CONVERGENCE AND BROADCASTING PRACTICE IN NIGERIA: ISSUES, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

This paper examines the issues, challenges and prospects that convergence has brought to broadcasting practice in Nigeria. The paper is anchored on the technological determinism theory and adopted the literature modelling method which includes the analytical review of both related literature and related empirical studies.

The paper argues that convergence has triggered significant changes in broadcasting practice across the country just as it accentuates that regardless of the numerous issues and challenges, convergence has a whole lot in the offing.

The paper concludes that convergence has come to stay, to reshape and transform broadcasting practice in Nigeria and recommends, inter alia, that the Nigerian Government should make resolute efforts to subsidise the prices of new media technologies so that broadcasters can easily afford them.

Key Words: Convergence, Broadcasting Practice, Nigeria, Traditional Media, New Media

Word Counts: 124

Introduction

The broadcasting sphere in Nigeria and indeed the world over has never been static. It has continued to evolve, and much more with the stupendous advancement that keeps pervading the global technological sector. Decades ago in Nigeria, the radio and television were the only means through which broadcast messages were disseminated to the audience who, at the time, were mass, scattered and heterogeneous (Akpan, 2004; Oyero, 2007; Olley, 2009; Ogedi, 2009; Olowofela & Peter, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020). For instance, it was common sight to find scores of persons gather in a house to watch the NTA Network News at 9 p.m.; listen to the 7 a.m. news on the

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network service of Radio Nigeria; or watch football matches during the heat of the popular Olympic Games. Going by the ephemeral nature of the radio and television, the audience found it extremely difficult (if not impossible) to record broadcast messages for future use (Akpan, 2004; Oyero, 2007; Gbam, 2017; Ogwuche, 2017; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020) Missing a news broadcast on TV, for instance, was tantamount to missing it for a lifetime except the station, for some reason, decides to air it again. As a matter of fact, the dictum that "the radio speaks only once" was much popular at the time (Emwinromwankhoe, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020).

Besides, the radio and television were largely linear, unidirectional and vertical in their pattern of information dissemination (Akpan, 2004; Oyero, 2007; Olley, 2009; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020). This means that the audience had no say, absolutely, about the who, what, when, where, why and how (5Ws and H) of the message. Needless to say, the audience were practically dumping grounds for the cornucopia of news and other information relayed via these traditional media (Oyero, 2007; Emwinromwankhoe, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020).

However, with the introduction of the Internet and other paraphernalia of new media technologies, as well as the proliferation of digital devices, the *status quo* mentioned earlier has changed. The old (or traditional) broadcast media and the new media have come together, giving birth to what is technically known as media convergence (Erdal, 2007; Oyero, 2007; OECD, 2013; Kipkirui, 2016; McEwan, 2017). With convergence, the sharp differences that once existed between the traditional broadcast media and the new media have been blurred just as the once separate industries of broadcasting, telecommunications and computers have come together for a better communication experience (Killebrew, 2005; Baran, 2012; Biagi, 2012; Dominicks, 2015; Taylor, 2015; Uba, 2017; Olusaga, 2018).

Also, there are no clear distinctions between private (telecommunication) and public (broadcasting) communication; nor are there distinctions between the character of a broadcast message, or the equipment used to produce, transmit or receive the message. With a powerful gadget such as an iPhone, for instance, a broadcast practitioner can produce, edit, package and relay a broadcast message (Oyero, 2007; OECD, 2013; Dominicks, 2015; Turow, 2017; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020).

Convergence has equally impacted tremendously on the broadcast audience as they do not necessarily have to stay close to the

"box" (radio or television set) in order to receive audio/visual messages (Pavlik, 2005; Petersen, 2007; Kalamar, 2016; Kipkirui, 2016; Olowofela & Peter, 2018). This is because there are multiple channels via which they can access broadcast contents. They can either access it using the radio app on their smartphones, or live stream the programme online. Alternatively, they can visit the broadcast station's site and download it as podcast, or watch it on *YouTube.* The audience may even decide to record the broadcast content and listen to/watch it at a later time. Suffice it to say that convergence has made it possible for the broadcast audience to simultaneously consume and produce broadcast contents (Erdal, 2007; Kipkirui, 2016; Turow, 2017; Uba, 2017; Emwinromwankhoe, 2018). Not only are broadcast audiences now kings in the broadcasting business, they have become *demassified* and fragmented.

Owing to convergence, a lot of significant and troubling issues have continued to crop up in the Nigerian broadcasting sector. Some scholars (Pavlik, 2005; Oyero, 2007; Taylor, 2015; Pavlik, 2015; Nwanne, 2016; Emwinromwankhoe, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020) have rightly noted that in the era of convergence, broadcast practitioners across the country are faced with enormous challenges which must be tackled if they are to have a smooth ride. Not only are there issues and challenges, the country's broadcasting sector stands to gain a lot if it decides to tap fully into the vast potentials inherent in convergence. Be that as it may, this paper examines the issues, challenges and prospects of convergence on broadcasting practice in Nigeria.

Understanding Convergence

Scholars in the field of mass communication differ in their definition of convergence. This variation is understood as convergence, as a term, is very broad, polysemous and elusive. As Latzer (2013) notes, convergence is an ambiguous term used by various disciplines to describe and analyse processes of change towards uniformity or union. Hence we have media convergence, industry convergence, legal convergence, economic convergence, socio-cultural convergence, payment method convergence, energy consumption convergence, software convergence, amongst others.

The word "convergence" is the nominalised form of the verb "converge" which is defined by the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (*7th ed.*) as "to move towards each other and merge at the same point." Etymologically, the word "convergence" has its

roots in the Latin words *com* which literally means *towards* and *verger* which literally means *to bend or lean*.

Okoroafor (2016, p. 25) defines convergence as "the coming together of two or more distinct entities or phenomena, thereby removing entry barriers across the IT, telecoms, media and consumer electronic industries." Turow (2017, p. 44) describes convergence as "a phenomenon which takes place when products typically linked to one medium show up on many media." Turow (2017) goes further to elucidate that when you can get a Red Box baseball game broadcast in Boston to show up on your laptop computer and/or your android phone, that is convergence; when you can transfer an Adele music album from your laptop to your iPod, iPhone, iPad, or Xbox, that is convergence.

However, as it pertains to the field of broadcasting, Taylor (2015, p. 14) offers a more comprehensive definition. He says convergence is "the blurring of the hitherto three distinct industries of telecommunications, computers and broadcasting." Convergence, therefore, is the term used in describing a situation whereby the traditional broadcast media, the world of telecommunications, and the new broadcast media blend, meld and merge for the purpose of enhanced communication. When, for instance, an android phone or a laptop is used in the production, editing, packaging and relay of broadcast messages, it is convergence. Same applies to when the audience use their laptops or mobile phones to receive broadcast messages.

Convergence in broadcasting is of different types. There is technological convergence (the ability of any infrastructure to package, process and transport any type of data – text, picture, audio and video); market convergence (the coming together of the telecommunications, computer and broadcasting industries); consumer convergence (the ability of a broadcast consumer to access contents using a multiplicity of devices); cultural/visual convergence (the ability to merge voice and video with texts and photographs, etc.); newsroom convergence (the process whereby news, features, news commentaries and other related resources are shared within and between broadcast organisations); and regulatory convergence (the merging of the regulatory bodies for the telecommunications and broadcasting industries).

Broadcasting Practices Before and During the Era of Convergence

Decades ago in Nigeria, broadcasting practices were characterised with great standard, professionalism, skill and simultaneity. There were limited sources from which broadcast practitioners could get news and other items for broadcast whilst majority of such practitioners had to be present at the scene of the event in order for them to write and present lapidary reports. Broadcast practitioners also had to work round the clock to ensure that broadcast contents were in line with the standards and professional practices as outlined in the *National Broadcasting Code* (Oyero, 2007; Olley, 2009 Emwinromwankhoe, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020).

Broadcast practitioners at the time were highly skilled and had areas of specialisation. Radio practitioners were different from television practitioners, just as broadcast reporters were different from broadcast presenters. That is not to mention the fact that broadcast messages were, more often than not, disseminated to the audience simultaneously. Oyero (2007) elucidates this point in a rather remarkable way:

> The traditional mass media follow a "one-to-many" model of communication. In other words, one source speaks one time to many people who constitute a homogeneous mass audience. Messages sent from these media are designed to appeal to and reach mass audience. Everyone who is tuned to a particular radio station will hear the same commercials … Generally, the [traditional] mass media communicate with the public as a mass audience rather than an individual human being (p. 170).

Owing to the fact that broadcasting was one way and unidirectional, feedback was invariably delayed (Erdal, 2007; Oyero, 2007; Obalanlege, 2015). Furthermore, contents were disseminated using the analogue form of broadcasting whilst there were limitations as to the equipment used for recording, processing, packaging and disseminating such contents. Many a broadcast practitioner relied on bulky cameras and microphones, VHS tapes as well as other paraphernalia of analogue equipment.

With convergence, there are rapid and tremendous transformations in broadcasting practices. Today, broadcast practitioners can source news from diverse and limitless sources which range from the Internet, weblogs, citizen journalists, social networking sites, to visiting the scene of the event. Another area of change is that broadcast practitioners no longer have

areas of specialisation as they now write reports across the traditional broadcast media and the new broadcast media. For instance, a broadcast reporter with ITV/Radio would have to simultaneously write reports for the station's radio and television as well as the Internet, social media, website and cable TV. The aforesaid is what some scholars (Erdal, 2007; Obalanlege, 2015; Akpeh & Ukwella, 2017) refer to as *multi-skilled* or *deskilled broadcast journalists*.

In addition, broadcast professionals can now use a variety of gadgets or technological devices to record, process, package and disseminate broadcast contents. They can decide to record information using bulky cameras and microphones, or do so using portable technological devices such as personal digital video recorders, smartphones, iPhones, tablets, to name a few. These technological devices can also be used to edit and relay broadcast contents. Also, broadcasting has now become digital as many stations across the world in general and Nigeria in particular disseminate information using digital terrestrial broadcasting. Broadcast contents are also in multimedia formats as audio could be laced with video, texts, graphics, data and vice-versa.

Theoretical Construct

This paper is anchored on the technological determinism theory. The term "technological determinism" was coined by Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929), an American sociologist-cum-economist. Technological determinism revolves around the proposition that technology in any given society defines the society's nature as well as culture (Nwanne, 2016; Asemah, Nwammuo & Uwaoma, 2017; Uwawah, 2018; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020). As noted by Nwanne (2016) and Ja'afaru (2018), technological determinism theory rests on the basic assumption that technology is what determines, shapes and influences how people in a society think, believe and behave.

Ja'afaru (2018), in his bid to explain the theory, remarks that:

> The theory assumes that technology shapes how individuals communicate, relate and interact in a society. The theory holds that the media not only alters their environment, but the very message they convey. Technology determines how news is gathered. The medium determines the content of communication (p. 162).

Technological determinism theory, therefore, sees the media as the main force behind social and cultural changes in the society. For instance, when the radio evolved as

a medium of communication, it shaped and affected the way information was relayed as people greatly preferred the medium to newspapers and magazines – media which existed before it. This was because they saw radio as a medium that was far better and more appealing than the print media. Then when the TV evolved, attention ostensibly shifted from the radio to the TV. The TV became the latest craze as people had the perception that a household without TV had not yet arrived in terms of wealth or social status. The same applies to new media technologies (Internet, smartphones, laptops, tablets, etc.) which are indubitably making waves across the globe.

Technologies shape our society. They sure determine how we think, how we talk, how we act, how we socialise, how we produce, package, deliver and consume information.

Uwawah (2018) notes that technological determinism theory has the following as key assumptions:

(a)   As the medium or communication technology changes, so does a society's way of communicating.

(b)   That humans in a social context have no choice but to adapt to an emergent media technology for an enhanced communication experience.

The theory is pertinent to this paper because it would help beam searchlight on the changes that convergence has triggered in the Nigerian broadcast industry. It would also help to navigate through the issues, challenges and prospects of convergence in broadcasting practice in Nigeria.

Convergence and Broadcasting Practice: A Review of Related Empirical Studies

A good number of empirical studies have been carried out to determine the influence of convergence on broadcasting practice. For instance, Dupagne & Garrison (2003) carried out a study to investigate the effects of convergence on Media General's Tampa News Centre in Florida, USA. At the end of the study, the researchers found, amongst others, that jobs and roles in the centre have changed due to convergence and that staff in the centre now do more thinking about how to disseminate information.

Closer home, Olley (2009) embarked on a study to determine the challenges new media technologies have brought to broadcasting practice in Nigeria, using four select broadcast stations – Delta Broadcasting Service, Warri; Edo Broadcasting Service, Benin; Silverbird Television, Benin; and Nigerian Television Authority, Benin. Upon completion of the

study, he found that unfair government policies, high cost of acquiring new media technologies, lack of interest among broadcasting staff and broadcasting managers, and inaccuracy of new media channels are the problems militating against the Nigerian broadcasting industry in the era of new media technologies.

Similarly, Mwaura (2011) conducted a study to ascertain the impact of the new media on radio broadcasting in Capital FM, Kenya. Findings from his study revealed that: the staff of capital FM, Kenya greatly used new media platforms during the gathering, processing and broadcasting of programmes; poor staff training and high cost of acquiring new media constitute challenges to the employees' use of broadcast media; and the station's audience now have more options as to how to consume broadcast contents. Mwaura's findings were corroborated by Adigwe (2012) whose study on the impact of information and telecommunication technologies (ICTs) on news processing, reporting and dissemination in broadcast stations in Lagos State revealed that ICTs have led to a great improvement in the ways news are processed and reported in the stations, especially in the areas of timeliness and live broadcasting.

In addition, Meier, Bracker & Verhovnik (2016) embarked on a study to unravel the challenges faced by the over 5,000 employees of Bavaria's Public Broadcasting Service, one of Germany's largest media organisations, in the era of convergence. The researchers found that the absence of networking (particularly cross media); absence of flexible workflow design possibilities; problems with the use of mobile devices in media production; and insufficient integration of social media in research constitute challenges faced by the employees in the era of convergence.

In the same vein, Ngomani (2016) conducted a study to ascertain, comparatively, radio listening habits among young people in Cape Town, South Africa in the era of convergence. The study focused on three stations in Cape Town – *Assembly Radio*, *Cliff Central* and *Balls Visual Radio.* Findings from her study revealed that radio listening habits among young people living and studying in township greatly differ from the practices of those who attend school in rural areas.

Ogwuche (2017) carried out a study to investigate the adoption of convergence technology for sports journalism, using *Brila 88.9 FM* as a case study. The researcher found that the staff of the station had greatly adopted convergence technology for their work; and that the benefits of this adoption include the quick

download of stories from sports websites and regular link-up of the station with affiliate stations.

Lastly, Emwinromwankhoe (2020) conducted a study on the influence of convergence on broadcasting in Edo State, using three select broadcast stations (Nigerian Television Authority, Edo Broadcasting Service and Independent television/Radio) as case studies. Findings from his study revealed that convergence has significantly influenced broadcasting practice in the state, especially in the following areas: information gathering for broadcast purpose, production and editing of programmes, relay of programmes, display of programmes, and storage of aired programmes. Finding further showed that convergence has created more avenues for the distribution of broadcast content by practitioners in Edo State.

The aforementioned empirical studies lend credence to the already established fact that convergence is changing the nature and structure of the broadcasting practice across the globe. This is why Pavlik (2005, p. 150) submitted that "a major consequence of convergence for the [broadcast] media is structural transformation. Convergence is not driving just technological change, but changes in the organisation of [broadcast] media operations."

Issues Convergence has Brought to Broadcasting Practice in Nigeria

Against the backdrop of the influence of convergence on broadcasting practice in Nigeria, some issues have cropped up. Before all else is the issue of licencing. Prior to the era of convergence, licencing frameworks in the country traditionally consisted of a large number of different service categories, and broadcast operators applied for separate licences in order to provide each service. For instance, in time past, a broadcast operator who intends to set up a radio and television station would have to apply for two different licences from the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC). Today, however, market convergence has made it possible for broadcast operators to produce contents that cut across different media.

There is also the issue of content. Consequent upon the fact that any device can be used to record and relay broadcast messages, and the opportunity this has offered the broadcast audience (User-Generated Content or UGC), the Nigerian broadcast industry has been inundated with shoddy and substandard contents. As Owuamalam (2008) and Khan, Shalid & Ahmad (2014) rightly observe,

contents that are titillating, unsuitable and gruesome can easily be relayed to the public via the Internet. Also, the strong desire to be the first to relay new information often make Nigerian broadcasters sacrifice accuracy, fairness and balance – core ethics of the broadcast profession – on the altar of profit making. As Zhang (2008) warns, getting it *first* should never outweigh getting it *right*.

Besides, fixing prices on broadcast contents has become a knotty problem to the NBC. This is because of market convergence and the opportunity to relay contents using cross media. Today, traditional broadcast stations in Nigeria easily relay contents comprising cross or multimedia such as text, audio, video and data. Public interest has also been a victim of convergence in Nigerian broadcasting practice. Owing to competition issues and UGCs, the Nigerian broadcast industry is now awash with contents that are diametrically opposed to public interest.

Aside from the above, there is the issue of increased consumer choice as well as increased competition among broadcast stations in the country. Gone are the days when broadcast stations imposed contents on consumers; today, consumers have the prerogative of choosing how and when to access broadcast messages. To broadcast consumers in Nigeria, the mantra now is "*serve yourself.*" For instance, the consumer has the prerogative of deciding whether to watch the presidential debate on conventional TV, or on cable TV. Alternatively, s/he can live stream the programme on the Internet, or record it for future viewing. As regards increased competition, broadcast stations are now caught in a web where only the fittest survives. Not only do they compete with each other (vertical competition), they also compete with the new media such as the Internet (horizontal competition). To survive in the industry, therefore, many broadcast stations now have to go the extra mile to produce mesmeric contents (Akpan & Senam, 2012).

Furthermore, there is the issue of frequency allocation spectrum as broadcast stations easily interfere with others' frequencies. Convergence has also led to the creation of new markets for broadcast stations in the country. According to Taylor (2015), any telephone operator in Nigeria today has the ability to provide video services to its clients, and any broadcaster today can provide Internet access using the TV. A good number of Nigerian television and radio stations such as Channels Television, AIT, ITV, NTA, Raypower FM, amongst others, have links via which consumers can access their contents on

the Internet. Also, many of these stations simultaneously relay programmes on terrestrial TV (analogue or digital) and cable TV.

There is also the issue of alliances, mergers and acquisitions as many broadcast stations, in their bid to remain relevant and formidable in the ever competitive world of convergence, merge to become one. Although alliances, mergers and acquisitions are more common in western countries, it is ineluctably a thorn in the flesh of broadcasting practice in the country.

Convergence has also led to increased workload for broadcast practitioners across the country as they now have to write across different media. For example, a reporter with Channels Television has to write stories for the station's online page whilst also writing for broadcast on its digital and cable TV. Then there is the issue of information overload as various online broadcast platforms are now inundated with broadcast messages. According to Hall (2001), the implication of this is that broadcast audiences may not know which content to consume and which to neglect.

Challenges Faced by Nigerian Broadcast Practitioners in the Era of Convergence

There are numerous challenges faced by Nigerian broadcast practitioners in the era of convergence. Although some of these challenges are also present in other countries, others are peculiar to Nigeria because of the political, social, economic and educational climate of the country. First, there is lack of training on the use of new media. Many broadcast practitioners in Nigeria lack an in-depth training on how to use new media for broadcast purposes. Nwanne (2016) notes that majority of Nigerian broadcast journalists were trained using typewriters and other analogue devices and have failed to seek digital knowledge. Many broadcast practitioners parade smartphones, tablets, iPads, laptops, etc. which they cannot put to other uses aside from making calls, sending text messages and chatting on social media. Can one expect a fish to effectively navigate the waters when it is not in the know of how to swim? This question relates, certainly, to many Nigerian broadcast practitioners in the era of convergence.

Also, there is erratic power supply. There is no gainsaying the fact that power supply in Nigeria is an outright embarrassment. One can hardly expect power supply for six hours without an interruption from the electric authorities. In some areas, power outage has lasted for several months (if not years). It is sad to note that even with the privatisation of the country's electricity industry, the situation has

remained same. Since virtually all new media need a stable or uninterrupted power supply to function, poor power supply constitutes a major impediment to broadcast professionals in the era of convergence.

The high cost of acquiring new media constitutes another challenge. It is an established fact that poverty is a major challenge in Nigeria and other developing countries (Olise, 2012; Nwanne, 2016; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020). Most new media such as smartphones, tablets, laptops, etc. are sold at high prices with little or no subsidisation from the federal or state governments. The recession did not help matters as it made the already high costs to further escalate. Although the Federal Government has publicly announced that the country has slid out of recession, everyone knows that that was a tongue-in-cheek announcement: it is not a reflection of the actual state of things. Consequently, many broadcast practitioners are unable to afford new media devices. It is worthy of note that even with the signing of the National Minimum Wage Bill into Law, the situation would not record any improvement as many economists have opined that an increment in money income (₦30,000) does not necessarily correlate an increase in real income (the purchasing power of money).

Poor Internet facilities is another challenge bedevelling Nigerian broadcast practitioners in the era of convergence. It is an undeniable fact that Internet facilities leave much to be desired in Nigeria. Many a broadcast professional consider it a Herculean task to access information using an Internet network that does not fluctuate. Even with the introduction of 4G network by majority of the network service providers in the country, the situation has remained same as many broadcast practitioners can hardly get 3G workable on their new media devices; let alone 4G. Since broadcasting is time-bound and much more with convergence, poor Internet facilities constitutes a humongous impediment.

Furthermore, there is difficulty in verifying the authenticity of news source(s). Owing to the fact that converged broadcasting has opened the door for citizen journalists or news *produsers* to thrive, verifying the authenticity of news source(s) has become a great challenge for many broadcast practitioners in Nigeria. This is because the Internet is constantly inundated with several broadcast contents about people, events and places. Therefore, it is a difficult thing to know which report is accurate and which is false.

Lastly, there is inadequate supply of new media in broadcast stations. Many

broadcast stations, particularly those owned by the federal and state governments, lack new media technologies. In stations where such new media are found, they are either outdated or inadequate. Even with the endless calls by the National broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON) that all broadcast stations in the country should fully embrace digitalisation, many government-owned stations still operate on analogue broadcasting. This is a great challenge because it is only when new media technologies are available that broadcast professionals can put them to good use.

Prospects of Convergence in Broadcasting Practice in Nigeria

However the issues and challenges that convergence has brought to broadcasting practice in Nigeria, it can be a great blessing, gain as well as boon for broadcast stations across the country. Vast potentials are inherent in this permanent visitor called convergence, and if Nigerian broadcast practitioners decide to tap fully into them, they as well as their stations stand to gain a lot.

To start with, there can be greater speed. This speed is in two dimensions: the speed of disseminating contents by broadcast stations, and the speed of accessing such contents by broadcast consumers. Prior to the era of convergence, broadcast practitioners across the country took ample time to gather, process, package and relay information to their audiences. With convergence, there can be more avenues through which these practitioners can source for information (Kipkirui, 2016; Emwinromwankhoe, 2020). They could visit the Internet, interact on social media, visit weblogs, rely on citizen journalists and so on. The list is practically endless. By so doing, there would be more breaking and follow-up news as broadcast practitioners can upload videos and audios with tremendous speed and at any time.

Convergence can also help to facilitate interactivity and feedback. Interactivity is the form of communication that takes place between the user and the medium while feedback has to do with the consumer's response to a broadcast message. As noted by Ruggiero (2000) and Deuze (2003), interactivity strengthens the core of the active user. For instance, interactivity would make it possible for broadcast consumers to watch videos, listen to audio, and make comments at the same time and at great speed. Kipkirui (2016) opines that there can be three categories of interactivity in converged broadcasting: (a) navigational interactivity which allows

consumers to move through sites to information of specific interest by clicking on hyperlinks (b) functional interactivity which allows consumers to participate by interacting with other consumers as well as broadcast reporters and presenters via social media (c) adaptive interactivity which allows the customisation of a broadcast station's site to a specific consumer's preference.

Besides, convergence can help to promote multimediality. With multimediality, news stories published on the Web can be complemented with graphics, photographs, animations, audio streams and video footage. *BBC Online* is a good example of a news website employing multimedia obtained by reposting content from BBC Television and Radio. Multimediality also encompasses the use of different media platforms to disseminate broadcast information. For instance, Channels Television News is disseminated via digital terrestrial TV, cable TV, and online streaming on the station's app, android phones, iPhones, iPads, tablets, laptop and desktop computers. With multimediality, broadcast stations in the country can easily win and keep customers, the stiff competition regardless.

Convergence also enhances the storage of broadcast contents. Convergence can make broadcast practitioners across the country to easily store audio/videos in virtually limitless environments on the World Wide Web. Broadcast practitioners can also store contents on an array of cheaper, better and more powerful devices such as flash drives, DVDs, memory cards, personal digital video recorders (which allows for storage of up to 140 hours of standard-definition television or video with audio), to name a few. Contents can also be stored online using sites such as *UC Web Storage, pCloud*, *Google Play Music*, *Mega*, amongst others. Pavlik (2005) rightly notes that with convergence, storage of contents is now cheaper, faster, enhanced and more reliable as compared to the era of analogue broadcasting.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Convergence has come to stay, to shape, to transform, refine and reshape broadcasting practice in Nigeria. It heralds significant growth and development for the country's broadcast sector. With convergence, broadcast stations across the country can come up with absolutely enthralling contents which can be disseminated across multiple platforms, just as interactivity between them and their audiences is enhanced. Nonetheless, convergence, like the proverbial rose flower, has come with its thorns which are in the form of issues and challenges. Nigerian broadcast practitioners would invariably have

to grapple with these issues and challenges if they must make headway. Therefore, for Nigerian broadcast practitioners to effectively navigate these issues and challenges, and ultimately have a seamless transmission in era of convergence, the following recommendations are made:

1) The Nigerian Government both at federal and state levels should make resolute efforts to subsidise the prices of new media technologies so that broadcasters can easily afford them.

2) The Nigerian Government should make urgent efforts to stabilise power supply in the country. This is because virtually all new media depend greatly on it to function.

3) Owners of broadcast stations across the country should make it a priority to adequately supply new media technologies such as laptops, iPads, iPhones, tablets, etc. in their broadcast stations.

4) The management of broadcast stations across the country should from time to time conduct trainings for their employees on the use of new media for enhanced communication. This is because it is only an enlightened fish that can effectively navigate the waters.

5) Broadcast practitioners across the country should make consistent efforts to verify information obtained from the Internet, social media and citizen journalists before relaying them. They should properly sieve (or gatekeep) such information in order to ensure that they conform to the standards of fairness, balance, objectivity and accuracy.

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