such as the Virginia Tech shootings (2007) and California wildfires (2007). These UGC (User Generated Content) initiatives were initially grouped together within CNN under an iReport label, but over time the burden of moderating and verifying each item proved overwhelming, with over 10,000 video items received each month. So in 2008, CNN decided to split the brand from CNN and turn iReport into a separate UGC platform, where the community managed the quality and content of the contributions (Newman, 2009:18).

Newman says, another key development for CNN has been the engagement with social networks like Twitter. It was used extensively during the US election and the cable channel has incorporated its use directly into its marketing.

So that, we can agree to say, CNN views social media as ‘everyone’s job’, and have engaged staff members across the organization with training and awareness programs to arm them with the tools to be successful in the digital age.

2.2.4.3. EBC Social Media Department's overview

According to EBC's fact magazine published in 2015, the television station was established by an agreement between the Loard Thomson Company and the Ethiopian Government while majority of the equipments were provided by Phillips Ethiopia. The government announced launch of the TV station in October 1957 E.C. (1964). On the evening of October 30, 1957 E.C., the television service was inaugurated by the Emperor Haile Sellasie I. And it is a 52 years old media house now. After many ups and downs, currently EBC has its own Television, Radio and FM stations to transmit news and programs.

As Abel Adamu, Deputy Chief Executive Officer and head of Entertainment and Sports Division, EBC is applying the social media platforms as a means of news and program dissemination. He added, EBC has website and other social media pages which are managed by its own department (Personal Interview, November 2017)

According to Zeryihun Kassa, who was former Deputy Director of EBC Online and Monitoring Department, EBC started using social media around 8 years ago. One of the aims to use social media was, reviewing and monitoring trending agendas on Facebook to feed the EBC programe, "Media Dassessa - ማዲያ ዳሰሳ" and also for management consumption.

He added, "when Facebook becomes more influential on the Ethiopian political landscape, our bosses begin to give proper attention to it. The main aim was to monitor what is happening and trending on the social media, especially on Facebook. In due course, the management decides to form social media team considering it as alternative platform to reach out to younger, tech-savvy young generation" (Personal Interview, on August 10, 2017).

The researcher also discussed with staff members of the Social Media Department at EBC. One of their staff, who is senior social media journalist told, EBC online department had almost 18 staffs. The main duty of the new media department is sharing news and programs to the audience via website, facebook, twitter and you tube.

As the interviewee clearly stated, EBC had different social media pages, Facebook with more than 440,000 followers, Twitter with 2,957 followers and You Tube with almost Fifty Thousands subscribers.

Abel, the Deputy CEO of EBC, added "EBC had a full-fledged digital material which can help journalists to perform their duty as best as possible. The department is equipped with state of the art techs like the latest I-phone with high quality standing designed to transmit events live on facebook, twitter or other social media platforms." (Personal Interview, November 2017)

A journalist, who is a senior reporter at EBC Online department, also confirmed the same. He shared, in personal interview during August 12,2017, that "EBC had dynamic materials and ample human resources but the leadership at EBC doesn't provide proper and timely guidance despite the investment in material and human resource."

2.2.4.4. FBC Social Media Department's Overview

Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), commonly known as FANA, is the Nation's first commercial National Broadcaster and multi-lingual media center. As clearly stated on its website, "FBC used to be a clandestine anti-Dergue voice of Liberation (Voice of EPRDF) before its establishment as Radio

Fana in 1987 E.C. With the defeat of military regime, Radio Fana has been re-organized under the ownership of the four Regional Endowments. The major share holders of the company are: EFFORT, TIRET, TUMSA and Wondo."

As of January 2011, Radio Fana, grew to Fana Broadcasting Corporate Share Company. So as to enter into the TV business. "FBC has incorporated commercial and public service values and advocates developmental journalism to foster nation building and fight against poverty" stated at the website.

According to Adam Tadesse, Program Director, FBC is transmitting news and programs via Radio and Television as well as Website. Currently FBC reaches out its audience through social media platforms.

Adam told the researcher, "FBC clearly understood the importance of social media. That is why we put a clear statement about new media in our 5 year strategy. Structurally we had organized a social media department under the Directorate of News and Current affairs." (Personal Interview, on July 6, 2017)

Mekoya H/Mariam, Head of the FBC New Media Department, added how FBC is applying social media platforms: "FBC started using new media, especially the website, before a decade ago. FBC's social media pages started around 8 years ago. Currently, we do have Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Google+, Instagram, and Sound Cloud accounts. We are sharing our news and programs via these platforms." (Personal Interview, on July 10, 2017)

According to Mekoya, FBC has an authorized Facebook page (which is recognized by the Facebook Company). During interview, FBC had more than half a million (655,000) followers on facebook.

Mekoya added, they are sharing the information in multiple languages; Amharic, Affan Oromo and English. According to the data obtained from the department, the FBC social media section has 11 human resources.

2.2.5. Journalists' Use of Social Media

It is better to put Tayeebwa's (2016:12) observational conclusion about journalists' social media usage in Uganda. He notes that, journalists and their respective media houses in Uganda have not let the 'access liberty' accorded though the 'space-time liberty' passes them. They have Facebook,

Twitter, WhatsApp and other social networking sites to source news content, but also connect with their audiences.

Thomas (2013) shares the above idea and strengthens his view by citing Hermida and Thurman's 2008 study. He quotes "Most journalists feel blogs offer them the possibility to express news freely without the pressure of being part of a corporate news chain. User generated content, expressed on different social media platforms, and is mainly seen as complimenting journalism rather than replacing it".

Nyamboga (2014:93) on the other hand argued Kenya's experience. He describes, Social media can slow down work because a journalist can spend long hours using social media at the expense of work, as Facebook and other social media platforms are very addictive. He added,

It can leave room for sabotage; forgetting to log out of your Facebook page could spell disaster, as people can easily post things that are not true or use your name for their own selfish interests. There are very few rules to govern social media. In-house guidelines have been set out by some media houses to guard their reputations; some journalists have been dismissed for writing personal opinions on social media. A journalist can easily publish incorrect information without clarification. Additionally, there is little regulation in the use of social media, and it can be a platform for hates speech. In some countries, the government has shut down blogs (Ibid).

On the other hand media houses influence their reporters to use social media for journalistic practice. According to Thomas (2013) finding, journalists expressed a belief that there is significant pressure within the industry to utilize social media.

This pressure can be enforced directly by one's publication. "Our bosses expect us to follow what happens on social media platforms, as well as a pressure to use it in order to keep up with competitors and peers," said a Journalist in an interview with Thomas (2013). The Journalist added "If you want people to know who you are you have to be on Twitter, there is a kind of peer pressure, as the other publications use it for promoting their own content and if one does not use it, he gets a certain degree of handicap in the matter of reaching out to one's public."

Therefore, by having the above ideas, in this era of new media, journalists are using social media for their practice in one way or another.

2.3. Social Media and Journalistic Practice

2.3.1. Social Media Opportunities: Deep in sight

Traditional media players are yet to fully recognize social media information as “news”. While it remains debatable whether digital technology has weakened or strengthened journalism, what is for sure is that social media has shaken up the media business model and ushered it into a new age – one where journalists are not simply responsible for storytelling but also engaging with their audiences through social media, blog posts and other mediums (Mathias Kamp, 2016).

As Mathias Kamp (2016) clearly elaborates, the biggest change impacting the industry today is how consumers are getting their news. Outside newspapers or desktop news, consumers are looking to their mobile devices for the latest updates.

It is better to see some of the opportunities of Social Media for Journalistic practice, especially in news processing. Here are, below, discussed.

2.3.1.1. Social Media as an Alternative News-platform and Public Discourse

We have seen in the above social media are transforming the way information travels within and between networks of individuals. By having all the above, we are going to see how social media are becoming an alternative means of information and a suitable platform for public discussion.

Many pundits claim that individuals no longer seek news but instead news finds individuals, particularly on social media websites (Harsha,2014:17).

According to Pew Research, today, nearly 80% of American adults are online and nearly 60% of them use social networking sites (Pew Research, 2011). In fact, social networking accounts for one out of every six minutes spent online (Lipsman, 2011). People have begun to turn to social media for information regarding a range of goods and services from banking to cell phones (Knowledge Networks, 2009). It is not surprising, therefore, that social media has begun to change the way people access the news.

Although media companies were initially protective of their online content, they had come to terms with the advantages of viral media by the time Facebook opened its so ware platform to media and application developers. The New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN, ABC, CBS, CNET, and PBS all can be found on Face- book. Many of the media companies have sophisticated social media strategies that resemble “saturation bombing in cyberspace” including Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, instant messaging, and hyperlinks to other social network sites such as LinkedIn (Emmett, 2009).

In its 2010 State of the News Media report, the Pew Research Center suggested that social networking appears to provide legacy media organizations with a means to build their audiences. In fact, Facebook refers a significant amount of traffic to three of the top ten news websites. Specifically, Facebook generates 7% of the CNN traffic, 6% of the New York Times traffic, and 7% of the ABC News traffic (Ibid).

According to the 2011 State of the News Media Report (Pew, 2011), all forms of news media suffered audience declines during 2010 with the notable exception of online news. When asked where they got their news “yesterday,” only television was mentioned more frequently than online news sources. Among young adults (aged 18-29), however, online news is the most mentioned source. Sixty- five percent of young adults stated that they get most of their news information online. And, according to a study by Pew Research Center and John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, 30% of U.S. adults consume news on Facebook (Mitchell, Kiley, Gottfried, & Guskin, 2013).

Social media have changed the way information travels within and between networks of consumers. Individuals are no longer restricted to a one-way search for information online. Instead, social media allows information to find the users as well (Qualman, 2009). Because social media gives users more control than traditional media, it allows for greater flexibility in their news gathering behavior. Furthermore, the interconnectedness of social media users causes information to travel faster and in more relevant ways compared to traditional media (Gangadharbatla, 2012).

The Ugandan Journalism and Communication Professor of Makerere University, Dr. William Tayeebwa, in his research ‘ the impact of social media on traditional media’ wrote about the social media’s suitability of the public as an alternative means of news in Uganda. The Internet and social media have only increased the ability to bring many different kinds of news to its audience, and significantly quicker than had before been possible (Tayeebwa, 2016, cited Steensen 2011). He added, having been previously restricted to morning newspapers and on-the-hour news broadcasts,

which only presented a selection of news stories, now access to this information is only a mouse click away. Interactivity also ensures both accesses to the audience as users and producers, and the development of a relationship with sources that can publish news off their own back.

On the one hand, (Tayebwa, 2016) details, the spread of social media platforms provides an opportunity for enhanced access to information and a diversification of sources and opinions. Social media have greatly advanced the possibilities of “citizen journalism”. They provide channels for everyone to reach out to the public, to share information and to express opinions without formal requirements and with a minimum interference in form of regulation and censorship.

It is obvious media are excellent avenues to stimulate the discussion of pertinent issues such as governance and democracy between citizens and their leaders but, most especially, among citizens themselves. Social media offer opportunities to form new ways of networking and forming communities through online discussion boards or forums. Unwin (2012) discerns that new media technologies establish a new balance of distributional power of information through means of co-creation of content between ‘peers’, what he refers to as a ‘sharing liberty’.

2.3.1.2. Social Media as a Networked Journalism

The news industry is in a period of transformation where an old media system is disappearing and a new media system is budding. An age where the passive-watcher culture is giving way to a participatory culture and where a society previously hooked on traditional media is giving way to a much more complicated media landscape where the ordinary citizen has the ability to control media technologies and tell their own stories in powerful, innovative and creative ways. This is an era where our social, cultural and technological ways of life intersect (Alejandro, 2010:21).

James Curran (2011), in his research called “the future of journalism”, argued that news media practice is in a renaissance. It is because three reasons:

- The Internet is said to be enriching the quality of old media journalism. Journalists now have instant access, thanks to social media, a rich store of public and other information, and can incorporate more readily a range of different news sources. As a consequence, it is claimed the old news media are better able to verify stories, and to offer a wider range of views and insights.

- The Internet is bringing into being an efflorescence of web-based journalism, which is compensating for the decline of traditional news media. In this view, the old order of monopoly journalism were a “desert of Macworld”. The desert is now being reclaimed by a legion of bloggers, contributions from citizen journalists, social media writers, and proliferating Web-based start-ups. This reclamation is now unstoppable, and will continue to expand. There is going to be more content, not less; more information, more analysis, more precision, a wider range of niches covered.
- The two worlds of old and new journalism, it is predicted, will come together in a protean synergy. The crisis of the traditional ‘economic’ model of journalism will give rise to a new ‘social’ model based on a pro-am (that is professional-amateur) partnership. This will take the form of “network journalism” in which members of the public draft, research or produce stories. In some cases, volunteer journalists will produce their own websites; in others, they will constitute a diverse feed chain, with professionals at the center. The key to understanding the future of journalism is to substitute the word ‘journalism’ (which is a vertical, gatekeeper institutions) with the phrase ‘journalistic activity’, based on the open-ended, reciprocal, horizontal, collaborative, self-generating, extensive, and inclusive reporting and a comment of a kind never experienced before.

As he concluded, media studies must become a Networked Journalism thought leadership program. (Curran, 2011:241).

2.3.1.3. Social Media as sources of Agenda and/or Information

As we have discussed above with the findings of Nyamboga (2014:89), Social media has various advantages including speed of accessing and disseminating information, ease of updating unfolding stories, providing a forum for discussions, among others.

Another researcher, Zeenat Abdool (2015:18), also added that, Social media applications and the networks that are created by users could provide opportunities to investigative journalists by providing access to further information and sources.

Off course social media is becoming the source of information or agenda for media practitioners. That is why an interviewee (journalist) told to Thomas (2013) in his research interview, “we use twitter to see what people are talking about, to see what other people are writing about.”

According to Abdool (2015:17), journalists are using social media applications for crowd sourcing for information. There is a minority among the journalists she interviewed regarding social media applications in the newsgathering process. The use of social media applications are encouraged but not forced upon by news editors at the respective publications. Further expands on this by stating that news editors themselves are on social media and keep abreast of events and news occurring outside of the newsroom.

Lavrusik (2015), also strengthened Abdool's arguments on how investigative journalism is prospering in the age of social media. He briefly stated that in a society that is more connected than ever, journalists that were once shrouded in mystery are now taking advantage of their online community relationships to help scour documents and uncover potential wrongs. The tools and information now available to journalists are making the jobs of investigative outlets more efficient. The socialization of the web is revolutionizing the traditional story format.

This says a lot about the advantages of socialization on new media to gather data, evidence and news tip from acquaintances of the social media.

2.3.1.4. Social Media as sources of News Sources and Knowledge

It is evident that social media applications, specifically Facebook and Twitter, are changing the newsgathering culture.

Lavrusik (2010:24) says that “reporters are now capturing content shared in the social space to enrich their stories, enabling tomorrow's reporters to create contextualized social story streams that reference not only interviewed sources, but embedded tweets, Facebook postings and more. Journalists are also leveraging the vast reach of social networks in unprecedented ways. In many respects, social media is enabling watchdog journalism to prosper.”

Social media applications are providing for reporters, especially for investigative journalists, with an added platform to search for evidence and documents, which enable them to gain more content to add further value and credibility to their investigations. Lavrusik (2010:24) is of the opinion that the use of social media applications in investigative journalism is allowing investigative journalism to develop and assist journalists in being better positioned to expose wrongdoings in society.

According to Thomas (2013), the first of the two most popular ways in which social media is used according to the journalists is the ability to share knowledge through it. Though this can of course be done with one's peers, it can also be a general channel in which to push and understand relevant material that is of interest.

Thomas's interviewee told him, "I see it more as sharing links and stories, not that personal stuff, I use them to look up trending things or check additional information about a happening" (Thomas, 2013).

As Thomas (2013) says in his summary of findings, social media itself has become a major means to get access to sources, as well as a source in itself, with several participants indicating they often find worthwhile stories by using trending hashtags, seeing what politicians, company leaders and individuals are writing about and discussing. And then, articles have been born of twitter conversations.

2.3.1.5. Social Media as Sources of Feedback

In 21st century, the contemporary journalism allows its audiences to participate actively in the production of news and allows the sending of their personalized feedback to key writers or producers from the industry.

Thomas (2013) strengthen that, the online newspapers follow the choices of interactivity, rapidity and selectivity, with users being able to select their favorite topics through the aid of hyperlinks or newsletters. In this way, newspapers, and broadcast media too, open an ongoing communication channel between them and readers, which permits a live flow in conversations and in opportunities to give feedback to stories. This creates the basis for personalized journalism.

According to Hermida and Thurman (2008:73), "the Internet in this new media culture [allows that] the public is no longer a passive consumer of media, but an active participant in the creation of the media landscape".

In light of a general belief in journalism becoming two-way communication, the questions focused on the interviewee's attitude to comments being made on their own, and general articles. Thomas added that it's interesting how comments can become part of the news, it could almost be a dinner discussion of informed individuals, probably more interaction now because you can just tweet (about

your news story) to someone and say, ‘how dare you?’ (Then feedback follows) I agree, I disagree, I have information on your story, etc (Thomas, 2013:36)

The social media makes feedback on a story very quick and spot on. It also offers opportunities to refute the facts in the story. That's what makes media houses and journalists vulnerable if they get their facts wrong. Yet it also offers them more on their new, prompting them for follow up stories or further investigation.

2.3.1.6. Social Media as a development (for Reporters and Editors)

For the journalist, the new equation is about doing a lot more with a lot less. Reporters are now required to submit stories for multiple platforms – television, radio, print and online. For a journalist in today’s media landscape, it is essential to be multi-skilled (Alejandro, 2010:15).

Alejandro (2010:16) adds, as for editors, there is a lot of curation (editing the social media content to mainstream media) going on. New posts like “social media editors” or “community editors” have been and are still being created in newsrooms since 2009.

In May 2009, the New York Times hired its first social media editor to expand the use of social media networks and publishing platforms to improve New York Times journalism and deliver it to readers. Also early in 2009, Sky News in the UK appointed a Twitter correspondent whose main responsibility is to cover breaking news. BBC also appointed its first social media editor in late 2009. His job is to help the BBC team of reporters and producers engage more proactively with social networks, Twitter being one of them, as newsgathering and distribution channels for journalism. This birth of social media editors in the newsroom raises questions about the future role of editors: will they soon be doing less journalism and more fact checking? Will they just be relegated to copy tasting and spotting trends from social networks like Twitter, Facebook and the like?(Alejandro, 2010:15)

In addition to the development of their day-to-day practice and general professional skill, social media is now playing a great role in different aspects. Reporters are now encouraged to become more entrepreneurial in how they make their stories available, whether it be through their Twitter, Facebook, YouTube account or podcasts.

Tayeebwa (2016) notes that, considerations are being made with the knowledge that news consumers on social media have a limited attention span because news content now competes for attention with other non-news-related content. An issue that could easily tempt reporters into dramatizing their news content in an effort to compete for attention with other social media content.

With or without social media, traditional or conventional journalism must remain the practice of gathering, processing and distributing news and information through various mass media channels and formats based on established and sacrosanct norms such as balance and fairness, truthfulness and accuracy, objectivity and impartiality, neutrality and detachment (Tayeebwa, 2016:76).

Recognizing the above idea, (Meyers at al., 2012), social media is playing significantly to improve the reporters and editors skills. As journalism is a practice that is grounded in the ability and passion of individuals to recount stories that have an impact on the wellbeing of society, which is their social responsibility role.

With the intention that , through social media, the practical skills of gathering, processing and disseminating information are practicing and being developing without any formal journalism training.

2.3.1.7. Social Media as a Fifth Estate

New-media technology is not only having a serious effect because of its impact on established journalism. The way that the vast bulk of public and commercial media is changing is more important than the emergence of citizen journalism or the independent blogosphere. Together they offer the opportunity to transform the news media into a more open, trustworthy and useful forum for information and debate. As news becomes non-linear and open-sourced, journalism will change and is changing. This is about more than posting a comment on a blog or sending in a photo to a website. The claims that traditional media are the sole champions of authority, objectivity and quality will be (and is being) challenged (Beckett, 2008).

To step forward the above argument, lets add some narratives. In 2012, three Journalism professors named Nic Newman, William H. Dutton, and Grant Blank, raised the issue of social media as a fifth estate. In their research “Social Media in the Changing Ecology of News: The Fourth and Fifth Estates in Britain” argued social media can be a fifth estate.

Mainstream journalism is undoubtedly a fourth estate. In this era of 21st century, with the increasing use of live blogs by journalists and social media users, the three professors reached in one conclusion.

They argued that, the Internet provides a platform through which networked individuals (and/or journalists) can form a “Fifth Estate” : Users can source their own information, independent of any single institution, using the capabilities provided by search and social media. Also users can create content in many forms – like blogs, email, tweets, and comments on websites – that provide even greater independence from other institutions and offer a mechanism whereby public opinion can be directly expressed. This content can bypass or be amplified by the traditional mass media of the Fourth Estate, but in doing so it can fulfill many of the same functions of holding up the activities of government, business and other institutions to the light of a networked public. Thus the Fifth Estate is also a potentially potent political force, but without the centralized institutional foundations of the Fourth Estate. It is composed of the distributed activities of many individuals (and/or journalists) acting largely on their own in a more decentralized, networked fashion (Newman, Dutton, & Blank, 2009:17).

The argument above implies the power of the social media in holding power to account and in getting things done through concerted social media campaign. A case in point could be the recent campaign against the Ethiopian government in Oromia and Amhara regions which was caused by alleged perceived injustices and economic marginalization in the regions. Arab spring could be another powerful example of the potential of social media as a political tool. These unfettered communication tools that promote independent thoughts have given individuals the belief that they can do anything so long as they can gather support from the thousands who share their view.

2.3.2. Challenges of Social Media (Social Media as challenges of Mainstream Media)

Even though, Social Media have multiple opportunities for the contemporary journalistic practice, they have also undeniable challenges. The following are some of the challenges for traditional or mainstream media faces globally.

2.3.2.1. Challenges in News Gathering, Reporting and Getting Audience

According to Garrison (1996), the advent of New Communication Technology (NCT) has brought forth a set of opportunities and challenges for conventional media. Domingo & Heinonen (2008:3) added, the presence of new media and the Internet in particular, has posed a challenge to conventional media, especially the printed newspaper.

As Tayeebwa (2016) describes, the issue of lack of training in journalism or skilled individuals to process information for distribution online is compounded with the low literacy levels of audiences. For instance, Unwin (2012:42) notes how the divide between the information-rich and the information-poor becomes wider between richer individuals and countries that are able to access ever-faster Internet, thus enabling them to use ever-creative social media. Such differences in access to social media apply 'not only between countries, but also between urban and rural areas, between those who have more disabilities and those who have fewer, and very often between men and women'. Tayeebwa (2016) develops the Unwin's idea. He says, such cyber-illiteracy across the board disadvantages the journalism enterprise.

Tayeebwa (2016) clarifies also, "In our digital age, anyone can do what journalists traditionally have done".

In addition, Thomas describes, going by the concept that one of the principal effects that media houses have on governance is their ability to provide information relevant in the voting booth, social media's undoubted influence in shaping the standards, opinions and perceptions of the people – especially the middle class and urban elite - must be considered in shaping governance (Thomas, 2013).

Whereas, Tayeebwa (2016) said. there is mechanisms for traditional journalism to gate- keep the content for distribution, the instantaneous nature of sharing information as accorded by social media makes it harder to exercise the requisite quality controls. In the competitive moments between media houses, it is easier for false and defamatory information to be disseminated via social media platforms. At the extreme, social media has been cited in cyber-crime i.e. stalking, hacking, cyber-bullying and cyber-terrorism.

Therefore, the role of the journalist in the new cyberspace era as related to the freedom of the reader and viewer in choosing what to read or watch and when to participate in the construction of news. The traditional top-down (one way) model of communicating with readers does not apply any more to the online spaces.

The interaction between journalists and sources can be skipped, with information being spread directly by sources on online pages. Thus, the role of the journalist as a mediator between the external world and the audiences is withdrawn from the professional world of journalism.

2.3.2.2. Challenges in News Verification, Credibility and Trust

News credibility represents one of the contemporary issues, which became apparent with the engagement of journalism in online platforms. While online journalism is developing into a web practice adopted by all newspapers, the concept of interactivity arises naturally from the news industry. This quality of new media platforms promotes the endorsement of a two-way communication model, challenging the traditional practices of journalism that are based on one-way communication (Tayeebwa, 2016).

Hovland and Weiss (1951 - 1952), as cited by Gangadharbatla, F. Bright & Logan (2014), suggested that consumers view some communicators as more credible than others. They determined that the “credibility” of a communicator reflects the public perception of the communicator’s fairness and factualness. In their early research, Hovland and Weiss (1951-52) were particularly concerned with the credibility attributed to different sources of information such as specific scholarly journals, popular magazines, gossip columnists, and political analysts. Their findings indicated that the credibility of a source had a significant impact regarding the initial acceptance of information.

Consumers have general beliefs regarding the credibility of various kinds of information sources such as television news, newspaper reports, Internet blogs, and advertising. These beliefs are based on their cumulative experience regarding the fairness and factualness of specific sources of information (Gangadharbatla, F. Bright & Logan, 2014).

Depending on the early work of Hovland and Weiss (1951-52), certain types of information sources are viewed as credible, or trustworthy, and other sources are viewed as untrustworthy. Therefore, consumers’ acceptance of information is mitigated by the credibility of the source.

The study done by Harsha, Laura F. Bright & Kelty, confirmed the popular notions in trade press that young adults are increasingly turning to social media for news rather than using traditional media such as print newspapers, magazines, television and radio. Interestingly, however, despite their preference for using social media for newsgathering, young adults still perceive traditional media as

more credible news sources than social media. And it is becoming a big challenge for being credible because of the fake news that is posted on social media.

Tayebwa (2016) on his part added that, telling stories to the general public, providing crucial information and influencing perceptions is no longer a preserve of traditional media. The difference remains that social media because of its unregulated nature can disseminate news without any filter or direct control, while traditional media houses still perform the function of an intermediary (gate keeping) who filters, analyses and explains information before it goes public.

He continues "on the other hand, the “unfiltered” spread of information and opinions through social media also comes with a number of risks and downsides (to the mainstream media practices). Contributions on social media platforms are mostly not subject to journalistic standards and ethics. Due to the lack of regulations and standards, abuse in forms of spreading false information and rumors, defamation and hate speech can hardly be prevented. At the same time the increase in the quantity of information does not say anything about the quality of available information. In this context, the role of traditional media and professional journalists in analyzing, filtering and explaining information needs to be emphasized" (Tayebwa, 2016:5)

As per explanation of Mudhai (2009), just like traditional journalism channels, social media can be excellent avenues for dissemination of credible and useful information for decision-making as well as excellent for imparting knowledge and skills to the citizenry. He added, the challenge remains to ensure that credible information is provided through social media as in traditional ones so that debate is not based on opinion rather than fact, or on prejudice rather than knowledge.

The other issue, which challenges the mainstream media by social media, is accuracy. In journalism practice, accuracy is the disposition to take the necessary care to ensure so far as possible that what one say is not false, sincerity the disposition to make sure that what one say is what one actually believes. But it is challenging by social media, because they don't give much attention to it.

In this regard Angela Philips (2011), in her research, Transparency and the New Ethics of Journalism, says,

Online, where speed is considered to be more important than painstaking fact checking accuracy and sincerity reside in transparency. Bloggers and Social Media writers see truth as a work in progress. They will publish rumors and wait for readers to react them, believing that the interactivity of the Web will provide its

own corrective. That is the reason why attribution on the Web is one of the few ethical norms agreed by bloggers or social media writers: ‘what truth is to journalists, transparency is to bloggers’. If the ‘public’ is to act as a corrective it needs to be aware of where the information originated (Angela Philips, 2011:356).

She added that, this should not be difficult for mainstream news organizations to do. The media standards Trust is currently working to produce the metadata that would allow every piece of news to be tagged with information about where it originated as well as information about the news principles of the organization that produced it.

Attribution is not only a means of allowing people to trace back and check it. It is also a means of giving credit to the originators of the information. “if professional journalism was to embrace the blogger’s code fully and attribute story sources routinely it would help to produce a different form of competition for cultural capital and differentiation (Philips, 2011).

Nyamboga (2014) on his part says, Social media provides a platform for accessing information about anything one can think of. He added, the other key disadvantage of social technology especially social networking is that most people do not know how to network effectively and safely. The usual forms of censorship: violence, prison, harassment and raids on editorial offices are equally damaging to professional journalists as well. Assaults on online journalists and social media activists are direct attacks on all media (Nyamboga, 2014:92).

In fact, says Thomas (2013), such is the impact of social media on journalism. Steensen argues that, the only thing that separates journalists from the other news bringers (social media news writers) in the public eye is their professional identity. This identity is therefore of growing importance to the journalist and his/her success (Steensen 2011).

The challenge is however, how to get compelling stories from noise as there are millions of tweets, stories, pictures, links, name them, posted on the internet every second. Although new technologies have effected changes on the amount of information available and the rate of reception, it is not clear whether these have had any significant effect on the quality of information and news. In fact, there are claims that rising competition and the obsession to provide exclusive news fast using social media may have negatively affected the quality, reliability, and validity of information. This is especially true of the breaking news facility.

Theoretical Framework

2.3.3. Agenda Setting

Agenda setting is one of the best-substantiated theories in media and communication research (McCombs, 2005). Its original formulation assumed the existence of a more or less monolithic news media whose decisions about story salience would be reflected in perceptions of issue importance among audience members. Recent work on agenda setting in the digital age has continued to treat news media as central (Newman, Guggenheim, Jang, & Bae, 2014). Less explored has been the potential for politicians to set their constituents' agendas without the participation of the media.

In 2015 an international workshop was held to discuss about Social Media and agenda setting prospects. During that, Deen Freelon from School of Communication at American University describes, "Audience members may to varying degrees follow along the agenda path set by their leaders, or attempt to inject their own pet concerns onto the agenda. Digital media have given them unprecedented opportunities for such agenda injection, but few studies have investigated how often they actually do so."

He added, still, recent research has recognized that agenda-setting power is dispersed among a much greater diversity of parties than at any time in history. Journalists now jockey for audience attention with influential social media users and writers like bloggers, celebrities, activists, corporations, and academics, among others (Freelon, 2015). The distinction between "horizontal" (general-interest) and "vertical" (niche) media categorizes outlets according to their intended audiences, but in the process elides critical distinctions within the categories (Ragas & Roberts, 2009; Vargo et al., 2014).

For example, those amateurs referred to as "gate watchers" (Bruns, 2005), "grassroots intermediaries" (Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2013), and "networked gatekeepers" (Meraz & Papacharissi, 2013) occupy a particular stratum of horizontal media positioned between those who mainly create content and those who mainly consume it. By curating content from a variety of primary sources, these non elite individuals and groups help to set their audience's agendas.

2.3.3.1. Social Media and Agenda Setting

One of the most critical aspects in the concept of an agenda-setting role of mass communication is the time frame for this phenomenon. In addition, different media have different agenda-setting potential. Agenda-setting theory seems quite appropriate to help us understand the pervasive role of the media (Salman, Mustafa, Salleh & Shahizan Al, 2016).

For journalists, social media have become news beats for picking up stories, contacting and getting access to sources informally or formally (Skogerbø, Bruns, Quodling, and Ingebretsen, 2016:191). Other scholars agreed with them. For sources social media have become alternative channels both for addressing and talking to citizens directly and for “dodging the gatekeepers” of mainstream media by publishing stories and material that can be picked up by journalists or citizens.

They explained, social media are potentially yet another channel for sources to influence journalism, as they allow sources to control staging and content, and thereby a means to influence the agenda-building and agenda-setting processes of the news media. For both sides, digitization has increased the amount of potentially accessible information sources immensely. This situation on the one hand may have led to a devaluation of source power as the sheer ubiquity means that each source has little exclusive control of information. Similar pieces of information may be accessible to journalists through more than one channel, thereby weakening source power. On the other hand, digitization has increased the number of platforms where stories break and flow (Skogerbø, Bruns, Quodling, and Ingebretsen, 2016:191)

In addition to that, online and social media have added to the number of potential outlets that sources can use to get their stories out, thereby reducing the value of access to journalists and mainstream news media channels, and increasing source power. Either way, the integration of social media and journalism may alter the power of sources and journalists to set the agenda for the news media.

On the other hand, Salman, Mustaffa, Salleh & Shahizan Al (2016:2) says, the advent of the Internet and its related application, especially web 2.0 has tremendously changed the way we interact and do things. The dawn of social media has brought challenges to the way news is diffused in a social system.

The conventional media is no longer having full control on agenda setting over the masses. This is due to the pervasiveness of the social media, which provides access to the masses and makes it easier for anyone to create and share news. But says Salman, Mustaffa, Salleh & Shahizan Al (2016), thanks to social media, which makes this possible. Hence, the mainstream media is losing its grip as far as agenda setting is concern, especially political agenda.

Since the 2008 General Election, the social media has been at the forefront of setting the political agenda. News reported or shared via the social media have become the talking point of the day and this made some observers to believe that the social media is no longer an alternative media as it used

to be, but rather mainstream media by way making news headlines. This is obvious in the way social media, especially Facebook, is used to share political news among the public (Salman, Mustaffa, Salleh & Shahizan Al, 2016).

Meanwhile social media is a new phenomena of our time, scholars have and being long discussed the ability of the mainstream media to shape that issues the public considers to be salient, based on the relative attention provided to some issues over others. As the fathers of agenda-setting theory put it, “Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position” (McCombs and Shaw 1993).

The ascendance of digital media has the potential to alter this function in three distinct ways, each of which has dramatically different consequences, say McCombs and Shaw.

First, it is possible that alternatives to the mainstream media considerably attenuate traditional media’s ability to set the nation’s political agenda. We know that most people consuming digital media continue to use Agenda Setting in a Digital Age more traditional media sources as well. If the cues available across these sources differ, the strength and influence of any one is likely to be diminished.

On the other hand, it is possible that the advancement of new media has slightly modified the nature of the mainstream media’s ability to set the agenda, rather than eliminating it entirely. If new media are following the cues of traditional media, then the agenda-setting power has not diminished but has instead simply gained another channel. Mainstream media could set the agenda of blogs, social networking sites, video sharing sites, and others, which then deliver those cues to the general public in a modern version of the two-step flow. The role of traditional media would remain unchanged, and new media outlets such as YouTube would essentially take the place of opinion leaders in years past. Moreover, it seems likely that the end result in this scenario—which issues are discussed by the public and how—would remain the same.

Finally, some have suggested that the rise of new media has the potential to result in a reverse flow of information. Particularly due to the speed with which many social media outlets such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter function, they may actually have the ability to influence the agenda of traditional news outlets. As author Jonathan Last (2006) put it, “An informal network—the new media—has arisen that has the power to push stories into the old media”.

As the relationship between old and new media develops, it is important that we learn the nature of that relationship, and particularly its effects on the classic agenda-setting power of the media.

Generally, because of the above scholarly views, reporters and editors are influencing (positively or negatively) by social media on their day-to-day journalistic practice especially in agenda setting, news sourcing or newsgathering process. So, the researcher believes agenda setting theory is suitable for this study in accordance with the next one.

2.4. Technology Determinism

The news cycle has moved from a passive news cycle (in which the journalists finds news, reports it and the audience consumes it) to interactive applications of news. Initially, when the story went live, that was the end. But now, it's the beginning. The audience can comment, share, add or even change information. The period of I write, you read, you're welcome is long gone (Didiugwu, Ezugwu, and Ekwe,2015:13).

According to them, when stories are moved to open space like Twitter, Facebook, it means interesting stories will be read more often than they would have been if they were published in the middle of a newspaper or mainstream media.

Based the above view and because of social media is a new technological media outlet, this study supposes to include on technology determination theory in addition to agenda setting theory. Technological determinism states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another.

In this approach the focus is on the technology of Mass Communication and on how such technology determines the nature of Mass Communication and its role in society and the lives of people. In technological determinism it is believed that technology and technological innovation force social change, culture, economics and politics. According to Littlejohn (1992) one of the best examples of technological determinism in media theory is Marshall McLuhan's theory "the medium is the message". The work of McLuhan emphasis on how the technology of a medium determines the nature of Mass Communication and its impacts on society. The theory explains that when new systems of technology are developed, the culture or society is immediately changed to reflect the senses needed to use the new technology. Due to such reason, these Nigerian scholars claimed, Society will always change and adapt to the new system of media technology.

Therefore, this theory for the above reasons is very relevant to this study since it describes human nature in its society in the digital era. Wherever the media exert forceful influence, they also cause change. And, as clearly stated in the specific objectives of this study, the researcher aims to assess the perception of Editors and Journalists about the use of social media in their journalistic practice.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology of the study. Methodology deals with how we can go about acquiring knowledge in the research whereas method deals with which precise procedures can we use to acquire the knowledge (Grix, 2004 cited in Tesfaye, 2013:36). In this regard, Gabriel (2011) says, “A good methodology is more a critical design attitude to be found always at work throughout a study, rather than confined within a brief chapter called Methodology.” Yes it is known that, generally, methodology can refer the scientific study of the research done. Therefore, how the research has been conducted is discussed in this chapter.

3.1. Research Method

The methodology employed in this study are both qualitative and quantitative (mixed method).

A qualitative methodology is a composite of philosophy, concepts, data-gathering procedures, and statistical methods that provides perhaps the most thoroughly elaborated basis for the systematic examination of human subjectivity. Central to this enterprise are the meanings and understandings that individuals bring to their endeavors (Grix, 2004, cited in Tesfaye, 2013:37).

A quantitative method, on the other hand, is the second method used in the study. According to Miller and Brewer (2003), quantitative research method is numerical measurement of specific aspects of phenomena. It is very structured and explanations are formulated in terms of the relationship between variables. It is also an approach based on intensive study of one or a small number of phenomena to seek to generalization. According to Campbell and Stanley (2009), quantitative research method includes the true experiments and the less rigorous experiments called quasi-experiments, correlation studies, and specific single-subject experiments. Creswell (2009) adds that more recently, quantitative strategies involved complex experiments with many variables and treatments.

Quantitative and qualitative methods have a nature of supporting one another when they are used in one study. Carrasco and Lukas (2015) say, “Qualitative methods can be useful as a part of the whole

empirical process, i.e. in the initial framing of concepts, to understand the issues and to design appropriate measurements. They can also be used to validate and interpret our quantitative analytical results and to communicate them in meaningful ways.” As Mann, C. and, Stewart F. (2002:265) pronounced the significances of the combined effects of the two approaches as “the different methodological perspectives complement each other as the complementary compensation of the weaknesses and blind spots of each single design.” As a result, the researcher had employed both quantitative and qualitative methods.

In this quantitative part of the research, the method helped the researcher to evaluate the journalists' social media preference and reasons of selection among the sample respondents by generating statistics which are important to generalize about the subject of the study. It also helped the researcher to show the total journalists who are using different social media information for their practice and which type of information they are using. The quantitative research is also important to give a rank for many comparable things in a group. As a result, this method helps the researcher to rate the social media utilization of journalists for their practice as per the number of utilization. Since the research is focused to identify the opportunities and challenges, this method helped the researcher to have higher sample size. This is also an important method to rate the items in relation to the research aim.

On the other hand, qualitative method helped to get information about the personal preference and social media using experience for their journalistic practice. It also used to get the detailed information about the challenges and opportunities of social media towards their practice. This method helps to explore the level of challenges and opportunity of social media on journalistic practice for EBC and FBC journalists through in depth interview and focus group discussion.

As a result, by using this method, the researcher gathered information through questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion from Journalists of EBC and FBC about their current experience in using social media, the challenges they are facing and the opportunities they had gained from social media. In addition to this, Editors, Editor-in-chiefs, and Media Managers are also participated in the study to get detailed information and professional comments towards the research goal.

Generally, this mixed method helped the researcher to identify the study goal, which could lead for a better findings (conclusions) and recommendations or suggestions.

3.2. Participants of the study

In this research the participants were Journalists who are working at Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), basically at the headquarters.

EBC and FBC are the old and huge media houses in Ethiopia by having a grand total of more than 1200 reporters, it is almost half of the nations' reporters. And out of the EBC and FBC total reporters, 795 journalists (as of 2016) are working at the headquarters of EBC and FBC in Addis Ababa, the rest are working for branches offices at regional cities. It can be understood that, how vast it is.

Above all, according to Ethiopian Broadcast Authority report, EBC and FBC had a wide range of geographical coverage, broadcasts their stories in multiple languages and have a variety of platforms, i.e. radio, television and website as well as social media accounts.

Due to the above reasons, the research is generally designed to analyze the opportunities and major challenges of social media for journalists working in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate. The study does not include other Ethiopian media's professionals and their practice as well as EBCs and FBCs regional offices to make the research manageable. Therefore, the participants of the study are journalists whom are working only at the head quarters, Addis Ababa, operational surroundings of EBC and FBC.

3.3. Sampling Techniques and Procedures

In this research, for the qualitative method, snowball sampling technique was employed. Snowball sampling is where research participants recruit other participants for a study. It is used where potential participants are difficult to find. Ask those subjects to recruit other people (and then ask those people to recruit. Participants should be made aware that they do not have to provide any other names (<http://dissertation.laerd.com/purposive-sampling>; retrieved on March 2017).

Since the study aimed to assess the new technology, journalists should have high educational level and understanding of social media. Therefore, the researcher should rely on the insider sources about the participants experience about social media. Then, the researcher examined the data gained from the Human Resource Departments about respondents' educational level and Editors' information about journalists' experience on social media use.

The main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable us to answer our research questions (Ibid). Therefore, the researcher purposely selected 14 Interviewees and 21 FGD participants from different departments of the media houses through snow ball sampling.

For quantitative method, on the other hand, simple random sampling was employed. Because the study targeted journalists working at EBC and FBC are a total of 795 journalists, based in Addis Ababa. As per Dominic and Wimmer (2011:94), simple random sampling with replacement involves returning the subject, element, or unit to the population. So that it has a chance of being chosen another time.

After having the total population, the researcher selected the targeted participants by simple random system. Accordingly, the researcher chose and tried to have the margin of error 5%, the confidence level of 95%. Therefore, 260 journalists were selected as sample of the study from the total 795 population,.

Therefore, after identifying the targeted samples, the questionnaire was distributed, FGD and In-depth interviews were held to explore details on issues pertinent to the study.

3.4. Data Source and Instruments of Collection

The study used primary data source. A combination of various data collection instruments were constructed to access first hand information - questionnaire, in-depth interview and focus group discussions.

In order to facilitate data collection processes in the field, tools like notes, and audio recording were utilized. The discussions were recorded on digital recorder and smart mobile with the participants' consent. Relevant profiles of the interviewees were recorded and used for the purpose of this research.

This helped the researcher to accurately transcribe the data as accurately as possible. The researcher also took written short notes for ease of transcription.

3.4.1. Questionnaire

To gather the required quantitative data for the study, a questionnaire was employed. The questionnaire had four parts. The first aimed at finding out demographic information of respondents while the second part was designed to get information that helped to know the social media preference of journalists. It also helped to know their experience in using social media to get their job done. The third part, a Likert scale method, was basically focused to find out their agreement and disagreement levels on the

challenges and opportunities of social media to their practice and other questions related to social media and journalism practice. The last part was an open ended question about their general view towards social media to their practice and media houses. Since the reporters were assumed educated or can read and understand the language well, the questionnaire was designed in English by choice.

The questionnaire was distributed to a total of 263 journalists at EBC & FBC. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 241 (164 from EBC and 77 from FBC) were filled and returned properly, the others 21 (17 from EBC and 4 from FBC) were not returned or incomplete, and discarded.

Some of the questions were adopted in a contextualized manner from questionnaires in a way to reflect the realistic situations of the social media usage in journalistic practice. To see the strength and quality of the questions, pilot-tests were carried out two weeks before (May 03,2017) the main data collection phase.

3.4.2. Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussion involved carefully selected respondents by the researcher from different sections. A group discussion was held in a permissive environment in order to extract opinions and share ideas and perceptions through group interaction. According to Morgan cited in Mann and Fiona (2004: 99), the main characteristic of focus group discussion was interaction among participants. The aim of using focus groups was to make use of group interaction to produce data and insights in ways that the participants would ‘naturally’ generate meaning in relation to the research questions (Hansen 1998:281).

Based on this, the researcher used focus group discussion that allowed a small group of people to discuss on the key issues of the research topic. Hence, the researcher conducted three focus group discussions with different number of participants. The total number of focus group discussion was 21. Among the participants in the group 3 were female. The researcher tried to select participants from different departments. Therefore, Group 1 was from EBC with 8 participants, Group 2 was from FBC with 7 participants and Group 3 was purposely formed from EBC and FBC journalists (joint group) with a total number of 6 participants, 3 from each media house.

In conducting the focus group discussions, the researcher principally acted as a moderator from a list of predetermined interview guidelines revolving around the research objectives.

Amharic language was used in the discussions to make the participants comfortable and share opinion freely as well as to get detailed analysis. Digital and Smart Phone recording were used with subsequent translations during data analysis.

The focus group discussions were held at Fana Broadcasting Corporate recording studio and Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation's documentary department editorial meeting room. The FGD took two working days.

3.5. In-depth Interviews

Individual in-depth interviews are characterized by extensive questioning and open-ended questions, and used to collect qualitative information. Individual in-depth interviews are important as a follow-up to focus group interviews in order to take forward the issues raised in the focus groups (Ritchie & Lewis 2003).

The in-depth interview played a vital role in this research to present the opportunities and challenges of social media on the journalistic practices for EBC and FBC journalists. Hence, the interviewer conducted individual in-depth interviews on a one-to-one basis with respondent.

In terms of sampling, individual interviewees were purposively selected from different departments of the media houses and journalists working online as well as well known social media users.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 14 interviewees until the interview points had gained saturated. The interviewees were Senior Journalists, Editors, Editor-in-chiefs and Media Program Managers. All are selected based on their staff and bosses recommendation in accordance their experience on social media practice or use. In fact, the researcher also considered the variety in department representation.

The researcher, as in the focus group discussions, used an interview guide, and since the aim is to achieve a breadth and depth of coverage across their use of social media and journalistic practice. Digital and Smart Phone recording has also been applied with the consents of the interviewees.

3.6. Validity and Reliability of the Instruments of the Study

Reliable questionnaires and interviews yield consistent results from repeated samples and different researchers over time. Scholars strengthen this idea. Differences in results come from differences

between participants, not from inconsistencies in how the items are understood or how different observers interpret the responses (Boynton and Greenhalgh, 2004). In the same way, agreeing with Wimmer and Dominick (2011), validity is usually defined as the degree to which an instrument actually measures what it sets out to measure.

The reliability and validity of the instruments are checked in different ways. In order to assure the reliability of the methods used in the study the researcher had employed a pilot study before the actual data collection. Therefore, the data collection instruments were primarily applied to selected journalists as a pilot test and appropriate feedback taken, for the validity of the data and instruments used. Journalists who participated in the pilot study did not participate in the actual data providers.

The data that were collected both in the questionnaire and interview techniques were reviewed and checked for its accuracy, appropriateness, validity and error free by the researcher and his advisor as well as by his M.A Graduate Study friends before it finally went to for processing and analysis. The study participants were primarily informed and introduced about the research topic by the researcher during the data collection process. In addition, regarding the interview data, verification of the accuracy of the transcriptions and translations was achieved by cross-checking the transcripts against the tapes.

3.7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

As discussed briefly, the researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The data was analyzed based on appropriate quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Quantitative data that were collected using questionnaires were entered into the computer using SPSS software and Excel program. Coding and analyzing of these data were carried out using this software package.

In addition, information through qualitative instruments (in-depth-interviews, and focus group discussions) were analyzed qualitatively. The interview was conducted in Amharic language to make the respondents feel comfortable and express the issues in better ways. Then, the data was transcribed and translated into English.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

4. Introduction

This chapter is about the presentation, analysis and discussion of data obtained from questionnaire respondents, FGDs and in-depth interview. As it was stated before, the study targeted on journalists in Addis Ababa. The main purpose of the study was to assess *The Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media on Journalistic Practice: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) in Focus*. To gather the required data for the study, questionnaire, FGDs and in-depth interview were employed as major tools and the researcher used table and graph to analyze the data.

The collected data with the objectives and thorough review of relevant literature were coded, entered and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques. The questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions of the findings were classified in to different major themes.

Accordingly, the first category was assessing journalists' and their social media experience: mainly their personal use and choice of the social media form or type. This helped to find out whether EBC and FBC journalists were using the potential of social media by practically putting their stories and getting exposure to world of information that the social media provides. It also include the challenges they are facing from social media.

The second category focused on social media use for journalistic purpose. Here the analysis and discussions were pointed out what type of social media information and sources were used for journalistic practice.

The other category was journalistic practice and social media. It was more focused on how social media was changing the ways of agenda setting, information gathering, reporting, editing and disseminating process at EBC and FBC. The discussion was up to read the minds of journalists and media managers determine their general outlook about social media opportunities and challenges. The journalists` attachments to social media as well as major challenges in using social media for journalistic practice were discussed. Further in the discussion was about their suggestions and reflections to solve or minimize the challenges of social media.

4.1. Respondents' Demographic Background

The table below shows cross tabulation of journalists' general demographic background of Sample informants by age, sex, educational qualification, work experience, working language of their journalistic practice, and the medium for which they are working for are given.

Table 1. Demographical distribution of respondents

	EBC		FBC		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Sex						
Male	115	70.12%	57	74.02%	172	71.36%
Female	49	29.87%	20	25.98%	69	28.63%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%
Age						
20-25	21	12.8%	15	19.48%	36	14.93%
26-30	37	22.56%	37	48.05%	74	30.7%
31-35	51	31.09%	17	22.07%	68	28.21%
35-40	46	28.04%	6	7.79%	52	22.75%
Above 40	9	5.48%	2	2.59%	11	4.56%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%
Education						
First Degree	149	90.85%	69	89.61%	218	90.45%
Second Degree	15	9.14%	8	10.38%	23	9.54%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%
Work Experience						
less than 5 years	70	42.68%	41	53.24%	111	46.05%
6-10 years	77	46.95%	28	36.36%	105	43.56%
More than 10 years	17	10.36%	8	10.38%	25	10.37%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%
Medium working for:						
Radio	41	25%	63	81.81%	104	43.15%
Television	97	59.14%	4	5.1%	101	41.9%
Online	9	5.48%	7	9.09%	16	7.05%
Both (Radio & Tv)	17	10.36%	3	3.89%	20	8.29%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

As can be seen in the above table the male and female ratio accounts 172 (71.36%) and 69 (28.63%) respectively. Age of respondents as you can see from the table above ranges from 26 - 40+.

Respondents with their age between 20-25 account 36 (14.93%). Respondents between 26-30 age level account 74 (30.7%). Respondents between the ages 31-35 are 68 (28.21%). Those who are between 35-40 are 52 (22.75%) of the total respondents. The rest 11 (4.56%) respondents are above the age of 40.

General information about respondents obtained from the questionnaires indicates that 218 of the 241 journalists (90.45%) have bachelor degree, while only 23 (9.54%) have got second degrees. Additionally, most of the journalists 111 (46.05%) have less than five year work experience in the media industry. But contrary to these 105 or 43.56% of the respondents have been working between 6-10 years in EBC and FBC. The remaining respondents 25(10.37%) had more than 10 years experience in the media houses.

Amongst the respondents, the majority are broadcast journalists. As shown in the table, 104 (43.15%) and 101(41.9%) working for Radio and Television respectively. The rest 17 are working for online and 20 for both online and broadcast medium.

4.2. Respondents' Social Media preference

As can be clearly seen in the table below, all respondents (241 journalists) have facebook accounts. Most of them use more than 2 social media platforms. As it is clearly seen in the table, YouTube is the second most (155 or 64.31%) preferable social medium next to facebook for EBC and FBC journalists. Figures from the questionnaire shows Twitter and LinkedIn take the next rank in social media preference of the selected journalists from EBC and FBC. Google+ and Blogs are almost equivalently used by 63 and 52 journalists respectively. According to the data found from the questionnaire, 36 journalists run Instagram accounts. Among the social media platforms, Flickr is the least used, only one user from among EBC and FBC journalists selected for the purpose of these research.

Table 2: Journalists Social Media Preference

Social Media Platform	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Facebook	241	100%
Twitter	72	29.97%
You Tube	155	64.31%
LinkedIn	72	29.87%
Flicker	4	1.65%
Instagram	36	14.93%
Blogs	52	21.57%
Google+	63	26.14%
Others	8	3.31%

(organized by the researcher)

Therefore, the findings above lead to conclude that journalists of EBC and FBC took facebook as their first choice, YouTube as a second, twitter and LinkedIn as a third.

They choose facebook as their first choice, maybe, because it allows them to upload and post texts or video in any size. Besides, the billions of members facebook have cumulative over the years offers journalists new, unlimited medium for unfiltered reporting.

4.3. Respondents' Experience in using social media

As the table indicates below, of the total candidates who returned the questionnaires, 98 (40.66%) said they used social media for 5-6 years. 79 (32.78%) of the total respondents, were on the social media for 7-8 years. 42 journalists stayed on the social media for over 8 years, and 20 (8.29%) used social media for 3-4 years. The remaining, 2 respondents replied their presence on the social media was for less than 2 years.

Table 3: Respondents experience in using social media

Experience	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 Years	2	0.82%
3-4 Years	20	8.29%
5-6 Years	98	40.66%
7-8 Years	79	32.78%
Above 8 years	42	17.42%
Total	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

This indicates that the respondents are more experienced in using the social media particularly facebook. Given the number of journalists on facebook the two media houses do have the potential to exploit the social media to their interest.

4.4. Respondents' Purpose for using Social Media

The world of internet gives for everybody to have the chance for global thinking or knowledge. Wherever he/she lived, one can understand how the global phenomenon is going on, the only thing she/he needs is the internet and the device which can operate in the cyber world.

The reason for being active in social media varies from person to person. The issues he/she loves or the matter to which he/she gives attention to depend on the reality of that person. Understanding the purpose for using the social media can lead the researcher to identify what the journalists are focusing on.

Table 4: Respondents purpose for using social media

Purpose	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
For information and knowledge sharing	213 (of 241)	88.38%
For social relation	132 (of 241)	54.77%
For entertainment	141 (of 241)	58.5%
Other	25 (of 241)	10.37

(organized by the researcher)

The table above clearly shows ranks the respondents give to different purposes for using the social media. Over 213 (88.38%) of the total respondents use the social media for information and knowledge sharing. The second biggest purpose to get into the social media is the want for entertainment with 141 (58.5%) respondents. 54.77% uses the social media for social relations, and the rest 10.3% go to the social media for others purposes like scholarship.

Among the FGD participants, almost all (18 of 21 participants) are using social media for information purpose as it's the case with the questionnaire respondents.

The researcher also tried to check whether the Interviewees are also using social media, for purposes mentioned above or not. All 14 of the interviewees agreed that as they are using social media for information purpose in most cases. And they told me that they rarely login to social media for social relations and entertainment purposes.

The fact that 88.3% of the respondents go to the social media for information and knowledge sharing confirm the belief that the social media has already established itself as a powerful news dissemination medium. That's why the journalists go for tips and share their stories on facebook hoping thousands will join the conversation.

4.5. Respondents' Social Media profile name, challenges and reasons for using fake or nick name

The world of social media gives freedom as one can use his/her page as per his/her choice. The chance of anonymity in profile naming is among the freedoms in offer over the social media.

There are different reasons to be anonymous in the social media. The researcher asked the respondents about their profile name, challenges and reason of anonymity in using social media as a journalist.

Table 5: Respondents profile name in social media

Profile Name	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Real Name	233	96.68%
Fake or Nick Name	8	3.31%
Total	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

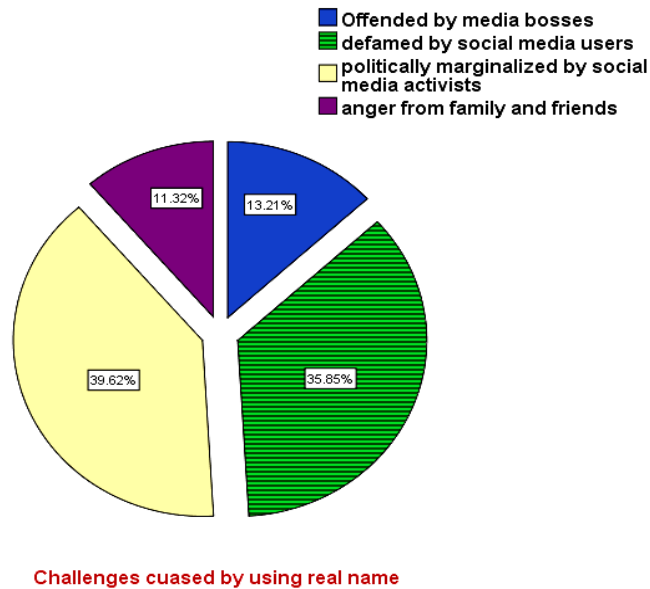
As can be seen in the table above, 233 (96.68%) of the total respondents use their real name for their social media profile. Only 8 (3.31%) use fake or nick names for their profiles. Among the 8 respondents who use fake names, EBC & FBC share 4 each.

According to the findings, those who use fake names do so as they feel insecurity to go public on the social media with their real name. And 5 of the total (8) respondents also have another reason in mind when they go for fake name; they believe fake names gives them the freedom "to express their thoughts freely". Two of the respondents believe, " for journalists using Social Media is not ethically correct."

The ones who involve in the social media with their real name pay the price though. According to respondents, EBC and FBC journalists face stern criticism and political marginalization by activists just for their reports on the media. As can be seen on the chart below, 39.62 % of respondents

According to the respondents, being journalists who work for EBC or FBC leads to face political marginalization by political activists and extremists. As clearly shown from the chart below, 39.62 % of respondents face abuses for reports they do for mere reason that they are assumed to serve the interest of the ruling party.

Chart 1, Challenges cause by Social Media



The researcher talked to individual interviewees from both EBC and FBC, especially editors and editor-in-chiefs. They argued that some political activists particularly some among the Diaspora took "journalists as propaganda tools for the government" and not as serving the public. Such kind of blaming and defamation often frustrated journalists. Sometimes, "our families and friends advise us to quit the media work as they are victims of hate speech."

During the discussion, the journalist had shared the challenge that she faced.

I have been using Facebook some months back. During the instability in the country, especially in Oromia and Amhara Regions, I had produced a television program about the facts and reasons for the conflict in Oromia. I believed that, I had produced the program as per our media Editorial policy and ethics of journalism. I tried to make it balanced and fact based. After the program had aired out, I posted it on my facebook page to share it to my followers on social media. After a while, I was stereotyped by some users and political activists, as the ruling party propagandist. I faced humiliations and intimidations as a result. It worried my families too. This was really a big challenge for me, and it caused me to deactivate my Facebook account (FGD participant Code 3, on July 14, 2017).

4.6. Respondents' experience in using social media for journalistic purpose

The emergence of social media has made it possible for anyone with access to technologies, such as a smart phone and/or any mediated technology to gather, process and disseminate information. Anyone with such facilities can make their own broadcasts, thus doing the work of conventional media houses.

In his work, Tayeebwa (2016) notes how social media sites rival traditional media such as newspapers and television as sources of news and information. On his part, Abdelhay (2012) argues that the role of traditional journalists has in recent years diminished because of the emergence of citizen journalism as afforded by new technologies.

According to Thomas's (2013) finding, journalists expressed a belief that there is significant pressure within the industry to utilize social media. This pressure can be enforced directly by one's publication. "Our bosses expect us to follow what happens on social media platforms, as well as a pressure to use it in order to keep up with competitors and peers," said a Journalist in an interview with Thomas (2013).

The above facts and research findings from abroad show how social media is integrating with journalistic practice. The researcher asked Ethiopian journalists whether they are using social media for their journalistic practices. Table 6 presents their responses:

Table 6: Respondents social media use for their work

Have you ever use?	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	157	65.7%
No	84	34.85%
Total	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

According to the table above, out of 241 respondents, 157 (65.7%) are using social media for their journalistic practices. It is believed that the culture of using social media for journalistic purpose is developing in EBC and FBC. As seen in the table, 84 (34.85) journalists don't go to the social media to run their duty.

The researcher found out majority FGD participants are using social media information for their practice and they often share their productions to their followers over the social media. Some 13 (61.9 %) of FGD participants said they use the social media for information.

Of the 14 interviewees, 12 (85.7%) said that they use social media to get their job done.

One of the interviewee, said:

We see journalists are increasingly using social media for the purpose of journalistic practice. We usually have editorial discussion two times per day, one in the morning session and one in afternoon session. In the editorial, issues that go viral on the social media get raised. Almost all our reporters are our eyes and ears for what is going on the social media. It is believed that, the growing presence of journalists on the social media in the best interest of the media houses (Personal Interview, I-9, on July 6, 2017)

In addition interviewees I-2, I-5 and I-8, strengthened the idea. They confirmed to the researcher that journalists who are using social media for their day-to-day practice in EBC and FBC are increasing.

Although the utilization attitude is increasing, there are more journalists who do not use social media for journalistic purpose. It is because, as the FDG 1 participant Code 2 argued, the Media houses are not encouraging social media information to be used. Some editors added, they believed social media are places of trivial issues which can't be confirmed or verified. So that, especially using facebook is nonsense. According to them, the attitude of their immediate bosses, i.e. using social media as a wasting time and money mentality, discourages journalists.

On the other hand, some argued that:

FBC, nowadays, believes that social media is a changing phenomena for information flow. We acknowledge social media as another platform for our program and news dissemination. Our media house is encouraging journalists to use social media for purpose, especially for their work. I have to be honest that, before 5 or 6 years, we the media managers didn't see the impact of social media. But nowadays, everything is changing and can be impacted by social media, including the journalism world. So that, we had changed our attitude and applied social media as our another outlet (Personal Interview, I-8, on July 6, 2017).

Interviewee I-1, also said that EBC accepts social media can have an important role for journalistic practice.

As the theories stated in the study frame work (Agenda Setting in social media and Technology Determinism, which are related to social media technologies), the emergence of social media has

made it possible for anyone with access to technologies, such as a smart phone and/or any mediated technology to gather, process and disseminate information to others. In the electronic media world, anyone with such facilities can make their own broadcasts, thus doing the work of conventional journalists. In his work, Tayeebwa (2016) notes how social media sites rival traditional media such as newspapers and television as sources of news and information. On his part, Abdelhay (2012) argues that the role of traditional journalists has in recent years diminished because of the emergence of citizen journalism as afforded by new technologies.

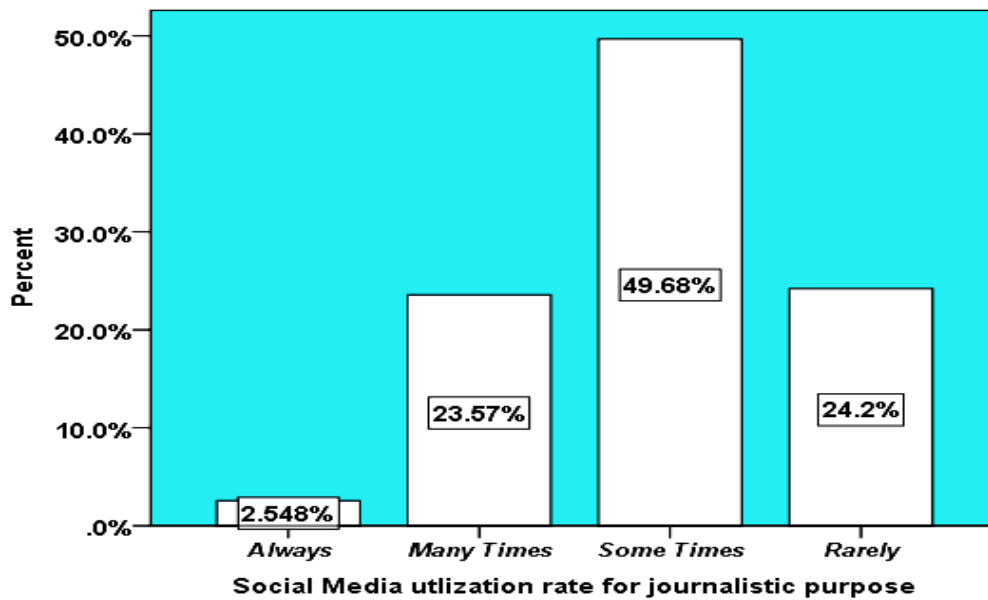
According to the above arguments and findings from the journalists, it is possible to conclude that, regardless of the attention difference, EBC and FBC management believes social media can be used for journalistic practice, in accordance with verification and investigation of facts. Therefore, journalists are influencing and getting influenced by social media in their practice.

4.7. Respondents' Social Media utilizations rate for their practice

Tayeebwa (2016) cited in Naughton (2013), notes the increasing power of Twitter as a news-sharing outlet, observing that it had become 'the de facto newswire for the planet.' Other scholars such as Kirkpatrick (2010) point out the increasing role of social networking sites, notably Facebook and Twitter, in sourcing and disseminating journalism content. It is well understood that, EBC and FBC journalists are using social media for their work. But the next questions to be answered are: to what extent are the social media used and what type of information is used for journalistic practice.

As clearly stated before, 157 (65.7%) respondents use social media for journalistic purpose. Among the 157 journalists, 49.68% use it sometimes, and 24.2% rarely use it. 23.57% of the respondents use the social media many times for their practice. The ones who always use it are just 2.54%.

According to the findings from the questionnaire, most of the respondents (73.25%) use social media for their practice, though at varying frequency.



Most of the FGD participants and interviewees confirmed that they sometimes use the social media for journalistic practice.

Therefore, we can conclude that, most of the EBC and FBC journalists are using social media for their practice as it's the case with journalists worldwide.

4.8. Types of information that the respondents use

One of the advantages of the social media is the chance to access and get different information easily. Here below is what type of information they are going for and how much time that they spend on.

Table 7: Respondents social media information preference

Information used by respondents	Total	
	Frequency	Percentage
Political and current affairs News	153 (of 157)	97.45%
Entertainment News	146 (of 157)	92.99%
Sport	105(of 157)	66.87%
Business and Economy	83 (of 157)	52.86%
Other information (Science, Health...)	33 (of 157)	21.01%

(organized by the researcher)

Out of 157 respondents (who use social media for journalistic practice) 153 (97.45%) are using social media for "Political and current affairs news" and related materials (audio, video, photos etc. 92.99% (146) respondents also use for "Entertainment information". Going for Sports information is in the third rank with 83 journalists (66.87%) of the respondents. The rest 83 (52.86%) journalists use the social media for "Business and Economy" information. Some 21.01 % use it for other type of information like Science, Health and etc.

Similarly, 15 (71.42%) participants from all FGDs, go for political and current affairs information on the social media. 2 (9.52%), on the other hand, prefers business and economy. The rest, 4 (19.04%) participants of the FGDs, look for entertainment type of information.

During the discussion, Code 4 said, most of the time, he and his colleagues use social media information to develop story. In most cases they develop stories for news and current affairs.

Code 16 also said;

I'm working for business and economy section. We usually find and use International Media's business and economic analysis. In most cases we find these features and news from social media pages. Especially these days, we are commonly using social media tips to follow developments from around the world (FGD participant Code 16, August 4, 2017).

Interviewees also said that they track political and current affairs issues as their first choice. 13 of the total interviewee often follow such issues on the social media.

Interviewee Code I-2 confirmed the idea raised by FGD discussion on the extent of journalists' use of social media information. He told the researcher, "Social media information, mainly current affairs, is helping us to get up-to-date facts about what is going on from across the world. When we produce news, we can use information that comes through our smart phones where ever we are so long as internet network is available." (Personal Interview, I-2, on July 10, 2017).

Interviewee Code I-3, seconds Code I-2's thought saying that they use social media information. But, he notes it takes careful consideration to verify the factuality of the tips as there is widespread misinformation on the social media. "We strictly demand to verify and investigate as per our editorial policy. We just can't use every fact or information found over the social media; rather whenever possible we prefer our original news stories." (Personal Interview, I-3, on August 6, 2017).

The above discussion shows that most respondents use the social media for "Political and current affairs" information as justified by 97.45% of the respondents, 71.42 % FGD participants and almost all interviewees. Entertainment ranks second.

4.9. Respondents' general view towards Social Media

As news becomes non-linear and open-sourced, journalism will change and is changing. This is about more than posting a comment on a blog or sending in a photo to a website (Beckett, 2008). The claims that traditional media are the sole champions of authority, objectivity and quality will be (and is being) challenged. Alejandro in addition explained:

New-media technology is having a serious effect because of its impact on established journalism. The way that the vast bulk of public and commercial media is changing could be more important than the emergence of citizen journalism or the independent blogosphere. Together they offer the opportunity to transform the news media into a more open, interactive and useful forum for information and debate(Alejandro, 2008:7).

As seen earlier, the journalistic practice is increasingly integrating with the new media platforms especially with social media. Since the researcher is trying to find out the challenges and opportunities of social media on journalism in Ethiopia, especially in EBC and FBC- journalists' view towards these issues are so crucial. This study discusses their observation and views as follows:

4.9.1. What do you think is the social media to your duty and media house?

Table 8: summary of respondents' views about social media towards their journalistic practice

Social media for their practice	EBC Respondents		FBC Respondents		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
It is a challenge	7	4.26%	4	5.19%	11	4.56%
It is an opportunity	9	5.48%	19	24.67%	28	11.62%
both a challenge and opportunity	132	80.48%	43	55.84%	175	72.61%
Neither a challenge, nor an opportunity	6	3.65%	6	7.79%	12	4.98%
Not sure	10	6.09%	5	6.49%	15	6.22%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

According to table 8, 175 (72.61%) of the total 241 respondents asserted that the social media has both challenges and opportunities for their journalistic practice. Additionally, 28 (11.62%) journalists believed it has more opportunities than challenges. On the other hand, 11 (4.56%) of the respondents viewed social media as a challenge for their practice. 12 (4.97%) believed social media is not a challenge or an opportunity to their work. The remaining 15 (6.22%) are not sure whether it has a challenge or an opportunity.

Similarly, 17 (80.95%) of the participants, from the total 21 FGD members, believed that the social media is both a challenge and an opportunity for their practice. The rest, 4 (19.04%) of the participants in the FGDs, saw it as it is a challenge.

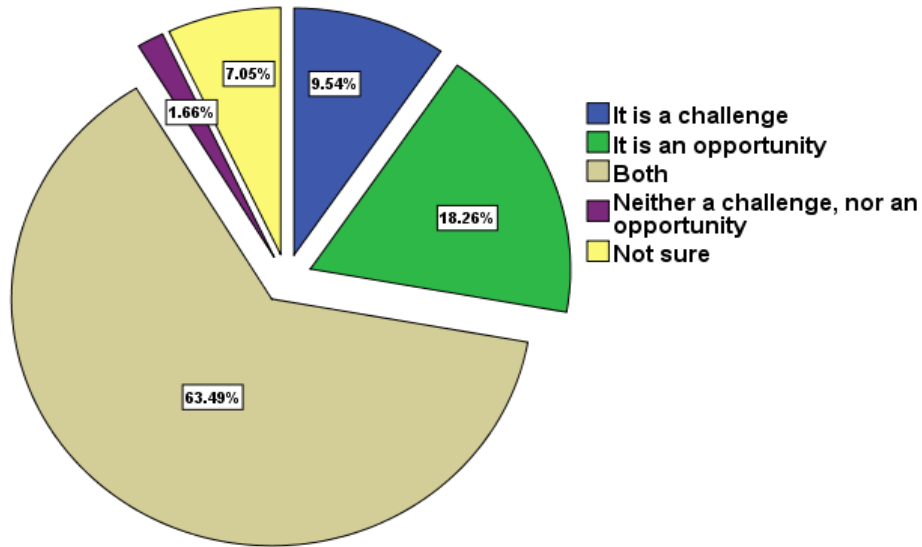
Table 9: summary of total respondents' views about social media towards their media house

Social media for their media house	EBC Respondents		FBC Respondents		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
It is a challenge	16	9.75%	7	9.09%	23	9.54%
It is an opportunity	11	6.7%	33	42.85%	44	18.25%
both a challenge and opportunity	127	77.43%	26	33.76%	153	63.48%
Neither a challenge, nor an opportunity	2	1.21%	2	2.59%	4	1.65%
Not sure	8	4.87%	9	11.68%	17	7.05%
Total	164	100%	77	100%	241	100%

(organized by the researcher)

As one can see from table 9, 153 (63.48%) of the total 241 respondents replied that the social media is both a challenge and an opportunities for their media house. Additionally, 44 or 18.25% journalists believed it has more opportunities than challenges. On the other hand, 23 or 9.54 of the respondents viewed social media as a challenge for their media. Only 4 or 1.65% believed social media had no challenge or opportunity on their media house. The rest 17 (7.05%) are not sure whether it has a challenge or an opportunity.

In addition, 20 or 95.23% of the participants, from the total 21 FGD members believed that the social media has both a challenge and an opportunity to their media house. Only one of them was not sure.



Journalists' view about social media to their media house

As briefly discussed in the literature review, when new technology gets introduced, culture or society is often affected to reflect the senses and skills needed to use the new technology. Due to that, society will always change and adapt to new media technology; this is according to technology determinism theory.

Technological determinism states that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act, and how society operates as we move from one technological age to another (Didiugwu, Ezugwu, and Ekwe, 2015:7).

According to them, when stories are moved to open space like Twitter, Facebook, it means interesting stories will be read more often than they would have been if they were published in the middle of a newspaper or mainstream media.

The social media can be considered as a new technological media outlet, and it shapes the journalists mind and the way they think as well as the way they are reporting. As a result, as Marshall McLuhan's theory "the medium is the message" discussed, the social media technology of a medium determining the nature of their communication practice and its impacts on society. Therefore, since most of the research participants had replied as social media has both a challenge and opportunity to their practice and media house, it is possible to say that the social media platforms are having impacts on journalists, medium and their messages to the society.

4.10. Social Media Opportunities/Advantages for Journalistic Practice

Table 10, respondents' views about social media's opportunities

It helps to get and/or improve:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Respondents of 241
Agenda Setting	88	103	16	12	6	225
Information gathering and reporting skills as well as observations and perspectives	92	108	11	10	9	230
Getting sources/evidences for investigation	81	86	13	31	14	222
Professional Networking	87	83	6	17	8	215
Can be considered as another media platform for Information disseminating	87	105	7	17	4	223
Getting feedback from the audience/ interaction	92	126	6	4	7	235
Promotes press freedom and expression	77	74	26	5	7	219

(organized by the researcher)

Table 11, respondents' views about social media challenges

In journalistic Practice Social Media disadvantages:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total Respondents
Diverting audience attention from national agendas to trivial issues	60	102	18	18	3	213
Lacks credibility and trust	82	120	14	5	0	217
Mostly, promotes conflicts and hate speeches in Ethiopia	97	107	8	18	3	233
Mostly disseminate Fake news and distorted Information / or Lacks detailed, investigated and verified reports/	98	111	8	13	3	233
Challenges the mainstream media in audience sharing	67	121	11	18	4	220
Libeling, marginalization, and defamation	66	116	15	5	9	231
Challenges journalists' professional confidence	8	33	37	89	14	215

(organized by the researcher)

The researcher classified the results (concerning whether the social media is viewed as an opportunity) into two groups for the analysis; those who strongly agree, agree and partially agree as "Agree", whereas respondents who strongly disagree and disagree as "disagree". Table 10 shows the summary of the opportunities of social media.

Table 12: Summary of the respondents' views about social media's opportunities

It helps to get and/or improve:	Agree		Disagree		Total Respondents
	F	%	F	%	
Agenda Setting	207	92%	18	8%	225
Information gathering and reporting skills as well as observations and perspectives	211	91.73%	19	8.26%	230
Getting sources/evidences for investigation	177	79.72%	45	20.27%	222
Professional Networking	190	88.37%	25	11.62%	215
Can be considered as another/alternative media platform for Information disseminating	202	90.58%	21	9.41%	223
Getting feedback from the audience/ interaction	224	95.31%	11	4.68%	235
Promotes press freedom and expression	187	85.38%	32	14.61%	219

(Organized by the researcher)

Based on the findings from the above summary table 10, the discussion of each advantages stated as follows.

4.10.1. Agenda Setting opportunity

Out of the total 225 respondents, 207 (92%) journalists answered that social media is an opportunity to set agenda and get agenda for journalists while 18 (8%) disagree. In addition, 13 (61.9%) of FDG participants also agreed that the social media offers great opportunity to set and get agenda.

From FGD 1, participant code 5 said social media gives him an agenda to begin with. It gives him unidentified facts and he works to strengthen the fact and to dig and get the truth. Participant code 4 also agrees with the idea that says social media is significantly helpful in setting agenda and preparing journalists for further investigation.

Interviewee Code I-5 said, in individual interview, social media can have an important role in agenda setting and getting an idea to set. Usually they had tried to set public agenda depending on the government plans and events. But, now days, social media is becoming another means to address agenda of their media and to get the agenda from the social media users.

Social media helps us to have an ability of magnifying national agendas. Social media gives us not only a chance to access the public agendas, but also helps us to reach out young and adult audiences with our agendas (Personal Interview, I-2, on July 10, 2017).

Code I-1 builds on the idea. According to him agenda can get from any direction:

Our editorial team always discusses about social media agendas. If the editorial gets a worthy agenda, we can assign reporters to verify and investigate the truth on the ground. Even though we rarely use it, social media is becoming one of our platforms to disseminate our agenda, and it's becoming a means to get out the public agenda too. Sometimes, we pick agendas which have greater impact to wrongly discuss on social media. Then we have to verify and tell the truth to the audience in accordance with our editorial policy (Personal Interview, I-1, on June 23, 2017).

Code I-9, on his part, told to the researcher, agendas can be picked from social media. Whether it is right or wrong, ideas from the social media can be considered as a big agenda so long as they have a big impact on the public or the nation. The cancelation of the national exam for the year 2016 is a powerful example to show the impact the social media can exert on the politics of this country.

According to interviewee, the social media can have a great role in entertaining national agendas in collaboration or opposition of the mainstream media: "I believe the media can take and pick such public agendas from the social media. If the agenda is well thought out, the social media users can hop on it for active discussion," (Personal Interview, I- 12, on July 10, 2017).

As clearly discussed in chapter two of this research, social media is becoming the source of information or agenda for media practitioners. Thomas (2013) wrote, "Journalists use twitter to see what people are talking about, to see what other people are writing about."

According to Abdool (2015), journalists are using social media applications for crowd sourcing. The use of social media applications are encouraged but not forced upon by news editors at the respective

publications. He further expands on this by stating that news editors themselves are on the social media to keep abreast of events and news occurring outside of the newsroom.

It is crucial to note that the social media is changing the way agenda is used to be set.

One of the most critical aspects in the concept of agenda-setting role of mass communication is the time frame for this phenomenon. In addition, different media have different agenda-setting potential. Agenda-setting theory seems quite appropriate to help us understand the pervasive role of the media in the age of social media (Salman, Mustafa, Salleh & Shahizan Al, 2016:7).

It is obvious, media are excellent avenues to stimulate the discussion of pertinent issues such as governance and democracy between citizens and their leaders but, most especially, among citizens themselves. Social media offer opportunities to form new ways of networking and forming communities through online discussion forums. It is helping journalists to get agenda.

Unwin (2012) discerns that new media technologies establish a new balance of distribution power of information through means of co-creation of content between 'peers', what he refers to as a 'sharing liberty'. As a result, reporters can set the agenda and discuss with their followers. It is feasible for the media houses too.

Therefore, as the above findings approves, it is true and applicable that social media have become a means of agenda setting as well as a source of agenda.

4.10.2. Information gathering and reporting opportunity

According to the above summary table, of 230 respondents, 211 (91.73%) agreed social media offers good opportunity for information gathering and reporting skills of journalists. It leads to say almost all journalists get access to information gathering and reporting over social media.

According to participant code 2, 6, 7, 14, 17 and 19 of FGDs, they get fast and up-to-date information that help them to do their job. "since the information is supported by photos and videos, it is also possible to say social media is an archive in which we can get holistic information that can be as an additional resources." (FGD participant, Code - 2, on July 17, 2017).

Participant 7 also said, social media is so helpful in facilitating interview schedules and other data gathering ways, through it before going to the actual places for reporting. She added, thanks to social media she doesn't need to open television every time to get breaking news alert. Rather, she gets access to new information on her cell phone being everywhere with availability of internet. Code 14 also said social media helped him a lot in being the first source and leading him to the clearer picture of an event.

On the other hand participant 17 explained that, he feels as if he holds information in his pocket everywhere and the society that is well informed is being created by social media. This resulted social media shortened the long process of information gathering and verification. He also said, "social media is an archive for me and I can get historical photos, audios and videos that could help me to use actualities and Sound bites for my stories."

According to the Interviewee I-9, social media helps them to update themselves regarding to editing skills and related knowledge.

Almost all interviewees told to the researcher that social media have brought them a big opportunity in information gathering and reporting process.

Tayebwa (2016) said, the spread of social media platforms provides an opportunity for enhanced access to information and a diversification of sources and opinions.

In the old days, a reporter was given a lead or went out to find a story. Today, many stories are received third hand (sometimes even fourth or fifth hand) through Facebook posts or Tweets or Digg so that by the time a story is assigned to the reporter, the story in some form or another is already out there in the social media universe. The reporter now has to take that into consideration and find some angle to the story that is not yet being talked about (Alejandro, 2010:9).

With or without social media, traditional or conventional journalism must maintain the practice of gathering, processing and distributing news and information through various mass media channels and formats based on established and sacrosanct norms such as balance and fairness, truthfulness and accuracy, objectivity and impartiality, neutrality and detachment (Tayebwa, 2016:12).

Recognizing the above, social media is playing significantly to improve reporters and editors information gathering and reporting skills. As journalism is a practice that is grounded in the ability

and passion of individuals to recount stories, it has an impact on the wellbeing of society, which is their social responsibility role.

Therefore, one can say through social media the practical skills of news gathering, processing and dissemination are practiced and being developed as respondents indicate in the discussions.

4.10.3. Alternative media platform opportunity

Over the last decades, social media has gained popularity all over the world. Almost everyone uses Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, You Tube and other forms of social media both for social and professional purposes. Although not everyone has gotten on board with the social media giant, it has shaped how people around the world communicate with one another.” (Nyamboga, 2014:89)

In addition to that, he added information that was once considered off limits and inaccessible by an “average” person is now disseminated within shortest period possible. Because internet/new media outlets like Twitter, You Tube and Facebook are easily accessible to millions of people globally, they have become effective platforms to disseminate headline news to mass audience.

The researcher has inquired to see if this idea applies in the media context here.

Of 223 respondents, 202 (90.58%) agreed that the social media offers opportunity for journalistic practice as alternative media platform. And all 21 FGD participants agreed that social media is considered as an alternative media platform for their practice and their media house.

During the discussion, the power of social media according to participant code 1, is that it reaches societies in remote areas that normally do not have access to mainstream media. The opportunity, as for him, is also creating citizen journalism or mobile journalism. It directly helps journalists to get another platform to disseminate any information for their audience.

Interviewee Code I-9 and Code I-4 agreed that social media is not only an alternative, but also an additional platform for their media when it comes to information dissemination and flow. According to them, therefore, both EBC and FBC have given attention to use the social media as an alternative medium.

It is possible to sum up this issue with the following scholarly view: Social media have changed the way information travels within and between networks of consumers. Individuals are no longer restricted to a one-way search for information online. Instead, social media allows information to find

the users as well (Qualman, 2009). It also helps the media to have an alternative and additional outlet for their productions or news.

On the other hand, Thomas (2013) said, from Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and a collection of blogs, a news statement can advance from zero to 20 million viewers overnight. The viral nature of this highly social, user- driven environment enables complete strangers to connect over common beliefs, desires or interests and together creates winners and losers.

Currently, audiences can have not only Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and other social networking sites to source news content, but also connect with their virtual audiences. That is why journalists and their media house are able to potentially use social media as alternative to address their news and programs easily and directly, regardless of network problem. The other additional opportunity to this regard is that social media can offer access to recheck stories at anytime. This enables audiences to see the programs or news that come out during their working hour or sleeping time.

Hermida and Thurman (2008:34), on the reporting advantage of using social media as alternative platform, put the following excerpts:

Most journalists feel blogs offer them the possibility to express news freely without the pressure of being part of a corporate news chain. User generated content, expressed on different social media platforms, and is mainly seen as complimenting journalism rather than replacing it(Ibid).

Therefore, I can conclude that the social media has brought alternatives both to journalists and the media houses. That is why EBC and FBC as well as their staff have accounts or pages over Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and other social media platforms.

4.10.4. Getting feedback from the audience/ two-way interaction opportunity

Thomas (2013:13) said that the online media follow the choices of interactivity, rapidity and selectivity with users being able to select their favorite topics through the aid of hyperlinks or newsletters. In this way, newspapers, and broadcast media too open an ongoing communication channel between them and readers that permits live conversations offering chances to give feedback on stories. This creates the basis for interactive journalism. This is how the world is communicating in this age of social media. And it is true that EBC and FBC journalists are enjoying the fruits of the era of new media.

According to the table, of 235 respondents, 224 or 95.31% established the social media has offered opportunity to run journalistic duties. It helps to get feedback from the audience that can facilitate interactive relationship. Almost all respondents agreed on this conclusion.

Additionally, 17 participants of the FGD members replied as they are getting feedback from their audiences via social media platforms.

For example participant code 1 (from FGD 3) said social media gives him chance for free discussion with the audience. According to him, getting immediate feedback from audiences and having an interaction with them offers different advantages. He argued journalists may have a chance to develop a better news angle and perspective to their work.

Some interviewee also agreed with the above point. "The feedback that the reporters has getting from the followers of their own news on social media confessed that their professional capability developing as a result.' (Personal Interview, I-9, on July 6, 2017)

The interviewee Code I-7 and Code I-12 also told the researcher that the number of feedbacks from audiences is increasing day by day. Most of the time, feedbacks are more focused on the weaknesses. It would help them to work hard to better news and program productions.

As briefly discussed on the literature review, scholars argue on the idea discussed above. According to Hermida and Thurman (2008:42), "the Internet in this new media culture [allows that] the public is no longer a passive consumer of media, but an active participant in the creation of the media landscape".

In addition to this, Thomas explained how social media play an important role in adding the interaction between the producer and consumer of news.

He said the new format of online news broadcasting has come to include various types of UGC (User Generated Content) such as: polls, message boards, have your say, comments on stories, Q&A's, blogs, reader blogs, and your media your story (Thomas, 2013:18).

Here at EBC and FBC, there is tremendous effort to network and interact with audiences. That is why we are posting and sharing our links in every story; this is according to Interviewee Code I-2 and Code I-8.

In light of a general belief in journalism, becoming two-way communication, the questions focused on the interviewee's attitude to comments being made on their own, and general articles Thomas, (2013), said. "It's interesting how comments can become part of the news, it could almost be a dinner discussion of informed individuals, probably more interaction now because you can just tweet (about your news story) to someone and say, 'how dare you?' (Then feedback follows) I agree, I disagree, I have information on your story, etc." Thomas, 2013:36).

Tayebwa (2016:14) also said social media avails the opportunity of interaction between the media and their audiences. Online journalism is developing into a web practice adopted by all newspapers, the concept of interactivity arises naturally from the news industry. This quality of new media platforms promotes the endorsement of a two-way communication model, challenging the traditional practices of journalism that are based on one-way communication.

The social media can increasingly become and has already been, of course, a source of feedback for EBC and FBC journalists, whatever the issue is and at any time.

4.10.5. Being source /evidence as an opportunity

Out of the total 222 respondents 177 (79.72%) agreed that the social media can be a very good source for tips and story ideas.

Regarding this, FGD 2 participant code 4 said that he gets various facts from his followers over the social media. He explained that he received different information via inbox and then he used them as source and evidence for his story. More than half of the FGDs participants 14 (66.67%) support that idea. The remaining answered they didn't use such tips though they believe it can help them do their job better.

In addition, the Interviewee Code I-11 in the in-depth interview said that the social media has become a significant source for the mainstream media especially for entertainment programs. He added:

Journalists are able to access information from the elite part of the society very easily and quote their ideas directly from their pages. Social media has become a good addition and easily reachable source to access evidences. Reporters can contact them if they need a personal interview with them (Personal Interview I-11, on July 10, 2017).

The Social media plays, as scholars argued, an important role for sourcing: "News beats, for picking up stories, contacting and getting access to sources informally or formally" (Skogerbø, Bruns, Quodling, and Ingebretsen, 2016). Other scholars agreed with them. The social media have become alternative channels both for addressing concerns and directly talking to citizens and for "dodging the gatekeepers" of mainstream media by publishing stories and material that can be picked up by elites or citizens (Skovsgaard and Van Dalen 2013).

Another researcher, Abdool (2015:17) also added that Social media applications and the networks that are created by users could provide opportunities for journalists to investigative tips and sources deeper as they develop a particular story.

Social media platforms provide more chances and tools to search for evidence and documents, which enable them to gain more content that further add credibility to their investigations. Lavrusik (2010:69) is of the opinion that the use of social media applications in investigative journalism is allowing investigative journalism to develop and assist journalists in being better positioned to expose wrong doings in society.

Therefore, the discussion above leads to a conclusion that it is possible for journalists to pick tips and evidences for investigative story as the social media offers strong shield for anonymity.

4.10.6. Professional Networking, and networked reporting opportunity

Out of the total 215 respondents, 190 (88.37%) journalists agreed that the social media helps to make professional networking.

As participant code 7 explained, starting from making many friends and followers, his benefits as a journalist from social media is a lot in terms translating opportunities for professional excellence. And other 15 (71.42%) of the total FGD participants agreed that the social media brings them opportunities for professional network as well as networked reporting.

Social media is changing their professional network in advance as interviewees explained,

Social media created an opportunity of positive competition for journalists within and outside their media house. It also helps professionals to engage in workshops and meetings to share knowledge from seniors and experienced journalists as well as experts

of journalism and communication. As a result, journalists always try to disseminate information to the best of their potential (Personal Interview, Code I-9, on July 6, 2017).

Scholars argued that the contemporary journalism can be considered, due to strong connection between the audience and professions, as a networked journalism.

James Curran (2011:241) strengthens the above idea. He said in some cases, volunteer journalists will produce their own websites; in others, they will constitute a diverse feed chain, with professionals at the center. The key to understanding the future of journalism is to substitute the word 'journalism' (which is a vertical, gatekeeper institutions) with the phrase 'journalistic activity', based on the open-ended, reciprocal, horizontal, collaborative, self-generating, extensive, and inclusive reporting and a comment of a kind never experienced before. As he concluded, social media is helping to make professionals as well as the society more networked.

Social media offer opportunities to form new ways of networking and forming communities through online discussion forums. This is clearly attested by much of the respondents who agree that they are getting more networked than ever before helping them practice their journalistic profession even better.

4.10.7. Social Media as a promoter of press freedom

Since social media helps everyone to be part of citizen journalism; every citizen has chance to express or share their information with the public (Tayeebwa, 2016). Similarly, Participant code 4 explained, the journalist, who could not normally exercise freedom of expression because of editorial policy, can have chance to freely post or share his/her views on social media.

Most of the respondents of the questionnaire, 187 (85.38%) believed that the social media has an opportunity in promoting press freedom and expression for journalists and societies in general. And 11 (52.38%) participants of the FGD said that social media can promote free expression. And most of the Interviewees agreed it is an opportunity that social media has brought to them.

According to interviewee I-6, social media has brought about free flow of information for journalists and the larger public: "Since social media is easily accessible and doesn't have any gate keeper, it gives me an opportunity of free sharing of ideas. Social media is an opportunity in making a

significant shift making journalistic practice an enterprise for every citizen", (Personal Interview, I-6, on July 11, 2017).

Therefore, we can summarize with this Tayeebwa's (2016:78) scholarly view: "Social media have greatly advanced the possibilities of 'citizen journalism'. They provide channels for everyone to reach out to the public, to share information and to express opinions without formal requirements and with a minimum interference in form of regulation and censorship". Even though it has been agreed by fewer respondents compared to other opportunities, it is possible to say that social media is helping journalists to exercise their freedom of expression.

4.11. Social Media Challenges/disadvantages for journalistic practice

Table 13: Summary of the respondents' views about social media challenges

In journalistic Practice Social Media disadvantages:	Agree		Disagree		Total Respondents
	F	%	F	%	
Diverting audience attention from national agendas to trivial issues	192	90.14%	21	9.85%	213
Lacks credibility and trust	212	97.69%	5	2.3%	217
Mostly, promotes conflicts and hate speeches in Ethiopia	212	90.98%	21	9.01%	233
Mostly disseminate Fake news and distorted Information / or Lacks detailed, investigated and verified reports/	217	93.13%	16	6.86%	233
Challenges the mainstream media in audience sharing	198	90%	22	10%	220
Libeling, marginalization, and defamation	217	93.93%	14	6.06%	231
Challenges journalists' professional confidence	91	42.32%	124	57.67%	215

(organized by the researcher)

As mentioned above, the researcher classified the results (which indicates the agreement level of the opportunities of social media) in to two groups for this analysis. Those who replied strongly agree, agree and partially agree are termed as "Agree", whereas respondents who strongly disagree and disagree are grouped as "disagree". The above table shows the summary of the opportunities in the social media.

4.11.1. Challenges in Agenda Setting

Out of 213 respondents, 192 (90.14%) replied social media is challenging to them when it comes to agenda setting. They believed, it is diverting audience's attention from big and national agendas to trivial issues. FGD participants also 15 (76.19%) believed social media has posed significant challenge to continuously maintain its agenda setting power.

The remaining 6 of the respondents disagree and they said it couldn't challenge them to set agenda. It is because, social media is not reachable for vast audience here in Ethiopia.

On the other hand, all the interviewees agreed social media is challenging the mainstream media in agenda setting. Interviewee I-2 summarizes the idea as follows:

Social media brings lots of challenges, despite the opportunities it offers. Social media is creating social mobilization, in effect, weakening the mainstream media from its traditional agenda setting power in the public. And this is gradually shifting the agenda to trivial and private issues compared to mainstream media's national agendas. We knew that the mainstream media is led by its plan. But social media creates a big agenda and it shifts or drives mainstream media out of their plan. We already experienced it many times (Personal Interview, I-2, on July 10, 2017).

As we have discussed on theoretical frame work, it is possible that the advancement of new media has slightly modified the nature of the mainstream media's ability to set agenda, rather than eliminating it entirely. It is well understood that if new media are following the cues of traditional media, then the agenda-setting power has not diminished but has instead simply gained another channel.

Off course, mainstream media could set the agenda of blogs, social networking sites, video sharing sites, and others, which then deliver those cues to the general public in a modern version of the two-step flow. The role of traditional media would remain unchanged, and new media outlets such as YouTube would essentially take the place of opinion leaders in years past. Moreover, it seems likely that the end result in this scenario (which issues are discussed by the public and how) would remain the same.

Even though social media had an advantage of addressing the mainstream media agenda by sharing and posting, it remains a challenge in shifting or changing the agenda into another horizon. Global researches confirmed that the conventional media is no longer having full control on agenda setting over the masses. This is due to the pervasiveness of the social media, which provides access to the masses and makes it easier for anyone to create and share news (Salman, Mustaffa, Salleh & Shahizan Al, 2016).

Hence, the mainstream media is losing its grip and getting a big challenge as far as agenda setting is concerned especially political agenda, as respondents confirmed above.

4.11.2. Challenges on Credibility and Trust

Depending on the early work of Hovland and Weiss (1951), certain types of information sources are viewed as credible, or trustworthy, and other sources are viewed as untrustworthy. Therefore, consumers' acceptance of information is mitigated by the credibility of the source.

As per the challenges summary table, of 217 respondents, 212 (97.69%) answered the social media is a challenge on their credibility and trust. They believed, due to many reasons, social media shared non-trusted and non-credible information.

According to the FGD participant Code 2, code 3, Code 7, Code 9, Code 12, Code 13, Code 20 and Code 21, journalists are facing many challenges due to social media. The basic challenge, as Code 9 briefly mentioned, is the issue of credibility and trust:

Basically, most of social media users have a bias towards mainstream media. They see us as the mouth piece of the government or the ruling party. This is mainly because the society (which is mainly the elite and the young adults who are using mobile and laptops) tend to intentionally put more trust to the social media than the conventional media. As a result of this, even though the mainstream media journalists bring balanced and true information after relatively proper verification process, it has become a challenge to divert the public from the information they have already had from social media (FGD participant, Code 9, on July 24, 2017).

Tayebwa (2016) discussed about that in detail. He said telling stories to the general public, providing crucial information and influencing perceptions are no longer able to preserve the traditional media

and its journalists. The difference remains that the social media, as it's totally unregulated, can disseminate news without any filter or direct control while the traditional media houses still perform the function of intermediary (gate keeping) filtering, analyzing and explaining information before it goes public.

As per the respondents' beliefs, the young adults are increasingly turning to social media for news rather than going to the traditional media. Interestingly, however, despite their preference for using social media for newsgathering, young adults still perceive traditional media as more credible news sources than social media. But, in most cases, especially in national agendas, that duly have impact on the public, the reports still remain not credible and trustworthy.

Therefore, it is possible to say that social media is becoming a big challenge for credibility and trust. As the discussion above shows, almost all respondents are facing the credibility and trust issues on their practice.

4.11.3. Challenges on hate speech

Tadias Magazine reported, on 2016, a research about hate speech conducted by Oxford and Addis Ababa University. The research covered 1055 Facebook pages and 13,000 statements monitored between February and April 2015. The finding was "almost all dangerous statements were uttered by individuals seeking to hide their identity, who are 92%". And the few extreme statements had receiving the largest amount of comments and shares.

Such kinds of hate speeches appear to push journalists off the social media limiting them just to use it for journalistic practice. According to FGD participant code 6, hate speech is one of the big challenges.

It is used for abuse by racial and religion extremists. They abuse and label me because of my race and sometimes for my religion as well as for my political beliefs. Some extremists and political activists inboxes me hateful messages. That sometimes pushes me to tend to look for overseas events from other international media. I think such hate speeches are making me lose opportunities of gathering events which are proximate to me in all standards (FGD participant, code6, on July 17, 2017).

More than half of the FGD participants, 13 (61.9%) agreed that hate speech on social media is a challenge to practice their work, especially in political newsgathering and reporting process.

It is true for questionnaire respondents that hate speech on the social media is challenging their journalistic practice. According to the data found from the respondents, 212 (90.98%) of the total journalists, believed hate speech is a challenge for their work and social media usage.

Interviewees also agreed on the idea. More of them told the researcher that they are facing hate speeches despite difference among journalists in the amount and degree each face on their stay on the social media.

Interviewee I-6 said, he is always afraid of hate speech. Even if hate speech is a challenge to him, he tries to use because it offers more advantages than the challenges. He argued;

We journalists must treat ethnic and cultural diversity as a unifying force not as a political violence manipulation tool. We should openly challenge the hate speeches and fake news, we should foster an honest and open debate on the all possible socio political events, and engage in genuine reporting. We should focus on our balanced information that we are disseminating for our audience, then we can win all the hate speeches (Personal Interview, I-6, on July 11, 2017).

As one can understand from the above discussions, it is likely to say that, regardless of the difference on the degree and amount of hate speech each journalist facing, respondents take it as a challenge.

4.11.4. Challenges on Verification

Social media mostly disseminate "Fake news" and "distorted information or Lacks detailed, investigated and verified reports", said 217 (93.13%) respondent. As a result, the public is expected to verify these kinds of information even though it was not included in our media plan. It tends to mainstream media for extra resource, budget and time.

From FGD participants, Code 4 said before he finishes the investigation and verification process, the social media somehow disseminates fresh information or breaking news. This leads him, sometimes, to hurry and post unverified stories on his pages. It seems true for 19 (90.47%) of the respondents as they are challenged by social media posts in their verification process. The rest 3 said that they are not practically worried about fake news on the social media.

This is a highly discussed issue in the individual interview too. Most of them put it that fake news and a timely report of the spot makes the verification or investigation process difficult.

It is clear that EBC and FBC journalists are facing this difficult process of verification as it is the case with the global media that are also challenged by the social media in their process of verifying reported posts on the social media.

Nyamboga (2014:92) said social media provides a platform for accessing information about anything one can think of. The challenge is however, how to get compelling stories from noise as there are millions of tweets, stories, pictures, links, name them, posted on the internet every second.

Although new technologies have affected changes on the amount of information available and the rate of reception, it is not clear whether these have had any significant effect on the quality of information and news. In fact, there are claims that rising competition and the obsession to provide exclusive news fast using social media may have negatively affected the quality, reliability, and validity of information. This is especially true of the breaking news facility.

Therefore, it can be put as a challenge for respondents since most of them agreed that they are having challenges due to the issues discussed above.

4.11.5. Challenges on Audience sharing

Out of the total 220 respondents, 198 (90%) answered that the social media is taking away their audience. Almost all FGD respondents also agreed that the social media is eating away their audience.

According to Interviewee I-13 social media is especially challenging them by taking their entertainment program audiences.

The youth and elite adults are focusing on social media entertainments rather than listening to our radio programs. We understand that these elite and urban youth are not our only target audience, but we need them to listen us. In most cases, our entertainment programs are challenged by the social media entertainment videos, photos, programs and information shared by the international media as well as famous social media users (Personal Interview, I-13, on July 11, 2017).

It is mostly true especially for newsrooms. News followers had multiple choices over the social media. The mainstream media are facing these challenges in all ways; this is because the social media has the freedom to comment on any topic in anyway; besides the social media has that power to get out with any breaking news at any moment in time.

This is a new phenomenon, and no one can be free from the social media challenge. All mainstream media have to face it. We know that in most issues social media goes first with all the breaking news. But the mainstream media have always relied on verification and attribution, and verification often takes a long time. The uninvestigated and unverified stories couldn't be reported and disseminated by our media; it is forbidden according to our Editorial Policy. The concern is how we can move fast with the unprecedented flexibility of the social media platforms (Personal Interview, Code I-1, on June 23, 2017).

The trend, as Tayeebwa (2016) explained, especially among the youth, the elite, and urban dwellers who are the majority social media users, is increasingly turning away from traditional media houses to social media sites for news updates consequently allowing users to share news stories, images or videos, and to discuss a news issue or event.

Therefore, it is possible to argue that, almost all participants in the research believed that social media is most likely taking the share of the audiences from EBC and FBC.

4.11.6. Challenges of Defamation on Social Media

The researcher got a case that exemplifies libeling and defamatory cases on the social media as it happens on journalists as noted below.

Getu Temesgen, a senior journalist at EBC, is a facebook giant. He used social media for almost 10 years. Currently, he had more than 265,000 followers on his facebook page. Getu told the researcher, before he has become an active participant, he was using social media for the sake of social communication. As he told the researcher, in recent years he used the social media, especially facebook for journalistic purpose. He used it to share or post any new information and facts that he gathered. He believed the social media had tremendous advantages for his work. He has got a lot of networks here in Ethiopia and around the world. He has been using social media videos and historical photos for his mainstream media programs. Getu said, even though social media has given him so many opportunities, he couldn't deny the challenges that he has faced:

I remember. The day was April 2016, or 2008 Ethiopian colander. The social Media runs a fake viral story about the passing away of 'Ababa Tesfaye' (Artist Tesfaye Sahilu, who was famous in telling stories to children on EBC (formerly called ETV). When I heard this bad news, I was so shocked. But, I was skeptical. I didn't believe such viral story because I experienced such a fake

story. Many popular people had to go through such false stories. Then as I used to call him, I found him via his cell phone. He was so nervous and shocked by the bad news that's gone viral on the social media. Then, I went to his home and have captured a photo and video with him. I wrote some facts about him and posted the story on my facebook page. It was very surprising; the reaction was unexpected for me. I was assuming to get bits of appreciation. Not at all, it was very nasty and full of vile. Most of the readers used despicable words; 'Who are you after all? Are you God or Allah to make him alive?' - ፈጣሪ መሆንህ ነው የሞተ የምታስከሳው ወይስ ሙድ መያዝህ ነው? Most of them were not ready to accept the truth; rather they took me as if I were trying to fool them (Personal Interview, on August 6, 2017).

"It was so hard to post another issue during that time" added Getu. Then, after his social media post, FMs like Sheger FM and others had interviewed Ababa Tesfaye and create clarity on that fake story. Actually, Ababa Tesfaye passed away in 2017 a year after that hoax news.

Therefore, Getu said, "it is not a conundrum I only face on the social media, but many other journalists do have this same experience."

In addition to Getu, participant Code 3 said, the big test that happens on the social media for journalists is the humiliating insult they often experience whenever they post or share information of their choice.

The results gained from questionnaire respondents further strengthen the position held above. As one can see on the challenge summary table, almost all the respondents, 217 (93.93%) agreed social media is not easy to them as it tends to humiliate or politically marginalize their personality and their standing as journalist. Half of the interviewees and more of the FDG participants agree that bad labeling is a daily experience of a journalist on the social media platform.

We can conclude that, defamation and libel has gathered steam to keep abusing some of the social media users particularly journalists. It is better to put Nyamboga's explanation as a summary of the above position:

The other key disadvantage of social technology especially social networking is that most people do not know how to network effectively and safely. The usual forms of censorship: violence, prison, harassment and raids on editorial offices are equally damaging to professional journalists as well. Assaults on online journalists and social media activists are direct attacks on all media (Nyamboga, 2014:94).

Based on the findings, it is possible to say that journalists are facing challenges on libeling and defamation.

4.11.7. Challenges on Professionalism

The contemporary media practitioners are facing a lots of challenges due to social media as discussed. But, compared to the other challenges, the social media's challenge on professionalism seems to have lesser effect. Only 91 (42.32%) (Which is less than half of the total respondents' i.e 215) believed it has impact on their professional confidence, and development of professionalism. Similarly, only 10 (47%) of the FGD participants agree that the social media is challenging the profession itself and the confidence of journalists.

According to participant Code 8, the antagonistic conversation on the social media discourages journalists when it comes to openly identifying oneself as journalist:

We are highly discouraged because of the antagonistic approach the Ethiopian online community has developed due to partisan political views. Journalists are often forced to have two different assumptions. An assumption that is governed by the editorial policy of his/her institution and a personal outlook that lures with the freedom to write anything on the social media. And this has become a difficulty to either go identify oneself as a journalist or any common individual (FGD participants, Code 8, on July 17, 2017).

But, participant Code 2 had a different argument:

The need for more 'like', 'share' or 'comment' on the social media is eroding journalists' credibility. An event is somehow over exaggerated and posted by some journalists, which is unethical for me, and this could potentially lead the public to ignore our reports. And it makes some of my staff to hate their job (FGD participant, Code 2, on July 17, 2017).

Interviewee I-3 and I-9 also argued about the challenges on professionalism. They say such cyber-illiteracy across the board disadvantages the journalism enterprise as a whole.

To this regard, Tayeebwa (2016) clarifies, “In our digital age, anyone can do what journalists traditionally have done”. It leads the journalist to ask themselves how best and different they can serve while they add value on what is out on the social media.

The interaction between journalists and sources can be skipped, with information being spread directly by sources on online pages. Thus, the role of the journalist as a mediator between the external world and the audiences is shifted from the traditional professional approach to newly developed options on the social media.

Thomas (2013) added, going by the concept that one of the principal effects that media houses have on governance is their ability to provide information relevant in the voting booth. Social media's undoubted influence in shaping the standards, opinions and perceptions of the people – especially the middle class and urban elite - must be considered in shaping governance.

Whereas there is mechanisms for traditional journalism to gate- keep the content for distribution, the instantaneous nature of sharing information as accorded by social media makes it harder to exercise the requisite quality controls. In the competitive moments between media houses, it is easier for false and defamatory information to be disseminated via social media platforms. At the extreme, social media has been cited in cyber-crime i.e. stalking, hacking, cyber- bullying and cyber-terrorism (Tayeebwa 2016).

In addition, Gunter (2003), the role of the journalist in the new cyberspace era as related to the freedom of the reader in choosing what to read and when to participate in the construction of news. The traditional top-down model of communicating with readers does not apply any more to the online spaces. The interaction between journalists and sources can be skipped, with information being spread directly by sources on online pages. Thus, the role of the journalist as a mediator between the external world and the audiences is withdrawn from the professional world of journalism.

The data discussed above leads to say that, more than half of EBC and FBC respondents believed that the social media's challenge over professionalism and professionals' confidence is slightly troubling in comparison to the other difficulties.

4.11.8. Other Challenges of Social Media Departments of EBC and FBC

The researcher discussed with social media team members of each media house.

According to Interviewees, there are lots of challenges for the department, internally and externally.

We understand that the management has given due attention as much as possible. But the department needs robust leadership as it can cause massive impact on the media itself and the politics of the country. As it is the digital age, we need to have up-to-date digital material and knowledge. We also need quality training. We all are trying to practice our best, but training can help us to do as best as it's possible. I think lack of training is one of the challenges we're having (Personal Interview, I-12, on July 10, 2017).

He added that other departments especially the broadcast media (both radio and TV) should give appropriate support to the social media. We need their unreserved service to publish breaking news, to go first with latest updates and programs. If we closely work together, we can perform better both in the social and mainstream media.

Similarly, interviewee I-7 also shared to the researcher the internal challenges the social media department face at EBC:

The main problem we are having internally is lack of proper interest on the part of the EBC Management. They always talk positive and they assume they have delivered the expected leadership. Actually, they facilitated training from BBC on live reporting through the social media. But, they didn't take us through the implementation. We do have team leaders who are member of the Editorial Team, but they couldn't get things done. I think the leadership considers our department less important. This makes us feel bad about the department (Personal Interview, I-7, on July 7, 2017).

Interviewee I- 4 also told the researcher that EBC didn't offer competent leadership. If it continues the old way, the department couldn't deliver the expected outcomes despite ample material and human resources.

Based on these facts, both EBC and FBC social media departments are facing challenges not only from the social media, but also they are facing different challenges from their own media houses, internally.

Chapter Five

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

The study identified the types and levels of opportunities and challenges of social media on journalistic practice, and how EBC and FBC journalists view the potential of new media in the role of newsgathering, reporting and agenda setting process. Therefore, the conclusions drawn and recommendations made hereunder are based on the findings obtained from the analysis of questionnaires, FGDs and interviews.

5.1. Summary

The study assessed the “Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media on Journalistic practice” on journalists in Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation (EBC) and Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC). The research examined the journalists' experience and preference of social media to their practice and the opportunities they have gained as well as the challenges they are facing in using social media.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches (mixed method) were applied. Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and Interviews were the instruments used to collect data from journalists, who were the focus of this study.

The data were analyzed using SPSS and Excel spreadsheet. And the following are the major findings:

The findings of the study showed that when it comes to particular social media preference All respondents (241- 100%) prefer Facebook. You Tube is the most (64.31%) preferable social medium next to Facebook. And Twitter and LinkedIn are the 3rd (29.97%) preferred platforms. On the other hand, Flickr is the least, only 4 (1.65%) of the total 241 respondents.

Among the respondents, 233 (96.68%) normally use their real name. The rest only 8 (3.31 %), are using fake names for their social media profile. Some 39.62% suffer from defamation, libel and other offences from political activists, their bosses as well as from family and friends.

According to the finding, 98 (40.66%) respondents have used the social media for 5-6 years; 32.78% have used it for 7-8 years. The other 17.42% have been on the social media for more than 8 years. Of the total respondents, only 2 (0.82%) are using the social media for less than two years. Most of the respondents have been using the social media for 5 years and above.

As mentioned above, the study was about the use of social media, its opportunities and challenges for journalistic practice. The journalists at EBC and FBC use the social media for different purposes with prime emphasis on searching for information and knowledge. The findings show 213 (88.38%) are into the social media for information purpose. Next to information comes entertainment (58.5%) and social relations (54.77%).

However, journalists are using the social media in a varied degree of frequency. Among the 157 respondents that were inquired if they use the social media for their practice, 84 (34.85) have not been using the social media for their work, almost half of them (49.68%) sometimes use it and only 2.54% often visit it. This can lead us to a conclusion that the use of social media for journalistic purpose is not that significant, though it's increasingly growing by the day.

As indicated above, the majority of the journalists consider social media as source of information. According to the data found from those who use the social media for information, almost all (97.45%) go for political issues and current affairs. Issues like Entertainment take 92.99%, Sport 66.87% and Business and Economy 52.86%.

The finding also reveals that the role of the social media in the traditional media setting is considered both as challenge and opportunity. Of the total 241 respondents, 175 (72.61%) believe the social media presents both challenges and opportunities. And 28 (11.62%) are considering it only as an opportunity, but 11 (4.56%) sees it as a challenge. The rest consider it neither as an opportunity, nor as a challenge.

And most journalists are aware of the opportunities and the importance of the social media to contribute to the practice. According to the findings from questionnaire respondents, FGD participants, and interviewees, it is learned that they are trying to apply the opportunities available to the best of their practice. Of the total respondents, most agree that social media have become a means for agenda dissemination and source of agenda. Information gathering and reporting is another advantage that the social media has in offer to the respondents. It helps to develop their practical skills during information gathering, reporting and editing process. In addition, social media is becoming an alternative platform for the journalists themselves as well as their media organizations. Through their social media accounts or pages, they are sharing or disseminating information they produce. Getting feedback from audiences and having interaction with them is among other opportunities the social media offer to the traditional media. It is understood that social media is

playing a great role to get tips for program production. Last but not least is that it gives journalists to have a networked opportunity with professionals. Besides, less than half of the total respondents agree that the social media can help to promote for press freedom and expression.

On the one hand, the majority of the respondents agree that they come across various challenges due to the emergence of the social media. The findings show that the social media is challenging big agenda that the traditional media design to dominate the public. As the social media has the power to expose stories of the mainstream media, and as it is capable of unleashing counter campaigns that tarnish government agenda, the trust capital of the traditional media like EBC and FBC is under considerable challenge. Hate speeches, libel and defamations as well as biased political activism in social media limit journalists to join few of the conversations that don't politically corner them. The social media makes verification and investigation of news stories easy and difficult at the same time. The bulk of the information running on the platform and the scale of fake news circulating on the social media take the media houses and journalists to extra time to accurately establish facts. Since it gives audiences variety of information right on the spot, it provides much needed time freedom. That is why they tend to follow more social media than mainstream media. The other finding is, the social media practice in the media houses, i.e. at EBC and FBC, suffer from lack of training on how to use the social media for larger journalistic purpose. This, according to the finding, boils down to the failure of the management to provide competent leadership on the social media matters. Even though EBC and FBC have structured the departments in their media houses, their online departments lack proper leadership.

Finally, the study finds out that there is a strong need to use social media for journalistic practice both by the journalists and the two media houses. But, the utilization of the social media potential has been at its infancy so far, even though there is a want to do more.

5.2. Conclusion

The findings show that the journalists and the media houses' utilization of social media for journalistic practice have already taken root but it is really at its early days in terms of maturity and exhausting every available opportunity. As to technological determinism of media theory, the technology determines the nature of mass communication and it has role in society and the lives of

people. The idea of technological determinism is that technology and technological innovation force social, cultural, economic and political changes. Therefore, accessing and practicing the social media technology is crucial for media professionals because the use of this technology can determine what is going on among the urban youth and elite.

But journalists in these media organizations are not mostly in use of these new media technology outlets, called social media, in the process of information gathering, reporting as well as agenda setting. It would have been more efficient and effective for the professional work of journalism, if all journalists were able to use the social media opportunities mentioned above.

On the other hand, the findings indicate journalists are facing many challenges while they are using social media. All the challenges directly or indirectly have negatively impacted their choices and involvement in conversations. According to the findings like, the social media's challenge on agenda setting, verification, credibility and trust as well as defamation and libels have big effect on the practice of the journalists and the media houses. The universal goal of journalism basically is changing the lives of the public through information. But, it appears the social media might affect lives due to the massive misinformation it has allowed to circulate.

One of the big reasons which can lead the media to loss trust, credibility and impact is the way they set agenda, the way they gather information and the timeliness of reports. Therefore, in the engagement of media houses in the social media, the challenges are mostly related to the kinds of agenda they choose to the social media or the kinds of agendas they pick from the social media platforms.

As briefly discussed in the literature review, the mainstream media could set the agenda on blogs, social networking sites, video sharing sites, and others, which then deliver those cues to the general public in a modern version of the two-step flow. The role of traditional media, some assume, would remain unchanged, and new media outlets such as Facebook and YouTube would essentially take the place of opinion leaders in years to come. Moreover, it seems likely that the end result in this scenario would remain the same i.e which issues are discussed by the public and how.

But, as the findings confirmed, the capacity as well as ability of agenda setting of respondents and their media houses are considerably challenged by the social media, and needs due focus since the global phenomenon is fast changing due to intensive use of high tech tools in the media.

5.3. Recommendations

The outcomes of this study show almost all the respondents have social media account and they have been using their account for more than 5 years. EBC and FBC, as media houses, have also been practicing social media as an alternative media platform. Yet many respondents are not regularly practicing the social media to their journalistic duties. And the social media departments of these two media organizations need quality leadership support to advance their practice by integrating the platforms with their mainstream outlets.

Therefore, based on the findings of this study, the following are recommended to effectively utilize the social media for journalistic practices:

- The media houses should pay proper attention and provide robust leadership to the online and social media department so that the departments can effectively utilize all the advantages that the social media have in offer.
- It is so fundamental to raise the awareness of journalists about the use of the social media for journalistic purpose. This is because the right attitude will have the power to change the performance of the media houses in exploiting the social media whichever way possible.
- Quality education and trainings need to be designed and offered to help institutionalize best social media integration with the traditional media.
- The media houses need to provide access to strong internet network and smart phone or tablets in a bid to run the social media service anytime anyplace.
- There should be concerted efforts to regulate the social media and help discern fake news from factual stories.
- Journalists who are regularly using the social media to run their duties should be encouraged to show their good examples to the rest of the journalists who should follow in their footprints.
- Media houses should effectively use all the alternative platforms of the social media as best as they can.
- EBC and FBC should learn the experience of CNN, BBC, Aljazeera, Reuters ... to effectively integrate the social media with their traditional media outlets.
- Relevant researches should be conducted to show the way out and to devise mechanisms that help to fill in the skill and knowledge gaps
- National workshops should be organized to help raise the awareness of practitioners and online users in a bid to facilitate smooth ride in the effort to install the best possible solutions for challenges that may happen in the social media platforms
- Media houses and journalists need to lead the way forward in using the social media for nation building, and to facilitate changes in communities. This could place journalists at the right position in the conversations happening on the social media.

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7. Appendixes



Addis Ababa University
Graduate School of Journalism and Communications

Research Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

I am a last year postgraduate student at Addis Abba University at School of Journalism and Communications. I am doing my thesis on "the Opportunities and Challenges of Social Media on Journalistic Practice: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation and Fana Broadcasting Corporate in Focus". This questionnaire aims to get your opinion and say, which makes my study alive and complete. Hence, you are kindly requested to give your honest answers to all questions. I assure you that all the information you give in this questionnaire will only be used for the purpose of the research and will be kept anonymous. And, I thank you very much for your time and considerations in advance, Demeke Kebede.

You can reach me via demekekebede30@gmail.com / Mobile +251 911 48 56 03

Part One: Personal Information (Please circle or underline your answer)

- **Sex:** A) Male B) Female
- **Age:** A) 20-25 B) 26-30 C) 31-35 D) 35-40 E) Above 40
- **Education:** A) Certificate B) Diploma C) First Degree D) Second Degree E) PhD
- **Work Experience:** A) less than 5 years B) 6-10 years C) above 10 years
- **Medium you work for:** A) Television B) Radio C) Web/Online D) All

Part Two:

Please answer the following questions by using Circle or tick mark with the appropriate choice

1. Do you have a Social Media account?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
2. If “Yes” for how many years have you used?
 - A. 1- 2 years
 - B. 3 - 4 years
 - C. 5 – 6 years
 - D. 7 – 8 years
 - E. 8 years and above
3. Which Social Media do you use mostly? (You can circle more than one answer)
 - A. Facebook
 - B. Twitter
 - C. You Tube
 - D. LinkedIn
 - E. Flicker
 - F. Instagram
 - G. Blogs
 - H. Google+
 - I. Others
4. Why do you use Social Media? (You can choose more than one answer)
 - A. For social relation
 - B. For information and knowledge sharing
 - C. For entertainment
 - D. If other, please specify -----

5. Have you ever used social media for journalistic purpose?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No
 6. If yes, what is your main purpose? (You can circle more than)
 - A. To disseminate information/news
 - B. To gather information and search sources or evidences
 - C. To share knowledge
 - D. To build professional network

- E. If others, please specify-----

7. How often do use Social Media information for your journalistic works?
 A. Always
 B. Sometimes
 C. Rarely
 D. No
8. What type of information do you use or read or follow from Social Media? (You can circle more than one answer)
 A. Political and current affairs News
 B. Entertainment News
 C. Sport
 D. Business and Economy
 E. Others
9. Which one is true about you?
 A. I am using my real name and photo for my social media page/account
 B. I use fake or nick name
10. If you are using fake or nick name, why?
 A. Because, I believe using Social Media is not ethically correct for journalists
 B. Because, I am afraid of insecurity both from the government and the public
 C. Because, it gives me freedom to express my thought
 D. Because, I am not confident in my professional capability
 E. If others, please specify-----

11. If you are using your real name, did you face any challenge as a journalist?
 A. Yes
 B. No
12. If yes, what is that?
 A. I have been immortalized by my media bosses
 B. I have defamed by social media users
 C. I have been politically marginalized by social media activists
 D. I have faced anger from family and friends
 E. If any other, please specify-----

13. If No, why? -----

Part Three: Please mark or tick your choice in the table below

Table A: Social Media advantages for Journalistic Practice:

It helps to get and/or improve:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Agenda Setting and Agenda Getting					
Information gathering and reporting skills as well as observations and perspectives					
Getting sources/evidences for investigation					
Professional Networking					
Can be considered as another media platform for Information disseminating					
Getting feedback from the audience/ interaction					
Promotes press freedom and expression					

Table B: Social Media disadvantages for Journalistic Practice:

It has a challenge or disadvantage of:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Partially Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Diverting audience attention from national agendas to trivial issues					
Lacks credibility and trust					
Mostly, promotes conflicts and hate speeches in Ethiopia					
Mostly disseminate Fake news and distorted Information / or Lacks detailed, investigated and verified reports/					
Challenges the mainstream media in audience sharing					
Marginalization, and defamation					
Challenges journalists' professional confidence					

Part 4: Please put your opinion below in the space

14. In general, what do you believe about social media to your journalistic practice? Is it a challenge or an opportunity? or what? -----

15. What do you believe about social Media for your Media House? Is it a challenge or an opportunity? or if other please specify? -----

I thank you for your time and honesty!!!

FGD questions and discussion points

1. what are the opportunities that you have gained from social media?
2. What are the challenges that you are facing?
3. What is your suggestion for future use?

የቡድን ውይይቶች መነሻ ነጥቦች

1. ከማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎች ያገኛችኋቸው ጠቀሜታዎች ምን ምን ናቸው?
2. በማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎች የተነሳ ያጋጠሟችሁ ተግዳሮቶችስ ምንድን ናቸው?
3. ለወደፊቱ እንደመፍትሔ ምን እንዲደረግ ትመክራላችሁ?

Interview Questions

Part One: Editors and Editor-In-Chiefs

1. When did you start using social media? And which platform is your choice?
2. How often do you post, update or comment on social media?
3. What is your purpose to use social media?
4. How are you perceiving social media in your journalistic practice?
5. What are the opportunities?
6. What are the challenges?
7. What are benefits that you got from social media, which helps to improve your journalistic role?
8. What is you say? can social media be preferred as alternative platform for journalists? Why?
9. Have you ever use social media agendas for your media purpose? Why?

ለአርታኪዎችና ለዋና አዘጋጆች የቀረቡ የቃል ጥያቄዎች

1. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን መቼ መጠቀም ጀመሩ? የትኞቹንስ ይጠቀማሉ?
2. በማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ላይ በየምን ያህል ጊዜው ይፅፋሉ፣ መረጃ ያቀብላሉ ወይም አስተያየት በመስጠት ይሳተፋሉ?
3. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን በዋናነት የሚጠቀሙት ለምን ዓላማ ነው?
4. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎች ለጋዜጠኝነት ሙያ ጠቀሜታ አላቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?
5. ጠቁሜተኞቹ ምንድን ናቸው?
6. ተግዳሮቶችስ ምንድን ናቸው?
7. እስኪ ለጋዜጠኝነት ሙያዎ ማደግ ያበረከቱለዎትን ጥቅሞች ይንገሩኝ?
8. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን ለጋዜጠኞች እንደ አማራጭ ሚዲያ ናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ? ለምን?
9. እርስዎ ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን ለሙያዎ ተጠቅመውባቸው ያውቃሉ? ለምን?

Part Two: Media Managers

1. Do you have a social media team as a structure? if yes why?
2. How do you evaluate your media house performance before and after the rise of social media?
3. What are the challenges you are facing because of social media?
4. What are the opportunities?
5. What should be done for the future of Mainstream Media at the age of Social Media?

ለሚዲያ ሀላፊዎች የቀረቡ የቃል ጥያቄዎች

1. በሚዲያችሁ ውስጥ የማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ቡድን በመዋቅር ደረጃ አላችሁ? ለምን?
2. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን መጠቀም ከመጀመራችሁ በፊትና በኋላ የድርጅታችሁን አፈፃፀም እንዴት አገኙት?
3. ማህበራዊ ሚዲያዎች በድርጅታችሁ ላይ እያሳደሩት ያለው ተግዳሮት ወይም በጎ ያልሆነ ተፅዕኖ ምንድን ነው?
4. ጠቀሜታዎችስ ምንድን ናቸው ይላሉ?
5. በዚህ የማህበራዊ ሚዲያ ዘመን ለነፃ ሚዲያ ዕድገት ምን ይደረግ ብለው ይመክራሉ?