

EXPLORING THE CREATIVE DESTRUCTION IN BROADCAST MEDIA CONVERGENCE IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the creative destruction of media convergence on broadcasting in Anambra state, using Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS 88.5fm) as a case study. This is specifically with a view to finding out if there is attitude change among the audience as a result of convergence or change in finances or media policies of the station as well. The study was anchored on the Technological Determinism theory and adopted the survey research design. A census was carried out by the administration of 258 copies of questionnaire to all the 258 staff of Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS). The finding of this research shows that media convergence has minimal influence on broadcast media audience as a whole while it has impacted on the finances and media policies of the station. The study therefore recommends that broadcast media owners should ensure that their media policy remains ethical irrespective of media convergence, media regulators ensure that broadcast media keep up with expected standards of their programme contents; even online, and that broadcast media owners should create more awareness and exposure to their online presence.

Keywords: convergence, creative destruction, Broadcast media, media policy and displacement

INTRODUCTION

The easiest way to understand media convergence is to think of how separate types of media—such as broadcast, print and online—have merged together. Media previously made distinct by their technology of distribution have converged. Newspapers are no longer just printed on large sheets of thin paper; they also have websites with up to the minute information, including videos which remind you of TV. Broadcasters do not just beam signals to your TV aerial or satellite dish; they have websites with articles published on them which might remind you more of the printed page. Families can still sit down together at a specified time to watch a TV programme, but programmes can also be watched at a later date on the internet, entirely at your own convenience.

Convergence however brings three key challenges: potential erosion of trust and confidence in the content we consume; challenges to the future of public service content; and outmoded regulation, which is slow to adapt to changing markets and audience expectations.

Convergence is an ambiguous term used by various disciplines to describe and analyse processes of change toward uniformity or union. Its application in the communications sector, often referred to as media convergence, also encompasses valuable approaches and insights to describe, characterize and understand the digital creative economy. A certain amount of fuzziness combined with the broad, multipurpose-character of convergence leads both to a general and a wide range of very specific understandings of the convergent communications sector.

Creative destruction on its part was a concept coined by Joseph Schumpeter in 1942 to describe a process by which something new brings about the demise of whatever existed before. He used it to explain the incessant product and process innovation mechanism by which new production units replace outdated ones in a capitalist economy. In the media parlance, it can be used to aptly describe the current transformations of news media whose business models are adjusting to the twin challenges of digitization and the Internet.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The world has in recent times witnessed various technological advancements especially in the area of communication. The advent of new media has posed a challenge to conventional broadcast media stations. This has led to broadcast media convergence, wherein broadcast stations make use of the new media vis-a-vis the traditional broadcast channels.

This convergence some have argued may lead to '*creative destruction*' as it has unconsciously displaced a lot of traditional broadcast stations. Against this backdrop, the question is what are the effects of this convergence culture on government owned broadcast media? Is it leading to creative destruction as theorized by Joseph Schumpeter?

PURPOSE OF STUDY

The general purpose of this study is to investigate the consequences of media convergence on traditional broadcast media organisations with respect to either leading to creative destruction or otherwise. However, the specific objectives are:

- To ascertain the extent of change in the attitude caused to the audience as a result of the broadcast media convergence.
- To find out how this convergence has affected the finances of broadcast media organisations.
- To determine if convergence or creative destruction has affected broadcast media policy.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to facilitate the investigation of the research problem, the following research questions were posed:

Research Question 1: What is the extent of change in attitude of the audience as a result of broadcast media convergence?

Research Question 2: How has creative destruction affected the finances of broadcast media organisations?

Research Question 3: Has convergence or creative destruction affected broadcast media policy?

SCOPE OF STUDY

Due to technological advancements, media convergence is a phenomenon that has become common in recent times especially in communication. Though there are many ways to analyze this phenomenon, but this study seeks to explore the displacement debate.

There are basically two mediums in traditional broadcasting; radio and television. This study is limited to radio, as it is the most accessible medium to most people.

There are numerous radio stations in Nigeria, but Anambra Broadcasting Station (ABS) 88.5fm Awka was chosen as a rapid assessment context for this study because it is a government owned station and most of them share basic similarities in terms of programming, funding and audience preferences etc. Any other radio station in the country could have been chosen, but the belief was that the results of this study could be replicated in any other radio station in the federation to establish what was obtained in ABS.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mass media in the 21st century

The growth of convergent media has transformed the news industry and how consumers seek out and retain news content.

The 21st century saw the advent of news organizations having multi-platform presence, so that newspapers are no longer just newspapers, but also websites, Smartphone apps, tablet apps, and social media profiles. Because many news sources have presence on multiple platforms, inter media agenda setting has the potential to become even stronger. In convergent media, news travels rapidly and discovering the agenda of a competing news organization can occur with one click. While it is common for salience of issues to be transferred from one organization or medium to another, news organizations may differ on issue prominence (Lim, 2010).

Convergence is essentially about different media broadcast channels coming together, working together in sync or a combined offering. It is a likeminded, combined approach to presenting content, by channels that traditionally have been segregated (or did not exist). Convergence is the flow of content across multiple media platforms, the cooperation between multiple media industries, and the migratory behaviour of media audiences who will go almost anywhere in search of the kinds of entertainment experience they want (Jenkins, 2006, p.2).

Jenkins highlights three of the key points relating to convergence. Multiple media channels, audience migration and entertainment experiences. We are experiencing a shift in the media world where audiences have greater

control over content due to demand of dynamic entertainment and expression. There are greater numbers of media channels for them to select from, and competition for audience share is as fierce as it's ever been.

As Williams (2009, p. 46) notes, "the contemporary media environment has on occasion been promoted to be unprecedented: in its tendencies and dynamics of convergence, in its scale of socio-economic impact, in its capacity to re-render and re-imagine the worlds of representation and mediated expression."

EFFECT OF BROADCAST MEDIA CONVERGENCE ON AUDIENCE

The ardency of media convergence in recent times has enabled its audience play a much more active role in the ways that they consume their media content, branching away from the traditional methods that are becoming ever more 'dated' and 'left behind' by the never technological advances of today. Journalists no longer have the luxury of traditional work hours, as the advent of 24 hour television and instant news updates has led online newspapers to release breaking news constantly (Lim, 2010).

21st Century News Consumption

Audience are migrating more and more toward digital news as convergent devices become prevalent. Rather than gravitating toward one device, people are becoming multiplatform consumers (Pew Research Center, 2012). Research also suggests that people do not use one device exclusively, and thus users are getting more news more often. This research supports the displacement debate or Schumpeter's concept of creative destruction. It is also instructive to note that the displacement debate in the media circle arguably thrives in the developed worlds. The developing countries' experiences of media convergence are more of re-defining roles than replacement or displacement.

However, out of all media platforms, traditional and digital, people get the majority of their news from personal computers. Therefore, while it is crucial to analyze all media platforms, online news requires a closer look. The most popular news outlet among digital devices is a news organizations website or app, as opposed to news aggregate or social media sites.

Due to media convergence consumers' cognitive processes and methods for reading news have also shifted over the past decade. Twenty-first century news audiences have evolved their consumption habits to limiting news reading to headlines, summaries and clips (Maier, 2010b). Furthermore, news audience spend less time reading news than they in the past, and they do so for brief intervals. This change in information seeking has necessarily altered how audiences select information. In a study of audience attention, Hans-Jurgen and Schumacher (2006) researched how salient visual cues orient and direct the reader to desired info.

The authors found that online news users employ top-down (intention-driven) cues and bottom-up (stimuli – driven) cues.

However, multi-media is a characteristic of digital media that is constantly improving, but is lacking in traditional media. Online news consumers seek the fastest routes to the most relevant information. The multi-media aspects of digital news platforms, which are less developed in newspapers, quicken readers' orientation to

the page and thus improve their ability to retrieve as much relevant information as they can retain before moving onto the next website.

Patterns of use: Traditional News Media vs Online News

As of 2012 more than 150 news papers have moved to some form of digital model and as many as 100 more are expected to follow suit within the year (Pew Research Center, 2012) while this growing number of news papers is transitioning to the web, the content and organization of each are not necessarily identical. Readers are migrating more and more to the web for news, but legacy news organizations, such as the New-York Times and CNN remain the most popular sources for news, both online and off.

In a study of 1,450 daily news papers and the top or news websites of 2007, Maier found that news paper stories average twice the length of online news stories (Maser, 2016). Furthermore, online news had a slight skew toward international topics, but in total it lacks the depth of newspapers coverage.

Furthermore, media convergence has enabled users in general read a wider range of stories than news paper users; however, online news users can recall fewer details about these stories (Tewksbury and Althaus, 2000). Therefore, in this digital age, news users spread their attention across a wide away of topics, instead of reading each news story in depth. This behaviour supports LC4MP in that users are consuming greater amounts of news on a wide range of topics, yet when prompted to elaborate on these topics, they can only recall the topic itself. Convergent devices have prompted the public to consume more news, which, when coupled with the infinite amount of information on the internet, expends people's capacity for processing messages at a superficial level. The news topic may be the only amount of information onto which people can expend cognitive processes.

This study can be analogized to online media in that web users are constantly switching from app to app in a matter of seconds. Therefore in applying the same tenants of Hardy and Jamieson's (2011) study to the current media environment convergent media users are more likely to retain information about a large number of news topics. All these are feasible mostly in developed countries of the west where Internet access and power supply to steadily be online is a non issue unlike the developing countries still battling with Internet access and electricity supply as they are the major determinants of Internet usage pattern in any country.

BROADCAST MEDIA POLICY

Policy, simply put, is a deliberate system of principles set to guide the actions and decisions of a particular set of people in a defined setting. It is against this backdrop that we can arrive at a definition for broadcast media policy. Broadcast media policies are regulations set to guide the activities of the broadcast media. These policies tell agents of the broadcast media exactly what to do and what not to do. It tells them how to operate in the geographical area they are located in. It is the government's role to determine overall broadcasting policy. Broadcast media policy, however, is aimed at exerting a form of control on the broadcast media, as a completely free and uncontrolled broadcast media can bring about a wide range of social conundrums by virtue of the enormous power it wields; hence the need for broadcast media policy. It is necessary to regulate broadcasting and that regulation must exist within a policy context that has defined goals about the structure of the

broadcasting system. This policy or regulatory framework must address both structural and behavioural aspects. Structural regulation refers to the broadcasting system and institutional arrangements; while behavioural regulation refers to programming and content issues.

The media landscape is following a transformation, characterized by a steady increase of convergence of media services, with a visible move towards intertwining traditional broadcast and internet. Audio-visual media content has arrived to non-TV screens and internet content is arriving to the traditional TV screen. The proliferation of connected devices and the wide availability of faster broadband connections are affecting existing business models and consumer habits and creating new challenges and opportunities for the creative industries.

The advent of globalization as well as remarkable advancements in technology has caused the traditional broadcast media to proceed quickly into the convergence era, culminating in the need for reformed broadcasting policies. The term 'Policy Convergence' has since, been used to describe this transition. Policy convergence discusses the transformation from traditionally separate telecommunications and media policies towards one national or supranational communications policy (Cuilenberg and Slaa, 1993; Latzer, 1998). This overlaps with regulatory convergence, which reflects integrated regulatory agencies and laws for the convergent communications sector (Latzer 2013). Broadcast media convergence entails that new regulatory responsibilities are emerging or growing in importance (Bohlin et al, 2000; Drucker and Gumpert, 2010), including the protection of intellectual property, freedom of speech and the regulation of domain-name systems on web space. As a result of unrest caused by media convergence, a dominant new design of governance for the convergent communications market is becoming apparent, which constitutes major building blocks for worldwide reforms (Latzer, 2009). Constituent components include integrated political strategies for telecommunications, the Internet and the media; integrated control structures (regulatory authorities) and laws for the convergent communications sector; a technology-neutral, functional taxonomy; a subdivision into transmission and content regulation; and a growing reliance on alternative models of regulation such as self- and co-regulation.

In Nigeria, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) is charged with the regulation of broadcast media industry in both licensing and content regulation and programming criteria. Part of the regulatory challenges of the NBC is coping with Schumpeter's trope of creative destruction which describes the current transformations of news media whose business models are trying to adjust to the twin challenges of digitalization and the Internet.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE ON BROADCAST MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

In a broadcast media system that is increasingly converging and in turn, establishing its presence on the internet and related agents, there exist a number of financial implications. In the aspect of advertising, advertisers who ordinarily would place their advertisements on any of the existing broadcast media outlets are opting to advertise via the internet through social media (social networks) like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc. ahead of broadcast media as they believe they gain quicker and more direct access to their customers, most of which are registered on these social media. This type of advertisement however, is relatively cheaper for the

advertiser than advertising on the traditional broadcast media which appears to be the costliest form of advertising. This has an impact on the finances of broadcast media organizations as they would now make a lot less income than they would have made in advertising before the era of media convergence. Other financial implications include – High cost of internet access and increased labour; both resulting in increased overhead running cost of the broadcast media organization. The argument here is whether it is really the prophecy of creative destruction that is sneaking in quietly in the business of broadcasting. This study provides empirical bases to this.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Technological Determinism theory, also known as the medium theory which was propounded by Marshall McLuhan in 1962. The theory postulates that media technology shapes how we as individuals in a society think, feel, act and how the society operates as we move from one technological age to another in this case from the traditional broadcast media to convergent broadcast media. Most interpretations of technological determinism share two general ideas:

- That the development of technology itself follows a predictable, traceable path largely beyond cultural or political influence, and
- That technology in turn has “effects” on societies that are inherent, rather than socially conditioned or produced, that society organizes itself to support and further develop a technology once it has been introduced.

We can infer from these two ideas that the development of technology goes beyond affecting only cultural and political influence as it also affects the media; and that these technological developments in turn, have effects on societies, repositioning them to support and further establish these technological developments.

The basic assumption of the theory is relevant and applicable to impact of technology (Internet and social media) on the media, and in particular, the broadcast media. Technological innovations have changed the landscape of not only local broadcasting but also international broadcasting. The regular radio stations have evolved into the internet radio through the help of the changing technologies. Internet radio (also web radio, net radio, streaming radio, and e-radio webcasting) is an audio service transmitted via the Internet. Music streaming on the Internet is usually referred to as webcasting since it is not transmitted broadly through wireless means. A lot of innovations have evolved in radio broadcasting which has led to various digital forms of radio broadcasting. This innovation allow for the transmission of radio programmes just by owning a laptop connected to the internet or a GSM phone.

Also Over the years, television broadcasting has been upgraded from the boring black and white forms, to dull colours, and then to high definition (HD), Liquid Crystal display(LCD), 3 Dimensional views(3D)... all for the viewing pleasure of the audience. These days there is even internet form of television that gives room for webcasting, online TV, which is the digital distribution of television content via the internet. This study attempts to ascertain the overall effect of all these transformations and convergence on the life of traditional broadcast media.

METHODOLOGY

This study is designed as a survey. The term 'survey' is commonly applied to a research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and typically utilizes a questionnaire or an interview as the survey instrument (Robson, 1993). Communication researchers use surveys to analyze trends and media patterns. (Leary, 1995).

An explorative research methodology was used for this study. Questionnaire was administered to all the staff of Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), Awka numbering 258. Census was used since the study population (258 staff) was not too large to study.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A pre-coded 10 item questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. These items addressed variables directly related to research questions that have been developed for this study. The questionnaire was divided into 4 segments.

The first segment sought the respondent's demographic data. These included; gender, age, educational qualification, and place of residence.

The second segment consisted of 2 questions (5-6) seeking to establish the respondent's attitude change due to media convergence.

The third segment consisted of 2 questions (7-8) which sought to establish the respondent's view on how media convergence affects the finances of ABS 88.5fm Awka.

The fourth segment consisted of 2 questions (9-10) seeking to establish the respondent's view on how media convergence has affected the media policy of ABS 88.5fm Awka.

Measurable Variables:

The measurable variables for this study included the independent variables, known as demographics.

The demographics included: gender, age, class level, and place of residence. These were measured by asking questions that bordered on socio-economic status. (Questions 1-4)

Some dependent variables measured included:

- **Attitude change towards traditional broadcast media as a result of media convergence:** this was measured by asking respondents questions that sought to establish if their interest towards the conventional media has shifted to online media due to media convergence as a confirmation of creative destruction or otherwise.
- **Effect of media convergence on the Finance of Broadcast stations:** this was measured by asking respondents questions that sought to determine if media convergence affects the finance of broadcast stations.

- **Effect of media convergence on the policy of broadcast stations:** this variable was measured by asking respondents questions about their perception of the broadcast outfit media policy since the advent of media convergence.

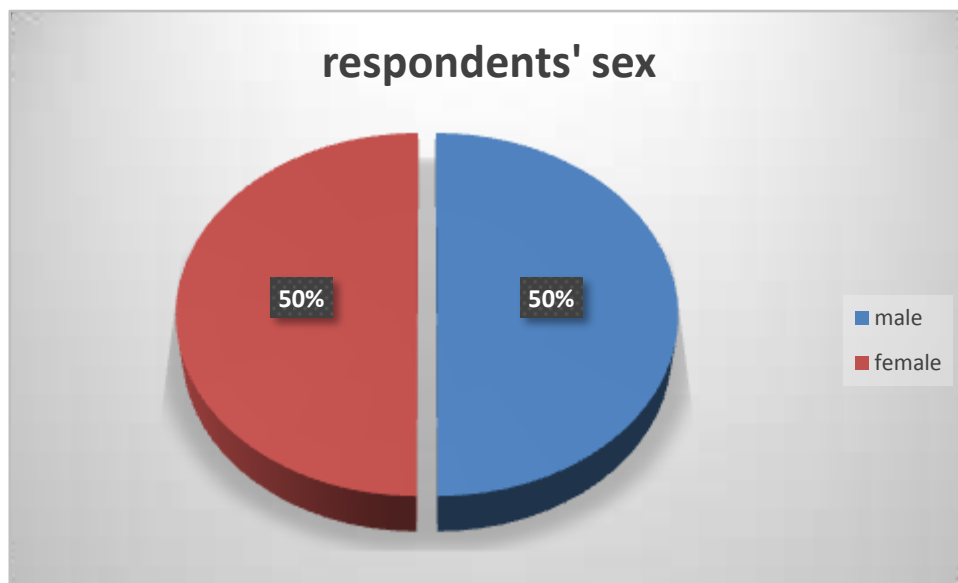
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

A total of 258 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the staff of Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), Awka. These copies were proportionally distributed and none was lost.

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

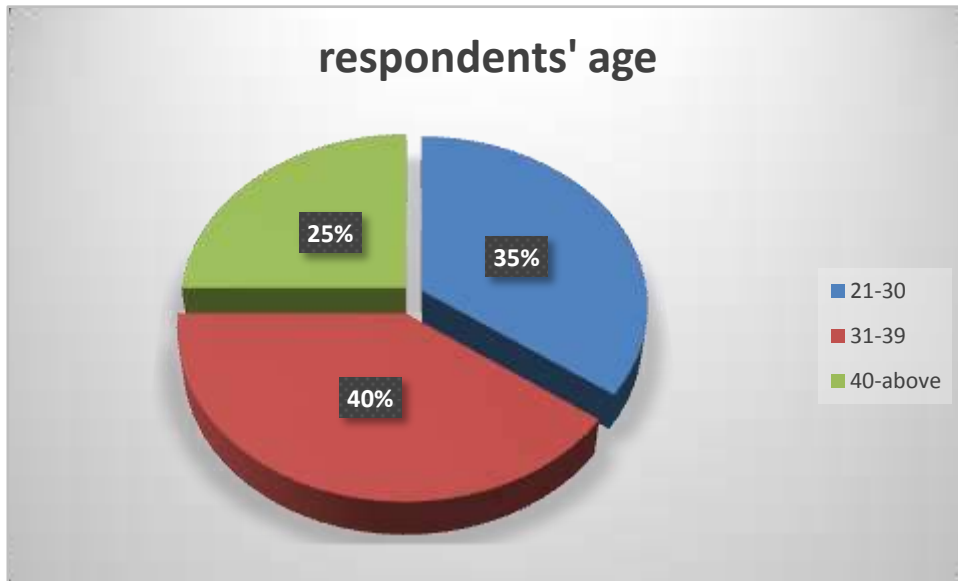
The respondents' data collected are shown in the pie charts below.

Figure 1: Respondents' sex



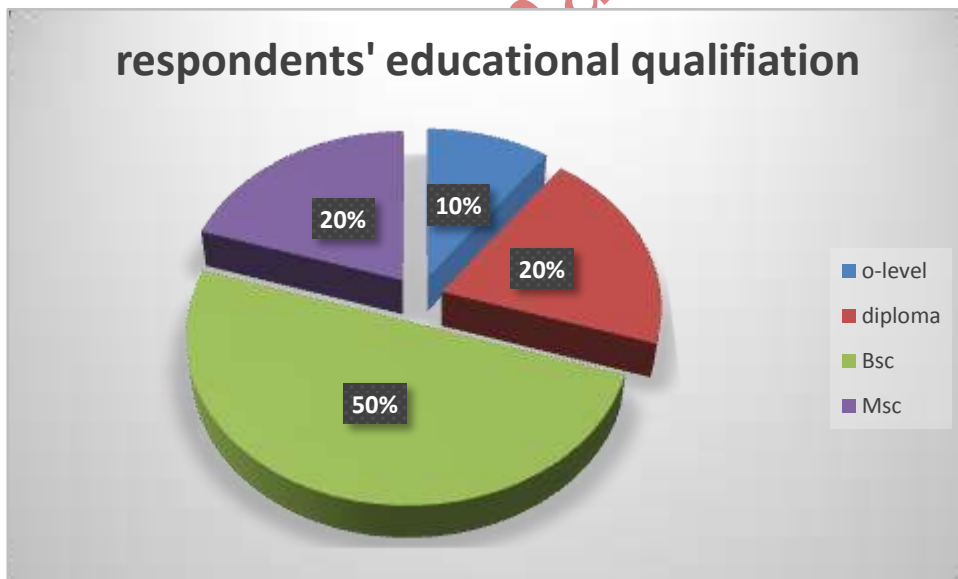
Data in fig.1 show that 50 percent of the respondents are male and 50 percent are female (129 males and 129 females). The gender distribution here is interesting as they are equally surprising to the researchers, however they cut across all the departments and not only the editorial staff where literature usually support gender imbalance.

Figure 2: Respondents age



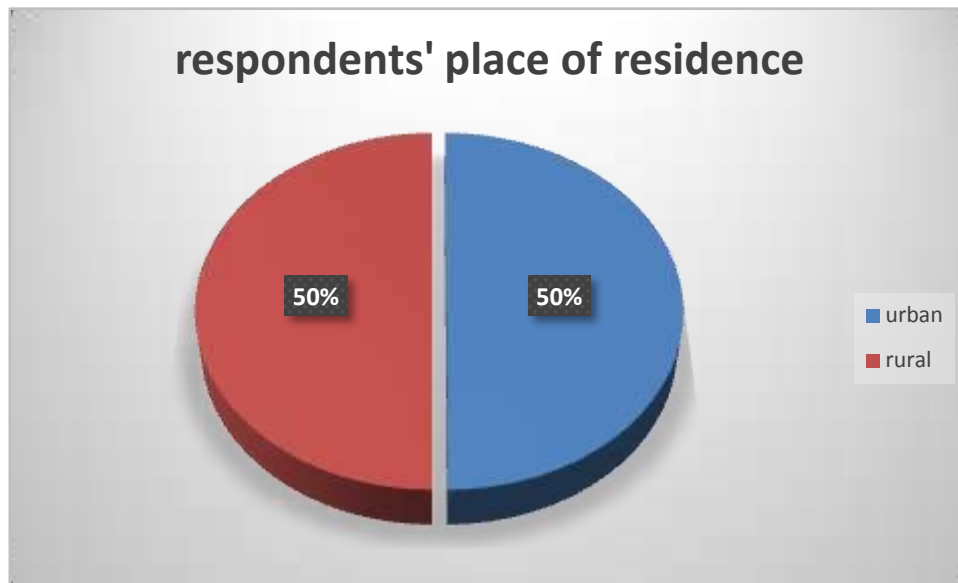
Data in fig. 2 shows that 35% are 21-30years, 40% are 31-39 years, and 25% are 40-above years.

Figure 3: Respondents educational qualification



Data in fig. 3 shows that 10% have 'o' level WAEC qualification, 20% have diploma qualification, 50% have Bachelor's Degrees and 20% have Masters Degrees.

Figure 4: Respondents place of residence

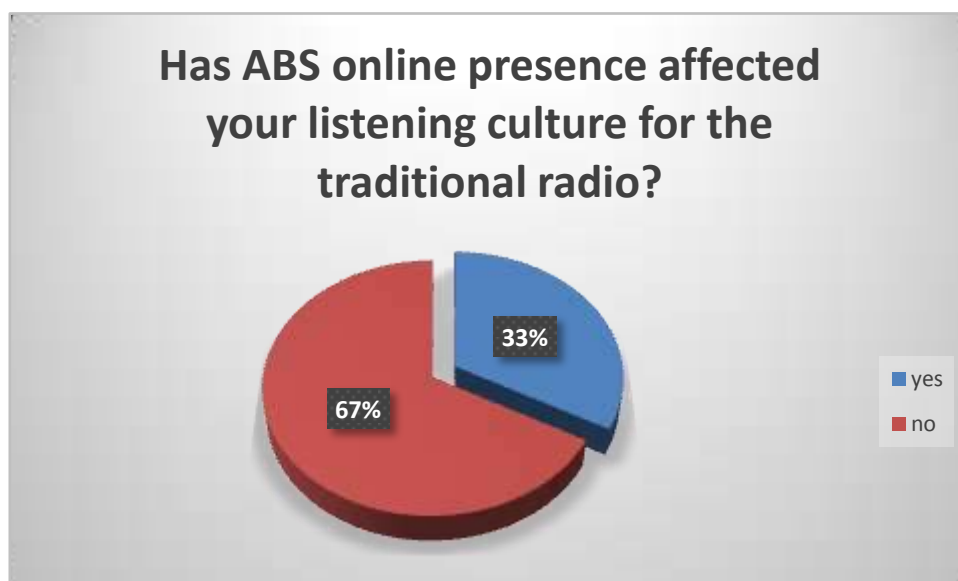


Data in fig. 4 shows that 50% of the respondents' place of residence is urban and 50% of the respondents' place of residence is rural.

ATTITUDE CHANGE TOWARDS TRADITIONAL BROADCAST MEDIA AS A RESULT OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE

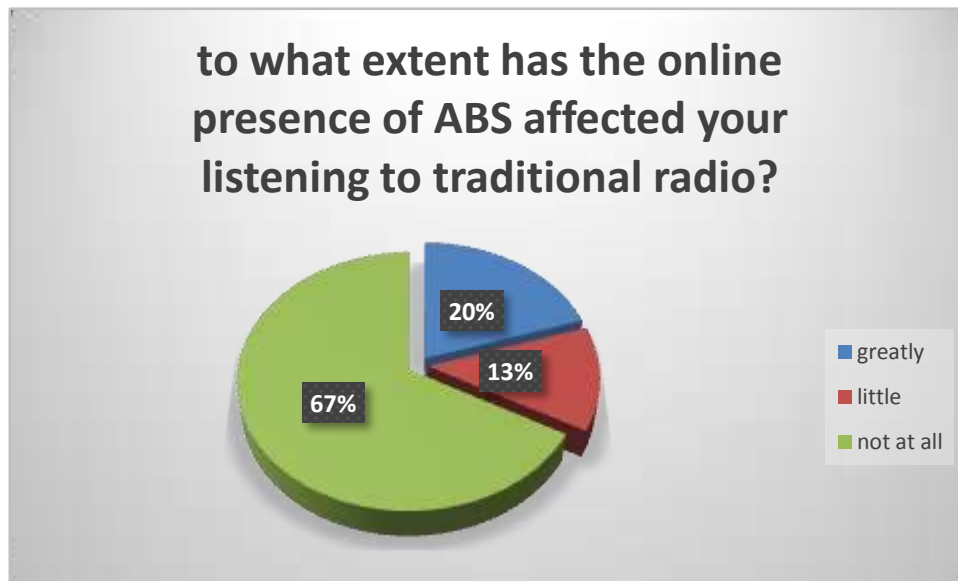
The respondents' attitude towards traditional broadcast media as a result of media convergence was measured using question items 5-6 in the questionnaire (see appendix). Details of the data collected are shown in the pie chart below.

Figure 5: Has ABS online presence affected your listening culture of traditional radio?



From the chart, ABS online presence has affected 33% of the respondents' listening culture of the traditional radio and 67% of the respondents' said that ABS online presence does not affect their listening culture of the traditional radio. This goes to disprove the possibility of creative destruction in the broadcast media as a result of convergence necessitated by its online platform.

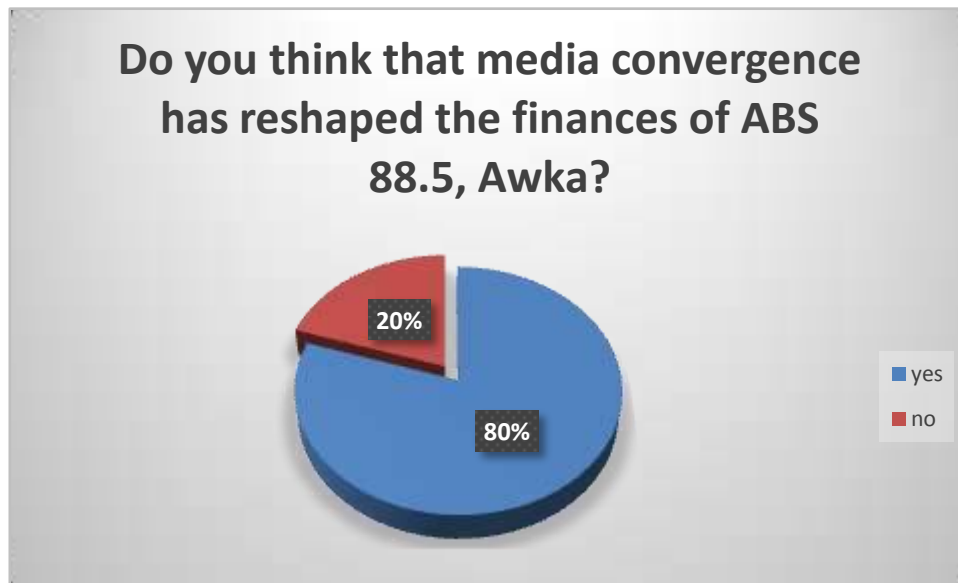
Figure 6: To what extent has the online presence of ABS 88.5 fm Awka affected your listening culture?



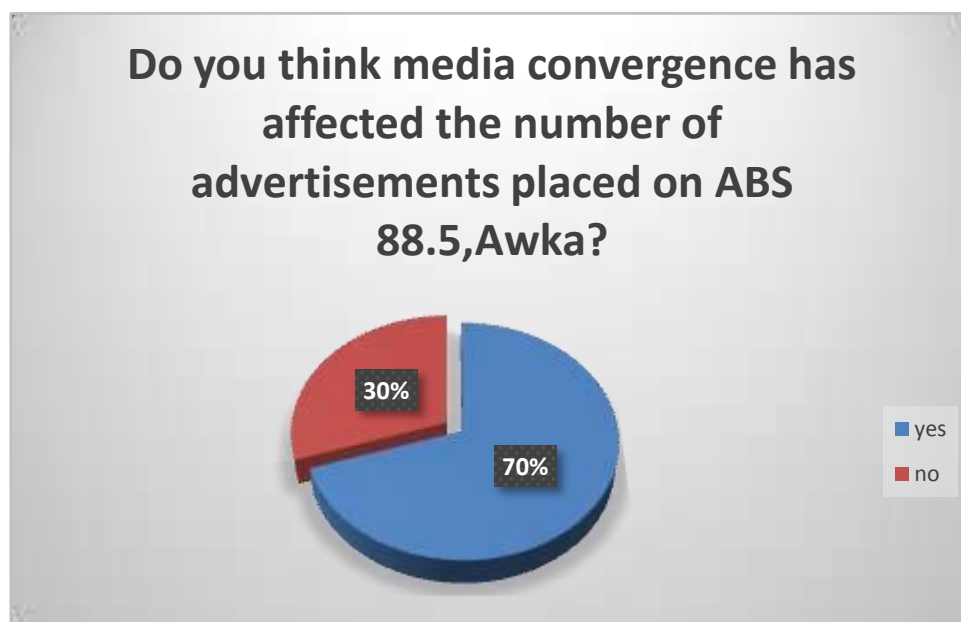
From the chart above, 67% have not been affected by media convergence at all, while 20% have been affected greatly and 13% have had little effect caused by media convergence. This data also rules out the displacement or replacement debate about the broadcast media in Nigeria as a result of convergence. The theory of creative destruction is also ruled out here.

EFFECT OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE ON THE FINANCE OF BROADCAST STATIONS VARIABLES

The respondents' perception on how media convergence has affected the finance of the broadcast station was measured using question items 7-8 in the questionnaire (see appendix). The details of the data collected are shown in the pie charts below:

Figure 7: Do you think broadcast media convergence has reshaped the finances of ABS 88.5. Awka?

Data gathered from the chart above ascertains that majority of the respondents (80%) agree that this convergence has reshaped the finances of ABS, Awka while 20% do not agree to this. This suggests that convergence has re-defined the business and financial profiles of broadcast media in Nigeria rather than a total creative destruction or their disappearance from the media business environment. The data gathered on the influence and perception issues on the convergence of broadcast media do not however support creative destruction as a result of moving from one technological age to another.

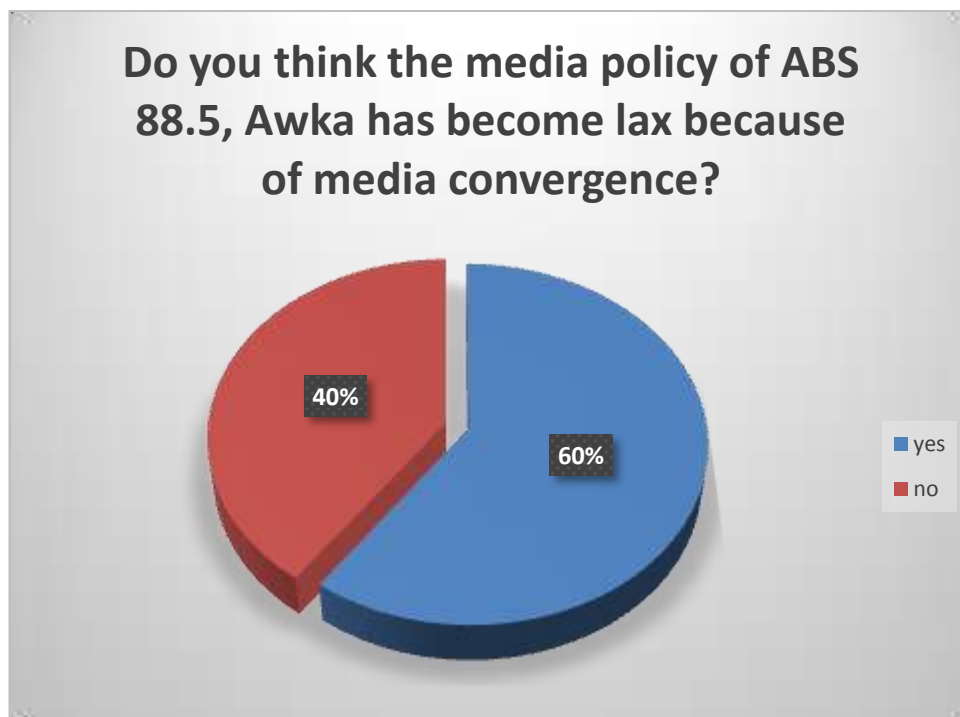
Figure 8: do you think this media convergence has affected the number of advertisement placed in ABS 88.5, Awka?

From the chart above, it shows that 70% of the respondents are of the opinion that this broadcast media convergence has affected the number of advertisement placed in ABS Awka while 30% think otherwise. This is a further confirmation of the dwindling revenue as a result of convergence.

EFFECT OF MEDIA CONVERGENCE ON BROADCAST POLICY

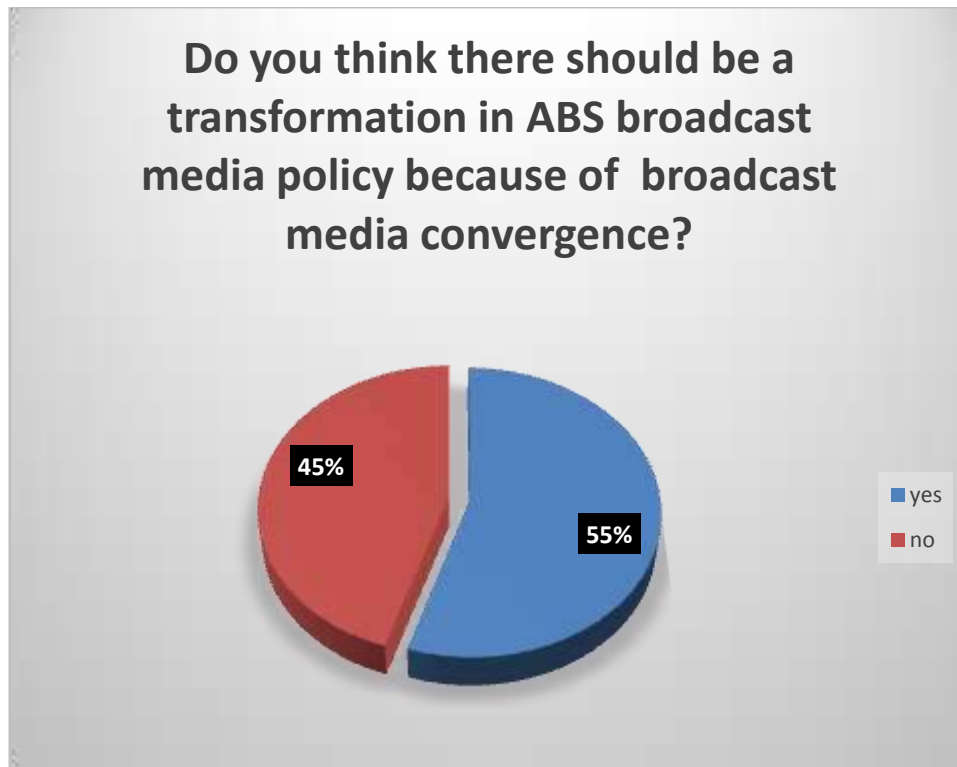
The respondents' perception on the effect of media convergence on broadcast policy was measured using question items 9-10 in the questionnaire (see appendix). The results are in the charts below.

Figure 9: Do you think the media policy of ABS 88.5 Awka has become lax due to broadcast media convergence?



From the data in figure 9, it can be exerted that majority of the respondents (60%) have the perception that media convergence has caused the media policy of ABS to become lax while 40% do not agree with this. The data suggests the adoption of permissiveness or dynamism in the media policies of broadcast stations to key into the daily emerging trends as a result of convergence.

Figure 10: Do you think there should be a transformation in ABS broadcast media policy because of its broadcast media convergence?



From the data analyzed in fig 8 above, it can be deduced that the higher number of the respondents (55%) agree that the media policy of broadcast outfit should be transformed because of media convergence while 45% do not share this view.

Analysis of Research Questions

This study had three specific objectives:

- 1) To ascertain the extent of change in the attitude caused to the audience as a result of the broadcast media convergence;
- 2) To find out how this convergence has affected the finance of broadcast media organization;
- 3) To determine if this creative destruction has affected broadcast media policy.

The three research questions posed in this study revolve around these objectives. Data interpretations were used to answer the research questions.

The first research question sought to ascertain the extent of change in the attitude caused to the audience as a result of the broadcast media convergence, data derived from figure 5 & 6 ascertain that the extent to which broadcast convergence has affected the attitude of the respondents is of low value; since 67% say that they have not been affected at all.

The second research question sought to determine how media convergence has affected the finance of ABS 88.5, Awka. Data gathered from figure 7&8 show that indeed media convergence has impacted on the finances of the broadcast station as 80% said it has affect their finances and 70% said it has affected the rate of advert placement in the station.

The third research question was asked to measure the extent to which media convergence has affected the media policy of Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS). Data from fig. 9 &10 show that there is a close margin with results concerning this research question. 60percent of the respondents say it has affected the media policy while 40percent say it has not. Also, 55percent say the media policy needs to be transformed because of media convergence while 45percent say it does not need to be changed.

Discussion of Findings

The data analyzed in this study was obtained from 258 staff of Anambra Broadcasting service, Awka. The overall results offer a wide range of conclusions.

The research sought to find out if media convergence affects the listening culture of respondents to traditional radio. Findings from the research suggest that this effect is low as majority of the respondents disagree that it affects them.

The finding that 80 percent of the respondent agree that media convergence has affected the finances of the broadcast station (88.5 ABS, Awka) exerts that media convergence has a large impact on the finance of broadcast stations.

Also majority of the staff of ABS (60%) agree that media convergence has affected the media policy of the station and 55% also agree that the media policy needs to be transformed because of this media convergence. This suggests that media convergence influences broadcast media policy.

Conclusion

Data obtained from 258 staff of Anambra Broadcasting Service (ABS), show that an average of 70% of the respondents agreed that media convergence influences broadcasting. This leads to the conclusion that media convergence has adverse effects on media policy, finance of broadcast stations but has fewer effects on the use the conventional broadcast media.

Recommendations

Since it would appear that media convergence influences broadcasting, the study therefore makes the following recommendation:

- Broadcast media owners ensure their media policy is still ethical irrespective of media convergence
- Media regulators ensure that broadcast keep up with expected standards of their programme contents, even online.
- Broadcast media owners create more awareness and exposure of their online presence.
- Broadcast stations should keep up with the culture of dynamism to blend with all technological trends brought about by convergence and digitization.

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