ANALYSIS OF THE COMPLIANCE OF KENYA'S ONLINE LEAD STORIES TO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

PHILIP MOMANYI MAOSA
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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this research project is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution other than the University of Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed————————   **Date** ————————
Name: Philip Momanyi Maosa - Registration number: K50/80636/2015

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

This research project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed————————   **Date** ————————
Supervisor: Dr Samuel Siringi
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the Almighty God for giving me the strength and courage to conduct the study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

It is not in dispute that my success would not have been possible without assistance from my lecturers and supporting staff. I specifically thank my supervisor, Dr Samuel Siringi, who guided me during my research.

Furthermore, I also wish to thank my classmates with whom we studied together during group work and also consulted each other. It was a great academic journey, which is memorable.

I also thank the Lord for giving me life and the drive to study and appreciate the goodness of knowledge.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

NMG : Nation Media Group

PRC : Pew Research Center

KBS : Kenya Broadcasting Service

BBC : British Broadcasting Company

OSF : Open Society Foundations

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the compliance of *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* newspapers to professional requirements in publishing lead stories on their websites. The study hinged on three objectives: to compare the lead online stories published by *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* based on features of online journalism; to investigate the completeness of lead stories of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* based on Mike Ward's online journalism elements; and to examine the quality of online lead stories based on Mike Ward's elements of online journalism. The diffusion of innovation theory developed by Everett Rogers in 1962 was used to inform the study. The research utilized the qualitative research approach. The method used was case study. Moreover, the population was restricted to the content of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* websites. The research used purposive sampling technique, under the non-probability sampling methods. The method of data collection was content analysis while the tool was Mike Ward's tools of online journalism. The research used thematic analysis, derived from themes based on Mike Ward's features of online journalism, which were presented using the narrative method. The study found that reporters from both media organisations utilise most of the online journalism tools. Also, the study found that participation between readers and reporters is prioritized. The research recommended that journalists should stop overemphasizing on one type of multimedia and ensure media that promote interactivity are maintained.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This chapter provides the background, statement of the problem, objectives, research questions, justification and significance of this study. It also underscores the place of digital media in the society.

1.2 Background of the study

Mass communication is vitally important in any given society. It ensures that citizens are abreast with the most recent situations in their surroundings and are equipped to make sound decisions on matters affecting them.

Philosopher Francis Bacon (1537) said succinctly that information is power. People exploit tools of mass communication to source for information, which they use in their daily lives (Emery, Ault and Agee, 1970) .

Slimming down to the exact definition of this field has been a tall order because of the perpetual volatility of the various forms of communication such as public and private (McQuail, 2010). This notwithstanding, Rogers (1962) defined communication as the sharing of ideas from one person to another to create meaning.

Upon this foundation, we can derive the definition of mass communication as sending out "information, ideas and attitudes to a sizable and diversified audience through the use of the media developed for that purpose" (Emery et al, 1970, pp5).

These means include electronic media (television, radio and films), print media (newspapers and magazines) and popular media such as the Internet. Thus, the relevance of mass media and its agents cannot be emphasized enough. As Emery et al (1970) argue, the society is media-centric.

Hence, communicators must have the wherewithal (knowledge) to appropriately determine the right media channel to propagate information since "they will shape our destiny" (Emery et al, 1970, pp3).

The agents are reporters, editors, press associations, advertisement agencies, public relations firms and research institutions, among others (Emery et al, 1970). It is cardinal to note that the mass media is being moved by the rollers of progressiveness. It is ever changing. The media today is neither the media of yesterday nor the media of the future.

Turow (2010) points out that there are more media products and technologies such as computers, which provide users with a tuft of choices on what information to consume. He further adds that the current media are no longer unique, owing to the entrance of convergence — "when content that has traditionally been confined to one medium appears on multiple media channels" (Turow, 2010, pp5).

This resistance to inertia has led to the adoption of new trends by media agents and agencies in reaching audiences. The industry has been visited by steady and 'violent' movement from one communication channel to another — adequately summarized as communications revolution.

Gordon (1977) illustrates that man has abandoned 'archaic' channels of oral to written. From the use of hieroglyphics to the invention of the printing press in the 15 century by a German called Johannes Gutenberg. Centuries later there have been inventions of other media such as TV and cinema, among others.

Kenya has not been left out of the media revolutions. The media landscape in Kenya is metamorphosing at a very fast pace. However, it is still functioning in an environment that is devoid of adequate infrastructures that facilitate effective execution of functions. Mbeke (2008) says that the industry bulks under the pressure of inefficient legal and regulatory structures engendered by the colonial master, Britain.

It tightly controlled information carried in newspapers at the time. Fortunately, the putting up of the Kenya Broadcasting Service (KBS) in 1959 opened the opportunity for the maturisation of the media during the leadership of Jomo Kenyatta (1963-1978). KBS was later revamped to Voice of Kenya in 1964 and nationalized (Mbeke, 2008).

During this time the purpose of empowering the media was solely driven by development, unification, political antagonism and media ownership (Mbeke, 2008). From then on there has been an upward spiral of major milestones in the information, communications and technologies sector that have in turn influenced media.

The Ministry of Information (2006) identifies substantial progress in the following areas: increase in internet service providers (73 registered by 2005), telephony, cable and fiber networks, broadcasting stations (approximately 60 per cent have access to television and 90 per cent radio) and digital broadcasting, through the transition from analogue to digital.

In the pursuit of more audience and maximisation of its opportunities, media houses in Kenya are taking up convergence; requiring them to resort to new, creative and dynamic measures of conducting business that includes shedding off the 'old' ways (Juma, 2013).

This has consequently led to the renaissance of journalism, which is termed as online journalism. Technology is the impetus of the milestones in the sector (Korir, 2013).

Transformations in media can be traced far back to 2001 during the attack on World Trade Center in the United States of America. Americans, primarily through the Internet and other news avenues, were apprised of minute-by-minute state of affairs concerning the assault.

They did not have to wait for the following day to get comprehensive information in newspapers. Craig (2005) cites a similar disaster that occurred in 1901 — the assassination of US President William McKinley — whereby citizens were not exposed to instant, timely and pristine information. The sublime difference between the two events is that one happened in the Internet age.

Kolodzy (2006) puts the matter into proper context, saying that in this century there is an array of news sources at consumers' disposal compared to decades ago. Other avenues are now popping up complementing the erstwhile predominant monoliths (television, radio and print).

The news values as we know them of timeliness, proximity, among others, have been transcended. Multimediality has brought with it more demands from audiences and entirely impacting on journalism activities. Now, photos, videos and texts accompany each other when breaking stories (Craig, 2005).

Craig further points out that the profound nuance between online and print journalism is that the former supports multimedia and constant updating of stories; adding that Americans sourcing online news websites (according to a study by Pew Research Center in 2002) had scaled to 82 million, up from 52 million in 2000.

Online news consumption is lurching. That a major blow has been dealt on the media cannot go unnoticed: shrinking and fragmentation of audiences is causing media firms a headache. Readership, viewership and advertising are declining (Kolodzy, 2006).

Firms are working out ways to reach their audiences, compelling them to're-invent' in order to flourish in the digital era (Dominick, 2011). And the only and favourable way to achieve success is by converging. Biagi (2012) views digital media as "mass communication technology that combine text, pictures, sound and video using computer technology" (pp187).

Biagi adds that Nicholas Negroponte, in 1978 at Massachusetts University of Technology, was the first person to identify the convergence theory; that involves merging of technologies. It has precipitated unfettered flow of communication and convenience.

However, Kolodzy (2006) faults the interpretation of this precipice describing it as "ill-defined, misunderstood and misrepresented" (pp3). She says convergence should be fathomed as focusing on leading-edge ways of approaching news coverage that involves delivering information in the most appropriate and effective way — which she terms as combining different elements of storytelling.

Dominick (2011) lists three types of convergence: corporate, operational and device (technological). Corporate convergence is a situation whereby content providing firms, starting in 1980s, acquired distribution companies such as movie studios, which was to make it possible for a single firm to be able to provide any kind of service.

Some of the noted are the merger between Time Warner and AOL ad between Vivendi ad Universal Studios and Universal Music. But the system failed. Operational convergence on the other hand takes place when managers of different news outfits form a single unit.

Operational convergence is underway in Kenya, for example, at Nation Media Group where TV, print and Online desks are working as one entity. In Florida too, TV station WFLA, Tampa Tribune and TBO.com did the same thing.

Dominick posits that the merits of these arrangements are cost cutting, because one reporter, for example, will repurpose content to be ingestible by all the platforms; and the demerit is about competency issues — employees will have to undergo training to be abreast with the other platforms.

Finally, device convergence involves consolidating the functions of several gadgets into one. Smartphones fit well in this category. For example, one can use a Samsung mobile phone to capture audio, video, take pictures, write texts and send them where they are wanted. Similarly, Kolodzy (2006) calls this trend technological convergence.

Marshall McLuhan (1964) said that the medium is what drives an audience compared to the content. Also, world news is shaped by media and that through technology the world has become a global village.

McLuhan (1964) classified media channels under 'hot' and 'cold'. The latter embodies interactivity while the former is one way (photographs and print media). Based on this classification, digital media falls in the cool' category.

Kolodzy (2006) adds economic and journalistic convergence as other types of the phenomena. With regards to the first one, cross promotion of brands and consolidation are used as synergies. She cites an example of when a movie in 1999, *Eyes Wide Shut* starred by Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, by The Warner Bros. was cross marketed in Times magazine through a review and on CNN, on Larry King Live.

All media the media used are owned by Time Warner Company. Consolidation is when, as earlier indicated, media companies merge. Journalistic convergence involves roping in media

platforms to dole out content through different formats, news is repackaged over and over to suit the different media and promote interactivity.

Olawuyi and Friday (2012) say that technological convergence is changing how information is gathered, processed and distributed. It has made access to information easier and pleasant. They say that this type of convergence permits communication between different products thus enabling actors to operate in different but synchronized way.

1.3 Problem Statement

The uptake of convergence for the sake of improving news processing has been accepted by media institutions.

More importantly, digitization has made journalists change their way of providing news and their interaction with the audience (Nyabuga and Booker, 2013), hence it has impacted journalism in Kenya (Waxman, 2012). The need for the adoption of new practices is necessitated by the need to provide important information in a manner that will enrich the public.

News must be delivered immediately and accurately so that the consumers can make informed decisions on different issues affecting them. The traditional media was not able to take care of this requirement. The internet became popular because it allowed for the publishing of stories in real time.

Presently, people get news hours before the newspaper production even begins. Nevertheless, the quality of stories and how they are sourced has been largely affected. In journalism of yore, reporters had the luxury of filling stories at a particular time but now things have changed (Waxman, 2012).

With the immense use of mobile technology and applications such as WhatsApp, they are required to file minute by minute status update of events. The editors also upload the updates on the websites as they trickle in (Craig, 2005).

Online editors, unlike their print media counterparts, do not wait for the complete story to process it. This is therefore one of the major advantage of online journalism (Ward, 2002).But the quality of stories seems not to be improving; on the contrary, one might argue that news processing is receiving a hard hit despite convergence being perceived as suitable.

As a result of increased competition to break news on social networking sites, rapid news service alerts and websites numerous, for example, cases of inaccuracies have been recorded (Waxman, 2012). Also, since reporters are supposed to write stories for both online and print platforms, the depth of the former is mostly in question.

The stories are not written comprehensively because they are working on limited time since the work load has increased (Waxman, 2012). But more importantly, the promotion of user-friendly content has received more focus.

Ward (2002) says that online news stories have the ability to give readers a pleasant experience if the necessary tools are put into use. For online stories to sell the content must be packaged in the most appealing way, by promoting quality.

Quality can be measured according to the distinctive features of online stories by Mike Ward: multimedia, interactivity, immediacy, and linkage/hypertext; there is also chunking that involves using themes to separate parts of a story to improve readership potential.

Whereas interactivity involves the provision of avenue to communicate with readers through direct mail and commenting on stories, linkage is the use of digital text that enables a reader navigate related information through embedded hyperlinks.

This study therefore sought to use the four Mike Ward elements as a quality analysis framework to find out if Kenya's online media applied the standards in their lead stories.

1.4 General objective

Main objective: To investigate the impact of convergence on journalism in Kenyan media houses

1.4.1 Specific objectives

1. To compare the lead online stories published by *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* based on the four features of online journalism outlined by scholar Mike Ward.

2. To investigate the completeness of lead stories of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* based on Mike Ward's elements of online journalism.

3. To examine the quality of online lead stories based on Mike Ward's elements of online journalism.

1.5 Research questions

1. Do the online stories published in the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* apply Mike Ward's four elements?

2. What are the most complete online lead stories published in the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* websites?

3. Were the lead stories published in the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* websites processed in accordance to Mike Ward's elements of online journalism?

1.6 Justification of the study

Digital journalism is the present and future of journalism in Kenya and the world over. Journalists are now expected to possess the requisite skills to spur their functions in the digital environment.

The impact of this revolution must therefore be checked and balanced on the scales of media code of conduct and other guidelines to determine whether it is scaling up news quality. Waxman (2012) said that the quality of copy had been greatly compromised not just by journalists increased work but also by the insatiable consumption of news.

Given that many readers, particularly the young, depend on social networking sites (for example Twitter and Facebook) for information (Kamau, 2013), it places journalists at a vantage point to either build or destroy readers through the nature of news processed.

1.7 Significance of the study

The Nation Media Group, the leading media house in Kenya, started converging about four years ago; and it is still ongoing. The idea behind convergence is to improve how news is processed and delivered to the audience.

Whereas much has been done to improve the speed of deliver and content packaging, the same content is under scrutiny by readers and internal staff at *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* newsrooms.

Hence, this study looked into how the Ward features are affecting news quality and how they can be used by media managers and media institutions to propagate well-packaged content.

1.8 Scope and limitation of the study

This study was restricted to the stories published on the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* websites within a period of four days.

1.9 Operational terms

Mass media: it is a collective term referring to channels of transmitting news to a huge number of people, such as television.

Journalism: is the study of how to write news stories and transmit them to consumers.

Reporter: this is someone who is trained on how to gather, process and disseminates news to the public.

Internet: it is the physical infrastructure linking computers to each other allowing communication.

Web: is the point of connection (interface) that permits users to share different types of information on the internet.

Completeness: This term refers to stories that have all the elements: multimedia, interactivity, immediacy and linkage.

Convergence: this refers to the bringing together of various media platforms to function as one unit.

Multimedia: is the combination of different forms of media such as text, video, audio and pictures.

Quality: refers to the dissemination of stories that contain the features of online journalism as elaborated by Mike Ward: multimedia, hypertexuality and interactivity.

Digital: is the technological surge that has enabled huge amounts of information to be transmitted anywhere at a fast rate.

Online: this is a term that refers to the process of accessing, retrieving and relaying digital information.

News: can be described as information that meets the following criteria: relevance, arousal (dramatic, entertaining and unique) and revelation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

This chapter will comprehensively address what integration of media platforms means to the core of journalism: news production and dissemination. The features of online journalism by Mike Ward will also be focused on.

2.2 Ward's elements of online journalism

Mike Ward (2002) expounds the concept of 'Attention economy' that was engendered by Michael Goldhaber, which focuses on ways to capture the audience's attention on the web. In essence, the only way readers, for instance, can be interested in a particular content is if they find it engaging.

Ward (2002) observes that with the emergence of a new medium there have been two significant outcomes: improved communication through which people can share their various experiences and upping "the ante" (pp5). He equates the digital technology to a genie that has escaped its leash and does not intend to be restrained again.

The ubiquity of this technology has changed the way of life. But the all-absorbing question professionals and 'bedroom publishers' are grappling with is how this medium can be controlled to achieve its optimum strength — that is, "how to make journalism work on the Web" (pp6).

Ward (2002) advances two attributes that make online journalism distinct: researching and reporting; and construction and publishing of story. When writing a story, journalists are now able to research and get information quickly compared to the pre-digital years.

They can also get in touch with respondents through various mediums such as chart lines. The internet contains all types of information that the reporter can select and deselect for his/her use. Publishing of the content is the one under scrutiny.

The standards advanced by Mike Ward are immediacy, multimedia, interactivity and linkage. Immediacy is one of the most prestigious advantages digital technology has over other mediums. A journalist is able to constantly update news and give a breakdown simultaneously.

Multimedia on the other hand pertains the wide range of user friendly mediums such as text, video, still pictures, information graphics and audio. This contributes to the user's pleasant experience when he/she interacts with content on the website.

The content should be disseminated through the appropriate channel to maximize user gratification. Ward (2002) indicates that interactivity occurs on three levels. First is when the user interacts with the provider of content. For example, readers can send journalists emails with their views or to contribute more information about the story.

Second is consumer to consumer interaction. Most online stories have message boards that allow readers to post their comments thus providing different perspectives to a story that journalists can also pick and run with.

There is also the instance when the reader becomes the provider. This mostly takes place on social media sites such as Facebook. Users post information about their surroundings that elicit conversations that may find their way into mainstream media. Digital technology has empowered everyone with a smartphone to be a citizen journalist.

Unlike the past years when readers would tip journalists, the digital era enables the people to publish information by-passing the gatekeepers. The information hence may not be subjected to the veracity that comes with working for a conventional media organisation.

The use of hyperlinks provides a user with further information to the one offered. A piece of news could be linked to a similar one covered years back or to an authoritative organisation that is concerned about the theme of the story. These characteristics enable a user consume information non-linearly. They can independently click on the web story of their choosing.

The evolution of media has forced former ways to be changed to suit the new way of presenting news. Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) argue that this evolution has become a new burden to journalists for they have to adapt to the system in terms of being multiskilled. The evolution of the media has introduced new ways of approaching content generation. Global media houses have adopted, riding on the tide.

In packaging of content, Mike Ward (2002) advanced the use of four key elements in stories: multimedia, hyperlinks, immediacy and interactivity. Ward, in his book *Journalism Online* published in 2002, suggests ways journalists can go about writing for online medium. This framework was used to guide this study.

Ward was a journalist for a decade. Having worked for organisations such as the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), he ventured into academia, lecturing and later heading University of Central Lancashire's journalism school in Preston.

He develops various media courses. His book is used internationally in teaching students. Arguably, convergence is considered to be the future of journalism. Companies have embraced it to break news at all times.

2.3 The need for multiskilled journalists in global media

In the political party primaries in Kenya, the Nation Media Group journalists and editors relayed results as they streamed in. Readers were kept informed even before the final tallying. Technology usage and the internet have made this possible.

It is happening worldwide, whereby media marriage has been prioritized and diversification tossed away (Quinn, 2009). Technological revolution, as Franklin (2005) posits, has goaded journalists to be multiskilled.

Reporters are filing for the website, print, recording videos and even taking photographs. However, the transition is hindered by insufficient technological expertise due to lack of adequate training (Quinn 2009). For a converged media to be successful all the key players must co-opete (cooperate and compete).

While acknowledging that journalists from British media establishments have taken up multimedia reporting, Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) however observe that their responses have not been fast.

On the other hand, the idea of convergence has been implemented fairly successfully. Kolodzy (2006) says that people are at the epicentre of journalism; hence if they do not get along well then the exercise flounders.

News gathering is a community activity. Consequently, for it to work good communication must be put into good use (Quinn, 2009). With regards to processing of news, Craig (2005) gives us an in-depth insight.

He argues that the disparate between online and print journalism is that the former has multiplatform capabilities while the latter does not. Secondly, on the online avenue, stories can be perpetually revised as new information trickles in.

Craig (2005) points out that shovelware — taking texts from print and uploading them on a website — is now playing second fiddle to the need for fresh content. The Nation Media Group for example has employed a 'digital first' concept.

There are factors that directly affect news processing: audience, attitudes and medium. For a story to be popular, the use of photographs is non-negotiable. Online readers are actively involved when reading stories and if it does not interest them instantly, for instance when few photos have been used, they move to something else.

Research says the audience of the Nation website comprises men. In such a situation, more will be geared towards maintaining the niche but also rope in more women. The digital public has a penchant for news thus amending the art of storytelling (Craig, 2005).

The new wave reporting has its weaknesses. Firstly, while in a newspaper one can easily navigate the pages, in online one must move from webpage to webpage. And the screen — on a mobile phone, which is the most popular tool for accessing news — is small in size in contrast to a newspaper.

Secondly, online stories require more work in breaking the monopoly of reading news. Hence, photos, videos and audio clips come highly recommended. If the chunks of tests are not broken by these alternate platforms readers get bored and may not visit the site again.

On the other hand, online media has strengths: stories can be hyperlinked, there is no space limitation and can be archived.

Quinn (2009) suggests that media players must change their attitudes and behaviours towards convergence. Rather than promoting individualism, group efforts should be championed. Kolodzy (2006) concurs that reporters must be willing to share story tips.

Through this the focus shifts to pleasing the public with good coverage as opposed to who has the award-winning story of the day. Janet Kolodzy (2006) adds that media houses that have witnessed successes where integration is concerned concentrated on the core responsibility: informing the public.

It is equally important to note that the traditional writing format — the inverted pyramid — is not always applicable. Story structures consider the order of events and the medium. The inverted pyramid is used in both online and print.

But chronology format is more common online. This is because if the story grasps readers' attention they will read in-depth. Another one called the Wall Street Journal structure entails the use of description in leads and the knitting of the lead with other elements in the story.

It personalizes stories. Campbell (2011) indicates that convergence has undisputedly impacted news production processes. The advent of new media introduced what can be viewed as continuous or unending supply of information.

News cycle is 24/7. The erstwhile punching in and out is seemingly nonexistent. Journalists work round the clock to deliver stories with speed, but also not pushing accuracy aside; however, there

are cases where accuracy has been compromised for the sake of being the first to get the story out.

News alerts is one of the platforms that have redefined news production and dissemination. Important information is sent out to subscribers at a particular fee. The messages are tailored to fit into the interests of the receiver — it could be about international news, entertainment among others.

This means that information is circulated incrementally as events unravel. Jeongsub Lim's (2010) research that studied how important issues are covered by major online newspapers in America provides a glimpse of this issue.

Lim (2010) highlights the basic tenets behind news convergence: attention and placement. He points out that in spite of the media overhaul, the fundamentals are still intact. He did a study on four websites and observed that placement of stories and the attention accorded to them determine how they lie on the webpage.

Further, websites are constantly updated to appear fresh and appealing. The number of pageviews websites get rest, partly, on the new stories being published. This therefore influences the agenda-setting role of the mainstream media, which remains unchanged.

But sadly, this privilege that news corporations enjoyed now seems to be on the precipice. Waxman (2012) posits that now that the power has been distributed to everyone by technology, anyone and everyone has the power to set the agenda.

In fact sometimes elite media houses' agendas are controlled by social media networking sites, particularly when users belabor on something they deem relevant; and journalists pick it up and develop it further.

Setting of the agenda is moving away from a localized point. Chaffee and Metzger (2001) illustrate this point well. In addition to decentralization of control, the sources of journalists also change.

Now that many have access to new media anyone can be a content creator. Anyone can be a journalist, thus the creeping in of the concept of citizen journalism. Everyone has an 'equal' chance of contributing to the conversation.

More importantly, Chaffee and Metzger (2001) point out that the technologies have significantly altered the idea of mass communication. This is because with the availability of a tuft of information access points, media organisations have had to ebb away from traditional conveying of content to a larger and heterogeneous group, to now a specified and smaller one.

Audiences have been segmented to receive information that they like; making the elite houses still relevant. The new media has emancipated the mass because they are now the ones with the power to drive stories and control media and government.

Jenkins (2006) rakes in a new dimension that greatly shines new light on the meaning of convergence and news processing. He brings to the fore the key terms — media convergence, participatory culture and collective intelligence. Collective intelligence refers to the reality that in the wake of technology no one holds monopoly of information and that everyone and anyone has the capability and ability to engage in meaningful debates. Smartphones make this opportunity possible.

The term was conjured up by Pierre Levy. Althaus and Tewksbury (2000) said that the demand for online news is increasing. The rise is directly proportional to the emergence of more platforms. This however impacts on how audiences ingest information.

Waxman (2012) states that readers surveil more than they can chew; they do not engage in comprehensive reading unless a story is completely new to them. The unlimited capacity model advanced by Waxman then comes to play.

She says that this want for uninterrupted news supply 'discourages' reporters from practicing long-form journalism. Mid-form and short-form journalism then carry the day because they are not bound by time and in-depth research, whereas exposure to a plethora of topics will soar, the readers' knowledge will only be superficial.

2.4 Media culture

In Kenya convergence is still setting up roots in all media enterprises. In Nation Media Group (NMG) for example, convergence technology became manifest about four years ago, encountering upheavals and admiration from journalists and also administrative quarters.

Juma (2013) says journalists considered lack of adequate training and insufficient technological facilitation, such as laptops, as the major impediment to complete adoption of the phenomena. Disposition of the players, as Juma (2013) points out, was also a moderating factor.

Whether it would be a success or utter mistake was being discussed. In the same breath, Korir (2013) indicates that though multiplatform conveyance of content has been taken up in NMG, ethical issues have been raised.

Korir (2013) advances that issues of accuracy have been flagged in online stories, and generally morality of coverage of stories is more compromised on the online avenue. At the same time, he adds that variety has been introduced, and suggests aggressive compliance to ethical standards.

Moreover, Shankleman (2003) says that the culture of corporations is what determines their successes and whether they can stay relevant and afloat in a volatile and disruptive society. The culture in this case refers to the practices firms have adopted along the way, using them as a lighthouse for making decisions. They include the nature of stories covered, the tone.

Citing operations in global media agencies, CNN and BBC, Shankleman (2003) says that a company's goals must be realigned with the ever-changing environment. She says that CNN capitalized on real-time news updates, which give stories life making them attractive and hence attractive to audiences. Additionally, another dynamic revolves around the devices audiences prefer to use in consuming news.

Mobile technology has protruded as the most endeared gadget. A study by Pew Research Center (2015) observes that out of 50 online news websites, 39 got their traffic from mobile. Only a fraction read from desktop computers.

Digital avenues have bludgeoned legacy platforms such as TV. Nonetheless, it has led to the development of online audio, which is opening a new frontier called "audio journalism".

The report indicates that "as of January 2015 35 per cent of cell phone-owning adults have listened to online radio in the car, up from 21 per cent in 2013 and nearly six times that of 2010 (six per cent). Whether this ends up a positive or negative development for news remains unclear".

Pew Research Center (2015) defines legacy as "websites and associated apps of news organisations that have non-digital arms like newspapers". Owing to the love for digital technologies, revenues have been on an upswing while those of traditional platforms such as newspapers have been slumping due to cut down of income from advertisers (PRC, 2015).

Media players have encountered challenges in trying to implement the digital first approach by setting up various products that are exclusively digital. PRC (2015) cites BuzzFeed and First Look Media are some of the ventures that had good intentions but collapsed.

It is also important to note, as carried along by Waxman (2012) and bolstered by PRC's study, that mobile users spend little time on stories compared with desktop users. On a positive note, digital advertising has been growing with $50.7bn (Sh500bn) being spent on digital adverts.

The growth of technology has also made podcasts — audio files available on the internet — become a favourite to the public. PRC advances that the growth has been increasing due to the ubiquity of smartphones.

2.5 Media channel and news retention

Comprehension and retention of messages is a significant area of study, more so with the rapidity of technology. Gumus and Ozad (2011) indicate that users of newspapers and television have a high chance of retaining information more.

At the same time, with reporters being required to report on all platforms, it is safe to say that convergence is its own enemy. Manpower has shrunk since one person is now required to the job of at least two people.

Dupagne and Garrison (2003) say that reporters at Tampa News Centre complained of having more work to do in less time. Further, job descriptions have been revised; for example if one only used to write then he or she is now supposed to take photographs and videos. This hence calls for additional training.

On this vein, respondents in Dupagne and Garrison's (2003) research said that journalists must be 'perfect' at a particular skill and acquaint themselves with the others as well. And more importantly, good communication is a requisite.

Realigning the education curriculum with the current job trends is mandatory, focusing on multimedia. New media has definitely eroded the perceived boundaries separating traditional and digital media, with studies pointing to the irreversibility of the advancements.

Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) indicate that traditional media must find its spot in this new space and cultures in newsrooms must be redefined. This is so because movement is from 'linear' to multifaceted — relaying information through a single media channel to a now integrated system.

As much as the digital locomotive has increased the speed at which content is produced, as Saltzis and Dickinson (2008) concluded, the same study indicated that multiskilling has not made results to be attained quicker compared to traditional journalism.

On the contrary, the study shows that more time is spent on a story, but this does not erode, and may never, the gains achieved through 'digitalness'. Journalists also work in a high pressure environment to beat their competitors and deliver the expected results (Saltzis and Dickinson, 2008).

They also point out that more mistakes are likely to be run since the journalists face less editorial checks, owing to the condensed number of people producing news items. Nonetheless, the study indicates that accuracy is non-negotiable and that a competitive environment comes with the territory.

Wilson (2014) says that information communication and technology has transformed presswork in a cataclysmic manner. Also, productivity and news packaging have increased for the better. Deuze (2004) says that the concept of convergence and its practice is a hot area of study. Convergence is a very interesting concept and phenomenon that is defining what journalism is.

Quinn (2005) likens convergence, which he also calls multi-platform publishing or integrated journalism, to a destination and the time taken to get there varies from organisation to organisation. More importantly, he elicits the question of why media managers are adopting multiplatform publishing; to improve quality of work or to increase their revenues.

Media companies in the world over are embracing convergence so that they are not left behind. Quinn (2005) adds that online journalism has played a leading role in the transition to convergence.

It is cardinal to note that convergence in this study will only focus on the content aspect whereby various products that fit into the different conveying platforms are produced; the technological form of convergence is peripheral, according to Quinn (2005).

According to Rich Gordon (2001), convergence has become a fashionable word being tossed around by media practitioners. Gordon traces the history of convergence and how it has evolved into a term that has shaped and influenced modern-day journalism.

He says that change agents in media companies used the word to indicate "transformation", and as a result it became a powerful word. But there was a problem that was not envisaged: the term has various definitions (Gordon, 2001).

Quinn (2005) said that since an aspect of convergence required multi-skilled staff, it became an undoing. This is so because a reporter would be required to take still photos, write a story for the web, the television and probably the newspaper at any given time.

Whereas it provided products for managers to plaster on the different mediums, the work done was below standard. Bob Haiman, President Emeritus of the Poynter Institute, pointed out the resemblance of such a reporter to a boat-car. Despite the boat-car being a creative move, it was not as helpful because it still had to be a car and a boat too.

For integrated journalism to succeed, top brass of companies must employ structural convergence that involves the re-organisation of the newsroom and creating new positions that will be dedicated to convergence. Additionally, it involves complete sharing of news events through the setting up of a news hub (Quinn, 2005).

This is where the editors will decide how best to tell the story — meaning there has to be a difference between how the story is told with the use of multimedia compared to how it would have been conveyed before the consolidation. It is measured by the value added (Northrup, 2004).

Northrup (2004) adds that journalists must now jump out of their comfort zones to deliver news that is abundant with information, which is done by providing comprehensive coverage through, for example, Mike Ward's elements of journalism online: using links, among others.

Cross-promotion of content, which is also seen as cooperation, cannot be termed as real convergence because it does not significantly improve the provider and consumer relationship (Northrup, 2004).

As convergence continues to set roots in Kenya, the revenue of traditional media such as newspapers has drastically reduced. For example, newspaper readership and revenue from sales and advertisements have condensed (Handorf, 2013).

The digital technology introduced competiveness in the industry that has forced media agencies to adopt. Handorf (2013) argues that advertisers have shifted to the internet, where information is largely consumed from. The digital model of communication has brought with it multiplatform publishing.

And it is on this basis that the motive of the drivers of convergence is being interrogated. Quinn and Quinn-Allan (2005) say that whether media entities are taking up convergence to improve the quality of coverage or to ramp up business is a behemoth matter that has to be addressed.

They observe that media managers presume that since the requirement of reporters to be multiskilled for convergence to work, which consequently sheds the number of staff, is a cost-cutting endeavor. Whereas that may be true, it does not apply in the production of content.

Quinn and Quinn-Allan (2005) highlight what Prof Fred Hilmer, the former vice-chancellor of University of NSW, said about how managers can increase their revenue through this phenomenon. Prof Hilmer advocated for non-fragmentation, which discourages individual operations. But marketed a format in which different mediums pool together to relay information across different platforms, thus maintaining, building or continuing the relationship with its audience(s).

More importantly, reporters believe that convergence improves the quality of their work. When a reporter is required to deliver a story in various platforms he/she will be able to identify their shortfalls and also appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of different media (Quinn and Quinn-Allan, 2005).

It is worth noting that business and journalism do not function in isolation good journalism attracts advertisement and advertisement makes good or better journalism possible. Convergence is aided by the internet and digital technology equipment such as computers. Northrup (2004) says that multiplatform publishing is a strategy that will facilitate the growth of a media firm by expanding its market tentacles; and business will be on an uptick.

The significant shift not only involves journalists having superior and better ways to present news but also the audience having appropriate ways of consuming it. Convergence is driven by audience fragmentation, changing behaviours of consumers and the time spent on media. According to a research done by Ipsos Synovate (2011), mobile phones are the core of information access among Kenyans.

Additionally, the Media Council of Kenya (2016) says that digital technologies have become central in the lives of Kenyans. The increasing access and use of these technologies have altered the functioning of media. The Council adds that with the decrease in the exploitation of traditional media, organisations must change by embracing the innovations for their survival.

For convergence to thrive, managers must first advocate for a change in mindset. For example, reporters should say 'I am working in news not print'. Secondly, all staff should be assigned roles that are in line with their skills. This will increase their productivity, leading to synergy.

And one of the best way of promoting cooperation to maximize potential in newsrooms, Northrup (2004) says, is by establishing a 'hub'— what he describes as a superdesk'. This refers to a central place where different editors dealing with convergence directly are concentrated.

More importantly, Northrup (2004) says that multiplatform publishing is a strategy for media organisations to grow rather than a cost-reduction affair. On the contrary, implementing convergence requires heavy investment in software (human resources and conceptualization), hardware (equipment) and capacity building (training). "Convergence is not about technology. It is about the story that reaches consumers by way of technologies that consumers use as part of their media mix" (pp102).

It concerns the utilization of several media to produce the best story than how individual mediums would have performed when relaying the same story. As required in the adoption of a new behaviour, evaluation is relevant.

Northrup (2004) posits that media managers must appraise the success of convergence by using indicators that will display the progress being achieved. For example tracking the response generated by specific stories that were produced in a converged manner by monitoring web pageviews, average reading time and how much it was shared.

Convergence facilitates suitable use of different media at various stages of story development: breaking, developing, following and resulting. According to Northrup, "no single news medium is ideal for presenting all stages for the entire gamut of news consumers" (pp103).

However, the nature of convergence dictates that the most effective medium should be used when publishing a story. The evolution of journalism can be traced to the early nineties when the first web browser was developed.

At the time there was no enthusiasm shown towards the use of the internet and the emergence of new media as a result. Journalism therefore had to evolve or face extinction (Siapera and Veglis, 2012).

This could be rightly interpreted to mean gratifications users derive. For example, news websites have message boards that enable users interact with reporters and their fellow users (Kawamoto, 2003).

Though convergence has various synonyms — multiplatform publishing and integrated journalism — one cannot run away from the reality that it has taken the world by storm (Quinn, 2005). More importantly, through the internet digital broadcasting, inter alia, relations have been enhanced due to interactivity that comes with convergence (Agboola, 2014).

Agboola (2014) adds that the younger population has been more intrigued by New Media, which is essentially 'digital' technologies that include websites, blogs, among others, because of its ubiquity. Information is easily available and one requires putting in 'less' effort to get it.

Agboola (2014) defines new media as "a cyberculture with modern computer technology. Most technologies described as new media as digital and often have characteristics of being networkable". (pp105).

Drula (2015) views convergence as the bringing together of various technologies whereas multimedia is seen as the representation of forms of convergence: audio, video, text and graphics. The progression of technology has made it become the center of people's lives.

The growth of mobile technology has been the most popular; users can receive any kind of information in the fastest way (Kaul, 2013). Additionally, progression is having a direct impact in the practice of journalism.

Whereas print journalism was the very 'definition' of the practice, the same cannot be said now as the internet has taken over, casting print aside. Journalists have had to adopt by jumping onto the new media wagon (Kaul, 2013).

Kaul (Ibid) advances that media houses and learning institutions are restructuring and rethinking new practices that will be conducive for their survival in this dynamic world. Fortunately, the technological revolution, 'digitalisation', has made it possible for journalists and members of the public to live their imaginations.

Information is now merely a tap away. Through the internet, space and time have been significantly condensed. Technology has proven that there are other profitable ventures media practitioners can pursue (Kaul, 2013).

New frontiers in the digital space are emerging – social networking and online journalism inter alia. Nonetheless, the unfurling of emerging practices should not jeopardize the basic principles of good journalism (accuracy, among others).

The popularity of the internet – new media – can be attributed to the difference sensory experiences users derive from various technologies (McLuhan, 1964). Digital technology has enabled both journalists and consumers to participate in the gathering, processing and dissemination of content.

This expansion of media audiences is one of the most profound results (Kaul, 2013). Consumers are no longer passive but actively engage in 'journalism'. The development brought about by the digital revolution can be assessed quantitatively and qualitatively (Franco, 2009).

The former focuses on the tangible aspects that facilitate internet connectivity such as mobile phones while the latter focuses on the experiences of those who interact with technology. These unravel the fundamental principles of journalism such as offering the masses a lifeline.

Since journalism is at the epicentre of governance (Franco, 2009), retouching of technology determines how citizens participate in the democracy of their nations. Within the past decade there have been incidences such as the Arab Spring in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt in 2010 that put social media in the frontline as a tool that can be used to get rid of the 'old' government and bring in a 'new' one.

Facebook was used to monitor and relay real time events. People of different classes have participated actively (Franco, 2009) in the running of government. Monopoly of power and opinion is slowly fizzling out. The manifestation of digital technologies on mass media journalism takes place in three forms: the nature of news gathering and processing; new skills taught to reporters and the fate of traditional media.

Story telling has been made better by utilizing the varying forms of media. For example, reporters can go a mile farther in developing a story. In addition to using written texts, information graphics are increasingly becoming popular because they present information in a sexy way.

Technology has greatly affected how journalists work. The internet has provided almost everyone with an opportunity of generating content. News is no longer confined to the

professionals; amateurs are now able to drive the conversation by using social networking sites (Hermans and Haenens, 2009).

This has made pessimist cast a doubt on the long-term value of the internet. Because information is simply presented, for example, by bloggers without verification, the internet has infiltrated the lives of journalists.

They now use it to satisfy their work needs. Journalists are being resocialised by convergence. The past routine of working as an 'individual' doesn't exist anymore. Teamwork is needed now more than before.

Aside from this, the atmosphere in newsrooms has become more intense as the number of competitors increases by the day; making reporters relay information as it trickles in. Work pressure (Hermans and Haenens, 2009) hence puts the pillars of professional journalism at the risk of collapsing. The fast-paced storytelling creates interstices for error and misleading information to slip through.

Numerous content patrolling social networking stories are bogus; therefore journalists have to be more careful to avoid picking them as factual. But professionalism in the perspective of leadership becomes problematic when the larger section of a population does not have the tools to enable them access information.

Franco (2009) points out that technology aids the democratic process, but in Latin American countries most people source their information from the traditional media compared to the internet. This acts as a hurdle to the penetration of news to influence leadership and accountability.

The significant influence of digital technology hence is directly proportionate to the level of connectivity – "digital shadow" – Social mobilisation is made possible by digital technology. Citizens are able to mobilize themselves online to protect against what they perceive to be an ill. Kiambu County resident railed against their Woman representative Gathoni Wamuchomba after she objected to new salary cuts. She later retracted.

The internet is a representation and an indication of "social justice" (Franco (2009), pp19) because it allows inclusivity of the people by enabling public participation in all spheres of their lives. It seeks to eradicate inequality by promoting a sense that everyone is operating on the same field.

Readers can communicate their views to the purveyors of information, which is mostly provided free of charge (Kaul, 2013). Presently, news is not a preserve of a particular group of elite; rather, it resonates across diverse communities.

Digital technologies have resulted in a global village (McLuhan, 1964) where one can learn about the goings-on in other continents without having to be there physically. Barriers and other detractors have been broken down to permit unbridled permeation of information, according to Anthony Giddens.

International issues have been domesticated by the technological disruption. This domestication process (Venkatesh, 2006) involves the steady use of technology by different players. The global village phenomenon occurs when technologies break down the barriers that hinder smooth movement of people, among others (Ron, 2010). When this happens a new society springs up, allowing connection of people far and near.

The digital wave is encouraging active engagement of the actors. Focus is now centred on the users. This is more profound when creating new business models by media owners. Now that content is 'free' media houses have to find ways of making money.

Some have put up paywalls that only allow one to read a number of stories but pay to read more; while others are still trying to figure out how to charge for content in a world in which it is readily available (Kaul, 2013).

Enterprise or exclusive stories are becoming more and more. Publishing stories that are unique and are not owned by competitors is one way of reaching out to the market. Additionally, data journalism is utilizing visual appeals to capture readers' attention, creating an opportunity for media companies to survive and thrive.

Audiences are becoming fragmented (Kaul, 2013), hence more emphasis on content selection. The digital age is compelling media houses to be super innovative. Journalists cannot afford to stand on the sideline as the world passes them by.

They must join the feat since there are many new frontiers being explored. The digital tide is an enabler of good journalism. The technology revolution is a harbinger of revised ways of working. Journalism is now becoming a "conversation" (Kaul (2013), pp139) as opposed to a "lecture" as it was from the beginning.

The online media is unique compared to others because it largely depends on the consumers, and it is multibarreled (Ward, 2002). In the age of 'digitalism,' journalism schools must hammer in students the importance of grasping how the sector is changing.

They should be adequately prepared to be able to cope in the new journalism world (Narayana, 2010). Because the media landscape has changed over the years, new ways of conveying and acquiring information have emerged, making journalists work in a fast-paced industry (Open Society Foundations, 2014).

Digitisation has dramatically altered the nature of journalism. Though it has increased the avenues of information can be accessed and conveyed, it has equally disturbed the ethical practices. With consumers being put in a position where they can act as journalists — citizen journalism — a lot of information relayed is unverified (OSF, 2014).

However, editors have said that the gains brought by social media supersede the concerns (Bullard, 2014). Through citizen journalism people who were sidelined by traditional media can now be actively involved in expressing their views, by social media. Regardless of the fresh opportunities, the public service media is not benefitting. Open Society Foundations defines public interest as the common goals among citizens that should be addressed by the national government.

Open Society Foundations (2014) adds that "digitization brings new opportunities" (pp108) to media practitioners in three ways: faster news dissemination, improved information sources and better interaction with readers.

For instance, archiving has been made possible. Journalists can easily search for related content to improve their copy and go beyond by linking several related stories to each other. This was not possible in the pre-digital era. Journalists instantly receive feedback from the audience about a story or story idea(s) (Ward, 2002).

Digitization has consequently shrunk the news cycle, heralding unethical practices. Rumours propagated on social media are sometimes embraced as truths and plagiarism is on the rise. Secondly, the increased pressure adds to the atmosphere of committing mistakes. The pressure also piles since journalists are required to possess more than one skill and use them when gathering news.

The OSF (2014) observes that digitization has played a major role in "news gathering and dissemination rather than in news quality" (pp110). At the same time, digital media has opened more chances for investigative journalism to thrive.

Through digital platforms such as blogs, journalists can publish stories that might not be deemed 'safe' to be run in traditional media platforms. The blogs are run and operated by the owner who determines who should be published. Because of ubiquity of the internet, the reach of the blogs is expansive, thus tremendously improving the chances of the stories having social impact (OSF, 2014).

2.6 Facebook

Through such platforms, user-generated content then becomes highly valuable to mainstream journalists. However, content creators simply offer "old information on new platforms". Online avenues allow editors to update and edit content, which has been the primary benefit offered by this platform (OSF, 2014).

It is cardinal to highlight that traditional media has not been disposed of entirely. In developing nations such as African countries, traditional and new media complement each other. And the digital gap is tapering with more people, particularly the "older generations" (OSF (2014), pp130) embracing the digital technologies. The audience still sources for news from its trusted

traditional media that now has an online presence. Content offered has not been diversified – it has simply been a switchover to the internet.

But the access to news has been diversified now that a reader does not have to be restricted to one news source because he/she is spoilt for choice. Facebook has become one of the most popular places for getting news among the younger generation.

Media firms have introduced new features such as RSS feeds to deliver content to subscribers. Despite the new technological trends, radio is still at the top position as the predominant source of news in Kenya and other sub-Saharan countries, mainly because radio sets are cheap and signals are active even in the boondocks (OSF, 2014).

Mobile reports by citizens are becoming the formidable frontier of spreading news. Citizens capture news events such as road crashes and send them to journalists or mostly upload it on social media networks (Umair, 2016); incident reporting.

Technological convergence is making mobile journalism a reality. It has reduced the burden on journalists because they can now, through multimedia capabilities and the internet, webcast content wherever they are.

Digital tools such as smartphones, personal digital assistants and cameras are used by reporters to source for stories (Umair, 2016). It is the fastest way of propagating news. The efficiency and strength of mobile technology and social networking platforms were put to the test during India's anti-corruption rally in 2011.

The India Against Corruption movement led by Anna Hazare set up a website, Facebook and Twitter accounts through which they posted comments and encouraged citizen engagement thus fuelling agitation against graft (Rodrigues, 2014).

Equally, they used text messaging drives to create awareness of the vice. Most media houses have recognized the uptick of the popularity of social media platforms as alternative news sites to mainstream media and have joined in (Bullard, 2013).

More importantly, it is not enough for news providers to have an online presence; they must keep the users active. This indicates that the traditional power of editors to act as gatekeepers and control the flow of news no longer exists. Users have a tapestry of news sources (Bullard, 2013).

Communication systems have sprung up to become the centre of human lives. These systems play a dual role: private and socio-political duties (McChesney and Schiller, 2003).

This has precipitated the uptake and exploitation of information communication technologies (Haddon, 2004) that have promoted audience segmentation. News is now offered, not on a general basis, but to niche audiences (OSF, 2014).

Ownership of media has also been in the crosshairs of technological revolution. New players who are offering internet-only services are emerging. People experience journalism through the "eyes of technology" (Bonin, 2013, pp1).

And despite the changing media landscape, the fundamentals of professional journalism that includes seeking the truth and informing and educating the public, are still intact. Journalism is being experience in a new breath. The new media has made this possible because the voices of readers are being heard and they are able to discuss issues freely and efficiently (Bonin, 2013).

This jostles media practitioners to start envisaging how and what the future will be. Alejandro (2010) posits that journalism "is not dead but merely evolving" (pp3), hence journalists must evolve too.

2.7 Theoretical framework

This theory was very relevant to the study because it centers on how technology is created and adopted by people. By virtue of convergence being brought about by proliferation of various technologies, how these technological innovations are taken up by users can be assessed by this theory.

It was first developed by Everett Rogers in 1962 and he defined it as the process by which an innovation is propagated through a given medium in a particular period of time among members of a society (Rogers, 1983).

Innovation on the other hand is defined as something (an object, idea or practice) that is viewed by a person or a unit of adoption as new. Technology is a design that serves as a means with which the likelihood of various alternatives is achieved.

It can be hardware (tangible objects that personify the technology) or software (the knowledge-base of the technology). It is cardinal to point out that diffusion has three elements: innovation, communication channels (mass media) and time.

For an innovation, which is engendered by the recognition that a particular problem needs to be solved, to be effective it has to rope in these factors: relative advantage (the level to which an idea is considered better than its predecessor), compatibility (the level to which an idea is seen as being in tandem to the culture of the recipients), complexity (the level to which an idea is seen as

in tandem with the culture of the users) and trialability (the level to which an idea is experimented by the users on a partial basis before it is fully adopted).

Time influences adopter categories that are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority and laggards. The rate of adoption refers to the speed by which an innovation is embraced, and it is measured by the amount of time adopters require to warm up to it.

It is influenced by behaviour, opinion leaders (people whose influence carries the day) and change agents (experts who have been subjected to professional training), and social norms (the prevailing patterns of behaviours) and attitudes.

Bandura (1977) advanced that attitudes and behaviours are shaped by external factors, stimuli, which act as reinforcements with regards to whether a particular act will be abandoned or adopted.

Framing, which is the act of focusing on a particular theme and making it more important than others through selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration (Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, Ghanem, 1991), plays a significant part.

Marketing a new idea requires the source to frame it so that the chances of adoption can be increased. To convince someone to adopt a fresh perspective requires the factoring in of the culture, the environment and the person (Rogers, 1983).

With this in mind, Diffusion of innovation theory will enable us understand better how digital media has impacted on the way news is being processed now.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This section elaborates how information was collected and represented. The study design used is also discussed as well as the population, sampling and sample size. Other sub-topics contained are data collection, data analysis, recommendations and the conclusion.

3.2 Research approach

This research used qualitative approach, which provided an in depth analysis of how convergence is impacting newsrooms. Hancock, Ockleford and Winridge (2009) say that this approach is important because it helps the researcher and the targeted audience understands the social phenomena.

The qualitative approach is relevant to this study because it provides data that is specific to the circumstances or situation being investigated, thus rendering it vital in designing extensive solutions (Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest and Namey (2005).

More importantly, qualitative approach possesses the capability of enabling the researcher learn multiplex descriptions of how the population experiences the issue under study (Namey et al).

3.3 Research method

News websites of the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* newspapers were used by the researcher as case studies. These two are the leading media houses in Kenya and are at the fore front in the uptake on convergence.

The two organisations practice cross media ownership, running both a television station and a newspaper. Therefore, the study becomes important because it will show us how the phenomenon is fairing in light of these organisations. Robert Yin (2013) says this type of study is useful in answering questions regarding the "why" and "how" of a phenomena. Yin (2013) says that it is preferred in analyzing "contemporary events" (pp9). Moreover, the researcher can use it to sort out a series of evidences such as documents.

3.4 Study population

Population is the entire elements that are important in the work of the researcher (Phrasisombath, 2009). For this study, the researcher assessed all the stories published on the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* websites. The stories published by the websites of *The Standard* and *Daily Nation* are informed by the principles of convergence, according to Mike Ward.

3.5 Sampling size

Sampling is essential because it enables a researcher target respondents with the right information, which will promote the credibility of the outcome. It pertains the selection "of a number of study units from a define study population" (Phrasisombath, 2009, pp4).

The sample size used was 32 stories: 16 from *Daily Nation* and 16 from *The Standard*. This provided a complete view of how multimedia is perceived by both media houses in the country.

3.6 Sampling technique

Non-probability sampling proved to be the relevant technique. It is used to choose the population that will be studied. Purposive sampling in particular came in handy in the research because it targeted specific stories that were essential to the study (Phrasisombath, 2009).

It is useful when studying information rich case studies. This refers to cases whereby a researcher can learn a lot about the issues surrounding the study subject (Patton, 1990).

3.7 Data collection

The techniques used to collect data are very important because they enable a researcher to gather information about the units being studied. For the findings to be accurate, data collection must be cone in a systematic manner (Elmushafar, 2012).

This research applied content analysis to review the stories individually and document the results. Content analysis has become one of the most effective options when carrying out a study about emergent trends (Krippendorff, 2012).

It involves perusing of texts that may include pictures. The research focused on particular story themes that guided the study. The analysis was carried out to find out whether editors adhered to the elements of online journalism before running the stories on the websites.

The categories of stories sampled were news, business, sports, county and blogs. Each section other than county and blogs had four stories.

The two websites had one story each under examination because the *Daily Nation* newspaper 'does not' have a lead county story on Saturdays but blogs are published daily. County stories picked from each website were three.

3.8 Data presentation, analysis and interpretation

The analysis was done thematically and then presented through tables and narrative formats. The use of the themes: multimedia, linkage, immediacy and interactivity is demonstrated through

tables (table 4.1 to table 4.6) in the next chapter. Percentages were used to indicate how the stories faired based on the tolls developed by Mike Ward.

3.9 Research ethics

Ethics is a very important element that if interfered with, disrupts the correct findings. Ethical guidelines provide a framework that enables a researcher wade through ethical dilemmas that he/she may come across (Wiles, 2013).

The right tools were utilized in order to reach an appropriate outcome that is valid and reliable. More importantly, after I defended the proposal before a board of examiners, I was given a certificate of fieldwork (see appendix one).

I again defended the research project before the examiners who made recommendations that I complied with, after which I was given a certificate of corrections (see appendix three). I also forwarded the research project to my supervisor. It was subjected to anti-plagiarism test and I was given a certificate of originality (see appendix two).

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings, analysis and interpretation of the data collected during fieldwork. This study investigated whether the lead stories published in the *Nation* and *Standard* websites adhered to professional tenets as informed by Mike Ward's elements of online journalism. The features are multimedia, immediacy, linkage and interactivity.

4.2 Presentation of findings and analysis

The number of stories analysed in the study were 32. They were classified under five categories: news, business, county, blogs and sports.

These five are the key types of stories published by the media houses, and also where more focus is dedicated.

The findings were assessed thematically after being presented in table format. The themes were multimedia, hyperlink, immediacy and interactivity.

Each theme was reviewed independently. According to Ward (2002), these are cardinal for reporters when researching and reporting about a story.

The usage of hyperlinks facilitates interactivity because a previous story can be linked thus enabling the user get in-depth information; readers can also subscribe to access specific content. The data was collected in a period of four days.

Table 4.1: Frequency of categories of stories sampled

	NATION		STANDARD	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
News	4	25	4	25
Business	4	25	4	25
County	3	19	3	19
Sports	4	25	4	25
Blogs	1	6	1	6
TOTAL	16	100	16	100

Each website contributed a total of 16 stories collected between November 15 and 18. Each category was assessed using the four aforementioned tools of analysis (multimedia, interactivity, linkage and immediacy) developed by Ward (2002).

However, the county and blogs categories do not have an equal number of stories as news, business and sports.

The reason is because the *Daily Nation* does not have a lead county story on the *The Saturday* edition. Therefore, it was prudent to have at least one blog published by both newspapers.

Table 4.2: Multimedia elements with stories

MULTIMEDIA	STANDARD		NATION	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
PHOTO	13	81	15	**94**
VIDEO	1	6	1	**6**
INFOGRAPHIC	0	0	0	**0**
AUDIO	0	0	0	**0**

Table 4.2 presents how stories from both news sites faired within the realm of multimedia. Ward (2002) says that websites can offer various types of user-friendly mediums of communication.

In this study, the types of multimedia under study were video, photo, audio and information graphics. Craig (2005) points out that these media make stories appealing and improves the reader's experience with the content. Craig defines information graphics as visual representations that are used to make information easily understandable.

Table 4.2 shows how the two media houses performed concerning multimedia. According to table 4.2, *Daily Nation* stories had photos uploaded on 15 stories, which is equivalent to 94 per cent. On the other hand, *The Standard* pulled in 81 per cent of overall articles with photos, 13 per cent less compared to its competitor.

On videos, both websites scored the same percentage point – six; and zero per cent on the information graphic and audio categories. Craig (2005) says that videos are cumbersome to process thus making photos a more convenient alternative.

And with the urgency that comes with web publishing, still pictures are run first then videos later. Ward indicates that videos contain many 'bits' that make processing slow, even when playing on the web.

However, the situation is being improved. Videos offer a broader picture or context of the story while photos provide more details. Craig (2005) argues that it is not mandatory to use a video, only if it is the best medium through which the story can be relayed.

Information graphics are rarely used because creating them is tedious. They can be used in offering more information in an attractive way through the combination of different elements (text, video and photos).

Long-form journalism can be summarized in graphs or charts. Budget stories can be run using information graphics, tapping into the visual elements of the other mediums to make them appealing to the readers.

Ward (2002) adds that multimedia is able to provide "multiple textures to journalism". The use of multimedia makes it possible for a reader to hear, see and view a story. On this note, table 4.2 indicates that photos were the primary medium editors opted to use to communicate.

Whereas both organisations used just one video in two of the 32 stories, none exploited the effectiveness of audio files and information graphics. This is because photos are more convenient, cheaper to capture and faster to process as compared to videos and audios.

The Standard used fewer photos in its 16 stories while Nation had photos in all stories. These stories were the most important during that news day. This shows that lead stories are handled better by *Daily Nation* journalists compared to their counterparts at *The Standard*.

However, neither perceives videos as an equally important avenue of conveying information, which is detrimental to the fundamentals of online reporting. Videos contain drama that may be exciting and offer relevant details to the reader that may not be contained in still photos.

Table 4.3: Stories with hyperlinks

HYPERLINKS	STANDARD		NATION	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
News	4	100	3	75
County	3	100	2	67
Business	4	100	4	100
Sports	4	100	0	0
Blogs	1	100	1	100

Table 4.3 shows the number and percentages of stories by *Standard* and *Daily Nation* that had hyperlinks. When linkage is concerned, both organisations recognize their pivotal role. But when

you slim down to individual categories, *Standard* performed significantly well against *Daily Nation.*

All *Standard* articles were hyperlinked while under *Daily Nation* some had and others did not. Under *Daily Nation*, news had three stories with links, two county stories with links but none in the sports section was hyperlinked. The online avenue has the capability to connect readers to other sites or past stories within the website.

The reader is able to stay abreast about current situations and what he/she might have missed previously. For example, regarding the *Daily Nation* story headlined *Supreme Court locks out Jubilee, Nasa from petition* published on November 14, one of the links of a story headlined *Poll petition: Kenya's make or break moment* — was related to the story.

It was comprehensive, offering further details that were not in the current story. In the Standard story headlined *Supreme Court orders IEBC to provide petitioners with forms 34A, 34B* published on November 15, one of the links was relating to a similar story on the progress of the election petition case — *Presidential petition enters day 2 as Uhuru scores big.*

The use of hyperlinks is one of the major nuances that separate traditional media from digital media. The former does not have hyperlinking capabilities, leaving the latter with the advantage of promoting interaction.

The manipulation of the different elements is the root of journalism online. Using hyperlinks, other than providing more information, they also increase the pageviews and page visits of a site. Readers click on the related content, spending more time on a website as compared to a story that has no links.

Table 4.4: Stories that were published timely

IMMEDIACY	STANDARD		NATION	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
News	4	100	4	100
Business	4	100	4	100
County	3	100	3	100
Sports	4	100	4	100
Blogs	1	100	1	100

Table 4.3 shows that all the stories published on the two websites were done in a timely fashion. Timeliness is an important component of online journalism that makes it stand out. Of worth noting is how immediacy or timeliness of the published stories was determined by the editors.

Immediacy is one of the news values (oddity, proximity, relevance, impact and conflict). In this research, timeliness was measured by the inclusion of dates in the stories, pointing out when the stories were uploaded on the websites and when the events discussed in the stories took place. Prior to the entry of the technological revamp, traditional media (TV and radio) would often interrupt a broadcast to relay a breaking story. But they were inhibited from offering

comprehensive stories by the nature of their broadcasting. Newspapers for example would publish a complete story the following morning. Radios broadcast bulletins at intervals of half an hour. But the emergence of online journalism has resolved this. News sites break stories and update them incrementally, keeping readers updated throughout.

But this has precipitated other problems that organisations are battling with. For instance, the speed by which stories are published on the internet makes it 'superfluous' to buy a hardcopy newspaper to read the same story. Editors upload various stories on websites simultaneously without having to cut off another running story. This capability is because of pagination, whereby different pages are interlinked and "understood in isolation", according to Ward (2002).

Table 4.5: Stories that contained social media sites for feedback

INTERACTIVITY	STANDARD		NATION	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
Twitter	16	100	16	100
Facebook	16	100	16	100
Google Plus	16	100	16	100

Figure 4.5 shows the number of stories that utilized any or all of the available social media network sites to promote interaction between reporters and their audience. Evidently, all the stories recorded 100 per cent interactivity, which is what Ward advocates. Twitter, Facebook and Google Plus are some of the most popular informal platforms used for networking globally. Citizen journalism for example is enhanced mostly through Facebook. Thus, media organisations do not want to be excluded from this playing field.

All the stories under review have been accompanied by links to the three sites so that readers can post comments or feedback about stories. Organisations have trained social media editors who scour the comments and give a report. All types of content are usually relayed on social media. Both organisations have exploited the benefits of interactivity by providing the most popular network sites. Participation is now 'mandatory' for any organization to survive in the ever-changing media environment. Pew Research Center (2016) points out that social media are becoming a place where a majority of readers turn to for news.

Digital sources of news include news websites, news applications and social media sites. Furthermore, the lead stories were placed where visibility is guaranteed. Landing pages are where readers visit and select content to read. These stories were placed as top stories in the respective landing pages. Ward describes interactivity as an audience-driven consumption that functions on three levels: consumer interacting with fellow consumer; the consumer interacting with the content provider; and the consumer becoming the content provider. Message boards allow readers to view and react to what others have said about a story.

Readers also email journalists their comments through addresses provided for in the stories. On being content providers through citizen reporting, Ward observes that mainstream journalists are

boxed out because readers post content directly on these platforms, which are then picked up by the journalists. Such content is sometimes saddled with inaccuracies. This research tried to find out if editors adhere to the guidelines of good story reporting when uploading stories on the websites. The guidelines were crafted by Ward (2002) and are important in ensuring the stories are appealing to readers. The study found that editors from both organisations abided by these elements namely multimedia, linkage, interactivity and timeliness. The frequency of changeover of lead story was at least two hours. For the Daily Nation, two hours was the appropriate time during weekdays while at the weekend the changeover was dependent on the most popular and latest story.

Table 4.6: Stories that had completeness

COMPLETENESS	STANDARD		NATION	
	Number of stories	%	Number of stories	%
Multimedia	16	100	16	100
Linkage	16	100	15	93
Interactivity	16	100	16	100
Immediacy	16	100	16	100

55

Figure 4.6 shows the number of stories in *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* that had all the elements advanced by Mike Ward. For *Standard* stories, all of them had links, at least a photo, social media sites and were published timely.

However for *Daily Nation*, one sports story did not have a link thus rendering the category incomplete. One story in *The Standard* and one story in the *Daily Nation*, both in the news category had a photo and a video. But all the other stories only had photos.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Overview

This section summarizes the findings of the study, gives recommendations and conclusions. The main objective was to establish the impact of convergence on news processing in Kenya's multimedia newsrooms, particularly at the *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* organisations.

This section will also highlight how the theory has affected the operations in the newsrooms.

5.2 Summary of findings

The study found out that these two categories, interactivity and immediacy, were adhered to in all the stories. However, multimedia and linkage were not used consistently in all the stories yet they are central to making stories comprehensive and appealing to the audience.

This study's primary function was to determine whether the elements of journalism by Mike Ward influence how stories are published by the Nation and Standard media organisations, which were the case studies.

Based on the three research questions, it was established that these four elements by Ward do influence how reporters gather information and how editors publish the content on the websites. This can be corroborated by the fact that immediacy and timeliness recorded 100 per cent while linkage and multimedia too had over 60 per cent rating.

The elements — multimedia, linkage, immediacy and interactivity — have become part of the principles the guide news processing in the two organisations. More importantly, how the four

varieties are manipulated by editors to churn out the most appealing content to the readers. From the findings, it is evident that the diffusion of innovations theory by Everett Rogers is impacting how technology is being absorbed by journalists.

More journalists have embraced digital technology in performing their tasks — social media is being used to enhance participation.

Regarding the online journalism elements, the study indicates that immediacy and interactivity were the most consistent features in the stories under review. The latter is crucial in making readers feel part of the creative process.

That they can also contribute to news gathering goes a long way in promoting inclusion. The other elements (multimedia and linkage) were equally considered by the journalists who uploaded the articles. Furthermore, the viewpoint of reporters toward these elements was well elaborated in the study.

5.3 Conclusions

From the findings elaborated, the study concluded that Mike Ward's elements of online journalism form the foundation of the strategies that media organisations can take advantage of to improve the sector.

The features (multimedia, linkage, immediacy and interactivity) point to the reality that unlike traditional media, the digital platform is not restricted by time or space; it can be expanded to accommodate emerging trends.

Digital journalism thus dishes out faith that there are more opportunities to be explored. The diffusion of innovation theory by Everett Rogers indicates that new ideas or practices are not imbibed at the same rate across the board.

The study findings reveal that journalists operate differently; nonetheless there is room for improvement. Regardless of the circumstances journalists are subjected or exposed to, change is unavoidable. Enterprises must adapt fully or crumble.

More importantly, participation has become the core of communication. Good communication between organisations and their audiences is hinged on each party being allowed to actively engage in news processing activities.

Readers have the opportunity to contribute to stories and story ideas. They have become part of the conduit because their comments drive news and sometimes shape the agenda. The study points out that journalists have a variety of options at their disposal, which they can use to ensure that content sent out to readers is very appealing.

Multimedia, for example, allows journalists to manipulate different communication mediums to publish stories in a way that will guarantee they are read, and have an impact in the social system.

Furthermore, the media landscape is transforming rapidly. Sources of news are not static but are dynamic depending on the technological revolutions. Social media has sprung up as one of the most crucial types of media where readers get news.

The popularity of social media is facilitated by mobile handsets that have access to the ubiquitous internet, making it readily available. Facebook and Twitter, among many others, support all types of multimedia placing it at a prime spot to influence newsroom agendas.

Mainstream media entities have fully integrated social media in their editorial space. Social media also allows interactivity and instant publishing.

5.4 Recommendations

The study found out that media organisations overemphasized one type of multimedia (photo), which, according to Mike Wards defeats the true purpose of online journalism. So, editors should ensure that all the types of multimedia are balanced in the stories.

Also, this study found out that information graphics were not used in any of the sampled stories. Craig points out that information graphics are important because they can summarise a story through photos, charts, among others, reducing time spent in reading a long story; and also makes reading experience pleasant. With this in mind, information graphics should always be used.

Additionally, the research found out that some categories in the Nation, blogs and county, had few links. Ward (2002) says that links are necessary because they shore up readers' comprehension about the emerging or developing issue.

If they are used sparingly then the readers are not given the full picture, impairing the possibility of making informed choices or decisions. Hence, more related content should be embedded in new stories.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Certificate of Fieldwork

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-3318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: +254-204913208 (Direct Line)
Telex: 22095 Fax: 254-02-245566
Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF FIELDWORK

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on ~~December~~ May 26 2017 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis Proposal defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project can be allowed to proceed for fieldwork.

Reg. No: _K50/80696/2015_

Name: _PHILIP MOMANYI MATATA_

Title: _An analysis of Kenya's had new media stories based on Mike_

Wards skins of online Journalism

Dr Samuel Siringi
SUPERVISOR
SIGNATURE
9/9/2017
DATE

Dr Samuel Siringi
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
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9/9/2017
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Appendix II: Certificate of Originality

Turnitin *Originality Report*

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AN ANALYSIS OF KENYA'S LEAD NEW MEDIA STORIES...

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Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-3318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: +254-204913208 (Direct Line)
Telex: 22095 Fax: 254-02-245566
Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197-00100
Nairobi, GPO
Kenya

REF: CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTIONS

This is to certify that all corrections proposed at the Board of Examiners meeting held on DECEMBER 5 in respect of M.A/PhD. Project/Thesis defence have been effected to my/our satisfaction and the project/thesis can be allowed to proceed for binding.

Reg. No: K50/80636/2015

Name: PHILIP MOMANTI MAOSA

Title: ANALYSIS OF THE COMPLIANCE OF KENYA'S LEAD ONLINE STORIES TO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Dr Samuel Siringi
SUPERVISOR   SIGNATURE   18/12/2017
                                       DATE

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ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR SIGNATURE   18/12/2017
                                       DATE

Dr. Ndeti Ndati
DIRECTOR   SIGNATURE/STAMP   18·12·2017
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