Merging Jyllands-Posten with Politiken and Ekstra Bladet: Ownership Concentration and Content Diversity?

The Danish newspaper market has been characterized by a relatively high degree of external plurality (measured in terms of ownership), and a tendency towards reduced internal plurality (measured in terms of content differentiation). The research question asked here, is how a major merger in Denmark may have influenced the latter trend?

The paper sketches economical, political, and management conditions leading to the establishment of JP/Politikens Hus as a unified, foundations owned corporation in 2002. Counter to traditional media market thinking it is hypothesized that the forming of the corporation has actually increased rather than decreased media content plurality.

In doing so, we question the predominant theories in the field of media economics, challenging claims of causality between ownership concentration and reduced media content plurality. We do so by applying a market ecological perspective, inspired by John W. Dimmick’s seminal book “Media Competition and Coexistence – The Theory of the Niche” (Erlbaum, 2003).