

**UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND RADIO NEWS PRODUCTION: A STUDY OF  
SELECTED RADIO STATIONS IN ACCRA.**



**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA  
STUDIES, FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION AND  
COMMUNICATION, SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE  
STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA, IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER  
OF PHILOSOPHY (MEDIA STUDIES DEGREE).**

**JULY, 2017**

## DECLARATION

### STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, Mashud Zakaria declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotation and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

### SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was carried out during one of the trying periods of my life. I was bed-ridden by months of sickness during the critical moments of conducting my thesis. However, being my refuge, shelter and fortress, God's amazing grace saw me through the research. Therefore, I express my profound thanks to the Almighty God for His protection, guidance and support during the period of undertaking this research and beyond.

My deepest gratitude goes to my father, lecturer, adviser, and supervisor, Dr. Andy Ofori-Birikorang for his support, guidance and direction before, during and after the dissertation period. God richly bless you. I would want to acknowledge the contribution of the Rector of the Ghana Institute of Journalism, Dr. Wilberforce S. Dzisah, for giving me a solid academic foundation which contributed immensely to the production of this solid piece of academic document. Many thanks to Mr. Kwesi Aggrey, Mr. Yaw Boadu Ayebofo, Ms. Joyce Mensah, Mr. Asare Okae-Anti, and Ms. Christine Hammond for their academic support and guidance throughout my stay at the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the University of Education, Winneba.

Special thanks go to informants at Citi FM and Peace FM for their invaluable contribution to my thesis. To the 2016/2017 CoMSSA group, especially my colleague Justice Abudulai Issah, I say thanks for being there for me all the time.

I end by dedicating this piece to my wonderful and lovely sister, Fuseina Zakaria, for her immense support during very trying times of my life. God bless you and your would-be husband, Sualisu.

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this piece to my father, Alhaji Zakaria Salifu and my mother, Florence Dupey for their invaluable contributions to my academic laurels. This thesis is also dedicated to Mr. Osei Bonsu Ampaarbeng and his wife, Hawawu Kassim. God richly bless you.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2.1 Social Media	6
1.2.2 Radio News Production	10
1.3 Statement of the Problem	13
1.4 Research Objectives	15
1.5 Research Questions	16
1.6 Significance of Study	16
1.7 Delimitation	17
1.8 Organisation of the study	18
1.9 Summary	18




<b>CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>20</b>
2.0 Introduction	20
2.1.1 Overview of social media	20
2.1.2 Social media in Ghana	22
2.1.3 The impact/uses of social media	22
2.2.1 Evolution of radio and radio news	24
2.2.2 Overview of radio and radio news in Ghana	27
2.3.1 Social media and radio news production	30
2.4.1 Social media and patterns of news production, distribution and consumption	33
2.4.2 Social media and news production: evolving issues and debates	43
2.5.0 Theoretical framework	45
2.5.1.0 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)	46
2.5.1.1 Relevance of TAM to Current Study	49
2.5.2.0 Technology Appropriation Model (TaM).	49
2.5.2.1 Relevance of TaM to current study	51
2.6 Summary	52
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>53</b>
3.0 Introduction	53
3.1 Research Approach	53
3.2 Research Design	54
3.2.0 Case Study	55
3.2.1 Multiple Case Study.	57
3.3 Population	58

3.4 Sampling Strategy and Size	61
3.4.1 Peace FM	64
3.4.2 Citi FM	65
3.5.0 Data Collection methods	66
3.5.1 Cyber Ethnography	67
3.5.2 Interviews	68
3.5.3 Documents Analysis	69
3.6 Data Collection Procedure	70
3.6.1 Cyber Ethnography	70
3.6.2 Interview	72
3.7.0 Method of Data Analysis	73
3.7.1 Qualitative Content Analysis	73
3.7.2 Descriptive Statistics	75
3.7.3 Thematic Analysis	76
3.8 Ethical issues	77
3.9 Validity and reliability	80
3.10 Summary	82
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS</b>	<b>83</b>
4.0 Introduction	83
4.1.1 News gathering	84
4.1.2 Sourcing	88
4.1.3 News Reporting	92
4.1.4 News Dissemination	96
4.1.4.1 News Dissemination on Facebook	96

4.1.4.2 News Dissemination on Twitter	105
4.1.5 Public Engagement and Interactivity	115
4.1.6 News Editing	119
4.2.1 Credibility	120
4.2.2 Policy	122
4.2.3 Complementarity	123
4.2.4 Radio - Social Media News Ecology	125
4.3.0 Summary	129

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

		<b>132</b>
5.0 Introduction		132
5.1 Summary		132
5.2 Main findings		132
5.3 Conclusion		138
5.4 Limitations of the study		140
5.5 Suggestions for further studies		141
5.6 Recommendations		142
REFERENCES		144
APPENDICES		157
APPENDIX I		157
APPENDIX II		160



## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table</b>	<b>Page</b>
1: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016.	96
2: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	98
3: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	98
4: Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook Pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 - 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	100
5: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Facebook pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	101
6: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Content on both CITI FM and PEACE FM's Facebook pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 - 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	105
7: Comparative frequency distribution of Post types on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	105
8: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM's Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 - 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	108
9: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016.	108
10: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Source on Peace FM and Citi FM's Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 - 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	110
11: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June 2016 to 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016.	111
12: Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016	114

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure</b>	<b>Page</b>
1: Top ten radio stations with strong Facebook presence.	60
2: Top ten radio stations with strong Twitter presence.	61
: 3 Opinion polling on Citi FM’s Facebook page.	92
4: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016	97
5 Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook Pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016	99
6: News sharing on Facebook by Peace FM	100
7 Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Facebook pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016	102
8: Citi News Daily on Citi TV (Facebook).	103
9: Citi FM using Facebook Live to broadcast pre-election lecture by Vice Presidential Candidate, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia.	104
10: Peace FM using Facebook Live to stream an outdoor event	104
11: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8 <sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8 <sup>th</sup> December, 2016.	106
12: Live News Update (Interview) on Citi FM’s Twitter page	107
13: News sharing on Twitter from Peace FM’s website.	109
14: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter Pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016	110
15: Peace FM’s Twitter content with embedded YouTube video	111
16: Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8th June 2016 to 8th December, 2016.	113

17: Twitter Periscope used to stream Citi Newspaper Review	114
18 Extract from Citi FM’s news bulletin showing the use of social media to engage audiences	116
19: A Twitter follower “retweeting” Peace FM’s news post	117
20: Radio – Social Media News Ecology Framework	125



## ABSTRACT

The study investigated social media use by two radio stations in Accra (Peace FM and Citi FM), employing cyber ethnography, interviews and documents analysis as well as the Technology Acceptance and Technology Appropriation models. The research revealed that social media has been useful in enhancing journalistic tasks of news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news editing, and public engagement or interactivity. However, the point of departure in terms of the appropriation of social media by the two radio stations lies in the area of news dissemination. The study also found that the incorporation of social media into radio news production has not subverted traditional patterns of news production and distribution. Rather, social media complements radio news production, with the resultant effect being the evolution of a radio-social media news ecology. Members of the ecology (radio stations, social media and audience) inter-relate and interdepend on one another in the area of content production and usage. What is, however, significant is that the two radio stations do not have any documented policies to help tackle credibility issues associated with some social media content.

## CHAPTER ONE

### OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a general overview of the study by focusing on the background, statement of the problem, objectives, and research questions. The significance of the study and the delimitation of the research are also outlined.

#### 1.1 Background

The advent of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram represents a new phase of the revolution and development of new media in the globalized world (Adegbilero-Iwari & Ikenwe, 2014). Boadi (2013), citing Lind and Zmund (1995), is of the conviction that social media platforms have, among other things, democratised content creation and dissemination of information among groups, individuals, and institutions while consolidating existing connections among them. Thus, social media platforms such as blogs, microblogs (for instance, Twitter), and video/image/file sharing platforms (wikis) have encouraged collective intelligence, promoted “radical decentralisation” and participation of users while enabling consumers to contribute, enrich content, remix and control their own data (Fuchs, 2014 p.32).

The interactive and democratic nature of social media appears to have attracted growing number of users worldwide. Approximately 2 billion internet users are using social networks for news, information, entertainment and business activities and these figures are still expected to grow as mobile device usage and mobile social networks increasingly gain traction (Statista, 2016). Facebook has the highest

number of active users (over 1.5 billion), followed by WhatsApp (900 million) and then others such as QQ, Facebook messenger, Tumblr, Instagram, and Twitter (Statista, 2016).

In the area of news and information, Alejandro (2010) argues that social media has not only revolutionised news consumption habits of media audiences but also has had an impact on news gathering processes among the traditional or mainstream media - television, radio and newspapers. Laird (2012) asserts that people are using social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook to keep up to speed with happenings around them as “traditional news outlets become increasingly less relevant to the digital generation”.

In the period before the arrival of the internet and social media, news media audiences waited for their morning papers, sat down at an appointed time for television evening news or stuck to their radio sets in order not to miss any breaking news. However, today, news consumption among these audiences is changing. More recently, a growing number of readers, viewers and listeners are going online for their news (Alejandro, 2010).

The point is that social media has created the space for audiences to source their own information and has also empowered them to create variety of content through blogging, emails, tweets, comments on websites and other social media platforms (Newman, Dutton & Blank, 2012). Thus, despite the relative presence of television, newspapers and radio in many countries, there is a growing competition from interactive online media for the news space.

Though Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012), Alejandro (2010), and Hachten and Scotton (2007) are of the conviction that the mainstream media is still a major source of news and information for a large number of audiences, they also argue that the audience for social media are growing rapidly. As a result, the mainstream media is pushing to keep up with the trend by integrating social media into its daily routines (Scolari, 2009). Journalists are, for example, now inclined to use social media to break news quickly before putting up their full stories (Laird, 2012).

The development of social media has not only given greater meaning to the concept of “Citizen Journalism” and a redefinition of what is news, but technological convergence, partly spurred by the development of social media, is also changing the way news is produced generally (Brooks, Kennedy, Moen & Ranly, 2008). According to Newman (2011), Facebook and Twitter have now become an important tool for journalists. These social media sites have gained grounds in newsroom activity, influencing and shaping the ways stories are gathered, broken, and disseminated to audiences. Knight and Cook (2013) assert that the traditional news organisations are also leveraging the interactive capabilities of social media to maintain their audiences and reach new ones. They do so by streaming events live on their websites, incorporating amateur videos into their feeds, and encouraging user comments and feedback in both formal and informal ways.

This situation is not only helping the news media to try to remain competitive in the wake of social media surge, but has also enabled journalists to gain new authority and influence through their expert use of social media. Some are becoming ‘network nodes’, attracting significant audiences of their own independent of their parent brands (Newman, 2011). Thus, through the nature of the news and by the way

journalists do their work, new media are redefining the relationships between journalists and news organisations and journalists and their audience (Deo-Silas, 2013). In buttressing Deo-Silas' (2013) point, Hachten and Scotton (2007, p.47) note that:

The so-called new media (some not so new) - camcorders, cellphones, satellite phones, bloggers on the internet – have been transforming the traditional ways that news has been gathered and reported.

Hachten and Scotton (2007) argue that the advent of new media, and for that matter social media platforms, has revolutionised and impacted the mechanics of news delivery as well as the editorial content of a number of newsrooms across the world. Online news platforms are facilitating and playing supplementary role in the rapid dissemination of fast-breaking story to an array of traditional news audiences.

Significantly, the broadcast media, particularly radio, cannot escape the intricacies of the evolution of social media. Scolari (2009) asserts that the arrival of new media technologies, which are not based on the broadcasting logic, is challenging the knowledge about traditional mass media technologies, including radio. Cordeiro (2012) avers that radio broadcasting is facing severe competition for people's attention among all available audio contents brought about by growing internet and social media technologies. The scholar (Cordeiro, 2012) notes that radio listeners now have access to an increasing amount of content, including news and entertainment, from different social media platforms and formats. As a result, a new audience – non-traditional, non-passive, participative and independent – has emerged. They appear to respond to the interactive features of social media. This



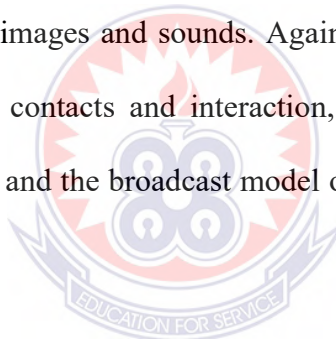
situation is challenging radio broadcasters to improve their traditional broadcasting towards multimedia content and distribution.

In the same vein, Hachten and Scotton (2007) contend that with the advent of social media, the term audience in itself is becoming antiquated because it implies a mass of passive receivers of communication. In explaining Hachten and Scotton's (2007) position, Pleil and Zerfass (2007) note that social media platforms have an appropriate infrastructure that allows users to interact with one another while compressing time and distance. Pleil and Zerfass, (2007) again aver that unlike radio's long-held broadcast model of broadcasting to large audiences or "point-to-mass", social media allows not only narrowcasting or one-to-one or one-to-many communication, but also "many-to-many" and "many-to-one communication". Thus, by lowering the barriers to communication, social media enables radio stations and their audiences to easily access and share content and information such as news or opinions (Kinsella, Passant & Breslin, 2011). In view of this, Castells (2003) is of the conviction that the social media revolution has spurred a number of radio broadcasters to devise several strategies of remaining competitive. They do so by using internet technologies to create intranets for news gathering, providing a platform for news distribution and dissemination. Again, streaming technology has become crucial for radio's online development, providing live audio transmissions and making radio broadcasting available via digital devices (computers, mobile phones, tablets) and networks (spreading of radio content through the web using sharing tools). Radio today is available both in digital and analogue platforms that combine to fit with audience needs, uses and routines (Cordeiro, 2012).

What is significant, however, is that the integration of social media into the news production process by a number of radio stations has received minimal documentation, especially within the Ghanaian context. This study therefore attempts to examine how Ghana's radio stations are using social media for news production.

### **1.2.1 Social Media**

In the last decade, the internet, and more specifically the web, has witnessed a dramatic shift from the model of a static web page towards a social web (social media) or Web 2.0 where the possibilities of users to interact with the web has increased (Terranova & Donovan, 2013). Terranova and Donovan (2013) note that the advent of the social web or social media has made it easier for ordinary people to publish and share texts, images and sounds. Again, these social media tools feature the elements of profile, contacts and interaction, blurring the distinction between personal communication and the broadcast model of message sending information to an unspecified target.



Significantly, the notion of social media has been associated with multiple concepts such as “the corporate media favourite”, “User-Generated Content (UGC)”, “Convergence Culture”, “the people formally known as the audience”, “participatory media”, “peer production”, and “Web 2.0” (Mandiberg, 2012). This therefore brings to the fore the possibility of varied definition of social media as a concept. Indeed, Nations (2016) is of the conviction that social media is not easy to define, though there are numerous and varied definitions of the concept.

Jacka and Scott (2011, p.5) define social media as “a set of Web-based broadcast technologies that enable the democratization of content, giving people the ability to

emerge from consumers of content to publishers'. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p.61) describe social media as 'a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content.' They (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010, p.61) define Web 2.0 as "a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion".

However, Cohen (2009) and Stelzner (2009), in defining social media, differentiate it from social networking. They describe social media as a strategy and an outlet for broadcasting and define social networking as tools and utilities for connecting with others. Hartshorn (2010) appears to concur with Cohen and Stelzner's (2009) distinction between social media and social networking. To Hartshorn (2010), social media is a channel for the transmission or sharing of information with a broad audience while social networking is an act of engagement among people with common interests who associate together and build relationships through community.

Boyd (2007) also describes social media as collaborative media creation and sharing platform (that may include Social Networking Sites [SNS] and other participatory media activities such as news blogs). Activities on social media are done on a fairly large scale but can be extended to include smaller user-generated content networks or micro-communities such as blog, voice blogs (vlogs), podcasts, and wikis. Dewing (2010), on the other hand, views social media as a wide range of internet-based and mobile services that allow users to participate in online exchanges, contribute user-created content, or join online communities.

Based on these definitions, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) categorize social media into various types. They include the following;

- a. *Collaborative projects* enable the joint and simultaneous creation of content by many users and they include various ‘wikis’ such as Wikipedia.
- b. *Content communities* have as their main purpose the sharing of media content between users, including text (for instance, Bookcrossing), photographs (Flickr), videos (YouTube) and PowerPoint presentations (SlideShare).
- c. *Social networking sites* allow users to connect by creating personal information profiles and inviting friends and colleagues to have access to the profile and to send emails and instant messages. Profiles usually include photographs, videos, audio files, and blogs. Facebook and Myspace are examples of social networking sites.
- d. *Virtual game worlds* are social media platforms that replicate a three-dimensional environment in which users appear in the form of personalised avatars and interact according to the rules of the game. They have gained popularity with the support of devices such as Microsoft’s Xbox and Sony’s PlayStation.
- e. *Virtual social worlds* allow inhabitants to choose behaviour more freely and to live (in the form of avatars) in a virtual world similar to their real life. An example is Second Life (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010).

The interactive, democratic and participatory nature of social media has made the platform easy to use, facilitating socialization and providing users with free publishing and production platforms that allow them to upload content in any form;

be it pictures, videos or text (Lovink, 2011). This has helped improve and transform productivity, task and activities in many aspects of social and professional life.

One particular aspect of professional life which social media appears to have impacted is journalism – an activity of gathering, reporting and dissemination news and information. Brooks, Kennedy, Moen and Ranly (2008) are of the conviction that the advent of social media is changing the ways in which news is consumed and distributed. This then raises a fundamental question as to how news organisations should adapt to this change with respect to the process of news production.

This study, which focuses on how radio stations use social media for news production, investigates the use of social media technologies and applications in the process of gathering and disseminating radio news. This is justified by Kern's (2008, p.314) assertion that "news is everywhere on the internet. So it is fair to ask how a radio network or individual station can distinguish itself from all the other online news sources."

Baylis, Freedman and Procter (2010) also argue that radio news production must be seen in the context of a rapidly changing workplace and a fragmented audience with the advent of social media. The scholars explain that the rise of social networks such as Facebook and Twitter, for example, has added to the speed at which news travels and therefore radio news producers need to come up with innovative ways of incorporating social media into their news production processes if they want to remain competitive and to retain their audiences. This study therefore investigates the ways in which radio stations in Ghana are appropriating social media for news production and examines the ways in which these technologies have impacted the

nature of information delivery to their audiences on one hand and the editorial structures, policies and activities of these radio stations on the other.

### **1.2.2 Radio News Production**

The delivery of news is a defining feature of radio and is still one of its most important strengths despite competition from audio on demand such as podcasts. According to Chignell (2009, p.166), radio news performs a number of different functions apart from simply providing up-to-date information about ongoing events.

The functions include:

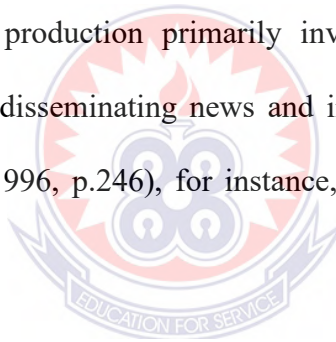
...keeping the audience listening as the news narrative unfolds; emphasising the 'liveness' of the broadcast; reinforcing the co-presence of the presenter/listener; and reinforcing the national identity in nationwide broadcasts or local identity in radio.

Therefore, news production is a critical portion of the work done in a typical radio station since news is a very visible part of a station's product (Hausman, O'Donnel & Benoit, 1996). The scholars (Hausman, O'Donnel & Benoit, 1996) note that the goal of radio news production is to offer something more than an announcer reading a copy. Additional elements such as interview conducted with the subject of the story; a live or on-the-screen report from a radio station staffer; or the noise of a riot taking place – add to the variety of the new production process and maximize the impact of radio news.

The point is that radio has certain distinctive abilities that other media do not have and these attributes relate to the strength of radio and the qualities radio news can stress (Hausman O'Donnel & Benoit, 1996). Keith (2002) argues that radio is noted for its timely information delivery. Radio is also a personal medium – a one-on-one

method of communication - which can bring the listener close to a story at the scene of an event. What this implies is that one can listen to radio news at home, at work, or as they drive in their cars but other media like the television usually require supporting devices for use. People are, therefore, more likely to listen to radio than any other traditional media. Keith (2002) again asserts that in the United States of America, there are twice as many radio in use (approximately 140 million) as compared to the total circulation (60 million) of all daily newspapers.

Radio news production is not easy to define due to the technicalities involved in the process of collecting and disseminating information. Yet, a number of scholars such as Hausman, O'Donnell and Benoit (1996), Boyd (2000), and Kern (2008) appear to agree that radio news production primarily involves the process of gathering, sourcing, reporting and disseminating news and information to listeners. Hausman O'Donnell and Benoit (1996, p.246), for instance, define radio news production as encapsulating



...the total gamut of these duties (which may be split among several people) involves news gathering, news writing, assembling the elements of a newscast (including stories and sound elements), and news reading [dissemination] and reporting.

Boyd (2000) also defines radio news production as encompassing sourcing and news gathering, news writing, news reporting and news reading (dissemination). Referring to radio news production as radio journalism, Chignell (2009) posits that radio news production includes news gathering, news writing and news reporting.

What is significant, however, is that the processes of radio news production have not remained static over the years. Boyd (2000) argues that the processes of radio news

gathering and dissemination have witnessed a dramatic change with the advent of new media technologies. In the scholar's (Boyd, 2000, p.410) view,

the digital revolution is today transforming the way we receive broadcast material, but for many years it has been transforming the way broadcasters work. The news business is about getting information and turning it around fast.

Chignell (2009) appears to agree with Boyd's (2000) assertion who argues that the age of the multimedia journalist has arrived and the internet has played an important role in shaping and redefining how news is gathered and reported. Kern (2008) provides a succinct picture of how new media tools, including social media, have impacted news reporting and journalistic roles within the radio news production process. He notes that:

Radio journalists who have spent decades learning how to 'report with their ears' are now thinking about the best graphs, documents, photographs, video, or Web links to flesh out their reports. For many, these new responsibilities are also liberating; reporters working on Web stories don't need to worry about squeezing their reports into predefined time slots. The Web is vast, and expandable; bits and bytes are cheap.

Therefore, the quest for this research to examine the use of social media by radio stations in Ghana for purposes of news production becomes paramount due to the pervasive nature of Web 2.0 around the professional activities of radio journalists and radio stations in general. The study therefore examines how social media has influenced the news production chain and how the adoption of these platforms has shaped the manner in which radio news is processed and distributed. The study investigates the ways in which social media has affected radio news production roles



and how radio audiences are engaged in varied ways using available interactive tools, applications and platforms associated with social media.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

The news media is an essential part of our everyday activity, especially as they help provide information to meet the diversified needs of the public. However, the advent of internet, digital devices and social media technologies have combined to create a conducive environment for audiences to access variety of news stories in a timely manner outside the traditional media box (Alejandro, 2010; Newman, Dutton & Blank, 2012).

The interactive features of new media, among other characteristics, have provided alternative news sources for audiences. However, this situation is posing new challenges for the traditional media (Cordeiro, 2012), especially radio. Though, in response to this trend, radio is making in-roads in the manner in which it uses and integrates these technologies into news production, such developments are often sparsely- documented. A few scholars such as Cordeiro (2012), Zoellner and Lax (2015) and Levenshus (2007) have carried out researches in this area but it appears these works are usually situated within the Western context.

Cordeiro (2012), in a perspective analysis, examines how the changing trends in broadcasting, such as technological convergence and interactivity, are impacting the activities of radio as an important source of news and information. The researcher argues that technological advancement within the broadcasting industry, including the surge in social media, should challenge radio broadcasters to improve their traditional broadcasting towards multimedia content and distribution. Failure to do

so, according to Cordeiro (2012), could threaten the existence of radio as a source of news and information.

Zoellner and Lax (2015), on the other hand, investigate how the expansion of UK radio stations into the online space has transformed radio production. The scholars discuss the social media practices of radio producers and explore whether these new digital tools contribute to a shift towards a more participatory production culture. Their study found that social media and its applications have, among other things, enhanced interactivity and engagement with audiences. However, the use of social media in radio production among the selected UK radio stations has not displaced traditional ways of programming, including news production. It appears that their use of social media is mainly an extension of traditional journalistic techniques.

Levenshus (2007) also examines how public radio stations in the US are taking advantage of social media tools to expand their base and enhance their service. The study showed that these radio stations are at the early-adopter stages of their experiments with social media. Despite challenges such as minimal resource reallocation, social media has been beneficial to the radio stations, particularly in terms of serving the core mission of public broadcasting - contributing to a rich and participatory public culture.

While this is the case, it appears that a number of scholars, such as Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012) and Sweis and Baslan (2013) focus on how social media impacts the activities of all the three traditional news media (radio, television, print) without narrowing it down to specific media type, given their distinct characteristics as mediums of news dissemination. In cases where attempts are made to scale these

studies down to specific media type, newspapers appear to get a chunk of the attention, followed by television and then radio.

In this regard, Tacchi (2005 p.342) argues that despite the “universal relevance of the medium (radio)” in “offering cheap and effective communication channels”, particularly in Developing Countries, not much attention, especially in terms of research, has been directed towards the impact of ICT and new media technologies on the medium.

Within the African context and for that matter Ghana, minimal investigation has been carried out on how news organisations in general are integrating social media in their work (Deo-Silas, 2013), and for that matter radio. This is despite growing evidence that the internet is revolutionizing news gathering and distribution within Ghana’s broadcast media (Safo, 2005). For instance, radio stations such as Citi FM, Peace FM and Starr FM are among the top 10 brands in Ghana with strong social media presence (Social Media Index Report, 2016). They use social media for all manner of activities, including pushing their news content to an array of audiences. Yet, these activities have received little empirical research and documentation. Therefore, there appears to be a gap in literature in the study of how radio stations in Africa, particularly those in Ghana, are leveraging social media technologies for news production. This study, thus, intends to fill that lacuna by examining the use of social media for news production by selected radio stations in Accra.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The study is informed by the following objectives:

1. To examine how selected radio stations in Accra are using social media for news production
2. To investigate the issues that arise out of the use of social media for radio news production.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

1. How are the selected radio stations in Accra using social media for news production?
2. What are the issues that arise out of the use of social media for radio news production?

### **1.6 Significance of Study**

The advent of social media appears to have shaped the manner in which radio news is produced (Freeman, 2011). Increasingly, social media and its available content and applications are competing with radio stations for audience share and content generation and distribution. It has therefore become necessary for radio stations to adopt and appropriate social media platforms and applications, especially in the area of news production, if they are to survive and remain relevant (Schuurman, Courtois, & De Marez, 2011). What is significant is that, it appears a number of radio stations in the world are utilizing social media in collecting information, interacting with audiences and reporting the news. However, there appears to be minimal documentation of such trends, especially within the Ghanaian context.

By investigating how the selected radio stations in Accra are using social media for news production, the study will undoubtedly enrich current discourse on social media use by radio stations. It will do so by not only adding to the scant literature on social

media use among radio stations in Ghana but also fill the academic lacuna inherent within the broader discourse in the world.

Beyond this, findings arising out of the study will provide the radio stations under investigation documentary evidence as to how they are leveraging social media for news production. This is expected to help inform and shape policies and strategies regarding social media use.

### **1.7 Delimitation**

This study focused on examining how selected radio stations are using social media for news production. However, the research was limited to the Ghanaian situation with a study of selected radio stations in Accra. The study also investigated the issues that emerged from the use of social media for radio news production. For the purposes of this study, the researcher examined two radio stations in Accra – Citi FM and Peace FM. The aim was to provide a case by case analysis of how these radio stations are using social media for news production for the purposes of comparison. The selection was done following their strong social media presence. A February 2016 *Social Media Index Report* released by Pen Bytes, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), on the social media presence of 300 radio stations in Ghana put Citi FM among the top ten. Citi FM came 1<sup>st</sup> (first) and 2<sup>nd</sup> (second) in terms of their Facebook and Twitter presence respectively. Peace FM on the other hand placed 10<sup>th</sup> (tenth) and 6<sup>th</sup> (sixth) in both Facebook and Twitter use respectively. The fact that Citi FM broadcasts in English and Peace FM Twi also provides some linguistic balance to the selection and the study in general.

The selection of these radio stations enabled the researcher to collect credible and reliable information on how they are using social media for news production. The researcher operationally defined news production as all the activities involved in the gathering, sourcing, reporting and dissemination of the news as well as interaction with audiences.

Again, the study's cyber ethnographic study was limited to the Facebook and Twitter pages of the two radio stations. According to Pen Byte's February 2016 *Social Media Index Report*, Facebook and Twitter are the two most popular social media platforms among radio stations in Ghana, and for that matter the two radio stations under study.

### **1.8 Organisation of the study**

The study is organised into five chapters. Chapter one comprises the background of the study, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitations, and the organisation of the study. The second chapter reviews related literature and discusses the theories necessary to situate the research within context. Chapter three discusses the methods and procedure for data collection and analysis. Here, the research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure and method of data analysis are discussed. The fourth chapter is dedicated to the findings and discussions of the study. Chapter five summarises the findings arising out of the study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations for further studies.

### **1.9 Summary**

This chapter introduced the study with a general overview of the patterns of social media use by the mainstream media, including radio. While it is apparent that social

media has permeated the news production activities of radio stations, the problem is that there has been minimal documentation of this trend, especially within the Ghanaian context. This study therefore is expected to add to the minimal literature on social media and radio news production in Ghana, with a study of selected radio stations in Accra. The next chapter reviews related literature on the subject and discusses relevant theories necessary to put the research within context.



## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 2.0 Introduction

This study seeks to examine how radio stations in Ghana are integrating social media in the production of news following the surge in Web 2.0 technologies such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. This chapter reviews various works related to social media use within newsrooms and how it impacts the news production process. It also discusses the Technology Acceptance and Appropriation models as a framework for the study. These are intended to help situate the research within context.

#### 2.1.1 Overview of social media

The advent of social media has significantly transformed interaction and communication between and among individuals throughout the world. In recent times, social media has impacted business operations and has become a daily practice in users' lives (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson & Seymour, 2011). However, social media is not a new concept - it has evolved over time (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson & Seymour, 2011). Social media emerged out of the need to develop technologies that will facilitate communication (Carton, 2009). The evolution of modern day social networks which use digital technology was marked by the development of telegraph to transmit and receive messages over long distances in the 1790s (Ritholz, 2010) as well as the advent of radio and telephone in the 1800s (Edosomwan Prakasan, Kouame, Watson & Seymour, 2011).



The arrival of the internet and, significantly, the email in the 20th century boosted human interaction, compressing time and space (Borders, 2009). In the 1990s, many social networking sites were created, including Six Degrees, BlackPlanet, Asian Avenue, and MoveOn. In addition, blogging services such as Blogger and Epinions were also developed (Ritholz, 2010). In the early 2000s, social interaction received a great boost with the development of many social networking sites. This transformed the interaction among individuals and organisations who shared common interests in music, education, movies, friendship, and news based on social networking (Junco, Heibergert & Loken, 2011). In 2003, MySpace, Hi5 among other networking sites popped up while Facebook, Dogster and Mixi evolved in 2004. Yahoo!360, YouTube, Twitter, Badoo and other sites were also launched (Junco, Heibergert, & Loken, 2011). These sites have since evolved, incorporating multimedia and sophisticated interactive features to their interfaces to boost communication among different people (Cordeiro, 2012).

Notwithstanding these developments, social media is still undergoing some transformation as new websites and online content appear each day (Statista, 2016). At the same time, social network penetration worldwide is also growing. There are more than 1.6 billion social network users worldwide with over 64 per cent of internet users accessing social media services. Social media users are projected to hit 2.5 billion worldwide by 2018 (Statista, 2016). Currently, there are over 500 social media sites in the world. Facebook is at present the most accessed social media site, with over 1.1 billion monthly active users (Alexa.com, 2016). Like many of these social networking sites, Facebook not only enables users to communicate beyond local or

social boundaries, but also offers opportunities for the sharing of user-generated content such as photos and videos as well as features such as games (Statista, 2016).

### **2.1.2 Social media in Ghana**

Ghana cannot be left out of the social media surge. This has been facilitated by the growth of the internet and the development and penetration of mobile technology (Buami, 2013). Mobile penetration reached a total of 35,802,135 as at February, 2016, up from 35,451,444 at the end of January, 2016. This represents an increase of 0.99%. Again, total internet users in 2016 stood at 7,958,675 compared to 6,981,691 recorded in 2015 (Internet Live Stats, 2016). On the other hand, total mobile data subscription hit 18,550,103 as at February, 2016 with a total penetration rate for the month under review pegged at 67.36% (NCA, 2016).

Ghana is experiencing an explosion of social media use with Facebook being the second most visited website as of January, 2016. This is based on websites ranking by SimilarWeb.com. As at January, 2016, Ghana accounted for about 2,900,000 of all Facebook users globally (Social Media Index Report, 2016).

### **2.1.3 The impact/uses of social media**

Bruns (2008) argues that social media has created the opportunity for the youth to consume, produce, share and remix media content such as blogs, video, photos. This has therefore advanced the claim that the youth are active producers and consumers of media. The participatory nature of new media has empowered the youth not only to create and distribute their own content, but has also helped them sustain connections with others (Coleman, 2005). In what appears to be an elaboration of Coleman's (2005) argument about the significance of social media in empowering the youth to

sustain connections with others, Rooke (2012) asserts that social media sites are used as a strategy to network individuals by establishing and maintaining contact with an increasingly larger set of friends and acquaintances. Robichaud (2012) also notes that a number of people use social media to stay informed and get entertained, especially when they connect with friends, family, or organisations or are “fans” or “followers” of them. Fischer and Reuber (2011) constructed the idea of “community orientation” as an outcome of social media use. They argue that social media has made individuals more open to community building. This connection allows for a growing response to crisis as news and entertainment from around the world are brought to the attention of niche communities.

But Pugh (2010) provides a distinct view of how social media is put to use. In her study of how people construct their identities through Facebook, Pugh (2010) argues that through the social context of Facebook, users have the ability to emphasize a particular aspect of their identity and are able to develop mutual relationships of self-esteem, sense of belonging and support.

Social media is also making its mark within the advertising and branding industry. In her study of how social media is used as an advertising platform at Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited (GGBL), Ayivor (2015) argued that web 2.0 platforms are used at GGBL for brand awareness, communication and interaction with key audiences. Kwafo (2015) on the other hand argues that Facebook is an important tool for organisational or internal communication management. She is of the conviction that the interactive features of social media are significant in enhancing effective communication and instant feedback generation as well as improving organisational culture and productivity. In his qualitative content analysis of how President John

Dramani Mahama and Nana Addo Danquah-Akufo Addo used Facebook in the 2012 presidential campaigns, Fordjour (2015) reveals that these candidates used the platform to promote and project their vision, policies and personalities to the electorate.

Overall, social media is significant in various facets of professional, individual and organisational lives, specifically in the areas of building brands, promoting effective organisational communication, enhancing image building and impression management, and helping build and grow businesses.

### **2.2.1 Evolution of radio and radio news**

Radio is an old medium and some historians maintain that it emerged as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> Century through the handiworks of scientists such as Heinrich Hertz, Nikola Tesla, Guglielmo Marconi, and Edwin Armstrong (Federal Communication Commission, 2003). Called “telegraph without wires”, the early radio broadcast over wide areas by sending electromagnetic waves into the air. Its messages were available to audiences within range who had a suitable receiver (Starkey, 2008). Thus, the development of radio brought the benefits of mass distribution of news, information and entertainment which were previously confined to newspapers. Significantly, radio developed into its present form in 1935 through the experiments of Martin Block in New York (Kern, 2008). This development gave birth to radio programming including news production.

According to Starkey (2008), early radio programming consisted of live symphony broadcasts, poetry readings, and live coverage of major news and events. Radio has since evolved, with Kern (2008) describing it as a “survivor medium”. The scholar

asserts that radio news and its associated programmes remain relevant despite the proliferation of television in the 1950s and 1960s, the surge in cable news channels in the 1980s and 1990s and then the evolution of the internet and social media in recent times. The scholar (Kern, 2008) is of the conviction that radio continues to be an important source of news and information and an attractive medium for an array of audiences owing to its distinct features such as portability, intimacy, nimbleness, personality and cheapness or affordability.

Research indicates that radio audience has declined very little over the years. Radio ratings research conducted in the United States, between 1998 and 2009, indicates that audiences have declined very little over the last decade with almost 240 million Americans – more than 90 per cent of the population over age 12 – listening to some radio (Federal Communication Commission, 2010). Yet, the United States Federal Communication Commission (2010) admits that though radio audiences in general have declined little over the last decade, the number of people who said they listened to news on the radio dropped significantly from 54 per cent in 1991 to 34 per cent in 2010. Cordeiro (2012) argues that the dip in radio audiences over the years follows the fact that radio listeners now have access to varied amount of content, including news and information, from different new media platforms. Radio audiences are now active creators, consumers and distributors of content which now imposes an obligation on radio stations to integrate new media technologies in programming, including news production:

The tipping point that will make the change for media and, in particular, for radio broadcasting is the conversation that today, interactive tools and social networks allow to arise between radio listeners and radio stations: more than just producing and

distributing web content, radio broadcasters must now relate to web users, as they will, through sharing tools, talks and opinions that they provide... (Cordeiro, 2012 p.504)

In what appears to be an agreement with Cordeiro's (2012) assertion, Boyd (2000) argues that the internet revolution is transforming the way radio stations receive, produce and distribute broadcast material. The scholar is of the conviction that the future of radio news is digital and that radio stations must aim at "narrowcasting" their programmes using new media tools in order to meet the specialized needs and interests of the sophisticated "digital audience". Kuyucu (2014) also appears to concur with the arguments put forth by Cordeiro (2012) and Boyd (2000). In examining the simultaneous evolution of radio from analog to digital broadcasts on one hand and the impact of new media in broadcast productions, including news, on the other, Kuyucu (2014) notes that while a new wave of digital and terrestrial broadcasting systems are sweeping across the radio arena, consumers are also shifting focus from radio to new media content. The researcher asserts that this situation is posing a threat to the operations of radio stations given that listeners are shifting their focus to social media while advertisers are also exploring the commercial viabilities of these platforms. As a result, he (Kuyucu, 2014) opines that conventional radio broadcasting is over and that radio stations need to understand the growing importance of incorporating internet and other new media tools in their activities, including news production, if they want to remain competitive.

While this is the case, it appears that some radio stations are already responding to the social media surge. Anderson (2004), citing Chignell (2009), argues that some established radio stations in the world, including BBC radio, Radio Netherlands, and

the CNN have tended to use the internet and Web 2.0 technologies to simultaneously broadcast news programmes to varied audiences. The effect is that news content originally available to a restricted local or national audience has suddenly achieved global reach through the conduit of social media.

Kern (2008, p.314-5) also argues that while the internet and new media technologies have given “previously ephemeral radio stories new – and seemingly perpetual-life...” the web can also be a vault for storing audio” and can “also be a way to distribute radio-style reports that are not actually broadcast.” In sum, the scholar believes that new media technologies, including social media, can extend and support radio news programming in an efficient, effective and swifter way.

### **2.2.2 Overview of radio and radio news in Ghana**

Essandoh (2006), citing Ansah (1986), is of the conviction that radio is a significant medium of communication in Africa and for that matter Ghana because access to it is widespread. Again, the researcher asserts that the medium is pervasive and its messages can simultaneously reach varied audiences irrespective of their educational status, ethnicity, class and income levels.

It is estimated that in Africa, there are about a hundred (100) radio receivers per 1000 people while in Ghana, there are approximately 219 radio receivers per 1000 people (Essandoh, 2006). Again, the 2002 African Media Development Initiative Research Report asserts that radio is the most accessible and patronized medium in 17 African countries, including Ghana. The country (Ghana) was among six placed under the “heavy listening” category (Nartey, 2013).

It must be noted that radio broadcasting in Ghana is not a recent phenomenon. It dates back to 1935 when a small wired relay station called ZOY was established by then Governor of the Gold Coast, Sir Arnold Hudson (Ansah, 1985). The station was used as a propaganda instrument to communicate the messages of the Colonial Government to the people and to inform listeners about developments during the World War (Ansah, 1985). Radio ZOY had since undergone several changes based on political and technological dynamics of the time. It became Radio Ghana on attainment of independence in 1957 and had had monopoly over the airwaves until the mid-1990s when broadcasting was deregulated (Kakari, 2000). This situation has led to the proliferation of private radio stations, broadcasting news and information to their audiences in various languages such as Twi, Ewe, Ga, Dagbani, Hausa, Gonja, and Fanti. In 2015, the number of radio stations fully operational in the country totaled 412 (NCA, 2015).

What appears significant throughout the evolution of radio in Ghana is the fact that the medium was used and continues to be used not only to entertain audiences, but has been instrumental in producing news content and programming to educate and inform the public. For instance, Ansah (1985 p.3) argues that during the colonial era, radio content significantly included “general news items of World or Empire significance” as well as news items for the overall education and information of the masses on issues of national importance. During the post-independence era, radio news performed a critical role of serving as a mouthpiece for the government – be it military or civilian – and helped to inform the public about government’s policies, programmes and activities (Essandoh, 2006). The liberalization of the airwaves in the last two decades has diversified radio news; providing alternative choices to the



masses not only in terms of medium but importantly in the area of news content spanning linguistic, social and political considerations (Media Sustainability Index, 2008 cited in Boachi, 2010).

While acknowledging the significance of radio news in the lives of Ghanaian audiences, it is important to note that radio in itself has undergone technological changes since its inception (Safo, 1993). For instance, the advent of new media technologies, including social media, are transforming and impacting the ways in which radio stations relate with their audiences and how programmes are transmitted and produced (Yeboah, 2016). Thus, radio stations are adopting new media technologies and platforms in order to keep up with the trend. A Social Media Index Report released by Pen Bytes, a Non- Governmental Organisation (NGO) shows that for its February 10, 2016 radio index, over 300 radio stations in Ghana showed some social media activity in terms of how they leveraged platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to, among other things, disseminate news and engage their audiences.

On Facebook, the study showed that radio stations in Greater Accra such as Adom FM, YFM, Peace FM, Hitz FM, Citi FM, Radio XYZ, and Asempa FM are ahead of the other radio stations in Ghana in the way in which they integrate social media in their programming, including news production (Social Media Index Report, 2016). With regard to Twitter, the study showed that few radio stations have Twitter accounts and that Facebook appears to be more popular among radio stations compared with Twitter. Nonetheless Joy FM, Citi FM, YFM, LIVE FM, Starr FM, Peace FM, PLUZZ FM, Kapital Radio, Adom FM and Ultimate Radio are leading in terms of Twitter use (Social Media Index Report, 2016). In all this, it is certain that social media has become an integral part of radio journalism in Ghana. This,

therefore, makes it imperative to investigate, in specific terms, how these platforms and their applications are used for radio news production in contemporary times.

### **2.3.1 Social media and radio news production**

Radio is a major source of information and news among many populations in the world and has become part of their daily lives. Despite the significance of radio as an important medium of information dissemination, minimal attention has been given to the medium in terms of research and documentation (Hartley, 2000). Tacchi (2005 p.342) shares a similar position when he argues that despite the “universal relevance of the medium” in “offering cheap and effective communication”, especially in Developing Countries, not much attention, particularly in terms of research, has been directed towards the impact of ICT and new media technologies on the medium. Yet, a few studies on social media and radio news production have given interesting perspectives as to how the medium is responding to the social media surge and how this development is impacting radio-audience relationship.

A study by UK’s Federal Office of Communication (OFCOM) in 2013 on the current state of radio in a digital age showed that radio listenership among Britain’s audiences remains high despite the development of new media technologies, including social media. The study further reveals that radio’s key qualities such as accessibility, ubiquitous platform, dependable companion; and deliverer of timely national and local news are remain significant among audiences. Despite this, there is still competition from new media technologies such as digital and mobile media as well as social media. New media appears to be overtaking radio in serving as a primary source of music - especially among younger audiences - and as a unique medium for instantaneous news delivery (Ofcom, 2013).

Therefore, in anticipation of the impact of new media technologies on the competitiveness of radio as an interactive medium, Brecht (2000a) called for radio to become “two-sided” rather than “one-sided”. The assertion is that radio should move from a “distribution apparatus” into a “communications apparatus” that should “let the listener speak as well as hear” (Brecht, 2000b p.42) and this can be achieved with the integration of new media in programming. Following from this, it appears that while some radio stations are already taking steps to incorporate social media into news production in order to facilitate engagement and interactivity with audiences, others are lagging behind. In her study of how public radio stations in the US are responding to the social media surge, Levenshus (2007) gives quite an interesting perspective on this matter. Using the survey method along with case studies, Levenshus (2007) asserts that radio stations show some ambivalence towards the use of social media in broadcasting. Station executives are resisting social media experiments because of lack of knowledge, lack of resource allocation, and institutional culture.

Zoellner and Lax (2015) conducted a study on *Social Media and Local Radio Production in the UK*, using a multi-method case study investigation of local British radio stations in addition to programme analysis, expert interviews and web analysis. The researchers found that social media use among radio stations in the UK has evolved from a specialist tool or platform to a role that is now mainstream and part of a journalists’ day- to - day routine. Key aspects of social media use by journalists are finding sources of stories and identifying potential interviewees or participants. Zoellner and Lax (2015), however, indicate that despite this development, there

appears to be little integration between some radio stations' programmes and their social media activity, especially with regard to interaction with news audiences:

In fact, the online space and the listening space of radio remain fairly separate with the former serving as a promotional and research tool for the latter. In this respect, Brecht's hope for establishing radio as a "two-sided communications apparatus" may be met by the potential of social media but so far it has not materialised in practice (Zoellner and Lax, 2015 p.17).

But Scannel (2010) disagrees. The scholar contends that in the last few years, traditional ways of transmitting radio content are being woven with interactive online environments, particularly news websites and social media. Audience members engage in the prolonged life of radio news and are invited to communicate not only to, but also with radio journalists, as well as among each other. Thus, journalists share links from their personal Twitter and Facebook accounts to website versions of radio content. Content include short tweets with audio clips, blurbs, shout-outs, calls for information and snippets of news:

Radio news used to disappear after being on air; it needed to have immediate impact...Now, radio news has longer lives and journalists follow them online. It even happens that stories spur a debate on Twitter, and other media use it as a basis of their own stories (Singer et al, 2011, p.422 cited in Scannel, 2010).

Adding another dimension to the radio-social media argument, Cordeiro (2012) also notes that technological convergence and the interactive nature of new media tools

pose a serious threat to the existence of radio as a source of news and information. In her perspective study, *Radio becoming r@dio: Convergence, interactivity and broadcasting trends in perspective*, the scholar avers that radio listeners now have access to an increasing amount of content, including news and entertainment, from different new media platforms and formats. As a result, a new audience – non-traditional, non-passive, participative and independent – has emerged. These audiences, according to Cordeiro (2012), appear to respond to the interactive features of social media. This situation is challenging radio broadcasters to improve their traditional broadcasting towards multimedia content and distribution. Cordeiro (2012) also argues that though some radio stations have integrated podcasts, streaming services, on-demand videos, and online social network posts into their activities, the trend towards online content would revolutionise radio into *r@dio*. Thus, *r@dio* means that radio and its available content would be streamed online or over the internet.

#### **2.4.1 Social media and patterns of news production, distribution and consumption**

Alejandro (2010) asserts that the advent of social media has changed the way in which audiences relate to the traditional news media. The changing pattern of news consumption among these audiences is occasioned by the fact that a number of audiences are going online for news. She argues that television, newspapers and radio are still with us but there is a growing competition from interactive online media for the news space. In Alejandro's (2010) view, social media users are active producers and consumers of news content. They create, distribute and share their own content (User-Generated Content) by leveraging the interactive tools and capacities of

Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. This is unlike the one-way communication that characterized “pre-internet news when people tuned in to events happening around the world through 24-hour television news channels” (Alejandro, 2010 p.5).

This situation is threatening the existence of the mainstream media (Alejandro, 2010; Cordeiro, 2012 & Rajendran & Thesinghraj, 2014). Rajendran and Thesinghraj (2014) argue that the presence of social media has threatened the existence of printed newspaper. The scholars aver that the effect of this threat is seen in the dwindling circulation of newspapers worldwide, especially in the United States. According to data from the United States Audit Bureau of Investigations, average daily circulation of US newspapers declined by 7% in the last and first quarters of 2008 and 2009 respectively. This has been linked to a shift in consumer behaviour towards online and social media news and information sources (Rajendran & Thesinghraj, 2014). Significantly, in 2008, about 40 per cent of audiences in the United States got their international and national news from the internet and social media sources; up from 24 per cent in 2007. Internet coverage of the US presidential campaign in 2008 which was boosted by various social media networks is said to be the likely reason for that growth (Alejandro, 2010).

Alejandro (2010) further argues that the impact of social media in the changing patterns of news consumption among audiences follows the widening reach of social networks. She notes that the use of personal media such as phones and tablets with social media features makes users access stories on time, even before the traditional media picks them up:

Mass media is passé. Today, it is all about personal media.

In the old days, a reporter was given a lead or went out to find a story. Today, many stories are received third hand (sometimes even fourth or fifth hand) through Facebook posts or Tweets or Digg so that by the time a story is assigned to the reporter, the story in some form or another is already out there in the social media universe (Alejandro, 2010 p.9).

In the same vein, Canter (2013) posits that the traditional notion of audience as passive receivers of news is being contested with the advent of social media. The journalist who is traditionally seen as the “central authority” in newsgathering and dissemination process is gradually losing grounds as the internet and social media provide more opportunity for audiences to collect their own information and independently disseminate them (Alejandro, 2010; Canter, 2013). Thus, audiences are joining the process of journalism; that is, the process of gathering, producing and distributing news (Gillmor, 2006). Some scholars such as Moyo (2009), and Sambrook (2005) make a case for the generation of news content by everyday citizens who collect and share information through social media platforms - a practice commonly known as “citizen journalism”. The concept of “citizen journalism” became popular when, on July 7, 2005 within six hours of the London bombings, the BBC received more than 1,000 photographs, 20 pieces of amateur videos, 4,000 text messages and 20,000 emails from social media users (Alejandro, 2010). Former head of global news for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Richard Sambrook wrote:

people were participating in our coverage in a way we had never seen before. By the next day, our main evening TV newscast began with a package edited entirely from video sent in by viewers (Cited in Alejandro, 2010 p.14).

Atton (2007) observes that within the British context, citizen journalists present a challenge to the mainstream media, especially in the area of breaking news. Mainstream news reporters no longer wield monopoly over news production. In the same vein, Hermida and Thurman (2007) contend that editors of the British news media are undergoing an uncomfortable transition as they struggle to integrate content produced by ordinary people in their professional news structures. This position is supported by Bruno (2011) who contends that major events are now most likely to be revealed via social media first, from the public on the ground in the heart of the action, before the professional journalists arrive. Bruno (2011) labels this the *Twitter effect* and suggests that social media platforms are central to the reporting of crisis events and enable more in-depth coverage and visibility to threatened voices.

The argument is that now, individuals, businesses, and public institutions can independently put information into the public domain without having to rely on the gatekeeping process utilised by news organisations, which may decide to keep certain information out of the public's reach (Sambrook, 2005). This means that news which was previously disseminated top-down can now be disseminated bottom-up. The audience now has a say as to what news is important to them and as to what level of engagement they wish to pursue - whether to visit the traditional media for news, go online or combine both (Alejandro, 2010). This situation has also spurred the traditional news media to take active steps to meet the challenges that come with



social media surge (Alejandro, 2010 & Deo-Silas, 2013). Lasorsa, Lewis and Holton (2011) posit that technology has always been at the forefront of newsgathering and the journalistic process. The scholars are of the conviction that the last century has seen audio, visual, and digital innovations contributing greatly to changing the way journalists approach their work. As a result, Deo-Silas (2013) asserts that newsgathering and diffusion technologies have become fundamental prerequisites to modern journalism.

According to Barnard (2014), the work of journalists has changed considerably since the proliferation of digital media technologies and social media. Journalists now are compelled to integrate social media in their journalistic activities and make news ‘direct’ and available to audiences ‘in real time’. As a result, Bunz (2009) notes that in May 2009, the *New York Times* hired its first social media editor to expand the use and integration of social media networks into its publishing platforms to improve delivery to readers. Again, in 2009, Sky News in the UK appointed a Twitter correspondent to cover breaking news. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) also appointed, in late 2009, its first social media editor to help the BBC team of reporters and producers engage with audiences more proactively.

Alejandro (2010), in her study of *Journalism in The Age of Social Media*, reveals that the traditional media use social media tools such as blogs, Facebook, and Twitter to disseminate or distribute news about variety of issues, including running stories and breaking news events. In the scholar’s view, it allows for more space for analysis and gives context to the news. Similarly, a study conducted by the European Commission (EC) on social media use among journalists in 2012 reveal that reporters and producers use social media to search for specific information and generally to stay

updated on the news. Facebook, Twitter, Blogs and YouTube are also used to interact with the public; to communicate programming information; to promote their programmes; and to drive traffic to their websites. According to the study, an important capability of social media is that it allows the journalist to identify and approach news sources who would otherwise be difficult to find in routine journalistic practice.

Social media has also significantly facilitated interactivity between journalists and their media audiences (Cordeiro, 2013; Mabweazara, 2010 & Newman, Dutton & Blank, 2012). Mabweazara (2010), citing Moyo (2009), emphasizes the interactivity of online editions of African newspapers, which allow users to comment, give feedback or vote on controversial issues. Moyo (2009) argues that this situation gives readers greater influence over the material covered in the newspapers while at the same time provides journalists with an opportunity to access ideas and leads from the readers. Mainstream journalists are also leveraging the strengths of social media for networked journalism (Alejandro, 2010). Here, “the journalist still reports, edits and packages the news. But the process is continually shared. The networked journalist changes from being a gatekeeper who delivers to a facilitator who connects” (Alejandro, 2010 p.14). Haak, Parks and Castells (2012) define networked journalism as a diffused capacity to record information, share it, and distribute it. This, in their opinion, has been facilitated by the power of internet and social media tools to connect people. Therefore, the notion of the journalist working alone is becoming antiquated. Every journalist has now become a part of a network that functions to collect, process, and distribute news or information (Beckett & Mansell, 2008).

Haak, Parks and Castells (2012) maintain that in spite of the significance of social media in revolutionizing journalism, the profession is still facing some crisis. They stress that since news and information are readily available to social media users and are relatively cheap, audiences opt less frequently for newspapers. Referring to this situation as *crisis journalism*, they argue that the news media need to innovate to remain competitive and profitable.

Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012), in their study *Social Media in the Changing Ecology of News: The Fourth and Fifth Estates in Britain*, appear to disagree with Haak, Parks and Castells' (2012) assertion. They argue that the growth of social networks and the emergence of simple tools – as provided by YouTube, Flickr, Facebook and Twitter – for enabling the publishing of “personal media” has led to a rebalancing of the traditional relationship between news producers and consumers. This situation, in their opinion, reinforces the thesis that online news more often complements rather than substitutes for offline or traditional news sources. They, therefore, suggest a shift in debates about the up-take of online news and the displacement of traditional media, to rather questions surrounding the rapidly evolving ecology of news production and consumption in the online world.

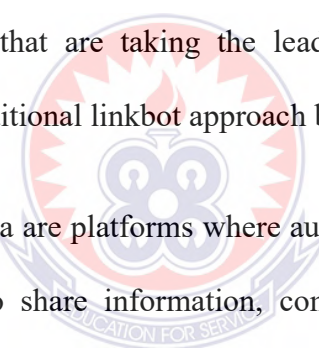
Greenslade (2009) appears to support Newman, Dutton and Blank's (2012) assertion who argues that while many news headlines emphasize drops in newspaper circulation, declines in the UK, for example, have been concentrated in the tabloid press, such as *The Daily Mirror*, and not the more mainstream press, such as the *Daily Telegraph*, *Financial Times*, *Independent*, or *The Guardian* in the UK. Greenslade (2009) further notes that audiences for the main television bulletins in the UK have remained unchanged since 2004 and despite a fall in circulation of some newspapers,

it is the websites and social media pages of traditional print publishers and broadcasters that continue to dominate online news in the UK. This position is supported by Rajendran and Thesinghraj (2014) who also aver that new media and print media are bound to coexist and reinforce each other despite the independent utilization of social media for news production and distribution among media audiences. Also supporting Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012) and Rajendran and Thesinghraj's (2014) argument that the traditional media is not losing grip on the control of news are Hermida and Thurman (2008). They assert that the gatekeeper approach still dominates in online newspapers particularly through the moderation of user-generated content. The scholars contend that editors tend to view user-generated content as complementary to professional journalism rather than replacing it. Therefore, editors tailor, filter and moderate content to suit their own needs and to protect their brand. Gaskins and Jerit (2012) also make a similar case in their study *Internet News: Is It a Replacement for Traditional Media Outlets?* They argue that social media replacement of journalistic work is happening but not widespread. About 75 per cent of respondents interviewed for their study report using social media a news source alongside the traditional media. Even in the case of newspapers and radio, where the tendency toward substitution was strongest, according to their study, almost half of the sample stated they were using these outlets about the same amount since they started using the Internet.

In the midst of the argument, there is a school of thought which believes that despite the seeming incorporation of social media into journalism, the news media still maintain the status quo rather than create greater interaction between journalists and readers. Broersma and Graham (2012) and Hermida, Fletcher, Korrell and Logan

(2011) argue that news organisations are largely engaging in a one-way communication process with audiences by creating automatic feeds from their websites (linkbots) to social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and rarely respond to readers.

In his study, *The interactive spectrum: The use of social media in UK regional newspapers*, Canter (2013) makes an interesting revelation on the debates surrounding the use of social media for interactivity by the mainstream media. The scholar argues that individual journalists are making personal decisions to share information and interact with social media users on their own volition rather than what may appear to be an organisational norm and routine. Thus, it is individual journalists rather than their news organisations that are taking the lead in increasing interactivity with readers, neglecting the traditional linkbot approach by their news organisations:



Social media are platforms where audiences and journalists converge to share information, comment on information and occasionally collaborate. Traditional methods remain dominant but a change is happening at an individual level. Journalists are communicating more frequently with readers, taking their feedback on board and becoming more accountable. This communication is public and informal in approach, framing journalists as ordinary, fallible individuals rather than authoritarian gatekeepers (Canter, 2013 p.493).

Despite the argument surrounding the one-way stream of social media use by mainstream media, it is asserted that social media still remains a valuable tool used by journalists for sourcing information and ideas for non-breaking news stories, soliciting feedback and for building brand loyalty (Dickinson, 2011). In his study on UK regional newspaper use of social media for journalism, Dickinson (2011) reveals that journalists expressed awareness of building a personal brand via Twitter, establishing relationships with readers, and staying closely connected to their audience.

Similarly, in his study of the journalistic practice and meta-discourse on Twitter, using a combination of digital ethnography and content analysis, Barnard (2014) identifies eight journalistic practices on social network, Twitter. He argues that social media is used by journalists for information collection, news dissemination, sourcing and connecting with potential sources and public note-taking – including live-blogging of events, serving as a personal record of quotes and sources for news stories. The rest are public engagement, journalistic meta-discourse (ethical issues), other professional interactions and personal interactions.

Deo-Silas (2013) also studied how newsroom journalists in Ghana are using social media for newsgathering and dissemination. Using the survey method as a primary tool for data collection, the researcher found that journalists in Ghana are embracing social media in their routine newsgathering process and are quite optimistic about its potential as an information resource. The newspaper industry appears the most progressive in terms of social media use. The private media appear more open to the new opportunities offered by social media for their journalists and their organisations as a whole. However, journalists with the public broadcast media are rather restrained

in using social media as a journalistic tool. Generally, though social media has become a part of journalistic activities in Ghana, it appears it has not affected journalists' gatekeeping function or disrupted newsroom routines.

#### **2.4.2 Social media and news production: evolving issues and debates**

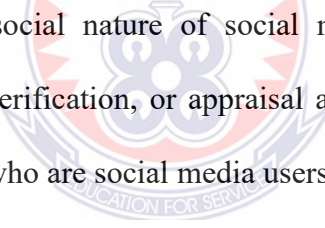
Alejandro (2010) argues that despite the significance of social media in journalism and production and dissemination of news content, there are potential pitfalls that come with such adoption. The researcher contends that while social media networks churn out viable leads, there are also a lot of hearsays and hoaxes associated with social media news sources.

Alejandro (2010) cited an incidence in October 2008, where a citizen journalist, a CNN iReport poster, reported that Apple's CEO, Steve Jobs, had been rushed to the hospital after a severe heart attack, citing an anonymous source. The story turned out to be false. CNN removed the story from the site and referred to it as fraudulent. That false story impacted the financial markets. Apple's stock in US trade took a major hit and dived to its lowest that year before bouncing back.

In this vein, Singer et al. (2011) argue that the new modes of audience participation in radio news have done away with some traditional ideals in journalism, such as objectivity, and have replaced them with alternatives, such as what the scholars call "multiperspectivity" – an easy way of collecting and aggregating multiple perspectives on an issue. But some scholars think that social media journalistic practices have the tendency to disrupt traditional newsroom standards. Barnard (2014), for instance, argues that one of the primary issues of debate with regard to the use of social media for newsgathering has to do with ethical dilemma related to

journalistic principles of truth and verification on one hand and the distinction between professional and citizen journalism on the other. The researcher argues that whereas some journalists uphold these traditional values, others deviate from such principles.

Lysak, Cremedas and Wolf (2012) seem to agree with the views espoused by Barnard (2014). They argue that independent confirmation of the information is still necessary though social media provides the journalist with an array of reliable information for news dissemination. They recommend the development of newsroom policy and guidelines for social media use by journalists. Lysak, Cremedas and Wolf (2012) note that a clearly-communicated policy about how social media should be used to report and update breaking news would benefit any news operation:



The very social nature of social media does not make accuracy, verification, or appraisal a priority. Members of the public who are social media users do not need to use the judgment that must be a hallmark of a newsroom's operation; thus journalists would be wise to be as skeptical about information obtained through social media as they are about that received from a new source who has recently come forward (Lysak, Cremedas & Wolf, 2012 p.205).

The European Commission (2012), in its study on how journalists use social media, reveals that reliability and credibility of information is the greatest risk or danger of using social media in news gathering. Journalists surveyed for the study opined that the social media content by government services or EU institutions are regarded as



trustworthy, compared with information by individuals or businesses that are regarded as more untrustworthy. They reasoned that such information should still be verified since it may be filtered or biased.

Mabweazara (2010), in his study of new media practices among some newspapers in Zimbabwe, gives deeper insights into the challenges of new media use in journalism. The scholar explains that some Zimbabwean newspapers are ambivalent about comments posted on their social media pages, and news sourced from social media. As a result, these newspapers subject content to the newspapers' editorial policy positions. However, there are still concerns regarding what Mabweazara (2010) calls the development of internet and “armchair” journalism, with the overreliance of junior journalists on social media and internet sources for news. Related to the challenge of “armchair journalism”, according to Mabweazara (2010), are also ethical challenges of plagiarism and the failure to verify internet and social media content. These problems raise questions of accuracy and credibility of news.

Similarly, Deo-Silas (2013), in his study of how newsroom journalists in Ghana incorporate social media in their work, reveals that newsrooms lack social media policies to help gatekeep newsgathering and sourcing activities on social media. The researcher recommends a written policy to forestall any future journalistic pitfalls when using social media for news production.

### **2.5.0 Theoretical framework**

Littlejohn and Foss (2009) define theory as a unified, or coherent body of propositions that provide a philosophically consistent picture of a subject. They argue that theories reduce complex experience into a manageable set of concepts and propositions in

order to make for easy understanding. Deo-Silas (2013), citing Fawcett and Downs (1986), sees the relationship between theory and research as a transaction where the theory determines the data to be collected on one hand and how the research findings or data support or challenge the theory on the other. Thus, theories provide a framework or model to explain and make sense of data collected.

The current study seeks to examine the use of social media for news production among selected radio stations in Accra. Since the study is about the use of technology (social media) for information dissemination among journalists, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Technology Appropriation Model (TaM) have been used to explain and contextualize findings arising out of the research.

#### **2.5.1.0 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)**

While some scholars (such as Deo-Silas, 2013) see the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as an extension of the Innovation Diffusion Theory by Rogers (2003), others (such as Rauniar, Rawski, Yang & Johnson, 2014) contend that it was adopted from the Theory of Reasoned Action, postulated by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975). The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is a social psychological theory which links a person's behaviour through their intentions. Thus, while TRA was theorized to explain general human behavior, TAM specifically explained the determinants of computer acceptance and user behavior across a broad range of end-user computing technologies.

TAM was originally conceived by Davis in his doctoral thesis in 1985 and suggests that an individual's motivation to use a technological device is influenced by the system's features and capabilities (Deo-Silas, 2013). Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw

(1989) suggest that *Perceived Ease of Use* (EU) and *Perceived Usefulness* (PU) are two significant determinants of computer usage behaviour. The scholars explain PU as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her task or activity. In the organisational context, the usefulness may improve an individual's performance which may lead to financial and non-financial benefits. Within the social media circles, users of platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr may be motivated to use them because it helps to meet the related needs of the individual. Similarly, radio stations may be motivated to use social media and their related applications because they enhance broadcast journalists' professional task of news production. The rationale is that each social media application offers certain primary services, and accordingly offers various types of tools and applications to add value to the needs of its audiences. PU thus represents advantageous results derived from attributes of the technology being used. The benefits can be physiological, psychological, sociological or material in nature (Gutman, 1982).

Perceived Ease of Use (EU), on the other hand, has been defined as the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort. The importance of perceived EU signifies the degree to which an innovation is perceived not to be difficult to understand, learn, or operate (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989). The EU works on the principle of least effort that states that an individual will adopt a course of action that will involve the least average work from the person. This principle of least effort can be extended to assume that the social media user will be more appreciative of the minimum effort required to learn features, make use of the applications, and perform social-media-related activities, such as uploading and sharing video (Rauniar, Rawski, Yang & Johnson, 2014). Thus, the user may access a

site based on how easy it is to use. In the same vein, radio stations may be motivated to use social media because these stations can easily navigate and use these platforms along with the features and applications that come with them.

Several studies on social media usage by individuals and organisations have adopted the TAM to describe and explain social media habits among participants. It appears, however, that a number of these studies are quantitative in nature and this is hinged on the fact that Davis (1989) built the model on hypothetical predictions of the motivations for individuals' use of a particular technology. For instance, Rauniar, Rawski, Yang and Johnson (2014), in their quantitative study, used the TAM to explore social media usage among populations. Again, Yeou (2015) used a quantitative approach to assess the acceptance level of the e-learning system among 44 students of a Moroccan university.

Notwithstanding the quantitative foundations and applications of the TAM, some qualitative studies have adopted the model to explain the motivation behind audience's use of social media platforms. Ayivor (2015), in her qualitative study of how Guinness Ghana Breweries Limited uses social media for advertising, adopted the TAM to examine the incipient reason behind the organisation's social media presence. Following from this, the current study which qualitatively examines how radio stations in Ghana are using social media for news production, leverages the conceptual foundations of the TAM to explain the motivation for the use of web 2.0 platforms for radio journalism and news production.

### **2.5.1.1 Relevance of TAM to Current Study**

In the area of journalism, the TAM has been used in several studies to explain and conceptualise journalists' social media habits as well as the motivation for the adoption of these interactive platforms for news production. Deo-Silas (2013), for instance, employed the TAM to examine how newsroom journalists across various media houses in Ghana, including radio, use social media for their routine journalistic practices and investigates the significance of these platforms in newsgathering and dissemination processes.

The conceptualization of the TAM in the Deo-Silas' (2013) study makes the model significant to the current study. This is because the model will help to examine the motivation for radio stations' use of social media for news production. It will also help to specify how such motivations translate into the application of social media in newsgathering, sourcing, reporting and dissemination processes. This will help put the study in context. The model will also help to examine how the two principles of TAM - Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEU) – come to bear on the motivations for radio stations' use of social media for news production.

### **2.5.2.0 Technology Appropriation Model (TaM).**

This model was birthed from the socio-cultural theory. In the socio-cultural field, appropriation refers to cultural learning, or the application of cultural tools (Overdijk & van Diggelen, 2006). Wertsch (1998) describes appropriation as the act of taking something that belongs to another and making it one's own. In the field of technology, MacKay and Gillespie (1992, p.698) posit that appropriation of technology is a subjective social activity because "people are not merely malleable subjects who submit to the dictates of a technology...they are active, creative and expressive –

albeit socially situated – subjects”. The scholars note that innovations are not always a linear process, since “people may reject technologies, redefine their functional purpose, customize or even invest symbolic meanings to them”. In their view, appropriation does not specifically relate to the features of a technology, but the structures a technology brings or alters as individuals engage with it.

Overdijk and Diggelen (2006) argue that appropriation of a technology simultaneously transforms the user and technology. It does not only cause change in the knowledge and skill of the user, but it also causes change in the properties of the technology. Thus, central to the concept of appropriation is a mutual shaping. Overdijk and Diggelen (2006) contend that the concept implies a process of social construction in which the actions and thoughts of the technology users are shaped through the use of the technology, while at the same time the meaning and effects of the technology are shaped through the users’ actions.

Sey (2011) gives quite a broad definition of appropriation when she contends that the user appropriation of technology may not only lead to dramatic or mild deviations from the original purpose of the technology and bring about significant structural change to the technology itself but may also change the way the organisation or the individual operates. Thus, technology appropriation, in her view, is a two way affair.

Bar, Pisani and Weber (2007) also contend that technology appropriation occurs when users take full advantage of features provided by technology designers. They argue that technology embodies two components: structural features and spirit. Structural features are the types of rules, resources, and capabilities the system offers such as how restrictive, sophisticated, or comprehensive it is. The spirit of a technology refers

to the values and goals underlying the structural features, such as what types of uses are considered proper or not (DeSanctis & Poole, 1994 cited in Sey, 2011).

DeSanctis and Poole (1994) identify four aspects of technology appropriation. *Appropriation moves* refers to the particular ways in which a group chooses to appropriate a structural feature; for example, to use it directly or in relation to other structures. *Faithfulness or unfaithfulness* reflects whether the user adheres to or deviates from the structural features and spirit of the technology. *Instrumentality of use* describes the purpose for which the technology is used, for example, to manage communications or to exercise power. *Attitudes*, on the other hand, refer to the users' approach to the technology. This includes users' confidence level in technology, perception of its value, and willingness to excel at using it.

#### **2.5.2.1 Relevance of TaM to current study**

The Technology Appropriation Model (TaM) has been used in various studies to explain how the media houses use social media for their routine newsgathering and distribution processes. In his study of *New Technologies and Print Journalism Practice in Zimbabwe: An Ethnographic Study*, Mabweazara (2010) used the TaM to explain and conceptualise how selected newspapers in Zimbabwe appropriate online and social media tools in the course of their journalistic work. Mabweazara (2010) argues that:

As a journalistic tool, the Internet has assumed a taken-for-granted function in newsroom routines. Its intricate functions have been enmeshed with the fluid and continually shifting processes of journalism practice (Mabweazara, 2010 p.171).

Following from Mabweazara's (2010) thesis, it is important to examine how radio stations are appropriating social platforms and their applications for their news production activities. Based on the features of the technology appropriation model, the study will investigate the extent to which radio stations utilise the structural features of social media. The rationale is to help provide a conceptual grounding for the application and use of social media in the production of radio news in an evolving technological world.

## **2.6 Summary**

This chapter set out to review related works on social media and radio news production, with much of the literature coming from the West. Minimal literature exists on the subject within the African context and particularly in Ghana. From the available literature, it appears that a number of radio stations in the world are integrating social media into the news production process. However, the debate has been as to whether the appropriation of social media for news gathering, sourcing, and dissemination purposes is complementing or replacing traditional methods of radio news production. The next chapter discusses the data collection methodology and analysis.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

This study seeks to examine how radio stations in Ghana are using social media for the production of news. This section presents the methods and strategies employed in data collection and analysis. In doing so, this chapter examines the study's approach, design, population, sample size and sampling strategy, data collection methods and instruments and the procedure used for data collection and analysis. This is to help situate the research within context.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

This study employed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative data are in the form of text, written words, phrases, or symbols describing or representing people, actions, and events in social life (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006). Based on this, the current study employed the qualitative method. This is so because the study seeks to describe how radio stations use social media for news production, an event which occurs in real life. Data was collected by examining texts (cyber ethnography of the radio stations' social media pages), analyzing qualitative interviews and documents (news bulletins) gathered from participants, and then building them into themes. The qualitative research approach also helps to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). This study also seeks to understand the significance and meaning radio stations attach to social media in their routine journalistic practices. Therefore, the qualitative approach helped to explore such meanings. Again, qualitative research seeks to identify, explore and explain the attitudes, actions and perceptions of people within a social

setting and the meanings they make of their actions - without subjecting it to rigorous mathematical computations (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). The current study also seeks to explore social media use among radio stations – primarily through the use of words. This was done by collecting data from the participants’ settings, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meanings of the data (Creswell, 2014).

A number of studies examining how media organisations use social media for news production have used the qualitative approach. This is hinged on the fact that qualitative research helps to effectively assess the true motivations behind social media users’ behaviour and attitudes (Pugh, 2010). In his study of social media and the evolution of journalists’ routines, Moritz (2012) employed the qualitative approach by conducting in-depth interviews with journalists. The aim of the researcher was to understand the world from the subjects’ points of view, and to unfold the meaning of their experiences. A similar approach was adopted for the current study since it examines how radio stations integrate social media into news production. Drawing from these instances, the current study, which seeks to examine how radio stations in Ghana are using social media for news production, adopted the qualitative approach.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is a detailed plan or method for obtaining data scientifically (Schaefer, 2004). Research design can also be thought of as the logic or master plan of a research that throws light on how the study is to be conducted. It shows how the entire or major parts of the study – the samples, data collection methods and instruments – work together in an attempt to address the research questions (Thomas,

2010). Research designs also refer to the procedures or strategies of inquiry. Significantly, the selection of an appropriate design depends on the nature of the research, the research problem and questions, personal experiences of the researcher, and the type of audience for the study (Creswell, 2014). Research designs, especially in the qualitative circles, include narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case study.

### **3.2.0 Case Study**

For the purpose of this research, the case study design was adopted. Case study is a design of enquiry in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a programme, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals. A case study “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (observations, interviews, audiovisual materials, documents and reports) and reports a case description and case themes” (Creswell, 2014 p. 97). A case study is one of several ways of doing qualitative research because its aim is to understand human beings in a social context by interpreting their actions as a single group, community or a single event (Creswell, 2014). The current study which seeks to examine how radio stations are using social media for news production represents a case which is to be examined in detail. This is so because the study seeks to understand, in detail, how relevant social media is to the selected radio stations, the motivations for their use, and issues arising out of integrating social media in routine news gathering, sourcing and distribution processes. As with case studies, the current study employed multiple data collection instruments and procedures such as interviews with journalists, editors and social media administrators, cyber

ethnographic studies of the radio stations' social media news pages (Twitter and Facebook) and documents analysis (news bulletins).

A case study is also an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined. The case study approach is especially useful in situations where the context of the events being studied is critical and where the researcher has no control over the events as they unfold (Yin, 2009). Thus, the current study or case examines how radio stations use social media in news production, an activity which occurs in real life context. The study was conducted within the organisational setting where the researcher did not have control over the site and the social media habits of these radio stations.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), a case study examines a bounded system or a case in detail over time, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. All the collected evidences are collated to arrive at the best possible responses to the research question(s). As a result, the researcher may gain a sharpened understanding of why the instance happened as it did, and what might become important to look at more extensively in future research. Thus, this research examines in detail how two radio stations in Accra – Peace FM and Citi FM - are using social media for news production. Their social media habits were examined over time, through the use of multiple methods such as interviews, cyber ethnographic studies of their social media pages and documents. However, Yin (2009) asserts that there are different types of cases that can be studied - single cases, single cases with embedded units, and multiple case studies. For the purpose of this research, the multiple case study was used.

### 3.2.1 Multiple Case Study.

A multiple or collective case study allows the researcher to analyse within each setting and across settings. In a multiple case study, the researcher examines several cases to understand the similarities and differences between them (Yin, 2009). The current study which examines social media use among selected radio stations in Accra employed the multiple case study design as it examines the cases of two radio stations in Ghana (Citi FM and Peace FM), using multiple data collection methods and instruments. This ensured the reliability and robustness of data as several data sources validated each other.

Stake (1995) and Yin (2009) also define multiple or collective case study as examining cases across multiple sites. This involves the selection of several events or situations to show different perspectives of the issue. The current study which examines the use of social media among radio stations, cuts across multiple sites or cases (Citi FM and Peace FM) and examines the perspectives of journalists, editors and social media administrators across the two settings. However, the researcher also paid attention to embedded units within each case or radio station in order to bring out the various issues characteristic of them. This helped draw similarities and differences across the cases.

Several studies on how media organisations use social media for news production have employed the multiple case study design. For instance, Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012 p.1) used multiple case study, drawing “from multiple methods, including survey research of individuals in Britain from 2003-2011, analysis of log files of journalistic sites, and interview with journalists” to examine how top news sites in UK use social media for news production. Drawing from this, the current

study which examines social media use among radio stations in Ghana used the multiple case study approach in order to examine the unique cases of each radio station while examining similar or differential patterns of social media use among them.

### **3.3 Population**

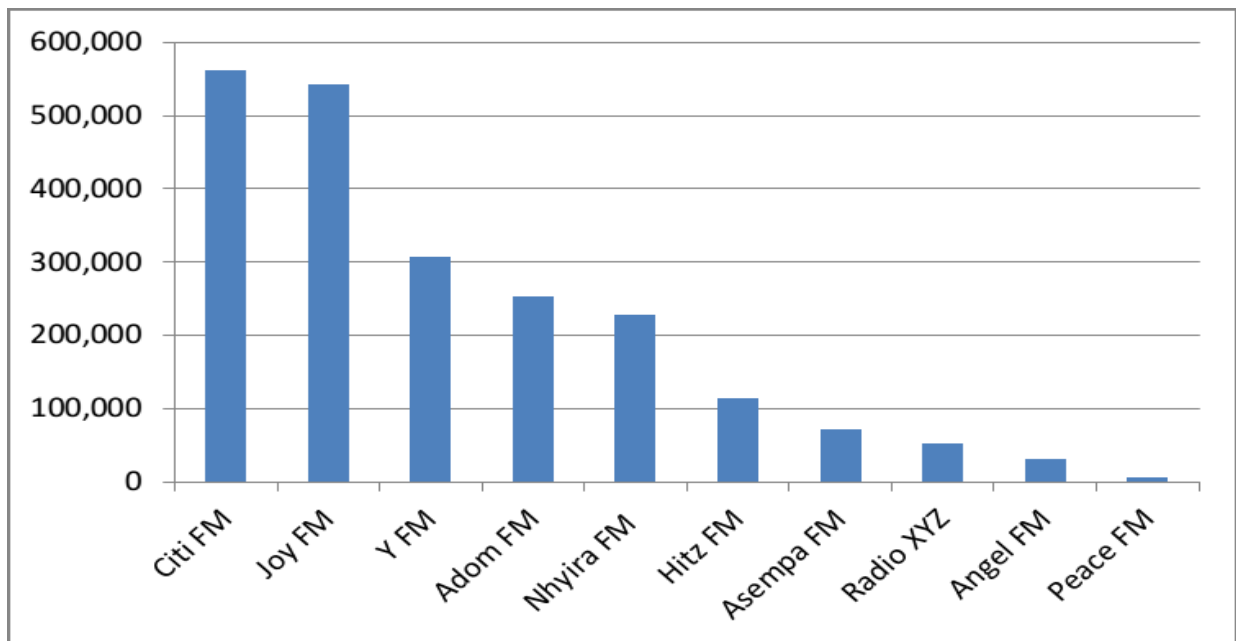
Parahoo (1997) defines population as the total number of units from which data can be collected. The units may include individuals, artifacts, events or organisations. In relation to my study, all the 412 radio stations in Ghana (NCA, 2015) and the over 500 social media sites (Alexa.com, 2016) constituted my population since the current study is about how radio stations are integrating social media for news production.

Burns and Grove (2003) also define population as all the elements that meet the criteria for inclusion in a study. Burns and Grove (2003, p.234) define eligibility criteria as “a list of characteristics that are required for the membership in the target population”. Though the population for the current study covers radio stations in Ghana and social media platforms, the eligibility criteria for the population, based on Burns and Groove’s (2003) assertion, covered radio stations involved in news broadcast and at the same time have social media presence. The issue of eligibility criteria appears to dovetail into the study’s target population as postulated by Nworgu (2006), cited in Donkor (2014) and Odum-Sackey (2015). The target population includes all the members of a group whom the research is targeting or related to. Thus, the members of the population are required to meet certain eligibility criteria in order to be considered for the study. Based on this, though the population for the current study comprises all radio stations in Ghana and social media platforms, the

target population encompassed all radio stations with social media presence on one hand and all the social media platforms used by these radio stations on the other.

The population parameter or target population for this study has been clearly articulated and supported by a February 2016 *Social Media Index Report* released by Pen Bytes, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) on the social media presence (Facebook and Twitter) of 300 radio stations in Ghana. It sets out clearly the radio stations with social media presence, providing the possible members from which the study's sample can be drawn. The Report classified these radio stations into the top ten in terms of "how radio stations (they) are leveraging social media to promote themselves and to reach and engage" with their audiences (Social Media Index Report, 2016 p.2). On Facebook, the report put Citi FM on the top spot with the most following (561,118 'Likes'), followed closely by Joy FM with 542,720 'Likes'. Y FM came third with 308,204 'Likes', and then Adom FM with 253,048 likes. Nhyira FM came fifth with 230,155 followers. This was followed by Hitz FM (6<sup>th</sup> position), Asempa FM (7<sup>th</sup> position), Radio XYZ (8<sup>th</sup> position), Angel FM (9<sup>th</sup> position) and then Peace FM (10<sup>th</sup> position).

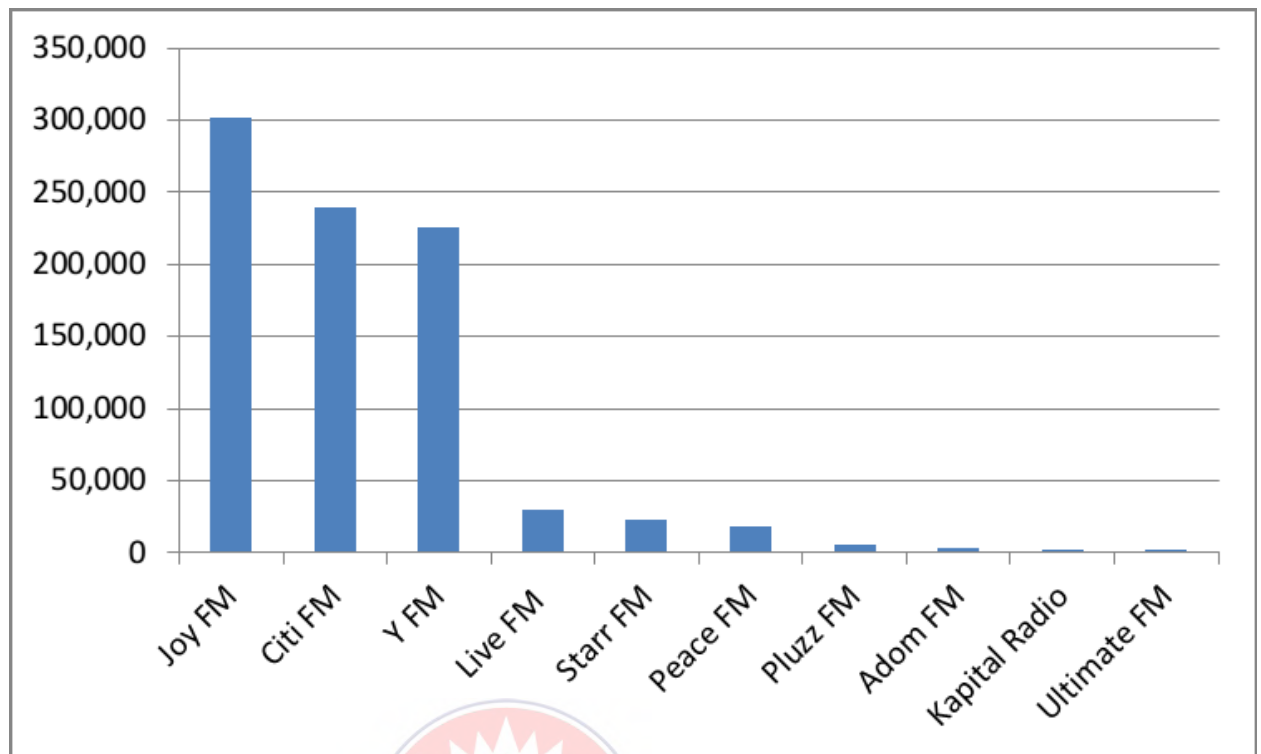
**Figure 1: Top ten radio stations with strong Facebook presence.**



Source: Social Media Index Report (2016).

On Twitter, the top ten radio stations in Ghana in terms of Twitter following, ranked in descending order, are Joy FM (302,000 Followers), Citi FM (239,000 followers), Y FM (226,000 followers), LIVE FM (29,400 followers) and Starr FM (23,300 Followers). The rest are Peace FM (18,600 Followers), PLUZZ FM (6,025 Followers), Kapital Radio (2,501 followers), Adom FM (2,993 followers) and Ultimate Radio (1,864 followers).



**Figure 2: Top ten radio stations with strong Twitter presence.**

Source: Social Media Index Report, 2016.

### 3.4 Sampling Strategy and Size

Sampling method or strategy guides the researcher as to the choices of what to observe or whom to interview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). An intelligent sampling strategy enables researchers to make systematic contact with communicative phenomena with a minimum of wasted effort (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002). Sampling method also helps the researcher to select a portion of the population to represent the entire population (Polit & Hungler, 1999) and this is highly dependent on the nature of the research as well as the study's objectives and scope (Given, 2008). As a result, this study employed the purposive/purposeful and representative sampling techniques.

Lindlof and Taylor (2002) citing Schwandt (1997) describe purposive sampling as a non-probability approach in which sites and cases are chosen because there may be good reason to believe that what goes on there is critical to understanding some process or concept. Thus, for the purpose of this study, Citi FM and Peace FM were purposefully chosen as sites for the study because both have strong social media presence. This was per the Social Media Index Report (2016). Citi FM placed first and second in the area of Facebook and Twitter use respectively. Peace FM on the other hand placed tenth and sixth in both Facebook and Twitter use respectively. In studying how radio stations are using social media for news production, it became necessary for the researcher to select radio stations that have social media presence. This made it possible for them to provide the needed information that could satisfy the objectives of the research. Though any of the radio stations that made it to the top ten list could have been selected, the researcher chose Citi FM and Peace FM because the two radio stations readily availed themselves for the study. Baxter and Jack (2008) argue that convenience is at the core of qualitative research because availability of participants who will provide data for the study is an important consideration in purposive sampling. In the same vein, participants from the two radio stations were also purposively sampled. Facebook and Twitter were purposefully sampled for the cyber ethnographic studies. The selection of Twitter and Facebook was done in accordance with the Social Media Index Report (2016) which ranked the two platforms as the most popular social media sites among Ghana's radio stations.

Significantly, the fact that Citi FM broadcasts in English and Peace FM in Twi also provided some linguistic representativeness to the sampling. Biber (1993) defines

representativeness or representative sampling as the extent to which a sample includes the full range of variability in a population such as age, gender, language, ethnicity or race. Sampford (1960, p.24) describes representative sampling as a non-random sampling method “whose object is to choose units that, in the opinion of the observer, represent the population”. Thus, the selection of Citi FM and Peace FM as the study’s sample provided some balance to the population parameter in terms of stations that broadcast in English and Twi.

In terms of sample size, the researcher interviewed six participants; three from each radio station. The participants included online editors, broadcast journalists, producers, and social media coordinators. Cyber ethnographic studies of both radio stations’ Twitter and Facebook handles (multiple sites) were done over a six month period (8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016) to validate responses from the interviews conducted and documents analysed. All posts (status, updates, pictures, videos, audios, and podcasts) within the period of the study were observed and coded on a cyber-ethnography log sheet. Though the cyber ethnographic study was limited to a six month period, follow up studies were done in order to incorporate new information into the data collection process. On Facebook, a total of 5,292 posts were sampled for Citi FM within the period under study while Peace FM garnered 2,049 posts. With regard to Twitter, the study analysed 7,281 tweets from Citi FM and 3,994 for Peace FM.

The choice of sample size for the interviews, documents analysis and cyber ethnographic studies is justified by the fact that sample sizes are not really material in qualitative studies. According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002) qualitative studies, such as the current research, do not produce data that can be subjected to rigorous

statistical procedures and, therefore, do not allow generalization to a population. It also follows from the fact that qualitative studies focus on the social practices in a specific historical or cultural setting and that the question of whether they are normally distributed in a population is immaterial. Nonetheless, the researcher ensured that the sample size was not too small. This was to allow for data adequacy and thick analysis - a position supported by Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007).

### **3.4.1 Peace FM**

Peace FM has been described as the pioneer indigenous commercial radio station in Accra and fits into the National Media Commission's (NMC) category of private commercial radio (Boachi, 2010). The station, which transmits on the frequency 104.3 MHz, broadcasts mainly in Twi (Lampsey, 2009). The station began as the first private Akan-language radio in 1999 through the handiworks of three businessmen - Osei Kwame Despite, Fadda Dickson and Kwasi Brenya (Boachi, 2010), though Kwame Despite is considered the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the station. The station is currently part of the bigger business conglomerate, the Despite Group of Companies (Lampsey, 2009).

Peace FM is the first private radio station in Greater Accra to broadcast all programmes entirely in a local language, specifically Akan (Nyavor, 2010). The station broadcasts entertainment programmes, talk shows as well as news and current affairs programmes to its listeners (Lampsey, 2009). Though it broadcasts on a five kilowatt (5kw) transmitter, its programmes, particularly news content, are relayed to audiences across the country and the world through affiliate stations (Boachi, 2010). For instance, the station broadcasts four major news bulletins daily - 6am, 12pm, 6pm and 8pm - and a minor one at 1pm. These bulletins are relayed via at least 17 local

radio stations in Ghana as well as a number of foreign channels such as *My Radio* in Italy, *Hot Digital Radio* and *Rainbow Radio* both in London (Boachi, 2010). Peace FM has since its inception carved a niche for itself in the area of Akan news production, having created the space for other stations Akan-speaking stations such as Adom FM, Nhyira FM among others to compete in the area of local news broadcasting (Nyavor, 2010).

Peace FM is also utilizing the online space in varied ways. Its news bulletins are streamed live on its website *peacefmonline.com* and another online platform, *ghanatoday.com* (Boachi, 2010). The station also shows strong Facebook and Twitter presence and engagement. The Social Media Index Report (2016) ranked that station number ten in the area of Facebook presence and sixth in terms of Twitter use. Therefore, Peace FM was valuable in helping to meet the key objective of this study which is to examine how radio stations are using social media for news production.

### **3.4.2 Citi FM**

Citi 97.3 FM is an English-speaking radio station and a private commercial channel that operates from Adabraka in the Greater Accra Region. It broadcasts on 97.3 megahertz and online on *citifmonline.com*. The station is operated by Omni Media and owned by Samuel Atta Mensah, an Accra-based business-man. Citi FM was established in 2004 to produce a mix of talk shows, contemporary adult programmes as well as news and current affairs content to English-speaking audiences across and outside the country (Citi FM, 2016).

The station's main programs include *Citi Breakfast Show*, *Brunch in the Citi*, *Traffic Avenue* as well as its flagship news and current affairs production, *Eyewitness News*

(Radio.com.gh, 2016). Key among its niche programming is the production and dissemination of news content, both radio and online, to an array of listeners and news consumers. Citi FM is considered one of the most prolific English-speaking radio stations in the capital. Consequent to this, the station's news and current affairs program, *Eyewitness News*, was adjudged Best 2011 Radio Program of the Year by the Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana (Citi FM, 2016).

Citi FM is also noted for using new media technologies in its programming, particularly in the area of news production and interactivity with audiences. The station was recognized as having the most Innovative Newsroom in Africa at the 16th Telkom Highway Africa Awards. This was in recognition for leveraging digital media, including online, social and mobile media, in its newsgathering and dissemination processes (Citi FM, 2016). The station also ranked second on the list of radio stations with strong social media presence by the Ghana Social Media Review (2015) and placed first and second positions in the use of Twitter and Facebook respectively in engaging audiences (Social Media Index Report, 2016). Thus, the station's credentials as a niche radio station with strong social media presence puts it in a position to be examined in terms of how it is leveraging social media for news production.

### **3.5.0 Data Collection methods**

A number of studies on how news organisations and journalists use social media for news production and distribution have used a combination of cyber ethnography (also known as virtual ethnography, online content analysis, digital content analysis or web analysis) along with interviews, and sometimes documents, to achieve the objectives of their studies. For instance, Canter (2013) used cyber ethnography (what he referred

to as online content analysis) to examine the use of social media by UK regional newspapers for audience interactivity. He also conducted in-depth interviews with journalists to step into the minds of the participants and understand their experiences, attitudes and motivations for incorporating social media in their work. Therefore, the current study which centres on radio stations' use of social media for news production adopted cyber ethnography and interviews as primary methods of data collection and documents analysis as a secondary method to triangulate responses from the primary instruments.

### **3.5.1 Cyber Ethnography**

Cyber ethnography, also referred to as online ethnography, virtual ethnography or online content analysis, is defined as a “new qualitative research methodology that adopts ethnographic research techniques to study the cultures and communities that are emerging through computer-mediated communications” (Kozinets, 1988 p.366). Cyber ethnography involves describing and interpreting observed relationships between social practice and the system of meaning in the online space. It is basically holistic as it attempts to describe most of relevant aspects of the online culture material existence and meaning systems (Geertz, 1993; Lindlof and Taylor, 2002 cited in Odum-Sackey, 2015).

For the purpose of this study, a six month cyber ethnographic study was carried out on both the Twitter and Facebook news pages of Citi FM and Peace FM (from 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016). The six month period for the cyber ethnographic studies was done with reference to Weinstein and Ventres' (2000) assertion that ethnographic studies can be conducted within a few weeks or months depending on the nature of the research. The scholars argued that “because ethnography is qualitative and not

based on surveys or statistical analysis, a fulfilling project can be completed within a reasonable timeframe” (Weinstein & Ventres, 2000 p.600-601). All the activities on the radio stations’ pages including posts, shares, hashtags, retweets, replies, reposts, pictures, videos, live tweets, and texts, podcasts and streamed content were observed and recorded on a prepared cyber ethnography log sheet.

### **3.5.2 Interviews**

Interviews are a key feature of qualitative research as they help to understand the social actor’s experiences and perspective (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002) through stories, accounts, and explanations. Researchers usually select persons for interviews only if their experiences are central to the research problem in some way, especially due to their skill, expertise or hold a wealth of knowledge that can answer the critical questions and satisfy the objectives of the research (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002).

The current study employed in-depth interviews to explore how radio stations in Ghana use social media for news production. The interviews which were conducted among journalists, social media coordinators, and editors of Citi FM and Peace FM as well as administrators of their social media pages are expected to help interrogate the relevance of social media in news gathering, processing and distribution as well as the various issues emerging from using these social media platforms for news production. The knowledge, position and wealth of information that participants possess placed them at the heart of the research and put them in the right position to answer the various questions fundamental to meeting the objectives of the study.



Interviews with these participants also helped to explain, verify, validate and clarify issues arising out of the cyber ethnographic studies conducted on the social media pages of the two radio stations as well as document analysis of news bulletins.

### **3.5.3 Documents Analysis**

Documents (news bulletins) were also analysed to meet the objectives of the research. Payne and Payne (2004) describe the documentary method as the techniques used to categorise, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents whether in the private or public domain. Mogalakwe (2006) argues that although surveys, in-depth interviews and participant observation are tried and tested instruments of data collection instruments, they are not the only tools available for conducting effective research. Creswell (2009) asserts that documents are effective means of collecting data and can be accessed at any time convenient to the researcher while helping save time and resources at the expense of transcribing. Mogalakwe (2006) asserts that documentary sources become necessary when the researcher wants to make references to past behaviour that has been documented. They also become significant when observed behaviour has been documented and can be used to triangulate and validate other methods.

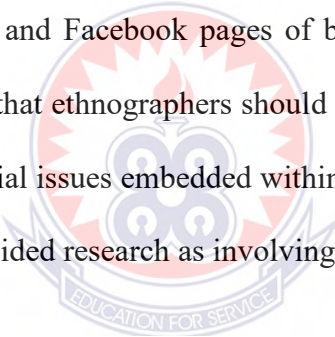
Given these scenarios, the researcher adopted the documents approach in analyzing news bulletins (scripts) of radio stations. This was to save the researcher time in observing the news bulletins of these radio stations for the purposes of examining how they use social media for news dissemination and interaction with audiences. However, in cases where extracts from bulletins could not be accessed, the researcher monitored and recorded relevant portions of the radio stations' live news broadcasts, recorded and transcribed them. The transcripts (documents) were then analysed.

Information from these documents helped validate results from the interviews and cyber ethnographic studies.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

#### **3.6.1 Cyber Ethnography**

The study seeks to examine how radio stations are integrating social media into their news production processes. This involved a cyber ethnography of the various activities of Citi FM and Peace FM's social media pages (Twitter and Facebook), including what they shared on these social media platforms, the types of stories shared, how they interact with audiences, the relationship between their bulletins and social media activity, comments from fans or followers among others. The selection of multiple sites (Twitter and Facebook pages of both radio stations) was based on Marcus' (1995) assertion that ethnographers should consider multiple sites in order to more fully understand social issues embedded within a complex and globalized world. The scholar defines multisided research as involving



...chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography (Marcus, 1995 p.105).

Prior to the study, the researcher ensured that the social media pages of these radio stations were *followed* (in the case of Twitter) and *liked* (for Facebook). The researcher also conferred with the various radio stations to ascertain the authenticity of their social media pages since multiple and fake accounts were sometimes created.

The researcher then carried a pre-research survey or study on the social media pages of the stations. This helped develop a unique coding system, categories, and units for the cyber ethnographic log sheet.

The researcher, on a daily basis, monitored activities on the social media pages of the selected radio stations. On a typical day, the researcher monitored and coded posts in the morning, afternoon and in the evening. The researcher easily revisited and coded posts which were missed because online posts are usually static and could be studied at any time. This was done for six months. The units of analysis were posts. Therefore, all posts, including non-news content, were openly observed and coded. This was to, among other things, provide a broader picture of news activities on the two radio stations' Facebook and Twitter pages in relation to other content. Observations made were documented on the cyber ethnography log sheet. The sheet was customized to suit the purpose of the study and included categories such as date/time, post type, post content, post source, interactivity and memo. Definitions of the categories are as follows:

**Date and time:** This is the day, month, year and time within which a particular post is coded or registered on a log sheet.

**Post type:** This refers to the type of post coded on the log sheet. It may include but not limited to news and features, breaking news and updates, news headlines, live updates, opinion polls, live tweets of news, retweet of news, and live tweets (non-news).

Post content: This refers to the component of a particular post. It includes but not limited to texts only; texts and image; texts and video; texts, video and image; and texts and audio.

Post source: This refers to where a particular content is coming from or originates. It includes but not limited to website, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.

Memo: This is a section for capturing other or important observations during coding.

### **3.6.2 Interview**

#### *Interview Protocol*

The study seeks to examine how radio stations in Ghana are using social media for news production. As a result, editors, journalists and administrators of the social media pages of Citi FM and Peace FM were interviewed on how they use social media in their routine journalistic work for their stations. Before the interviews, participants were identified and given letters of introduction. Later, face-to-face meetings were held with them to brief them on the subject. An interview guide was given to participants to enable them examine the requirements of the interview and the questions in the interview before the scheduled date. Suitable dates, times and locations were scheduled with each participant for the interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured and employed the interview guide. Semi-structured interviews are suited to working with small samples and are useful for studying specific situations or for supplementing and validating information derived from other sources (LaForest & Bouchard, 2009). They are also effective for gaining insight into problems that are not immediately perceptible.

The semi-structured approach, which was applied to the current study, allowed participants some degree of comfort to provide detailed and exhaustive answers to the questions where they can. A recorder was used as a primary tool in collecting data for each meeting. Also, notes were taken in the course of the interview. This was to help in capturing themes and major issues arising out of the interviews. Recorded responses were transcribed and grouped into themes for analysis.

In the course of the interview, participants were allowed to navigate the radio station's social media page and explain the reasons behind some of their posts. This technique is called *auto driving*. Pugh (2010) and Odum-Sackey (2015) used this technique to examine how celebrities construct their identities on Facebook. This technique created a more interactive interview while helping to practically illustrate the opinions and assertions of participants. In the course of the interview, the researcher brought participants back on track so they did not sway from the crux of the discussion. Each interview lasted between 20 and 30 minutes and participants were made to listen to a play-back of the interview in order to be sure of the responses they had given.

### **3.7.0 Method of Data Analysis**

#### **3.7.1 Qualitative Content Analysis**

Krippendorff (2004) describes content analysis as a research technique or method for making replicable and valid references from a set of data to their context while Palmquist (2005) defines content analysis as a means of objectively examining the presence of certain words, phrases, characters, themes, concepts or any communicative language in a body of text. Kenix (2008), on the other hand, argues that content analysis helps in uncovering embedded meanings behind media texts and it could be carried out either qualitatively or quantitatively.

When content analysis is done outside the ambit of quantification to analysing meanings, patterns and themes that may be apparent or otherwise in a communicative text, it is called qualitative content analysis (Wildemuth & Zhang, 2009). According to Wildemuth and Zhang (2009, p. 1), content analysis approached qualitatively allows “researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner.”

Based on Wildemuth and Zhang’s (2009) assumptions about qualitative content analysis, the current study used this method to analyse the texts, images and other content of the Facebook and Twitter pages of Citi FM and Peace FM in order to understand how the selected radio stations use social media for news production. This was done through a cyber-ethnographic study of their social media pages. The cyber ethnographic content or log sheet was used to capture the content of posts on the social media pages of the two radio stations. The sheet was designed taking into consideration the objectives of the study.

Hallet and Barber (2014) are of the conviction that cyber ethnography is a type of qualitative content analysis because the idea is to understand and analyse the content of online materials such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Flickr. For instance, Zoellner and Lax (2015) qualitatively analysed the “web content” of the radio broadcasters’ websites and their social media activities in order to identify current practices and links between online and on-air content. Besides, Krippendorf (2004) opines that although quantitative content analysis is important in many scientific endeavors, qualitative content analysis has proven equally useful particularly in discourse analysis, ethnographic research, and computer text analysis.

### 3.7.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics involves gathering data that describe events by the use of visual aids such as graphs and charts to aid the reader understand the data distribution (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). Knupfer and McLellan (1996) assert that descriptive statistics may be qualitative or quantitative.

However, in qualitative research, such as the current study, descriptive statistical tools are employed to reduce data into manageable form, especially in cases where a large mass of raw data has been gathered and there is the need to establish patterns of occurrence and distribution (Knupfer & McLellan, 1996).

Descriptive statistics helps to determine the “whats” and “hows” of events by describing them. As with qualitative research which, among other things, describes events, occurrences and happenings, descriptive statistics helps to understand and make meaning of human situation by quantifying and organizing them into graphs, and charts (Robinson, 1994).

Canter (2013) did a qualitative study on social media use among some UK regional newspapers by conducting a cyber ethnographic study of their multiple social media profiles. The researcher used descriptive statistical tools such as bar graphs to represent information gathered from analysing texts on their social media pages.

As a result, this study which examines how radio Citi FM and Peace FM are using social media for news production used descriptive data in the form of frequency tables and bar graphs to represent data gathered from conducting cyber ethnographic studies on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Twitter and Facebook pages. Patterns of observations were noted, categorized, tallied and represented on the frequency tables and graphs

using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The researcher used two types of frequency distribution tables; comparative frequency distribution tables and cumulative frequency distribution tables. The comparative frequency distribution tables were used to compare data from both Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook and Twitter pages. This was to ensure comparative descriptive analysis of how the two radio stations are using social media for news production, particularly, in the area of news dissemination. The same data was also represented on bar graphs to provide a pictorial view of the compared frequencies. The cumulative frequency distribution tables on the other hand provided a sense of the summative data from the social media pages of both stations. In all, the frequency tables contained categories, frequencies and percentages.

### **3.7.3 Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is a type of qualitative analysis which is used in identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It is used to analyse classifications and present themes (patterns) that relate to the data (Boyatzis, 1998). Miles and Huberman (1994) argue that this can be done by coding and categorizing data into themes. The process includes coding, categorisation and noting patterns in order to provide a relationship between the variables and factors in order to create a reasonable and logical chain of evidence. In relation to the current study, the researcher coded the various interviews conducted with informants at Peace FM and Citi FM as well as the cyber ethnographic studies conducted on the stations' Facebook and Twitter pages. The researcher noted the issues that run through the interviews and cyber ethnographic studies and categorized them under various themes



and sub-themes within specific research questions in order to make for easy interpretation of the data.

For research question one which sought to investigate how the two radio stations use social media for news production, major thematic areas were drawn from the works of Boyd (2000), Hausman et al (2013), and Kern (2008) on the major components of radio news production. The components are *news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news dissemination, public engagement or interactivity* and *news editing*. In the case of research question two which sought to examine the issues arising out of the study, the researcher was guided by the common issues that came out of the interviews as well as relevant literature on the subject matter.

Marks and Yardley (2004) contend that thematic analysis is considered the most appropriate for any study that seeks to discover concepts and ideas and describe human behaviour using interpretations. It provides a systematic element to data analysis. It allows the researcher to associate an analysis of the frequency of a theme with one of the whole content. Creswell (2009) also stresses that thematic analysis is also considered suitable to deal with type of data through which the researcher can highlight the differences and similarities apparent within the data set. With reference to Creswells' (2009) assertion, though the current study categorized and analysed data from the two radio stations based on themes, it also noted the similarities and differences between them in the analysis and interpretation process.

### **3.8 Ethical issues**

Halai (2006) avers that good research is a moral and ethical task and the researcher should be concerned about ensuring that the interests of a study's participants are not

compromised in any way. Ethical principles must be adhered to in any kind of research in order to reduce or avoid harm altogether. This is because the protection of human subjects or participants in any research is imperative (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001). Ethical considerations are very vital in qualitative studies because:

Qualitative researchers focus their research on exploring, examining, and describing people and their natural environments. Embedded in qualitative research are the concepts of relationships and power between researchers and participants. The desire to participate in a research study depends upon a participant's willingness to share his or her experience..." (Orb, Eisenhauer & Wynaden, 2001, p. 93)

In consonance with this, Halai (2006) posits three critical ethical issues researchers must adhere to in the course of their study. They are informed and voluntary consent, confidentiality of information shared and anonymity of research participants and no harm to participants. The current study made a great attempt at complying with these ethical principles in order to ensure high standards.

In the area of informed and voluntary consent, the researcher informed the various radio stations about the study and its purpose. This was done, first, through the submission of introductory letters for approval to collect data. Later, a meeting was arranged with the editors and other informants of the radio stations to debrief them about the study – its scope, purpose and significance. The stations were made aware of the fact that a cyber-ethnographic study would be carried out on their Facebook

and Twitter pages. The informants within the radio stations were notified that the study is purely for academic purposes and that participation was voluntary. Participants were also furnished with both soft and hard copies of the interview guides for their perusal ahead of the scheduled interviews. Informants were also informed that the interviews would be recorded on tapes. The tapes were played back to participants to confirm the information they had provided.

Again, participants were informed about the confidentiality of information provided and their anonymity. Therefore, the study treated the information provided by the respondents with utmost privacy, especially during the data analyses stage where there was a need to directly quote them. Specific codes such as R1C (Respondent one; Citi FM) or R2P (Respondent two; Peace FM) were used to label participants to protect their identities.

In order to avoid or minimize any harm to participants, the researcher fully informed them of any possible risks that might arise in the course of the study. The researcher informed them of possible long periods of interviews and follow up interviews. This was so because the participants are busy journalism professionals who might not be available for other periods of information gathering. This information was to help them to re-adjust their schedules as well as the researcher's work plan in order to ensure that both the interviewer and interviewees availed themselves for the interviews. In effect, adherence to this principle averted any possible clashes the scheduled interviews might have had with respondents' work schedules, thus preventing harm.

Beyond these, all sources used in the study were duly acknowledged. This was done in the form of in-text citations and references. Quotations from relevant sources were given page numbers while the researcher ensured that all rules related to plagiarism were adhered to.

### **3.9 Validity and reliability**

Golafshani (2003) is of the conviction that despite the fact that validity and reliability are commonplace in quantitative studies, they have in recent times become significant in the qualitative research circles. The scholar's argument is hinged on the premise that "since reliability and validity are rooted in positivist perspective, then they should be redefined for their use in a naturalistic approach" (Golafshani, 2003 p.596). Therefore, the current study, which is qualitative, employed validity and reliability techniques to ensure adherence to the principles of accuracy; strive for objectivity; and present authentic and trusted data.

Creswell (2014), citing Gibbs (2007), defines qualitative validity as the extent to which the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects. As a result, Creswell (2014), citing Gibbs (2007), recommended eight reliability techniques and four validation tools for any qualitative enquiry.

The reliability techniques are triangulation or using multiple data sources; the use of member checking; the use of rich, thick descriptions to convey findings; clarification of the biases the researcher brings to the study; presentation of negative evidence; spending prolonged time in the field and the use of peer briefing to enhance the

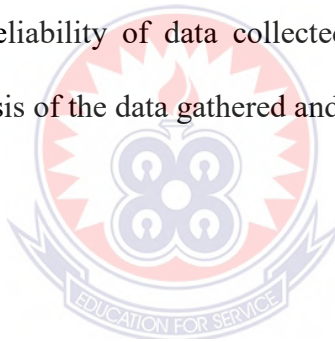
accuracy of the account and the use of an external auditor to review the entire project. Validation techniques on the other hand, as espoused by Creswell (2014) citing Gibbs (2007), are checking of transcripts for accuracy; avoiding redefinition of codes; coordination among coders in the case of team research or when the researcher is assisted by another person during the coding process and employing intercoder reliability or agreement.

Following from the above, the researcher ensured the validity and reliability of the study in a number of ways. In the area of validity, first, the researcher used multiple sources of data to examine how the selected radio stations are using social media for news production. The researcher did that by triangulating data from interviews with participants, cyber ethnographic study and documents analysis. More so, the researcher played back recorded and transcribed interviews to respondents to ascertain their validity while rich and thick description was carried out by the researcher, especially during data analysis. The descriptive tools such as frequency tables and graphs were used to add to the description of data collected. The researcher also used peer briefing, particularly towards the end of the study. Through this, inputs were made, mistakes were corrected and accuracy ensured. To boost the validity of the study, the researcher employed coders to assist with the cyber ethnographic studies. To safeguard inter-coder reliability, the researcher trained coders prior to the data collection process and frequently cross-checked data with the coders to ensure agreement with the guidelines of the coding process as well as objectives of the research.

In the area of reliability, the researcher re-checked interview transcripts to ensure obvious mistakes were avoided. The researcher, in the case of the cyber ethnographic studies (content analysis), stuck to the definitions of the codes.

### **3.10 Summary**

This chapter provides a detailed process and procedure for data collection and analysis. The study, which is qualitative, drew on a multiple case study of two radio stations in Accra with strong social media presence (Peace FM and Citi FM). Data was collected through a triangulation of instruments such as interviews, documents analysis and cyber ethnographic study of the radio stations' social media pages. The information collected were analysed using content, thematic and descriptive methods while the validity and reliability of data collected were upheld. The chapter that follows presents an analysis of the data gathered and discusses the findings.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This study set out to examine how selected radio stations in Accra – Peace FM and Citi FM – are using various social media platforms for news production. It also investigated the issues arising out of such usage. This chapter discusses the findings of the research using the methods specified in the previous chapter. The researcher used a combination of content, descriptive and thematic analysis to discuss data gathered from the field. Along with relevant theories and related literature, the study brought out the key issues regarding social media use by Citi FM and Peace FM and helped to conceptualise findings emerging from the research. For the purpose of ensuring participants' anonymity, the researcher used specific codes to label participants. The following are the codes for each participant: R1P (Respondent 1, Peace FM); R2P (Respondent 2, Peace FM); R3P (Respondent 3, Peace FM); R1C (Respondent 1, Citi FM); R2C (Respondent 2, Citi FM) and R3C (Respondent 3, Citi FM).

The research questions that guided data collection and analysis are:

RQ1: How are the selected radio stations using social media for news production?

RQ2: What are the issues that arise out of the use of social media for news production?

RQ1: How are the selected radio stations using social media for news production?

Radio news production must be seen within the context of a rapidly changing journalistic environment as well as the fragmentation of audiences following the advent of social media (Baylis, Freedman & Procter, 2010). Boyd (2000) is of the conviction that the processes of radio news production have not remained static over the years and avers that the processes of radio news gathering and dissemination have witnessed a sharp change with the advent of social media technologies. Chignell (2009) also makes a point that the age of multimedia journalism has arrived following the surge of social media and that the internet is playing a major role in shaping how radio news is gathered and reported. As a result, this research question sought to investigate how the sampled radio stations - Peace FM and Citi FM - are using social media platforms for their news production activities and processes. Responses from participants were categorized into themes based on the six key components of radio news production as captured in definitions provided by scholars such as Boyd (2000), Hausman et al (1996), and Kern (2008). The components are *news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news dissemination, public engagement or interactivity and news editing*.

#### **4.1.1 News gathering**

The study revealed that social media helps Citi FM and Peace FM keep up with and utilise a variety of news and information that abound on social media. Informants from both stations revealed that the array of User-Generated Content (UGC) on social media such as short videos, pictures, audio clips, news stories, and feature articles provides vital information for both radio and online news production. Such content come in variety of ways and from different sources. Respondents contend that some



social media users who post various news items on their pages, such as breakings news, amateur videos, and audio clips, at certain instances draw the attention of the radio stations to such content by way of tags, tweets, and emails. These stories are then verified and incorporated into the radio news bulletin or generated into online news and shared on their various micro blogs such as Facebook and Twitter. In relation to these findings, Moyo (2009) and Sambrook (2005) describe everyday citizens who collect and share such content through social media platforms as *Citizen Journalists*. Alejandro (2010) and Canter (2013) argue that the advent of social media has made audiences active producers of information, subverting the traditional notion of journalists being perceived as “central authority” in news gathering. These scholars aver that audiences are now joining the process of journalism.

Informants from the two radio stations again revealed that some of these social media news contents come from government and public officials’ pages or platforms which the radio stations have subscribed to or “liked”. Such information are quickly picked up by the radio stations and converted into news stories which are broadcast on radio or shared on their Facebook and Twitter pages from their websites. Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) provides an example of the news gathering capabilities of social media in the following words:

For instance, most of the information that we pick from the Flagstaff House page usually come by automatic alerts or by way of people tagging me in the comments section so that I get the alert on a new post on the Flagstaff House page. May be, a minister has made a comment on his/her page; people tag me there or any of my friends.

Another respondent from Peace FM (R1P) also spells out how public and government officials who have strong social media presence provide useful information on their platforms for radio news production:

But there are some known personalities like the President, Vice President, Former President like Rawlings, Mahama and all that. These people, especially Former President Mahama, is very active on social media so when he puts a story out there, we just look at it, assess it and then we cross check from his communication outfit. If it turns out to be true, we use it in our radio news bulletin.

Social media has become particularly vital during breaking news as pictures, videos and audio material posted by social media users become instrumental in news production (Laird, 2012). As a result, it came up that the two radio stations, through verbal policies, encourage their reporters to be active on these social platforms in order to quickly and promptly gather information for the news production process. Again, respondents from the two radio stations appear to consciously, even without such verbal policies, actively participate, monitor and use social media for news gathering. The rationale is to help journalists keep up with what is happening around them and to keep themselves abreast of new information coming up on these platforms for timely incorporation into the news production process. Canter (2013) also makes a case for journalists' use of social media for news gathering. The scholar argues that individual journalists are making personal decisions or out of their own volition are using social media for all manner of activities, including news gathering. The idea is to help them gather and generate news quickly. Respondent 3 from Citi (R3C) FM, in this regard, explains:

In terms of breaking news, social media becomes faster than the traditional media. So it's really helping a lot and is one place most journalists are monitoring now. You cannot be relevant today as a journalist if you cannot sync the two...

Respondent 2 from Peace FM (R2P) also explains why their outfit encourages their journalists to integrate social media in their news gathering processes:

Any journalist who would not work with social media will always be late in news gathering. Sometimes, a story breaks in other parts of the country, say in a village; you have a relative who called to tell you - maybe a three-storey building has collapsed and killed people. What do you do? You can't just take a car and go there. There are smartphones all over; we just ask the person to video it to us or just take shots and send it to us through our social media platforms. We get it and work on it. ...So we encourage as much as possible for our journalists to be on social media to be on the alert because those are where we can follow certain leads; there are [stories on] fire outbreaks that pop up first on Facebook and you will have to follow the leads.

The above findings show how social media has become vital in news gathering within the two radio stations. They appear to be leveraging the significance these platforms provide for information collection or news gathering in order to facilitate their work. This finding appears consistent with Perceived Usefulness (PU), a key assumption of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989).

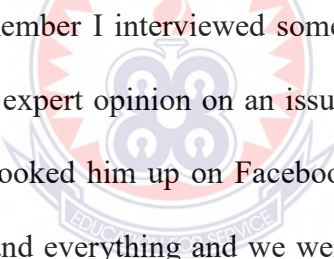
PU is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her task or activity. For the two radio stations - Peace FM and Citi FM – it appears that they are motivated to use these social media platforms because it helps to meet their professional need of information gathering or news gathering. As a result, Respondent 3 from Peace FM (R3P) asserts that social media has improved newsgathering and has facilitated radio news production. It has also helped compress space, time and is bridging the human resource gap inherent in the radio newsroom:

If, for example, you don't have the means to send personnel round to look for stories coupled with production constraints, social media partly bridges that gap. For example, you are unable to go and interview the president and he puts the information on his social media handle, you can have access to them barrierless.

#### **4.1.2 Sourcing**

Zoellner and Lax (2015) argue that social media helps radio journalists find sources of stories and to identify potential interviewees for news production. Dickinson (2011) also asserts that social media still remains a valuable tool used by journalists for sourcing information and ideas. Sambrook (2005) avers that a variety of people are connected to social media. They include children, fathers, mothers, celebrities, politicians and experts such as doctors, economists and political analysts who share their experiences and views on a myriad of issues on their individual pages. Therefore, social media provides a pool of readily available potential news sources which the journalist can tap from. What this implies is that traditional news sources have become more diffused and varied with the advent of social media. These

scholarly arguments on the significance of social media in radio news sourcing are present in Citi FM and Peace FM's news production processes. Respondents from the two radio stations were unanimous in admitting the usefulness of social media in connecting with various news sources for both online and mainstream newsgathering and dissemination processes. These sources provide scoops, exclusives and vital information for both breaking and non-breaking news broadcasts. The sources also help in connecting with other potential news sources who can provide important information necessary in the news production and distribution processes. These sources potentially contribute various content such as audio, videos, pictures and other relevant information, sometimes of national and public interest. Such information becomes critical in enriching radio journalism:



I quite remember I interviewed someone who is out of the country. I needed his expert opinion on an issue. The person was in London but because I looked him up on Facebook and got him, we did the voice recording and everything and we were able to use it for our news. So it's good (R3P).

Respondent 1 from Citi FM also explains how social media, specifically Twitter, helped him to connect with a source outside of the country to comment on an important issue:

For example, recently a story broke in neighbouring Burkina Faso and I needed a journalist in that country to speak to. All I did was to go on Twitter, searched for a journalist in that country and sent him a private

message asking that I speak to him on an issue...He sent me his contact and bingo! We were on.

Respondents from both stations revealed that some news sources can readily be contacted through social media and that any other means of contacting them may prove difficult and abortive. They both cited former Foreign Affairs Minister, Hannah Tetteh, as a source who can be easily reached through social media. Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) cites that:

For instance, there was this issue about some Pakistanis working illegally in the country and we tried contacting the Foreign Affairs Minister on her phone to comment on that but it was unsuccessful so a colleague suggested that we should try reaching her on Twitter instead and in no time she responded with all the information we needed. As a result we were able to tell our listeners what the government had to say about the issue. Had it not been for social media, we wouldn't have reached her.

Another respondent from Peace FM (R2P) provides a similar scenario of how former Foreign Affairs Minister, Hannah Tetteh, can be contacted for interviews and other sources of information for radio news through her social media handle:

There's been an occasion where Hannah Tetteh, you know she has been so active on Twitter, you may send her a text, you may not get her or something but once you hit her up on Twitter, she is able to reply you either by direct mail or publicly. So you can use it for a story if you want.

This finding is in line with the European Commission's (2012) assertion that an important capability of social media is that it allows the journalist to identify and approach news sources who would otherwise be difficult to find in routine journalistic practice.

An added significance of social media in the area of news sourcing for radio news production lies in how it aids in opinion polling. Respondents from the two radio stations contend that their respective media houses leverage the strength of social media for opinion polling, particularly in the area of "vox pop". This follows the fact that while social media presents an array of people who hold opinions on issues of national interest, it at the same time affords radio stations the opportunity to sample the opinions of the public without "going on the streets" or using the traditional "phone-ins". In doing so, respondents argue that social media helps to compresses space and time and reduce the workload of journalists while ensuring swift information collection. This revelation appears to show how the traditional mode of street interviews appears subverted by social media:

...there are times you just want to sample views of people on social media on an issue – it also allows a different way of sampling thoughts of people. The days of strict use of recorders and physical presence of journalists in order to interview a source or to get information from the public through vox pop are long gone (R1C).

**Figure: 3 Opinion polling on Citi FM's Facebook page.**



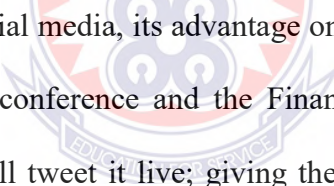
In all, these findings show the importance of social media in helping the two radio stations connect with a variety of news sources. Thus, Peace FM and Citi FM are leveraging the significance of social media in the area of developing news sources and this is in tandem with the Technology Acceptance Model (TaM) which stipulates that people are likely to use a technological tool due to its Perceived Usefulness (PU), especially in the area of enhancing their work or professional routines.

#### **4.1.3 News Reporting**

Apart from social media being instrumental in the way in which it helps in information gathering and sourcing, Facebook, Twitter and other social media platforms enhance a key journalistic task of news reporting. Bruno (2011) argues that



social media platforms are central to the reporting of crisis events and enable more in-depth coverage of local and international news. Kern (2008) is also of the conviction that radio journalists now have an array of choices in reporting the news compared to the period before the arrival of social media where the journalist has to file voice reports on arriving from assignment or a breaking news event. Findings from the study point to a myriad of ways in which Citi FM and Peace FM capitalize on the strength of social media to report variety of events including breaking news, running stories and other important events to an array of social media users and radio audiences. This is done through live tweets or texts on websites and the use of a variety of social media applications to “transmit” an event or news live. This enables reporters from the two stations to file reports live from the field before arriving in the newsroom to file their audio reports. Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) explains that:



But for social media, its advantage on that score is that if a journalist is at a press conference and the Finance Minister is addressing it, the reporter will tweet it live; giving the updates as and when they come from the event.

In reporting events live, Peace FM, for instance, appropriates an application called “Storify” for providing live updates of key events such as demonstrations, press conferences, and other running news events, especially on their websites.

It [storify] is a third-party sort of platform but you can embed the code on the website. So whatever you are doing on that platform – for pictures, for video, for audio – you put it there and it will be showing on the website. So it gives you minute-by-minute update of what is

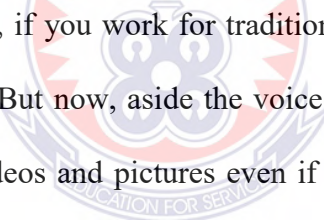
happening. So we use it for let's say influential press conferences that a lot of eyes are on (R3P).

The use of these applications such as “Storify” by Peace FM for news reporting and the application of Twitter for providing live updates of events shows how these media houses take optimum advantage of the features provided by social media for news reporting. This finding is in line with the principles of Bar, Pisani and Weber's (2007) Technology Appropriation Model (TaM) which stipulates that technology appropriation occurs when users take full advantage of features provided by technology designers. What this implies is that these radio stations are making optimum use of these social media applications for their routine journalistic duty of news reporting. While this is the case, the findings also show that social media is shaping the ways in which the two radio stations traditionally report the news. As Sey (2011) argues, appropriation may also change the way individuals or organisations operate. Respondent 1 from Peace FM (R1P) explains the manner in which the appropriation of social media platforms and their applications is changing the mode of news reporting:

Last Thursday, the Finance Minister presented the budget. Our reporters were there and after the presentation of the budget, they recorded some of the MP's and all that. They need not come to the office to do another recording. They just sent the interviews through WhatsApp which is an important social media tool... I remember those days when we didn't have the social media thing here in Ghana, we were doing recordings after our various assignments, we will come to the production studio just to put the voice there and replay it before

it is carried on air. When it happens like that, it sort of delays the news but now social media has put some sort of expediency on news delivery...

Key informants from both Citi FM and Peace FM argue that the surge in social media has challenged radio stations to go beyond voice reports to the integration of multimedia content such as videos into news reporting. This situation has affected the way radio journalists gather and report the news. For these radio stations, reporters are encouraged to go beyond collecting and reporting audio content to taking videos and pictures of events to be integrated into the online news production process. This appears to be a typical case of the subversion of traditional methods of news reporting prior to the advent of social media:



Those days, if you work for traditional radio, you will just be looking for voices. But now, aside the voice recordings, you will have to take relevant videos and pictures even if it's one minute video. So, now if someone visits our social media pages or website, they will know that this is relevant information and you must summarise what you have put out there (R2C).

Kern (2008, p.18) made a case for how social media is impacting and subverting traditional news reporting and journalistic roles within the radio news production process by arguing that "Radio journalists who have spent decades learning how to 'report with the ears' are now thinking about the best graphs, documents, photographs, video, or Web links to flesh out their reports."

#### 4.1.4 News Dissemination

The advent of social media appears to be pushing the mainstream media, including radio, to integrate these platforms into the news production process in order to make news and information available to audiences in “real time” (Barnard, 2014). In the light of this, Alejandro (2010) argues that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter have become significant in disseminating or distributing the news to an array of audiences on or off radio (social media).

Indeed, results from the six month cyber ethnographic studies conducted on the Facebook and Twitter pages of the two radio stations (from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 to 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016) showed similar as well as the varied ways in which Citi FM and Peace FM use social media for transmitting or distributing the news to their audiences.

##### 4.1.4.1 News Dissemination on Facebook

**Table 1: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.**

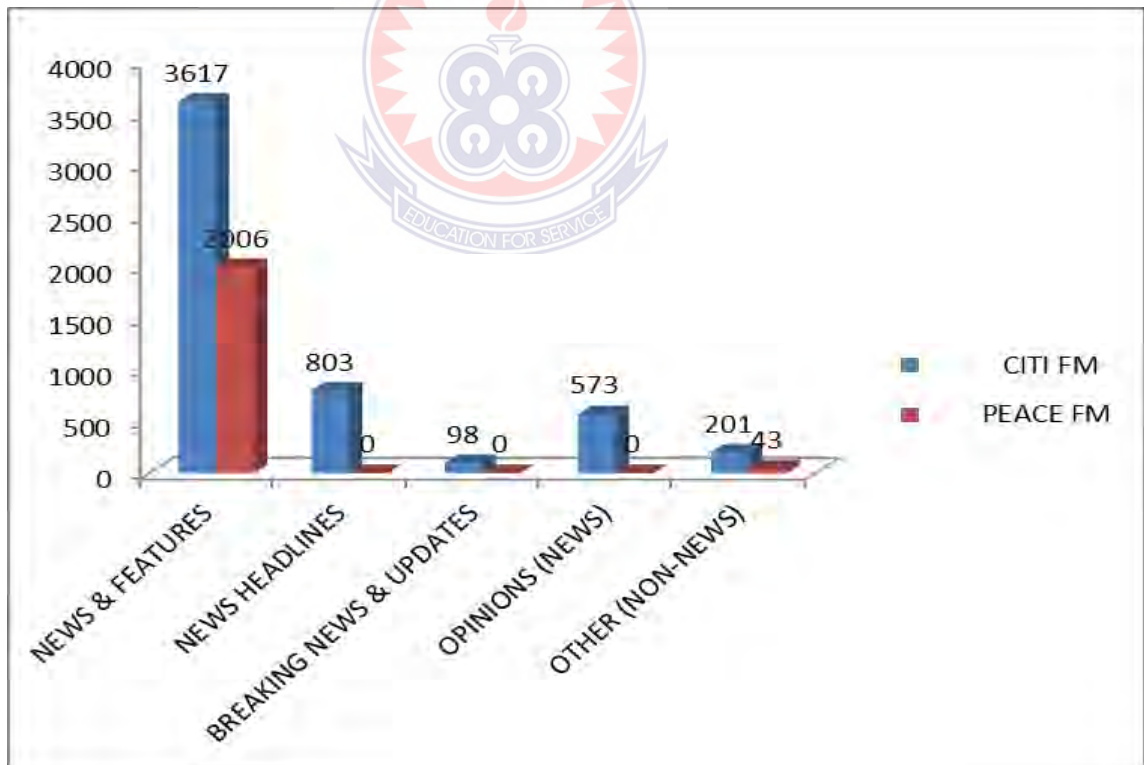
Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
News & Features	3617	68.3	2006	97.9
News Headlines	803	15.2	0	0.0
Breaking News/updates	98	1.9	0	0.0
Opinions (News)	573	10.8	0	0.0
Other (Non-News)	201	3.8	43	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5292</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2049</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 1 shows a comparison of the types of stories Citi FM and Peace FM disseminate to their audiences on Facebook. For Citi FM, the table reveals that the

station capitalizes on the strength of Facebook to disseminate variety of news content. A chunk of the content distributed to its audiences are news and features (68.3%), followed by news headlines (15.2%); opinions (10.8%) and breaking news and news updates (1.9%). The rest (3.8%) are for non-news activities. From the table, unlike Citi FM which uses Facebook to disseminate variety of news content, it is apparent that Peace FM uses Facebook to disseminate predominantly news and features (97.9%), though such content (news and features) dominate the post content of these two radio stations. Only 2.1% of Peace FM’s Facebook content are used for non-news activities. The data is illustrated in the bar graph below:

**Figure 4: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM’s Facebook pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016**



**Table 2: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016**

Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
News & Features	5623	76.6
News Headlines	803	10.9
Breaking News/Updates	98	1.3
Opinions (News)	573	7.8
Other (non-news)	244	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>7341</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 2 depicts the cumulative frequencies as well as percentages of post types of both Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook pages. In all, more than three quarters (76.6%) of Facebook posts from both stations are news and features while 10.9% of posts are news headlines. Breaking news/updates constitute a little over a percentage (1.3%) of the Facebook posts of both radio stations while opinions on the news are 7.8% of their content. Non-news materials constitute 3.3% of Peace FM and Citi FM's Facebook content from the period 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016. But on the whole, it appears the two radio stations disseminate news and features on their Facebook pages more than any other content.

**Table 3: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016**

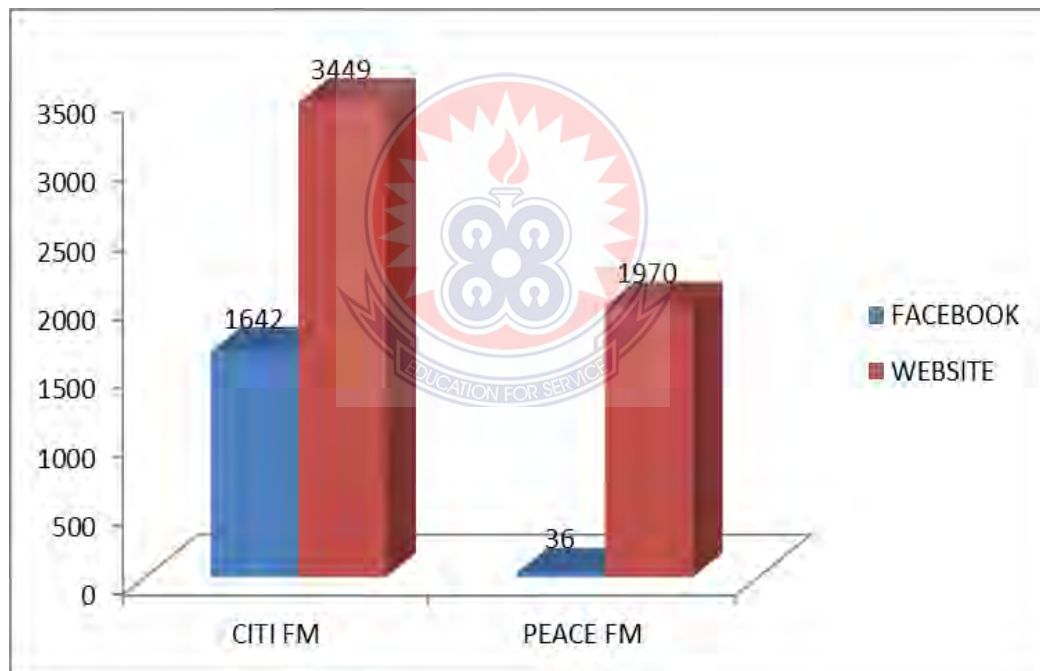
Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Facebook</b>	1642	32.3	36	1.8
<b>Website</b>	3449	67.7	1970	98.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5091</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 3 displays the source of such Facebook posts. For Citi FM, the data showed that more than two thirds (67.7 %) of the content are stories shared from the station's

website while 32.3% are generated on Facebook. With regard to Peace FM, more than 98 per cent of the content are shared from the stations' website while the rest are generated on Facebook. What this means is that Peace FM appears to share more of its content from the station's website compared to Citi FM. Such content reach an array of the social media audience who want to be abreast of events around them. As at March 9, 2017, Peace FM had 446,312 Facebook fans while Citi FM had 979,990 Facebook fans. This information is graphically illustrated on the figure below:

**Figure 5 Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook Pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016**



**Table 4: Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Post Source on Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook Pages from 8th June 2016 - 8th December, 2016**

Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
Facebook	1678	23.6
Website	5419	76.4
Total	7097	100

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 4 shows a summative frequency distribution of sources of post content on both Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook pages. In all, over three quarters (76.4%) of the content on the Facebook pages of the two radio stations are stories shared from their websites. Almost one quarter (23.6%) of their content is organically produced on Facebook or uploaded on the platform using specific social media applications. What this means is that both radio stations cumulatively engage in news sharing activities from their websites than from other platforms.

**Figure 6: News sharing on Facebook by Peace FM.**





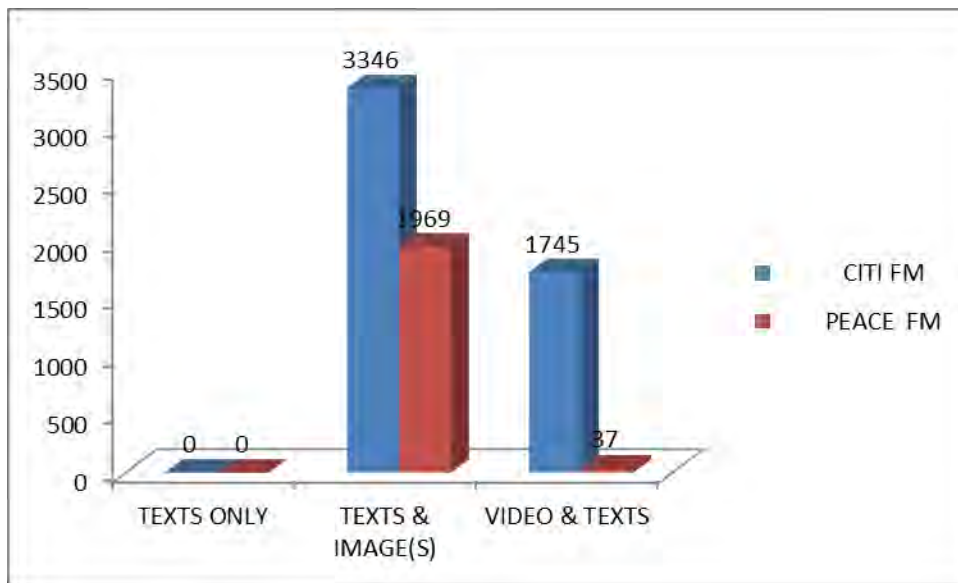
**Table 5: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM ‘s Facebook pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016**

Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percent ages	Frequency	Percent ages
Texts Only	0	0.0	0	0.0
Texts & Image(s)	3346	65.7	1969	98.2
Video & Texts	1745	34.3	37	1.8
Total	5091	100.0	2006	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016

Out of the news content disseminated on Facebook, it also appears, from Table 5, that the two radio stations disseminate a mix of *texts and images* and *texts and videos* of news stories to their social media audiences. However, Citi FM disseminates a chunk of such text, audio and audio-visual materials to their audiences compared to Peace FM. About 65.7% of news materials posted on Facebook are texts and images (in the form of news stories with pictures) while 34.3% are video and texts (in the form of recorded and live videos). On Peace FM’s Facebook page, over 95% of the content are texts and pictures (news stories with pictures) while less than 2% are video and texts (recorded and live videos). This data is illustrated in the graph below:

**Figure 7 Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Facebook pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016**

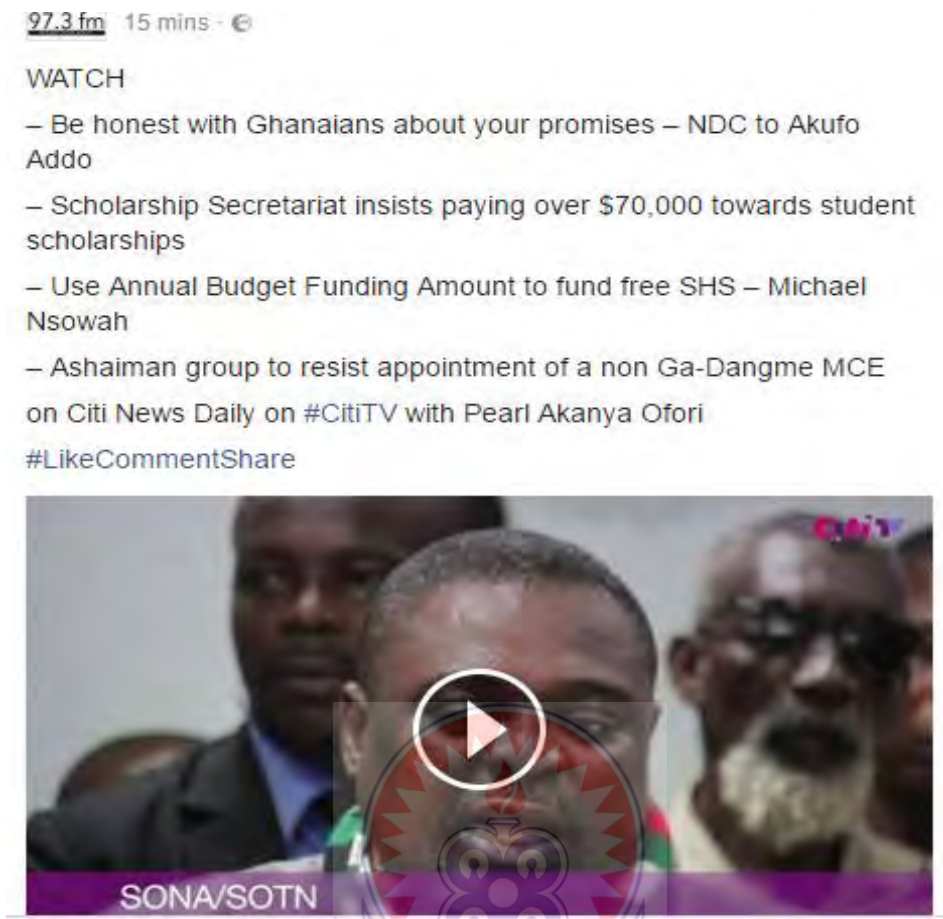


Source: Field data, 2016

In all, this shows the level of integration of multimedia content by Citi FM into the news dissemination process compared with Peace FM. Respondent 1 from Citi FM (R1C) elaborates on the use of videos and other multimedia tools for news dissemination:

Lately, we have realized that videos are also an integral part of what is happening on social media. So we think the new multimedia is also getting on these social media platforms like Facebook. As a result, we have introduced Citi TV. It's an online television where we record our news and other outdoor events like MOGO, "December to Remember" on it.

**Figure 8: Citi News Daily on Citi TV (Facebook).**

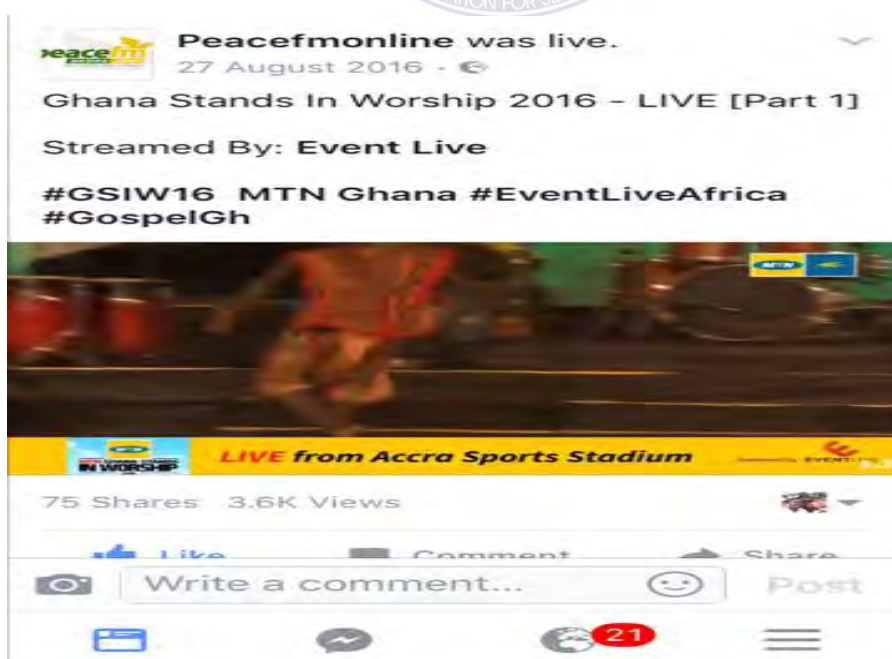


The cyber ethnographic studies conducted on the Facebook pages of the two radio stations also showed that these media houses appropriate a Facebook application called *Facebook Live*. This audio visual application enables the stations to broadcast or stream important events live, broadcast breaking news stories and to broadcast the news live from the studios in order to give Facebook users a feel of what is happening on location. Figures 9 and 10 indicate how the *Facebook Live* application is used by the two radio stations for news dissemination.

**Figure 9: Citi FM using Facebook Live to broadcast pre-election lecture by Vice Presidential Candidate, Dr. Mahamudu Bawumia.**



**Figure 10: Peace FM using Facebook Live to stream an outdoor event**



**Table 6: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Content on both CITI FM and PEACE FM's Facebook pages from 8th June 2016 - 8th December, 2016**

Categories	Frequencies	Percentage
Texts only	0	0
Texts and images	5315	74.9
Video and texts	1782	25.1
Total	7097	100

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 6 shows the cumulative frequency distribution of post content on both Citi FM and Peace FM's Facebook pages. In all nearly three quarters (74.9%) of posts for both radio stations are *texts and images* while a little over a quarter are in the form of *video and texts*. This implies that most of the posts on both radio stations' platforms are in the form of *texts and images*.

#### 4.1.4.2 News Dissemination on Twitter

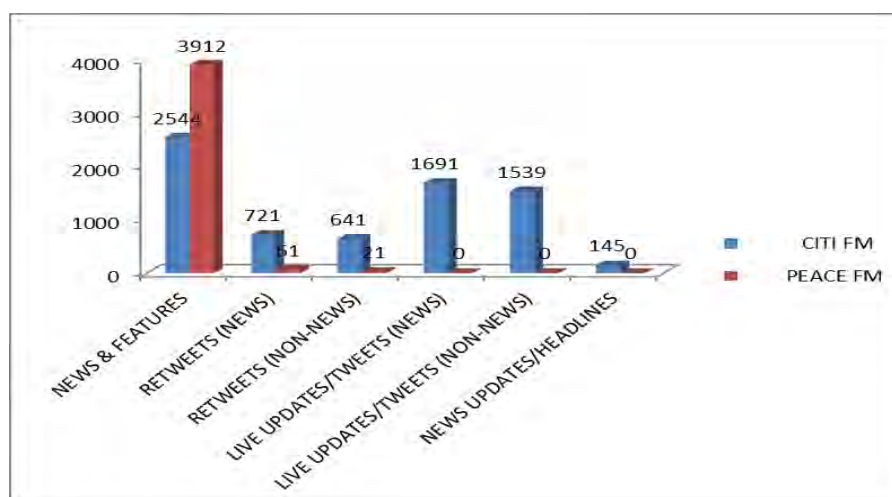
**Table 7: Comparative frequency distribution of Post types on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016**

Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
News & Features	2544	34.9	3912	97.9
Retweets (News)	721	9.9	61	1.5
Retweets (Non-News)	641	8.8	21	0.5
Live Updates/Tweets (News)	1691	23.2	0	0.0
Live Updates/Tweets (Non-News)	1539	21.1	0	0.0
News Updates/Headlines	145	2.0	0	0.0
Total	7281	100.0	3994	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016

Table 7 shows the news dissemination activities carried out by Citi FM and Peace FM on Twitter. News dissemination on Twitter by the two radio stations appears quite varied compared with such activity on Facebook. This may be due to the differences in features provided by the two platforms. Citi FM uses Twitter to disseminate news and features (34.9%) and provide news updates and headlines (2.0%) to Twitter followers. About 23.2% of the content were live updates or tweets of the news and interviews conducted during the bulletin while 9.9% were retweets from Twitter fans about the news. The rest (about 30%) of the content were not related to news dissemination activities (non-news). What this means is that Citi FM uses its Twitter page for other activities other than news, though they appear insignificant. For Peace FM, it appears much of its tweets (97.9%) are aimed at disseminating only news and features to its audiences. In all, what this means is that Citi FM uses Twitter to disseminate varied content compared to Peace FM which appears to restrict its news dissemination activities to the distribution of news and features. This information is graphically illustrated on the figure below:

**Figure 11: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Types on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2016 to 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.**



Source: Field data, 2016

In the area of using Twitter for live news updates, Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) rationalizes that Twitter makes it easier to disseminate information quickly, attributing it to the ease with which it is used for live tweets, updates and videoing. This revelation is in tandem with the Perceived Ease of Use (EU) principle of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989) which states that users are likely to adopt an innovation if it is perceived not to be difficult to understand, learn, or operate:

Twitter has been designed in such a way that it makes tweeting live events easier and faster compared with Facebook. That is why you see us doing more live stuff on Twitter (R2C).

**Figure 12: Live News Update (Interview) on Citi FM's Twitter page**



**Table 8: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Types on Citi FM and Peace FM's Twitter pages from 8th June 2016 - 8th December, 2016**

Categories	Frequencies	Percentages
News & features	6456	57.3
Retweets (News)	782	6.9
Retweets (non-news)	662	5.9
Live updates/tweets (news)	1691	15
Live updates/tweets (non-news)	1539	13.6
News updates/headlines	145	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>11, 275</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data, 2016

From the table, more than a half (57.3%) of both radio stations' cumulative posts on Facebook constituted news and features, 6.9% of posts were retweets of the news, 5.9% of the total posts comprised retweets of non-news related items; 15% of the posts were live updates/tweets of the news and 1.3% of the cumulative posts were used to disseminate news updates and headlines. What this means is that cumulatively, both radio stations appropriate Facebook on a larger scale to disseminate news and features.

**Table 9: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2016 – 8<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.**

Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Twitter	2517	50.3	17	0.4
Website	2389	47.7	3843	96.7
YouTube	102	2.0	113	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>5008</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3973</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, 2016

From Table 9, it appears that much of the news content on Peace FM's Twitter page (96.7%) are shared from the station's website with just a few (2.8%) coming from



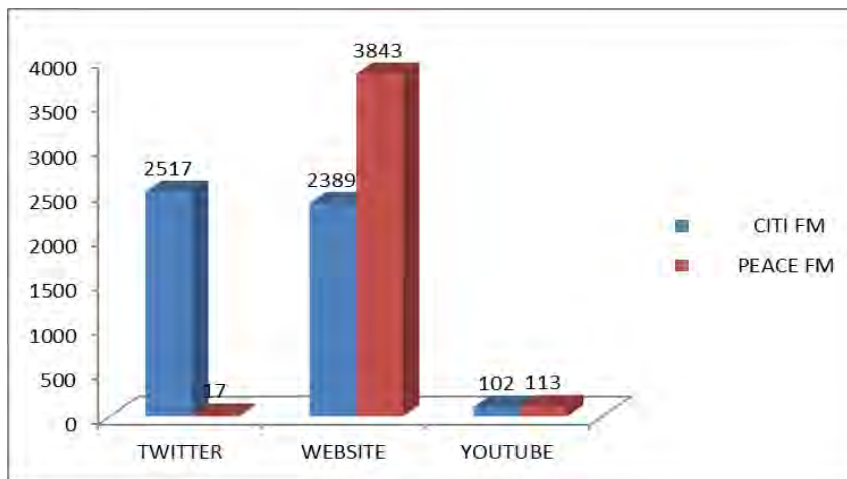
YouTube and Twitter (0.4%). However, for Citi FM, source of news content appears almost fairly distributed between the stations' Twitter page (50.3%) and the stations' website (47.7%). Only 2.0% of the content is shared from YouTube. What this means is that Peace FM does a lot more news sharing on Twitter from its website compared with Citi FM. Figure 13 below provides an illustration of the news sharing activity by Peace FM.

**Figure 13: News sharing on Twitter from Peace FM's website.**



It also appears, from the data, that Citi FM does not rely on just news on its website for news dissemination, but creates and uses content on Twitter for news dissemination to its fans. This shows how varied the two radio stations appropriate Twitter for news dissemination to its array of fans. As at March 8, 2017, Peace FM had 47, 200 Twitter followers while Citi FM led with 523,000 followers. The diagram below presents a graphic distribution of a comparative sketch of Citi FM and Peace FM's post source on Twitter.

**Figure 14: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Source on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter Pages from 8th June 2016 – 8th December, 2016**



**Table 10: Cumulative frequency distribution of Post Source on Peace FM and Citi FM's Twitter pages from 8th June 2016 - 8th December, 2016**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Twitter	2534	28.2
Website	6232	69.4
YouTube	215	2.4
Total	8981	100

Source: Field data, 2016

The table gives an overview of the cumulative frequency distribution of post source on both Peace FM and Citi FM's Twitter pages. The results show that most of the posts (69.4%) on the two radio stations' Twitter pages are news content shared from their websites while a little over a quarter (28.2%) of the posts are generated on Twitter. Cumulatively, only a few (2.4%) of the posts on both radio stations' Twitter handles originate from YouTube.

**Table 11: Comparative frequency distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8th June 2016 to 8th December, 2016.**

Categories	CITI FM		PEACE FM	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Texts only	2581	51.5	3808	95.8
Texts & Image(s)	2208	44.1	49	1.2
Video & Texts	121	2.4	116	2.9
Audio & Texts	83	1.7	0	0.0
Text, Image & Video	15	0.3	0	0.0
Total	5008	100.0	3973	100.0

Source: Field data, 2016

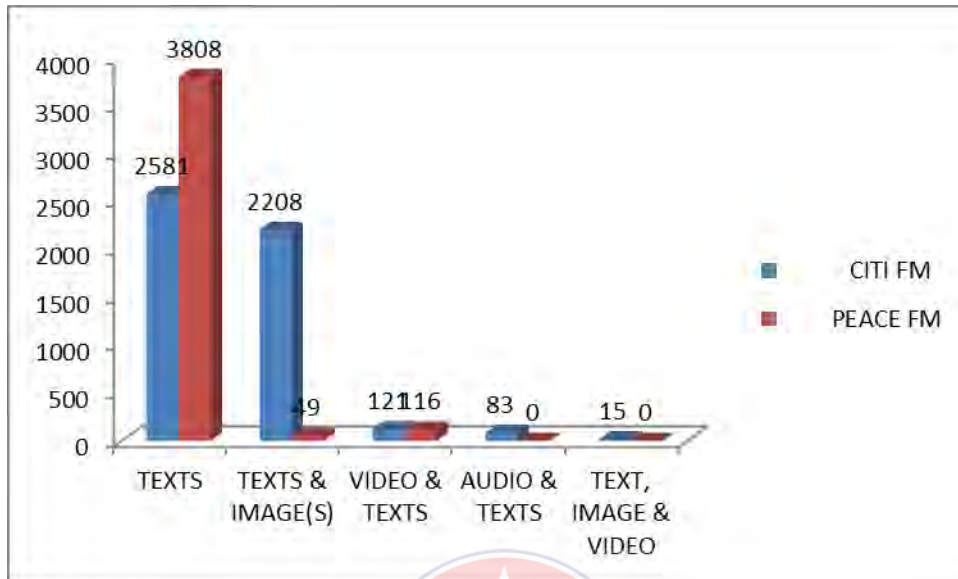
In terms of the content of news posts on Twitter, results from the cyber ethnographic studies conducted on the two radio stations' websites indicate that Peace FM's news tweets contained more texts (95.8%) with a few texts and video (2.9%) and images and texts (1.2%) compared with Citi FM. The *texts only* and *texts and images* content of the post content of the Peace FM are mostly stories shared from the stations' website while the *videos and texts* components are stories shared on Twitter from the station's YouTube page. These videos are edited stories from the station's sister media house, United Television (UTV) and have been put on the YouTube page of the station.

**Figure 15: Peace FM's Twitter content with embedded YouTube video**



With regard to Citi FM's Twitter content, table 11 shows some distribution among the categories (*Texts only*; *Texts and Images*; *Texts and Audio*, *Texts and Texts*, *Image and Video*). Simply, more than half (51.5%) of the content are *texts only* while more than 44% of the content are *texts and images*. *Video and texts* constitute 2.4% while *audio and texts* are 1.7% of the content. *Text, image and video* constitute only 0.3% of the Twitter news content on Citi FM's page. *The texts only* content are usually live tweets of news and interviews during the station's main news bulletins (6am; Midday and 6pm). However, most of the live tweets are done during the stations' 6pm news bulletin (*Eyewitness News*). The *text and image* content are mostly news stories shared from the station's website while the *texts and video* and *text, image and video* components are recorded or streamed news content. The *audio and text* content are usually podcasts of the news shared on Twitter. Overall, what this means is that it appears Citi FM integrates more audio, video and image content in its news dissemination activities on Twitter compared with Peace FM. It also appears Citi FM is taking maximum advantage of features provided by Twitter for news dissemination and this is in line with Bar, Pisani and Weber's (2007) postulation under the Technology Appropriation Model (TaM) which stipulates that technology appropriation occurs when users take full advantage of the features provided by a particular technology for their daily activities. The comparative appropriation of Twitter between the two radio stations in terms of content is further illustrated on the graph below:

**Figure 16: Comparative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM’s Twitter pages from 8th June 2016 to 8th December, 2016.**



Source: Field data, 2016

But what also appears significant is the appropriation of social media applications such as *Periscope* in disseminating radio news on Twitter. Informants from especially Citi FM argue that the *Periscope* application provided by Twitter has enabled them to “broadcast the news live”; ensuring swift dissemination of news and enhancing greater interactivity and engagement with audiences:

The periscope helps our followers on Twitter in particular to have a live experience of what is happening in the studio. We use a mobile phone to do like we are just taking a normal picture or video and then it is showing live on Twitter via periscope (R1C).

The above findings reveal how Citi FM appropriates Twitter for news dissemination. This revelation is in line with Bar, Pisani and Weber’s (2007) assertion that

technology appropriation allows users to take full advantage of features provided by technology designers in order to fulfill their daily tasks and routines.

**Figure 17: Twitter Periscope used to stream Citi Newspaper Review**



**Table 12: Cumulative Frequency Distribution of Post Content on CITI FM and PEACE FM's Twitter pages from 8th June, 2016 to 8th December, 2016**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Texts only	6389	71.1
Texts and images	2257	25.1
Video and texts	237	2.6
Audio and texts	83	0.9
Text, image and video	15	0.2
Total	8981	100

Source: Field data, 2016

With regards to the cumulative post content on both radio stations' Twitter handles, it came to light that most of the posts (71.1%) are *texts only* while a little over a quarter are *texts and images*. Only 2.6% of the cumulative Twitter posts are *video*

*and texts* while *audio and text* materials constitute less than a percentage (0.9%). Texts, images and video content constitute only 0.2% of the cumulative posts on both radio stations' Twitter pages.

#### **4.1.5 Public Engagement and Interactivity**

Scannel (2010) argues that traditional ways of transmitting radio content are now being interspersed with interactive online and social media features in order to engage an array of audiences. Expanding on the arguments by Scannel (2010), the European Commission (2012) avers that Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube are also used to interact with the public and to drive traffic to media houses' websites. Significantly, the key purpose of radio news is to provide information to its audiences (Keith, 2002). Therefore, the audience is significant in any information dissemination process. This can be achieved if feedback and engagement with the audience are done (Chignell, 2009). The integration of social media in information gathering, sourcing, news dissemination and reporting are all, in one way or the other, geared towards engaging audiences.

Findings arising out of the cyber ethnographic studies on the social media pages of Citi FM and Peace FM, interviews with key informants and analysis of documents show use of the strength of the various social media platforms for interacting and engaging with the audiences across various platforms (cross media engagement). Before and during news broadcasts, listeners are engaged on various social media platforms to send in their views and opinions about key headline stories. Extract from Citi FM's news bulletin on the next page shows how the station, at the beginning of the news bulletin, is inviting the audience to be part of the news through their various platforms.

**Figure 18 Extract from Citi FM's news bulletin showing the use of social media  
to engage audiences**

**97.3 CITI FM, HELLO GOOD AFTERNOON AND WELCOME TO CITI  
PRIME NEWS LIVE FROM OUR STUDIOS AT NUMBER ELEVEN DR  
MORTON LOOP IN ADABARAKA , ACCRA.**

**MY NAME IS ... AND I AM HERE WITH .....**

**IN THE HEADLINES,**

As controversy over Electoral Commission's new logo rages on, Chairperson,  
Charlotte Osei says...

**TEASER: LOGO TEASER**

Angry Azim residents affected by tidal waves demonstrate and calls for immediate  
rebuild of sea defence wall

**TEASER: AZIM DEMO**

**TEASER:**

***WE ARE LIVE ON ALL OUR PARTNER STATIONS ACROSS THE  
COUNTRY AND AROUND THE WORLD ON CITIFMONLINE.COM***

**NEWS IDENT -----**

***FOR REGULAR NEWS UPDATES ....., DOWNLOAD THE CITI NEWS APP ON  
GOOGLE PLAY STORE...LIKE OUR FACEBOOK PAGE, CITI 97.3 FM, AND  
FOLLOW US ON TWITTER, @CITI973.***

On Twitter, followers are able to retweet live texts of interviews conducted during news broadcasts as well as news stories, videos and audio material shared on that platform. Hashtags are also used to engage followers and to keep conversations running.



**Figure 19: A Twitter follower “retweeting” Peace FM’s news post**



Respondent 1 from Citi FM (R1C) explains that:

...we ask our listeners to send us comments, give them our social media handles, hashtags, WhatsApp numbers among others and subsequently pick comments from all these places...You will find that on Eyewitness News.

Respondent 2 from Peace FM (R2P) also shares a similar view:

We have a WhatsApp line and during every news bulletin, we announce the WhatsApp number. The idea is to allow our listeners to send their views, comments

on the issues being broadcast. It's a way of finding out if people are listening to the news or not. It's a way of evaluating the news. So people share their opinions through WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram.

On Facebook, radio audiences use the interactive features of the platform such as "Comment", "Share", "Reply", "Like" and the messaging application to engage each other as well as with the radio stations. Thus, Citi FM and Peace FM are capitalising on the interactive feature of social media to engage their audience in longer conversations and among the stations' audiences even way after news broadcasts or when stories are shared. This finding corroborates Scannel's (2010), cited in Singeret et al 2011, assertion that before the advent of social media, radio news used to be more ephemeral and fleeting but with the adoption of social media by these media houses, radio stations use their online platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and websites) to engage the audiences in longer conversations, a situation which appears to increase the life span of radio news.

Respondents say interactivity has also helped in shaping news content, enhanced the relationship with various social media sources and improved newsgathering and distribution processes. These findings are in line with the Perceived Usefulness (PU) of Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) in that these social media platforms and their features have become critical in enhancing the work of these radio stations, especially in the way in which it helps them to interact and engage with their audiences.

#### 4.1.6 News Editing

Cordeiro (2012) avers that the advent of social media has, among other things, created a non-traditional, active, and participative audience. Thus, social media has created a point of convergence between the mainstream media, including radio, and their audiences (Canter, 2013). The scholar is of the conviction that the benefits of such engagements include the feedback radio stations gather from their online audiences concerning not only the news headlines but significantly about the news programme or bulletin itself (Canter, 2013). Respondents from both Peace FM and Citi FM were unanimous in admitting the role audiences play in shaping the editorial content of the news. It came up that some social media users make editorial inputs into the news such as correction of wrong facts read on air and on the radio stations' social media platforms. Informants reveal that social media users shape the grammatical and structural content of the news in varied ways. Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) refers to these virtual or social media editors as *Shadow Editors* and explains their significance in the news production process:

Sometimes, they may even throw in certain things that will help you do a lot of follow ups. For me, they are very crucial; I call them my “shadow editors” because you don't really know the path that you are charting. They are at the back, more or less like gauging you. Though they are not professionals, they see certain things they see you may not see. They sometimes point out errors; it could be grammatical, factual errors or something.

Respondent 1 from Peace FM (R1P) also makes a similar observation:

As an Akan radio station, we have our audience making contributions regarding the pronunciation of Akan names and certain issues about the culture of the Akans. Again, let's say a building collapses and we say 7 people died. Maybe at the time the information was given to us, the number had increased from 7 people to about 10 so that person through his/her contribution via text message we can say that the number has increased to 10.

The editorial inputs made by social media users within the radio news production process appears useful to these media houses in their daily routines. This is in line with the Perceived Usefulness (PU) principle of Davis, Bagozzi and Warsha's (1989) Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which postulates that people are likely to use a particular technological device because of its ability to enhance their daily and professional activities; which in this case is news editing.

RQ2: What issues arise out of the use of social media for radio news production?

This research question sought to examine the key issues that arise out of the integration of social media in the production of news within the two radio stations. Based on the interviews, four key themes or issues emerged. They were issues of *credibility, policy, complementarity* and *radio-social media news ecology*.

#### **4.2.1 Credibility**

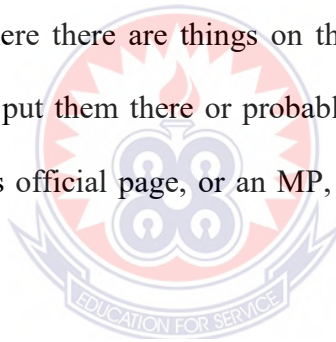
It came up that Citi FM and Peace FM are struggling with using social media sources and information for news production due to questions about the credibility of some of the information provided on the platform. This is despite the significance of social media in providing an array of User-Generated Content (UGC), and the availability of a plethora of news sources for radio news reporting and dissemination. The issues

range from malicious content aimed at assassinating people's character, fake news as well as the hacking of social media accounts of prominent news sources in order to control the information these sources put out there:

A lot of things that are said on social media are not true. People use those platforms to vilify people, to announce the death of others and the arrest of some public officials, which sometimes turn out to be untrue after your verification" (R1P).

Respondent 3 from Citi FM also provides a classic case of how information is faked on social media, sometimes affecting the station's ability to effectively authenticate and utilize such content:

We've had occasions where there are things on the Flagstaff House page and then they will say they didn't put them there or probably hacked or something. So if it's coming from a Minister's official page, or an MP, we go a step further to call them (R3C).



The complaint about credibility of information on social media by these two radio stations has been extensively captured in several studies on social media use. In what appears to confirm this research finding, the European Commission (2012) in its study argues that the credibility and reliability of information on social media remains the greatest risk to news production. Just as Peace FM and Citi FM verify social media sources, the study recommended the authentication of information on these platforms since they can be filtered or biased.

#### 4.2.2 Policy

Despite the credibility issues associated with social media content, the two radio stations do not have any documented policies on how to use these platforms for news production. The two radio stations rely on verbal directives and basic principles of journalism such as truth, accuracy, credibility, and cross-checking of facts to guide the process of gatekeeping social media content and sources. Respondent 2 from Citi FM (R2C) talks about the absence of a social media policy to guide radio news production:

We don't have a written policy on how news sources on social media should be managed but there is a verbal policy. As I speak with you, we are developing a social media policy that would guide staff as to what to do and what not to do on social media and it will also guide the newsroom in particular. We have an editorial policy which is written but it's silent on social media...

Respondent 3 from Peace FM (R3P) explains how, in the absence of written policy on social media usage, the station is able to gatekeep information from social media using journalistic principles and ethics:

If you apply the ethics of the profession on social media, it's the best...I'm working but I rely on some information from social media to add up to what I'm doing in the traditional media. But I will not over rely on social media that is why we have reporters who go on assignments like the Independence Day Celebrations. They go there so they bring live report.

The issue of the absence of newsroom policy on social media usage by the traditional media, including radio, has been widely discussed by many scholars. Lysak,

Cremedas and Wolf (2012) argue that despite the fact that a number of media houses (such as Citi and Peace FM) may rely on journalistic principles of cross-checking of facts, truth and accuracy to filter information coming from social media, there is still the need for the development of newsroom policy and guidelines for social media use by journalists. These scholars argue that if media houses (such as Peace FM and Citi FM) adopt a clearly-communicated policy about how social media should be used to report and update breaking news, it would help the stations to avoid unnecessary pitfalls and credibility problems. Similarly, Deo-Silas (2013) who studied how newsroom journalists in Ghana are using social media for their routine activities also recommended the development of a written newsroom policy on social media usage for journalists in order to forestall any future journalistic pitfalls.

#### **4.2.3 Complementarity**

There have been debates as to whether mainstream media news production, including that of radio, is facing a threat from the surge in social media. Scholars such as Cordeiro (2012), and Haak et al (2012) argue that the traditional media, including radio, are facing serious threat from audio-visual and other materials on social media. The scholars further aver that the ability of social media to empower audiences to emerge from consumers to producers of news is likely to disrupt newsroom routines within the mainstream media, including radio. However, findings from the study prove otherwise. The study has revealed that social media has complemented and added on to the traditional newsgathering, sourcing, reporting and dissemination processes within radio newsrooms. Respondent one from Citi FM (R1C) explains the ways in which social media has complemented radio news production:

I think social media has added on to how we gather news because if you are a traditional news station and you allow social media to break news before you do, soon you'll be out of business. For me, I think it has increased our sources of information. It also helps us to be cautious about the speed with which we break news; about accuracy and credibility.

Respondent 3 from Peace FM (R3P) provides a detailed description of how social media has complemented radio news production. The informant argues that a chunk of the Ghanaian populace still listens to the traditional radio news because internet penetration within the country remains low. The informant added that this development still makes radio news relevant. The informant is of the conviction that within radio newsrooms, reporters still file their voice reports after having broken news on social media. He added that the use of WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter for interactivity during newscasts adds on to the ways in which the radio stations engage the public. The respondent stressed that radio stations still rely on traditional methods of newsgathering and sourcing and that social media news sources add on to the radio station's traditional ways of news gathering and distribution processes:

When it comes to news reporting, we still get our reporters to file their voice reports unless news breaks when the reporter may have to send his voice report via WhatsApp. Our traditional ways of doing things have not been disrupted just that social media has added on to what we do. It has helped speed up the rate at which we even disseminate news to our audiences...

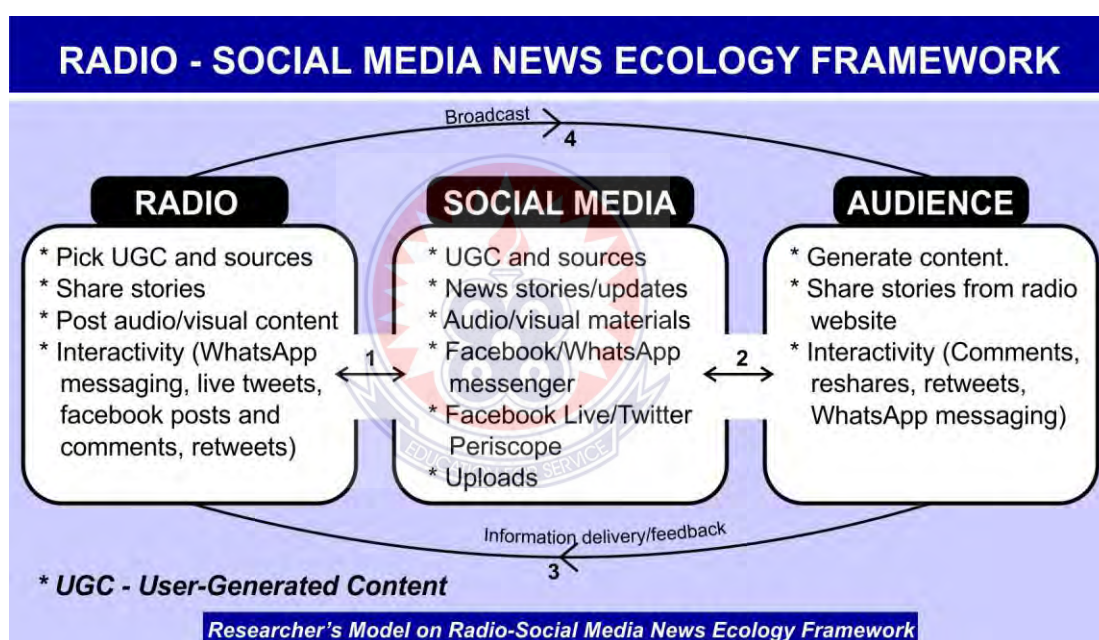
These findings corroborate arguments put forth by a number of scholars on how social media complements traditional news production processes. Newman, Dutton and



Blank (2012) argue that online news and social media content complement rather than substitute traditional news production processes. This position has been reinforced by Greenslade (2009) who argues that audiences for traditional media remains unchanged despite the social media surge while Rajendran and Thesinghraj (2014) posit that social media and the traditional media are bound to co-exist and depend on each other.

#### 4.2.4 Radio - Social Media News Ecology

**Figure 20: Radio – Social Media News Ecology Framework**



Another issue that arises out of the use of social media for radio news production is radio- social media news ecology. Quarm (2016, p.161) defines ecology as “the study of the interrelationships between living organisms such as plants, and animals and the environment in which they live.” It can be inferred from the definition that radio stations and their audiences constitute an ecology because there is some kind of interaction between them within the broader context of the news production process as revealed by the study. The interaction or interrelationship between these radio

stations and their audiences is, however, buffered by social media. The resultant effect is the development of *radio-social media news ecology* which is illustrated in the framework above: *Radio-Social Media News Ecology Framework*.

The *Radio-Social Media News Ecology Framework* is a model used to explain the infinite cyclical relationship between radio stations and their audiences, and mediated by social media, during the news production and distribution processes. The *Framework* postulates that both radio stations and their audiences independently produce and utilize social media content in mutually-beneficial and diverse ways, especially in the area of information gathering, news sourcing, news reporting, news dissemination, and public engagement and interactivity. The *Radio-Social Media News Ecology Framework* also postulates that such interaction leads to a complementary relationship among members of the ecology (radio stations, social media and audiences) who feed on the strengths and weaknesses of one another.

In explaining the *Framework*, as illustrated in Figure 20 above, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and websites are replete with content independently produced by both radio stations and their respective audiences. From the study, and as indicated by *arrow 1*, it became evident that Peace FM and Citi FM contribute to the User Generated Content (UGC) on social media. For instance, videos which are in the form of documentaries, news highlights, and recording of television news uploaded on YouTube and shared on Facebook and Twitter, is a major contribution to UGC on social media. Again, audio materials in the forms of podcasts are shared or uploaded on social media. News stories in the form of texts are also an integral part of what these radio stations contribute to social media content. These news stories sometimes come with pictures or images as shown by the

study. Shown by arrow 2 on the *Framework*, radio audiences also contribute greatly to social media content production. They contribute pictures, articles, their views on topical issues and sometimes provide scoops and leads on social media. The audiences are sometimes news sources on social media.

Aside the contribution of both radio stations and audiences to the content production on social media, these platforms come with a set of applications and features such as *Storify*, *WhatsApp Messenger*, *Facebook Live*, *Twitter Periscope*, and upload tools for audio-visual materials. *Storify* is a social media application that allows radio reporters to update events live on their websites. *WhatsApp Messenger* on the other hand allows radio stations to aggregate the views of their audiences for greater interactivity while, from the study, *Facebook Live* and *Twitter Periscope* allow for radio news dissemination to social media audiences and help to improve public engagement. In sum, social media provides the platform for the production of news content by both radio stations and their audiences while offering useful applications. At the same time, social media activities also rely on the news content produced by these two radio stations and their audiences in order to keep these platforms going. Thus, news content production provides ecology between the two radio stations, their audiences and mediated by social media.

However, that is not all to the emergent *radio-social media news ecology*. Beyond content production, radio stations and their audiences utilize or appropriate social media in a variety of ways within the news production process. From the study, and as shown by *arrow 2*, it is evident that audiences of the two radio stations consume an array of social media content either independently produced by them or the radio stations. They disseminate news stories by sharing such content predominantly from

the radio stations' websites, or YouTube pages onto Facebook, or Twitter. Audiences also interact with radio stations on their social media platforms through responses to news posts in the form of retweets, tweets, and comments or direct messaging with radio stations through *Facebook* or, *WhatsApp Messenger* applications. Radio Stations, on the other hand, also utilise social media content for news production in variety of ways. They generate news stories from online materials such as pictures, videos, audios, press statements, and other posts on social media relevant for both radio and online news production processes. These radio stations also appropriate social media applications such as *Facebook Live* and *Twitter Periscope* for news reporting, and dissemination. Radio stations also respond to WhatsApp messages; retweet audiences; and reply to Facebook messages in a bid to better interact with their audiences during live news broadcasts or off-air. This is indicated by *arrow 1*. While this is the case, social media is the conduit through which all these activities occur. The resultant effect is the development of *radio-social media news ecology*.

Significant to the *Radio-Social Media News Ecology Framework* is the infinite cyclical production, sharing and utilization of content and feedback between radio stations and their audiences. On the *Framework*, *arrow 3* indicates how radio audiences contribute content to radio stations for news production activities. This is primarily done through phone calls or direct contact with radio stations to provide them with leads, scoops or information on breaking news. Sometimes, audiences provide direct feedback to radio stations regarding topical issues within the bulletin. Radio stations sometimes incorporate such feedback into the bulletin and use the information provided to them by the audiences in the news production process. As indicated by *arrow 4*, such information, generated into news, is broadcast to the

audiences. In other instances, such information from audiences is used for online news production (by sharing it on social media). This is indicated by *arrow 1*. Radio audiences may discuss, share or comment on such issues on social media (indicated by *arrow 2*) or provide direct feedback to radio stations (*arrow 3*), with the cycle continuing.

While the relationship within the ecology remains strong, radio stations, their audiences and social media share a complementary relationship with one another. For instance, from the study, it is clear that the two radio stations use social media for newsgathering in order to complement their traditional methods of information gathering and cross-checking of social media facts. Reporters from the two radio stations use social media to report breaking news in order to timely disseminate information to their audiences and then file their voice reports later. Again, social media, which provides a platform for radio audiences to be news sources, also adds on to the traditional news sources radio stations rely on for their news production. Social media also provides the platform for news dissemination by these two radio stations to its audiences during traditional news broadcasts. It also makes for easy interaction with audiences during news broadcasts through tweets, retweets, comments, replies, and WhatsApp messages. This shows the complementary relationship existing within the *radio-social media news ecology*.

#### **4.3.0 Summary**

This chapter presented the findings and discussions of the research questions. The study sought to examine how the selected radio stations use social media for news production as well as discuss the issues that arise out of the integration of social media into the news gathering and dissemination processes. The study found that

social media has been useful in enhancing the professional tasks of news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news dissemination, news editing, and public engagement with Citi FM and Peace FM's audiences. This finding is in line with the Perceived Usefulness (PU) principle of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) which stipulates that a person is likely to use a technological device if it will enhance their daily routines or professional activities. While this is the case, it appears that the two radio stations are in similar but varied ways appropriating social media platforms and their applications for news production. While Citi FM appears to appropriate social media for a variety of activities such as dissemination of news headlines, breaking news, and news and features as well as live tweet of news and interviews, Peace FM appears to restrict itself to mainly news sharing activities. Again, Citi FM appears to have moved beyond texts and images to the use of more video and audio materials (recorded documentaries, podcasts, and news headlines with edited videos) to broaden the scope of news dissemination and public engagement. Peace FM, on the other hand, appears a bit limited to the use of texts and images despite sporadic attempts to incorporate videos into its social media engagement. The reason for this variation in usage may be linked to linguistic factors. This is especially so when Peace FM predominantly targets indigenous Akan speakers (Nyavor, 2010) and social media appears to target the elite. It is therefore not surprising that social media provides more leverage for Citi FM which is an English-speaking radio station. What is however significant is that social media has not disrupted the traditional news production processes of the two radio stations. Rather, it has complemented their routine news gathering, sourcing, and reporting processes. The resultant effect is the emergence of *radio-social media news ecology*; where social media has created a buffer between these media houses and their audiences, in establishing the

interdependence and relationship between them in the area of news production. However, it emerged that the two radio stations do not have any written policy on social media usage.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Introduction

This study set out to examine the use of social media for radio news production among selected radio stations in Accra. The research came out with various findings and analysis as to how the selected radio stations use social media for news gathering and dissemination activities as well as the issues that arise from such usage. This chapter, therefore, summarises the salient issues arising out of the study, draws the appropriate conclusions and makes recommendations in the area of the use and appropriation of social media for radio news production. Highlighting on the study's limitations, this section also outlines possible suggestions for further research.

#### 5.1 Summary

The study sought to examine how selected radio stations in Accra use social media for news production as well as investigate the issues that arise out of the integration of social media into the news gathering and dissemination processes. Data was drawn from multiple sources, specifically through the use of cyber ethnography, interviews and documents analysis. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Technology Appropriation Model (TaM) formed the theoretical foundation and undertone of the study and particularly helped to properly contextualize the research. The findings of the study are summed up below.

#### 5.2 Main findings

The first objective of the study sought to examine how Peace FM and Citi FM use social media for news production. Data gathered based on this objective were themed



with reference to definitions of radio news production provided by numerous scholars. The components of radio news production as captured by definitions from scholars such as Boyd (2000), Hausman et al (2013), and Kern (2008) are news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news dissemination, public engagement or interactivity and news editing.

In the area of news gathering, the study revealed that social media provides a readily available pool of information or User-Generated Content (UGC) from which the two radio stations draw from for their news production activities. The availability of pictures, videos, and audio materials on social media become vital for breaking news and helps these radio stations to quickly catch up with current issues around them and at the same time promptly disseminate information to their online (social media) and off-line (radio) audiences. This finding is in line with Perceived Usefulness (PU), a key assumption of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). PU is the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology would enhance his or her task or activity. It appears that Peace FM and Citi FM are motivated to use these social media platforms because they help to meet their professional need of information gathering or news gathering. Again, following the significance of social media in adding up to the traditional news gathering activities of these radio stations, authorities from the two radio stations, through verbal policies, encourage their broadcast journalists to show strong social media presence in order to catch up with the news. At the same time, journalists within these radio stations, out of their own volition, also actively use social media to enhance their journalistic task of news gathering in order to break the news and generate important leads and scoops on vital issues of public interest.

The study also revealed that social media has become vital in news sourcing, beyond the traditional ways of finding and maintaining news sources for radio news production. It came up that the two radio stations capitalize on the strength of social media to connect with, maintain and tap the experiences and views of the potpourri of readily available news sources the online media present. These sources become crucial in providing scoops, leads and other relevant information for both radio and online news production. “Citizen Journalists” who provide an array of User Generated Content (UGC) in the form of amateur videos, short stories, and pictures are instrumental in the way radio stations break the news. What is even more significant is the presence of public figures and experts on social media who provide readily available information for radio news production. Again, these radio stations tap the strength of social media for opinion polling or gauging public opinion on issues of national importance, instead of “going on the streets”. What this implies is that news sources have become more diffused and varied with the advent of social media. Thus, the significance of social media in new sourcing is in line with the Technology Acceptance Model (TaM) which stipulates that people are likely to use a technological tool due to its Perceived Usefulness (PU), especially in the area of enhancing their work or professional routines.

Apart from social media being instrumental in the way in which it helps in information gathering and sourcing, the study also points to a myriad of ways in which Citi FM and Peace FM capitalize on the strength of social media to report variety of events including breaking news, running stories and other important events to an array of social media users and radio audiences. During key events such as demonstrations, press conferences, and disasters, reporters appropriate social media

technologies and applications for news reporting. Broadcast journalists live tweets these events; provide minute-by-minute updates on their websites; and use social media platforms such as the WhatsApp messenger to file audio reports on the field. The study also found that the integration of social media into radio news reporting is diversifying the way broadcast journalists perform their tasks. It came up that radio journalists are encouraged to go beyond voice reports to filing visual content such as videos and pictures for online news, a finding which is in line with Sey's (2011) argument that appropriation may also change the way individuals or organisations operate.

In the area of news dissemination, the study showed similar as well as differences in the way in which Citi FM and Peace FM use social media for transmitting or distributing news to their audiences. Data compiled during a six month cyber ethnographic studies (from June, 2016 to December, 2016) on the Facebook and Twitter pages of the two radio stations showed that while Citi FM appeared to appropriate social media for a variety of activities such as dissemination of news headlines, breaking news, and news and features as well as live tweet of news and interviews, Peace FM appears to restrict itself to mainly news sharing activities from its website. Again, Citi FM appears to have moved beyond texts and images in its news dissemination activities to the incorporation of more video and audio materials (recorded documentaries, podcasts, and news headlines with edited videos), broadening the station's scope of news dissemination. Peace FM, on the other hand, appears a bit limited to the use of texts and images (from mainly shared news stories from its website) despite sporadic attempts to incorporate videos into its social media engagement activities. The reason for this variation in usage of social media for news

dissemination may be linked to linguistic factors. This is especially so when Peace FM predominantly targets indigenous Akan speakers (Nyavor, 2010) and social media appears to target the elite. It is therefore not surprising that social media provides more leverage for Citi FM which is an English-speaking radio station.

Social media has also become useful in enhancing interactivity and engagement between the two radio stations and their audiences. Peace FM and Citi engage their audiences across a number of social media platforms, notably Facebook, Twitter and, WhatsApp. During news broadcasts, listeners of the two radio stations are engaged or made to join the news by way of asking them to send in their views across the radio stations' social media platforms. On Twitter, for instance, followers of these radio stations are able to retweet live texts of interviews conducted during news broadcasts as well as news stories, videos and audio material shared on that platform. Radio audiences use the interactive features on these social media platforms such as "Comment", "Share", "Reply", "Like", "Hashtag" and the messaging applications to engage each other as well as with the radio stations, sometimes in longer conversations way after news broadcasts. Thus, the use of social media for radio news production appears to have diversified and added on to the traditional means of engagement between radio stations and their audiences. Indeed, Scannel (2010), citing Singeret et al 2011, assert that before the advent of social media, radio news used to be more ephemeral but in recent times, the use of online platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and websites) by radio stations to engage audiences in longer conversations appears to have increased the life span of radio news.

One of the significant ways in which social media has helped the two radio stations in the news production process lies in how it enhances the editorial work of these

media houses. The study revealed that both Peace FM and Citi FM's social media fans make editorial inputs into the news by way of correcting grammatical, factual, and structural errors of news content. Referring to these audiences as *Shadow Editors*, respondents say the editorial inputs by social media users have helped to improve content and delivery of the news. The ability of these audiences to actively participate and make inputs into the editorial content of these radio stations is explained by Cordeiro (2012) who avers that the advent of social media has, among other things, created a non-traditional, active, and participative audience.

The second research question sought to investigate the issues that arise out of the use of social media for radio news production. The study found that first, the two radio stations are struggling with the use of some social media content for news production, largely because of the credibility issues that come with such information. The issues range from malicious content aimed at maligning people, to dissemination of fake news.

In spite of the credibility issues associated with social media content, it appears that the two radio stations do not have any documented policies to guide broadcast journalists in information gathering. Rather, these radio stations rely on verbal directives and basic principles of journalism such as truth, accuracy, credibility, and cross-checking of facts to guide the process of gatekeeping social media content and sources. While this is the case, Deo-Silas (2013), who studied how newsroom journalists in Ghana are using social media for their routine activities, recommended the development of a written newsroom policy on social media usage for journalists in order to forestall any future journalistic pitfalls.

Another issue that came up is complementarity. It appeared that the use of social media for radio news production has not subverted traditional newsroom practices. Rather, it has added on to the ways in which the two radio stations gather, source, report, and disseminate the news. This finding supports assertions by scholars such as Newman, Dutton and Blank (2012), Greenslade (2009), and Rajendran and Thesinghraj (2014) who argue that online news and social media content complement rather than substitute traditional news production processes.

Significantly, the use of social media for radio news production has created a distinct ecology between these radio stations and their audiences, buffered by social media. While radio stations and their audiences contribute UGC to enhance social media activity, the platform has also provided the avenue for radio stations and their audiences to interact with each other, aiding in news gathering, news reporting, and news dissemination activities. This has led to the evolution of a *radio-social media news ecology* where members (radio stations, audiences and social media) feed on the strength of one another to enhance the news production process.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

The objectives of the study were to examine how selected radio stations in Accra use social media for news production and investigate the issues that arise out of the use of social media for radio news production. The following conclusions were drawn based on the outcome of the study.

The study concludes that social media has been useful in the news production processes of the selected radio stations (Peace FM and Citi FM). It has enhanced the stations' professional tasks of news gathering, sourcing, news reporting, news

dissemination, news editing and public engagement or interactivity. This is in line with Davis et al's (1985) Perceived Usefulness (PU) principle of the technology acceptance model which stipulates that people are inclined to use a particular technology if it will enhance their daily tasks.

However, it appears that the two radio stations in similar and varied forms appropriate these social media platforms in their routine news production processes. While the point of convergence between the two radio stations in terms of appropriation lies around news gathering, sourcing, reporting and editorial issues, the point of departure hovers primarily around the application of social media platforms and their applications for news dissemination. While Citi FM appears to appropriate social media and its applications to disseminate variety of content such as news headlines, breaking news, and news and features as well as for live tweeting of news and interviews, Peace FM appears largely restricted to news sharing activities. More so, Citi FM appears to integrate more audio-visual materials in its news dissemination process. These content include recorded documentaries, podcasts, and news headlines with accompanying videos. Peace FM, on the other hand, appears a bit limited to the use of texts and images despite sporadic attempts to incorporate videos into its news dissemination and social media engagement activities.

The study also concludes that both radio stations are battling with credibility issues associated with some social media content. In spite of this, Peace FM and Citi FM do not have any documented policies to guide social media use by their broadcast journalists. Journalistic principles of cross-checking of facts, truth, and accuracy rather guide these stations in gatekeeping social media information.

Again, social media complements rather than replaces traditional radio news production activities such as news gathering, sourcing, public engagement and interactivity, and news dissemination.

What is, however, significant is that the incorporation of social media into radio news production has created a *radio-social media news ecology* where members inter-relate and interdepend on one another in the area of content generation, news gathering, news dissemination, sourcing, and public engagement and interactivity.

#### **5.4 Limitations of the study**

The quest to meet the deadlines of the research placed some limitations on the study. That is time factor did not give the researcher the opportunity to carry out a lot more follow-ups, especially with regard to the cyber ethnographic studies or expand the period of the study beyond six months. This is particularly significant given that the social media space keeps evolving, with new tools and applications adding up to the online space. Therefore, it is possible that radio stations' use of social media would evolve with the changing trends in the online space. Studying these radio stations' social media habits over a longer time could provide varied information that can contribute to the validity and reliability of the research. Nonetheless, the researcher gathered enough data on the social media platforms of the selected radio stations over the six month period which provided useful information on how the stations are integrating social media in the news production process.

Again, it was difficult getting literature on social media use among radio stations in Ghana and even within the African context. Most of the literature reviewed were situated within the Western context. This owes to the fact that, generally, there have



been minimal studies on radio and social media use within the African context. The researcher therefore situated much of the analysis within the framework of literature from the West. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the minimal literature on the use of social media for radio news production within the African and Ghanaian contexts.

The researcher also faced difficulties getting coders to help in the cyber ethnographic studies on the radio stations' websites. The few coders employed were novices to the study and therefore the researcher had to constantly train them to ensure inter-coder reliability and validity of the research.

### **5.5 Suggestions for further studies**

Future researchers should widen the period beyond six months, especially for the cyber ethnographic studies. This will ensure data adequacy and help the researcher incorporate changing trends within the online space and how radio stations are adapting to these developments in the news production process.

Again, future researchers may adopt the ethnographic approach to study how radio stations are using social media for news production. This approach will enable the researcher study social media practices within radio newsrooms, using a variety of methods such as focus group interviews, participant observation, cyber ethnography, and documents analysis. It will enable the researcher better understand the social media culture of radio news production within these contexts.

Again, future researchers on this topic should expand the sample to include audience perceptions and views of how social media is incorporated into radio news production. Audience or social media users are significant in the radio-social media

news ecology and therefore their contributions will be vital in enriching future studies. Similarly, future researchers can expand the scope of the multiple case study to include a lot more radio stations in order to ensure the incorporation of variety of information on how social media is used for news production. It will also help improve the validity and reliability of the research.

## **5.6 Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made based on the research questions and objectives findings, discussions and conclusions of the research in the area of social media and radio news production:

1. Media houses should properly gatekeep social media information owing to the credibility issues associated with some online content. From the study, it came to light that fake news, hacking of people's social media accounts in order to control information, and malicious information aimed at assassinating people's character abound on social media. Therefore, radio stations must display a lot of professionalism and tact in collecting or gathering information from online sources for radio news production.
2. In order to effectively ensure the credibility of online content used for radio news production, the study recommends the development of a documented policy on social media usage. The policy should specify the modalities for cross-checking the credibility of online content such as pictures, videos and other information posted by "Citizen Journalists". Beyond this, the policy should even specify how to verify the accounts of social media users, especially those of public figures, experts and politicians.

3. The study also recommends that radio stations which have not adopted social media for news production should do so in order to broaden their scope of news gathering, dissemination and public engagement. It has become evident that social media has the potential to complement radio news and establish the online reach and presence of radio stations.



## REFERENCES

- Adegbiler-Iwari, I., & Ikenwe, I. J. (2014). *New Media in Old Media: the Nigerian Case*. Nigeria: Afe Babalola University.
- Alejandro, J. (2010). *Journalism in the Age of Social Media*. University of Oxford: Reuters Institute Fellowship Paper.
- Alexa.com. (2016). *Top 500 Global Sites*. Retrieved 22 November 2016, from <http://www.alexa.com/topsites>
- Anderson, S. (2004). Internet Radio: Delivering Radio Programmes Online. In Sterling, C. (Ed). *The Museum of Broadcast Communications Encyclopedia of Radio* 2 (756-758).
- Ansah, P.A.V. (1986). *Making Broadcasting Useful: The Development of Radio and Television in Africa in the 1980s*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Ansah, P.A.V. (1985). *Broadcasting and National Development*. Accra: Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC).
- Atton, C. (2007). Current Issues in Alternative Media Research. *Sociology Compass*, 1 (1), 17–27.
- Ayivor, A. D. (2015). *Social Media as an Advertising Platform: The Case of Guinness Ghana Breweries*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis): University of Ghana, Legon.
- Bar, F., Pisani, F., & Weber, M. (2007). *Mobile technology appropriation in a distant mirror: Baroque infiltration, creolization and cannibalism*. Prepared for discussion at Seminario sobre Desarrollo Económico, Desarrollo Socialmente Comunicaciones Móviles en América Latina. Convened by Fundación Telefónica in Buenos Aires, April 20–21, 2007. Retrieved July 14, 2017, from [http://arnic.info/Papers/Bar\\_Pisani\\_Weber\\_appropriation-April07.pdf](http://arnic.info/Papers/Bar_Pisani_Weber_appropriation-April07.pdf)
- Barnard, R.S. (2014). 'Tweet or be sacked': Twitter and the new Elements of Journalistic Practice. *Journal of Journalism*, 17(2), 190–207.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and Implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.
- Baylis, P., & Freedman, N. (2010). *BTEC Level 3 National Creative Media Production Student Book*. UK: Pearson Publications.
- Beckett, C., & Mansell, R. (2008). *Crossing boundaries: New media and networked Journalism*. *ICA Communication, Culture & Critique*. Retrieved on 22 November, 2016 from <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/4221>

- Biber, D. (1993). *Representativeness in Corpus Design: Literary & Linguistic Computing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boachi, K.S.H. (2010). *Broadcast News in Ghanaian Languages: A Comparative Study of Akan News on Uniiq and Peace FM (October-December, 2009)*. [Unpublished Master's Thesis], University of Ghana, Legon.
- Boadi, F. (2013). *Social media and civic discourse among students of the University of Ghana*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis) University of Ghana, Legon.
- Borders, B. (2009). *A Brief History of Social Media*. Retrieved November 22, 2016, <http://socialmediarockstar.com/history-of-social-media>
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Boyd, A. (2000). *Broadcast Journalism: Techniques of Radio and Television News*. London: Focal Press.
- Boyd, D. (2007). *Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship*. *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, 13 (1), 210-230.
- Brecht, B. (2000a). *The radio as an apparatus of communication*. In: Brecht on theatre: The development of an aesthetic. Edited and translated by J. Willett. New York: Hill and Wang, pp. 51–53.
- Brecht, B. (2000b). *The Radio as a Communications Apparatus*. In: Silberman, M. Brecht on Film and Radio. London: Methuen.
- Broersma, M., & Graham, T. (2012). Social media as beat: tweets as news source during the 2010 British and Dutch elections. *Journalism Practice*, 6 (3), 403–419.
- Brooks, S. B., Kennedy, G., Moen, R. D., & Ranly, D. (2008). *News Reporting and Writing*. U.S.A: RR Donnelley & Sons Company.
- Bruno, N. (2011). *Tweet First, Verify Later: How Real-Time Information is changing the Coverage of Worldwide Crisis Events*. Paper for the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford: University of Oxford.
- Brunz, A. (2008). *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life, and Beyond: From Production to Producers*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Buami, K. E. (2013). Internet Using Habit among Junior High School Students of Nima, Accra – Ghana. *International Journal of ICT and Management*, 1 (3), 133- 138.

- Bunz, M. (2009). *How Social Networking is Changing Journalism*. The Guardian. Retrieved 22 November 2016, from <http://www.theguardian.com/media/pda/2009/sep/18/oxford-social-media-convention-2009-journalism-blogs>
- Burns, S. N. & Grove, S. K. (2003). *Understanding nursing research*. (3rd Ed). Philadelphia: Saunders.
- Canter, L. (2013). The interactive spectrum: The use of social media in UK regional newspapers. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 19(4) 472-495.
- Carton, S. (2009). *Defining Social Media*. Retrieved November 22, 2016, <http://www.clickz.com/clickz/column/1703507/defining-social-media>
- Castells, M. (2003). The Rise of the Network Society: *The Information Age, Journal of Economy, Society and Culture*, 1 (2) Oxford: Blackwell.
- Chignell, H. (2009). *Key Concepts in Radio Studies*. London: Sage Publications.
- Citi FM (2016). *Profile of Citi FM*. [online] Ghana News. Available at: <http://citifmonline.com/citi-fm/> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2016].
- Cohen, L. S. (2009). *Is There A Difference Between Social Media And Social Networking?* Retrieved July 3, 2016, from lonscohen: <http://lonscohen.com/blog/2016/07/difference-between-social-media-and-social-networking/>
- Coleman, S. (2005). *Remixing citizenship: Democracy and Young People's use of the Internet: A report for the Carnegie Young People's Initiative*.
- Cordeiro, P. (2012). Radio becoming r@dio: Convergence, interactivity and broadcasting trends in perspective. *Journal of Audience and Reception Studies*, 9 (2), 492-510.
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (4th Ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Davis, F.D., Bagozzi R.P., & Warshaw PR (1989). User acceptance of computer technology: *A comparison of two theoretical models*. *Management Science*, 35(8), 982-1003.
- Deo-Silas, K. (2013). *Newsroom Journalists' Use of Social Media in Ghana*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis) University of Ghana, Legon.

- DeSanctis, G., & Poole, M. S. (1994). Capturing the complexity in advanced technology use: Adaptive structuration theory. *Organisation Science*, 5(2), 121–147.
- Dewing, M. (2010). *Social Media: An Introduction*. Canada: Library of Parliament.
- Dickinson, R. D. (2011). The use of social media in the work of local newspaper journalists. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.834.3562&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Donkor, A. D. (2014). *Perspective of Highly Educated Women on the Portrayal of Women in the Popular Ghanaian movies*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis): University of Education, Winneba.
- Edosomwan, S., Prakasan, K.S., Kouame, D., Watson, J., & Seymour, T. (2011). The History of Social Media and its Impact on Business. *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship*. 16 (3), 79-91.
- Emery, M. & Emery, E. (1996). *The Press and America: An Interpretative History of the Mass Media* (8th Ed.). Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.
- Essandoh, M. (2006). *Local Participation in Community Radio: A Case Study of Radio Peace in Winneba*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Ghana, Legon.
- European Commission (2012). *Journalists and Social Media*. Aggregate Report. London. Retrieved 22 November 2016, from [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/quali/journsm\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/quali/journsm_en.pdf)
- Fawcett, J. & Downs, F. (1986). *The relationship between theory and research*. Norwalk, CT: Appleton Century Crofts.
- Federal Communication Commission (2016). *A Short History of Radio with an Inside Focus on Mobile Radio*. Retrieved 22 November 2016, from [https://transition.fcc.gov/omd/history/radio/documents/short\\_history.pdf](https://transition.fcc.gov/omd/history/radio/documents/short_history.pdf)
- Fischer, E., & Reuber, A.R. (2011). Social interaction via new social media: (How) can interactions on Twitter affect effectual thinking and behavior? *Journal of Business Venturing*, 26, 1–18.
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). *Belief, Attitude, Intention and Behaviour: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley
- Fordjour, O.K.N. (2015). *The Use of Facebook in the 2012 Presidential Campaigns: A Content Analysis of John Dramani Mahama and Nana Akufo-Ado's Official Pages*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis): University of Ghana, Legon.

- Freeman, B. (2011). *Internet killed the Radio Star? Music Listening Habits and Perceptions of Campus Radio in Singapore*. Paper Presented at the Radio Conference: A Transnational Forum. Auckland, New Zealand.
- Frey, L., Botan, C., & Kreps, G. (1999). *Investigating Communication: An Introduction to Research Methods* (2nd Ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Fuchs, C. (2014). *Social Media: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Gaskins, B., & Jerit, J. (2012). Internet News: Is It a Replacement for Traditional Media Outlets? *The International Journal of Press Politics*, 17(2), 190–213.
- Geertz, C. (1983). *Local knowledge: Further essays interpretive anthropology*. New York: Basic Books.
- Ghana Internet Users. (2016). Internetlivestats.com. Retrieved 22 November 2016, from <http://www.internetlivestats.com/internet-users/ghana/>
- Ghana Social Media Rankings (2015). *Most Influential Ghanaian Brands on Social Media in 2015, Comprehensive Report*. (1st ed., pp. 1-14). Accra. Retrieved from <http://cliqafrika.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/GHANA-SOCIAL-MEDIA-RANKINGS-2015.pdf>. Html. Accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016.
- Gibbs, G R. (2007). *Analysing qualitative data*. In U. Flick (Ed.), *The Sage qualitative research kit*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Gillmor, D. (2006). *We the media – grassroots journalism by the people, for the people*. Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media.
- Given, L.M. (2008). *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. (Vol.2), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Glass, G.V., & Hopkins, K.D. (1984). *Statistical Methods in education and Psychology*. Eaglewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall
- Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report*, 8(4), 597-606.
- Greenslade, R. (2009). *Newspaper sales plunge over the decade*. The Guardian. Retrieved on July 4, 2016 from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2009/dec/14/national-newspapers-sales-decade>
- Gutman, J. (1982). A Means-End Chain Model Based on Computer Categorisation Processes. *Journal of Marketing*, 46 (60-72).
- Haak, D. V. J. B., Parks, M., Castels, M. (2012). The Future of Journalism: Networked Journalism. *International Journal of Communication*, 6 (2012), 2923–2938.



- Hachten, A. W., Scotton, F. J. (2007). *The World News Prism: Global Information in a Satellite Age* (7<sup>th</sup> Ed.). U.S.A: Blackwell Publishing.
- Halai, A. (2006). *Ethics in Qualitative Research: Issues and Challenges*. Paper presented at Karachi University, Pakistan.
- Hallett, E.R., & Barber, K. (2014). Ethnographic Research in a Cyber Era. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 43(3) 306–330.
- Hartley, J. (2000). Radiocracy: Sound and Citizenship. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 3(2): 153-159.
- Hartshorn, S. (2010). *5 Differences between Social Media and Social Networking*. Retrieved July 3, 2016, from socialmediatoday: <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/SMC/194754>.
- Hausman, C., Benoit, P., & O'Donnell, B. L. (1996). *Modern Radio Production*. USA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Hermida A., Fletcher F., Korell D., & Logan D. (2012). Share, like, recommend: Decoding the social media news consumer. *Journalism Studies*, 13, 815–824.
- Hermida, A., & Thurman, N. (2007). *Comments please: How the British news media is struggling with user generated content*. Paper presented at the 8th International Symposium on Online Journalism, Austin, USA, 30-31 March 2007: Retrieved 4 July, 2016 from <http://online.journalism.utexas.edu/2007/papers/Hermida.pdf> (accessed 3/07/2016).
- Jacka, J.M., & Scott, P.R. (2011). *Auditing Social Media- A Governance and Risk Guide*. U.S.A: John Wiley and Sons.
- Junco, R., Heiberger, G., & Loken, E. (2011). The effect of Twitter on College Student Engagement and Grades. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 27, 119-132.
- Kaplan, A.M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons* 53 (1), 59-6.
- Karikari, K. (2000). *The Development of Community Media in English-Speaking West Africa*. In Boafo, K.S.T. (Ed). *Promoting Media in Africa*. UNESCO. PP.43-60.
- Keith, M. (2002). *Only Connect: A Cultural History of Broadcasting in the United States*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Kenix, L. J. (2008). Framing science: Climate change in the mainstream and alternative news of New Zealand. *Political Science*, 60(1), 117-132

- Kern, J. (2008). *Sound Reporting: The NPR Guide to Audio Journalism and Production*. USA: The University of Chicago Press.
- Kinsella, S., Passant, A., & Breslin, G. J. (2011). *Top Classification in Social Media Using Metadata from Hyperlinked Objects*. European Conference on Information Retrieval, 201-206.
- Knight, S., & Cook, C. (2013). *Social Media for Journalists: Principles and Practice*. London: Sage.
- Knupfer, N. N., & McLellan, H. (1996). *Descriptive research methodologies*. In D. H. Jonassen (Ed.), *Handbook of research for educational communications and technology* (1196–1212). New York: Macmillan.
- Kozinets, R.V. (2002). The field behind the screen: Using ethnography for marketing research in online communities, *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39:61-72.
- Kreuger, W.L., & Neuman, W.L. (2006). *Social Work Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Applications*. Toronto: Pearson.
- Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. London: Sage.
- Kuyucu, M. (2014). From Analog to Digital Radio Management: The New Radio and New Media. *Online Journal of Communication and Media Technologies*, 4 (4).
- Kwafo, J. O. (2015). *“Facebook” in Organizational Public Relations Practice* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Ghana).
- LaForest, J., Bouchard, L. M., & Maurice, P. (2009). *Guide to organizing semi-structured interviews with key informant: safety diagnosis tool kit for local communities*. Institute national de santé publique Québec.
- Laird, S. (2012). *How Social Media Is Taking Over the News Industry [INFOGRAPHIC]*. Mashable. Retrieved 30 June 2016, from <http://mashable.com/2012/04/18/social-media-and-the-news/#yuPbWsZb6ZqD>
- Lamprey, L.R. (2009). *Perceptions of Peace FM’s Talk Show “Wo Haw Ne Sen”*. (Unpublished Master’s Thesis): University of Ghana, Legon.
- Lasorsa, D. L., Lewis, S. C., & Holton, A. E. (2011). Normalizing Twitter: Journalism Practice in an Emerging Communication Space. *Journalism Studies*, 13(1), 19–36.

- Levenshus, B. A. (2007). *Public Radio's Social Media Experiments: Risk, Opportunity, Challenge*. A Future of Public Media Project: Funded by the Ford Foundation.
- Lind, M., & Zmund, R. (1995). Improving Interorganisational Effectiveness through Voice mail facilitation of peer-to-peer relationships. *Organisational Science*, 6(4), 445-46.
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2002). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (2nd Ed.). London: Sage Publications Inc.
- Littlejohn, S., & Foss, A.K. (2009). *Encyclopaedia of Communication Theory*. London: Sage Publications.
- Lovink, G. (2011). *Networks without a cause: A critique of social media*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Lysak, S., Cremedas, M., & Wolf, J. (2012). Facebook and Twitter in the newsroom: How and why local television news is getting social with viewers? *Electronic News*, 6(4), 187-207.
- Mabweazara, H. M. (2011). *The Internet in the Print Newsroom: Trends, Practices and Emerging Cultures in Zimbabwe*. In: *Making Online News Newsroom Ethnographies in the Second Decade of Internet Journalism*, Domingo, D & Paterson, C. (Eds). 57–69. New York: Peter Lang.
- Mackay, H., & Gillespie, G. (1992). *Extending the Social Shaping of Technology Approach: Ideology and Appropriation*. *Social Studies of Science* 22, 685–716. Retrieved July 14, 2017 from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280914790\\_Technology-push\\_market\\_demand\\_and\\_the\\_missing\\_safety-pull\\_A\\_case\\_study\\_of\\_American\\_Airlines\\_Flight\\_587](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280914790_Technology-push_market_demand_and_the_missing_safety-pull_A_case_study_of_American_Airlines_Flight_587)
- Mandiberg, M. (2012). *Introduction*. In *The Social Media Reader* (Ed). Mandiberg, M. (1-10). New York: New York University Press.
- Marcus, G. E. (1995). Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-sited Ethnography. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24:95–117.
- Marks, D., & Yardley, L. (2004). *Research methods for clinical and health psychology*. London: Sage.
- McCracken, G. (1998). *The Long Interview*. London: Sage.
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (2001). *Research in Education. A Conceptual Introduction*. (5th Ed.). New York: Longman.

- Media Sustainability Index (2006/07). *The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Africa*. Washington DC: International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX).
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mogalakwe, M. (2006). The use of documentary research methods in social research. *African Sociological Review*, *10* (1) 221-230.
- Moritz, B. (2010). *The social newsroom: Social media and the evolution of journalists' routines*. Retrieved on December 05, 2016 from <http://www.scribd.com/doc/102441210/The-social-newsroom-Social-media-and-the-evolution-of-journalists-routines>
- Moyo, L. (2009). *Repression, Propaganda, and Digital Resistance: New Media and Democracy in Zimbabwe*. In Mudhai, O. F., Tettey, W.J. & Banda, F. (Eds.) *African Media and the Digital Public Sphere*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nartey, A. T. (2013). *Campus Radio and Educational Broadcasting: A Study of ATL FM and EAGLE FM in Cape Coast*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis), University of Ghana, Legon.
- National Communications Authority (2016). *Mobile data subscription for January, 2016*. Retrieved on May 24, 2014 from <http://www.nca.org.gh/73/34/News.html?item=365>.
- Nations, D. (2016). *What is Social Media? Explaining the Big Trend*. Retrieved 11 November 2016, from <http://lifewire.com/what-is-social-media-explaining-the-big-trend-3486616>
- Newman, N. (2011). *Mainstream media and the distribution of news in the age of social discovery: How social media are changing the production, distribution and discovery of news and further disrupting the business models of mainstream media companies*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism Report. Retrieved on June 30, 2016 from [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/Working\\_Papers/Mainstream\\_media\\_and\\_the\\_distribution\\_of\\_news\\_.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/fileadmin/documents/Publications/Working_Papers/Mainstream_media_and_the_distribution_of_news_.pdf)
- Newman, N., Dutton, H. W., & Blank, G. (2012). Social Media in the Changing Ecology of News: The Fourth and Fifth Estates in Britain. *International Journal of Internet Science*, *7*(1), 6-22.
- Nworgu, B., G. (2006). *Educational Research; Basic Issues and Methodology*. Nigeria: Wisdom Publishers Limited.
- Nyavor, K.M.G. (2010). *Impact of Akan Radio News Presentation on the Audience of Adom FM*. (Unpublished Degree Thesis): Ghana Institute of Journalism.

- Odum-Sackey, B. (2015). *Identity Construction of Celebrities on Facebook: A study of selected Ghanaian artistes*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Education, Winneba.
- Ofcom (2013). *Radio: The Listeners' Perspective*. A Research Report for Ofcom: UK. Retrieved November 14, 2016 from [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/74712/listeners-perspective.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0021/74712/listeners-perspective.pdf)
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research. *The Qualitative Report*, (12): 281-316.
- Orb, A., Eisenhauer, L., & Wynaden, D. (2001). Ethics in Qualitative Research. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 33:1, 93-96.
- Overdijk, M., & Diggelen, W. van (2006). *Technology Appropriation in Face-to-Face Collaborative Learning*. In E. Tomadaki, & P. Scott (Eds.), *Innovative Approaches for Learning and Knowledge Sharing, EC-TEL 2006 Workshops Proceedings* (89-96).
- Palmquist, M. (2005). *Designing Writing*. London: Macmillan.
- Parahoo K. (1997). *Nursing Research: Principles, Process and Issues*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
- Payne, G., & Payne, J. (2004). *Key concepts in social research*. Sage.
- Pleil, T., & Zerfass, A. (2007). *Internet and Social Software in Corporate Communications*: In Piwinger, M. & Zerfass, A. *Handbook of Corporate Communications*, Gabler, Wiesbaden. P.511-534 (Eds).
- Polit, D., & Hungler, B. (2004). *Nursing Research, Principles and Methods*. Philadelphia, Lippincourt.
- Pugh, L. J. (2010). *A Qualitative Study of the Facebook Social Network: The Desire to Influence, Associate and Construct a Representative and Ideal Identity*. California State University, Long Beach.
- Quarm, A.P. (2016). *Integrated Science for West African Senior High Schools* (Revised Ed.). Kumasi: Prof-Quarm Publications Limited.
- Radio.com.gh. (2016). *Citi FM online*. [Online] Radio.com.gh. Available at: <http://www.radio.com.gh/citi-fm/> [Accessed 29 Nov. 2016].
- Rajendran, L., & Thesinghraj, P. (2014). The Impact of New Media on Traditional Media. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research*, 22 (4), 609-616.

- Rauniar, R., Rawski, G., Yang, J., & Johnson, B. (2012). Technology acceptance model (TAM) and social media usage: An Empirical Study on Facebook. *Journal of Enterprise Information Management*, 27 (1): 6-40.
- Ritholz, B. (2010). *History of Social Media*. Retrieved November 22, 2016 from <http://ritholtz.com/2010/12/history-of-social-media/>
- Robichaud, D. (2012). *Radio News and Social Media*. Floodlight.ca. Retrieved on November, 22 from <http://www.floodlight.ca/2016/11/22/radio-news-and-social-media/>. Weblog.
- Robinson, R. S. (1994). *Investigating Channel One: a case study report*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Rogers, E. M. (2003). *Diffusion of Innovations* (5th Ed.). New York: The Free Press.
- Rooke, B. (2012). *Campus/community radio in Canada: linking listeners to broadcasters with web 2.0 technologies*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis): University of Guelph.
- Safo, A. (2005). *Implications of Privatisation of Radio and Television in Ghana*. (Unpublished Diploma Thesis): Ghana Institute of Journalism.
- Sambrook, R. (2005). *Citizen Journalism and the BBC*. Harvard: Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University. Retrieved from <http://www.nieman.harvard.edu/reportsitem.aspx?id=100542>
- Sampford, M. R. (1960). *An Introduction to Sampling Theory*. Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd.
- Scannel, P. (2010). *The Ontology of Radio*. In: O'Neill, B., Ala-Fossi, M. Jauret, P., Lax, S., Nyre, J. & Shaw, H. (Ed). *Digital Radio in Europe*, p.9-16. Bristol: Intellect.
- Schaefer, R. (2004). *Sociology: a Brief Introduction* (5th Ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Schuurman, D., Courtois, C., & De Marez, L. (2011). New Media Adoption and Usage among Flemish Youngsters. *Telematics and Informatics*, 28 (1): 77-85.
- Schwandt, T.A. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Scolari, A. C. (2009). Mapping Conversations about New Media: the Theoretical Field of Digital Communication. *Sage Journal of New Media and Society*, 11(6), 943-964.
- Sey, A. (2011). New Media Practices in Ghana. *International Journal of Communication*, 5 (380-405).

- Singer, J., Hermida, A. Domingo, D., Heinonen, A., Paulussen, S., Quandt, T., Reich, Z., & Vujovic, M. (2011). *Participatory Journalism: Guarding Open Gates of Online Newspapers*. West-Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Social Media Index Report. (2016) (1st ed., pp. 2-17). Accra. Retrieved 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016 from <http://penplusbytes.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Social-Media-Index-Report-February-2016-1.pdf>. Html.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.
- Starkey, G. (2008). *The Importance of Radio Journalism*, London: Sage.
- Starkey, G. (2008). *The Quiet Revolution: DAB and the Switchover to Digital Radio in the United Kingdom*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Statista. (2016). Social Media Statistics and Facts. Retrieved July 3, 2016 from: <https://www.statista.com/topics/1164/social-networks/>
- Stelzner, M. (2009). *Social Media vs. Social Networking: What's the difference?* Retrieved July 3, 2016, from examiner: <http://www.examiner.com/networking-in-national/social-media-vs-social-networking-what-s-the-difference>.
- Sweis, F. R., & Baslan, D. (2013). *Mapping Digital Media: Jordan*. A Report by the Open Society Foundation.
- Tacchi, J. (2005). *Radio and New Media Technologies: Making Technological Change Socially Effective and Culturally Empowering*. In Healy, Siann & Berryman, Bruce & Goodman (Eds). *Proceedings in the World: Radio Conference 2005*, Melbourne, Australia.
- Terranova, T., & Donovan, J. (2013). *Occupy Social Networks: The Paradoxes of Corporate Social Media for Networked Social Movements* (Ed). In "Unlike Us" reader: *Social Media Monopolies and their alternatives*. Lovink, G. & Rasch, M. 296-311. Amsterdam: Institute of Network Cultures.
- Thomas, P. Y. (2010) *Towards developing a web-based blended learning environment at the University of Botswana*. Pretoria: University of South Africa.
- Weinstein, J., & Ventres, W. (2000). Mini-ethnography: Meaningful Exploration Made Easy. *Journal of Family Medicine*, 32 (9): 600-602.
- Wertsch, J. V. (1998). *Mind as action*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Wildemuth, B. M., & Zhang, Y. (2009). *Qualitative analysis of content*. In B. Wildemuth (Ed.), *Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science* (pp.308-319). Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.
- Yeboah, K. (2016). *A Look at How Well Ghana's Media Houses Are Using Social Media · Global Voices*. *Global Voices*. Retrieved 23 November 2016, from <https://globalvoices.org/2016/03/05/a-look-at-how-well-ghanas-media-houses-are-using-social-media/>
- Yeou, M. (2015). An Investigation of Students' Acceptance of Moodle in a Blended Learning Setting Using Technology Acceptance Model. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, 44(3) 300–318.
- Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). London: Sage.
- Zoellner, A., & Lax, S. (2015). On-Air and Online: Social Media and Local Production in UK. *Medien Journal* 2, 5-18.





## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I

#### Interview Guide

The researcher is a graduate student at the University of Education, Winneba, pursuing a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) Degree in Communication and Media Studies. In fulfillment of the requirements of the course, the researcher is undertaking a study on the topic *Social Media and Radio News Production: A Study of Selected Radio Stations in Accra*. Kindly assist by answering the following questions as candidly as possible. Confidentiality of your responses is assured as the study is strictly for academic purposes.

#### NEWS GATHERING & SOURCING

1. How long have you been active on social media?
2. Do you source stories from social media? How do you integrate such sources into news production?
3. Are your journalists encouraged to use the social media in gathering and sourcing news?
4. Have your stories ever been sourced or shared by others on social media?
5. Do you think social media improves newsgathering and news reporting?
6. (a) Has social media helped your outfit to connect with potential news sources and maintain a repertoire of them?  
(b) How have these sources impacted on your news production?
7. Has social media helped in generating leads for stories?  
(b) How do you incorporate such leads into your news production processes?

## NEWS DISSEMINATION

1. Do you integrate social media in news broadcasts? How do you do that?
2. Has social media influenced newsroom reporting of events?
3. Has social media helped in locating potential interviewees for news broadcasts? In what ways do you integrate them in your news broadcasts?
4. What is the main source of news dissemination on social media?
5. What kind of stories do you normally post on social media?
6. (a) Do you integrate multimedia features and applications into social media news dissemination processes?  
(b) How has that impacted on your news dissemination process?
7. (a) Do you integrate changing online trends in news production?  
(b) Can you provide instances where you have incorporated such trends in news dissemination? Kindly explain how this has impacted news production.
8. Have you capitalized on the strengths of social media for live events? How has that helped in news dissemination?

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT/INTERACTIVITY

1. Do you engage listeners through social media? How do you do it or not?
2. Has social media improved interactivity with radio news listeners? How do you do it or not?
3. (a) Are there in-house policies/strategies engaging social media fans before, during and after news broadcasts?  
(b) What are these policies or strategies and how have they helped in news production?

4. (a) Has your outfit amended certain features on your social media page aimed at improving interactivity with fans?  
(b) How has that helped in the news production process?
5. (a) Do social media fans make recommendations and inputs into your news production process?  
(b) Do you respond to such inputs and how have they helped in news production?

#### OTHER ISSUES

1. (a) Is your outfit struggling with what information to use on social media?
2. Do you trust social media as a news source? How so?
3. Is there a policy on how news sources on social media should be managed?
4. Is there a newsroom policy on who is responsible for content posted on social media?
5. Do you think social media affects journalistic standards?
6. Do you think social media disrupts newsroom routines or your traditional news production processes?

Thank you.

**APPENDIX II**

**CYBER ETHNOGRAPHY LOG SHEET**

Radio Station: ..... Social Media Platform.....

Date/ Time	Post type Breaking news; News; News highlights; News updates; opinion polls; live updates	Description/Content Texts & picture; video and texts; video only; text, video and picture; texts only etc.	Post source Shared from website; from Facebook/Twitter; repost etc.	Interactivity/Engagement Reshares; comments; replies/retweets; hashtags etc.	Memo Post title Observations