

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to establish different ways in which Kenyan media practitioners are coping with the rapid transition from legacy media platforms and practices to new digital technologies as audiences' transition to online spaces moreso after the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was informed by the Media Ecology Theory. The study aimed to meet three objectives: to establish the of the rapid digital shifts on the Kenyan media landscape after the COVID-19 pandemic; to find out if there were any notable paradigm shifts in the Kenyan media professional practice post COVID-19 pandemic; and to determine challenges experienced by stakeholders in the media industry as a result of rapid digitization of the Kenyan media.

Materials and Methods: The research adopted a descriptive survey design. The research population comprised media professionals and media content consumers. Sampling was done purposively with the researcher selecting work-based and social WhatsApp group members as respondents. Qualitative and quantitative data collection tools, that is, interviews and questionnaires, were used. Data was analyzed through descriptive statistics and narration.

Presentation of the data was done through a description of qualitative data while quantitative data is presented in pie charts and graphs. **Findings:** Findings of the study indicate that digitization of Kenyan media landscape became more visible and unavoidable after the Covid-19 pandemic.

The use of digital media platforms was also found to have expanded after the pandemic causing a shift in audience behaviour, audience engagement, and media revenue management and sourcing as well as job losses among media professionals. The study also provides insight into steps taken by media practitioners who had to quickly adopt digital innovations and practice more collaboration through digital spaces even as they grapple with various ethical issues. **Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy:** The study provides recommendations that would help media professionals and regulators adapt better to the new trends while maintaining the principles and ethics of journalistic practice.