

Media Convergence-Based Journalistic Competency Model in Journalistic Education in the Digital Era

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Abstract

This study aims to develop a media convergence-based journalistic competency model for journalism education in the digital era. The development of digital media has created a gap between conventional journalistic competencies and the competencies required in a convergent media environment, where journalists need to master digital technology, multimedia production, cross-platform content creation, and professional ethics. This condition indicates the need for a competency model that integrates journalistic skills, digital capabilities, and professional character in journalism education and training. This research employed a Research and Development (R&D) approach using the Borg and Gall development model. Data were collected through observations, interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), questionnaires, and documentation. The model was tested through three stages: an initial field trial involving 30 journalists, a limited field trial involving 32 journalists, and a broader field trial involving 35 journalists from various media platforms. The findings show that the developed model consists of five main stages: needs identification, learning objectives, material development, training activities, and evaluation. The model achieved a very feasible category based on the trial results and contributed to strengthening journalistic competencies, including technical skills, digital competence, multimedia competence, verification ability, professional ethics, and adaptive capabilities. The findings highlight the importance of integrating media convergence, competency-based education, and professional character development in preparing journalists for the digital era.

Keywords: Character-Based Journalism, Media Convergence, Education and Training Model, Journalistic Competency

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has transformed the journalistic ecosystem from a production-and-distribution model based on a single medium to a media environment that integrates multiple platforms (Yusnaini et al. 2025). Journalists no longer work only with news writing skills for print media, but are required to develop content in the form of text, photos, videos, audio, and news for digital platforms (Chukwu 2023). Research papers on media convergence education and training show that these developments are related to changes in journalists' work patterns and the need to master multimedia technology (Franciscato 2025). The journalism curriculum has even included the production skills of photography, video, television, radio, and cyberjournalism as part of the competencies students need to master (Wolf et al., 2024). This condition places journalistic education under the obligation to develop graduates who not only master basic journalistic techniques but also can work in an integrated, dynamic, and technology-based media environment.

These changes have direct consequences for the implementation of journalistic education, as the competencies needed in professional practice continue to evolve alongside the transformation of technology and the media industry (Butyrina, M 2020). Media convergence is not only related to the use of digital devices but also encompasses the flow of content across various platforms, integration between media systems, changes in industry work patterns, and shifts in audience behaviour in accessing and consuming news (Kirchhoff 2022). The research paper shows that the media industry needs human resources capable of producing accurate, objective, and credible content amid an increasingly dense flow of digital content (Hossain and Wenger 2024). Journalistic competence in this context needs to be defined in terms of the relationship among conventional journalistic skills, technological mastery, multimedia production, professional ethics, and the ability to adapt to the characteristics of convergent media (Besbris and Petre 2020). Journalism education requires a competency framework that connects these demands to the learning process and the development of graduate profiles. However, the conditions of journalistic education and training described in the document still show a gap between the competencies developed and the demands of technological developments and media convergence (Rahman, Haryani, and Sejati 2025). The implementation of journalistic education and training is considered not to meet the needs of the media industry fully. At the same time, disparities in journalists' qualifications necessitate the application of competency standards across print, online, and broadcast media. The problem is also related to journalists' level of professionalism, which, according to the document, remains low, with an estimated 30% considered professionals. This gap shows that mastery of journalistic skills cannot be separated from the need to update the competency structure to align with changes in the media work environment (Leavy 2022).

This competency gap can affect graduates' readiness to enter a journalistic work environment that demands cross-platform content production skills (El Takach, Nassour, and Hejase 2022). Limitations in mastering technology and multimedia can hinder journalists' ability to follow an integrated news production model. At the same time, weak professional practices can compromise accuracy, credibility, independence, and compliance with journalistic codes of ethics (Almakaty 2025). The research document identifies the ability to produce reliable and accurate news, uphold a code of ethics, maintain independence, and improve competence through continuous learning as part of journalistic quality (Oyako 2024). This situation shows that the issue of competence is not only about the technical ability to use digital media but also about professional skills that underpin the quality of journalistic products (Briandana et al. 2022).

The conceptual basis of this problem can be explained through Henry Jenkins' media convergence theory and competency-based education approach. Jenkins views convergence as the flow of content across various media platforms, changes in the relationship between the media industry and audiences, and transformations spanning technological, industrial, cultural, and social dimensions (Rahman, Haryani, and Sejati 2025). Convergence does not stop at the incorporation of media functions into a single device; it also encompasses changes in consumption patterns and in audience interaction with content spread across various media (Audinovic 2021). This perspective is relevant to competency-based education, which places the achievement of knowledge, skills, and attitudes at the basis for developing skills applicable in the world of work. The document also assesses the effectiveness of education and training by the program's ability to achieve competency goals, improve knowledge and skills, and encourage their application in the world of work (Yohanes, Romanisti, and Pradana 2025). These two foundations provide a framework to understand that media transformation needs to be followed by the reconstruction of the competencies taught in journalism education.

Several previous studies have provided an empirical basis for the relationship between journalistic education, professionalism, and media convergence. Asa Wisesa Betari and Raqib Chowdhury, through a study

on Mapping the Qualification Needs of Beginner Journalists in the Mass Media Industry in Indonesia, showed that the media industry needs young people to continue journalistic activities. Still, there are problems with the characteristics and work ethic of the younger generation, so it is necessary to develop a curriculum that promotes uniformity in journalists' qualifications and competencies (Betari and Chowdhury 2023). Sri Mustika and Wininda Qusnul Khotimah, in a study on Journalist Competency Standards for Improving Journalist Professionalism, concluded that the implementation of journalist competency tests has achieved the set goals, even though the results have not been maximized (Mustika and Khotimah 2021).

The three studies make important contributions but still leave room for development in constructing a journalistic competency model that explicitly integrates the demands of media convergence with the needs of journalistic education in the digital era. The novelty of this research lies in the construction of a competency model that connects basic journalistic competencies with digital competencies, multimedia, platform convergence, verification, professional ethics, and adaptive abilities within a journalistic education framework. The model not only views media convergence as learning material but also uses it to determine the competencies students need to achieve.

State-of-the-art in this research lies in the shift from developing a media convergence curriculum and training to constructing journalistic competencies aligned with the nature of the digital media ecosystem. Previous documents have contained various elements that can serve as the foundation of the model, such as mastery of technology, journalistic ethics, interview techniques, news writing, photography, videography, radio, cyberjournalism, and an understanding of media convergence. This research examines how these elements can be organised into competency models relevant to journalistic education in the digital era, focusing on the relationships among media industry demands, the characteristics of journalistic work, and students' competency achievement. This focus positions the competency model as a conceptual instrument to bridge the needs of the journalistic world and the educational process that produces graduates who are adaptable to changes in media platforms and technologies.

This research aims to formulate a journalistic competency model for journalistic education in the digital era, based on media convergence, by identifying competency dimensions relevant to changes in the journalistic work environment and integrating them into the educational framework. The resulting model is expected to make a theoretical contribution to the study of journalistic education and media convergence, particularly by clarifying the competency structure required of journalists in the digital media environment. In practice, the model can serve as a reference for curriculum development, the preparation of learning materials, the design of journalistic practice experiences, and the evaluation of student competencies in journalism education programs. This direction is in line with previous research recommendations that positioned the development of curriculum and competency-based education as instruments for preparing journalistic human resources to meet technological developments and the needs of the media industry.

METHODS

This research employs the Research and Development method, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Leavy 2022). This method is used to develop and test a Media Convergence- Based Journalistic Competency Model in Journalism Education in the Digital Era. The development model, referred to as Borg and Gall, consists of ten stages: research and data collection, planning, development of initial product drafts, initial field trials, product revisions, field trials, product improvements, field implementation tests, final product improvements, and dissemination and implementation (Husnayayin, Gustina, and Dewi 2024).

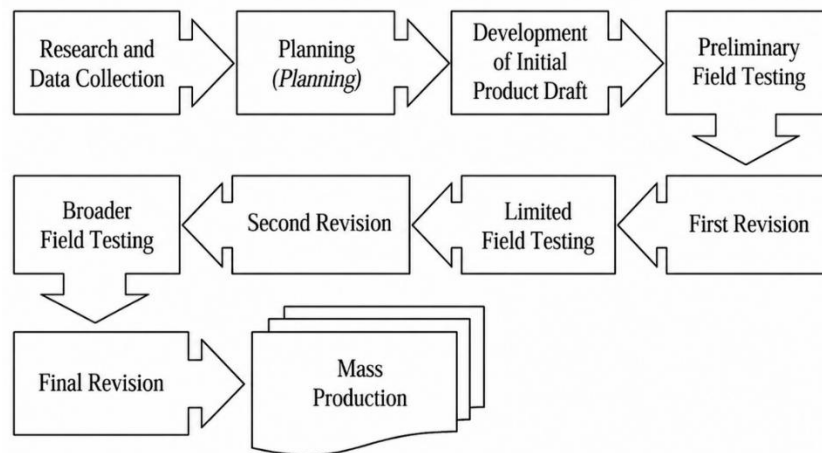


Figure 1. Stages of Development of the Borg and Gall Model

The first stage involves research and data collection, identifying journalistic competency needs, conducting literature reviews, and assessing competency demands in the context of media convergence.²¹ The results of this stage are used as the basis for planning the model. The planning stage includes the formulation of objectives, required capabilities, model structure, and test design. Furthermore, the product draft development stage involves compiling a competency model based on the results of needs identification and the literature review (Putri, Agung, and Suartama 2023).

The developed model comprises seven dimensions: basic journalistic competence, digital competence, multimedia competence, platform convergence competence, verification competence, professional ethics competence, and adaptive and analytical competence (Larasati et al. 2025). These seven dimensions are the basis for the preparation of indicators and model assessment instruments. The next stage is the initial field trial involving 30 journalists from print, online, television, and radio media. The trial is carried out through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The results of the trial are used to revise the product. Furthermore, the field trial involves 32 journalists with identical characteristics, whereas the field implementation test involves 35 journalists. Each stage generates input that is used to improve the model until the final product is obtained.

Table 1. Subject and Stages of the Trial

Strages	Subject	Quantity
Preliminary study	Teachers and educational professionals Journalism	Conform Needs
Initial field trials	Journalist	30
Field trials	Journalist	32
Fiels implementation	Journalist	35

The journalists who were the subjects of the trial came from various media platforms, namely print, online, television, and radio media, and had more than 5 years of experience. The research population consisted of journalists in Lampung who had attended the Indonesian School of Journalism of the Indonesian Association of Journalists (SJI-PWI) in 2015 (Casteel and Bridier 2021). The sampling technique used was probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling. The data source consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through FGD, interviews, observations, and

questionnaires (Stratton 2021). Secondary data were obtained through literature and documentation studies on journalistic education, journalistic competence, media convergence, digital technology, and journalistic practices. FGD was used at the preliminary study stage to identify needs and problems in model development. In contrast, interviews were used to explore the conditions of journalistic education and obtain criticism and suggestions. Observations were made during the trial process, and questionnaires were used to assess the model (Ahmad, Alias, and Razak 2023).

The research instruments consist of FGD guidelines, interview guidelines, observation sheets, and model assessment questionnaires. The instruments are prepared based on the set development objectives and competency indicators (Sukmawati 2023). The questionnaire is used to obtain quantitative data on respondents' assessment of the model. In the source document, the test instrument, in the form of a questionnaire, is administered to journalists from various media platforms. The data is analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative data, including FGD results, interviews, observations, criticisms, and suggestions, are analysed descriptively by grouping them into themes of competency needs, model implementation, and areas for improvement. Quantitative data are obtained from questionnaire scores and used to determine the model's feasibility.

The questionnaire uses a four-level Likert scale: 4 for strongly agree, 3 for agree, 2 for

Table 2. Questionnaire Assessment Scores

Answer	Shoes
Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The development research resulted in a media convergence education and training model that is oriented towards improving journalistic quality and building journalists' character. Development is carried out through the Borg and Gall stages, with the process comprising needs identification, planning, development, testing, revision, and refinement. The results of the study show that the developed model not only emphasises technical mastery of journalism, but also integrates the needs of convergence media, professionalism, ethics, character, and the ability to apply journalistic skills in practice.

Needs Identification Results

Need identification was carried out through a pre-survey of 10 SJI-PWI and FGD graduates with 15 SJI-PWI managers from various regions. This stage was used to obtain an overview of the current state of journalism education and the needs to be addressed in model development. The results of the pre-survey showed that there were problems with the presentation of the media, especially in writing and layout, which were considered not to meet the audience's needs fully. Regarding professionalism, respondents also assessed the need for journalistic coaching and training in stages.

This need shows that journalism education is not enough to provide basic knowledge about news writing. Journalists need a learning process that is closer to practice, adequate learning resources, a clear syllabus and achievement indicators, and the involvement of press practitioners. Respondents' input in the early stages specifically emphasised the dominance of practice in learning, the importance of observing the news, the use of additional learning resources, and the need for a composition of teachers with journalistic

experience. These findings form the basis for developing a more context-specific model for professional needs.

Model Development Results

Based on the identification of needs, the model is developed around five main components: needs identification, learning objectives, materials development, training activities, and evaluation. Needs identify is used to identify the needs of participants and the development of the journalistic environment; learning objectives are used to formulate competencies that must be mastered; developing materials are used to develop materials according to needs; Training activities are the stage of implementing learning through interaction, discussion, and practice; while evaluation is used to determine the achievement of goals and become the basis for model improvement.

Table 4. Matrix of the Journalism Training Model Stages and Implementation

Model Stage	Activity Focus	Expected Outcome
Needs Identification	Identifying the needs of participants, organisations, communities, and technological developments	Competency Needs Map
Learning Objectives	Determining the abilities that participants need to master	Clear Learning Objectives and
Material Development	Developing and integrating materials according to identified needs	Relevant Journalism Materials
Training Activities	Conducting learning activities through lectures, discussions, and practical exercises	Mastery of Knowledge and Skills
Evaluation	Assessing the learning process and outcomes	Achievement Data and Basis for Revision

The model was then tested in stages. The initial trial involved 30 respondents, a limited trial 32, and a broader trial 35, all from print, online, radio, and television media journalists. The trial process was conducted in stages to identify and correct the model's weaknesses before it was deemed the final product.

Model Feasibility Test Results

The results of the trial showed an increase in the model's assessment at each stage. In the initial trial, the score increased from 2.45 (61.25%) in the first round to 2.62 (65.38%) in the second and to 2.90 (72.42%) in the third. After revision, the limited trial produced a score of 2.91 (72.73%), then increased to 3.27 (81.64%) and 3.52 (87.89%). In a broader trial, the score reached 3.75 (89.25%), so it was included in the very feasible category.

Table 5. Development of Model Feasibility at Each Stage of the Trial

Trial Stage	Score	Percentage	Category
Initial Trial I	2.45	61.25%	Less Feasible
Initial Trial II	2.62	65.38%	Feasible
Initial Trial III	2.90	72.42%	Feasible
Limited Trial I	2.91	72.73%	Feasible
Limited Trial II	3.27	81.64%	Highly Feasible

Limited Trial III	3.52	87.89%	Highly Feasible
Wider Trial	3.75	89.25%	Highly Feasible

The increase in scores indicates that the revision process contributed to the refinement of the model. The feedback obtained during the initial stages, particularly regarding the need for more practical learning activities, the utilization of learning resources, the development of syllabi and achievement indicators, as well as the involvement of practitioners, became the basis for improving the model. After undergoing several stages of testing, the model achieved an increasingly higher level of feasibility. In the broader field trial, the final score of 3.75 indicated that the model was considered highly feasible for implementation in journalism education and training.

Results on Aspects of Journalist Character and Quality

In addition to the model's feasibility, the study shows that it was developed to shape the character of journalists who are honest, responsible, educated, careful in delivering news, have a good personality, are fair, and are intelligent. The results of the character instrument test yielded a score of 3.60 and an 89.93% percentage in a wider trial, placing it in the very feasible category. In terms of journalistic quality, the model produces indicators covering independence, compliance with the journalistic code of ethics, accuracy and credibility in news reporting, respect for other parties, fulfilment of journalistic rights and obligations, fulfilment of public needs, sustainable self-development, professional responsibility, integrity, and community service. The quality instrument also showed an increase from 2.47 (61.75%) in the initial trial to 3.60 (89.93%) in the broader trial. These findings show that the model is assessed not only on the feasibility of the learning structure but also on the competency orientation and the quality of the journalists to be produced.

The findings of the study show that the development of journalistic competence needs to be grounded in the real needs of students and media organisations, as well as in changes in the journalistic environment. The placement of needs identified in the initial stage shows that journalistic competencies are not sufficiently formulated within the existing curriculum structure and need to account for the development of work practices and the demands of the media ecosystem. These findings are in line with Jenkins' view that media convergence is not only related to the use of technology but also encompasses the transfer of content across various platforms, changes in audience behaviour, and shifts in technological, industrial, cultural, and social aspects (Ridwanullah and Bala 2022). Under these conditions, journalists no longer master news-writing skills alone but need to integrate various skills according to the characteristics of the platforms they use.

These ecosystem changes show that media convergence has also changed the competency structure of journalists (Alsaleh 2024). Journalists are required to produce content in various formats, such as text, photos, and videos, and to understand the characteristics of distribution across various digital platforms. This condition shows that digital and multimedia competencies should not be placed as additional skills separate from journalistic competencies, but rather become part of the overall news production process. Findings regarding the need for more practical learning, news observation, use of media devices, and practitioner involvement reinforce the view that competencies are formed through a combination of knowledge, skills, experience, and work contexts (Lee and Cho 2020).

The increase in the model's feasibility score from 2.45 to 3.75 indicates that model development requires a gradual process of testing and refinement. In the early stages, weaknesses were still found in the learning methods, learning resources, learning tools, learning targets, and proportion of practitioners'

experience. After obtaining feedback and revisions, the model's assessment improved until it reached the very feasible category. These findings reinforce the principle of competency-based development, which emphasises the achievement of competencies, the improvement of knowledge and skills, continuous learning, and their application in the world of work as important measures of program success (Ekman 2022). In the context of journalism education, the revision process is becoming increasingly relevant as technology, platforms, and media consumption patterns evolve. The developed competency model needs to be adaptable so that it does not remain limited to journalistic needs of a certain period (Karnouskos 2020).

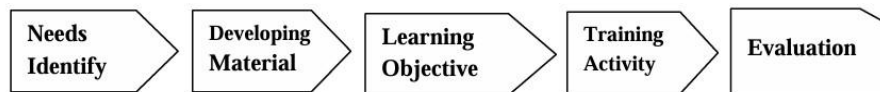


Figure 2. Steps of Iskandar Zulkarnain's Training Model

In addition to technical and digital competence, the study's results show that ethics and professional character continue to determine the quality of journalism. Independence, code of ethics, accuracy, credibility, responsibility, integrity, and public interest are inseparable parts of journalistic competence. This shows that mastery of technology does not automatically produce quality journalism (Steiner and Xu 2020). The faster the process of producing and distributing news through various platforms, the greater the demands on verification, accuracy, and professional responsibility (Li et al. 2022).

These findings align with the concept of journalistic professionalism, which identifies journalistic knowledge, honesty, respect for others' rights, responsibility, ethics, meticulousness, and accuracy as elements of professionalism (Törnberg 2022). These findings also strengthen and develop previous research. Agustin et al. emphasise the media industry's need for journalists' qualifications and competencies, while the Press Council's research shows the importance of competency standards in assessing journalists' professionalism (Marta 2020). This research can continue on this basis by positioning competence as the core of the development of journalistic education, not merely as a result of training. The implication is that journalism education in the digital era needs to connect conventional journalistic competencies with digital capabilities, multimedia, cross-platform production, technology adaptation, and professional ethics. This framework allows journalistic education not only to produce participants who can produce content, but also to produce journalistic work that is accurate, responsible, and aligned with the demands of the ever-changing media ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

This study developed a character-based media convergence education and training model for journalism education at SJI-PWI using the Research and Development approach based on the Borg and Gall model. The developed model consists of five main stages: needs identification, learning objectives, material development, training activities, and evaluation. The model was tested through three stages involving 30 participants in the initial field test, 32 participants in the limited field test, and 35 participants in the broader field test, with the results indicating a high level of feasibility. The findings demonstrate that the model integrates journalistic skills, digital competence, multimedia capabilities, professional ethics, and character development as essential components of journalistic competency in the digital era. The implication of this study is that journalism education and training should adopt a competency-based framework that considers the demands of media convergence and professional practice. However, this study was limited to participants and training contexts within SJI-PWI, which may limit the broader applicability of the findings. Future

research should examine the implementation and effectiveness of this model in different journalism education institutions and wider geographical contexts.

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