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College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communications

School of Journalism & Communications

The Practice of Media Convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC)

**A Thesis Submitted to School of Journalism and Communications in partial Fulfillment of
the Requirement of Degree of Masters of Art in Journalism and communication
(Multimedia Journalism)**

By Andualem Shimels

Advisor: Abdissa Zerai (Ph.D.)

June, 2023

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Addis Ababa University School Of Journalism And Communication

This is to certify that the thesis submitted by Andualem Shimels under the title “The Practice of Media Convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC)” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Art in Journalism and communication (Multimedia Journalism) complies with the regulations of the University and notes the accepted standards for originality and quality.

EXAMINING BOARD

Advisor

Signature

Date

Internal Examiner

Signature

Date

External Examiner

Signature

Date

Graduate Program Coordinator

Signature

Date

DECLARATION

I, Andualem Shimelis, hereby declare that the thesis titled “The Practice of Media Convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC)” is my own work. I would also like to confirm that all the sources and materials cited in this thesis are properly identified and acknowledged. This study has not been submitted to any university or higher learning institution partially or in full form in previous times. The thesis is submitted to Addis Ababa University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for Masters of Art in Journalism and communication (Multimedia Journalism).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At the outset, I would like to thank my Almighty God for His assistance throughout my academic carrier. I would like to give a special shout-out to my esteemed advisor, Abdissa Zeray (Ph.D) for his immense and diligent professional follow up and encouragement throughout this thesis project. Had it not been for his assistance, this paper wouldn't have achieved its initial objectives.

I am deeply indebted to families and friends who contributed to this thesis professionally and personally. First, my first appreciation goes to my beloved spouse, W/ro Woinishet Hailemariam as she has been the continuous source of inspiration to me from the beginning to the end of my study. My children Hella Andualem and Yitbarek Andualem also receive the credit for their moral support.

This endeavour wouldn't have been successful without the professional support of the staff of Fana Broadcasting Corporate – TV, Radio and Digital departments. In this regard, I am extremely grateful to Mekoya Hailemariam, Digafe Dagnachew and Solomon Alemu.

I don't have words to express my gratitude to Ato Admassu Damtew, CEO of Fana Broadcasting Corporate as he facilitated the chance to attend my MA education.

I am also extremely grateful to my colleagues at Development Bank of Ethiopia. Ato Yeabsira Kebede, Ato Malede Wasihun, Ato Adefris Taye, Ato Temesgen Mengiste, W/ro Tigist Nigusse, W/ro Debresina Musse and Ato Negash Bedada should be thanked for their inspiration and support. My friend, Ato Tsegaye Girma deserves my special thanks for his brotherly assistance throughout this paper.

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ACRONYMS

AAU – Addis Ababa University

CEO – Chief Executive Officer

FBC – Fana Broadcasting Corporate

FGD – Focus Group Discussion

Abstract

This study was conducted with the aim of examining the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporation (FBC). The study has specific objectives such as identifying the form of media convergence implemented at FBC, looking into changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring as well as assessing the strengths, weaknesses and challenges observed in the implementation of converged media at FBC. Based on the convergence theory, the study employed qualitative research method to address the research questions using qualitative data gathered through data collection instruments such as interviews, focus group discussions and archive file analysis. Accordingly, the researcher analyzed four archive files from previous news coverages of FBC to highlight how contents are channeled across platforms. The researcher also interviewed four top management members of FBC including the CEO, and also conducted three separate focus group discussions involving six staff from each of the radio, television and digital news teams. The findings of the study showed that FBC is currently practicing a form of media convergence known as 'Coordinating Independent Platforms' where autonomous television, radio and digital media departments collaborate in content production and sharing. The findings also revealed that FBC's current structure and staffing is not designed in such a way to maximize the benefits the media outlet gains from media convergence. Uncompetitive salary, lack of multi-skilled journalists, and mismatch between FBC's workforce and the workload journalists handle are the challenges identified in the findings. Moreover, the study shed light on the lack of written procedures articulating FBC's approach to media convergence and the resulting lack of common understanding among FBC's journalists as weaknesses on the part of the media outlet. On the other hand, the joint planning practice by the editorial team, and the commendable track record of FBC in media technology acquisition have been pinpointed as the strengths in FBC's media convergence practice. The findings pointed to the conclusion that FBC is not pursuing media convergence as a strategic goal although it is practicing cross platform dissemination of contents. The conclusion also included the points that FBC has not made staffing changes and newsroom restructuring for better implementation of convergence, in addition to indicating gaps regarding the absence of conducive organizational arrangement for deeper convergence as well as challenges regarding staff turnover and lack of training and devices. Based on the conclusions, the researcher recommended better focus for media convergence at FBC and remedies to address the gaps in manpower, organizational structure, facilities and devices.

Key words: *Media convergence, digital media, multi-channel dissemination, newsroom*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In today's increasingly integrated media landscape, it is common to get a given content disseminated across different platforms of the same media organization. You may listen to a news story aired on one of your local FM radio stations and get that same story repackaged and channeled through the television station and social media pages of the media organization. Or you may get text, photo, audio and video contents digitized and shared on the website or social media pages of the media outlet. This is a typical example of media convergence in action (Quinn and Filak, 2005, p. 4)

The media sphere in Ethiopia is shifting from time to time and most media houses are practicing some form of media convergence by embracing the digital space as an additional platform for disseminating content. There was a time when newspaper was the only form of mass media in Ethiopia for reaching audiences. But today, the local media sphere is full of media outlets disseminating content both on traditional and new media. The introduction of different forms of mass media into Ethiopia is discussed briefly as follows.

Ethiopia ushered in its first newspaper, known as 'Aemiro' ('Intelligence'), at the beginning of the 20th century during the reign of Emperor Menilik II (Shimeles, 2000, as cited in Nutman, 2013). Though publications such as 'Le Semaine d'Ethiopie', 'Le Semeur d'Ethiopie' and 'Ye Beir Dimts' are believed to have preceded 'Aemiro', researchers like Meseret (2013, as cited in Ambelu, 2022) regard the latter as the first official newspaper due to issues of ownership of the other publications and the lack of evidence proving that they qualify as newspapers (cited in Menychle, 2017, p. 47). 'Aemiro' was a hand-written newspaper with an initial circulation of 24 copies. Later on, the number of copies increased to 200 thanks to the import of a copying machine.

The other government sponsored newspaper of the day was known as 'Berhanena Selam'. It was sponsored by Ras Tefferi, who later became Emperor Haile Sellassie I, and served as a platform

where the scholars of the time shared their views. Both ‘Aemiro’ and ‘Berhanena Selam’ newspapers were temporarily suspended following the Italian occupation which lasted from 1936 to 1941. Though these pioneer newspapers were taken out of the picture, Ethiopian patriots began publishing other newspapers covertly to share information during their struggle against the Italian invaders. (Birhanu, 2006)

In 1935, a year before Italy invaded Ethiopia; radio became a new addition to the fledgling media landscape of Ethiopia. However, according to Skjerdal (2012, as cited in Menychle, 2017), it was interrupted a year later when Italian forces invaded the country (Cited in Menychle, 2017). Historical accounts show that the media sphere in Ethiopia saw significant improvements after the end of the Italian occupation. In 1941, ‘Addis Zemen’ newspaper was launched followed by the first publication of ‘The Ethiopian Herald’ newspaper and the establishment of Ethiopian News Agency in 1943. The ‘Addis Ababa Voice of Ethiopia’ radio also went on air that same year (Shimelis, 2000; Skjerdal, 2012 cited in Menychle, 2017)

The year 1963 also saw a quantum leap in the local media sphere with the launch of the first closed circuit television transmission in Ethiopia (Menychle, 2017, p. 48). This milestone coincided with the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Ethiopia’s capital Addis Ababa. Ethiopia’s media landscape saw a rather fleeting period of media freedom from 1974 to 1975 when the Dergue regime, which ended Ethiopia’s imperial rule, allowed citizens to freely express their opinions through media. However, this period of freedom was short-lived and was followed by period of repression which received fierce condemnation from the ‘intelligentsia’. The Dergue also deported foreign correspondents and set up a censorship department under the Ministry of Information to scrutinize media contents as well as books, films, plays and music to ensure that they didn’t go against the ideology the government pursued (Meseret as cited in Menychle, 2017).

The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), which came to power in 1991 after the downfall of the Dergue, is credited for abolishing censorship and introducing press freedom into the country. This period saw the proliferation of mass media especially newspapers and magazines (Birhanu, 2006). However, journalists working for private media have faced

persecution, exile and arrests under the EPRDF government at different times, notably after elections which were marred by allegations of vote rigging (Menychle, 2017, p. 53).

Following the advent of the World Wide Web (WWW), internet service was introduced into Ethiopia in the 1990s (Gagliardone and Mutebi, 2016, p. 9) The launch of internet globally has laid the groundwork for innovations in the digital space and brought forth new platforms for media organizations to connect with their audiences online. With modern-day digital platforms including websites, social media and video sharing sites, media organizations are practicing media convergence by disseminating their stories across old and media channels alike.

In the current media landscape in Ethiopia, it is hard to find a media organization that has not embraced media convergence in one form or another. According to the Ethiopian Broadcast Authority, more than 19 licensed public television channels, 27 private television stations, over 25 religion-based television channels, 6 commercial radio stations as well as 80 private magazines and newspapers are currently operating in the country (Ayele, 2022, p. 83). Almost all media corporations, television and radio stations, magazines and newspapers have digital presence and disseminate information on one or more digital platforms such as websites, social media or video sharing sites such as YouTube. By sharing contents on different platforms, the media houses are essentially implementing the concept of media convergence in its journalistic sense.

Media convergence is a broad concept which extends beyond the domain of journalism, and which has a myriad of definitions. It is a term which describes the coming together of separate media, organizations and cultures through the use of technology (Sparviero, Peil and Balbi, 2017, p. 4) The concept is applicable to almost all aspects of the communication and digital creative industries including publishing, film, broadcasting, advertising, music and games (Nwammuo and Nwafor, 2019, p. 55). In this regard, media convergence is defined as *“the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behavior of media audiences”* (Jenkins, 2006, as cited in Lugmayr and Zotto, 2016).

In the realm of journalism, media convergence is a practice that takes place in the newsroom where content is produced and disseminated across media platforms to the target audiences of the

media house. It indicates “*integrated news production, multiplatform delivery of news and information, multimedia storytelling and participatory models of journalism*” (Domingo et al., 2007, as cited in Lugmayr and Zotto, 2016, p. 5). Although the global media sphere saw major shifts in the twenty-first century, the idea of media convergence emerged in the 1980s (Duan, 2020). With the increased penetration of the internet and the steady sophistication of digital technologies, media organizations began embracing convergence.

Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), which is the subject of this study, has been implementing media convergence for many years. Established in 1994, FBC has grown over the decades and now circulates contents through its television, radio, and online platforms. It disseminates contents in different local languages and in English using its broadcast media, website and social media. Currently, FBC runs 12 FM radio stations across Ethiopia besides its television station (Fana Broadcasting Corporate, 2023)

1.2. Statement of the problem

Media convergence is now common in the newsrooms of international media outlets as well as local ones. Media organizations are reforming their newsrooms and making the most out of the opportunities brought about by the global digital revolution to remain competitive in today’s media sphere. According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), media houses are aiming to reach younger audiences and online groups so as to offset the loss of audiences caused by the decreasing popularity of traditional news platforms such as print and broadcast media.

The role of technology in fueling and enabling media convergence is immense. The internet has enabled media organizations to disseminate all forms of content to their audiences in an integrated manner. Thanks to the cyberspace, media houses can now digitize the contents they send out through their traditional media and share them to audiences online. Bainbridge, Goc and Tynan (2015) state:

The internet gives journalists a reach never imagined in the age of traditional print-based and nation-based media. Quite simply, the World Wide Web has transformed journalism... What is evolving is a new form of journalism—

participatory journalism—that facilitates a dynamic dialogue, a multi-level exchange of information and ideas between the journalist and the audience. (p. 261)

In the realm of journalism, media convergence is reflected in different forms, and particularly in newsroom reform. For media convergence to flourish, the newsroom of media organizations needs to be redesigned to accommodate integration of news production and delivery. According to Garcí'a et al. (as cited in Diehl and Karmasn, 2013), editorial convergence can be implemented in three models, based on case studies conducted in Germany, Austria and Spain.

The first form is full integration. This is a form of convergence where news gathering, processing and dissemination is managed centrally from a combined newsroom. Here, teams are classified based on the topics of the news the media outlet covers and the majority of journalists are trained to operate on multiple platforms. In Cross-media, which is the second model of convergence, newsroom teams can work from physically separate offices and most of the journalists operate on a single channel only. Nonetheless, the workflows of the newsroom are centrally managed by supervisors and coordinators. The third type of newsroom convergence can take the form of 'Coordination of independent platforms' (Diehl and Karmasn, 2013, p. 290). In this model, individual journalists take the initiative to handle multimedia projects without any direction from the management of the newsroom or the media organization. Every media platform in the media organization retains its independent identity, and the production and dissemination of content is not impacted as a result of the cooperation of the various media platforms in the organization.

An assessment of the global trend reveals that media convergence cases on the world stage are subjects of different studies, unlike the case in Ethiopia. To mention some, Menon (2006) looked into regulatory challenges to media convergence in South Africa while Fosu and Akpojivi (2015) explored convergence practices and production in Ghana and Nigeria. The cases of Media Convergence of three broadcast stations in Nigeria has been studied by Emwinromwankhoe (2020). In recent times, Williams and Tkach (2021) assessed the case of media convergence in the Democratic Republic of Congo focusing on digital and legacy media outlets in the country.

Beyond Africa, Duan (2020) has documented the media convergence cases of internationally known media outlets such as BBC CNN, CGTN and others. Bettiga, Boaretto and Chen (2013) explored media convergence in Italy while Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) studied convergence in British national media organizations. García-Avilés, José A., Andy Kaltenbrunner, and Klaus Meier (2009) looked into newsroom integration in Austria, Spain and Germany, and Lehtisaari et al (2012) examined media convergence cases of daily newspapers in Finland. Yoedtadi, Ronda and Wahid (2021) assessed television and social media convergence among Indonesian television stations taking the case of the local Indosair television.

Though media convergence has been a common practice among media organizations in Ethiopia, unfortunately, researchers seem to have paid little attention to the topic. The researcher of the current study found only a couple of studies focusing on the practice of media convergence at individual media organizations in Ethiopia. In a study conducted in 2013, Zerihun Hailu examined the practice of media convergence at Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency (ERTA). The study seems to be a pioneer when it comes to assessing the local experience of media convergence in newsrooms. The other locally conducted related research is a thesis by Emebet Demeke (2018) which shed light on the media convergence practice of The Reporter newspaper. These studies have uncovered useful insights about the practice of media convergence within the surveyed media outlets, as well as about the strengths, challenges and limitations regarding the implementation of newsroom convergence.

The researcher of the current study firmly believes that there should be more studies conducted on the practice of media convergence in Ethiopia by highlighting the cases of individual media houses so as to come up with useful empirical insight for local media organizations, media professionals, academicians and people interested in the subject. In this regard, the researcher believes that this study will bridge the research gap in the local media landscape by shedding light on the practice of media convergence at FBC as well as the strong and weak sides of its implementation.

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the study is to assess the practice of media convergence in the newsroom of Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC).

1.3.2 Specific objectives

Specifically, the research aims to:

1. Identify what form of media convergence is being implemented in FBC's newsroom
2. Find out if FBC has made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring to facilitate converged media
3. Pinpoint the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC
4. Identify the challenges FBC is grappling with in implementing converged media

1.4. Research questions

Through this study, the researcher will seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What form of media convergence is being implemented in FBC's newsroom?
2. To what extent has FBC made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring to facilitate converged media?
3. What are the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC?
4. What are the challenges FBC is grappling with in implementing converged media?

1.5. Significance of the study

As discussed in the previous parts of this research proposal, local studies focusing on media convergence in Ethiopia are in short supply. In light of that, this study will surely have significant contribution in broadening the rather scanty body of scientific knowledge in the area. The researcher also believes that the findings of the study will bring forth useful insights for

media organizations, journalists, researchers, media regulatory bodies, media associations and other individuals and groups interested in the subject matter.

1.6. Scope of the study

Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) is one of the leading media outlets in Ethiopia incorporating radio, television and digital media. The media organization actively produces and disseminates news across Ethiopia and beyond using its television station, digital platforms and the multiple radio stations operating in different regions of Ethiopia. Although FBC is a major local media outlet implementing media convergence, its practice of media integration has not been the subject of scientific studies to date. Hence, the researcher, who was a former employee of FBC, has made the media house the subject of his study.

Although Fana Broadcasting Corporate has teams tasked with different contents, this study will focus on the newsrooms of the media organization. The digital media department, which has a role in effecting media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate, will also be the focus of the study.

The researcher will use qualitative research design and gather qualitative data using in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and archive file analysis. The in-depth interviews and focus group discussions will involve only the management and staff members of Fana Broadcasting Corporate. For the sake of manageability, the time scope of the archive files to be analyzed will cover the year 2022 (2014/15 E.C) only.

1.7. Limitations of the study

Lack of case studies focusing on the practice of media convergence in Ethiopia is one of the challenges which affect the richness of the information imbedded in this study. This study is based on data to gathered from staff and management members of FBC. The absence of audiences' perspective due to issues of manageability is another limitation of this study. Future studies may come up with insights obtained from audiences as well, thereby enriching the available scientific literature on the local practice of media convergence.

1.8. Organization of the study

This study is classified under five chapters. The first chapter offers a glimpse of the entire thesis by highlighting the background of the study as well as the statement of the problem, the research objective and the research questions. It also explains the significance, scope and limitations of the study. The second chapter offers a broad review of related literature including books and previous studies which focus on the concept of media convergence and its application in media organizations in Ethiopia and the rest of the world.

The chapter also provides an overview of Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), which is the subject of investigation of this study as far as media convergence is concerned. Chapter three discusses the research methodology employed in the study with proper justification for the research procedure selected. It also explains the data collection instruments and data analysis procedures used in the study. The fourth chapter presents the results and interpretation of the analyzed data while the fifth chapter provides the conclusions of the study along with corresponding recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Historical And Conceptual Overview Of Convergence

2.1.1 Genesis and evolution of convergence

One of the leading cotemporary media scholars Rich Gordon, contends that the term ‘convergence’ was used in academic circle at least since the 17th century. The term is said to have been used in relation to wind currents, non-parallel lines and evolutionary biology, among others (Gordon, 2003, as cited in Lawson-Borders, 2006, p.4). The term ‘convergence’ and its usage also evolved in the 1960s and 1970s during a collaborative work between the Department of Defense of the US Government and universities in the US to come up with a networked system which we know today as the cyberspace (Internet).

The subsequent decades also saw widespread use of convergence and technological integration thanks to the growing academic discourse on the subject including the publication of notable works such as de Sola Pool’s (1983) ‘Technologies of Freedom’ and Negroponte’s (1995) ‘Being Digital’ (Duan 2020).

As far as the media sphere is concerned, de Sola Pool’s ‘Technologies of Freedom’ is considered as a trailblazer work and an eye opener which suggested new possibilities for the diversification of media channels through the use of an established physical infrastructure (Duan 2020). The continued growth of digital technologies and their affordances have brought the proposition of scholars such as de Sola Pool to reality, as is manifested in the continued integration of media and multi-platform dissemination of contents by media organizations.

According to Duan (2020), de Sola Pool described media convergence as an integration of various elements of media, while subsequent authors offered their propositions of media convergence resulting in the diverse viewpoints regarding the subject. Though the discourse and practice of media convergence blossomed in the wake of the advent of the internet, the practice of integrating media existed even before the invention of the World Wide Web.

Duan points out that after the coming of the radio and television, media organizations began practicing what was then called ‘media cooperation’, an early form media convergence, by producing contents for dissemination on print as well as broadcast media. The advent of new media platforms is initially received with concerns that the new platform could put an end to the previous one(s). According to Lawson-Borders (2006), there were fears that the invention of radio could put an end to newspaper just as the advent of television could kick out radio from the media landscape. However, these fears were proved wrong because each media form has maintained its existence and retained its identity to date.

The advent of digital technology and the internet has created new opportunities for these traditional media outlets to operate in integration resulting in new operational modalities and arrangements, and transforming the way content is created and disseminated across channels to reach fragmented audiences.

2.1.2. Convergence of news media

As discussed previously, the concept of media convergence emerged in the academic sphere in the 1980s following the publication of ‘Technologies of Freedom’ by Ithiel de Sola Pool (Lawson-Borders, 2006). Over the decades, the concept has evolved with more research and theorizing leading to the diversified meanings the term took on. In its present sense, media convergence cuts across diverse industries including communication, entertainment and publishing (Duan, 2020).

There is no single definition of media convergence unanimously accepted by authors and theorists. Academicians tend to define the term broadly by highlighting the different realms of communication where convergence takes place while professional definitions of the concept tend to be narrower in the sense that they focus on the logistics and workflows in the newsrooms of media organizations (Palacios and Noci, 2009).

According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), in its broad sense, media convergence refers to the integration of different media technologies, essentially through the use of digitization. It refers to

the ever-evolving combination of media systems that has been gaining pace in recent decades owing to the advancements in digital technologies (Bainbridge, Goc and Tynan, 2015).

In the context of journalism, the term can simply be defined as the dissemination of content across different media platforms. As described by Lawson-Borders (2006), convergence is an integration of print and electronic media with a view to disseminate multimedia contents through digital technologies and the cyberspace (Cited in Palacios and Noci, 2009). Likewise, Salaverría, García Avilés and Masip (2007) defined media convergence as:

a multidimensional process that, facilitated by the generalized implantation of digital telecommunications technology, affects the technological, business, professional and publishing area of the mass media. It favors an integration of tools, spaces, working methods and languages that were formerly dispersed, in such a way that journalists produce contents that are distributed through numerous platform (Cited in Palacios and Noci, 2009, p. 113).

According to Jenkins (as cited in Nwammuo and Nwafor, 2019), media convergence is the *'flow of content across multiple media platforms.'* Rather than replacing old media with new media, it refers to the blending of the old and the new to reach audiences who have different tastes and preferences when it comes to the form of contents they consume and the channels through which the contents are delivered.

Infotendencias Group (cited in Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016) also offers a definition which highlights the complex and multidimensional nature of the convergence process with implications on the technological, business, professional and editorial dimensions of media organizations. The definition also indicated that the convergence process brings about the optimization of tools, workspaces and processes to put in place an ideal environment for the dissemination of contents across multiple media leveraging the cyberspace.

According to Seib (2001), convergence brings together the 'slick format of television to the almost infinite information-providing capacity of the Internet', while A. Nachison highlighted

that convergence is an all-encompassing integration of the diverse forms of the traditional media with the digital media of the day (both cited in Lawson-Borders, 2006, p. 3)

All in all, for newsrooms, media convergence is all about the production of content for dissemination through multiple platforms by leveraging the affordances of the internet and digital technologies. Apparently, the application of media convergence has implications on newsroom technological capabilities and workings as well as on journalists, audiences and how the media contents are consumed (Palacios and Noci, 2009).

2.2. Conceptual overview of convergence

As discussed in the sections above, the concept of convergence has been around since the 17th century with varying meanings across the industries in which it is used. Convergence describes the integration of separate things into one, and uniting at a common point. In the broader context of media, convergence can take place at technological, industrial, and spatial levels, among others.

However, the technological level of convergence, which is accelerating with the digital revolution in the world, seems to dominate the discourse (Meikle and Young, 2011, as cited in Sparviero, Peil and Balbi, 2017). Here, it is worth noting the key enabling role the Internet is playing to facilitate the integration of different media and the flow of contents across different channels.

According to Lawson-Borders (2006), convergence takes place when print and broadcast media are used in integration with digital media, resulting in the channeling of multimedia contents across multiple platforms through the use of the Internet.

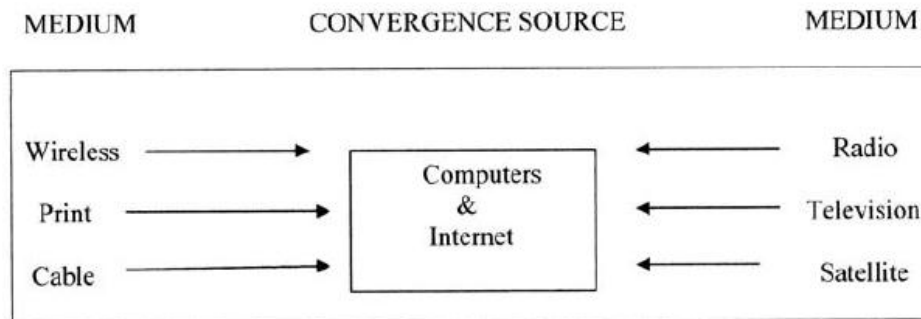


Figure 1 Convergence definition model (Lawson-Borders, 2006, p.5)

Convergence ‘blurs the lines’ not only among the diverse media platforms that exist, but also among the professional skills of journalists which result from the new converged reality that requires media professionals to be multi-skilled to operate effectively in the context of multi-platform media systems (Nwammuo and Nwafor, 2019).

For O’Sullivan et al. 2017 (cited in Fickers et al, 2021), digitization is not synonym to media convergence, nor is it an essential part of media convergence. While digital technology is the major driving force behind media convergence in today’s world, integrated (multi-platform) use of media also existed in the pre-digital era where there was no internet. That said, in today’s digital world, the affordances of digital technology are critical for implementing media convergence. technological convergence lies at the heart of media convergence and paves the way for the realization of other aspects of convergence in the media sphere (Sparviero, Peil and Balbi, 2017).

Some authors tend to argue that convergence blurs the boundary among platforms and recreating them as a unified digital channel (Nwammuo and Nwafor, 2019). However, convergence is about channeling multimedia contents across multiple platforms without erasing the distinctive identities of the different platforms. Duan (2020) explains that the emergence of new media doesn’t necessarily replace the old ones. Duan illustrates his point saying that the advent of radio did not put an end to newspapers just as the invention of television did not wipe out radio from the media landscape (Duan, 2020).

These media have managed to co-exist and integrate to create a media system offering audiences new ways of consuming contents. Likewise, the advent of the internet has made possible the delivery of contents across multiple platforms through the use of digital technology, without replacing (destroying) the old media. Duan (2020) notes that convergence helps nurture the diverse media platforms as a whole by creating an environment where each media makes up for the shortcomings of the others as well as learning from their strengths.

2.3. Forms of media convergence

As far as media houses and their workings are concerned, media convergence can take different forms. Professor Rich Gordon of Northwestern University identifies five types of convergence at the level of media organizations (cited in Quinn and Filak, 2005 and Lugmayr and Zotto, 2016). Each type of convergence is explained briefly as follows.

2.3.1 Ownership convergence: this refers to the collaboration of different platforms of the same media organization in the production and dissemination of contents. Such integration is aimed at promoting content sharing across all the channels the organization owns thereby slashing costs and boosting efficiency of the organization.

2.3.2 Tactical convergence: this type of convergence takes place among separately owned media outlets in the form of a partnership for sharing contents. In such arrangements, each media house retains its managerial autonomy and revenue while collaborating in cross promotion and content sharing.

2.3.3 Structural convergence: This type of convergence leads to newsroom reforms in gathering, producing and disseminating contents to audiences. It also has implications on the management and workings of the newsroom where different teams repackage contents in such a way to suit the different platforms of the media house.

2.3.4 Information-gathering convergence: This form of convergence is related to news reporting, requiring the journalist to have multiple skills to craft the story for different platforms of the media organization. This controversial form of convergence is said to put too much demand on the journalist in terms of upskilling in digital technology.

Terms such as ‘backpack journalism’ are used to describe the phenomenon where a single journalist produces multimedia contents that are suitable to multiple platforms. Journalists may be assigned to small events to gather information and craft contents which can be disseminated across channels. However, the quality of news report can be compromised if a multimedia reporter is assigned to cover major events where quality news coverage is expected.

2.3.5. Storytelling or presentation convergence: Again, this form of convergence focuses on the journalist. It also requires the media organization to provide all the logistics and equipment needed to present contents across multiple platforms.

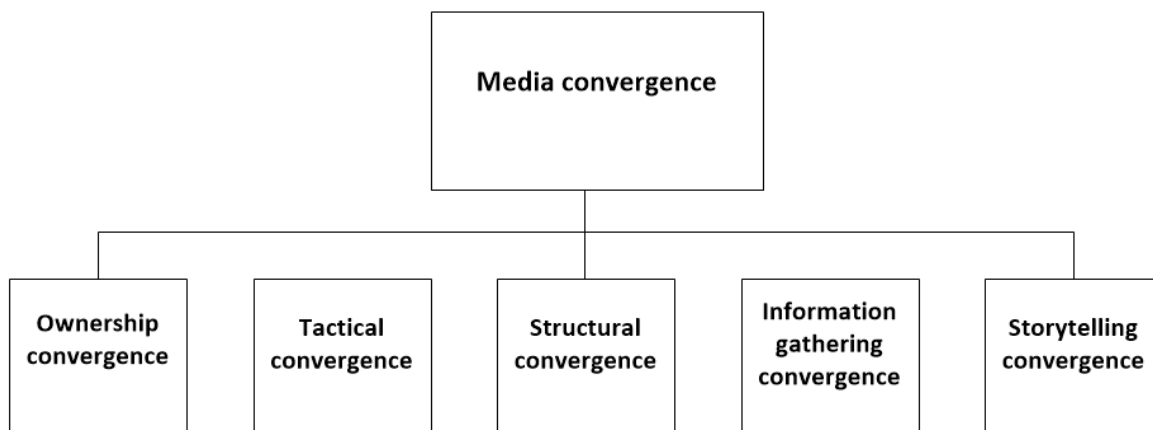


Figure 2 Forms of media convergence

Recent authors categorize the types of media convergence at a broader level which extends beyond the realm of journalism. For Bainbridge et al. (2015), convergence also takes the form of cultural, industrial and technological integrations. These authors argue that different cultures are converging currently thanks to technology and media integration, and highlight that the world is coming together as a global village with the advancements in media technology.

These authors also suggest that media convergence is being manifested as an industrial integration where few media companies take possession of multiple media organizations and consolidate their grip in the industry (Bainbridge et al., 2015, p. 448). As far as technological

convergence is concerned, the authors highlight technological developments that have created new possibilities of entertainment, content production and delivery by combining the internet with the communication and the gaming industries, among others.

An alternative model of convergence which encompasses technological convergence, company convergence, and professional convergence is also put forth by (Palacios and Noci, 2009). The technological convergence is somewhat similar to the one discussed above, while company convergence takes the forms of corporate takeovers as well as the formation of alliances and unions.

The professional convergence discussed by Palacios and Noci is similar to the ‘Information gathering convergence’ and ‘Storytelling (presentation) convergence’ put forth by Professor Rich Gordon as discussed above. Such convergence is implemented at the level of the journalist who gathers information and produces multimedia contents that are suited to multiple platforms. This form of convergence also aims at optimizing strategies, news materials and resources. It also extends beyond setting up integrated newsrooms to collaborating with the newsrooms of other media organizations (Palacios and Noci, 2009).

2.4. Convergence continuum

Media convergence at the organizational level falls on a certain point in a continuum comprising different levels of integration. The existence of diverse definitions of media convergence is indicative of the varying application of integration among and within media organizations.

The convergence continuum, developed by Lori Demo, Larry Dailey, and Mary Spillman (2003, as cited Quinn and Filak, 2005) indicates the levels of media outlets’ convergence encompassing the various levels of integration, namely, cross promotion, cloning, cooperation, content sharing, and convergence. Each levels of the continuum, which is depicted below, is explained briefly in the subsequent sections.

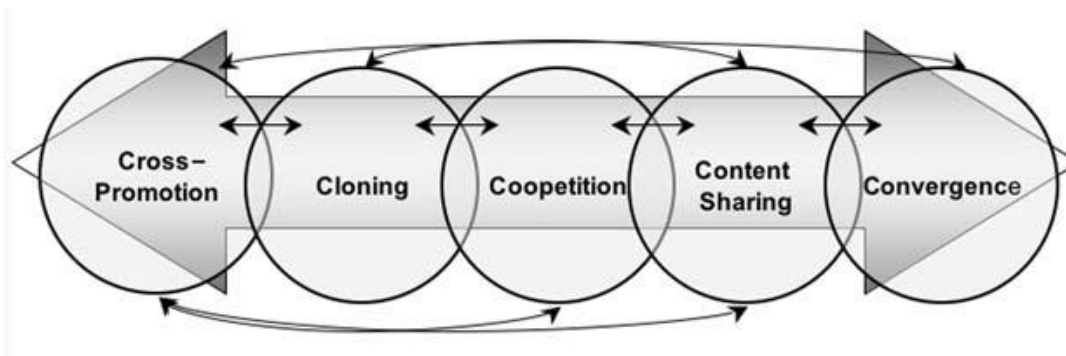


Figure 3 The convergence continuum (Lori Demo, Larry Dailey, and Mary Spillman, 2003)

2.4.1. Cross-promotion is a level of convergence where a media outlet collaborates with a partner to have its content shared on the partner’s platform. It is a level of convergence where collaboration among the staff of the media outlets is minimal, and where the teams do not collaborate on content production. In such an arrangement, one media outlet promotes the content of the other as in the case of a television station inviting audiences to read stories published in a partner newspaper.

2.4.2. Cloning is a situation where a content of a media outlet is channeled on a partner’s platform as it is, without any editing. This may take the form of republishing the content of a media outlet on the website of a partner organization. At this level, the media outlets do not cooperate in gathering inputs for their stories, but rather share the story only after it is produced.

2.4.3. Competition takes place when the media partners cooperate by sharing information on certain stories while still competing to come up with unique content. It is a level which lies at the center of the continuum where collaboration and competition among the media outlets is manifested. At this level, the teams of the media outlets share information on the stories they are producing although the cooperation is limited.

2.4.4. Content sharing - in such an arrangement, the partners share ideas on a regular basis and run joint initiatives together in relation to major events which need extensive coverage, such as elections. At this level, media organization share information among each other

and publish the stories of the partner media after recrafting it for their respective audiences.

Under the ‘content sharing’ arrangement, media organizations may also share costs dispensed for producing news stories and attend meetings of the other team for planning stories. That said, the media organizations operate as separate entities and produce their own contents.

2.4.5. Convergence is the level at which different teams come together and share assignments. They collaborate in newsgathering, content production and dissemination by leveraging the strengths of the different platforms of the media organization. At this level, the staff of the media outlets collaborate in planning and crafting contents. The joint teams also decide on the platforms best suited to cover the stories they work on. The teams work on ad hoc basis to handle projects collaboratively.

2.5. Newsroom convergence

While convergence takes place at different levels as explained in the preceding sections, newsrooms remain the main playfields where media convergence is played out in its journalistic sense. According to Thurman and Lupton (as cited in Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016,), “convergence is usually an internal process of integration between online and print or broadcast newsrooms within the same organization” (p. 5).

At the newsroom level, convergence leads to the creation of a multimedia environment and putting in place systems and resources for producing and disseminating news across platforms. It also entails reforming the newsroom setup as well as the roles of journalists along with reskilling and upskilling initiatives (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

Integrating news platforms is a continuous process that media organizations embark on and fine-tune through time. According to Lawson-Borders (2006), media convergence is not an end in itself and hence has to be adjusted and tailored to the context of the media organization concerned. He adds that the convergence initiative should be carried out considering the content and the platforms through which it is disseminated. The integration process brings about changes

which affect both journalists and the management of media organizations (Lawson-Borders, 2006).

Media convergence within a media outlet can take different forms. According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), there are three forms of editorial convergence which can take place within a media organization. Each of these forms of editorial convergence is discussed as follows.

2.5.1 Full integration: this is a form of convergence a media organization pursues as a strategy so as to advance its economic ambitions and the professional growth of its staff. As a result of the full integration, multimedia contents are produced in a single newsroom for dissemination across platforms. The newsroom is equipped with all the technological amenities required for producing and channeling contents through all the media outlets at the organization's disposal. In such an arrangement, workflows for each of the organization's news platforms are defined, and the whole team is managed centrally. Due to the full integration, most of the organization's journalists are trained to produce contents for two or more platforms.

2.5.2. Cross-media: under this arrangement, most of the staff of the media organization work only on one of the platforms the organization owns. Different teams of the organization can work from separate offices, but the workflows are managed centrally by supervisors and coordinators. Some of the journalists of the organization are expected to have skills to produce contents for multiple media.

2.5.3. Coordinating independent platforms: this entails cooperating the production and dissemination of news among the platforms of a media organization. Here, convergence is not a strategic goal for the leadership of the media organization as there is a desire to maintain the autonomy of each platform and the competencies and skills required for each channel. Hence, journalists engage in the production of multimedia contents out of personal initiative and interest. Under this arrangement, promoting the contents of one platform on the other (cross promotion) is common.

2.6. Factors contributing to media convergence

Media convergence is the result of an interplay among different factors. Digitalization, deregulation of media and communication markets, and shifts in user preferences are the major driving forces behind media convergence (Lugmayr and Zotto, 2016). Advancements in digital technology have created new means of creating, storing and delivering media contents thereby facilitating the production and dissemination of contents. Digitization of contents and channels, ever-expanding internet access, and the increased use computers and cell phones have helped accelerate media convergence (Sparviero, Peil and Balbi, 2017).

Advancements in digital technology have created new possibilities for content production and delivery. Media outlets can now condense multimedia contents and make them available through diverse channels using the affordances of digital technology. The digital revolution of the day has also enabled media outlets to deliver their contents to large numbers of audiences by leveraging the cyberspace (Lawson-Borders, 2006).

Thanks to the internet, media outlets can bring together previously separate platforms to deliver multimedia contents in text, image, audio and video forms tailoring their messages to the preferences of their audiences, with the added feature of interactivity that facilitates two-way communication between the media and the audiences they serve. According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), the internet has been a game changer in media convergence as it serves both as a dissemination channel and a content platform for storing contents. Moreover, it offers media outlets diverse options to present contents flexibly by bringing together elements of mainstream media.

Deregulation of media and communication markets in different parts of the world has also played a role in spurring the prevalence of media convergence by creating competition and boosting the production of media services (Lugmayr and Zotto, 2016). With the growth of digitization and widespread use of digital devices such as cellphones, audiences developed new tastes for new forms of content channeled through the platforms of their choice.

This has led media organizations to embrace media convergence and disseminate contents across diverse platforms. Today, people can access news on their preferred channel using their devices. According to Quinn and Filak (2005), the fragmentation of audiences has led media organizations to personalize the way they deliver contents based on the choices of their audiences by making the contents available across platforms and in a manner that is palatable to their audiences. They take advantage of digital technology and its features to reach audiences by disseminating multimedia contents through various channels.

2.7. Seven observations of convergence

The ‘Seven observations of convergence’ (Seven C’s), put forth by Lawson-Borders (2006), have an impact on the effective implementation of convergence at media organizations. The seven observations are described briefly as follows.

Communication highlights the need to engage all stakeholders, including journalists and audiences, in the discussion about media convergence. Participating all stakeholders in the conversation is key to develop common understanding and cooperation for the smooth planning, implementation and nurturing of media convergence in media companies. In a nutshell, communication is a vehicle for creating seamless integration in newsrooms.

Commitment is about the dedication of the media organization to make convergence a strategic goal and a guiding principle. The commitment of higher management is particularly important for the success of all integration efforts at the media house. In addition to the management, the staff and other stakeholders should also be committed enough to turn the media house into a converged outlet. Commitment is manifested in different ways including by allocating the required budget and resources for upskilling and research.

Cooperation is also key for establishing a well-converged media. Cooperation among management, journalists and support staff is required for the smooth implementation of effective integration in media outlets. Cooperation in terms of creating innovative ideas and exchanging roles among media practitioners is critical for realizing a converged media.

Compensation is the reward offered for media practitioners as per their contribution. Multi-skilled journalists should get compensation commensurate with their contribution for the success of the media organization. Hence, the management of media organizations should be cognizant of the efforts and qualifications of journalists and provide them the compensation they deserve.

Cultural changes – converged media undergo cultural changes inevitably. Journalists from different backgrounds (such as print, broadcast, and digital media) have developed different cultures and use different languages peculiar to their respective specializations. Media convergence blurs these differences and creates a unified team thereby ushering in new workplace culture. For the success and smooth operation of the organization, all staff should embrace the cultural changes brought about by convergence.

Competition is an imperative in the media sphere. Competition comes from local media outlets but also international ones which can reach audiences in all corners of the world through the internet. Media houses should embrace the competition and work hard to win both locally and internationally through alliances with media organizations based in their target markets.

Customer - audiences have more control in today's media landscape where they have better voice thanks to the affordances of interactivity facilitated by digital technologies. Audiences also influence the way media houses create and disseminate contents as their choices have significant implications on how the media companies operate. Hence, media organizations should be responsive to the preferences of their audience segments to enjoy more readership or viewership Lawson-Borders (2006).

2.8. Benefits and Challenges of media convergence

2.8.1. Benefits of media convergence

Some authors argue that media convergence has brought a number of benefits for media organizations, journalists and their audiences. From the perspective of media outlets, media convergence enabled by digital technology offers a chance for media organizations to embrace the technology of the day and reach diverse audiences online (Lawson-Borders, 2006). Media

convergence also paves the way for the financial success of media companies by reducing costs through optimization of their workforce and resources.

According to Zotto and Lugmayr (2016), through integration, media outlets can spur their journalists to be more productive and produce contents for multiple platforms, without the need to hire additional journalists. This saves labor cost for the media outlets while at the same time increasing the contents they craft and disseminate to cater to different audience segments. Convergence slashes costs by allowing the different teams to share the organizations facilities and resources, as well as avoiding duplication of roles.

According to Quinn and Filak (2005), convergence also allows cross promotions of contents across the channels owned by a media organization. By leveraging convergence, media organizations stand better chance of tapping into optimum revenue models by maximizing advertising opportunities in addition to enjoying better targeting and increased audience by employing better branding strategies (Vujnovic et al., 2010 as cited in Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

Cooperation among different teams also helps improve the quality of contents the media house disseminates using diverse and rich inputs from across the news team rather than just few members of the staff (Lawson-Borders, 2006). The use of innovative digital technologies, which lies at the heart of converged media, also serves as a vehicle for ensuring immediacy of content by constantly updating stories the media house produces (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

Some authors also argue that convergence enables journalist to do their job better by leveraging the different channels at their disposal and using the most appropriate platform to disseminate their stories (Quinn and Filak, 2005). It also offers journalists added visibility, for instance, by featuring a newspaper journalist to appear on a television channel owned by the same media organization to provide news analysis.

The requirement for being multi-skilled is also deemed to offer journalists the opportunity to acquire new skills and be more competitive and desirable in the labor market. Moreover, it

allows journalist specializing in print, broadcast or new media to understand and appreciate the skills of journalists with other specializations (Quinn and Filak, 2005).

According to Lawson-Borders (2006), convergence and digital technologies also enables media organizations to make their contents interactive thereby engaging their audiences better. This will allow two-way communication between the media outlets and their audiences, and create an opportunity for audiences to take part in content creation and setting the agendas of the media organization. The other benefit of media convergence includes flexibility in news delivery, time and format thereby allowing the news outlet to effectively cater to diverse audiences (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

2.8.2. Challenges of media convergence

Although media convergence has a number of benefits, there are also some challenges that come with it. The major challenge this phenomenon poses is the volatility of media related jobs which result from the integration of media outlets. Convergence and the ensuing restructuring and reform can render some employees jobless. The scale of the challenge becomes clear when viewed at the level of the media industry that hires thousands of journalists (Straubhaar, Larose and Davenport, 2012).

According to Zotto and Lugmayr (2016), the introduction of advanced digital technology into the newsroom and the revised roles of journalists to come up with multimedia contents for multiple channels, puts journalists in a situation where they struggle to cope with the new working arrangements and technologies. The situation makes a huge number of journalists deskilled as far as the new competencies required for operating in a converged media are concerned.

As for the multi-skilled journalists working in converged newsrooms, the challenge becomes work overload emanating from the contents journalists are expected to craft in multiple formats for disseminating to all the channels the media organization runs (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016). The 24/7 news cycle which is common in most media outlets also exacerbates the work overload on media professionals.

Some authors also argue that convergence affects journalistic values and practices in the process of information gathering and content production. According to Haiman (2001, as cited in Lawson-Borders, 2006), “the converged media world is one from which good journalism, and good journalists, are going to be in great need of defense”.

Similarly, Quinn and Filak (2005) mention challenges likely to be caused in the converged newsroom due to the backgrounds of different journalists. An example of this would be print journalists looking down on journalists from broadcast or online media streams as low skilled. Such challenges could hamper the smooth functioning of converged media unless they are treated properly.

The other challenges resulting from media convergence include the pressures of deadlines journalists face in their daily work and the potential reluctance on the part of journalists to embrace participatory arrangements which could compromise their occupational control by allowing audiences to take part in agenda setting and content production (O’rnebring, 2013 as cited in (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

2.9. Theoretical framework of the study

2.9.1. Theory of Convergence

Theory is an essential part in scientific studies and a critical part in the literature review of a research report. According to Robert K. Merton (as cited in Swedberg, 2014), theory refers to “*logically interconnected sets of propositions from which empirical uniformities can be derived.*” He added that the uniformities are ascertained through practically tested assumptions. Theories enable us to draw generalizations about the world and allow us to describe different phenomena and events which take place around us (MacRaild and Taylor, 2004).

This study is anchored in the Theory of Convergence, which the researcher believes is appropriate to base this study upon. Convergence is a broad term applied in diverse fields and denoting various meanings across the realms in which it is applied. The concept is employed in a

myriad of disciplines including mathematics, economics and biology, among others (Gordon, 2003 as cited in Palacios and Noci, 2009).

The complexity of the term convergence and the breadth of its application in different domains is captured in a definition put forth by Roco et al (2013). The authors define convergence as:

the creative union of sciences, technologies, and peoples, focused on mutual benefit; this is a process requiring increasing linkages across traditionally separate disciplines, areas of relevance, and across multiple levels of abstraction and organization (Roco et al, 2013, P. 544)

They add that convergence culture encompasses values, systems and methods which allow different teams to come together and collaborate better in carrying out projects which involve elements from different disciplines and realms.

According to Stohl (as cited in Miller, 2012), in organizational settings, convergence is concerned with how an organization recalibrates its practices vis-à-vis a global system which is characterized by dynamism, responsiveness, swiftness as well as the creation and diffusion knowledge. The end goal of such convergence approach is to boost the performance of the organization on the world stage (Miller, 2012).

For Diehl and Karmasn (2013), convergence is a construct used for describing the coming together of different dimensions which are interlinked among each other. Regarding the application of the concept in the media sphere, the authors say:

[T]he important dimensions are technological developments, the production of media content for multiple media platforms, organizational and managerial aspects, consumption of media content, and regulatory policy.

In the media sphere, convergence refers to the coming together of separate functions, markets and areas of application, affecting the way audiences consume contents (Diehl and Karmasn,

2013, p. 1). The meaning of the term also encompasses the formation of alliances and mergers of media companies (Palacios and Noci, 2009).

Convergence also affects the formation of the overall media industry and how individual media outlets operate in the media sphere, as the phenomenon paves the way for organizations in the wider media industry to take up new roles ranging from content creation to providing the infrastructure and networks for disseminating contents (Bainbridge, Goc and Tynan, 2015).

Applied to the level of the newsroom, convergence is about the joint efforts of editorial staff to come up with contents that can be channeled across multiple platforms to reach diverse audiences (Quinn and Filak, 2005). Such convergence leads to the optimization of news material and centralized production of multimedia content for dissemination across platforms (Palacios and Noci, 2009).

Technological convergence is key in facilitating integration in the media sphere. According to Palacios and Noci (2009), technological convergence is “*the capacity of infrastructures to acquire, process, transport and simultaneously present voice, data and video on a single network and an integrated terminal*” (p. 112). Through technological convergence, media organizations are able to produce and disseminate contents which are tailored to fit the affordances of each of the platforms they use.

2.10. Review of empirical studies

The researcher of this study has reviewed previous studies conducted locally and internationally on the topic of media convergence. An assessment of published studies which are available online revealed that a number of researchers have conducted studies on the subject.

For instance, Menon (2006) examined the regulatory challenges in relation to media convergence in South Africa. The findings of the study showed that South Africa has put in place a broad policy framework to manage the prevalence of technology in the country although the legislation is not adequately informed by the trend of convergence in the country.

Likewise, Emwinromwankhoe (2020) looked into media convergence in Nigerian broadcast media by examining the cases of three local broadcast stations. The research highlighted that media convergence has brought forth new possibilities for the broadcast stations to disseminate their content, and called for different interventions from stakeholders to make the gains of media convergence sustainable.

A study by Avilés et al (2009) examined newsroom integration in Austria, Spain and Germany. Their study indicated that audience participation is a central strategic question for media in the countries surveyed. The findings also showed the need to invest in boosting the interactive competence of journalists across platforms.

Television and social media convergence in Indonesia has been examined by Yoedtadi, Ronda and Wahid (2021), highlighting the case of the local Indosair Television. The study uncovered the growing trend of audience migration to the internet as their preferred platform to get entertainment and news content. The finding also shed light on the deficiencies of the television station in terms of lack of editorial integration in managing the broadcast and social media activities.

As mentioned in the first chapter of this proposal, the researcher found only two studies focusing on media convergence in Ethiopia. The first study, conducted by Zerihun (2013), examined media convergence in Ethiopia taking the case of Ethiopia Radio and Television Agency (ERTA). His research revealed that, at the time of the study, ERTA was implementing media convergence which led to cross platform integration in newsgathering and editorial decision making of the media organization. The study also pinpointed gaps in newsroom restructuring and assigning medium specific leadership.

The other locally conducted study on media convergence in Ethiopia is that of Emebet Demeke (2018) which examined opportunities and challenges of media integration in The Reporter newspaper. The findings of the research highlighted that media convergence at The Reporter newspaper was at its infancy during the time of the study although the media house introduced convergence seven years before the research was conducted. Among other things, the findings

also shed light on certain implementation gaps such as technological capacity limitations, lack of skilled professionals, absence of hyperlinked text, and failure to embrace Twitter and LinkedIn as alternative social media platforms for disseminating content.

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that media convergence is an under researched topic in Ethiopia although more and more media outlets in the country are embracing convergence. In light of this, the researcher believes that the current study will contribute to the rather scanty body of scientific knowledge focusing on the practice of media convergence in Ethiopia.

The current study will add to the few existing studies which examined cases of media convergence practice among media outlets in Ethiopia. Through the application of qualitative research design and data collection tools, the current study attempts to shed light on the form of media convergence which is being implemented at FBC as well as the challenges, strengths and weaknesses observed in the media convergence practice of FBC. The study will also assess whether FBC has made the staffing and newsroom reforms to pave the way for smooth and productive implementation of media convergence. In so doing, the researcher believes, the study offers useful insights about the practice of converged media at FBC, which is one of the leading media organizations in Ethiopia.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the first and second chapters, the researcher has indicated what this study is all about and what objectives it seeks to achieve. The researcher also discussed the theory and concepts which are relevant to the research in addition to summarizing previous studies conducted on the area of media convergence both locally and abroad.

In this chapter, the researcher would discuss the research design and methods which would be applied in the current study. The chapter would elaborate the rationale for using the research design employed in the study and highlight its appropriateness to meet the objectives of the study. This chapter also includes discussions of the philosophical perspective on which the study is anchored, the sources of data, the population of the study as well as the participants and participant selection methods employed. Ethical considerations regarding data collection, data sources and analysis have also been discussed at the end of the chapter.

3.2 Research paradigm

The researcher's worldview (philosophy) is one of the key determinants which have a bearing on the research design used in a given study. Hence, it is appropriate to briefly discuss worldviews and their implication in the context of research.

According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), ontology, epistemology and methodology are three key elements to consider with regards to research paradigms. The first element, ontology, is concerned with fundamental questions like "What does existence mean?" The concepts of existence and reality are the focus areas in ontological considerations. Epistemology, which is the second element, deals with knowledge and its source.

Epistemology tackles questions like "What constitutes knowledge, and how can one acquire knowledge?" (Daymon and Holloway, 2011) The third element, the methodology of a given research, is shaped by the researcher's ontological and epistemological views and stances. In

other words, the researcher's philosophical positions and the nature of the subject of study determine whether the researcher should use qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods in his scientific enquiry.

Some of the salient worldviews which are relevant in the context of scientific research are discussed below.

(i) Positivism

Positivism (also referred to as post-positivism) considers reality as an objective fact which is out there for anyone to check for him/herself. According to this worldview, reality is objectively discoverable through the use of scientific examination, and exists independently in spite of the opinions of people (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Positivists hold that the researcher's role in scientific studies is to reveal universal laws, and shine light on the objective reality that exists out there. Creswell (2014) notes that the positivist worldview considers quantitative research design as the most fitting method for conducting studies.

(ii) Interpretivism

Unlike the positivist worldview, anti-positivism (also known as Interpretivism) states that meaning (reality) is of many types and is constructed socially. Anti-positivists hold that meanings are subjective and have no independent existence separate from humans (Creswell, 2014). That is what causes the diverse existence of meanings (reality), according to interpretivists.

According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), just as meanings are constructed socially, they can also change through the conversations of people. For interpretivists, the qualitative research design is suitable in the context of the anti-positivists worldview as it enables the researcher to effectively deal with complex and varied realities through deep probing using open ended questions (Creswell, 2014).

(iii) Pragmatism

Pragmatism is a worldview which blends both the positivist and interpretivist paradigms. Instead of confining itself to either side of the philosophical divide, the pragmatist worldview is chiefly concerned with achieving the objectives of a research through the use of any available research approaches and instruments (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Pragmatism focuses on what the researcher can put to use in practical terms to achieve what he/she set out to find out through the study.

According to Creswell (2014), in the pragmatic worldview, mixed research methods are used to make the most out of all available research tools (qualitative and quantitative) to meet the objectives of the scientific enquiry.

The current study tries to shed light on the practice of media convergence at FBC based on the viewpoints of research participants and the researcher himself. Hence, the interpretivist research paradigm is best suited to the study.

3.3 Qualitative Data presentation and analysis

Research design can be considered as the blue print of the techniques and processes the researcher aims to apply in his study. In the words of M. Pandey and P. Pandey (2015, p. 18), it is the “*master plan specifying the methods and procedures for collecting and analyzing the needed information*”. Just as an architect follows the design for the construction of a certain building, the researcher also uses the research design to ensure that he is on the right track to conduct his study per his research proposal.

According to Creswell (2007), research design encompasses philosophy and the procedures to be employed in the research along with specific techniques. It helps the researcher to have a holistic view of the course the study takes including the methods and procedures for collecting, analyzing and interpreting data. Here, it is worth noting that the nature of the research and the research problem define what research design should be employed for a given research. Carefully selected and applied research design is crucial for avoiding bias and boosting the

reliability of the study. Sound research designs allow the researcher to have a wide spectrum of perspectives regarding the research problem (M. Pandey and P. Pandey, 2015).

As mentioned in the preceding parts of this study, research designs are categorized as qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative approaches are the best tools to deeply understand complex matters and the diverse perspectives of research participants (Leavy, 2017). The use of open ended questions in qualitative studies allows the researcher to elicit rich response from the research participants (respondents). According to Creswell (2007), texts, pictures and footages are some of the types of data used in qualitative studies.

While qualitative studies use qualitative research designs, quantitative studies use research designs which are suitable for gathering and analyzing statistical data. Quantitative research designs allow the researcher to make accurate measurements and gather numerical data in an objective manner. According to Leavy (2017), quantitative studies essentially follow deductive approaches whereby the researcher generalizes the findings drawn from the samples to the entire target population of the research.

A blend of both the qualitative and quantitative approaches results in a mixed research design which is suitable for collecting and analyzing all forms of data in a flexible manner (Creswell, 2007). The mixed approach allows the researcher to use all instruments at his disposal for gathering and examining both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher of the current study has applied the qualitative research design to investigate the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate.

Considering the need for in-depth analysis to look into the subject of this study, the researcher is of the view that the qualitative design is the most appropriate approach for the current study. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to draw out rich qualitative data from archive files as well as interview and focus group discussion participants. As is the case with studies conducted inductively, the findings of the current study uncover the state of media convergence at FBC and are not applicable to other media organizations in the country or beyond.

Research methods are the techniques and tools researchers apply to collect, examine and interpret data for the scientific enquiry the researcher is working on. They are the systematic

processes and techniques applied for gathering relevant data and making sense of it (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). Research methods also encompass the broader realms of data gathering instruments and the manner in which they are applied in specific studies.

According to Creswell (2014), observation, questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis are some of the data collection instruments researchers employ depending on the type of the study and the data needed for the research. Whether a study follows deductive or inductive approach also has a bearing on the type of the research methods applied in a given study. Researchers choose their research methods also based on the nature of the data required for the study, be it quantitative data or qualitative data. Depending on the nature of the data, the researcher picks qualitative, quantitative or mixed research methods to meet the objectives of the study as best as possible (Creswell, 2007).

If a researcher uses qualitative data in his/her study, he/she will use qualitative research methods and techniques such as in-depth interviews, document analyses, focus group discussions and observations. As mentioned above, Daymon and Holloway (2011) pointed out that qualitative research methods are suitable to probe and understand complex issues comprehensively through the use of open ended questions. The researcher of the current study has also applied qualitative research approach.

As discussed in the previous chapters, the current research assesses the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC). To meet the objectives of the study, the researcher collected and analyzed different types of qualitative data required for the research by using different qualitative data gathering instruments, namely, archive file analysis, in-depth interview, and focus group discussion.

The researcher has analyzed selected archive files within the time frame specified (the year 2022). He also conducted interviews with relevant members of the management of Fana Broadcasting Corporate including the CEO of FBC as well as the managers of the Digital Media Department, Television News Department, and Radio News Department. The researcher also

conducted focus group discussions with journalists working in the three core content departments mentioned above.

3.4. Study site

The site of this study is the headquarters of Fana Broadcasting Corporate which is located near Black Lion Hospital in the heart of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The departments on which this study focus are the core content sections of Fana Broadcasting Corporate, namely, the Digital Media Department, Television News Department, and Radio News Department, in order to investigate how these sections collaborate in implementing the convergence of the different news platforms of FBC.

Since its establishment in 1994, Fana Broadcasting Corporate has been growing in leaps and bounds over the decades and now circulates contents through its television, radio, and online platforms. The media organization disseminates contents in different languages including English. Currently, FBC runs 12 FM radio stations across Ethiopia besides its television station operating from its main studio in Addis Ababa (Fana Broadcasting Corporate, 2023).

The current study particularly focuses on the core departments of the media house which are responsible for news content production and dissemination. From the departments shown in the organizational structure of the content cluster depicted below, the researcher focused only on the core news content departments: the Television News Department, and Radio News Department and the Digital Media Department.

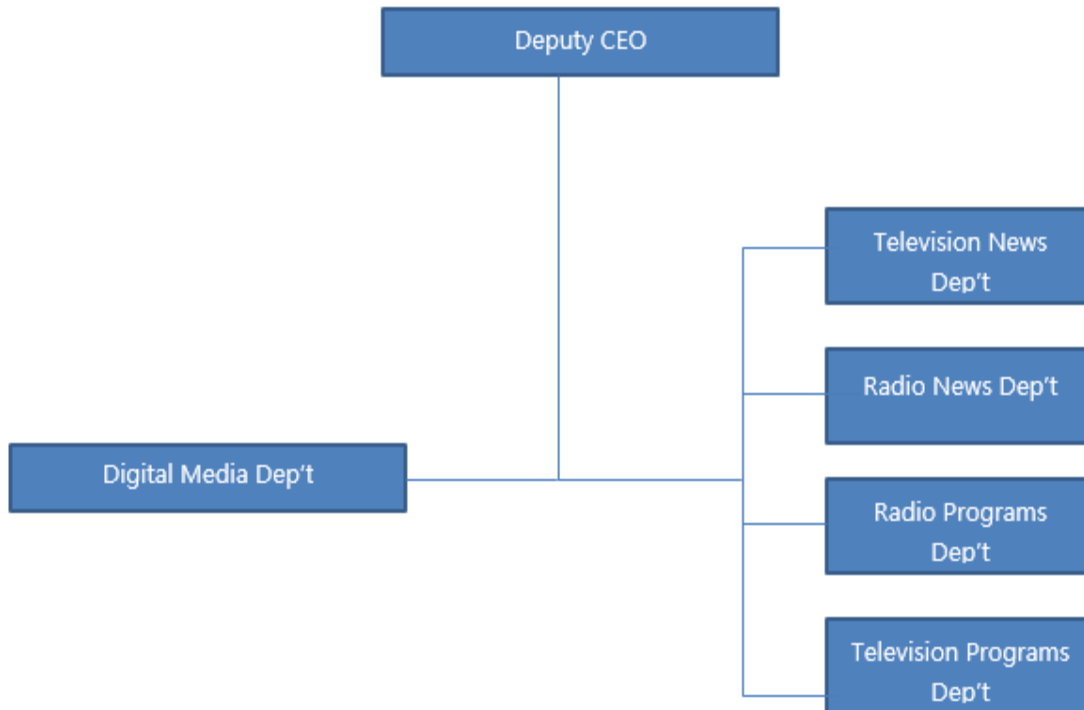


Figure 4 Organizational structure of FBC's content cluster (FBC)

3.5 Population of the study

The target population of this study comprises of the management of Fana Broadcasting Corporate's content cluster, as well as employees working in the Television News Department, and Radio News Department and the Digital Media Department. In total, there are around 18 employees working in the departments mentioned above including the management staff.

3.6 Participant selection methods

Considering the need to gather information from well experienced employees of FBC, the researcher of the current study has employed purposive sampling to select the interviewees. Accordingly, the researcher picked the CEO of FBC as well as the managers of the Television News Department, and Radio News Department and the Digital Media Department so as to draw out rich and detailed data through structured interviews.

According to Daymon and Holloway (2011), by using purposive sampling, which is usually applied in qualitative studies, the researcher is able to select participants that can provide detailed data needed for the research. Accordingly, the researcher of current study picked the CEO of Fana Broadcasting Corporate and the managers of the three departments mentioned above so as to engage well experienced management staff of the media outlet in the study thereby facilitating the gathering of rich data.

The researcher also selected six staff members from each of the three departments to take part in the focus group discussions.

3.7 Data collection instruments

The researcher has employed different data collection instruments to gather qualitative data for the study, namely, archive file analysis, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. Each of these instruments is discussed briefly as follows.

3.7.1. In-depth interview

One of the commonly used data collection instruments in qualitative studies are interviews. Interviews allow the researcher to gather detailed response from the interviewees through structured and open ended questions (Leavy, 2017). Interviews also facilitate the supply of rich qualitative data which help increase the quality and reliability of the findings of the study. Gray (2004) noted that the skills of the interviewer are key to draw out relevant and important data which are valuable inputs for the study. Among other things, interviews show the emotions, convictions, and opinions of the informants thereby revealing important information for the researcher, and add value for the data analysis and interpretation process (P. Pandey and M. Pandey, 2015).

Interviews were applied in the current study to elicit rich data and gain deeper understanding about the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate, by drawing responses from the CEO of FBC as well as the managers of the Television News Department, and Radio News Department and the Digital Media Department.

The interview questions were framed in such a way to illicit responses which enable the researcher to address the research questions. Hence, each research question is written focusing on a theme captured in each research question. The interviews were conducted in May 2023 at FBC's headquarters in Addis Ababa. Unlike focus group discussions, the in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to obtain rich data and deeper insights from the interviewees, which is not feasible in focus group discussions which involve at least six participants. Conducting detailed discussion with each focus group discussion participant is hard to achieve unlike in one-one-one interviews.

3.7.2. Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion is yet another valuable tool as far as qualitative research methods are concerned. Such discussions allow the researcher to capture various viewpoints of the discussion participants. The researcher acts as a moderator and guides the conversation on the right track and induces the participants to provide their viewpoints (Gray, 2004).

This data collection instrument also facilitates the provision of detailed inputs and relevant stories which illustrate the points under discussion. According to Leavy (2017), the researcher can draw out detailed data for the study by posing open-ended questions and encouraging the participants to talk.

The researcher of the current study has organized separate focus group discussion sessions for each of the three selected departments of FBC: the Television News Department, and Radio News Department and the Digital Media Department. Each session involved six participants from the respective department in the discussions which were moderated by the researcher.

Like the interview questions, the focus group discussion points were also crafted around each research question so as to get the insights of the participants on the issues raised. Each focus group discussion was conducted separately at FBC's headquarters in May 2023. Moderated by the researcher, the focus group discussions brought out the insights of the participants regarding FBC's practice of media convergence.

3.7.3 Archive file analysis

Archive file analysis is also one of the data collection tools in studies which follow qualitative approach. It is a method by which the researcher gathers valuable data for the research by going through and examining archive files (such as text, image, audio and video) online and offline. Compared to the data collected through other instruments, those acquired through analysis of archive files are wide-ranging (Daymon and Holloway, 2011). This is especially true when it comes to investigating the case of a certain organization.

The researcher of the current study used archive file analysis in addition to interviews and focus group discussions to further enrich the research data. Accordingly, the researcher has analyzed news contents disseminated across the different platforms of FBC during the year 2022. The archive files analyzed in the study include news items aired on radio and TV and published online by the media organization.

In general, the researcher believes that the application of different data collection instruments discussed above helps enrich the data used in the study and boost the soundness and credibility of the findings.

3.8 Research ethics

The researcher of the current study has exerted maximum effort to ensure that research norms and ethics are observed throughout the research process. The researcher gathered all the data required for the study after getting permission from Fana Broadcasting Corporate, its management as well as the non-management staff who participated in the study.

The researcher informed all participants about the purpose of the study and the need for gathering the data they provided before engaging them in the interviews and focus group discussions. The research participants have also been assured that the researcher will not reveal their identity and that their responses will remain anonymous. They have also been informed that the data they provided will not be used for other purpose than for the study at hand.

The participants were also given the chance to go through the transcript of their responses to see if the information they provided are presented as they are without any distortion or revision by

the researcher. Sample transcripts of the interviews and focus group discussions have been attached in the appendix section.

As mentioned in the preceding sections, the researcher has applied different data collection instruments such as interviews, focus group discussions and archive file analysis which are all appropriate in qualitative studies. The researcher believes that the rich data gathered through the different instruments help ensure the validity of the findings through proper triangulation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

As indicated in the first chapter, this research study aims to look into the practice of media convergence in the newsroom of Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC). With this objective in mind, the researcher gathered data using interview, focus group discussion and archive file analysis. The collected data were analyzed based on key themes drawn out of the research questions. The analysis of the data gathered from multiple sources using different data collection instruments has allowed the researcher to ensure the validity of the findings through triangulation. In the following sections, the researcher would discuss the analysis of the data in light of key concepts discussed in the literature review.

4.2. Media convergence model implemented at FBC

As discussed throughout this thesis, media convergence is all about the integration of different platforms for disseminating contents across channels. At the level of the newsroom, convergence entails putting in place a multimedia environment with the systems and resources required for channeling contents through all the outlets a media organization owns (Borders, 2006).

From the discussions in the literature review section, one can understand that convergence in the newsroom can take different forms ranging from full integration to cooperation among autonomous platforms of a media outlet.

According to Diehl and Karmasn's (2013) typology of convergence, in fully integrated news rooms, convergence is a strategy proactively pursued by a media organization for reaping economic and professional gains. The full integration is manifested through the fusion of the newsroom as a unified team for producing and channeling multimedia contents across platforms. 'Cross-media' is a slightly looser integration among the media organization's teams where most of the staff work only on one platform through centrally managed workflows.

The last form of convergence, known as ‘Coordinating independent platforms’, entails cooperating the production and dissemination of news among the platforms of a media organization. The convergence largely depends on the personal initiative and interest of journalist as it is not pursued by the organization as a strategic goal (Diehl and Karman, 2013).

FBC is practicing media convergence in one form or another. The researcher’s analysis of contents disseminated on the different platforms of FBC are testimony to the fact that the media outlet is channeling contents across all the platforms it owns.

One of the contents disseminated on both the broadcast and digital media of FBC in 2022 is a news report about the cancelation of lottery draw results of condominium housing units by Addis Ababa City Administration because of an alleged tampering with the list of eligible applicants who were included in the lottery draw (Appendix III). The news story was broadcast both on radio and television in addition to appearing on the Facebook page of FBC in the form of text and photo featuring the city’s Mayor.

One of the other contents FBC disseminated on television, radio and digital media during 2022 is a news report about a request submitted to the House of Federation of Ethiopia by 10 zones and special districts applying for the status of a region (See Appendix IV). Like the news report discussed above, this story was also aired on Fana radio and television in addition to being shared on FBC’s website as a text news including a photo. The stories discussed above show that FBC practices multi-platform production and dissemination of contents to cater to its audiences online and offline.

To look into the form of media convergence being implemented at FBC, the researcher has interviewed the top management members of the media outlet, and held discussions with members of different news departments. The interviews and focus group discussions the researcher held reveal that the form of media convergence implemented at the media organization is nowhere close to full integration.

The CEO of FBC, Ato Admasu Damtew, pointed out that the media organization has been practicing media convergence since it diversified its channels venturing into digital media and television in addition to radio.

The CEO stated that at FBC, agendas are set by an editorial board involving directors from autonomously managed departments such as television news department, radio news department, and the digital media department, unlike the case with fully integrated newsrooms where the whole team is managed centrally.

Regarding the implementation of the direction set by the editorial team, Ato Admasu says:

The dispatching and assignment of reporters is done in such a way to ensure converged media in the reporting. For instance, if a radio journalist is assigned to cover a story, he produces contents not only for radio but also for television and digital channels. This has allowed us to disseminate consistent information to audiences across all our platforms (Personal interview, May 2023).

The CEO's remark shows that FBC is practicing media convergence in the sense that it is disseminating contents across the different platforms it owns. However, convergence is not pursued as a strategic goal of the media organization as highlighted in the interview the researcher had with Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, Director of Digital Media department. Ato Mekoya stresses that FBC's strategic documents turn a blind eye to media convergence:

One of the gaps in the practice of media convergence at FBC is that the key documents of the organization have totally ignored media convergence. The editorial policy makes no mention of media convergence at all. Likewise, the strategic plan and other documents of FBC do not articulate the organization's ambitions in terms of practicing media convergence. So, there is a gap when it comes to establishing a system that facilitates media convergence in a clearly articulated manner. (Personal interview, May 2023)

From the accounts of the top management members presented above, one can infer that FBC is not implementing full integration as a form of media convergence. The absence of strategic direction regarding media convergence and the autonomy of the different news departments of FBC are indicative of the fact that the media organization doesn't run a fully integrated newsroom for production and dissemination of multi-media contents.

A close examination of the remaining two forms of newsroom convergence, namely 'Cross-Media' and 'Coordinating Independent Platforms' will shed light on which form of media convergence FBC adopted. In 'Cross-Media' model, different teams of a media organization work from separate offices, but the workflows are managed centrally by supervisors and coordinators. However, in the case of FBC, the workflows of each department is managed separately by the respective director of each department.

At FBC, there is no centralization when it comes to managing the workflows of the different departments under the content cluster. Highlighting this point, Ato Digafe Dagnachew, Director of Radio News Content Production at FBC, said that the integration is manifested in the joint editorial team which sets agendas and directions about upcoming events and how to cover them. Apart from that, he says, the workflows of each department (radio, television and digital media) are managed autonomously by the respective departments.

Similar points are also made by the other management members the researcher interviewed. Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, highlighted that the different departments under the content cluster of FBC work collaboratively while at same time retaining their departmental autonomy. From the above discussion, one can understand that FBC is not implementing the 'Cross-Media' form of integration either.

The third form of newsroom convergence, known as 'Coordinating Independent Platforms', is adopted by media outlets which facilitate cooperation among autonomous departments for producing and disseminating contents across platforms. In this form of convergence, there is no centrally managed newsroom, and convergence is not a strategic goal of the media outlet. Rather, journalists engage in the production of multimedia contents out of personal initiative

and interest (Diehl and Karmasn, 2013).

The researcher believes that this form of convergence is more similar to the one being implemented at FBC than the other forms discussed before. As mentioned earlier, FBC is not pursuing convergence as a strategy which is manifested in the absence of the concept in the strategic documents of the media outlet.

Additionally, the different departments are run separately rather than through a centralized team of management. The accounts of some of the focus group discussion participants also indicate that the personal initiative of journalists matters in implementing converged media at FBC despite the directions set by the joint editorial team to cover events in a converged manner.

Ato Addis Tsegaye, an editor in the radio department of FBC, stressed the lack of a well-planned system of implementing media convergence at the media outlet saying:

Much of the practice is based on the personal initiative of the journalist. For example, some journalists [working in the television or digital news departments] do not provide analysis on radio regarding the events they covered unless they are interested. Sometimes they seem to consider that contributing contents to the television department is more important than sharing contents to the radio department. (Personal interview, May 2023)

Similarly, Ato Belsti Aweke, a journalist from the television team, said that journalists feed contents to different departments only when they feel like doing so. Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, also mentioned that there are times when a certain content is shared on some platforms and not on others although it merits cross-channel dissemination. He attributes this gap to the absence of work procedures which make multi-channel production and dissemination of contents mandatory.

Therefore, the researcher believes that Fana Broadcasting Corporate is implementing the newsroom convergence form known as 'Coordinating Independent Platforms'. According to Lawson-Borders (2006), media convergence is not an end in itself and hence has to be adjusted and tailored to the context of the media organization concerned. Hence, it is up to the

management and staff of FBC to determine what form of media convergence is best suited to the media organization in light of its ambitions and visions as an organization.

4.3. The state of staffing and newsroom reforms at FBC

Apparently, the application of media convergence in a media outlet brings about changes in the newsroom, technological capabilities and manpower. Especially, in what Gordon (as cited in Quinn and Filak, 2005) calls ‘Structural Convergence’, newsroom reforms such as management restructuring and newsroom workflow revisions are inevitable.

Regarding the case of FBC, the CEO Ato Admasu Damtew said that FBC’s news team has been structured in such a way to optimize manpower for proper implementation of converged media. He pointed out that any assigned reporter from the television or radio department comes up with contents tailored for each of the platforms of the media house including the digital news department.

With regards to restructuring the management of the departments, the CEO stated, “Previously, we had high-level executives for each platform, but currently all these teams are structured under the content cluster to work jointly on similar agendas” (Personal interview, May 2023).

Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, Director of Digital Media department, doesn’t share the CEO’s views when it comes to the issue of restructuring. Rather, he believes that the recent restructuring the media organization implemented seems to negate the media convergence practice at the media organization. Ato Mekoya clarified his point saying:

Previously, there was a news and current affairs structure encompassing the radio and television news and news shows. That structure was better suited to implement media convergence at least between the television and radio departments despite its shortcomings. However, after the structuring, the radio department is organized separately to handle news and current affairs programs on its own. The same is true for the television station. This

has created a rather divergent arrangement among the platforms of the media house. (Personal interview, May, 2023)

Likewise, Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, points out that there are gaps in the organizational structure of FBC. He doesn't believe that the current arrangement paves the way for a smooth implementation of media convergence at the media organization. Similarly, most of the participants of the focus group discussions didn't mention any practical steps taken by FBC in terms of reforming the newsroom structure with a view to facilitate media convergence.

Belay Tesfaye, Deputy Editor-in-Chief in the radio department, highlights that due to the absence of appropriate restructuring, the implementation of media convergence is kind of informal and dependent on the interests of individual journalists and supervisors in the news departments.

According to Roco et al (2013), convergence culture encompasses values, systems and methods which allow different teams to come together and collaborate better in carrying out their duties. Regarding FBC's convergence practice, most of the interview and focus group discussion participants believe that there is a gap in the newsroom structure which is standing in the way of effective collaboration among the different teams.

Adding to the chorus, Ato Tesfaye Kebede, a journalist working for Fana Television said that the organizational structure of FBC doesn't seem to have been designed in such a way to nurture interdependence among the different departments of the media organization as manifested in the loose cooperation among journalist of the different departments.

The above cited responses of the interviewees and focus group discussion participants indicates that there are gaps at FBC when it comes to putting in place the structural changes and reforms to implement convergence at the level desired by most of the respondents. However, the desired level of convergence doesn't take place in a vacuum. It requires a conscious deliberation and decision on the part of FBC's management as to what degree of integration should be adopted at

the media organization.

According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), in a media organization pursuing deeper integration, “cross-border cooperation between departments, programmes, and channels at a news-desk or in a newsroom becomes the working standard” (p. 288). Hence, FBC needs to embrace deeper form of convergence to realize the level of structural reforms most of its employees aspire for.

Some authors who wrote on the subject of media convergence state that convergence facilitates efficient use of manpower. According to Zotto and Lugmayr (2016), effective integration enables media outlets to produce more contents for multiple platforms with their existing workforce.

The authors point out that media organizations practicing convergence can broaden their reach by delivering contents across platforms without hiring additional journalists and making the most out of their facilities and resources. From journalists’ point of view, media convergence is also considered as an opportunity for reporters to become multi-skilled as well as more competitive and desirable in the labor market (Quinn and Filak, 2005).

Although FBC journalists develop contents for multiple platforms as shown in the archive file analysis above, there are gaps in the quality of contents which could be attributed to lack of multi-skilled journalists. Ato Admasu Damtew, the CEO of FBC, admits that the journalists working in the media outlet lack the skills to operate flexibly and craft multimedia contents for multiple platforms. He adds:

Lack of capacity has limited the understanding of journalists about the peculiar features of each channel. Unfortunately, our journalists are generalists rather than specialists. They may have studied different media platforms as major and minor when they were in college. But when it comes to the practice, what they have is the skills of a generalist journalist, not that of specialists. This hinders the growth of both the journalists and the

platforms we run. It also hampers quality and speed when it comes to developing and disseminating contents. (Personal interview, May 2023)

Other FBC staff members interviewed also share the CEO's perspective on this. Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, said there is lack of multi-skilled journalists who can perform better across the channels of FBC. He stressed that not all journalists are able to manipulate the technologies and devices of the media house. He adds, "For instance, repackaging television productions for digital media requires digital knowledge and skills. There are gaps in that regard" (Personal interview, May 2023). The researcher would look into the issues related to digital skills in subsequent sections with illustrations from archive file analysis.

With regards to staffing reforms for facilitating media convergence, Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, Director of Digital Media department pointed out that FBC is trying to optimize its manpower by assigning journalists to cover events for multiple platforms despite the skill gaps. However, he stresses that the motive of assigning a journalist to craft contents for different platforms is not genuine commitment to media convergence. He clarifies his point saying:

A journalist is assigned to cover an event and come up with contents for television, radio and digital media so as to avoid the dispatching of more reporters to cover the same story. So the motive is addressing manpower shortage. In times when there are enough unassigned journalists, reporters from television, radio and digital departments are sent to cover an event with similar level of importance. In such situations, the convergence practice doesn't get much attention. This shows that the staffing of FBC is not designed in such a way to reap the full benefits of media convergence. (Personal interview, May, 2023)

As much as convergence can be an opportunity for journalists to acquire more skills, it can also put pressure on them to upskill and fit better in the converged media environment. According to Nwammuo and Nwafor (2019), convergence blurs the lines among the media platforms as well

as among the professional skills of journalists, resulting in a situation where journalists are required to be multi-skilled to function effectively in the context of converged media. However, losing the right balance between having multi-skilled journalists and the workload they handle could result in burnout and staff turnover.

According to Ato Digafe Dagnachew, Director of Radio News Content Production at FBC, there is a significant gap between FBC's manpower and the workload they are expected to handle. He stresses that the huge workload coupled with less competitive remuneration is causing staff to flee the media house.

Work overload resulting from integration of media is also highlighted in the existing literature on media convergence. According to Zotto and Lugmayr (2016), multi-skilled journalists are faced with work overload as they are expected to craft contents in multiple formats. The authors add that the 24/7 news cycle which is common in most media outlets adds to the work overload journalists grapple with.

In addition to causing burnout and staff turnover, work overload on multimedia journalists also compromises content quality. Some authors suggest that convergence and the resulting work overload affects journalistic values and practices in the process of information gathering and content production (Haiman 2001, as cited in Lawson-Borders, 2006).

In this regard, the CEO of FBC Ato Admasu mentioned instances where a story is channeled across all platforms of FBC without much consideration about the peculiar features of contents tailored to each platform. He added, "There are tendencies of copying the story developed for one medium and channeling it on the other media without adequate editing" (Personal interview, May 2023).

Haileyesus Mekonnen, Deputy Editor-in-Chief in the radio department, agrees with the CEO on this. He said there are gaps when it comes to customizing radio contents for the digital media due to a tendency of copying and pasting contents without proper trimming.

To illustrate the tendency of copying and pasting contents across platforms, let's have a close look at a news report FBC disseminated about the demarcation of the border between Addis

Ababa and Oromia region (See Appendix V). According to the archive file analysis the researcher conducted, the news report was disseminated on the radio and television stations of FBC. The video report which was aired on Fana Television was also uploaded on the YouTube channel of the media outlet for audiences online. Additionally, the story was also shared on the website of FBC in the form of text news combined with a photo featuring the Mayor of Addis Ababa city and the President of Oromia Regional State along with other high-level government officials who attended the session where the announcement about the border demarcation was made.

The researcher's examination of the radio script of the news revealed that the text was copied and pasted on FBC's website without proper customization of the content in line with the key features of web news. First of all, the news is devoid of hypertextuality which is a core feature of texts posted on websites. According to Luik (2008), hypertextuality refers to "the ability to link or make interconnection between texts" using hypertexts embedded in words (p. 119). However, FBC's text news shared on its website have no hypertexts which are linked to related contents on the website or the internet at large. The entire text, which has a word count of 385, has no hyperlinked words as is expected in web news texts.

Moreover, the news story lacks multimediality. In other words, the contents disseminated on air and online in different formats are not packaged together on FBC's website (Luik, 2008). The story appeared on the website only as a text news with a still image, and did not include the video format aired on Fana Television somewhere in the body of the web news for audiences to choose their preferred news format.

However, although the above discussed web news lacks hypertextuality and multimediality, it has a comment box at the bottom of the new for audiences to leave their feedback. One of the key features of online media its interactivity whereby the media outlet and audiences engage in two-way communication through the comments audiences leave in the comment box. According to Lawson-Borders (2005), the internet has made it possible for media outlets and audiences to interact easily unlike the traditional media which do not come handy for audiences to forward their feedback so easily.

In today's media environment where mobile journalists (mojos) take the lead in crafting and sharing multimedia contents, the interactivity feature of online media also creates an opportunity for audiences to get in touch with reporters and share ideas on the news stories shared (Straubhaar, LaRose, and Davenport, 2015).

Let's look at another web content FBC shared on its website in 2022 to further illustrate the copy-paste tendency at the media house. On August 6, 2022, FBC posted a news story was about the arrest of many people who were allegedly engaged in illicit exchange of dollars in Ethiopia (See Appendix VI). The story was covered on FBC's broadcast media and also as a text web news devoid of hypertexts. Like the content analyzed above, this news story was not packaged with the multimedia version for audiences to access on the website.

FBC's online contents analyzed above reveal that journalists share the scripts of their broadcast reports on digital platforms without properly customizing the texts for the web, and without embedding multimedia contents along with the text news. Judging by the similarity of the web news text and the broadcast news scripts, one can conclude that FBC journalists copy and paste text contents across platforms.

Explaining the practice of copying broadcast news scripts for the web with little editing, Quinn and Filak (2005) write,

The first efforts by newspapers and television stations to put their content on the Web resulted in the faithful reproduction of their printed news stories and TV scripts on a Web page. This is what is derisively known as "shovelware." Shoveling something already produced for one medium into the new form of the Web is easy and cheap. (p. 71)

The practice known as "shovelware" is clearly observed at FBC as shown in the archive files analyzed. Work overload on journalists could be one of the causes of copying and pasting contents across platforms. FBC would do justice to the stories uploaded on the web by looking into the causes of "shovelware" at the media house and taking corrective measures.

The above analysis points to the need for the media house to implement staffing reforms suitable for whichever form of integration it is pursuing, and ensuring that its journalists have what it takes to produce contents properly in different formats. Balancing the media outlet's interests with the professional wellbeing of journalists is key in this regard, besides looking into skill gaps and bridging them through trainings and mentoring.

4.4. Hurdles FBC faces in implementing converged media

Media convergence brings about the integration of the traditional broadcast and print media with the fast evolving new media enabled by the advent of the internet. Hence, convergence has implications on the technological capabilities of media organizations as well as the skills of media professionals (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016). In this regard, journalists who are well versed in digital and related skills are key to make the most out of the technologies of the day and produce contents in different formats.

Finding well skilled journalists who can perform professionally across platforms is one of the challenges FBC has been grappling with since it began implementing media convergence. This issue is highlighted in the interview the researcher had with Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, Director of Digital Media department. Regarding the lack of multi-skilled journalists at FBC, Ato Mekoya said:

The lack of all rounded, versatile journalists who can produce contents for all forms of channels is one of the major challenges FBC is facing at the moment. And yet the media outlet has not provided journalists with trainings to help them upskill. That is why this challenge keeps haunting us. (Personal interview, May 2023)

Zufan Kassahu, an editor in the radio section, stresses that FBC's contents are not tailored in a proper way to suit its digital platforms, and suggests that training and equipping staff with digital skills is critical to provide quality contents for audiences online. Similarly, Meron Feleke, a radio reporter at FBC, stated that there are tendencies of copying contents designed for broadcast and pasting them on the media outlet's website and social media pages. She

believes this is partly caused by the lack of skills on the part of some journalists.

Crafting and delivering contents in multiple formats and platforms requires that the journalist has a good grasp of the skills to manipulate the media technologies of the day (Quinn and Filak, 2005). As it stands, FBC has gaps when it comes to repackaging contents for its website as shown in the archive file analyses discussed in the preceding sections.

The CEO of FBC Ato Admasu Damtew, admitted that there are gaps in the digital skills of some journalists and pointed out that FBC has been taking measures in recent times to address the challenge by making digital literacy a requirement for new recruits joining the organization. He also suggested that the management of FBC will consider setting up a centralized team of editors to package contents better for each platform and avoid discrepancies.

The other area where FBC is facing challenges in its media convergence practice is related to logistics and resources. The convergence process brings about the optimization of tools, workspaces and processes to put in place a suitable environment for the dissemination of contents across multiple media leveraging the cyberspace (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016). Regarding the case of FBC, some of the interview and discussion participants mentioned gaps in relation to the lack of devices and facilities.

Ato Alemseged Asaye, a journalist for Fana Television, says journalists sometimes don't get enough devices to cover stories, especially at times when there are multiple events taking place. Ato Belsti Aweke, also from Fana Television team, mentioned a challenge related to lack of high- tech devices which are key in today's media landscape. He says,

The quality of contents journalists gather is sometimes affected by the devices they use. Therefore, FBC should provide journalists with modern devices which enable them to do mobile journalism (mojo) properly and gather quality photos and other contents using quality devices. (Personal interview, May, 2023)

Regarding logistical challenges, Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, added that the lack of editing rooms is also another hurdle FBC journalists are facing in their

efforts to provide contents on time across the media outlet's platforms.

The other challenge in the media convergence practice at FBC is related to compensation. As discussed in the literature review, compensation is one of the “Seven C’s” which are key for the effective implementation of media convergence. According to Lawson-Borders (2006), compensation is all about rewarding journalists as per their contribution. The author suggests that the management of media organizations should compensate multi-skilled journalists with commensurate pay and benefits based on their contribution.

In the case of FBC, there is no differentiated compensation scheme to reward multi-skill journalists better, and the existing compensation scheme doesn't look attractive enough to some of the staff of FBC who participated in the interviews and discussions.

Ato Haileyesus Mekonnen, Deputy Editor-in-Chief in the radio department, points out that there are journalists who left FBC and got hired in other media organizations to enjoy better pay and benefits. He says this challenge is depleting the experienced workforce of the media outlet.

Ato Digafe Dagnachew, Director of Radio News Content Production at FBC, also shares the view that improving compensation is an area that FBC should work on. Regarding staff turnover due to pay issues, he says:

This has led to turnover of experienced staff in search of better pay in other media organizations. Employees on whom FBC has invested a lot are leaving the company seeking better opportunities elsewhere. This is a big challenge as it drains our manpower and affects the quality of our work. To address this challenge, we are approaching and rehiring well experienced employees who had left the media house. (Personal interview, May, 2023)

The accounts of the above mentioned employees of FBC points to the need to look into the compensation scheme of the media organization and take corrective measures to retain experienced staff who contribute better for media convergence.

4.5. Strengths and weaknesses in FBC's media convergence practice

4.5.1. Strengths

As far as FBC's media convergence experience is concerned, there are some strengths highlighted in the data the researcher gathered. The fact that FBC is channeling contents on television, radio and digital media is mentioned as a strength by some of the research participants despite the shortcomings in the implementation.

Adanech Abebe, a journalist from the television department, highlighted that FBC covers major events on all its platforms. She added that the convergence enables audiences who miss live coverages on television and radio to access the news stories on the media outlet's digital channels including its website as well as its Facebook, Telegram and YouTube accounts.

Embracing new media facilitated by the internet has enabled FBC to leverage the web not only to channel contents but also to store them online and make them available for audiences. According to Diehl and Karmasn (2013), the internet has been a game changer in media convergence as it serves both as a dissemination channel and a content platform for storing contents.

Other discussion participants also believe that media convergence has become a regular practice at FBC especially when it comes to covering major events. Tesfaye Kebede a journalist working for Fana Television, believes that the practice of media convergence has enabled FBC to gain more and more audiences along the way. A review of the social media accounts of FBC by the researcher revealed that as of June 2023, FBC has 2.7 million likes and 3.5 million followers of its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fanabroadcasting>), 630,000 followers of its Twitter page (@fanatelevision), 180,582 subscribers of its Telegram page (<https://t.me/fanatelevision>) and 1.25 million subscribers of its YouTube page (<https://www.youtube.com/@fanabroadcastingcorporate>). (See Appendix VII)

This indicates that FBC is reaching vast amount of audiences online in addition to those it serves through its television and radio stations. Fana Television journalists Adanech Abebe and Minyechel Azezew believe that FBC should also venture into other emerging platforms such as Tik Tok to broaden its reach further. According to Lawson-Borders (2005), embracing new

media and channeling contents across different digital platforms enables media outlets to broaden their reach and share contents with speed.

The collaborative planning practice of a joint editorial team is also mentioned as one of the strengths of FBC as far as media convergence is concerned. According to Lawson-Borders (2005), cooperation among different teams of a media house helps improve the quality of contents the media house disseminates using diverse inputs from across team members.

Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, believes that the collaboration of all content teams through the editorial board is a strong side as it enables all departments to be well informed about upcoming events and activities ahead of time and plan accordingly. Despite the lack of written procedures and guidelines for implementing the channeling of contents across FBC's platforms, Ato Solomon says the editorial follow-up on the coverage of stories on different platforms is a strength.

Ato Alemseged Asaye, a journalist for Fana Television, also shares Ato Solomon's views. According to him, the daily editorial consultations enable the different teams to keep an eye on upcoming events and provide coverage as they see fit.

The other strength in FBC's media convergence practice is the relatively stronger integration between the broadcast media and the digital media. According to Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, who heads the digital media department, there is better content sharing bond between the radio and digital departments and also between the television and digital departments of FBC, compared to the cooperation between the radio and television departments. He added that the digital media department sources contents not only from the broadcast teams based at FBC's headquarters in Addis Ababa but also from the multiple FM radio station of the media organization across Ethiopia.

However, Ato Haileyesus Mekonnen, Deputy Editor-In-Chief of the radio department challenges the view that there is strong integration between the radio and digital teams of FBC. To substantiate his point, Ato Haileyesus mentioned that FBC doesn't channel its recorded radio news magazines on its social media pages as other media outlets such as Sheger Radio and DW.

He believes that sharing these radio contents enable audiences to catch up with the stories of the day when they miss the live transmissions.

The research's review of the social media pages of FBC also showed that during the year 2022 (which is the time frame covered in this study), no audio productions of FBC were shared on the media outlet's social media pages unlike video contents. The digital team may have strong ties with the radio team in sourcing written texts and photos from radio reporters dispatched to cover events. However, FBC's audio contents are not shared on the social media pages of the media organization.

Regarding the utilization of advanced media technologies, FBC also seems to be performing well relative to other local media houses. As stressed throughout this thesis, technology is key for effective implementation of media convergence. According to O'Sullivan et al. 2017 (cited in Fickers et al, 2021), digitization is the major driving force behind media convergence in today's world. Hence, acquiring advanced media technologies and devices can be considered as a competitive edge for media outlets.

With regards to the acquisition of media technology, most research participants are of the view that FBC is competing well with local media organizations. Alemayehu Geremew, a journalist in the Digital team, stresses that FBC uses technologically advanced devices such as cameras, cellphones and others compared to other local media outlets. He says the investment in technology has paved the way for convergence at FBC. Likewise, Wendwosen Aregaghegn, a journalist in the Digital team, says the use of state-of-the-art media technologies has enabled FBC journalists to provide quality multimedia contents which can be channeled through all platforms.

However, as mentioned in preceding sections, the quality of contents is sometimes compromised because of the shortage of high-tech devices. In such cases, journalists resort to using their own cell phones to capture photos and feed them to the digital team with texts to break stories as they happen. Hence, addressing the shortage of high-tech devices is an area for FBC to work on.

The use of new media and innovative digital technologies enables media organizations to ensure immediacy of content by disseminating concise and quick updates online as they happen, and also by constantly updating the news stories (Zotto and Lugmayr, 2016).

In the case of FBC, journalists are encouraged to provide contents to the digital team instantly from any major event they cover. The direction from the joint editorial team at FBC is to break the news from key events FBC's journalists cover, by delivering photos and texts to disseminate for audiences online. This is considered as one of the strengths of FBC as a media house practicing convergence.

Ato Desta Teka, a journalist working in the Digital department, stresses that the digital media is a priority when it comes to sharing contents instantly to break stories first as a media organization competing with others. He adds that the content sharing practice is continuously monitored by the editorial team. The CEO of FBC also highlighted that reporters of any of the news departments dispatched to cover events feed photos and text contents to the digital team from the venue where the event takes place. This is done to keep FBC's audiences informed about events as they happen.

The researcher's review of the Facebook page of FBC showed that there are news stories shared on the platform about major local events as they happen. For instance, on December 31, 2022, FBC posted a news of Facebook about the graduation of trainees of Ethio-Cyber Development Center (See Appendix VIII). The English version of the headline of the web news which was released in Amharic, goes like 'Ethio-Cyber Development Center is holding graduation ceremony for the first batch of trainees of its summer camp program.' Although the news has no byline, the wording of the content indicates that the news was provided by a reporter of FBC as the graduation ceremony was taking place.

Similarly, on December 30, 2022, FBC posted a news story about the launch of a conference about the role of Ethiopian scholars in nation state building (See Appendix IX). The news report stated the opening event of the conference was being held in the presence of scholars and top officials from the ruling party. As the news item discussed above, this news story is also phrased in the present continuous tense suggesting that the event was going on when the news came out on FBC's Facebook page.

The stories reviewed above show that FBC shares news stories on live events via its digital media to ensure immediacy of content dissemination using the internet.

4.5.2. Weaknesses

From the data gathered, the researcher also uncovered some weaknesses related to the practice of media convergence at FBC. As mentioned in the preceding sections of this chapter, there are no standard written procedures and guidelines that articulate the implementation of media convergence at the FBC.

Although it is clear that FBC's staff want deeper integration and more planned implementation of media convergence, there are no written documents that articulate how media convergence is put to practice at the media outlet. The key documents of the company including the editorial policy and the strategic plan turn a blind eye to media convergence.

In this regard, the CEO of FBC Ato Admasu Damtew pointed out that convergence is usually manifested at the top of the organization where the agendas are set in joint editorial sessions, and there are lax, unwritten implementation procedures at the level of journalists. The CEO adds:

Just as we have joint editorial consultations and integrated assignment allocation at the top, we should also have integrated teams down to the lower level of the news cluster. We also want to have joint sessions of editors on a daily basis to oversee the practical implantation of converged media by producing contents which are best suited for each medium. (Personal interview, May 2023)

According to Ato Solomon Alemu, Director of Television News department, the lack of work procedures which make multi-channel production and dissemination of stories mandatory has created a situation where some journalists abdicate their responsibility of sharing contents to all news departments on time. "As a result, the journalist's personal initiative matters in whether a story will be crafted for multiple platforms or for a single platform," Ato Solomon adds (Personal interview, May 2023).

Amelewerk Demisew, an Amharic desk journalist from the digital department, also highlights that due to the absence of standard written procedures, journalists receive verbal orders from their supervisors as to how they are supposed to come up with contents for multiple platforms based on the directions set at editorial meetings.

Most of the interviewed journalists from across the news departments of FBC share this view and stress the need for formalized written implementation guidelines for consistent implementation of media convergence at the media house.

On the other hand, Alemayehu Geremew, a journalist in the Digital team, highlights that one of the parameters on which the performance of FBC's journalists is rated is their contribution to other news departments in terms of sharing contents. However, measuring the performance of journalists in terms of their contribution for converged media, when there are no standardized guidelines and procedures, could spark controversy between the management and journalists of FBC. Hence, articulating implementation mechanisms and standards is key to bring all sides on the same page with regards to measuring media convergence practices at the level of individual journalists.

According to Zotto and Lugmayr (2016), the converged working environment might be unfamiliar to journalists especially if they are not trained and shaped in line with the changes in the media house. The backgrounds of journalists can also pose a challenge in creating common understanding about media convergence and ensuring smooth implementation (Quinn and Filak, 2005).

The media convergence practice at FBC also reveals that journalists are not on the same page when it comes to understanding media convergence. The gap in journalists' insights into converged media and FBC's inaction to bridge the gap is a weakness on the part of the media organization.

According to Ato Mekoya Hailemariam, Director of Digital Media department, the staff of FBC do not have equal level of understanding regarding media integration and its benefits. Not all journalists are capable of crafting contents in multiple formats either. Ato Mekoya adds that due

to the lack of understanding, some journalists tend to confine themselves to the platform they are primarily assigned on and consider the rest as secondary. He stresses that FBC should bring all its journalists to the same level of understanding and nurture a versatile workforce.

Similarly, Ato Tadesse Shiferaw, deputy editor in the radio department, says some journalists favor the platform they primarily serve and consider others as secondary. He suggests that assigning dedicated coordinators who can facilitate and monitor the proper sharing and dissemination of contents across all platforms can help in practicing media convergence consistently.

Likewise, Ato Belsti Aweke, a journalist from the television team, pointed out that there is a tendency, among some journalists, of considering inter-departmental content sharing as a subordinate responsibility. He added that in previous times some journalists used to consider digital media as less important than broadcast media, although that is changing over time.

According to Feven Bishaw, a journalist in the digital department, the other manifestation of lack of common understanding of media convergence at FBC is the misunderstanding among staff at regional FM stations on whether a certain news story is worth sharing on the digital media or not. She adds that staff at regional FM stations feel disappointed when the contents they send in are not shared online, and as a result they ignore even significant stories that they should share with the digital team. As indicated in the preceding sections, this seems partly caused by the absence of standards not only on how to implement media convergence at FBC but also on what type of stories are worth disseminating across all platforms.

The problems highlighted above are related directly or indirectly to gaps in the mindset and skills required for a well-functioning converged media, and are best addressed through well-tailored training. Highlighting the importance of training in a converged media environment, Quinn and Filak (2005) write, “Another key is training in the sense of exposure to ideas, and learning how to operate in different media” (p. 16).

According to Ato Tesfaye Kebede, a journalist working for Fana Television, highlights that FBC's journalists are practicing convergence the way they understand it as they have not received trainings that focus on media convergence. He also stresses that the situation is exacerbated due to the lack of clearly articulated written procedures which give journalists a sense of direction as to how convergence is implemented at FBC. He says training is key to shape the journalists of FBC to fit well into the converged media environment.

Addis Tsegaye, editor in the radio department, also pointed out that there are gaps on the part of FBC when it comes to capacitating the manpower of the media organization and coordinating the smooth implementation of converged media. The other discussion participants have also added to the chorus, and called for well-planned and recurrent trainings to keep journalists up-to-date with current and emerging media convergence trends.

The personal initiative of journalists is also key to acquire the skills they need to perform vibrantly in converged media environment. In this regard, self-teaching and asking for help from co-workers are important steps for journalists to gain the skills they need in the absence of such training offered by employers (Quinn and Filak, 2005).

4. 6. Discussion

As explained in the preceding chapters, this study set out to look into the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC). Specifically, the research aimed to assess the form of media convergence implemented in FBC's newsroom, whether FBC has made changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring to facilitate converged media, as well as the challenges, weaknesses and strengths observed in the practice of media convergence at FBC.

The researcher analyzed the data collected from interviewees, focus group discussion participants as well as archive files. As part of the archive file analysis, the researcher examined some sample contents which were disseminated by the media house on its radio, television and digital platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and FBC's website. The interviews and focus group discussions held with FBC's management and non-management staff also revealed critical insights about the current practice of media convergence at FBC.

4.6.1. FBC's media convergence model

The analysis of archive files and research participants' feedbacks revealed that FBC practices multichannel dissemination of contents, which indicates that the media organization is currently practicing media convergence. This is particularly true for news stories the media organization considers as significant from its standpoint. Accordingly, such stories are disseminated on air via television and radio in addition to being posted on the digital media of FBC.

The responses of the research participants also indicated that the form of convergence FBC is practicing currently is the one known as 'Coordinating Independent Platforms' where autonomous television, radio and digital media departments collaborate in sharing and disseminating multi-format contents in the absence of a centrally managed news room.

4.6.2. Staffing and newsroom reforms

With regards to staffing and newsroom reforms at FBC, the data gathered from the research participants indicated that FBC's structure and staffing is not designed in such a way to make the most out of the benefits media convergence offers. According to most of the participants, the media house did not take staffing reforms to implement convergence at the level desired by the respondents.

4.6.3. Challenges in practicing media convergence

Different challenges have been identified with regards to the media convergence practice of FBC. The analysis also showed that there is lack of multi-skilled journalists who can professionally craft contents in multiple formats, which in turn resulted in quality issues on the contents FBC disseminates across its platforms. Instances of "shovelware" at FBC have also been indicated through archive file analysis which highlighted that broadcast news scripts are copied and pasted on the website of FBC without proper editing and in a manner that lacks hypertextuality and multimodality.

Regarding staff welfare, the responses of research participants shed light on the mismatch between FBC's workforce and the workload journalists are supposed to handle. This is a challenge that is causing burnout and staff turnover.

The other challenge highlighted in the data analysis is the issue of uncompetitive remuneration which is partly blamed for staff turnover. The lack of differentiated pay scheme to encourage journalists with multiple skills is also a challenge in FBC's convergence practice. Regarding logistics and resources, some of the research participants mentioned the lack of editing rooms and high-tech devices especially during eventful days.

4.6.4. FBC's strengths and weaknesses regarding media convergence

This study has revealed strengths and weaknesses in FBC's media convergence practice. The collaborative planning practice of the joint editorial team is also mentioned as one of the strengths of FBC. Additionally, the relatively strong collaboration between the broadcast media and the digital media of FBC has also been highlighted as a strength despite the absence of radio news magazines among the daily posts of FBC's Facebook page. Despite shortages, FBC's media acquisition track record compared to other local media is also mentioned by participants as strength.

On the other hand, the absence of standard written procedures and guidelines that articulate the implementation of convergence at the FBC is a weakness highlighted by most of the research participants. The fact that the editorial policy and the strategic plan of the media house evade the notion of media convergence is also a weakness on the part of FBC.

Moreover, the lack of common understanding among FBC's journalists regarding media convergence is also the other weakness of the media outlet, according to the analyzed data. This has led to negligence and a tendency of confining oneself to the platform the journalist is primarily assigned on. Finally, the analysis has shed light on the absence of media convergence training as one of the weak sides of FBC's media convergence practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

In this study, the researcher has probed the practice of media convergence at Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC). Employing qualitative research design, the researcher gathered data through interviewees, focus group discussions and analysis of archive files. The researcher then analyzed the collected data along themes drawn from the interview questions. The findings have revealed that FBC is currently practicing a form of media convergence known as ‘Coordinating Independent Platforms’ although it has not made structure and staffing reforms which are conducive for optimum implementation of media convergence. The data analysis also uncovered that uncompetitive salary, lack of multi-skilled journalists, and mismatch between FBC’s workforce and the workload journalists handle are challenges in FBC’s media convergence practice. Lack of written procedures and common understanding among FBC’s journalists regarding media convergence are weaknesses identified in the study, while the joint planning practice by the editorial team, and FBC’s good track record in technology acquisition are cited as strengths.

5.2. Conclusion

1. Fana Broadcasting Corporate is currently practicing media convergence and disseminating contents across television, radio and digital media. However, FBC’s media convergence practice is not implemented in a well-planned manner and not guided by written documents such as editorial policy, strategic plan and work procedures.

2. FBC has not made the right changes in terms of staffing and newsroom restructuring to facilitate smooth implementation of media convergence. FBC’s manpower allocation is not carried out in a well-planned manner that enables the media house to optimize its staff for better implementation of convergence.

3. Work overload and uncompetitive compensation scheme at FBC are causing burn out and staff turnover. As a result, some staff have left the media house in search of better working conditions and pay in other media organizations.

4. Journalists' skill gaps are limiting the contribution of the staff to the proper implementation of media convergence at FBC. The gaps are also compromising the quality of the contents FBC shares in different formats.

5. Lack of common understanding among FBC employees is causing some journalists to confine themselves to the platform they are assigned to and regard other platforms as secondary. This is causing negligence and delays in feeding contents among the different news teams of FBC.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the conclusions explain above, the following recommendation are suggested for FBC to improve its media convergence practice.

1. FBC should implement media convergence in a well-organized manner guided by written standards and procedures. Such measure will give journalists a sense of direction about how convergence is supposed to be practiced at the media house and contribute their share for consistent implementation.

2. To lay the groundwork for better media convergence practice, FBC should make well-thought-out reforms in staffing and newsroom restructuring.

3. FBC should look into the challenges employees are facing in terms of work overload and pay issues in order to address staff turnover and disengagement.

4. To address skill gaps of journalists and boost content quality, FBC should provide recurrent trainings to its journalists on current and emerging trends and practices of media convergence. Equipping journalists with hands-on multimedia skills enables them to craft quality contents in multiple formats.

5. FBC should also bring its journalists to the same level of understanding regarding the notion and practice of media convergence so as to address the negligence and narrow attitudes observed on some of its journalists.

Future research directions

The researcher is of the view that the current study provides a glimpse into how media convergence is being practiced at Fana Broadcasting Corporate currently.

Future research studies could probe similar areas on a broader scale by including the perspectives of audiences on the impact of FBC's converged media practice. Researchers could, then, come up with richer recommendations on the optimum form (model) of convergence that is a best fit in FBC's context.

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APPENDIX

Appendix I: Interview Questions

Interview questions for FBC CEO

1. How is FBC implementing media convergence? Could you describe and elaborate how convergence is practiced at the level of the newsroom?
2. How well are the news teams and the digital media department working together to ensure converged media?
3. To what extent has FBC made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring for successful media convergence?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of FBC in terms of practicing media convergence?
5. What challenges is FBC facing in implementing converged media?


Interview questions for managers of news departments

1. How is media convergence practiced in FBC? Could you explain about the workflows and procedures you follow in the newsroom?
2. To what extent has FBC made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring to implement/facilitate converged media?
3. What are the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC?
4. What are the challenges FBC is facing in implementing converged media?

Appendix II: Focus group discussion points

1. How is media convergence practiced at FBC? Could you explain about the workflows and procedures you use as you work with the different teams/departments?
2. To what extent has FBC reformed its staffing and the newsroom structure to accommodate converged media?
3. What are the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC?
4. What are the challenges in practicing media convergence at FBC?

Appendix III: FBC’s Facebook post about cancelation of condo lottery draw results

 FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.)
July 13, 2022 · 🌐

በአዲስ አበባ ሰሞኑን የወጣው የጋራ መኖሪያ ቤቶች ዕጣ ውድቅ ተደረገ

አዲስ አበባ፣ ሐምሌ 6፣ 2014 (አፍ ቢ ሲ) የአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር ሐምሌ 1 ቀን 2014 ያወጣውን የ20/80 እና 40/60 የጋራ መኖሪያ ቤቶችን ዕጣ ውድቅ አደረገ።

የአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር ከንቲባ አዳነት አቤቤ በዛሬው ዕለት በሰጡት መግለጫ ባሳለፍነው ሐምሌ 1 ቀን 2014 የወጣው የ20/80 እና 40/60 የጋራ መኖሪያ ቤቶች ዕጣ ውድቅ መደረጉን ተናግረዋል።

ዕጣው የተሰረዘውም የከተማ አስተዳደር ከዕጣ አወጣጥ ስነ-ስርዓቱ በኋላ የተለያዩ ጥቆማዎች በመቅረባቸው የአዲት ሥራ ሲጀምር በባንክ የተላከውና ለእጣ እንዲውል ወደ ከምግብተር የተጫነው ዳታ ልዩነት መኖሩ በመረጋገጡ ነው ተብሏል።

በእጣው የሚካተቱት 79 ሺህ ቆጣቢዎች መሆን ሲገባው ፣ ምርመራ ሲደረግ ግን በእጣው ውስጥ የተካተቱት ሰዎች ቁጥር 172 ሺህ መሆኑ ተረጋግጧል ነው ያሉት።

ከንቲባ አዳነት አቤቤ ጉዳዩን አስመልክተው በማህበራዊ ትስስር ገጻቸው ባሰፈሩት መልዕክት፣ “የሕዝብ አመኔታን መቼም ቢሆን አንዘነጋም፤ ክብራችን ሕዝብን በፍትሃዊነት ማገልገል ስለሆነ ሌቦችና እምነታቸውን ሽጠው የሚበሉ ሁሉ ለጊዜው ቢታገሉንም አይሸንፉንም፤ እውነት ምንግዜም ታሸንፋለች” ብለዋል።

የሕዝብን ሀብት በቴክኖሎጂ ውንብድና ከመዘረፍ ማዳን እንደተቻለ የገለጹት ከንቲባዎች ፣ የጋራ መኖሪያ ቤቶች እጣ አወጣጥ ስራ ላይ አጠራጣሪ ጉዳዮች ካጋጠሙ ጊዜ አንስቶ በማጣራት ሂደት ለደገፉ የኢንፎርሜሽን መረብ ደህንነት አስተዳደር፣ የኢትዮጵያ አርቲፊሻል ኢንተሊጅንሲ፣ ለኢኖቬሽንና ቴክኖሎጂ ሚኒስቴር እና የብሄራዊ መረጃና ደህንነት አገልግሎት ምስጋና አቅርበዋል።

ይህ ማለትም 93 ሺህ የሚሆኑ ሰዎች በተጨማሪም መንገድ ዕጣ በሚወጣበት የቴክኖሎጂ ሲስተም ውስጥ እንዲካተቱ ተደርጓል።

የአዲስ አበባ ከተማ አስተዳደር ሐምሌ 01 ቀን 2014 በወጣው የ20/80 እና 40/60 የጋራ መኖሪያ ቤቶች ዕጣ የዳታ ማጭበርበር ድርጊት በመከሰቱ ሁኔታውን እያጣራ እንደሚገኝ እና በድርጊቱ የተጠረጠሩ ግለሰቦችን በቁጥጥር ስር እያዋለ እንደሆነ ማስታወቂያ ይታወሳል።

በዙፋን ካሳሁን



Appendix IV: FBC’s web news on a request for the status of a region



10 ዞኖችና 6 ልዩ ወረዳዎች በክልል የመደራጀት ጥያቄአቸውን ለፌዴሬሽን ምክር ቤት አቀረቡ

On Aug 4, 2022 🔥 1,040

አዲስ አበባ፣ ሐምሌ 28፣ 2014 (ኤፍ ቢ ሲ) በደቡብ ክልል የሚገኙ አሥር ዞኖችና ስድስት ልዩ ወረዳዎች በክልል የመደራጀት ጥያቄአቸውን ዛሬ ለፌዴሬሽን ምክር ቤት አቅርበዋል።

ጥያቄውን የተቀበሉት የፌዴሬሽን ምክር ቤት አፈ ጉባዔ አቶ አገሻሁ ተሻገር፣ ምክር ቤቱ ውሳኔውን በአጭር ጊዜ ውስጥ ያሳውቃል ብለዋል።

ጥያቄውን ያቀረቡት የደቡብ ክልል የአሥሩ ዞኖች እና የሥድስቱ ልዩ ወረዳዎች ምክርቤቶች በክልል መደራጀታችን የሀብተሰብን የልማት፣ የመልካም አስተዳደር ጥያቄዎች መፍታትና ኢንዱስትሪ አብሮትን ማጠናከር ታሳቢ ያደረገ ነው ብለዋል።

በዙፋን ካሳሁን

ወቅታዊ፣ ትኩስ እና የተሟሉ መረጃዎችን ለማግኘት፡-

ድረ ገጽ፡- <https://www.fanabc.com/>

ፌስቡክ፡- <https://www.facebook.com/fanabroadcasting>

ዩትዩብ፡- <https://www.youtube.com/c/fanabroadcastingcorporate/>

ቴሌግራም፡- <https://t.me/fanatelevision>

ትዊተር፡- <https://twitter.com/fanatelevision>

ዘወትር ከእኛ ጋር ስላሉ እናመሰግናለን!

Appendix V: FBC's web news about border demarcation between Addis Ababa and Oromia region



በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ እና የፊንፊኔ ዙሪያ ኦሮሚያ ልዩ ዞን ወሰን ማካለል ላይ ውይይት ተካሂዶ

On Aug 16, 2022 3,056

አዲስ አበባ፣ ነሐሴ 10፣ 2014 (እፍ ቢ ሲ) በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ እና የፊንፊኔ ዙሪያ ኦሮሚያ ልዩ ዞን የአስተዳደር ወሰን ማካለልን በተመለከተ በሁለቴ ወገኖች የተደረሰ ስምምነት ላይ የሕዝብ ውይይት ተካሂዶ።

ውይይቱ የኦሮሚያ ክልል ርዕሰ መስተዳድር ሸመልስ አብዲሳን እና የአዲስ አበባ ከተማ ከንቲባ አዳነች አቤቤ ጨምሮ የፌዴራልና የክልል ከፍተኛ የመንግስት የሥራ ኃላፊዎች በተገኙበት ነው የተካሄደው።

ከአዲስ አበባ ከተማና የፊንፊኔ ዙሪያ ኦሮሚያ ልዩ ዞን የተውጣጡ የተለያዩ ህብረተሰብ ክፍሎች፣ አባባዎች፣ የሃይማኖት አባቶች፣ የአገር ሽማግሌዎችና የነዋሪዎች ተወካዮች በመደረኩ መሳተፋቸውን በብልጽግና ፓርቲ የአዲስ አበባ ቅርንጫፍ ጽሕፈት ቤት መረጃ አመለካከቷል።

ከንቲባ አዳነች አቤቤ በውይይቱ ላይ ባደረጉት ንግግር፣ በአዲስ አበባና በፊንፊኔ ዙሪያ የኦሮሚያ ልዩ ዞን መካከል ያለውን የአስተዳደር ወሰን ጉዳይ በከፍተኛ የኃላፊነት ስሜት በትጋትና በዌርብኝነት፣ ከሕዝባችን ጋር ስንሠራበትና ስንመክርበት ቆይተን በስኬት አጠናቀናል ብለዋል።

በጋራ የቴክኒክ ኮሚቴ ተዋቅሮ ሲሠራበት የቆየውና ከባለፈው ዓመት ጀምሮ ሲመከርበት የቆየው የአስተዳደራዊ ወሰን ጉዳይ፣ በሕገ መንግስትና በአዲስ አበባ ከተማ ቻርተር መሰረት የወሰን ጉዳይ በሁለቴ አስተዳደር አካላት ይፈታሉ ብሎ በሚያስቀምጠው መሰረት ስምምነት ላይ መደረሱን ነው የገለጹት።

Appendix VI: FBC's web news about detention of illicit dollar exchange

በሕገወጥ የዶላር ዝውውር የተጠረጠሩ 70 የውጭ ዜጎችን ጨምሮ በሕገ ወጥ ተግባራት የተሰማሩ በርካታ ግለሰቦች በቁጥጥር ሥር ዋለ

On Aug 6, 2022 2,802

አዲስ አበባ፣ ሐምሌ 30፣ 2014 (ኤፍ ቢ ሲ) በሕገወጥ የዶላር ዝውውርና በሃዋላ የተጠረጠሩ 70 የተለያዩ ሀገራት ዜጎችን ጨምሮ በተለያዩ ሕገወጥ ተግባራት ላይ የተሰማሩ በርካታ ግለሰቦች በቁጥጥር ሥር መዋላቸውን የብሔራዊ መረጃና ደንገንት አገልግሎት አስታወቀ።

የብሔራዊ መረጃና ደንገንት አገልግሎት ማምሻውን በወጣው መግለጫ እንዳስታወቀው 70 የተለያዩ የውጭ ሀገራት ዜጎች ትራፊክን ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ አድርገው በሕገወጥ የዶላር ዝውውር ሲሳተፉ በተደረገ ጥብቅና የተቀናጀ ክትትል ተደርሶባቸዋል።

ተጠርጣሪዎቹ ከውጭ ወደ ሀገር ቤት የሚላክ ዶላር፣ ዩሮ እና የተለያዩ ሀገራት የውጭ ገንዘቦችንም በየሀገራቱ ለዚህ ዓለማዊ ባስቀመጧቸው ወኪሎቻቸው አማካይነት ወደ ግል አካውንታቸው እንዲገባ በማድረግና የኢትዮጵያ የብር ጥቅቅን በመስጠት በሕገወጥ ዓለም አቀፍ የሃዋላ ተግባርም ጭምር በመሳተፋቸው ተጠርጥረው ከፌዴራል ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን ጋር በመሆን በቁጥጥር ሥር እንዲውሉ መደረጉ በመግለጫው ተመላክቷል።

ይህ በእንዲህ እንዳለ መንግሥት የሠጠውን ኃላፊነት ወደ ጎን በመተው እና ከሕገ ወጥ ደላሎች ጋር በመመሳጠር ሕገወጥ የመኖሪያ ፈቃድን እና ፖስታሪት ጭምር አጭብርብረው ሲሰጡ የነበሩ 36 ተጠርጣሪዎች መያዛቸውም ተገልጿል።

በአዲስ አበባና ሐዋሳ ከተሞች በኢሚግሬሽንና ኤርፖርት አካባቢዎች ላይ ተመድበው ሲሰሩ ከሕገ ወጥ ደላሎች ጋር በመመሳጠር የግል ጥቅማቸውን ሲያግቡበሱ የነበሩ ሠራተኞችና ኃላፊዎች እንዲሁም ሕገወጥ ደላሎች በተደረገ ጥብቅ ክትትልና የሕዝብ ጥቆማ ከሲዳማ ክልላዊ መንግስት ጋር በመቀናጀት በቁጥጥር ሥር መዋላቸውን አገልግሎቱ በመግለጫው ጠቁሟል።

ተቋሙ በምሥራቅ ኢትዮጵያ በድሬዳዋ አካባቢ በሕገወጥ የማዕድን አዘዋዋሪዎች ላይ ያደረገውን ጥልቅ ጥናት መሰረት በማድረግ፣ ከፌዴራል ፖሊስ ኮሚሽን ጋር የተቀናጀ ኦፕሬሽን በማካሄድ ግምታቸው ከ100 ሚሊዮን የአሜሪካ ዶላር በላይ የሚሆኑ የማዕድን ምርቶችን ከ11 ሕገወጥ የማዕድን አዘዋዋሪዎች ጋር በቁጥጥር ሥር እንዲውሉ መደረጉንም አመልክቷል።

በተያያዘ በኮንትራባንድ ንግድ በመሰማራት ግምታቸው ከ70 ሚሊዮን ብር በላይ የሆኑ የተሸከርካሪ መለዋወጫዎችን፣ ልባሽ ጨርቆችን፣ የሲጋራ ምርቶችና መሰል ቁሳቁሶችንም ከ11 ተጠርጣሪዎች ጋር በቁጥጥር ሥር እንዲውሉ ማድረጉንም አገልግሎቱ ጠቅሷል።

Appendix VII: Followers of FBC's social media pages



በሕይወት ፍጥነት!

FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.) ✓

2.7M likes • 3.5M followers

Watch Now Liked Search



FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate) ✓

180 582 subscribers

This is FBC's official Telegram channel.

For more updates please visit www.fanabc.com

VIEW IN TELEGRAM

Preview channel



... Following

FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.)

@fanatelevision

Radio Fana, now called Fana Broadcasting Corporate.
facebook.com/fanabroadcasti...
youtube.com/c/fanabroadcas...
telegram: t.me/fanatelevision

Media & News Company ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA fanabc.com
 Joined August 2012

837 Following 630.4K Followers

Followed by Tigray Update, Ethiopia Current Issues Fact Check, and 67 others you follow



Fana Television
@fanabroadcastingcorporate 1.25M subscribers 33K videos

This is the official Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC) YouTube Channel - ... >

HOME VIDEOS SHORTS LIVE PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT

Appendix VIII: FBC's Facebook news on the graduation of trainees



FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.)
December 31, 2022 ·

የኢትዮ ሳይበር ታላንት ልማት ማዕከል ያሰለጠናቸውን ተማሪዎች እያስመረቀ ነው

አዲስ አበባ ፣ ታኅሣሥ 22 ፣ 2015 (እፍ ቢ ሲ) የመጀመሪያው የኢትዮ ሳይበር ታላንት የሰመር ካምፕ ፕሮግራም ሰልጠኞች ምርቃት እየተካሄደ ነው።

የምርቃት ፕሮግራሙ በሳይንስ ሙዚየም ነው እየተካሄደ የሚገኘው።

ተመራቂዎቹ በነሐሴ ወር 2014 ዓ.ም አገልግሎት ከአዲስ አበባ ሳይንስና ቴክኖሎጂ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ጋር የሰመር ካምፕ በመቅረጽ ሲያሰለጠናቸው የቆዩ ናቸው።

በዛሬው እለትም በታላንት ልማት ማዕከሉ ሲሰለጠኑ የቆዩ 62 ወጣቶች ናቸው የሚመረቁት።

በምርቃት ሥነ ስርዓት ላይ የመንግስት የስራ ሃላፊዎች እና የታላንት ማዕከሉ አጋሮች ተገኝተዋል።

የኢንፎርሜሽን መረብ ደህንነት አስተዳደር የሳይበር ታላንት ልማት ማዕከል በማቋቋም ባለ ልዩ ተሰጥኦ ታዳጊዎችና ወጣቶችን በመመልመል በተለያዩ ዘርፎች እንደሚያለማ ይታወቃል።



Appendix IX: FBC Facebook news on a conference on role of scholars in nation state building



FBC (Fana Broadcasting Corporate S.C.)

December 30, 2022

"በአገረ-መንግስት ግንባታ የምሁራን ሚና" በሚል ርዕስ ሀገራዊ የምክክር መድረክ እየተካሄደ ነው

አዲስ አበባ፣ ታኅሣሥ 21፣ 2015 (ኤፍ ቢ ሲ) በወላይታ ሶዶ ዩኒቨርሲቲ "በአገረ-መንግስት ግንባታ የምሁራን ሚና" በሚል ርዕስ የምሁራን የምክክር መድረክ ማስጀመሪያ መርሃ-ግብር እየተካሄደ ይገኛል።

በመድረኩ የሠላም ሚኒስትር እና የወላይታ ሶዶ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ሥራ አመራር ቦርድ ሰብሳቢ አቶ ብናልፍ አንዷላም ፣ መድረኩ በኢትዮጵያ ዘላቂ ሰላም ለማስፈንና የጋራ ጉዳዮችን በማጉላት ዘላቂ ለውጥ ለማምጣት የሚያስችል ምክረ ሀሳብ የሚነሳበት እና ውይይት የሚደረግበት መሆኑን ገልጸዋል።

በሀገር ግንባታ ላይ የምሁራንን ሚና የላቀ ሚና አለው ያሉት አቶ ብናልፍ ከውይይት መድረኩ ሀገርን የሚጠቅም በርካታ ሀሳብ እንደሚነሳም ይጠበቃል ብለዋል።

ምሁራን በአገረ-መንግሥት ግንባታ ላይ የጎላ ሚና ሊኖራቸው ይገባል ያሉ ሲሆን የምክክር መድረኩ ተሳታፊዎችም ሀገርን የሚያንጽ ሀሳብ በማንሳት የዳበረ ውይይት እንዲያደርጉ ጥሪ አቅርበዋል።

ውይይቱ ዛሬ እና ነገ እንደሚካሄድ ከዩኒቨርሲቲው ያገኘው መረጃ ያመለክታል።



Appendix XI: Sample interview with FBC CEO Ato Admassu Damtew

Researcher: How is FBC implementing media convergence? Could you describe and elaborate how convergence is practiced at the level of the newsroom?

Ato Admassu Damtew: As FBC started off as a radio station when it was established decades ago, initially it had the character of a radio station. However, over the years the media organization introduced television and digital media as additional platforms. Today, there is an integrated work which brings together all the platforms. In FBC, media convergence is practiced at different levels starting from agenda setting. There is a joint editorial team which sets agendas and determines how contents can be tailored to suit the peculiar features of each platform. The dispatch and assignment of reporters is also done in such a way to ensure converged media in the reporting. For instance, if a radio journalist is assigned to cover a story, he produces content not only for radio but also for TV and the digital channels. This has allowed us to disseminate consistent information to audiences across all our platforms.

We have gaps with regards to the skills of our reporters as most of our staff are generalists rather than specialists. Though journalists are conscious of the fact that stories should be crafted to suit each platform, there are skill gaps to implement that. Radio stories are crafted to appeal to the ear while TV stories are done to appeal to both the ear and the eyes. And digital media stories should integrate all these with speed. As I mentioned, we have gaps in implementing that that as planned. This impacts the way in which stories are reported in such a way to suit the nature of each platform. At the FBC, we prepare weekly and monthly plans at joint editorial sessions. Then, the plans are cascaded down to the level of the reporters through each directorate and team leader. On the other hand, the suggestion of staff at the lower level are channeled upward to the editorial team through the directorates. Then, it will be reviewed, enriched and implemented if the editorial buys it.

Researcher: To what extent has FBC made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring for successful media convergence?

Ato Admassu Damtew: When we launched our television station, we also made sure that we have the right and capable staff required for a television station. We leveraged the experience of these two teams in organizing our digital media team. When it comes to implementation, we

have structured our news team in such a way that it allows us to optimize our manpower for converged media. Accordingly, any assigned reporter from our television or radio stations will come up with contents tailored for each of the platforms we run.

Previously we had high level executives for each platform, but currently all these teams are structured under content cluster to work jointly on similar agendas. Accordingly, the content cluster comes up with the same agenda which are then cascaded down the directorates for implementation. Regarding assignments, sometimes we assign reporters from all platforms depending on the story to be covered. But usually we use a reporter to produce contents for each platform. Our radio reporters stationed at regional cities do reports for both media and digital media. Likewise, our television reporters also contribute to radio news production by providing updates live on radio via phone calls. They also forward short texts for the digital media using their cell phones. This is true not only for news contents. We also do the same for entertainment contents depending on the issue to be covered. There are also instances where we channel the audio from a live television coverage through our radio; for example, we do this when His Excellency the Prime Minister makes a public address.

So there is a strong collaboration among television, radio and digital media reporters, and employees are evaluated and awarded based on their performance in implementing media convergence. There are two advantages of media convergence in the context of our media organization, namely, optimizing our human resource and dissemination of consistent reporting across all our platforms.

There is lack of procedures for implementing converged media. The convergence is usually manifested at the top where the agendas are set in joint editorial session. There are some gaps in maintaining the convergence right to the lower level of the structure.

Researcher: What are the strengths and weaknesses of FBC in terms of practicing media convergence?

Ato Admassu Damtew: One of the strengths of FBC in terms of implementing media convergence is the favorable editorial policy of the media organization. We also recruit staff with media convergence in mind. We make sure that new staff are capable of doing reports both for

television and radio. Moreover, we have made digital literacy one of the requirements for employment.

As far as weaknesses are concerned, there are instances where a story is channeled across all platforms without much consideration about the peculiar features of contents tailored to each platform. Meaning, there are tendencies of copying the story developed for one medium and channeling it on the other medium without adequate editing. To address this, we should put in place a team which edits all stories in such a way that the stories are well crafted for each channel. As it stands there are separate teams which edit stories separately, resulting in some discrepancies in reporting. Currently, Staff who do the actual news reports at the reporter and editor levels are not working jointly.

So just as we have joint editorial consultations at the top and integrated assignment allocation, we should also have integrated teams down to the lower level of the news cluster. We also want to have joint sessions of editors on a daily basis to implement the practical implantation of converged media by producing contents which are best suited for each medium.

Researcher: What challenges is FBC facing in implementing converged media?

Ato Admassu Damtew: In terms of challenge, there is lack of capacity on the part of journalists which is limiting their understanding of the peculiar features of each channel. As I mentioned earlier, what we currently have is generalist journalists rather than specialist journalists. They journalists may have studied different media platforms as major and minor when they were in collage. But when it comes to the practice, what they have is the skills of a generalist journalist, not that of specialists. This hinders the growth of both the journalists as well as the platforms we run. This challenges also hampers quality and speed when it comes to developing and disseminating contents. As solutions, we plan to set up a joint team of editors to ensure smooth and proper implementation of converged media. Moreover, we plan to give trainings on the media outlets and their peculiar features. Going forward, we also plan to recruit specialist reporters for each media platform to increase the quality of our reports. We also plan to use proactive recommendations of our Quality Assurance department to endure quality reporting. Currently, this department gathers feedbacks on reports which have already been disseminated.

We will make sure that the department comes with proactive suggestions to prevent flawed reporting from happening in the first place.

Appendix XII: Sample interview with Ato Digafe Dagnachew, Director of FBC's Radio News Content Production

Researcher: How is media convergence practiced in FBC? Could you explain about the workflows and procedures you follow in the newsroom?

Ato Digafe Dagnachew: Integration and collaboration is key in ensuring media convergence in a media organization. At FBC, our journalists consider themselves as reporters for all the channels of the media organization. For instance, a reporter from the Radio News Content Production team doesn't work only for the radio team. He also has the responsibility to feed the television and digital teams with contents to disseminate in those channels. He covers the event for our radio, television and also digital channels. If two reporters from television and radio are assigned to cover a story, they work as a team of a media organization rather than focusing only on the department they belong to. A reporter assigned from any of the teams, first sends information to the digital team through a shared platform. The reporter is there representing FBC, not just the radio or television department. In project news too, the reporter feeds the digital team with the story he is covering. The same is true for television as well. There are stories the radio news team receives from other departments such as television and digital teams. So, we implement media convergence in this way. Starting from the time a journalist joins FBC, he/she considers himself as a reporter of the media organization rather than as a staff of a certain department.

As far as working procedures are concerned, there is a joint editorial team where the directors of all directorates put their heads together and discuss future assignments and projects. The directors also consult each other informally outside the framework of the editorial session on upcoming events and assignments and determine who covers which story. So we discuss on how to integrate our work. We also have an arrangement called core management which involves directors. Through this platform, we continuously share information among ourselves regarding upcoming events. Such arrangements allow us to monitor who is assigned where and the news coverage to be channeled across the different platforms.

Researcher: To what extent has FBC made the required changes in staffing and newsroom restructuring to implement/facilitate converged media?

Ato Digafe Dagnachew: We optimize our human resource whenever we there are multiple stories to cover. We assign one reporter and to produce contents for different platforms. This is also applied in the different teams within the radio news department that I manage.

Researcher: What are the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC?

Ato Digafe Dagnachew: As far as weaknesses are concerned, there is a significant gap between our manpower and the volume of work expected from us. We handle a lot of assignments which is a challenge by itself in light of the size of manpower we have to handle the work. There are also challenges related to lack of staff remuneration considering the labor market. This has led to turnover of experienced staff in search of better pay in other media organizations. Employees on whom the organization has invested a lot to capacitate, are leaving the company seeking better opportunities elsewhere. This is a big challenge as it depletes our manpower and affect the quality of our work. To address this challenge, we are rehiring well experienced employees who had resigned from FBC.

We also work hard to maximize the quality of our work and be competitive. As a media organization running 10 FM radio stations, we leverage our stations to broaden our reach and bring contents from across the country to audiences nationwide. Thus also allows us to optimize our manpower and also to diversify the contents we deliver.

Appendix XIII: Sample focus group discussion with Fana Television staff

Researcher: How is media convergence practiced at FBC? Could you explain about the workflows and procedures you use as you work with the different teams/departments?

Adanech Abebe, from television department: Convergence is being implemented. This allows audiences who miss our live coverages on TV and radio to access the stories on our digital channels such as Facebook, Telegram and YouTube. Considering that Tik Tok is becoming popular these days, FBC should also work more on utilizing that platform.

Minyechel Azezew: Although we are implementing media convergence, I think a lot remains to be done when it comes to maximizing the utilization of multiple digital platforms for disseminating stories.

Leykun Alem: Media convergence is practiced at FBC, especially when it comes to major events and exclusive reports of FBC, the contents are disseminated across all platforms of the media organization.

Tesfaye Kebede: We customize and channel contents through multiple platforms although rewriting contents to suit a certain platform is not something our journalists acquired through training. They just do it the way they understand it... We are making efforts to ensure media convergence at FBC and I think we are gaining more and more audience along the way.

Although media convergence is being practiced at FBC to a certain extent, it is not guided by procedures and standards. It usually depends on the individual efforts of journalists. I have not seen reward or punishment for practicing or not practicing media convergence.

Belsti Aweke: As far as the practice of media convergence at FBC is considered, there was a tendency of considering inter-departmental content sharing as something secondary rather than as a major part of the responsibility of journalists. As FBC started off as a radio station initially, there was also a tendency of considering the digital media as less important than the mainstream media platforms of the organization. Then, through orientation and other activities FBC has been strengthening its digital presence considering that the digital platform has become an increasingly popular platform among many people especially those who have access to the technology. So, I think FBC is embracing the digital media as a key platform for sharing contents to its audiences.

So, content is shared from any coverage of an event is instantly sent to the digital team. The digital department then shares the content in text and image. Then the radio and television productions follow.

Researcher: To what extent has FBC reformed its staffing and the newsroom structure to accommodate converged media?

Leykun Alem: The offices need some kind of procedural framework for practicing media convergence as the practice is ongoing traditionally rather than through a well-designed system of content sharing.

Tesfaye Kebede: Unfortunately, the organizational structure of FBC doesn't seem to be designed in such a way that nurtures interdependence among the different departments of the media organization. That said, there are orientations by departmental leaders to feed contents to the different teams. But it is not led by a written procedure and guideline. There is no accountability if a certain reporter fails to feed contents to other teams.

Belsti Aweke: I haven't seen staffing changes for implementing media convergence. Still, journalists feed contents to different departments based on their personal initiatives. That way journalists are sharing contents among departments.

Researcher: What are the strong and weak sides of the media convergence practice at FBC?

Adanech Abebe: We cover major events and channel them across platforms. That is a strength on the part of FBC as a media organization. Regarding weakness, sometimes there are delays when it comes to feeding contents to other teams is a weakness.

Alemseged Asaye: There are daily editorial meetings on upcoming activities of the media organization. This allows the different teams to keep an eye on the event and cover it as they see fit. This is a strength.

However, I see weaknesses regarding the adequacy of devices and manpower. There are not enough devices and manpower which allow us to do our job properly. That is something which has been limiting the capacity of FBC to cover events adequately.

Tesfaye Kebede: Systems and procedures are lacking and they need to be put in place.... There should be incentives to journalists who are good at feeding contents to other departments. There should also be trainings to journalists to boost their skills regarding media convergence.

Researcher: What are the challenges in practicing media convergence at FBC?

Minyechel Azezew: There is no dedicated coordinator who can facilitate media convergence... Lack of devices are challenges which are hampering fast sharing of contents.

Belsti Aweke: he devices we use are not advanced enough to capture contents at the level of quality expected by our audiences. As this is an age of mojo [mobile journalism], FBC should provide its journalists with devices which enable them to come up with quality contents as they cover events.

Sometimes we may need to come back to the studio rapidly and upload contents to share for audiences. But due to lack of company cars for transportation we may share the contents late.