

**Practices and Challenges of Using Social Media as
Sources of News in Ethiopia Mainstream Media:
Selected Mainstream Media in Focus**

Leoulseged Weldehanna

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Journalism and
Communications Presented In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communications**

Addis Ababa University

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Addis Ababa University

College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communications

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Leulseged Weldehanna

Advisor: Professor Debashis Chakrabarti

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June, 2018

Declaration

I, hereby, declare that the thesis entitled, *“Practices and Challenges of Using Social Media as Sources of News in Ethiopia Mainstream Media: Selected Mainstream Media in Focus”*, is my original work and that all sources of materials that have been used for this research have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Leoulseged W/Hanna

Signature: _____

Department: School of Journalism and Communications, Addis Ababa University

Date of Submission: _____

Addis Ababa University
Graduate School of Journalism and Communication

This is to certify that this thesis has been prepared by Leulseged Weldehanna, entitled, *“Practices and Challenges of Using Social Media as Sources of News in Ethiopia Mainstream Media: Selected Mainstream Media in Focus”* and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communications complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Chair of Department or Graduate Program Coordinator

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABC: American Broadcasting Company

BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation

CBS: Core Banking Solutions

CNN: Cable News Network

DLP: Data Loss Prevention

ENN: Ethiopian News Network

EBC: Ethiopian Broadcasting Corporation

EBS: Ethiopian Broadcasting Satellite

ETV: Ethiopian Television

FBC: Fana Broadcasting Corporate

HDTV: High Definition Television

LCD: Liquid Crystal Display

MSNBC: Microsoft and National Broadcasting Company

MGCAO: Ministry of Government Communication Affairs Office

MTV: Music Television

NYT: New York Times

SDTV: Standard Definition Television

UGC: User Generated Content

Abstract

The production and consumption of news today is not the same as in the past. Media technology evolution is one of the main engines for this change. Social media, for example, enables us to communicate freely and share whatever message we have with friends on facebook, twitter and youtube and others in the form of text, audio and video formats. And also it is open for everyone on social media network and now becomes a powerful media landscape to interact freely anytime, anywhere. Now it is used as sources of news for many local and international mainstream media. And it is ensuring media convergence. However, it also opens up new doors for false information to be communicated as true and genuine. Today, it becomes very difficult to identify the information posted or uploaded on social media which is accurate and verified. And these situations challenge the production and dissemination of news in mainstream media since they use it as one source of news. This research, therefore, was aimed at examining the practices and challenges of using social media as sources of news in Ethiopia mainstream media. In order to achieve the objectives of this research, mixed research method was employed. Both quantitative as well as qualitative data collection tools were used to gather information needed for the research. Questionnaire was taken up as a quantitative while in-depth-interview, ethnographic newsroom observations as well as document analysis were used as qualitative data collection tools. For analysis, mean scores and percentages were used to see the perceptions and attitudes of the respondents. And also, data collected through in-depth interviews, observation and documents were analyzed in relation with the results of the questionnaires. The findings of the research revealed that most of the respondents had a positive attitude towards the uses of social media as sources of news in the mainstream media. And they responded that they mostly used the social media pages of FBC, FBC,MOFA, EBC, federal and regional government communication affairs office, embassies, and personal blogs as well locally and international media, politicians and celebrities' social media pages. However, they also shared their fears about the spread of false news which have major impacts on the reputations of individuals, groups and community at large since social media platform is open to everyone. And they, finally, suggested that mainstream media should develop their own in-house guideline that promote the uses of social media as sources of news while minimizing the damages of false information uploaded.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Some of our role is probably gone. Will we be first with the Breaking News? Probably not in many cases. Someone on Twitter will be. Will we have the first still of a hero or victim? Facebook probably will have it. Will we get the first video out of Syria or Burma? YouTube will almost certainly have it posted first, although we'll often be one of the first to verify it's genuine (or not). (Kevin Bakhurst- Deputy head of the BBC Newsroom)

In the media industry today, there are two major changes. According to Kaul (2012), the first one, for better or worse, the media landscape is not what it used to be in the past. It is drastically being changed. Over the last fifteen or so years huge advances in the nature of digital technology have spawned a wide array of new media platforms, channels and delivery mechanisms through which we receive and at the same time deliver a staggering amount of contents. This changing landscape provides us, both as a consumer and producer of media, with many exciting new options to consider when choosing how and from where we get our information.

The second change is the production and delivery of content. Ahmed (2016) stated that the nature and magnitude of this epochal change are so enormous. Today, everyone gets involved in the production of creative content such as photographers, journalists, writers, and musicians, as well as those who deal in those products knows that nothing is as it was. They support transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts.

These changes, however, bring with it certain challenges and opportunities. A new media landscape has irrevocably altered how people interact with each other, how communities are formed, how opinions are shared. It has occasioned key shifts in the way their audiences think about the world around them. Recent developments such as peer-to-peer systems have dramatically changed how media can be distributed. This changes the dynamic of our media culture from the top-down hierarchical model we have had, to the user-centered model that is emerging (Kaul, 2012 and Schifferes, et al. 2014).

Today, anyone is able to craft their own forms of media and creating their own content without waiting for traditional institutions to sanction it. A new breed of empowered, talented individuals who can make films, artwork, records and books from their bedrooms are not waiting for permission to release it to their public in the form of blogs, online photo albums, personal websites. New social networks and content aggregators have sprung up to host this generation's creative output like facebook, Myspace and Youtube (Kulkarni, 2017).

According to Ahmed (2017) and Kaul (2012), the popularity of these creative reservoirs is a testament to a generation that wants to put their own self expression out there and receive reassurance and approbation from their peers in the form of comments and links. And nothing illuminates this new age of creativity, empowerment and interactivity more than the explosion of the blogosphere. Blogs, or online journals written by individuals and published on the web, have been the marketing buzzword of the last few years and their number, influence and relevance increases day by day. When information has become today's media commodity: easily accessible at almost no cost, anytime, everywhere.

Normally, with older forms of media, we are forced to wait for the next day's newspaper delivery or the evening news broadcast or our favorite radio show to access the same information that we can get twenty-four hours a day by visiting one of many new media resources. Media content and the ways in which we use it and create it today are definitely changing. A large percentage of the content we consume has actually already changed quite a bit; the rate of that change is accelerating faster and faster (Kaul, 2012).

These situations are challenging the works of the journalists in the newsroom in the mainstream media and changing the process of how information is gathered, stored, processed and disseminated for their audiences in this social media era. In doing this, questions of timely and verified news in the mainstream media in a one hand and unauthorized, unverified and inaccurate information spread in the social media in the other hand are still fighting. As Sambrook as quoted in Newman (2009), stated that:

Social media sites are the new towns, or cities or neighborhood bars, the places where the public gather and discuss things. Just as you wouldn't take a conversation from the neighborhood bar and broadcast it as the truth, you need to do your own checking and verification and all those things still need to happen in your use of social media too.

That is because misinformation on social media is just as likely to go viral as reliable information (Menczer, 2016). Therefore, this paper is aimed to examine the practices and challenges of using social media as sources of news in the mainstream media so as to produce and disseminate news that is free of obvious errors at least.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the past, broadcast and print media have traditionally been known as dominant sources for news, mostly due to their perceived credibility. A new element comes into play with the growth of the Internet surpassing that of television, radio and newspaper (Sagan and Leighto, 2010). As a result of this exponential increase, the consumption of news today has evolved exceedingly. Although television, newspaper and radio are still relevant, social media is changing the way we consume news.

Now, anybody can write anything, post it in any way they like, let their audiences read, watch and comment without time and space limitations. These situations are changing the media landscape as well as the ways information is gathered, stored, organized and disseminated by the mainstream media (Alejandro, 2010). In addition to these, social media users share the roles of journalist. It allows them to produce their own news, post them and let them be accessed by anyone who uses the social media without any barriers.

These situations bring challenges to the journalists in the mainstream media. They are required to provide news within a micro second difference from the sources. This is because the competition with the social media is very high. Journalists are being forced to accelerate the traditional journalistic process because people now want real time information. No media outlet can afford to wait. Traditionally, media outlets compete to out-scoop each other but today if they hold onto a story too long, they run the risk of being out-scooped by amateur bloggers, citizen journalists and twitterers (Kim, 2008 as cited in Alejandro, 2010).

In doing so, there are a number of occasions in which journalists release unauthorized, inaccurate and unverified information they have obtained from social media. This is because there are a number of chances on social media that fake information is posted as true news, shared and twitted. Kim explained this in the following statements:

In October, 2008, for instance, a citizen journalist, a CNN IReporter poster reported that Apple CEO Steve Jobs had been rushed to hospital after a severe heart attack citing an anonymous source. The story turned out to be false. CNN removed the story from the site and referred to it as fraudulent. That false information impacted financial market and became a reason for Apple's stock to fall by 9 percent.

The same is true for our country's mainstream media. Journalists use social media to see what is going on in the country and beyond and gather new information that is in turn used as input for their news for mainstream media (Hurminda, 2012 as cited in Ameyu, 2015). To be competent, there are a number of opportunities to amplify a lot of false and unverified information to be told by the mainstream media. Here the issues are how information that has been obtained from social media is verified and gets chance to be told through the mainstream media is a question?

Recently, there are some research works conducted on social media and related issues. Abrehet (2016) studied about the uses of social media in Public Diplomacy, Ameyu (2015) conducted her master thesis on social media and journalism and tried to show the relationship of journalists and media outlets' social networks in Ethiopia. Tesfaye (2013) examined how Facebook served as an alternative political forum and Mebratu (2014) studied social media usage of higher education students. These show that social media attract the attentions of many academicians and media professionals. However, as far as, the researcher is concerned, there was no research work done on the practices and challenges that the mainstream media face when they use social media as sources of news. Therefore, it was worth taking to conduct a study on this.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were split into two-general and specific.

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of this study was to examine the practices and challenges of using social media as sources of news in mainstream media so as to prepare and disseminate news that is verified and credible.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

The specific objectives of this study were;

- 1.3.2.1 To investigate the practices of social media usage in the mainstream media as sources of news.

- 1.3.2.2 To examine the process of their information verification mechanisms so as to disseminate it as news by mainstream media.
- 1.3.2.3 To identify the major impacts occurred due to releasing unverified news obtained from social media.
- 1.3.2.4 To pinpoint the major challenges faced due to using unauthorized, unverified and inaccurate information obtained from social media.
- 1.3.2.5 To recommend some mechanisms that help media professionals produce authorized, verified and accurate information while using social media as sources of news.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1.4.1** To what extent is social media used as sources of news in the mainstream Media?
- 1.4.2** How do the mainstream media professionals verify the sources of the news obtained from social media?
- 1.4.3** What are the impacts of releasing unverified information collected from social media through mainstream media to the public?
- 1.4.4** What are the major challenges in using social media as sources of news?
- 1.4.5** What should be done so as to use social media as sources of news?

1.5 Significant of the Study

The output of this study has multidimensional uses. First, it will hopefully become very useful resources for the media themselves. Today, there is no scarcity of information. The society is overburdened with information. The big challenges are now how it is gathered, stored, processed, disseminated and used so as to benefit the society (Alejandro, 2010). The mainstream media are still responsible to do so in this era of social media where unauthorized, inaccurate and unverified information is produced and disseminated (Newman, 2009). With this regard, this study will definitely provide them ample information. Second, anyone can learn the specific roles of journalists in the mainstream media and understand how the mainstream media gather, store, process and disseminate information. Third, it may be used as a starting point for policy makers who are very interested and responsible for safeguarding the general public from fake

news disseminated through social media. Finally, it will possible be used as sources of references for other similar studies.

1.6 Scope of the Study

Though the topic is very broad, this study was delimited to only identify those practices and challenges faced while using social media as sources of news in the mainstream media. Specifically, the research gave ample information to the extent social media is used and practiced. It also identified mechanisms used by reporters and editors so as to make sure that the information they obtained from social media are accurate and genuine. Moreover, it also extracted major challenges of social media for using as sources of news and suggested recommendations. Issues apart from these were not the focus of this research.

The researcher also focused on those purposively selected mainstream media such as EBC, ENN and EBS televisions, Fana 98.1 and Sheger 102.1 radio stations, Reporter and Sendeq Amharic newspaper, Kumneger and Medical Magazines. Except these mainstream media, others were not included in the study although there were a number of public and private media in the country.

In those selected mainstream media identified for this research, only randomly selected news reporters and editors were made to fill the questionnaire and hold in-depth interviews with the researcher. And also only three media managers were willing for interviews. Others were beyond the reach of this research.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Theories are formulated to explain, predict, and understand phenomena and, in many cases, to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions. The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problem under study exists (Richard, 2013).

Thus, in doing this research paper, the researcher identified three theories and discussed them in order to frame the viewpoints raised in this research. It was also used to limit the scope of the relevant data by focusing on specific variables and defining the specific viewpoint that the

researcher took in analyzing and interpreting the data to be gathered. It also facilitated the understanding of concepts and variables according to given definitions and built new knowledge by validating or challenging theoretical assumptions.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Scarcity of literature regarding the topic raised in this research could be taken as one of the limitations of the research since these media technologies and their usages are in flux. It was also difficult to find a theory that possibly substantiates the issue raised in this research. This is in relation with the newness of the issue and lack of research topics that have been conducted so far. Time scheduled for the research, finance and the bureaucracy in the selected media outlet were other factors that limited the study.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study was made to have five chapters. The first chapter was made to have the introduction of the study that contains the problem statement of the study, objectives, research questions that were tried to be answered at the end of the research, the significant, scope and limitations of the study. The second chapter contains review of literature. Chapter three was made to include the methodology of the study. The findings, presentations and discussions of the research are presented in chapter four of the study. The summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study are the final part of the research encompassed in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 The Concept of Media

With the average of communication, its reference is made to the instrument or form of content which is performed the communicational process or communication. The term is usually used to refer to the mass media (Roy, 2015 and Schmid, 1998).

The media are constantly evolving. The first way of communicating between humans most likely was used in prehistoric times, the signs and signals whose reflections in the material culture are the different manifestations of prehistoric art. The emergence of writing is taken as a milestone of the beginning of the story. Since then, economic and social changes were boosting the birth and development of different media, from writing and its mechanization linked to audiovisual media associated with the era of electricity and the revolution of information technology and telecommunications. Every one of them has been essential for the various stages of the so-called globalization process (Ibid).

According to Roy (2015), the main purpose of the media is, precisely, to communicate, but according to their type of ideology can specialize in inform, educate, transmit, entertain, form opinion, teach, monitor, etc. The positive characteristics of media reside in us enable large content of information to reach extended around the world immediately. The media, in the same way, make it possible that many personal relationships remain united or, at least, do not disappear completely. Another positive factor is given in the economic field: who owns the media usage can generate a certain type of consciousness on a sort of product, i.e. it can generate their own demand, since media often play the role of opinion-makers. Seen from the business sector, then, is a widely positive aspect to enable marketing and ads for the world.

Negative characteristics, on the other hand, lie in the handling of information and the use of the same for interests of a specific group. In many cases, it tends to form stereotypes, followed by many people due to the extent to which acquires the message in its distribution (Giles, 2003 and Roy, 2015).

Thus, the concept of media is one that is used to refer to all media in which an idea or message can be transmitted. Today, however, the concept is commonly related with certain media, more specifically with newspapers or newspapers, magazine, television, radio, internet, graphic publications.

Historically, the media have been something very exclusive and reserved always the upper social classes who could eat this type of information. For this we must remember that we would not just until the 19th century that would expand the literacy of societies through public education. Thus, it is understandable to note growth that the media have had in the 20th century and today. This is not only due to improvements in technology, if not especially to the fact that it is increasing the amount of population available to receive that information. The media are, as stated in its name, a stand which is transmitted ideas of different type that may be news, advertising messages, ideological debates, etc. Always the media are broadcasting a message in a language or code that must be accessible to the type of audience (Caron and Caronia, 2007; Hanson, 2010 and Roy, 2015).

According to Newman, et al. (2017), currently the two most widely consumed media are certainly internet and television. This has to do with the fact that they allow the use of a diverse range of audiovisual resources that attract the attention much easier for the consumer. On the other hand, are much more visible in economic terms. In the case of internet, we must also add an important and significant detail which is the immediacy with which the message arrives at the recipient, being able to send an e-mail and receive it instantly, being able to also read updated news at the last moment on an internet news site or being able to listen or get audiovisual material in the moment in which it is published (Hanson, 2010).

While describing today's media, scholars use different terminologies to describe the changes in the media. Kaul (2012), for instance, used the terms like 'new' and 'traditional' or old before the word media while he explained the changes that digital technology brings to the media. According to him, the new media refers to internet including social media that insists two ways of communication and the traditional or the old media refer to newspaper, magazine, radio and television that is one-sided and does not allow a conversation. Newman (2011) also used the terminology 'mainstream' so as to refer to the traditional or old media as it was mentioned by Kaul above and 'Alternative' to refer to the internet or new media. And Salman et al. (2011), on

the other hand, used the term ‘conventional’ in order to describe newspaper, magazine, radio and television and ‘new’ to refer to internet encompassing social media. Thus, it is unadventurous to use the terms like ‘old’, ‘traditional’, ‘mainstream’, ‘conventional’ to refer to newspapers, magazine, radio and television.

2.2 Nature of the Contemporary Media

The new medium is changing the notion of a medium, which has been known as the press or print media and the meanwhile classical electronic media. Since the development of the computer as a universal information carrier, able to integrate all known types of media and its combination with telecommunications, the term new media includes communication. According to Schmid (1998),

Internet as a synonym of the “new media” not only contains and disseminates information worldwide like electronic broadcast media, it is also capable of processing information in an interactive manner, since it is computer-based, i.e., its information objects are virtual machines. Thus, the potential of the new media is urging us to reconsider the notion of media. Since we witness that formal logic constitutes the concept of the computer, we need a new model of “media” to describe, understand and manage the effects of the new info sphere.

In fact, the five factors constituting communication, as initiator, recipient, vehicle, message, and effect include the defining characteristic of the new media. Besides unique communication advantages of the new media, as democratic access: Access as is offered by internet is open for everybody, anytime, anywhere, to the same conditions; Low costs : Internet contains information and knowledge of different communities world-wide, being displayed on a mouse click; Updated contents : New and changed entries on World Wide Web undergo no delay in the communication process, instantly, they are available for everybody; Approach to the contents : any requests about a topic can be ordered by keywords, using a choice of powerful search engines able to browse Usenet and World Wide Web. This comprehensive approach for information should not be underestimated, although there is accord that at present tracing down the desired bit of information is as difficult as searching for the needle in a haystack; Disposal of contents: the information processed by the Internet is digital, multimedia, interactive and thus adaptable to a variety of purposes by the users (Hanson, 2010 and Schmid, 1998). Thus, the contemporary media usage seems to be directed to social media such as facebook and tweeter as sources of news mostly without underestimating the mainstream media such as television.

In most countries, we see a consistent pattern, with television news and online news the most frequently accessed, while readership of printed newspapers has declined significantly. The biggest change has been the growth of news accessed via social media sites like facebook and twitter. (Newman et al., 2017).

2.3 Types of News Media

The term news media refers to the groups that communicate information and news to people. Most people get their information about government from the news media because it would be impossible to gather all the news themselves. Media outlets have responded to the increasing reliance of the people on television and the internet by making the news even more readily available to people. Thus, there are three main types of news media: print media, broadcast media, and the Internet which are in turn categorized as mainstream media and social media.

2.3.1 Mainstream Media

Traditional forms of mass communication, such as newspapers, magazine, television, and radio (as opposed to the Internet) regarded collectively as mainstream media. Mainstream media is a catchall term referring to television networks, newspapers, magazines, radio, and often the movie industry. It is so named because it is designed to appeal to as large an audience as possible, hence "mainstream."

Mainstream media is a term and abbreviation 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. The term is also frequently used by hobbyists and others with specialized interests to refer to the same media outlets. In this context, the term is not necessarily negative. In fact, most people are delighted to read about their favorite hobby in a major newspaper, provided the coverage is accurate and positive.

The mainstream media, at times referred to as the lame stream media for satirical purposes, are print and broadcast news organizations that report on news events. The mainstream media dates back to the start of the nation where politicians and printers would prepare broadside news sheets. The format of the media has evolved to include multipage newspapers printed on high-speed offset presses, radio, television and online websites. Traditionally, media has been supported by a combination of subscriptions, newsstand sales and advertising. These revenues pay the cost of distribution as well as the journalist who writes the content. Because news

gathering is expensive, over time the mainstream media has found ways to share content and to distribute the cost of journalism over a wider set of customers. Radio and television stations formed networks to share content. Print media formed organizations like United Press International and the Associated Press to share coverage and photos. Some newspapers share printing operations, and other media organizations such as Copley and Gannett have purchased a large number of newspapers resulting in shared administrative costs.

Although media started with a large number of competing news outlets operated locally, over time, media ownership and control has become more centralized in large organizations. The increasingly liberal media organs censor the dissemination of honest news and repeatedly apply liberal double standards.

The common denominator of the mainstream media is their censoring or downplaying stories that would lead viewers to conservative conclusions, and their use of photo bias, placement bias and other forms of deception to mislead viewers into drawing incorrect liberal conclusions.

The term mainstream media usually refers to how the majority of commercial-based or taxpayer-funded news reporting and commentary consist of liberal bias, while falsely pretending to be objective providers of information.

Thus, Mainstream media is a term and abbreviation 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.

According to Newman (2011), mainstream media outlets are found on television, radio, online and in newspapers and other publications. They include TV networks like ABC, CBS and NBC, as well as national news channels like CNN and Fox News. They also include websites like MSNBC and large newspapers like The New York Times and USA Today. Mainstream media sources are usually easy to find, and they reach large audiences.

2.3.2 Social Media

Social media as a term has only been around for a few years, but the seeds of today's dramatic changes to news production and distribution were sown right at the start of the internet revolution. Announcing the birth of the World Wide Web in 1991 on an early newsgroup,

inventor Tim Berners-Lee set out the key aims: The WWW project was started to allow high energy physicists to share data, news, and documentation (Lavinson, 2000).

The phenomenon of social media has grown rapidly since its emergence in the early years of the new millennium. The social media is an umbrella term for internet-based applications that allows creation and exchange of user generated content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). There is no clear and accepted definition for which services can be named social media and the phenomenon is constantly evolving. Depending on the degree of social exchange, different applications can be argued being a social media. Wikipedia for example is part of the term social media; however, the social exchange is limited (Hermida, 2012).

The technical protocols behind the internet were built to support one-to-one and many-to-many communication, not the broadcast models that had swept the world throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It has taken almost twenty years for the full potential of those new technical realities to hit home. Fuelled by the growth of powerful networks like Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, individuals are now able to create, collaborate and share their own media often to the bemusement of governments, lawyers and traditional news organizations. Thus, Big Media has lost its monopoly of the news. Now that it is possible to publish in real time to a worldwide audience, a new breed of grassroots journalists are taking the news into their own hands.

Social media have not replaced professional journalism, but it has certainly become harder to define what a journalist is in this time. The line between professional and personal has blurred amid an overwhelming tide of interlinked news sources and outputs. Terms like old media, new media, social media and blogging have become less and less useful in defining value or quality.

New types of journalistic organizations are emerging every day whilst professional journalists have embraced new skills like blogging, social media and the curation of communities. But big media have not just lost their monopoly of the creation of news; they are also in a fight to maintain their control of distribution, as social media offer alternative ways to find and discover news. Anderson (2009) once stated that:

The news increasingly comes to me as more people choose social media for their news rather than professional ones: We're tuning out television news, we're tuning out newspapers. And we still hear about the important stuff. ... I figure by the time something gets to me it's been vetted by those I trust. So the stupid stuff that doesn't matter is not going to get to me.

A considerable amount has been written recently about the quality and reliability of the information available in social networks like Twitter, the dumping down of the agenda (Andrew, 2007) of information whilst others point to examples of the new perspectives that can be opened up (Shirky, 2008). A related concern around the rise of social media relates to a fear about the loss of serendipity. There are fears that the filtering of news sources through friends and colleagues could lead to less diversity and a reinforcement of prejudices (Sunstein, 2011), whilst other studies have suggested that digital and social media lead to an increased diversity of sources (Dutton, 2007 and Garrett, 2009). Underlying many of these concerns is the extent to which increased time spent with social media might further undermine the business models that have sustained high-quality journalism in the past. This mirrors the earlier debate over the growing power of search giants like Google and other aggregators, which were perceived to have taken much of the value from organizations producing original journalism. Today facebook and twitter stand accused of living parasitically off the quality content produced by mainstream media and reaping the commercial benefit (Ibid).

2.4 Types of Social Media

Today, there are a number of social media on the internet. These are Magazines, Internet Forums, Weblogs, Social Blogs, Micro-Blogging, Wikis, Podcasts, Photographs, Videos, Rating and Social Bookmarking (Taprial and Kanwar, 2012). Whereas, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) as cited in Ameyu (2015) classified social media in six broad types; collaborative projects (e.g. Wikipedia), blogs and micro blogs (e.g. Twitter), content communities (e.g. YouTube, slideshare), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), virtual game worlds (e.g. World of Warcraft), and virtual social worlds (e.g. Second Life).

Most of the time, the most popular social media sites vary a lot by level of usage in different countries and demographics. Understanding these differences in popularity of different social media is very important when targeting specific audiences. When comparing the most popular social networks or media, it is best to review them by active account usage, not just the number of user accounts. This is because some social networks sites are growing more rapidly than others while some are now in decline. Gorbach (2016), for instance, used the services that the social media provide to the users to differentiate social media network sites. Based on his

classification, he came up with four categories such as social networking (Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+). Micro blogging (Twitter, Tumblr). photo sharing (Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest) and video sharing (YouTube, Facebook Live, Periscope, Vimeo) and place more than 60 social media sites that are now active into these four categories.

2.5 Similarities and Differences Between Mainstream Media and Social Media

As it has been discussed above, the mainstream media consists of prints and broadcasts such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television broadcasting, books etc. On the other hand, social media, which grows with technology, includes the use of facebook, twitter, blogs, google +, YouTube, Wikipedia, WeChat and so on-using internet as a platform. Not only has advanced technology facilitated internet consumption, it has also promoted new media to the extent that majority now believe new media will one day succeed traditional media. Social media has the foundations of mainstream media in serving the same purpose, similar procedures in gathering information and sharing the same audiences; however, it may succeed mainstream media due to the differences in the freedom of speech, coupled with social networking services entitled to users and the hastened speed broadcasting (Alajandro, 2010 and Dunkan, 2010).

According to Newman (2011), the purpose of social media is very much built on the mainstream media. Both social media and mainstream media have the same objective to keep their audiences informed, educated and entertained. It does not matter if we read a newspaper or magazine, or even webzines, also known as e-newsletters. Both media platforms serve to provide news and articles to inform us of the happenings around the world. Books we find in libraries and online communities like Wikipedia offer us bits of facts for our general knowledge, providing basic knowledge on certain topics.

Another similarity in mainstream media that extends to new media is the tedious method of gathering information, drafting and proofreading. In order for the newspaper readers and e-newsletter viewers to obtain only the correct news, newspaper companies engage reporters, journalists and editors in order to print a factual article without mistakes. Similarly, to uphold reputation as well as to ensure that the electronic sources tally with the printed media, a piece of article has to go through the same procedure in order to be published (Simmons, 2009). The

strenuous practice of gathering information is also used in broadcast media to produce drama serials and videos of new media. Television programs and videos posted online require many takes and much editing for the final product (Duncan, 2010). Television series as well as short clips online from BBC News, National Geographic etc, have to go through a long process of inspection before it is ready to be broadcasted on air or uploaded on their websites. It was estimated that a television advertisement may take up to three months, requiring 100 people. The process includes generation of concepts, pitching the idea, developing a script and writing a storyboard before filming can take place.

Despite the problematic procedures, technology has facilitated these processes, making new media superior to old media. An example would be Google Docs which allows users to share their work online and make revisions together with others at the same time. This saves time as a report can be completed faster. However, this requires internet as a platform and tends to promote social media, emphasizing its functions over mainstream media (Essays, 2015).

Both media platform serve the same target audience be it online, in print or broadcast. As mentioned, each form of media has an objective which is to disseminate a particular message and keep the masses informed. However, for those whom purposes resemble each other, they have same target audience to cater to and thus, garnering the same audience. Readers of fashion magazines such as Style or Vogue are most likely to be the avid viewers of fashion sites like Look book. In a similar way, readers of forums and the home section of local newspapers are most likely to be blog-hoppers (Ibid). Furthermore, ardent fans of the broadcast media such as television and radio are likely to be audiences of new media such as YouTube. If you find ourselves watching music videos on MTV, we are most likely to subscribe to YouTube or Hulu channels like Vevo that plays music videos online for fans. Both social media and mainstream media serving the same purpose would therefore engage the same target audience (Duncan, 2010 and Essays, 2015).

In addition, technology has made replaying, fast-forwarding and rewinding of videos much easier. Imagine trying to rewind the music video that we are currently watching on MTV, we would probably have to purchase the pay-per-view offer, also known as On-Demand. The next best alternative would be to watch the video on Youtube and have it replayed over and over again, or just that particular segment that we like. The ease of video watching can be seen from

the 2 billion views daily based on Youtube statistics (Website Monitoring, 2010). Such flexibility in technology generates more audience towards social media even if both media platforms were providing the same video, song or news article.

According to Essays (2015), although social media shares similarities with mainstream media, social media appears to be an improved version of old media. Out of the many differences, an obvious one is the magnitude in freedom of speech exercised in social media versus mainstream media. Before the print media is disseminated to the masses, the editors would have vetted and censored, following strict laws that applies. In Singapore's radio broadcasting network, deejay duo also known as The Muttons were suspended due to their participation in No Bra Day. It was an activity that required young female models to remove their bras in the shortest possible time. The video taken in the studio was posted on YouTube and the station was fined due to inappropriate content (98.7FM Encyclopedia Topics, 2008). On the contrary, it is almost impossible to censor all articles or advertisements on the website; only users in social media can be banned. Youtube reports hundreds of thousands of videos are being uploaded every day. With videos being uploaded at such an alarming rate, it stresses the difficulty in censoring and verifying contents.

Undeniably, technology has improved almost every aspect of media development. Its failure to make censorship across the board available, however, allows citizens to speak up. Yet, this apparent freedom of speech which is only made available through internet appears to promote opposition of various political stances and an eye-opener to liberal views. Especially with people more acceptable of liberal mindsets, freedom of speech is censored in mainstream media will result in technology will garner more supporters of social media (Essays, 2015 and European Parliament, 2015).

Although both media platforms serve to keep us informed of news, social media has an added feature that allows users to network. With mainstream media, there is no room for networking. We would have noticed advertisers leaving their contact number. However, we would only contact them to only engage or enquiry about a deal. Seldom would we notice an ad which purpose is to look for a friend or a wife. More importantly, we would not publish our address for snail mails or provide our contact number for interested members of the public to call us. There

is no opportunity to discuss or socialized since everything is publicized (Alajandro, 2010 and Essays, 2015).

On the other hand, based on references gather by the website Pingdom, there are more than 1.7 billion people on Facebook as of December, 2017 (Royal, 2018). Facebook, similar to Friendster has not only made social networking easier as users can add friends whom share common interests but has also improved the search for long lost friends. Furthermore, there is a privacy setting which we can adjust, allowing us to provide information to only people whom we want to. This allows us to form a connection with a stranger before committing in a friendship. New media also offers interactive activities such as game communities or internet chat relays. Through these game communities, players can gather teammates for online gaming and establish stronger relationships with strangers. Whereas chatting alone helps introverts make friends without having to meet people in the real world (Ibid).

Although these contributions by technology are seemingly beneficial, social networking through social media has increased crime rates, often acted against minors. Pedophiles are known to use social network sites to prey on victims. They are able to do so as they can remain anonymous or adopt false personalities that would not be validated (Alejandro, 2010). Perhaps, social networking is the only bane of new media which most internet users embrace as reason for new media to succeed mainstream media.

Lastly, another improvement can also be seen from the extremely shortened publication time for social media. Publication time differs from the aforementioned methods of gathering and refers to the time; it takes for the end product to reach out to the masses. As mentioned, it takes reporters, journalists and editors to create an article on the newspaper, making the process of getting a written article printed very long. Even if the information is ready for dissemination, the newsletter has not been printed and thus cannot be distributed. Furthermore once erred, it takes half or a day to correct the error and send an apology letter for the mistake or post an article the next day. If a mistake is made on a newspaper article, the journalist has to prepare an apology letter or a new article for the paper tomorrow, informing readers of the errata. On the contrary, with social media, it only takes the author a click of the button to have any information disseminated around the world on the World Wide Web (Ibid). Although there are specific rules to follow if a reputable site makes an error, it does not require more than a day to have its entry

edited on the site. When an error is made, the author can simply press edit and post again. Or in Twitter, we can simply delete our Tweet, another name for our entry, and post again.

Moreover, the internet has become more mobile with technology and people around the world are choosing to read news online instead. If we do recall the 2007 Burmese anti-government attacks, had it not been for the internet, history would have repeated and we would have been misinformed of the total death toll, similar to the uprising in 1988 (Essays, 2013). The use of the internet through blogging of pictures taken in Burma allowed mainstream media in other countries to cover the attacks. Similarly in today's context, information is readily available to us with the shortened publication time in new media compared to old media, all thanks to technology.

Table-1 Differences between mainstream and social media

No	Mainstream Media	Social Media
1	One-way conversation	Two-way conversation
2	Closed system	Open system
3	Opaque	Transparent
4	Mass marketing	One-on-one marketing
5	About ME	About You
6	Professional content	Brand and User-generated Content
7	Polished content	Authentic content
8	Paid platform	FREE platform
9	Metric: Reach/ frequency	Metric: Engagement
10	Actors/ Celebrities	Actors: Users/ Influencers
11	Economic decision-making	Community decision-making
12	Controlled communication	Unstructured communication
13	Pre-produced/ scheduled	Real time creation
14	Top-down strategy	Bottom-up strategy
15	Formal language	Informal language
16	Passive involvement	Active involvement

Source: Major Differences between Mainstream and Social Media.

The new media and traditional media are similar in their purposes, procedures and target audience. However, they differ in publication time, availability to networking and censorship. Both serve to keep their viewers informed and involve tedious procedures before getting the end product. Also, serve the same target audience be it electronic or print. However, with the drastic increase in internet users, social media has minimal censorship as it is unachievable with the vast volume of websites, unlike mainstream media. Furthermore, social media tends disseminate messages faster than mainstream media due to the short time needed in posting. Lastly, it provides opportunities for users to socialize and network (Essays, 2013).

As the above table depicts that the major difference between mainstream media and social media is that the mainstream media puts the audience in a passive position. That means the communication between the media and their audience becomes one way. Social media puts the audience at the center and allows the audiences to actively get involved in the communication. People are both the audience and the content creator; it provides a unique experience of social collaboration and social interaction. Over the last 15 years, social media has become an inseparable part of our lives, every day more and more people are joining social media networks, they create content, interact with each other, and collaborate with each other (Ibid).

According to Alajandro (2010) and Essays (2015), even brands are on social media. They organize social media marketing campaigns and interact with their existing or potential customers. Still question remains at large, which form of media influences the public and shapes the public opinion?

The past century was dominated by mainstream media. It became the voice of individuals and organizations. It was also a significant force in modern culture. This is often referred as mediated culture by sociologists. This is why the mass media is also known as mainstream media. It produces content based on what majority wants to see and hear (Newman, 2009). According to the above table, this is just against the notion of social media which promotes two-ways of communications.

Media sector have been used to create a public opinion and shape the existing opinion on controversial topics. Its power to create public opinion has been used in unethical ways. The

mainstream media has been considered as the most effective tool for political propaganda, especially in times of war in order to get more support from the public. This is because it propagates the agenda set by the government, no feedback from its audiences unlike social media (Anderson, 2010 and Rainie, 2017).

There is also the question of advertisement revenue, since main income of the media sector is advertisement; neutrality of the mainstream media towards corporations has always been a question of concern. As seen in the above table, there is no such concern in social media. And also social media provides a unique opportunity both for companies and for customers, interacting in real time. Companies and brands can be criticized openly on social media by their customers. Also customers can reach their favorite brands on social media. Internet presence is important but the presence of social media has become crucial for companies and brands (Anderson, 2010 and Rainie, 2017; Newman, 2009).

2.6 Media Convergence and Audience Roles Change

The information that used to be printed as news in newspapers and magazines or broadcast via radio or televisions are now also able to be viewed online. The platform, on the other hand allows users to upload and download information in any format they want. This becomes possible with the significant shift related with media convergence and social media (Higgins, 2010).

According to Flew (2018), media convergence involves the interconnection of information and communications technologies, computer networks, and media content. It brings together computing, communication, and content and is a direct consequence of the digitization of media content and the popularization of the internet. For Higgins (2010), media convergence is the merging of media outlets such as print, television, radio, the internet along with portable and interactive technologies through various digital media platforms. It allows users and specifically media professionals to tell stories and present information and entertainment using a variety of media. And it provides multiple tools for storytelling, allowing users to select level of interactivity while self-directing content delivery.

Media convergence transforms established industries, services, and work practices and enables entirely new forms of content to emerge. It erodes long-established media industry and content and increasingly uncouples content from particular devices, which in turn presents major challenges for public policy and regulation (Flew, 2018).

Social media is a new driver of the convergent media sector. The term *social media* refers to technologies, platforms, and services that enable individuals to engage in communication from one-to-one, one-to-many, and many-to-many. While the Internet has always allowed individuals to participate in media not only as consumers but also as producers, the social aspect of media convergence did not flourish until the 2000s, with the rise of Web 2.0 sites that aimed to be user-focused, decentralized, and able to change over time as users modified them through ongoing participation (Ibid).

American media scholar Howard Rheingold as cited in Flew (2018) identified three core characteristics of social media. First, social media make it possible for everyone in the network to be simultaneously producer, distributor, and consumer of content. “The asymmetrical relationship between broadcaster/media producer and audience that characterized 20th century mass communications has been radically changed,” says Rheingold. Second, social media’s power comes from the connections between its users. Third, social media allows users to coordinate activities between themselves on scales and at speeds that were not previously possible.

An important shift associated with convergence and social media is the rise of user-created content, with users changing from audiences to participants. Australian media scholar Axel Bruns as cited in Flew (2018) referred to the rise of the producer, or the Internet user who is both a user and a creator of online content, while British author Charles Leadbeater, as quoted in Flew, discussed the professional-amateurs revolution and mass collaboration, where the tools of content creation become cheaper and simpler to use, distinctions between amateurs and experts become blurred, and media content production becomes increasingly shared, social, and collaborative in nature. These situations of the media landscape benefit the users to interact freely, uplift the speed of the communication process and authorize users to interact without time

and space barriers. The situations also open up rooms for false information to be communicated as true and genuine. This makes the media landscape problematical and compels professionals in the mainstream media to go miles to verify the information obtained from social media so as to re-use it in the mainstream media (Newman, 2011).

2.7 The Nature of News

The term news is somewhat vague and all different news media have their own characteristics. The characteristics of news and journalism are also constantly changing. The press, radio and television make different evaluations on what to include in their concept of news and this chapter will discuss the nature of news. The first news media was the newspaper and the modern newspaper took form together with the industrial revolution in the 19th century and the subsequent rise and increasing wealth of the middle class. The early newspapers was characterized with short bulletins with official information, gathered and disseminated by news individuals and agencies (Sambrook, 2012).

The introduction of television and radio, controlled by a state monopoly, was followed by high demands on objectivity which was defined as truth, relevance, balance and neutral presentation (Hadenius, et al., 2011). Later on, the news media developed from not only reporting on events and deliver messages from officials, to also creating their own material and analysis. The scrutinizing function of the media emerged and was an effect of the professionalization of journalism. Issues such as sports, entertainment, culture and feature journalism has gradually also been integrated to the concept of news (Ibid).

The concept of news is often divided into hard news and soft news. The soft news refers to information that is personally or merely entertaining while hard news refers to information about current public affairs and government topics (Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015). The concept of news is made more complicated by the blurred lines between hard and soft news. Traditional news has, according to Zaller (2003), become softer and entertainment programs have started to involve content of public affairs. Traditional newspapers incorporate lifestyle features, sports and entertainment and at the same time talk shows and entertainment programs involve in political and public issues. Infotainment is another term referring to the blurred lines between information

and entertainment where information with hard news characteristics is presented in an entertainment context (Knobloch-Westerwick, 2015). However, there are still different characteristics among different news media that appeals to different target groups. There are public service TV and radio with a mission to provide the citizens with unbiased news and address public issues. Then there are private broadcasters with more entertainment profile. The same dynamics are found in the press where morning papers are more oriented towards hard news with a serious image and tabloid press more oriented towards entertainment and with populist image and sensational coverage of hard news (Weibull, 2013). Another development is the framing of news developing towards a ramification of news where focus is on the political game and strategy rather than the issue (Aalberg et al., 2011).

With social media, a new type of journalism has evolved where people contribute and create own news, so-called citizen journalism. The technical development has made it easier for individuals to produce and distribute their own material and citizen journalism refers to citizens engaging in journalistic practices (Goode, 2009). It includes blog writing, photo and video sharing and sharing eyewitness comments on current events. The concept is used not only by individuals taking the opportunity to create their own news, but also by the mass media to collect information for example letting people send in pictures from events not covered by the media's own staff, or report on reactions on twitter on current events. This development is an extension of the Jenkins (2008) concept of a convergence culture, a development where grassroots and corporate media intersect which creates unexpected synergies. The content is no longer connected to one platform, and the stories are not static. The passive audience developed into active users with control and then also to producers.

There are two problems with the concept of news and the measurement of attention to hard news. First of all, hard news are not isolated and measuring newspaper, radio or TV news consumption can be a blunt instrument for exposure to political news or political information, which often is the purpose when measuring news consumption in social sciences. The second problem is the changing media environment. The mainstream news media are not the only ones providing news. The changing structure of the media and the blurred lines between hard and soft news makes the term news complex. However, even though taking part of news may not guarantee full attention

to political issues, attention to news still makes the citizen updated on societal issues. The attention to mainstream news media, whether it is analog or digital, can also be an indicator of interest in public issues.

2.8 Using Social Media in the Newsroom

Social media platforms have been widely adopted as communication tools across sectors, geography, cultures, and demographics. People communicate heavily through social media, and when seeking out news, increasingly turn to social media as a news source (Barthel, et al. 2015). This practice of turning to social media for news is partly due to familiarity and convenience bred by the growth of social media adoption, but it is also due to the speed at which information can be disseminated through social media channels.

Social media is a fundamental tool for sharing information in real time, and as a result, it has become a central platform for the discovery of breaking events, leading to a broad uptake by journalists. Social media platforms, and in particular facebook and twitter, have been widely adopted in newsrooms over the last number of years, becoming an integral part of the journalist toolkit. This toolkit is put to use in a number of ways: journalists monitor social media for breaking news and content, they use it to find sources and eyewitnesses, and they harness its broad reach to crowd source varied perspectives on newsworthy events. In a more general way, they also use social media for promoting content, attracting audiences, and driving traffic to personal or professional websites. The wealth of information social media provides is unprecedented in terms of volume, variety, and velocity, if arguably not in terms of quality, and it is shaping the way that news is gathered and disseminated by professional journalists (Alagandro, 2010; Newman, 2011 and Sambrook, 2012).

In mainstream media, information is sourced mainly from ‘official places’ and ‘bureaucratic beats’, with reporters stationed at the ‘institutions of society’, and drawing facts from ‘experts’ (Hindman, 1998). Social media has now become an integral part of the journalism workflow in newsrooms, and journalists are often looking to ‘scoop’ news from social media. Unlike Facebook, its largest social media competitor, Twitter posts are mostly open for anyone to read. Around half a million tweets are posted on Twitter every minute. Twitter’s combined openness,

and the abundance of real-time information. It generates pose a significant challenge for journalists when it comes to using its content in the news production cycle. At the heart of concerns about the integration of social media in journalistic workflows is the process of information verification; social media content is treated with particular caution for use in newsrooms (Lyon, 2012.) As social media adoption and usage grow in the general public, confirming authenticity and provenance of social media content becomes increasingly critical. Heravi, et al. (2015) stated that:

Social media has been widely adopted into journalistic workflows, as it provides instant and widespread access to a plethora of content about breaking news events, while also serving to disseminate reporting on those events. The content on them, however, pose several challenges for journalists, as it arrives unfiltered, full of noise, and at an alarming velocity.

To deal with this change, journalists and newsrooms have been developing new mechanisms and workflows (both automated and human-centered) for verifying and validating social media content (Browne, 2012).

2.9 Challenges of Using Social Media in the Mainstream Newsroom

Today, social media has trashed many of the foundations on which mainstream media stands. In particular privacy of the individual, where are the boundaries? Are there any areas off limits? It seems we can all discuss pregnancies, affairs, ethics, finances, abilities, families. It is out there on Twitter and Facebook and there is no real protection for what, until now, has been largely personal or private. It leaves mainstream media in a very different universe.

The other major challenge in using social media as sources of news is anonymity. Many people joining the debate or discussion or sometimes accusing, or attacking, have no name and no face. Therefore, no seeming personal responsibility for the impact or truth or validity of what they publicly say. Professional journalists are encouraged to engage in social media spaces but held to account for their views and values, often find themselves engaged in a wholly uneven discussion on coverage or stories with an invisible opponent. Head of Global News Richard Sambrook argued that:

Social media sites are the new towns, or cities or neighborhood bars, the places where the public gather and discuss things. Just as you wouldn't take a conversation from the neighborhood bar and broadcast it as the truth, you need to do your own checking and verification and all those things still need to happen in your use of social media too. (Newman, 2009)

In addition to these, most journalists in the mainstream media are believed to work within an ethical framework. They do not report the death of a loved one until the family knows; they should not just steal material from others; they should try to establish facts before pushing a story out there. These are all fundamental and long cherished principles of the way most mainstream media news operates. But not the ground rules of many that use social media.

The other big challenge is that journalists are expected to work within the laws of their land. They should avoid libel; or contempt of court; or revealing the names of victims or juveniles accused of crimes. They do not break court injunctions. A lot of social media users do many of these things.

Sometimes, it has been argued that they show up the failings of the laws of the land, and they may do, but often it is done in ignorance of the law, or simply on the assumption that it does not matter. And that can leave mainstream media looking slow or stick-in-the mud or somehow part of an establishment that does not tell the whole truth. Kevin Bathurst, Deputy Head of the BBC Newsroom once said that:

Some of our role is probably gone. Will we be First with the Breaking News? Probably not in many cases. Someone on Twitter will be. Will we have the first still of a hero or victim? Facebook probably will have it. Will we get the first video out of Syria or Burma? YouTube will almost certainly have it posted first, although we'll often be one of the first to verify it's genuine (or not). (Newman, 2009)

Today, the social interaction among social media users is high. This can be a great way of hearing what the audience has to say, and answering questions or engaging. There are sophisticated ways of measuring what the audiences consume, and they keep an eye on what is being said to the mainstream media and about their content, all of which the media professionals consider in their editorial discussions.

However, there's a real danger lurking here namely that we mistake the squall on Twitter or the views of ten or 20 vociferous tweeters for the view of the audience as a whole. It may be that it

is, but it often is not and we should not necessarily be swayed in our editorial judgments by a noisy but small row on Twitter.

These are some of the challenges professional journalists face with social media and they grapple with them every day. But we can take those challenges and say that the uncertainties they introduce can actually underline the strengths that established news organizations have, for a very large part of the audience.

In the sea of many voices and stories of claims and general noise, we know there remains an appetite for a journalism that is based on the values that news audiences of mainstream media organizations value most highly of all: truth; accuracy; integrity; verification; independence; and speed. The new environment we are all living in can underline in the audience's mind the values of our journalism (Newman, 2009).

2.10 Major Changes on the Production and Consumption of News Brought By Social Media

Over roughly the past two decades, every industry in the world has been affected by the development and evolution of social media. The same is true for the production and consumption of news. Today, it becomes increasingly very difficult to draw the distinctions between information producer and consumer (Creeber and Martin, 2009; Bennet, 2003 as cited in Salman et al., 2011). This is because news is produced and consumed by the audiences themselves.

Whilst the elements that constitute news have not changed and the same values, new tools, the nature of the profession has (Newman, 2009). Social media have had a significant impact on how news and newsworthy articles are researched, produced, broadcast and consumed by audiences (Thomas, 2013). These changes have almost completely transformed the nature of journalism, with Thomas (2013) stating that *“the notion of the journalist has moved so significantly away from aspects of its traditional basis ... that it could be said to be a different role altogether”*. He also suggests that the role of a journalist will shift to that of a “social media writer”. According to him, social media writer assume that the users of the social media take part of news production and disseminations.

Journalists have started utilizing social media as a means of gathering information and visual and audio contents for their articles. One example of this is the use of one platform in particular, Twitter. During a study completed by Thomas (2013), one journalist stated that “*we, journalists, use twitter to see what people are talking about, to see what other people are writing about*”. As well as being able to find out what is currently trending in the media and local communities, journalists can take this information and visual and audio content that has been posted and reproduce it. In a slightly broader sense, it could be said that journalists are using information and content uploaded by other users of social media for their own use professionally. One could also say that journalists are taking advantage of the available content and are using it in their articles, without ‘paying’ for the materials or service. The ability to easily access and reproduce content is related to issues of audience exploitation, unwaged labor and audiences as a commodity. These issues affect industries globally and are somewhat enabled by our new media enabled markets. Fuchs (2014) raises the question of audience exploitation. Are audiences and users of social media being exploited by journalists? It can also be said that the ability to reproduce content is just one of the many affordances of social media and has become a natural and accepted change within many industries and societies, including journalism.

In the past, articles would be published in the newspaper the day after an event has occurred or breaking news would be broadcast on the television or radio. Online journalism which is developing into a web practice adopted by all newspapers (Thomas, 2013) and the features of social media platforms, for example Facebook Live, have changed the speed of news delivery. Top Journalism Schools (2012) stated that the reporter can capture news as it happens and transmit to the public within minutes.

Today, the production and consumption of journalistic content has become instantaneous, mobile and global, all features of our new media enabled market (Cassidy, 2017). Journalists are now under time pressure and do not always get the details correct, as Shirky (Shirky in Newman, 2009) put it, speed has been traded for accuracy. There has also been a crossover of platforms through which the news is broadcast, for example, “*In television news, presenters will often end a segment on a particular subject by reading out certain comments obtained from Twitter from*

viewers...in newspapers, readers will be encouraged to offer their comments through a certain social media channel...” (Thomas, 2013).

Social media have afforded audiences with the ability to interact with journalists, which is drastically changing the way news is consumed; news has become hectic, mobile and global (Cassidy, 2017). Audiences are not just reading, watching or listening to the news, they are responding, sharing, commenting, liking and retweeting articles through social media platforms, new behaviors enabled by social media. According to a study completed by The Pew Research Centre (2013), *“72% of adults get most of their news from friends and family, including via social media”*. Consumption of news has shifted from a one-way, a one-to-one model to a many-to-many model (Thomas, 2013). As Popova (2010) said, *“Technology has enabled millions of consumers to shift their focus from passive observation to active participation”*. These collaborative methods of broadcasting news and audience participation are encouraged by news publishing platforms (Thomas, 2013) and have become an integral part of how they function. This interactivity is a part of a broader, participatory culture model, and reflects wider shifts in behavior outside of the journalism industry.

There has been a notable decrease in the distance between the roles of producer and consumer (Thomas, 2013). According to Hedman and Djerf-Pierre (2013), this blurring is a key aspect of the changes the journalism industry is experiencing. Social media have afforded the ability for anyone to publish journalistic content and theoretically, become a journalist (Berehovy, 2015 and Deuze, 2008). The ability for anyone to publish articles online has threatened professional journalists and has the potential to render large media corporations, to an extent, unnecessary (Breiner, 2013), causing an enormous shift in the industry. As Materise (2015) states, *“Audiences are the ones with the news, sharing stories online before journalists even hear about them”*. With most newspapers publishing online and amateur and professional journalists posting online, there is increased competition. Audiences have a lot more choice, and journalism as a profession is losing some of its delegated authority over the masses (Thomas, 2013). *“Many reporters said they see social media as a way to demonstrate that they are true experts in their field or subject area of coverage, which they think helps differentiate them from wire reporters and other reporters”* (Ordway, 2016).

Another result of this competition is branding. Journalists are using social media to engage and interact with audiences, to stand out and to present an image to the audiences that represent themselves and their writing. Some suggest that a journalist's professional identity is the only thing separating them from amateurs and that identity is of growing importance in relation to a journalist's success. Journalists are branding themselves and publicizing a fusion of their professional and personal identities on social media (Thomas, 2013). This is reflective of the blurring of work life and play that has occurred globally and can be related to affordances of social media (Deuze, 2008).

2.11 The Debates Over the Uses of Social Media

The presence and uses of social media have drastically changed the ways of interaction. It becomes easy to interact with anybody, anywhere and anytime depending on the availability of the internet network. These developments are not just playing out between businesses; they are profoundly impacting almost every sphere of life and with journalism on the front line.

In developed societies the adoption of email, instant messaging and mobile messaging has been rapid and widespread. But in more recent years, there has been a rise in popularity of powerful new tools, associated with the improved capacity of the internet to handle two-way interaction message boards, tweets, facebook, YouTube, blogs, wikis and other social networks.

Web 2.0 advocates argue that the internet should not be just another form of distribution for big media companies but is an opportunity for a flowering of new creative expression (the read-write web) (Newman, 2009). And we are witnessing a historic shift of control from traditional news organizations to the audience themselves. The one-way nature of the media so far has been an unnatural state, argues Jarvis, due to limitations of production and distribution. He says that, properly done, news can be a democratizing force and that it should be a conversation between those who know and those who want to know, with journalists in their new roles as curators, enablers, organizers, educators helping where they can. On the other side of the debate, Keen (2007) as cited in Newman (2009) stated that the 'cult of the amateur' is undermining great companies who have consistently created value through imparting quality information and education. He added that:

We need to fight back, to retain the structures and profession that are in danger of dying out, taking with them concepts such as quality and trust: The Web 2.0 revolution has peddled the promise of bringing more truth to more people ... but every week a new revelation calls into question the accuracy reliability and trust of the information we get from the internet.

Although issues such as accuracy and standards are at the heart of the current debate within journalism, scholars and commentators see these issues as part of a much wider change in the media landscape. Saffo (2007) talks of the shift from mass media to personal media. He believes many traditional publishers will fall by the wayside in the process: The Mass Media revolution 50 years ago delivered the world to TVs, but it was a one-way trip all, we could do was press our nose against the glass and watch. In contrast, Personal Media is a two-way trip and we not only can, but also expect to be able to answer back. For Shirky (2009), the key change is the internet's ability to support 'many to many' conversations, in addition to the 'one to many' broadcast model. Now he says, "*Members of the former audience can talk directly to each other, leading to the largest increase in expressive capability in human history.*" Dutton (2007) argued that we are witnessing the emergence of powerful new voices and networks which can act independently of the traditional media. He has termed these developments the emergence of the 'Fifth Estate' and continued to that:

...Highly 'Networked individuals' (helped by new platforms like social networking and messaging) can move across, undermine and go beyond the boundaries of existing institutions. This provides the basis for the pro-social networks that compose what I am calling the Fifth Estate.

Although it is early days, Dutton believes that the Fifth Estate could be as important to the twenty-first century as the Fourth Estate has been since the eighteenth. From influential bloggers to community networks and activists, this new sphere of activity offers new competition for the mainstream media. These groups are becoming an alternative source of news, as well as another option for politicians, businessmen or other public figure to bypass them and take their message unmediated to their supporters or followers. And as if to add insult to injury, these new media and individuals are also now acting as a check on the mainstream media, questioning their accuracy, and standards, and forcing a new transparency.

2.12 Other Big News Media Stations' Experiences in Using Social Media as Sources of News

With the emerging of social media and easy of its accessibility, the platform of the mainstream media have drastically been changed. Up-to-date news is more easily accessible on social media. Participation on news preparation is improved. Anyone who is able to access internet can produce timely news and post it in any format and in anyway s/he likes accompanying with pictures, audio and video. However, now no one waits for news from mainstream newsroom which has gone through editors for checking its accuracy. These situations allow citizens to get access to news which are inaccurate, unverified and lose its objectivity. They also become victims of these false news disseminated on social media. Due to these, governments, institutions, groups and individuals are making wrong decisions on their day to day endeavors that in turn bring about conflicts, wastages of scarce resources and become sources to reverse decisions.

Thus, governments, institutions, groups and individuals are trying to do their best in order to protect themselves from such false news while using the social media. Some of them are enacting rules and regulations to protect themselves from the negative impacts of social media through legal procedure and others attempt to protect themselves through technology so that they deny the visibility of some who disseminate false news on their pages and some have already agreed to remove false news from their social pages within an hour after their releases. Most of the media in the developed countries have already established social media news screening teams that identify accurate and objective news posted on social media through rigorous verification methods. Thus, it becomes paramount important to look into the works and experiences of big international mainstream media so as to learn and adopt their experiences.

2.12.1 British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

Since the Asian Tsunami and the London bombings 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 authenticates audience material as well as to engage more deeply with audience members to cocreate content, write articles and shoot photo series. 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 and 65,000 pictures submitted. The 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 (Newman, 2011).

The BBC is careful to authenticate photos, videos and eyewitnesses before they are used in output. There are occasional exceptions, such as during the Burmese (2007) and Iranian (2009) protests, when it proved impossible to verify how and where some footage was shot. In these cases, an editorial judgment was made about the authenticity and the pictures were broadcast with caveats and appropriate labeling (Ibid).

The incorporation of user-generated material is valued both by the BBC and by audiences, according to a 2007 MORI survey. The survey, part of a wider study into UGC at the BBC, showed that 72 per cent approved of the use of this material, feeling that it improved the quality and authenticity of output, and 61 per cent agreed that it was good for the public to be involved in producing the news. However the same study (Cardiff University, 2007 as cited in Newman, 2011) also found antipathy towards mainstream message board debates which publish opinion-based UGC, as opposed to comments based on direct experience.

Charles, who took part in the focus groups, expressed a typical view: “I don't see the point. 99% of the people who call up or e-mail really do not add anything new to the debate.” Within the BBC itself, there has also been frustration that debates can be dominated by a small number of users, whilst a perceived need to intervene and moderate has led to significant difficulties in processing the volumes of user-generated content. The BBC has reduced the number of comment-style debates, but Taylor in Newman (2011), who manages the team, believes that particularly on big stories timely comments can still add useful perspective:

He said that, *“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.”*

Indeed, on several occasions the strength and immediacy of reader opinion has influenced the BBC's wider editorial line. Matthew Eltringham, Assistant Editor at the user-generated hub, recalls how strong and consistent negative reaction to the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech on Sharia Law (9,000 emails) changed the agenda that afternoon, prompting the 6 o'clock news to 'feature the strength of reaction and lead on the story'. One of the biggest changes in the last few years is the increased engagement with the BBC brand in third-party social media networks.

According to Newman (2009), in many cases, content from Flickr, Twitter and YouTube has been included in BBC output. The emergence of Twitter, in particular, as a source for breaking news has raised a series of new challenges around authenticity and representation. During the Mumbai attacks in 2008, the BBC was heavily criticized over the way it republished an unsubstantiated piece of information circulating on Twitter. Website Editor Steve Herrmann, who had to respond to complaints via the BBC Editor's blog, says, "*lessons have been learned and processes and guidelines tightened up: Audience feedback to my blog post showed three general reactions: a) Don't use Twitter and other informal sources you are the BBC, we want solid gold facts and nothing else. b) Use social networks. It's intelligent to see what others know. c) Use both, but level clearly, signpost, even keep them separate.*" Herrmann believes the BBC needs to continue to monitor and work with third-party networks. The trick, he says, is to find a way of reflecting 'the unfolding truth in all its guises' without jeopardizing the BBC's ability to get across the actual, verified facts. It is a difficult balance to strike, but the user generated hub has now extended its remit to social networks, checking tweets for authenticity before publication.

The BBC has expanded its use of live event commentary (mixing user comments with clearly labeled BBC facts and correspondent insights) on breaking news stories. In doing so, the corporation is building on the success of the live event pages pioneered by BBC Sport, which combine the latest action from a sporting event with user-generated backchat from a variety of sources. In this way, a new style of journalism is emerging around live events in particular, which takes the form of an unfolding conversation in partnership with audiences. And it now highly promotes citizen journalisms and encourages individuals to send videos and photos which are ready to be re-used in its mainstream media live transmission after verifying it (Newman, 2011).

2.12.2 Aljazeera

As it has been stated previously, text messages, photos, videos and eyewitness accounts have become one of the main sources of information in newsrooms around the world. Today, it becomes too difficult to rely solely on reporters or news agencies. This is because of that fact that every minute, billions of new information is uploaded and shared. With this huge amount of content produced by ordinary users across social media platforms, many challenges have emerged on how to verify the authenticity of user-generated contents and what techniques and mechanisms should be used inside newsrooms to deal with such content, both professionally and permanently are still left unanswered yet.

In order to exploit the potential of new media, improve citizen journalism and minimize the challenges faced due to uploading inaccurate and unverified information, Aljazeera developed a guideline in 2016 that helps journalists verify user generated contents (UGCs) although attempts had been executed since 2001. According to the guideline, UGCs are photographs, audio clips or videos that are planned, posted or scripted and are deemed to be valuable by news, creative, commercial and non-profit organizations who seek to distribute them via their own channels.

Al Jazeera believed that technological advances allow people to participate in broadcasting news and images and that a normal citizen can hold the role of a journalist, especially in areas where Al Jazeera correspondents are not present, while verifying and authenticating the material the audience sends. (Al Jazeera Media Institute, 2017).

When reporting major news today, UGC is of undeniable value. Nevertheless, it is also true that it can be easily distorted, forged or taken out of context, especially in terms of time and locations. That is why UGC must be validated and verified before publishing it in a news piece. This process, identified as news validation and verification, combines the use of editorial skills with technical tools (Aljazeera Media Training and Development Center-News Verifications Guideline, 2016).

The guideline stresses that the process of news verification is not limited to checking video, images or news material. It also has to include reviewing the story and context that accompanies or surrounds said material. According to the guideline, there have been reports on social media, based on UGC pictures and comments, have been found to be fabricated. Thus, the guideline

helps journalists verify contents. If they do not verify images from social media, the guideline suggests that they may end up publishing images that do not belong to the story they are telling *“This is misleading and confusing for our audiences, and ultimately damages our credibility as a journalist.”*(Ibid). The guideline suggests some key rules to be taken into consideration prior to verification.

If you want a picture to be true, you will persuade yourself it is. Understand that you will never be 100% sure. It is about deciding how comfortable you are with what you are about to publish or broadcast. Decide your policies now not when you have to make a decision. Share your steps engagement/understanding of process.

And also it recommends some key steps to be executed seriously while verifying contents. It also suggests for journalists to raise questions like who is uploading the contents? Do they seem legitimate? Can you reach out to them, talk to them? And it also urges journalists to use reverse images search, either still or frames from videos. Tineye and Google image search help professionals check if a picture has been published to the internet before and, if so, on which date?.

However, if a picture does appear on reverse image search, it does not mean that it has never been used previously; it simple means, it has not been indexed on the internet before. Thus, the guideline recommends journalist to look for indicators or clues in any picture of video and raise questions like what you can find to help you verify such as landmarks, signs, weather, what other people are saying, what the news reporters are saying. And finally, they should try to contact a direct source from the location to verify the authenticity of the images or story. According to the guideline, this source may be an eyewitness or a reporter from own media organization. When journalists receive a piece of content, it suggests that they make sure the author of the story or the uploaders to show their profile picture and confirm about what else they tweet/post?.

2.13 The Needs of the New Media Ecosystem

The media landscape of the world has been changing. According to Kaul (2012), new innovation of technologies have fundamentally altered the nature and function of media in our society, reinventing age-old practices of public communication and at times circumventing traditional media and challenging its privileged role as gatekeepers of news and entertainment. The same is

true for the production and the flow of new information until it reaches its destination. Newman (2011) stated that:

News was 'returning to its roots as a social medium' before the advent of the mass media. The internet is taking us back to the conversational culture of the coffee house, where news was exchanged and discussed in a lively atmosphere and then further distributed by pamphlet, letter and word of mouth.

Today social media have become sources of news for almost all of us. We just slide our mobile screen and browse a number of social media network sites and take whatsoever information we need. And these media sites also become actual places for many to meet and discuss issues they want anywhere and anytime. Twitter and Facebook have become as part of social media, for many people, the meeting places of the 21st century and new hubs for the creation and dissemination of news. In this sense they could be seen as part of the revitalization of the public sphere (Habermas 1962), where authorities could be 'kept within bounds' (Ibid).

The widespread adoption of simple sharing tools such as Facebook and the promotion of these services by mainstream news organizations has increased vitality even further. At the same time widespread smart phone adoption is increasing the ease with which consumers can upload access and share content anytime, anywhere. According to Huffington, "*They don't just consume news; they share it, develop it, and add to it. It's a very dynamic relationship with news.*" (As quoted in Newman, 2011).

This does not mean that the mainstream media are being replaced and new media have become emerged rather they live in a symbiotic relationship, feeding off and amplifying each other. It is mainstream media brands and mainstream media influencers that drive the majority of news conversations in social media. According to Newman, the news itself may emerge first via Twitter, but it is the mainstream media that pick it up and package it for a mass audience. The benefits are huge. The social media allow anyone to write, post and communicate with anyone on social media using text, photos, audio and video messages.

However, fake news gets the chance to be communicated and shared as true information since the social media are open for all. It becomes very easy to access new information written and posted by individuals with their own objectives (Jiayin, et al., 2018). Citizen journalism and social media have not replaced professional journalism, but it has certainly become harder to

define what a journalist is. The line between professional and personal has blurred amid an overwhelming tide of interlinked news sources and outputs (Newman, 2011).

These situations have created confusions among social media users apart from their benefits. There is a clash of style and cultures over the unregulated, anything-goes nature of the peer-to-peer internet, and this is profoundly uncomfortable for news organizations as well as for regulators and governments (Ibid). Today, the information posted on social media becomes reasons for conflict among individuals, groups and peoples beyond their country borders.

In order to protect their citizens and their statuesque, therefore, some countries have banned the uses of social media such as facebook, twitter and YouTube one time or more. According to Red News Report (2016), these countries have been Iran, North Korea, China, Vietnam, Eritrea, Cuba, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Pakistan and Egypt. And others have accepted the changes and made a major shift in the uses of the new media technology. And yet most news organizations recognize that there is no turning back. As it has been mentioned in Newman (2011), Herrmann argued, *“The virtual world is an important part of how people live their lives. It is where people share information. We need to be in there too”*.

New rules and norms are emerging for how organizations and reporters should engage in these networks. In the heat of real events, journalists are working out under enormous pressure to verify the most trusted information and separate the signal from the noise (Ibid). But as social media use becomes more established in newsrooms, there is a growing realization that social media affect the business of journalism too indeed, they are becoming central to discussions about the future of mainstream media including news productions and consumptions. And many of them have been developing their own social media sites and becoming part of the communications.

One of the difficulties for mainstream media organizations is that the social ecosystem is constantly evolving. New networks are emerging and audiences are continuing to shift their behavior and allegiances. A host of new start-ups and social aggregators are offering personalized newspapers based on the recommendations of users' friends. In truth, all of these tools are attempts to make sense of the extraordinary explosion of information that we have seen over the past decade and more. Alongside search, audiences now have new social mechanisms to

filter and find things that are relevant and useful to them. Every year these mechanisms become more valued by users, and yet none of this replaces the role of a mainstream media organization.

The need for quality content to be produced packaged and distributed remains crucial for the new ecosystem to function and flourish. The emergence of social networks and social discovery has added an extra layer of complexity to this ecosystem with the creation of new editorial and commercial dilemmas. There may still be more questions than answers, but mainstream media organizations know there is no alternative but to engage (Newman 2011).

2.14 Ethiopian Media Experiences in Using Social Media as News Sources

The late 19 century was the golden time for Ethiopia when they were introduced a number of modern technologies. The printing enterprise was not exceptional. It was this time in the country that the first newspaper was introduced (Shimelis, 2000).

The first medium was the weekly (La Se-mained' Ethiopie, 1890) later the name changed to Le Semained' Ethiopiein 1905. It was the first in the history of Ethiopia print media and circulated in Harar although some writers mentioned the newspaper 'Goh' as the first newspaper in the country. The main language of the publication was French, and occasionally Amharic (Fackler, 2012 and Shimelis, 2000). The first Amharic newspaper was issued in 1895, a four page weekly newspaper named 'Aemro' ('Intelligence') which appeared in the relatively newfound capital Addis Ababa (Fackler, 2012). It was marked by a degree of government control, underlined by the fact that the name was chosen by the Emperor Menelik II himself. Thirdly, there are reports that Blatta Gebre Egziabher wrote satirical poems on sheets that were duplicated around 50 times and circulated in the Emperor's courtyard every Sunday, before the year 1900; in its format, it resembled a newspaper. The year 1921 is the benchmark in Ethiopian print media, i.e., the opening of Berihanena Selam Printing Enterprise. It started Berhanena Selam, an Amharic weekly, conceived by Ras (prince) Tafari Mekonnen himself (Haile Silase I). The lasting journalism tradition in Ethiopia has been formed during this period and it was an era when loyalty to the Emperor paid off (Skjerdal, 2011 as cited in Tesfaye, 2013).

According to MOI (cited in Shimelis 2000) the progress of the Ethiopian press was interrupted for about five years (1935 -1941) because of the country's occupation by Mussolini's forces. Printing presses were demolished. There were centers for the production and dissemination of Fascist propaganda at Harar and Jimma. There were also field paper of the liberation forces, Bandirachin (later re-named Sendeq Alamachin -'Our Flag') issued. There were also many publications produced in foreign countries to promote the Ethiopian cause. After the emancipation of the country from Italian occupation in 1941, a new era had started in the history of the Ethiopian print media. According to the MOI's 1966 release, influential and long- lasting weekly papers as Addis Zemen and The Ethiopian Herald came onto the scene in 1941 and 1943, respectively. Both became dailies after December 1958. In 1952, Yezareyitu Ethiopia was added (Shimelis, 2000 as cited in Tesfaye, 2013). The broadcast media started almost more than half a century ago. The Ethiopian Radio was the primary one in the broadcasting sector (Aside, 2011 as mentioned in Tesfaye, 2013). It was established in 1935 and made to cover all parts of the country (Authority, 2009).

Ethiopia was among the first nations in Africa to establish a television service. The only television station, the Ethiopia Television, was established in May 1963 in Africa Hall in Addis Ababa on the important occasion of the first meeting of the Organization of African Unity. It began permanent broadcasting on 2 November 1964, coinciding with the 33rd coronation of Haile Selassie (Skjerdal, 2011). The real turn for the newspaper enterprise came in the late 1950s and early 1960s with the establishment of the Economic Commission for Africa (1958) and the Organization of African Unity (1963). There was, in this period, a larger number of both daily and weekly newspapers and other press products, all, with the exception of a few, being government-owned and catering to a limited circle of an elite readership-mostly top bureaucrats and members of the urban-based intelligentsia (Shimelis, 2000). Following the overthrow of the monarchy by the military junta, in 1974, mass media institutions were recognized as instruments of propaganda under the centralized control of the party and ministry of information. The military government imposed and implemented harsh censorship rule. During the military dictatorship from 1974 to 1991, the government had a total control over the media and the flow of information. Therefore, the years of the Derg regime have unequivocally been portrayed as a

dark chapter in the history of the Ethiopian media and journalism (Shimelis, 2000 and Skjerdal, 2012, as cited in Tesfaye , 2013).

In 1991, the Derg regime was defeated. And the conqueror formed a transition government. A year after, as part of the democratization process, the transition government conceded freedom of expression and declared in the press in 1992 the press Bill that granted the free press as well as the freedom of expression. And later in the 1994, Federal democratic Ethiopia Constitution asserted it. The 1994/95 Federal Constitution in its second part, which states about the democratic right, article 29 explains about rights of thought, opinion and expression, which includes including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information (Shimelis, 2000 as cited in Tesfaye, 2013).

The beginning of the free press in Ethiopia has been fascinating. Immediately after the 1992 Press Bill, according to Fackler (2012), the figures differ but according to the Government, 385 publications were registered between October 1992 and July 1997, of which 265 were newspapers and 120 magazines. At any one time, there were probably about 20 different newspapers for sale in Addis Ababa (Ibid). However, the circulation of newspapers and magazine are dominated in big cities like Addis. This is also true right now but this does not show the boosting of the broadcasting media along with the expansion of internet and satellite television (Skjerdal, 2012). It has been unimaginable about the number of private televisions and radios that are now available in the country if you compared it with those government owned television and radio stations a few years back. There are more than 15 satellites private television stations apart from 11 federal and regional government owned television and more than 30 religious satellite televisions. And there are more than 9 private radios stations in Addis Ababa only in addition to the 4 governments funded ones. According to the Second Growth and Transformational Plan, the migration from analog to digital will be finalized in 2020. This is also expected to transform the media landscape of the country.

Beside this, the expansion of internet access, mostly in big cities of the country, changes the landscape of the media in the country. According to the Ethio-Telecom 2017 report, there are more than 57 million mobile network users. There are more than 4.5 million facebook and twitter users along with 6 hundred thousand LinkedIn users.

This situation is drastically changing the media landscape of the country. Most of the country's citizens take social media as sources of news. The citizens, particularly, living in big cities where internet access is good, satisfy their information needs by using social media specifically facebook and twitter. This also changes the production and consumptions of news as the world migrate to internet and television (Newman, 2017).

2.15 Theoretical Frameworks

2.15.1 Theory of the Public Sphere

Since Jürgen Habermas' work *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, was published, scholars have criticized, analysed and compared his theory in their literary work and even today, as stated above, his theory is often used as a theoretical framework in many academic articles and books. Habermas defined his idea of the public sphere as "a realm of our social life in which something approaching public opinion can be formed and access is guaranteed to all citizens".

Habermas' theory is based in the 18th century, when a space emerged amongst private people and became known as the public sphere where individuals were free from the State. The public sphere was a place where people could share their opinions and discuss important issues. It was a place where people were able to criticize and influence decisions separate from the State and the economy; in other words, a space in which a public opinion could be formed freely. Most public spaces such as coffee houses and salons became the centre of public debate through which the public sphere was formed.

Habermas explains in his work that in the 18th century a new political class, the bourgeoisie, emerged and opened up a space for public opinion. The bourgeois public was mainly composed of European, educated men, prejudiced to the interests of those that were not officially included. The bourgeoisie created both institutions and launched several newspapers, providing a space for which private thoughts could more easily become public. The public sphere was considered open to all despite it only including the elite thinkers, and was protected both from the power of the church and the State.

Three main criteria can be drawn from Habermas' theory, which define the conditions for the emergence of a public sphere. The first condition is the disregard of status. The public sphere only existed independent from an authority of rank or status. Status was to be disregarded all together. If status were disregarded there would be no influence of rank, which held a better argument against the social hierarchy that was imposed by society. What mattered instead was the authority of a better argument. The second condition is common concern. Before the public sphere arose in the 18th century, the State and the church had authority of interpretation and public critical attention was cut back. When the development of capitalism started, more information became available and art, literature and philosophy started to become more accessible to private citizens. Private Citizens started communicating the works with others until they could claim authority. Information started to become the common concern of citizens, which led to many issues of common concern becoming topics of deliberation. The final condition is inclusivity. The public sphere was never able to be fully closed and disallow participation. It was to be inclusive of all private individuals without discrimination. Everyone had to be able to participate in discussed issues.

All discussed issues became general, both in significance and accessibility. Conditions of the public sphere were thus that all citizens should have access be able to debate freely, form a public opinion and not have their freedom of assembly, association or expression restricted. In other words, Habermas believed that the public sphere was built up through debate and discussion, which was accessible to every citizen and where people could freely form their opinions.

To summarize Habermas' core ideas in his theory, specific groups were not to be excluded, as it would lead to an incomplete public sphere, in other words, not a public sphere at all. Everyone should have the possibility to participate in the issues discussed and the public sphere was to be autonomous. This meaning that no economic dependencies should have influence and it should be free from state censorship and private ownership. Habermas also meant that the public sphere was created as a sphere of criticism of public authority. Privacy was also an important building block for the public sphere to exist, private people were to be able to discuss their opinions

openly and freely form public opinions. The public sphere was best maintained by acts of speech, such as through discussion.

Although Habermas based his theory in a study of a different era, it has created an understanding for today's media role in public communication. Reading his ideas, one can draw the conclusion that the media should be a free space for public opinion and include political debates and expression.

Although Habermas' theory may be one of the most important contributions to the theory of a public sphere, it has also received a fair amount of criticism by scholars. The New School Professor, Nancy Fraser, revisits Habermas' theory of the public sphere in her article "Rethinking the Public Sphere", and argues that the bourgeois public sphere was composed of a number of exclusions. She means that although Habermas asserted disregard of status and inclusivity, the public sphere actually discriminated against women and the lower classes of society. Fraser also means that the public sphere was mainly built up of bourgeois men who saw themselves as a "universal class" and constituted the hegemonic class. This further led to the precluding of other groups in society and their concerns.

Dr. Simon Susen, a sociologist at City University in London also highlights the critical sides of Habermas' theory and lists a number of critical points similar to Fraser's ideas towards Habermas' definition of the public sphere. Susen believes that the theory does not provide an adequate theoretical framework for understanding the public sphere in modern societies. He also means that it focuses mainly on the ruling class and therefore underestimated the significance of an alternative public sphere. A theory that is limited to the bourgeois public sphere automatically risks excluding other public spheres. Habermas' public sphere is also gender-blind and can be interpreted as a male-domination social theory. It is based on a universal conception of public interests and assumes that the bourgeois public sphere represents the public sphere as a whole, which Susen considers to be reductive. Susen believes that modern society contains a number of already existing and often competing public spheres. These public spheres are not solely based on the bourgeois but include different social groups, related to such as the working class, political, religious, sexual and ethnical minorities.

Despite existing critique of the public sphere, Habermas' theory remains as a valid, important theory to many in academia, most specifically amongst those focusing on communication theory. As previously noted, the theory will be separated from its focus on a historical stage and be used as a framework i.e. a perspective to look at a modern day issue. By separating the theory's building blocks from a historical stage and only using the conceptual framework, it provides the ability to more clearly understand social media's relation to free expression from an interesting and prominent theoretical viewpoint.

2.15.2 Media Ecology Communication Theory

According to Levinson (2000), it is impossible to understand social and cultural change without knowledge of the way media work as environments. Change the environment and we completely alter the sensory life of the inhabitants of that environment (McLuhan, 1970). What he means is that new environments change how people interact and how people understand the society surrounding them. In terms of social media sites, a brand new environment of the computer centered generation has produced new environments such as facebook, twitter, and even blackboard that provide that structures of a traditional society online.

Media ecology is the study of different personal and social environments created by the use of different communication technologies (McLuhan, 2003 as cited in Howe, 2011). Changes in technology transform the social construct, which in turn shapes perceptions, experiences, attitudes, and behavior (McLuhan, 1989 as cited in Howe, 2011). News media has evolved over time to include newspapers, radio, television (TV), and the internet. The overwhelming majority of societies use multiple platforms to get news on a typical day, including national TV, local TV, the Internet, local newspapers, radio, and national newspapers ("Participatory News Consumer," 2010, as cited in Howe, 2011).

New media refers to news accessed via the internet. Several newer technology developments are shaping new news media. Social media sites and blogs have helped the news become a social experience in fresh ways for the public. People use their social networks to filter, assess, and react to news (State of the News Media, 2010, as cited in Howe, 2011).

Today many access the news in multiple formats on multiple platforms on myriad devices. The ascent of mobile connectivity via smart phones has turned newsgathering and news awareness into an anytime, anywhere affair for a segment of avid news watchers. However, little research has been done specifically related to whether or not individuals believe they are better informed as a result of social media.

2.15.3 Presentation of Self Theory

This theory of self presentation in everyday life specifically on social media belongs to Erving Goffman who was a Canadian-American sociologist and writer. This theory was also backed up with recent information system researches conducted on social media (Jiayin, et al. 2018).

In his theory of presentation of self shares his views on the presentation of self in everyday life and introduces the way to present. According to him, regardless of the particular objective which the individual has in mind, when an individual appears in the presence of others, there will usually be some reason for him to mobilize his activity so that it will convey an impression to others which it is in his interests to convey.

The presentation of self serves an objective. It conveys an impression to others that lies in accordance with one's own interest. Goffman's view is therefore all about the outward appearance of action. This outward appearance is first applied to the agent. The presentation of self is the way we appear objectively before others. Others will form an opinion about us through perceptual rationality. Others are perceived in turn through their external objective qualities and appearance. According to his, "Others" are not the same as "us." Moreover, He introduces "the way in which the individual in ordinary work situations presents himself and his activity to others, the way in which he guides and controls the impression they form of him, and the kinds of things he may or may not do while sustaining his performance before them".

According to his empirical research findings regarding self presentation in everyday life and supported with other researches conducted on information system, he found that people use social media in order to present themselves as better than they actually are. Peoples' online identity is more imaginative than their true self. Young people tend to facilitate their life, which they perceive as complicated. This improvement of the virtual self on social media is related to the work of Goffman. Our presence on social media seems to be customized for an audience. In

the context of a public and accessible narrative of a brand, micro-blogging sites that allow messages to be viewed publically across a platform and to spread through likes and re-shares (such as the Twitter's re-tweet) are ideal for personal brand construction. The relatively limited and short messaging style, coupled with easy categorization of a theme through a hash tag (#), allows a presentation of cultural, social, and political interests in a consistent and visible manner. While other social media are characterized by limited connections with others based on shared geographies, circumstances, or personal histories, micro-blogging sites allow people to make connections with any other person on the network, regardless of whether the persons involved know one another or are connected in any other way, and to present the self in a representational manner. And he considered social media as a theater play where he conducts a performance; he plays a role. He says,

On social media, I only show the front stage of me to others, and hide the back stage. I present myself in order to influence my audience. I try to influence others according to my interests on social media. I want to control the impressions that others form of me and I tend to lead others. On social media, I tend to make others act in accordance with my plan. Social media is a game-like situation where I am a player. On social media, it is about knowing what the others are likely to do. I should try to guess others' motives on social media. On social media, I should try to guess other people's possible moves. (Jiayin, et al. 2018).

In the conclusions, Goffman believed that social media users have their own objectives. In order to meet those objectives, they bring their imaginative self to the social media and hide their true self. In addition, they expect other on social media to take their imaginative self rather than their true self. Thus, it becomes very easy to think of the communication process that we may have with these kind of social media users look like.

CHAPTER THREE

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The main target of this study was to examine the practices of using social media as sources of news and identify problems created due to using unauthorized, inaccurate and unverified information while informing the general public via mainstream media. In order to meet this target, the researcher applied mixed research method that includes collecting, analyzing and interpreting data using both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study in order to investigate a phenomenon or attempt to answer research questions. It is also useful to offset the weakness of both methods (Creswell, 2013).

Thus, this research method also allowed the researcher to use both quantitative as well as qualitative data gathering tools such as questionnaire, content analysis, in-depth interviews and newsroom ethnography observation so as to identify major findings relevant for the study.

3.2 Research Sites

For this research, eight mainstream media stations were purposely selected. EBC, EBS and ENN were chosen to represent television. Radio Fana FM 98.1 and Sheger 102.1 represent radio. Reporter and Sendeq represent the newspaper. Kumneger and Medical magazines represent magazine. From each medium station, from 10-30 news reporters and editors were expected to respond to questions presented to them via questionnaires. And also two reporters, two news editors and one program production manager were planned to be interviewed. Three newsrooms ethnographic observation were made and any data obtained via these data collection tools were recorded and used during data presentation and interpretations.

3.3 Data Sources

For this study, the researcher employed both primarily and secondary sources. As a primarily sources, questionnaires, in-depth interviews and newsroom ethnography observation were used. As a secondary data sources, documents that were collected in relation with this study were also thoroughly be reviewed and used in the analysis in line with data got through questionnaire and interviews.

3.4 Sampling Techniques

According to the data obtained from Ethiopia Broadcasting Authority, there were nine public and 10 private owned network televisions. Apart from the regional and community radio stations, there were nine private radio stations during data collection period. In addition to these, there were four private owned newspaper and six magazines although the number of registered newspaper and magazines was high.

Among these, the researcher purposively selected three televisions such as ETV, ENN, EBS and two radio stations like Fana FM 98.1, Sheger 102.1. Among the print media organizations, two newspaper such as the Amharic ‘Reporter’, ‘Sendeq’ and two magazines producers like ‘Medical’, ‘Kumneger’ were picked in the same procedure so as to collect their responses via questionnaires. Thus, the researcher prepared questionnaires and disseminated to randomly selected 200 reporters and news editors found in these mainstream media organizations.

In addition to these, 13 respondents were conventionally chosen from the same selected mainstream media. And the researcher held in-depth interviews with eleven of them. Three newsroom ethnographic observations were conducted at three mainstream media organizations such as ETV, Fana FM 98.1 90 and 120 minutes news program preparations newsroom and ‘Kumneger’ magazine.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

As data collection tools, the researcher applied questionnaires, content analysis, in-depth interviews and newsroom ethnographic observations.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

In order to collect first hand data, the researcher used questionnaire. A questionnaire allowed the researcher to collect the most complete and accurate data in a logical flow. This was done in order to reach reliable conclusions from what the researcher was planning to observe. Another benefit of this data collection tool was that it enabled the researcher to meet the research goal and objectives and minimize unanswered questions. Thus, the 200 questionnaires were prepared and disseminated to news reporters and editors after piloting and editing them based on the feedback.

3.5.2 In-depth Interview

In-depth interviewing, also known as unstructured interviewing, is a type of interview which researchers use to elicit information in order to achieve a holistic understanding of the interviewee's point of view or situation; it can also be used to explore interesting areas for further investigation. In-depth or intensive interviews are useful when you want detailed information about a person's thoughts and behaviors or want to explore new issues in depth.. This type of interview involves asking informants open-ended questions, and probing wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful by the researcher. And it allows the researcher to gather first hand qualitative data from the sources (Wimmer and Dominick, 2011). Thus, the researcher held in-depth interviews with four news editors, six reporters, three program production managers and media manager.

3.5.3 Newsroom Ethnography Observations

In the context of newsroom study, newsroom ethnography observations refer to the research data collection method that involves the researcher spending considerable time in the field, observing and talking to journalists as they go about their daily tasks and documenting their professional practices and newsroom culture (Cottle, 2001).

Thus, it allowed the researcher to see important insights into the nature of news, its informing practices and culture. It is perhaps more than most other methods that are destined to be reflexive, open to the contingencies of the field experience and therefore less than strictly linear in its execution or predictable in its findings. It also invariably involves sequenced research stages comprising research design, securing access, negotiating field relationships, collecting and recording data, analyzing data, and write-up (Ibid).

Therefore, the researcher stayed in three willingly selected newsrooms for two days in each newsroom in order to see and identify major practices and challenges facing them while using social media as sources of news. During this time, observation and discussions with reporter and editors were conducted and relevant in a note form were also taken based on the checklist being prepared for this purpose.

The researcher also took part in one editorial meeting so as to see the process of news issue selection, process and permission to be disseminated. Beside, content analysis were done on five news stories that have been collected from social media and retold to the general public as news through the mainstream media. The news stories were gathered from social media by ETV, EBS and 'Kumneger' magazine.

3.6 Data Analysis Method

As it has been mentioned in the research design, in this research, both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were employed. As a quantitative method, questionnaires and content analysis were made. In-depth interviews, newsroom ethnography and document analysis were also used as a qualitative method. The data gathered through in-depth interviews that were made with reporters, editors and media managers were transcribed and quoted with great care. Thus, the analysis and presentation were both in a form of numerical and interpretation. The data that were collected through questionnaire were analyzed by using descriptive statistics which allowed the researcher to use Likert's Scale. As a result, mean scores, percentage, numbers and statistics were used. Additionally, the research questions were answered while analyzing and presenting the collected data with an inclusion of a thorough discussion sections.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 Data Findings, Presentation and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

As it has been clearly outlined in the previous sections, the main objective of this paper was to examine the practice of using social media as sources of news in mainstream media and identify problems so as to recommend some remedial measures that curb the problems. In order to meet the objectives, both quantitative as well as qualitative methods were used to collect data.

Thus, 200 questionnaires were prepared and disseminated among selected mainstream media respondents found in Addis Ababa. Out of them, only 158 questionnaires were collected and 136 of the questionnaires got completely filled and directly taken for the research. In addition, six reporters, four editors, one program producers, one new media technology team leaders and one media owners were purposively selected and interviewed. Newsroom ethnographic observations were conducted at three conveniently selected mainstream media newsrooms. The newsroom observations were conducted for two days from May 16-28, 2018 at each newsroom and notes valuable for this research were taken based on the checklist prepared for this purpose. Observations were also made during the actual news presentations on those news stories that had been sourced from social media such as facebook, youtube and twitter. Documents collected in relation with this research were reviewed. content analysis were done on five news stories that had been collected from social media and retold to the general public as news via mainstream media. The news stories were gathered from social media by ETV, EBS and 'Kumneger' magazine.

This section of the research paper, therefore, offered the data gathered via the selected data collection tools mentioned above and presented as follows.

4.2 Overview of the Respondents

Though 200 questionnaires were prepared and disseminated, only 136 were accepted because no questions were left unanswered. Thus, the demography of these respondents was presented below.

4.2.1 Mainstream Media Organizations’ Participations Across Respondents

To respond to the questionnaires, eight mainstream media were made to participate though the number of respondents varied across the media organizations. Across mainstream media organizations, 31 (23%) of the total respondents were from ETV and 28 (20%) of them were from FBC. These numbers included both radio and televisions news reporters. And 25 (18%) and 19 (14%) of the respondents were from the ‘Reporter’ and ENN. 9(7%) of them were from EBS and Sheger from each. The rest were from Sendeq Newspaper, Kumneger and Medical Magazine. This indicates that almost 101 (75%) of the respondents were from the big mainstream media except ENN that is a newly emerged TV station.

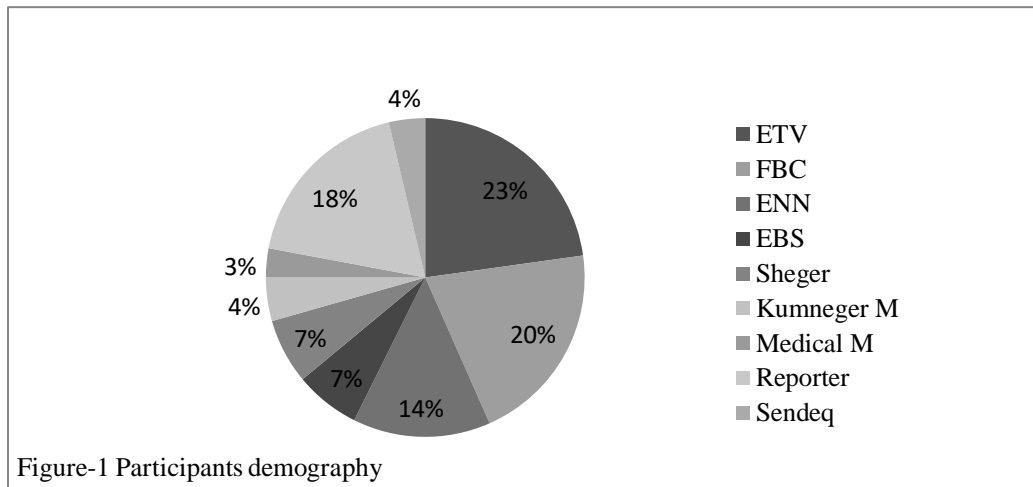
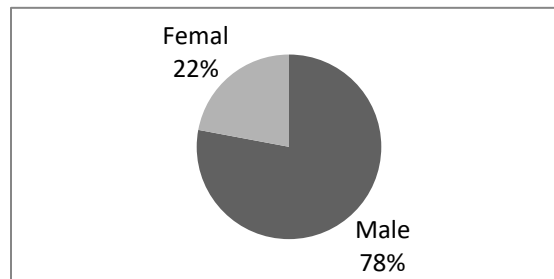


Figure-1 Participants demography

4.2.2 Respondents Sex

Across sex, 106 (78 %) of the respondents were male and 30 (22) of them were females. This indicates that more than half of the respondents were male respondents. Though the number of female respondents was few in number, the responses of 30 of the total sample were included in the study.

Figure-2-Respondents Sex



4.2.3 Respondents across Age

As it is seen in Fig-4 below, most of the respondents were youths. Among the total respondents, 93 (68%) of them were aged from 15-30 years old. This shows that most of the study respondents were youths. The next big number could be observed between ages from 31-45 years old that were 36 (27%). The rest of the respondents were adults of ages found between 46-60 years old. Based on these data, there is no media professional participated in this research whose age was above 60 years.

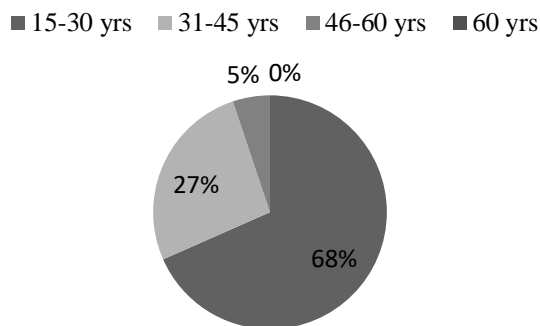
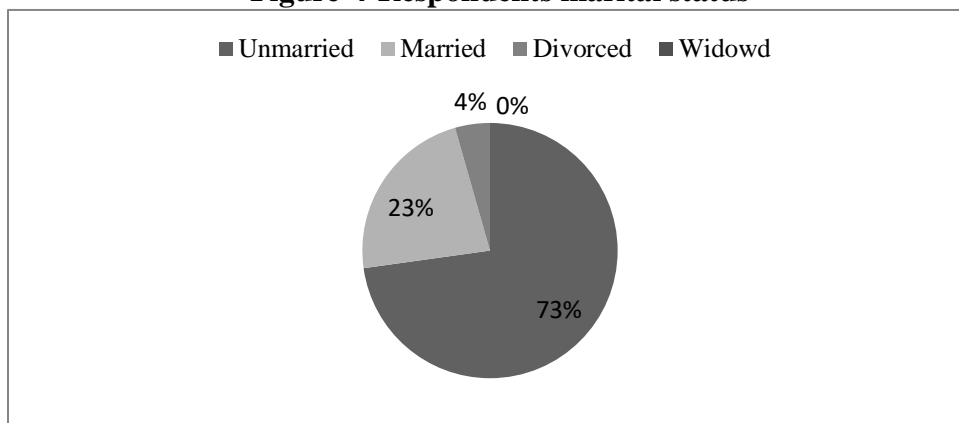


Figure-3-Age groups of the respondents

4.2.4 Marital Status of the Respondents

Concerning the respondents' marital status, almost nearly three fourth of the respondents were unmarried. The rest were married. A few numbers of the respondents were divorced. This, thus, indicates that it becomes very easy to see the influences of being single over marriage on the uses of social media as sources of news in the mainstream media and among respondents as well.

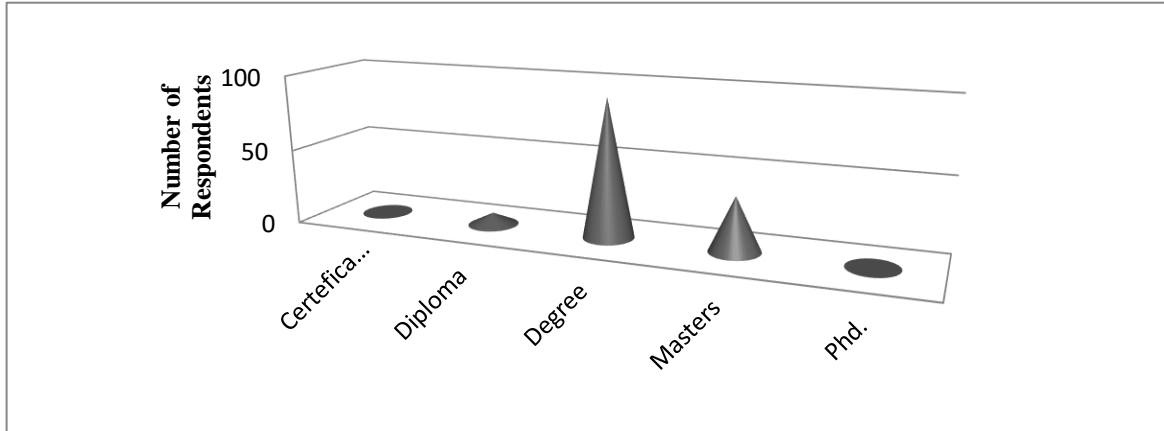
Figure-4-Respondents marital status



4.2.5 Education Level of the Respondents

Among the total respondents, more than half of the respondents 92(68%) were degree holders. And 8 (6%) and 36(28%) of the respondents had a diploma and masters respectively. No respondents were found under the category of certificate. This indicates that most of the mainstream media had degree and masters holder professionals.

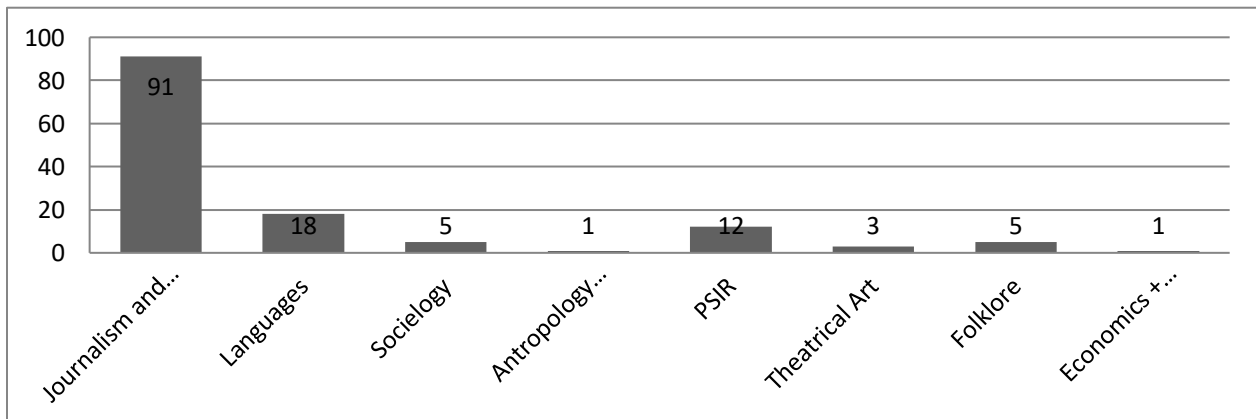
Figure-5-Respondents education level



4.2.6 Education Background of the Respondents

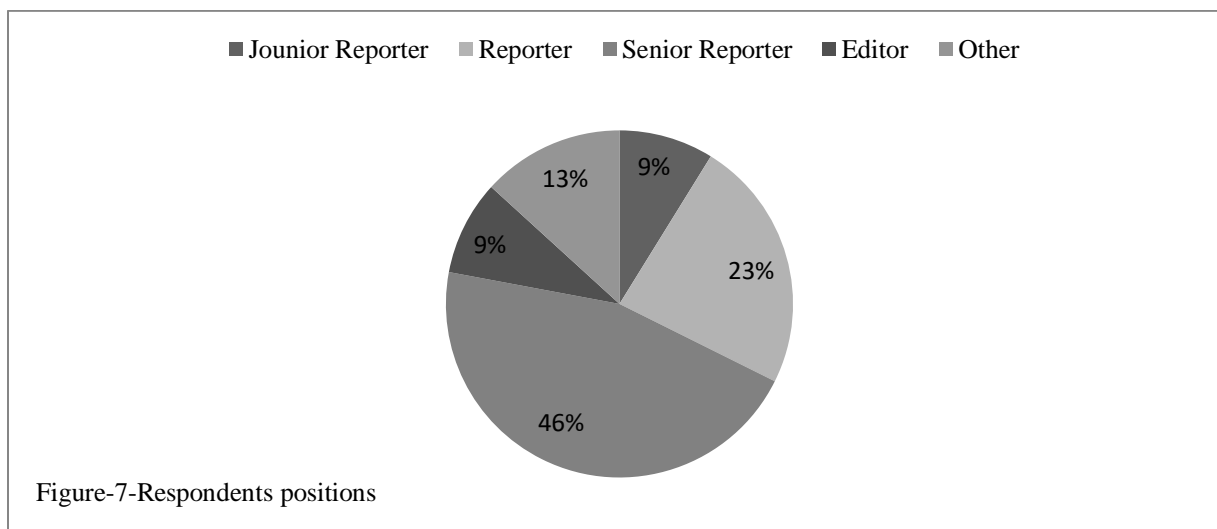
Based on the data presented below, fig-6, 91(67%) of them graduated in journalism and communication. 18(15%) and 12(9%) of the respondents graduated in languages (mostly English and Amharic) and Political Science and International Relations(PSIR) respectively. The rest of the respondents were from Folklore 5(4%), sociology 4(3%) and 3(2%) Theatrical Art, Economics and anthropology sociology 1(1%) for each. This shows that more than half of the respondents were from journalism and communication department. The rest were from languages and PSIR.

Respondents Education background



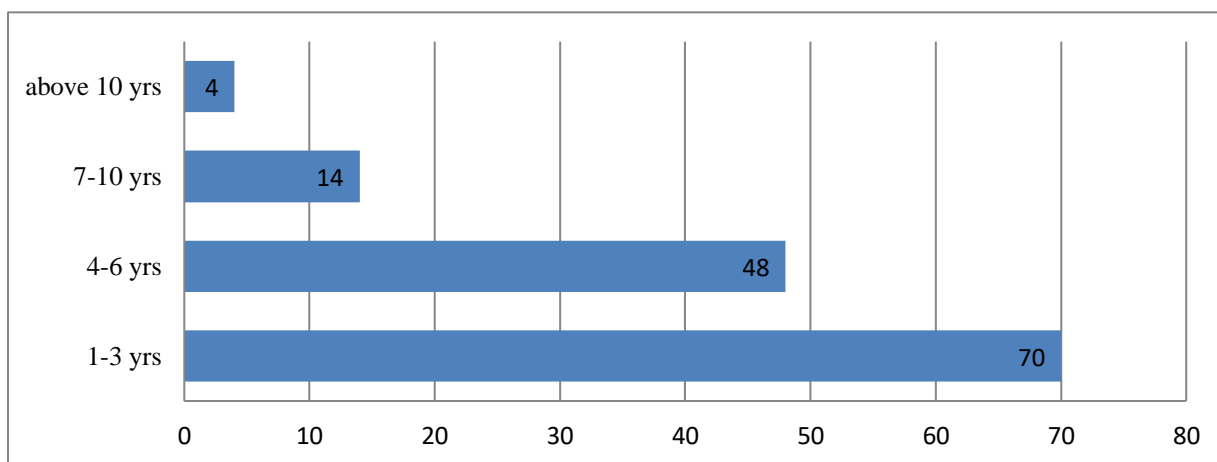
4.2.7 Respondents' Job Position

Regarding their positions that they have in their media organization, nearly half of the respondents 62(64%) were senior reporters officers and 31 (23%) of the respondents were reporters. The rest 12(9%) of them were junior and editors respondents each. 18(13%) of the respondents were program producers and media managers



4.2.8 Work Experiences of the Respondents

According to the data obtained via the questionnaires as presented in fig-8 below, 70(52%) of them had less than three years of work experiences. 48 (35%) of them had from four up to six years of work experiences. The rest 14(10%) and 4(3%) of the respondents had 7-9 years and above 10 years of work experiences. This indicates that most of the mainstream media news reporters had less than 6 years of work experiences. **Figure-8-Respondents Work Experience**

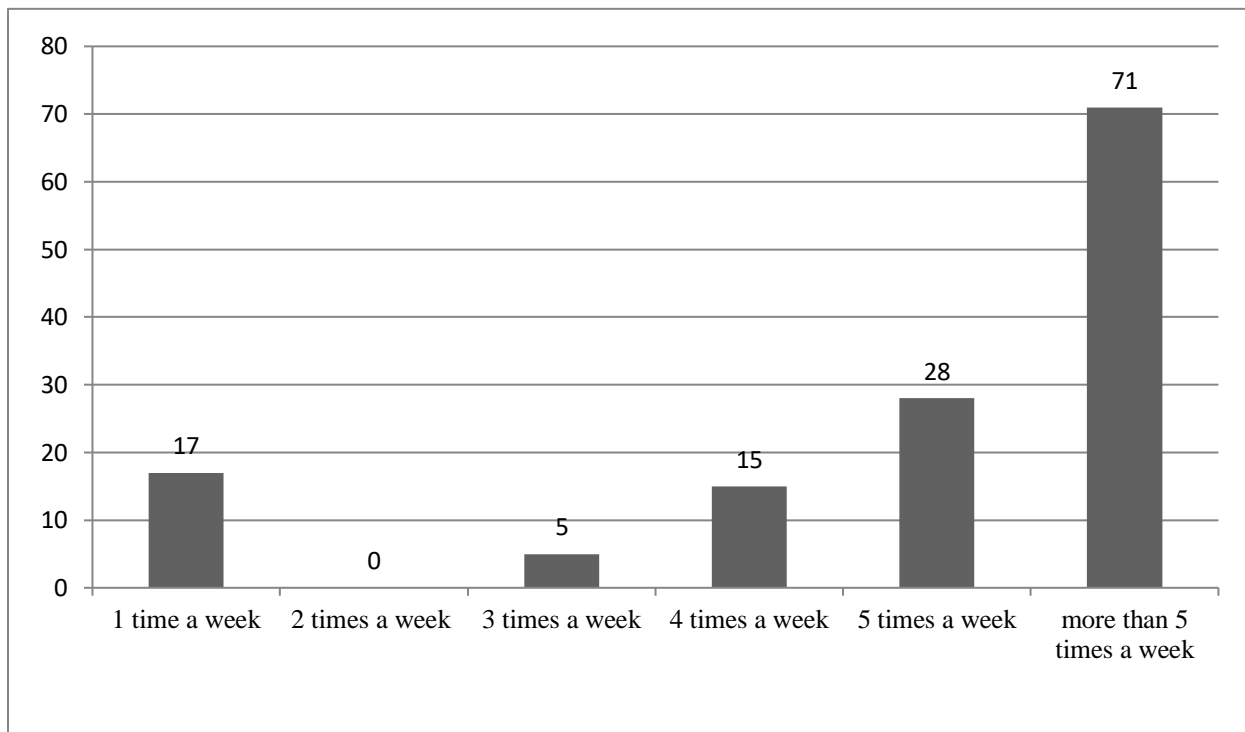


4.3 Social Media Usage among Respondents

The usage of the social media among the societies is increasing from time to time. Without the uses of social media, it becomes difficult to communicate and exchange information regardless of time and space. This research's respondents were not exceptional. All of them responded "Yes" for the question raised to make sure that they used social media. This indicates that social media becomes part of their life.

In order to identify the number of frequency the respondents used social media in a week, more than half of the respondents 71(52%) answered that they used social media more than 5 times in a week. 28(21%) of them responded that they used social media five times in a week. And 15(11%) and 5(4%) of the respondents answered that they used 4 and 5 times a week. Surprisingly, there were no one that answered two times rather 17(12%) of the respondents used social media one time a week. This depicts that almost all of the respondents used at least three times in a week.

Figure-9-Respondents social media usage per a week



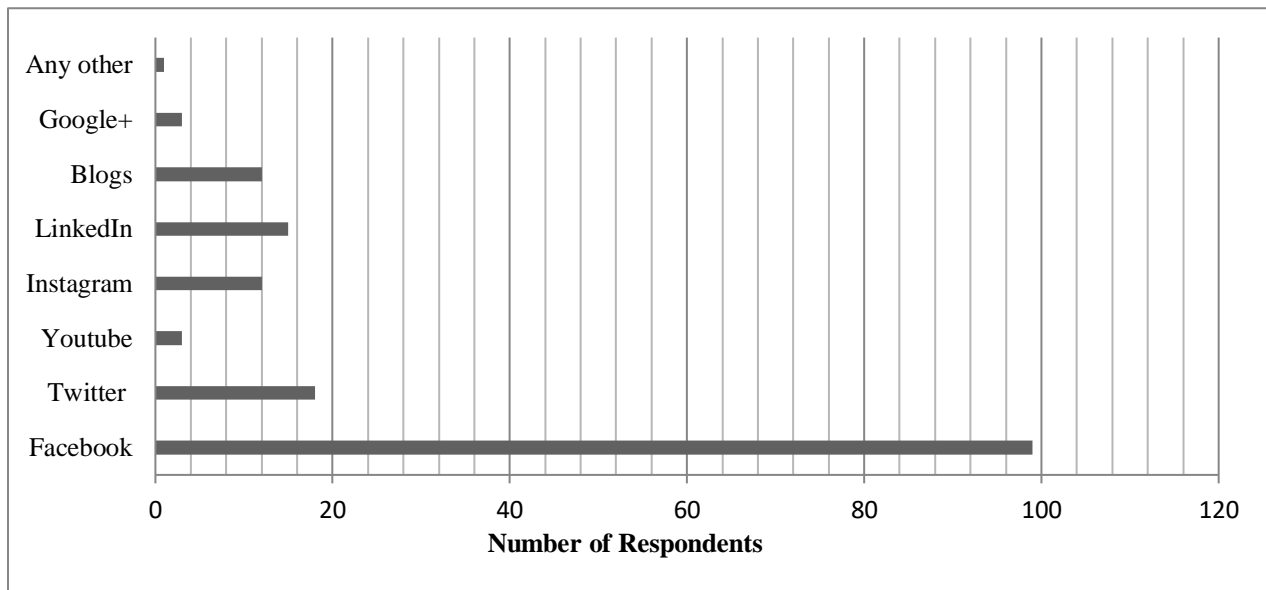
In addition to these, almost all respondents got access to social media either on their own mobile 70(51%) or from their office 57(42%). Podge (2009) as cited in agreed with this and stated that:

Social media is one of the best ways to get traction with the mobile market. Far more people have crappy cell phones than computers. This allows journalists to reach lower and even middle-income communities and minorities that news organizations have been overlooking. Why are you a journalist in the first place? Hopefully it's more than writing articles and seeing your byline. It's to reach communities where they are, and they're on the phone.

The rest of the respondents confirmed that they were able to get access to social media at internet café and other places.

4.4 Types of Social Media Used Frequently

Among the respondents, the usages of facebook took the lion share. According to the finding of the data given below in fig-11, 99(61%) of the respondents used facebook. 18(11%) of them used twitter. This shows that facebook and twitter were used by many of the respondents. Instagram, LinkedIn and Blogs got little attention given by the respondents comparing with facebook and twitter. **Figure-10-Respondents social media choices**



4.5 Purposes of Social Media Usages among Respondents

The purposes of social media usage among respondents were another issue. 69(51%) of the respondents used social media for all purposes including personal, professional as well as academic. However, 34(25%) of them used social media for personal reasons and 27(20%) used for their professional reasons. The respondents were also required to share their specific reasons

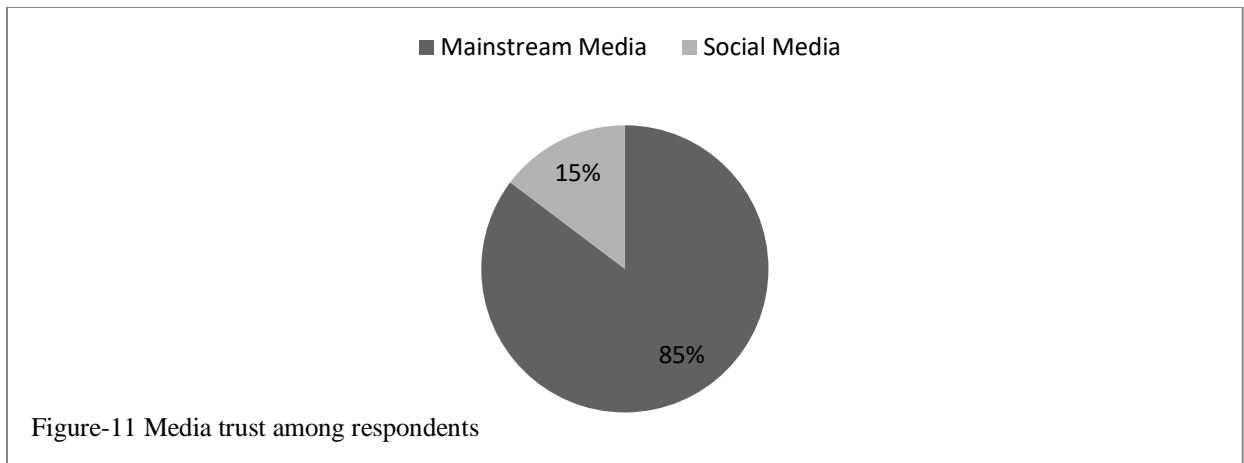
why they used social media for their professional purpose via an open-ended question. They wrote that social media

- ✓ Provide them new, fresh and unedited information posted by ordinary users.
- ✓ Offer chip information that is in turn changed into big news stories.
- ✓ Allow them to share information among friends regardless of time and space.
- ✓ Permit space to upload as well as download data in the form of text, audio and video format from local as well foreign media organizations.
- ✓ Enable them to create social media friends which become difficult to form such group in real life situations other than such environment.
- ✓ Allow them to visit government, non governmental and private organizations main website and get access to their information that is difficult or even costly to get it in person.
- ✓ Are easy ways of sharing information with societies at grassroots level and also among professionals.

The extent to which the respondents used social media was that almost nearly three fourth of the respondents frequently used for professional purposes. And 114(84%) of the respondents believed that social media were useful for their profession. That was the reason that more than half of the respondents used social media as sources of news. One of the interviewee said that social media are useful sources of news if they are able to go miles in order to verify the sources of the information obtained.

4.6 Media Trust among Respondents

Trust is a good asset for any media. This is because it has a direct link with the number and types of audiences that the media own. The literature confirms that big media have big number of audiences. One of the questions raised in the questionnaire was directly related with this. “Which media type do you believe most?”. 116(85%) of the respondents had more trust on the mainstream media rather than the social media. Only 20(15%) of the respondents believed that they had more trust on social media.



The other question forwarded to the respondents was that it required them to share their reasons why they trusted mainstream media over social media and vice versa. They responded that the mainstream media are legal organizations and they know they are accountable for what they say or write whereas it becomes impossible to get this when it comes to social media. No one is responsible for what has been posted on social media since there are a number of fake addresses. One of the interviewees also agreed with this idea. *“There are a number of posts on social media which have no real addresses or owners including addresses deliberately opened with anonymous destination. This puts big problems on the attempts taken by mainstream media to verify. And it also enforces media professionals to become skeptic about the sources of the information.”* (Interviewee-03, April 16, 2018). The other reason mentioned by the respondents was that mainstream professionals are working in together/team and go a long journey to verify the sources of the information before they disseminate it to their target audiences so as to build credibility of what they deliver. When it comes to the social media, the account can be owned by individuals who are entitled to post and disseminate what they have produced and make comments on others as well instinctively. These individuals may have their own interests and the social media platform allow them to do so. But in the mainstream media, *“That is not expected. It takes a long process to set the media agenda and verify the information obtained for news story. Even it takes time to get permissions so as to disseminate it. But it is an individual who produces and posts the information on social media he/she has obtained including photos, audio and video messages without worrying about its journalistic quality and afterward impacts”*, said an interviewee-01 on April,16 2018.

However, there were also 20 (15%) respondents who had big trust on social media. The same question was forwarded to them and they considered social media as useful sources of new information. The huge amount of information available on social media, together with the emergence of new tools that help them verify the information sources and services made social media their choices. One of the interviewees-05 agreed on this idea and said, *“I know the number of fake news stories that are posted on social media daily. but still I trust social media and use them as sources of news stories because the platform makes easy the process verify fake news and even access the main sites of government organizations and other media outlet”* (on April 26, 2018). Another interviewee-02 added on this. *“The information obtained from social media is fresh and contains supporting documents in audio as well as video format so that it is ready to be reused in the mainstream media”* (on April 16, 2018).

4.7 Social Media as Sources of News for Mainstream Media

Among the total respondents as it is presented in table-2, 90(66%) of them agreed that social media are useful sources of news. And 44(32%) of the respondents did not agree on the usefulness of social media as sources of news.

Table-2 level of agreement over social media usage as sources of news in mainstream media

No.	Social Media are useful sources of news	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly Agree	16	12%
2	Agree	74	56%
3	Neutral	0	0%
4	Disagree	36	26%
5	Strongly Disagree	8	6%
	Total	136	100%

These data were also substantiated with data obtained via interview. *“We use social media as sources of news. As part of the society along with the guidance of the profession ethics, we need to attach ourselves to social media. In my opinion, the mainstream media have already lost the credibility of the societies so that a number of people are migrating to social media where information is exchanged very easily and without any interference. You can simply meet a*

number of bloggers, political activities and individuals who want and work harder in order to set the agenda and direct the society to the way they want. Even they have the potential to divert the society. And individuals provide you new information which can be used as breaking news. Thus, we can easily get such information, understand the issue of the day and the concern of the society by interactive with them. In doing these, we can extract new information that has not been presented to the public in depth so that we bring it to the mainstream media organization for presentation after it has been passed through a long tiresome verification processes.” (Interviewee-04, April 19, 2018).

4.8 Respondents Attitude towards Social Media

In order to identify the direction and magnitude of respondents' attitude towards social media, 12 statements that were assumed to be calculated on the bases of Likert Scale as it has been mentioned in the methodology part of this research, were prepared and distributed. According to this estimation, the maximum and the minimum values would be 60 and 12 respectively. Their neutral attitude would fall on 36. This means scores above 36 shows their favorable opinions towards social media and a score below 36 would show respondents unfavorable opinions towards social media. The neutral score 36 would indicate the undecided opinions of the respondents towards social media.

Before calculating the mean value, questions number 3.7, 3.10 and 3.11 were contradiction statements so that their values were reversed. Having this in mind, the mean value of the scale was calculated and became 38.14. This means the respondents' opinion towards social media was favorable. It also implies that the respondents believe in the usefulness of the social media and use them as sources of the news. It also shows the curiosity about the verification of news before using in their mainstream media organization they are working for.

4.9 Frequently used Social Media by Respondents

One of the open-ended questions that was forwarded to the respondents was to list those social media that they frequently used as their news sources. The respondents listed the following social media address like locally government offices official facebook and twitter pages if they have any including the links that bridge to their main website pages, government and commercial

media stations facebook pages, Government Communication Affairs Office including regional Communication Offices main and facebook pages, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Office, fanabc.com www.ENA.gov.et, www.sciencedaily.com, NewsNow.com, dailymail.com, Embassies social media pages, blogs such as www.danielkibret.com, www.allafrica.com, www.africanews.com, www.bloomberg.com, Leaked News facebook page, Getu Temesgen's facebook page, Ephrem Eshete facebook page, Leaked News, foreign media stations pages such as BBC, CNN, Algezira, 'Xinhua', Reuters, Fox News, Press TV, CCTV, Time Magazine social media pages, the Guardian, the New York Times, Sky Sport, Goal Sport, VAO radio facebook page, German radio, Uhuru Kenyatta's facebook page, Washington post, twitters like @realDonaldTrump, @EnglishPremierLeague, @BBCfootball, @UNSecurity Council, video sharing-YouTube, DireTube, Shega Tube and so on.

4.10 Impacts of Realizing News Stories Obtained from Social Media

With the introduction of social media, users can receive news articles on their smart phones about as fast as the writer can write it. The use of smart phones and social media has ushered in a new era of journalism as citizens play a bigger role in the process of news making. With the help of social media platforms, citizens can produce and circulate their own news stories which can often be picked up by mainstream media. An interviewee-07 said, *“Large mainstream media used to have immense power over citizens as they controlled the spread of information which they could use to influence the people in the past. But now, with the introduction of social media, citizens can share information amongst themselves more easily which has led to a decline in consumption of mainstream media. Social media has given power back to the people. This has already brought a huge impact in the newsroom of mainstream media on the production and dissemination of news”*.

In order to cope with the speed of social media, mainstream media are using the social media as sources of news. Due to its urgency, we use the information posted on social media. That is because as responsible media organization, you need to interrupt and provide fact information so that you challenge and contribute our part so as to minimize the damage. I believe most information posted on social media are false and become difficult to differentiate the genuine ones.

An interview-02 shared experiences, *“Recently, we produced a news story on the death of Miruts Yifter, a well-known athlete, but it was found out that the information was wrong. We had got this information from the social media page of a well-known media. And his family was very sad and requested us to retell the general public that the athlete was not dead. Thus, any new information that is obtained from social media has to pass through a very series verification process before it is disseminated to the general public.”* (April 16, 2018)

The impacts of realizing information obtained from social media are huge as the respondents of the interview shared. An interviewee-01, *“Most of the information posted on social media, in one way or another, is partial and highly polarized and finally found false if you verify them. And some of them have the potential to trigger conflict among individuals, groups and societies so that there have to be checked and rechecked so as to make sure that they are free of mistakes and ethical. This saves us not to rebroadcast and amplify them.”* (April 16, 2018)

4.11 Verification Mechanisms used by Respondents

Recent communication research outputs have shown the positive impact of using social media for exchanging information. Mainstream media outlets are also using social media as sources of news. That is because social media provide with real-time information that is in turn ready to be used and inform the large audiences and readers. Individuals and authorities also make big decisions based on the information obtained from social media. However, message and sources uncertainty can place users in a risky position, as it is not always possible to know if messages are accurate, rumors or even malicious. One of the interviewee said, *“As it is known, it is very difficult to get information from most government organizations and officials. If you are private media, the journey to get information become double so that you will be enforced to see social media where individuals, officials and organizations freely exchange information. You can even get the information on social media that you need from those authorized government bodies. Thus, you will be forced to use the social media even though that is not user interest. In order to differentiate fake information out of posts, however, I personally use signs and verification codes that are given to official social media sites by the pioneers of the technology. And they also update the technology.”* (Interviewee-07, April 20, 2018).

Another interviewee-08 argued that it is difficult to solve the problem technologically. *“That is because even the technology inventor like Mark Zuckerberg was unable to solve the problem technologically. But in my opinion, the social media users should be bounded with moral. They have to be responsible for what they post on their pages. Thus, parents, schools and the society at large should teach their children how they have to use social media.”*(April 20, 2018).

Still another interviewee-02 reiterated, *“I use the number of likes and background information that a person or organization has and create a long attachment with that site. With the passage of time, it starts to disappear if that is a fake account. Most of the time, fake account does not stay long. They are created at one time, and disappeared in another time. This is because these kinds of accounts are created for a purpose. However, there are a number of social media pages which provide genuine information as well.”* (April 16, 2018).

In some media, respondents told the research that they are not allowed to have their own social media address other than their media official sites. According to them, the reasons behind these isolation of them from social media is that the media organizations do not want their reporters to be known with another image other than they have in the media they represent. *“So that we create our own fake accounts which are not known by the media we work for. This allows us to visit social media with fake account. You can imagine how complicated is the verification processes.”* (Interviewee-04, April 19, 2018).

However, most of the respondents agreed that they use triangulation method so as to verify the information they have obtained from social media. One of the interviewee-06 said, *“I personally use different techniques. I usually bring the information I have got from social media to the media I am working for. And further discussions are held and the triangulation processes begin here if the information is valid for being developed and retold to the general audiences. Many calls to the concerned bodies may be conducted, relevant documents may be reviewed and an individual contacted if that is necessary so as to enrich the information while verifying. Audio and video message may be collected if they are available as well”* (April 19, 2018).

Another interviewee-03, shared the researcher that there have been a number of occasions when articles are directly used in the mainstream media if they have been obtained from social media sites they assume they are legal and genuine. However, they have also faced court cases for the

article they directly used and got it published with minor editing. According to this interviewee, the verification process becomes tough when it comes to mainstream media. *“Sometimes I directly use social media as sources of news because other big media have already used it. For example, there are some mainstream media locally as well as internationally which are believed to broadcast or publish genuine information so that I always browse their social media pages and use them as genuine sources of news. This is because the government and the public have already developed trust. And it becomes simple for us to use information they have already posted and I retell them as own. Sometimes they fail and we fail as well if the news story they have posted is found out to be fake.”*

4.12 News Story Development in the Actual Newsrooms

Most of the newsrooms that the researcher observed were equipped with modern computers. As it was confirmed from news reporter that was in the room, *“The computers are modern and capable of performing all activities because they contain the necessary software that are needed for reporters to upload, cut and paste, edit and change the formats.”* And each reporter specifically senior reporters and editors has their own computer. Most of the time, as the researcher observed, the reporter, be it junior or senior, were responsible for bringing new information. During the morning editorial meeting, the reporter along with the editors held meetings and discussed the previous day’s news sessions and stories that have already aired. The attendants briefly exchanged information about the impacts, the strength and weakness of the news stories. After the discussions, moderators of the meeting start to collect new information which is possibly developed into news stories. Then, the editors assign reporters to gather and substantiate the new information so as to develop into news stories. If the new information has been sourced from trusted media, the only tasks left for the reporters are to translate and rewrite it in news format in order to get fit into the news formats of the media. However, if the new information has been sourced from social media, the reporter and editor believe that it is subject to go through a very serious verification processes. There were occasions when the news stories were directly aired. For example, the appointment of Dr. Abiy as the chairperson of the EPRDF was first announced on Fana Broadcasting Corporation’s facebook page and started to be broadcast in other media as well. The researcher witnessed when this happened. According to the reporter, *“This facebook page is believable and already accepted by the government as well as*

the general public so that it will be taken as genuine information if you use it as your sources of news. The only thing you do is, adjust the news story you have got from this page to keep you media news format.”

In another day newsroom observation, fortunately, the researcher happened in the newsroom of one of the target media organization’s newsroom. The new information that was developed into news story had been obtained from Aljazeera website. The news story was about the summit arrangements of Donald Trump to meet Kim Jong-un in Singapore.

The person who was assigned among the attendants was a senior reporter. After the meeting, he took the news story developed by Aljazeera and went to his table. He opened the web pages of Algezira and started reading. After he finished reading, he gazed at the twitter pages of those persons mentioned in the news story. He took a picture of their twitter and downloaded the whole story from media’s web pages live transmissions. The reporter confirmed that the media has been privileged to access those news stories and used for local uses. And immediately he developed a nice feature news story and made a voice record without anyone support on his own computer. Finally, he sent it to the editor for final check via network. Then, he filled a form after approval and resent it to get it aired. However, the researcher was unable to observe specifically what the editor had done before he approved.

During these two news stories development, the roles of the reporters were high. According to the guidance of the newsroom observation, *“now days, editors have no specific jobs. Because it is the reporter who brings news story idea, gets it approved during editorial meeting, develops it into news story and performs the record if s/he has already been chosen due to vocal and ways of reading method. Finally, it will simply be broadcast or aired”*.

According to the finding of data via newsroom observations, some of the journalists, be it junior or senior reporter and editor, were already acquainted themselves with different skills apart from writing. They were browsing internet themselves, upload and download news stories using different software, cut and paste, perform voices recording and editing. Thus, it could be very easy to conclude that today’s media professionals have to have a variety of skills, specifically technical skills if they want to join the media sector and exploit the potential that exist there.

4.13 Challenges in Using Social Media as Sources of News

As it has been discussed in the literature and finding of the data show that continuous accelerating technological change has broken down forms of barriers in seeking and consuming information, revolutionizing methods of news production, delivery and consumption of news. Contemporary technological media revolution has increased the power of the digital world through the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter to freely disseminate information to anyone, anywhere, at any time. Simultaneously, technological innovation in this digital era is reshaping the news industry and making dynamics of the news media more complex and condensed. Feeds from social media such as Facebook and Twitter provide a snapshot of events happening around the world from the viewpoint of first-hand witnesses, and blogs and citizen news sources offer analytical perspectives from the ground faster than print or television can provide.

The emergence of multi-platform news production and delivery through social media, however, challenges the role of the mainstream media as the sole information provider for society. Many pose questions on social media specifically regarding the reliability of information. An interviewee-01 raised his concern as a media professional. *“While using social media information as sources of news for mainstream media, you have to be aware of fake information that has chances to be spread as facts. So you need to have your own mechanisms that help you identify them.”* Schalkwyk (2016) also agreed with this idea and stated that:

Social media is renowned for its speed and relevance, but not necessarily for its accuracy. It has been said that via social media, misinformation is spread as facts become lost in the shuffle of competing information, limited attention, or both. It was found that the main reason for individuals not using social media as a source for news lies in the lack of credibility of articles, as many are not written by qualified journalists or reviewed by a reputable authority. These continue to be the major challenges of the mainstream media that use social media as sources of news.

“There is a lot of false information posted by the users. Most of them are politically politicized, unauthorized and partial, reflect individual’s idea, have their own targets but disseminate to all users. These put challenge on the attempts that the mainstream media go for verifying the

information sources, balancing the issue, avoiding its partiality and ensuring its accuracy.”
(Interviewee-02)

The use of social media also results challenging quest for mainstream media organizations that have always been continuously challenged to provide breaking news as soon as it happens and make aware of their audiences unless they do have live coverage. The challenges become even trip when it comes to newspaper and magazines if they are published weekly, monthly and bi-annual. Almost all interviewees agreed with this and said, *“Even mainstream media which have live-coverage need someone who go to the place and send the news. There is no such a thing in social media. Someone who has the access can beat you and report it to the public so that through the existence of social media that acts as a platform for the dissemination of news, the challenge for speedy news delivery becomes a more crucial factor than ever before. In order to compete with these social media networks, you may make mistakes. In these cases, it may not be enough to say sorry to the audiences as you may simply and easily do on social media. It could be considered as illegal and within days, it may become a court case. You may find yourself in prison.”* (Interviewee-06, April 19, 2018).

The adoption and uses of social media as sources of news in the mainstream media has resulted in the need to create a new set of editorial guidelines. Today, the newsrooms of many mainstream media have faced challenges. Professionals are being required to get acquainted themselves with new skills and rules and norms. *“In the heat of real events, journalists are forced to work out under enormous pressure so as to verify the most trusted information obtained from social media and separate the signal from the noise. In doing these, there are a lot of adjustments and they are also being revolutionized themselves to cope with the changes”*, commented by an interviewee-09. Individual audiences start to highly participate in the production and dissemination of news due to the establishment of social media. *“Previously, the general audiences did not have the authority to decide the news stories which have news values; however, this has drastically changed over the years. Their roles have already been changed from passive to active participation. They provide you new information which can be used as big news story for the mainstream media. It is up to you to improve the quality of the information and provide depth.”*(Interviewee-04, April 19, 2018).

4.14 Discussions

With the changes in media technology, McLuhan believed that the changes of societal perceptions, attitudes and ways of interaction have been inescapable. According to him, these situations have the ability to bring about changes in the media organizations' cultures while attempting to satisfy and cope with those changes. Thus, the practices and challenges of using social media have already become the talks of the days.

As it can be seen in the presentations of the findings of this research above, many of unmarried young media professionals use social media mostly for personal and professional purposes. The reasons behind in using social media as alternative media were found out that social media provide them with new, fresh and unedited information. Offer chip information that is in turn changed into big news stories and used by their media organization. In addition, they believed that social media allow them to form friends and exchange any information which they think are important. Habermas, as it has been discussed in chapter two, agreed with this and stated the media should be a free space for public opinion and include political debates and expression of idea without any interference. He also believed that specific groups were not to be excluded, as it would lead to an incomplete public sphere, in other words, not a public sphere at all. Everyone should have the possibility to participate in the issues discussed regardless of power and censorship in anyway and form. Almost all the respondents also agreed on the existences of freedom on social media. One of the interviewee-06 confirmed that, *"Freedom of expression, as it is stated in the constitution, is kept only on social media even though the country is now under state of emergency. It is completely denied when it comes to the mainstream media."* But one difference from the theory and practice of the past is the sheer number of people now taking part and the speed that the news takes to reach people across the globe.

Goffman along with recently published information system researchers, on the other hand, argued that social media allow users to bring their imaginative self to the stages and hide their true self. According to them, these users of social media want others to take them their imaginative self rather than their true self. These situations spoil the stage (the social media) so that false information and messages get chance to be spread very quickly. The respondents of this research also agreed with this. And they believed that social media platform allow users to

upload and download true as well as false information. In addition, the platform also permits users to create fake accounts, upload unauthorized, inaccurate and unverified information. An interviewee-07 commented that, *“The situations are challenging the mainstream media which use social media as sources of news and I advise mainstream media professional to go through a very serious verification process so as to re-use it in the mainstream media.”* Apart from the social media address of the sources, in-house guideline, using the main web pages of the sources if there is any, communicating with the information source person, the sustainability of the pages and experiences of offering balanced information, ensuring the number of likes and verification code imparted by the owner of the technology were suggested as remedy to verify the sources before using the information obtained from social media.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

As it has been stated in the previous sections, the main objective of this research was to examine the practices and challenges of using social media as sources of news in mainstream media. In order to meet these objectives, therefore, mixed research approach was employed. And data were collected using both quantitative as well as qualitative. Questionnaires, in-depth interview and ethnography newsroom observations were applied to gather data. Using these data gather tools, data were collected and the following major points were made based on the findings.

- ✓ The majority of the respondents 108 (78%) were males and the rest 22(30%) were females. This shows the dominance of males in the media organizations.
- ✓ Regarding their age, 98(68%) of the respondents were youths aged below 30 years old. The rest 36 (27%) of them were below 45 years old. 99(73%) of them were unmarried and 70 (52%) of them had below three years of work experiences. And 48 (35%) of them had work experiences between four to six years.
- ✓ 91(67%) of them graduated in journalism and communication. 18(15%) and 12(9%) of the respondents graduated in languages, Political Science and International Relations (PSIR) respectively
- ✓ Most of the respondents were reporters 31(23%) and senior reporters 62(46%). The rests were junior reports 12(9%) and others 18(13%) such as editors and program producers.
- ✓ Regarding their social media usages, 79(73%) of the respondents used social media more than five times a week. This shows how they frequently visited their social media pages.
- ✓ Almost all respondents got access to social media either on their own mobile 70(51%) or from their office 57(42%). The rest of the respondents were able to get access to social media at internet café and other places.

- ✓ 99(61%) of the respondents used facebook. 18(11%) of them used twitter. This shows that facebook and twitter were used by many of the respondents. Instagram, LinkedIn and Blogs got little attention given by the respondents comparing with facebook and twitter.
- ✓ 69(51%) of the respondents used social media for all purposes including personal, professional as well as academic. However, 34(25%) of them used social media for personal reasons and 27(20%) used for their professional reasons.
- ✓ Regarding to trust towards the media choice, 116(85%) of the respondents had more trust on the mainstream media rather than the social media. Only 20(15%) of the respondents believed that they had more trust on social media.
- ✓ 131 (98%) of the respondents firmly believed that most of the information got from social media may be unauthorized and need to be verified so as to ensure its accuracy.
- ✓ The mean value of the scale was 38.14 so that the respondents' opinion towards social media was favorable. It also implies that the respondents believe in the usefulness of the social media and use them as sources of the news.
- ✓ Based on the research findings, the facebook and their main website pages of FBC, MOGCAO, MOFA, EBC, Regional Communication Affairs Office, Embassies, International Media such as BBC, CNN, Aljazeera, Press TV, 'Xinhua', Reuters, Fox News, Press TV, CCTV, Time Magazine social media pages, Politicians and celebrities' facebook as well as twitter pages, the Guardian, the New York Times, Sky Sport, Goal Sport, VAO radio facebook page, German radio, Uhuru Kenyatta's facebook page, Washington post, twitters like @realDonaldTrump, @EnglishPrimiumLeague, @BBCfootball, @UNSecurity Council, video sharing-YouTube, DireTube, Shega Tube and so on were used as sources of news by the mainstream media.
- ✓ Through interviews and ethnography news room observations, the researcher learnt that most of the mainstream media had no in-house guideline or any system that is used to properly guide the usages of social media as sources of news and they follow their old system to verify new information obtained from social media.
- ✓ Today's media professionals are expected to perform a range of tasks. Therefore, they have to have a variety of skills, specifically technical skills if they want to join the media sector and exploit the potential that exist there.

- ✓ Almost all mainstream media that have been chosen for this research have their own facebook as well as main web pages. Respondents of the interview agreed that they communicate with their readers and audiences via the media's pages and use their comments and suggestion as sources of news. An interviewee-07 confirmed this. *“The participants of the social media provide us comments without any fear. You can see their freedom they have even based on their comments. And we use them and develop news stories and even programs.”*
- ✓ Formal in-house guideline, confirmation from the information sources, ensuring the verification code, number of likes and sustainability of the social media of the sources pages were suggested to be taken into consideration while balancing and verifying the information sources. However, the respondents agreed that it is very difficult to verify information if the technology becomes very sophisticated and open to all.
- ✓ Most of the interviewee responded that information obtained from social media has to be verified seriously due to untrue and polarized information may have chances to be posted as true and genuine.
- ✓ No mainstream media have developed and implemented ways or mechanisms to receive news stories from individuals on social media as other big international media do.

4.15 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, media professionals consider social media as a blessing. If used properly, they have become sure that social media can serve the mainstream media as sources of news since free exchange of information is being executed and accurate information is genuinely shared. According to the data gathered, however, that was not the case. A lot of fictitious stories have the chance to be uploaded and used as genuine information. Respondents also agreed that these fabricated stories obtained on social media have chances to be re-used in mainstream media. And now days, it becomes very difficult to identify the facts. Thus, the following recommendations were suggested so as to use social media as sources of news in mainstream media and presented as follows:

- ✓ Most of the mainstream media did not encourage their reporters to have their own social media pages. They advised their reporters to use and visit only the organizations media

page. That was found out far from the reality because the researcher could confirm that almost all respondents have their own social media pages and effectively interact with users with false names and fake accounts. These acts damage the communications process being held on social media and provide rooms for fictitious information to be spread very quickly. Thus, the mainstream media should allow their professionals to have their own genuine accounts and contribute their part for the effective communications of social media.

- ✓ Almost all mainstream media organizations had no in-house guideline that allow them to effectively use social media as sources of news since speedy information exchange is being held and false information have the chances to be posted as genuine ones. Thus, they should have to develop a comprehensive social media guideline and upgrade their old editorial policy so as to encompass today as well as future issues and cope with the developments of media technology.
- ✓ The mainstream media organizations along with parents and schools should teach their community specifically youths and promote the proper uses of social media.
- ✓ Continues communications and discussions should be held among media and their stakeholders including the governments so as to promote ethical values of the societies that are in turn used to advance social media usage ethics.
- ✓ Mainstream media should provide very quick and genuine information that is needed by the societies as the social media do. These make the fictitious information on social media lose rooms to be considered as true information.
- ✓ Formal in-house guideline, confirmation from the information sources, ensuring the verification code, number of likes and sustainability of the social media of the sources pages should be taken into consideration while balancing and verifying the information sources.
- ✓ From the literature and findings of this research, it was learns that the uses of media moves from mainstream media to social media. Therefore, mainstream media organizations have be ready to exploit the potential social media have already brought to them.
- ✓ Media professionals are now required to perform a range of activities alone so that they should be very skillful so as to be chosen and get fit into the needs of the contemporary

media sector. Apart from writing and reading, they should be knowledgeable about different editing software, create graphics, animation, filming and editing, videolicious even on a smart phone, photography and videographey and phone interview and so on.

- ✓ Today, big media organizations promote the uses of citizen journalism to widen news coverage area and allow individuals participate in the productions of news as they do on social media so as to get fresh information that is in turn ready to be retold via the mainstream media and eliminate barriers that are possibly created due to professional scarcity. Thus, mainstream media organization should design guidelines that allow individuals to take part in the production as well as the development of news stories and promote the uses of citizen journalism.

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Annex-One

Addis Ababa University

School of Journalism and Communications

Questionnaires for News Reporters and Editors of Mainstream Media

This questionnaire is prepared to collect data from the mainstream media news reporters and editors for the study being conducted on “**The Practices and Challenges of Using Social Media as Sources of News in Ethiopia Mainstream Media: Selected Mainstream Media in Focus**”. The effectiveness of the questionnaire relies on your genuine and reliable response to each of the questions. May I request you to share your ideas on the questions mentioned below. And your response to each of the questions will be kept confidential and used only for this research purposes. Thank you in advance.

General Directions

- You do not need to write your name on anywhere in the questionnaire.
- When you respond for the questions in the box, use only a tick mark ().
- For open-ended questions, please write your responses in the space provided.
- The research paper will be fruitful if you read and respond to all the questions.
- In this questionnaire, the term “mainstream” is used to refer to media such as newspaper, magazine, radio and television.

Part One: Background Information about the Respondents

- 1.1 Name of the Media _____
- 1.2 Gender: A. Male B. Female
- 1.3 Age: A. 15-30 years B. 31-45 C. 46-60 D. above 61
- 1.4 Marital status: A. Single B. Married C. Divorce D. Widowed
- 1.5 Educational Status:
- A. Below Diploma B. Diploma C. Degree D. Masters E. PhD.
- 1.6 Please mention your study area _____
- 1.7 Your current Position:
- A. Junior Reporter B. Reporter C. Senior Reporter
- D. Editor E. Any other _____
- 1.8 Work Experiences
- A. 1-3 years B. 4-6 years C. 7-9 years D. Above 10 years

Part Two: This section focuses on data that shows your exposure to social Media; please circle your responses among the choices.

- 2.1 Do you use social media?
- A. Yes B. No
- 2.2 If you say ‘Yes’ for question No. 2.1., then how often do you use it?
- A. Once a week B. Twice a week C. Three times a week
- D. Four times a week E. Five times a week F. More than five times a week
- 2.3 Where do you get access to social media?
- A. On your mobile B. Internet Café C. At work place D. Any other _____

2.4 Which type of social media do you use often?

- A. Facebook B. Twitter C. YouTube D. Instagram
E. LinkedIn F. Blogs G. Google+ H. Any other _____

2.5 For what purposes do use these social media?

- A. Personal B. Professional C. Academic D. For All

2.6 If you circled 'B' as your answer for question No. 2.4, please specify your answer. _____

2.7 To what extent do you use social media for professional purpose?

- A. Always B. Usually C. Sometimes D. Rarely E. Never

2.8. How do you see social media's usefulness for your profession?

- A. Extremely useful B. Useful C. Uncertain D. Useless E. Extremely Useless

2.9 How often do you use social media as sources of news?

- A. Always B. Usually C. Sometimes D. Rarely E. Never

2.10 Why do you use social media as sources of news? (You can choose more than one)

- A. The information obtained on social media is timely and new and ready to be reused.
B. It provides me raw, direct and unedited information that is ready to be verified.
C. The information obtained is true, accurate and verified.
D. It offers genuine information.
E. Any other reasons _____.

2.11 Which media type do you trust most?

- A. Mainstream media B. Social media

2.12 Your reasons for question No. 2.11 _____.

Part Three: Put this mark (Ö) in the box that contains your responses

Strongly Agree=5 Agree =4 Neutral=3 Disagree =2 Strongly Disagree=1

No	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
1	I use social media quite often.					
2	Social media are useful sources of news.					
3	Now a day, I believe that there is no news without social media.					
4	I believe that social media are used as sources of news for mainstream media news.					
5	I use the news posted on social media as sources of news for the media I belong to.					
6	I believe that information obtained from social media has to be passed through a series of verification process before it has been disseminated.					
7	I do not mind news obtained from social media to be disseminated to the public through mainstream media without being verified if it is new and urgent.					
8	All the news posted on social media is accurate.					
9	I am very skeptical about the news I obtain from social media.					
10	All the information obtained from social media has to be verified and checked for its accuracy.					
11	It is very difficult to get true, accurate and verified information on social media.					
12	I have big trust for the information that I obtain from social media rather than mainstream media.					

Part Four: Please write your responses on the blank spaces given next to the Questions

4.1 Can you mention some of the social media sites that you use as sources of news? For example: Daneil's Blog-www.daneilkibret.com, Trump's twitter-@realDonaldTrump

4.2 How do you know that some of the social media you have mentioned above are genuine?

4.3 What are the major challenges of using social media as sources of news?

4.4 Are there any big changes in your media newsroom due to the spread of social media usage anywhere, whenever and by anyone as sources of news?

4.5 How do you verify the information obtained from social media so as to use it as news for the mainstream media that you belong to?

4.6 What are the challenges of verifying the information obtained from social media so as to use it as news in the main stream media you belong to?

4.7 What do you advise your media organization as a media professional to verify information that is obtained from social media before it is disseminated to the public?

4.8 Is there anything you want to write, please share me here

Thank you so much!!!

Annex-Two

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የጋዜጠኝነትና ኮሙኒኬሽን ትምህርት ቤት ኮሚዩኒኬሽን ባለሙያዎች መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ የተዘጋጀ መጠይቅ

ይህ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጀው “Practices and Challenges of Using Social Media as Sources of News in Ethiopia Mainstream Media: Selected Mainstream Media in Focus” በሚል ርዕስ ዕየተዘጋጀ ላለው የማስተርስ መመሪያ ጽሑፍ መረጃ ለማሰባሰብ ነው።

የጥናቱ ውጤታማነት በዚህ መጠይቅ አማካኝነት ሐሳባችሁን የምታካፍሉኝ የሚዲያ ባለሙያዎች ላይ የተመሠረተ ይሆናል። በመሆኑም ከታች ለምትጠየቁት ጥያቄዎች ተገቢውንና ትክክለኛ መረጃ እንድትሰጡኝ በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ። በመጠይቁ ላይ የምትሰጡኝ መረጃ በሙሉ የሚውለው ሚስጥራዊነቱ ተጠብቆ ለጥናቱ ዓላማ ብቻ እንደሆነ በአክብሮት እገልጻለሁ። ጊዜያችሁን ሰውታችሁ ለምትሰጡኝ መረጃ ከወዲሁ ምስጋናዬን አቀርባለሁ!

የመጠይቁ አሞላል አጠቃላይ አቅጣጫ

- በዚህ መጠይቅ በየትኛውም መልኩ ቢሆን ስምትን አይጻፉ!
- ከፊት ለፊታቸው ሳጥን ላላቸው መልሶች፤ ይህን (✓) ምልክት ብቻ ይጠቀሙ።
- ምርጫ ለሌላቸው ጥያቄዎች፤ ከጥያቄዎቹ ቀጥለው በተሰጡት ክፍት ቦታዎች ላይ ሐሳብዎትን ያካፍሉኝ።
- ሁሉንም ጥያቄዎች አንብበው ቢመልሱ፤ ለጥናቱ ውጤታማነት የሚያበረክቱት አስተዋጽኦ ከፍተኛ ነው።
- በዚህ መጠይቅ “ሜይንስትሪም ሚዲያ/Mainstream Media” እየተባለ የተጠቀሰው ጋዜጣ፤ መጽሔት፤ ሬዲዮና ቴሌቪዥንን እንዲወክል ታስቦ የቀረበ መሆኑን በአክብሮት እገልጻለሁ።

ክፍል አንድ: የመጠይቁ መላሽ አጠቃላይ መረጃ

- 1.1 እየሠሩ ያሉበት የሚዲያ ተቋም ሙሉ ስም _____ ።
- 1.2 ጾታ: ሀ. ወንድ ለ. ሴት
- 1.3 ዕድሜ: ሀ. ከ15-30 ዓመት ለ. ከ31-45 ዓመት ከ. ከ46-60 ዓመት መ. ከ60 ዓመት በላይ
- 1.4 የጋብቻ ሁኔታ ሀ. ያላገባ ለ. ያገባ ሐ. የተፋታ/ች መ. የጋብቻ አጋር በሞትየተለየ
- 1.5 ትምህርት ሁኔታ: ሀ. ሰርተፍኬት ለ. ዲፕሎማ ሐ. ዲግሪ መ. ማስተርስ
ሠ. ዶክተሬት
- 1.6 የተመረቁበት የትምህርት መስክ _____ ።
- 1.7 አሁን የሚገኙበት የሥራ ደረጃ: ሀ. ጀማሪ ሪፖርተር ለ. ሪፖርተር ሐ. ከፍተኛ ሪፖርተር
ሠ. ኤዲተር ረ. ሌላ ከሆነ እዚህ ይጥቀሱ _____ ።
- 1.8 የሥራ ልምድ በዓመት: ሀ. ከ1-3 ለ. ከ4-6 ከ. ከ7-9 መ. ከ10 ዓመት በላይ

ክፍል ሁለት: ለማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ ያለዎት ቅርበትን ለማየት የተዘጋጁ ጥያቄዎች በዚህ ክፍል ተካተዋል። መልስዎን የያዘውን ፊደል ብቻ ያክብቡ!

- 2.1 ማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ ይጠቀማሉ? ሀ. አዎ ለ. አልጠቀምም
- 2.2 ለ2.1 ጥያቄ መልስዎት “አዎ” ከሆነ፤ በሳምንት ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ይጠቀማሉ?
ሀ. 1ጊዜ ለ. 2ጊዜ ሐ. 3ጊዜ መ. 4ጊዜ ሠ. 5ጊዜ ረ. ከ5ጊዜ በላይ
- 2.3 የማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ በብዛት የሚጠቀሙት የት ነው? (ከአንድ በላይ መምረጥ ይቻላል።)
ሀ. በሞላይል ለ. በኢንተርኔትካፌ ሐ. በሥራ-ቦታ መ. ሌላ ቦታ ከሆነ እዚህ ይጥቀሱ _____
- 2.4 አዘውትረው የሚጠቀሙት የማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ የቱ ነው? ወይም የቶቹ ናቸው?
ሀ. ፌስቡክ/Facebook ለ. ትዊተር/Twitter ሐ. ሊንክድኢን/LinkedIn

ክፍል አራት፡ ከታች ለቀረቡት ጥያቄዎች ተገቢውን መልስ በተሰጡት ክፍት ቦታዎች ላይ ግልጽና አጭር በሆነ መልኩ ይስጡ።

4.1 ለሚሠሩበት የሚዲያ ተቋም እንደዜና ምንጭነት የሚጠቀሟቸው የማኅበራዊ ሚዲያዎች የትኞቹ ናቸው? ለምሳሌ፡-ብሎግ ከሆነ ዳንኤል ክብረት (www.daneilkibret.com)፣ የትራምፕ ትዊተር (@realDonaldTrump)

4.2. እነዚህ ከላይ የዘረዘሯቸው የማኅበራዊ ሚዲያዎች ትክክለኛ መሆናቸውን እንዴት እንዳረጋገጡ ቢያብራሩልኝ

_____ .

4.3. ማኅበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን ለዜና ምንጭነት መጠቀም ችግር አለው? ምክንያታትን ቢያብራሩልኝ፤ አጋጣሚም ካለሆነ ቢጠቅሱልኝ

_____ .

4.4 ማንኛውም ሰው በማንኛውም ቦታና ጊዜ ማኅበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን እንደዜና ምንጭነት ሲጠቀምባቸው በተቋማችሁ የዜና ዝግጅትና ስርጭት ላይ ያመጡት ለውጦች ምንምንድን ናቸው?

_____ .

4.5 በማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ የተገኙ መረጃዎች እርስዎ በሚገኙበት የሚዲያ ተቋም መረጃዎችን መልሶ ለሕብረተሰቡ የሚነገሩበት ካለ ሂደቱን ቢያብራሩልኝ? ዕውነተኛነታቸውን፣ ትክክለኛነታቸውንና ምሉዕነታቸውን እንዴት ነው የሚረጋገጠው?

_____ .

4.6 ከማኅበራዊ ሚዲያ የሚገኙ መረጃዎች ትክክለኛነታቸውን ለማረጋገጥ በሚደረገው ጥረት የሚያጋጥሙ ችግሮች ምንምንድን ናቸው?

4.7 እንደሚዲያ ባለሙያነት ሜንስትሪም ሚዲያው/Mainstream Media ማኅበራዊ ሚዲያዎችን እንደዜና ምንጭነት ከተጠቀሙባቸው ምን እንዲያደርጉ ይመክራሉ?

4.8 ከላይ በተነሱት ጉዳዮች ዙሪያ ሊያካፍሉኝ የሚፈልጉት መረጃዎች ካሉ

አመሰግናለሁ!

Annex-Three

Interview Questions for Reporters, Editors and Program Producers

1. Do you use social media? Would you explain the purposes?
2. Does your media organization use social media as sources of news?
3. Do you encourage your media professional to use social media? Why?
4. What are the major benefits that you have obtained because of the uses of social media as media organization?
5. Which social media sites do you use or encourage your media professional to use? Why?
6. Are there any changes in your newsroom that you have made due to the spread of social media sites?
7. What are the major roles of information obtained from social media sites in agenda setting and news framing?
8. What are you doing so as to use social media effectively as the sources of news?
9. Do you trust all the information you have obtained from social media?
10. What do you do if you get fake news on social media?
11. What are the problems if journalists use social media as sources of news?
12. If you use social media as sources of news, how do you validate the information you have obtained from the social media so as to be retold to the public through your media?
13. Can you mention some of the social media sites that you are using as sources of news? And why?
14. Is there anything that discourages you from using social media sites as sources of news? And how do you mitigate it and use it effectively?
15. Are there any problems faced by the media organization while using social media?
16. In order to use the social media as sources of news in the mainstream media, what are your advices?

Annex-Four

Interview Questions for Media Managers

1. Do you use social media? Which social media sites do you quite often? What are your major targets in using the social media as a media organization manager?
2. Do you trust the information you have obtained from social media? Why or Why not?

3. What do you do with the information you have obtained from social media sites?
4. How do you explain the usage of social media sites for your media organization purposes?
5. How do you see the uses of social media sites in Ethiopia? Is a blessing or a curse?
6. Do you encourage your media professionals to use social media? Why?
7. Are there any changes that you have made due to the spread of using social media?
Structure changes, human resources such as number and quality of professional and finance?
8. What are the major problems that you have observed in the uses of social media as sources of news?
9. Are there any tangible cases that you have faced due to the uses of social media as sources of news?
10. What do you think should be done in order to not to disseminate untrue information through the mainstream media?

Annex-Five

Ethnography Newsroom Observations Checklist

Observations were made in three purposively selected mainstream media newsroom. The following lists of questions were used and tried to be answered while the observations sessions took place in each selected newsroom.

- ✓ Date and time
- ✓ Name of the media station
- ✓ Which participants of the editorial meeting took the lion share in order to decide on the news
- ✓ The roles of the reporters
- ✓ The roles of editors and others during the preparation and dissemination of news stories using social media as sources.
- ✓ Which information obtained from social media was chosen for being developed into news story
- ✓ Which social media sites were chosen first and why?
- ✓ Who were involved during the selections of sources and information?
- ✓ Who developed the news stories?
- ✓ What major mechanisms were used so as to verify the sources and what were the challenges?

- ✓ What major steps were followed during the preparations and dissemination of news stories specifically obtained from social media?
- ✓ Notice and list major changes observed in the newsroom if any due to the competition with social media sites so as to inform the public first.