AN ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT AND CONTEXT IN WHICH RADIO
JOURNALISTS EMPLOY SOCIAL MEDIA TO GATHER NEWS CONTENT: A
CASE STUDY OF EASY FM AND RADIO MAISHA

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BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as university supervisor.

1. Mr. Isaac Mutwiri.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving wife Masika Pendoh, your accommodation and understanding has been more than encouraging during my studies and carrying out this research. To my parents; thanks for teaching me the virtue of hard work and resilience.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APA	American Psychological Association
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CBD	Central Business District
CCK	Communications Commission of Kenya
DM	Direct Message
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FM	Frequency Modulation
ICC	International Criminal Court
1CT	Information and Communication Technology
IMS	Instant Messaging Services
IT	Information Technology
MCK	Media Council of Kenya
NMG	Nation Media Group
PDS	Publishers Distribution Services
SGL	Standard Group Limited
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TV	Television
UGC	User Generated Content
URL	Uniform Resource Locator
US	United States (of America)

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OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Breaking News: These are news events that are unexpected and are currently developing or occurring. An example is a plane crash or building collapsing. Breaking news can also refer to news that occurs outside a radio's bulletin time or publication time.

Inaccurate information: This is communication that is *not correct,* lacks truth and fact.

Incomplete information: Partial communication about a story which on its own cannot answer a majority of the basic journalistic questions of the 5Ws (who, what, where, why, when).

Incredible information: A statement that cannot be *believed* for lack of fact or for other error of omission or commission

Misleading information: This is information that is *false* and directs to a conclusion that is not correct sent either intentionally or unintentional

Prosumer: A combination of two words, *producer* and *consumer,* refers to an audience who not only consume content but also participate in the origination and creation of such content

Social media: A terminology is used to refer to numerous internet based sites where people can communicate in a two-way format over the World Wide Web

Story: News article or an event or material that produces such a report

Twitterview: It is an interview conducted on the internet twitter followed by a predetermined hastag (//followed by an agreed phrase) the ease of following the interviewer, interviewee and other followers

ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate the extent to which radio journalists use social media to gather news content. It focused on the contexts under which social media are preferred or are used in addition to traditional methods of gathering news. It also examined which social media sites radio journalists use and for what purpose when gathering news content. The study was done at two commercial radio stations belonging to two big multimedia organisations in Kenya; Easy FM (Nation Media Group) and Radio Maisha.

Using a mixed method design (combining quantitative and qualitative) the research reveals that a majority of radio journalists uses social media to gather news content. This they do through research, contacting sources, sending information from the field to the office and verification of information among other uses. The microblogging site twitter is the most used social medium forgathering news content by radio journalists.

The study also found out that journalists employ social media in situations where a potential news story is very far from their locality. In such instances they depend on eyewitnesses or someone they can believe to relay the information to them until one of them around that particular area gets the story. Social media are also used when the story is considered not big enough to warrant follow up for subsequent bulletins, for instance, to get traffic updates. Social media are used for gathering both soft and hard news in equal measure.

Among the concerns that journalists have as a result of using social media in gathering news is that they are breeding a clique of lazy journalists. That some in the profession are no longer doing their own effort to verify information, instead, they rely on social media updates from those who have decided to take the extra mile to ascertain any story.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction and Background

Social media is a relatively recent development in the trends of mass communication. Even the terminology social media is as recent as 2005 (Katri Lietsala, 2008). The terminology is used to refer to numerous Internet based sites where people can communicate in a two-way format over the World Wide Web. Social Media is a result of Web 2.0 development which replaced static websites where viewers were restricted to passive viewing with sites that allow citizens to create, share and distribute their own content (Newman, 2010). Web 2.0 is a website that doesn't just give information, but interacts with the user while giving information. This interaction can be as simple as asking for the user's comments or letting them vote on an article, or it can be as complex as on *Flixsler* recommending movies based on the ratings of other people with similar interests (Mutwiri, 2011). In other words, Web 2.0 is an advancement of Web 1.0 which was a form of web technology (as a single global information space) whose main characteristic was connecting people with information. In Web 1.0 a relatively small number of people published and most browsed (Anderson, 2007).

According to Katri Lietsala (2008), social media is a term used to describe web services that receive most of the content from users or that aggregate content from other sites as feeds. Aggregation is where a sites gathers content of similar substance and places them in a manner that people looking for content of a similar nature to what has been gatherd can easily find it. In Kenya an example of an aggregator is www.kenyamoia.com which collects and displays videos and news links from Kenya media organisations. On the other hand a feed is regular update from a content provider. Keith Gerr (2010) posits that social media aggregation is the consolidation of inbound/outbound web-based feeds into a dashboard view for the purpose of creating efficiencies in monitoring, dialoguing, sharing, collaborating and measuring.

In social media, any participant can become a producer but many people see themeselves as contributors in a community. Monetorty incentives are not mandatory for participats therefore sharing is voluntary. Examples of social media include facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Fliker, Wikipedia, MySpace among others. Journalists use social media for content creation, publishing, content sharing and social networking.

Social media are being used in almost all spheres of human life. However, the rate of adoption for social media is something that has not been seen in previous developments of

mass communication. It took 38 years for radio to have 50 million users, but it took Facebook less than four years (Firstbrook & Wollan, 2011).

Radio is still the most accessible tool of mass communication in Kenya with conservative figures showing that there are more than 7.5 million with a radio set reaching about 16.7 million people (Mbeke, 2010). With the number of internet users in the country pegged at 17.38 million users (CCK, 2012) the combination of radio and internet can have a major impact in mass communication. Though the advent of internet and convergence has been around for over a decade, previous studies have shown that even the most ambitious radio stations had an online presence that was barely a fraction of the reach and relevance of their broadcast service. Station web sites have often acted as informational supplements to broadcast offerings (Levenshus, 2007). Suffice is to say that attempts by radio stations to adopt social media have been to engage their audiences mostly to gather feedback but not as a complementary tool for gathering news.

Despite that, radio has continued to perform various functions in mass communication including informing, educating, and entertaining. To continue fulfilling these functions radio journalists too have adopted social media for their use.

The impact of social media on radio news has been evident as either direct or indirect source of information[1], or source of material which is filtered for mass audience. Some times radio journalists rebroadcast or retransmit content sourced from social media with serious consequences[2] (Business Today, 2012). A freelance journalist and a blogger. Dennis Itumbi, who runs a blog http://www.dennisitumbi.com, had reported on his Twitter account that a minister had died, the blogger had to apologize after the Government Spokesman refuted those claims[3]. Itumbi also found himself in trouble over allegations that he 'hacked the

[1] On February 19, 2012 Vice President Kalonzo Musyoka through his twitter account @skmusyoka denied having written to President Kibaki requesting him to sack the Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs Mutula Kilonzo. Kenyan media outlets picked the tweet and made a story out of it.

[1] An online magazine businesstoday.co.ke claimed that after NTV published through its facebook and twitter accounts the 'death' of former cabinet minister Njenga Karume, some 'news-hungry" media channels picked the story and rebroadcasted. It turned out the story was not true Njenga Karume was still alive. He died twenty days later.

[3] Dennis Ole Itumbi on February 20, 2012 tweeted: BREAKING: John Michuki dies in United Kingdom. In response the Government Spokesman Alfred Mutua issued a statement saying the minister was not dead

International Criminal Court's (ICC) website and published information on his blog. The blogger spent a weekend in police custody and was questioned over allegations of illegally accessing confidential, privileged and classified information and publishing it (Ombati, 2012).

Though social media influences many discussions that occur on the interactive web. recent studies have indicated that mainstream media content is a key contributor to discussion occurring in the social media (Newman. 2011). Other than using social media as source of their content, journalists have been able to attract audiences to themselves other than those of their parent brands. This aspect raises the question as to whether journalists still focus on their organization's audiences or whether they tailor their content for their own audiences. Several journalists run their own blogs, twitter and Facebook accounts which sometimes have more followers and likes than those of their parent organization. For example a former NTV journalist Larry Madowo had more followers on twitter than those of a programme he hosted.[4]

This trend is already causing a lot of research interest on its probable disruptive effects on media processes and structures (Harper, 2010). Though media houses have realised that social media are both a curse and blessing, the dificult task lies on how to tilt the balance towards more of a blessing. Newman, (2009) notes that there are three reasons why mainstream media organisations are taking social media seriously:

Telling better stories: That there is always someone out there with more knowledge than what the media house has. In this regard media organisations are involved in crowd sourcing to mine videos, pictures, audio and ideas that are with someone else outside the neswroom.

Making better relationships: that engaged audiences are more useful, they feel more appreciated and would spend more time on a particular content or outlet. In so doing they

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though he was hospitalized in Nairobi, "Sun 19th he was admitted at Aga Khan Hospital where he is undergoing medical procedures and is responding well to treatment." Read Mutua's statement. The journalist was bashed by audiences and colleagues in the social media to the point that he had to issue an apology. The apology entitled My Apology over Social Media Update on Michuki was published on the Jackalnews blog.

(http://theiackalnews.com/media-news/news-media/1660-exclusive-iackal-news-unearths-dennis-itumbis-hilarious-apology-over-iohn-michukis-death)

[4] As of April 4, 2012 @NTVPMLIVE had 1,540 followers compared to @LarryMadowo which had 28,269

become an asset for the organisation in terms of advertising and also should there be need to promote or sell another product from the same organisation.

Social media are also important in getting new audiences who were hitherto difficult to reach as well as reconnect with former loyalties (Newman. 2009).

Though media organisations are increasingly investing to harness social media (through employment of staff dedicated to online and social media related output and subscribing to social media platforms), the organisations are cautious on their dealings with social media. For instance, a Nation Media Group Guidelines on Social Media use discourages the organisation's journalists from publishing news items on their social media platforms unless the same has been approved and published on the organisation's outlet (Nation Media Group, 2012).

Traditionally radio journalists gathered news by pursuing news sources physically or through other means of communication other than internet tools. Garrison (1999) notes that among traditional tools that journalists rely on to gather news include telephones, telegraphs and typewriters. Moreover, before access to the Internet and mobile phones was possible, journalists attained most of their ideas for news stories from events while ideas for self-generated stories often developed in the field and by face to face conversations with sources, however, technology has influenced the way journalists are getting ideas (Karlsen, 2010). Despite that, traditional techniques that are necessary for any radio journalist include the ability to write clear, easily understood language, and a knack of summarizing complicated situations (Paul Chantler, 2003). The radio journalist collects audio or actuality, write stories and think up new angles.

Though social media has changed the way journalists gather news, the principles of journalism does not change. A guideline for Nation Media Group Journalist states that;

Journalists using social media sites as a source of news should apply the same journalistic tests as they would to any other method of newsgathering. A tweet is no more reliable as a source of news than a phone tip-off to the newsroom; a blog is no more reliable than an overheard conversation (Nation Media Group, 2012).

Radio journalists depend on eyewitnesses as sources of their stories, for instance survivors of a road accident may write on their Facebook wall or tweet about the accident. The journalist would then verify the information with relevant authorities and cross check with other sources, (often a correspondent closest to the scene). This relationship however, will not eliminate the need for journalists in the society. Harper (2010) says eyewitnesses will become

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reporters, but the world will still need "traditional" journalists to go in and verify the facts. As this happens the role of journalists will change from primarily disseminating information to truth dissemination. This of course comes after rigorous verification.

Media organizations are known to cover news that helps them generate revenue. Moreover, at a time of acute pressure on finances news organizations do not have enough resources to cover every event. Social media allows coverage of events that may not have been covered. For instance, not-so-serious accidents that happen on roads that are less used will get mentioned by users of such roads or by the Kenya Red Cross Society who respond to offer rescue services. Media houses use such alerts for their news briefs or as content for their social media outlets.[5]   Moreover, Radio Journalists use Social media and other internet based tools such as search engines to develop backgrounds for a story they are about to report on. Developing a personal understanding of an issue is crucial to support further information seeking and also to provide readers with an informed interpretation of events (Attfield, 2003). Social media is also thought to affect the angle which a journalist gives their story. An angle is the perspective that dominates a story, Dowell (2003) writes that an angle is a "thrust" or "driving force" of an assignment - the new "twist" or "hook" that directs the story. This study presumes that radio journalists change their angles to reflect latest development from news sources available to them via social media or so that their stories can look more original and different from other news outlets that would have already promoted their story through social media. Attfield (2003) argues that an angle must represent some proposition that the readership is unlikely to have encountered previously.

In using Social Media as a source of content, a key task for a radio journalist would be on how to select a credible source. Though social media provides a wide range of information, it is expected that journalists would use their professional judgment to choose the correct source. For instance, some stories may call for identifying experts who can speak authoritatively to a topic or issue such as constitutional reforms. Such sources are known as *cognitive authorities* (Diakopoulos, 2012). Other stories my just require an eyewitness account, for example during a fire incidence that is just happening. Eyewitnesses do not posses any special authority aside from a claim to have witnessed some event first hand and an ability to report on an event using their own perceptions of the world. A media manager in

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[5] April 21, 2012 Capital FM through their twitter account @CapitalFM_Kenya posted what Red Cross (SKenyaRedCross had posted on their twitter about an accident "ttAlert Accident reported along Mombasa Road, Emergency Medical Services Paramedics stabilising the victim..."

Kenya acknowledges that the public including people who have no journalistic training are increasingly being the ones who have first hand information about an event thus the major concern for media managers is to verify the stories to ensure accuracy and maintain their organisation's reputation (Karongo, 2012).

This paper investigated the extent to which radio journalists use social media in news gathering. It will also investigated whether radio journalists who rely on social media for their news content are those that deal with *soft news* for instance entertainment and celebrity as opposed to *hard news* such as politics, crime, and business.

1.2 Problem Statement

For decades radio journalists have depended on press briefings, face to face interviews and eye witnessing as major ways of getting news content. However, since the advent of social media, the ways of gathering news are changing.

Radio journalists have begun using social media as part of their day to day mode of collecting news. For instance, journalists no longer solely depend on face to face interviews with sources; this can now happen via social media tools such as Skype. It is also no longer compulsory for a journalist to be the actual witness of an event in order to report; such actual happenings could be captured by following almost instantaneous postings and comments from users of platforms such as twitter, Facebook and Google +.

This study therefore sought to probe the extent to which radio journalists use social media to gather news content and in what context. In doing that it intended to expose the challenges radio journalists experience when gathering news content from social media and whether radio stations have guidelines to govern the use of social media to gather news content.

The study also looked at how social media is affecting the role of journalists as gatekeepers of information getting to the audience.

The research was conducted in a population of 16 journalists who work for Radio Maisha in Nairobi and 10 who work with Easy fm in Nairobi. The two stations were chosen for the sake of diversity; they belong to different media organisations in Kenya, therefore they have different styles of gathering and delivering news. Whereas Radio Maisha broadcasts in Kiswahili, Easy FM uses English. Radio Maisha belongs to the Standard Group while Easy FM is part of the Nation Media Group.

1.3 Study Objectives

1.3.1 General objective

To investigate the extent and context in which radio journalists use social media in news gathering.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To investigate how radio journalists use social media to get news content.
2. To determine which social media tools radio journalists mostly use to access news content.
3. To find out the context of use of social media by radio journalist in news gathering.
4. To find out the challenges of using social media to gather radio news.

1.4 Research Questions

1.4.1 General Research Questions

1. What is the extent and context in which radio journalists use social media as a tool for getting news content?
2. Which social media tools are commonly used amongst different cadres of radio journalists?

1.4.2 Specific Research Questions

1. How do radio journalists use social media for gathering news content?
2. Under what circumstances do radio journalists rely on social media to gather news content?
3. What are the guidelines that govern radio news gathering through social media?

1.5 Justification

Social media are a new trend in the development of mass communication. Though it is recognized that social media have become a major source of news for both the general public and journalists (Nation Media Group, 2012) the extent to which the final news output depends on them is still unclear. This study therefore sought to show exactly the extent to which radio journalists depend on social media and for what news, how they do that, when they do it and the challenges of integrating social media as part of techniques of curetting news.

Operations of media organisations are governed by self imposed rules in the form of style guides and those by regulators such as the MCK. and CCK. However, since the usage of social media to gather news is relatively new, the study sought to point out whether there already guidelines for such usage.

Easy FM and Radio Maisha were chosen because they are stations whose parent organisations are leading multimedia outlets and presumably guided by varied editorial policies.

To increase credibility of stories, radio stations play voices of their news sources. The challenge to stay ahead of the pack has made radio journalists adopt different techniques of gathering content (including audio) among them the use of social media.
This study therefore aimed at developing a clear picture of how radio journalists use social media to get news content and how such usage can be enhanced to ensure that radio retains its relevance in bringing useful and trustworthy news.
It is intended that policy makers and managers will have sufficient information that can guide their decisions in dealing with maters of journalistic ethics, and the best practices in adopting social media as tools for gathering news content.

1.6 Limitations
The scope of this study was restricted to radio journalists in the stations in which it was carried out. For the sake of this study, journalists were defined as those whose daily duties entail the collection, processing and dissemination of news content. They are the reporters, editors and news readers. However, the use of social media for news content may not be limited to reporters, editors, and anchors. Social media could also be a source of newsworthy content to continuity presenters and comedians in the stations.

Focusing on radio alone definitely did not capture all ways in which journalists in other mass communication platforms use social media as tools for gathering news content.

Considering that by its very nature social media is very dynamic (what is in use today may be out of use tomorrow) it is possible that some social media that were assessed in this study may not be applicable in other future studies hence hampering longitudinal research where

such need may arise. Prior to 2008 MySpace was the most used social media internationally until it was overtaken by Facebook (Hu, 2011). Similarly a tool that could be so much used by radio journalists to gather news content today could be insignificant in the future.

Done among Radio Maisha and Easy FM staff in Nairobi only, the study is bound to be very specific to these stations and may not be replicated in other radio stations or even the stations journalist in other towns other than Nairobi.

It was also amazing to discover that journalist whose key fodder for news is asking for information from others were reluctant to offer in formation. Getting permission to conduct the survey was not automatic after delivering an introduction letter from the university. The researcher had to use personal rapport with those in authority in order to get permission and the required information. Having journalists fill in the questionnaire which was sent by SurveyMonkey either as an email or a link was also involved some follow up both by phone and personal visit to the newsroom.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the definition of social media as given by various authors who have done work related to social media and the traditional media. It will also seek to establish what social media journalists use to gather news content, how they do it and under what context.

2.2 Defining Social Media

The term social media is comprised of two words each of which if defined alone has different meanings. *Social* refers to the instinctual needs that human beings have to connect with other humans, the need to be around and be included in groups of similar like-minded people. *Media* on the other hand refers to tools used to make such connections. Such tools can be drums, bells, the written word, the telegraph, the telephone, radio, television, e-mail, websites, photographs, audio, video, mobile phones, or text messaging. (Hu, 2011). In one aspect social media therefore is a collective term for internet tools used for interactive communication. However, the terminology is so fluid that sometime it refers to an activity (a journalist blogging); sometimes to a software tool (Blogger or WordPress); sometimes to a platform (you can blog on Facebook).

The terminology has been criticized among media researchers who claim that it raises a metaphor that the traditional media has been somewhat unsocial (Lietsala, 2008).

Social media as an activity has brought about the aspect of User Generated Content (UGC) and User Driven Content. User Driven Content is where not all content is produced by the user but a great portion is sourced from the user and tailored to fit with what the users would like to know or see debated (Lietsala. 2008). In an ideal situation this is what should happen when radio journalists uses social media; as a tool to direct them to sources and a pointer towards what their audiences would like to know.

Presently many social media are free of charge to register on. There are several social media outlets that provide different services and target different audiences. Services offered by

Facebook, Twiner. MySpace. YouTube. and Linkedln, just to mention but a few are quite different.

There are six kinds of social media depending on what they do. There are those that are for content creation and publishing, social networking, content sharing, collaborative production, virtual worlds and add-ons.

1. Social networks

Though all social media sites are based on people's will to collaborate, there are some sites that concentrate on social networking giving people opportunity to spend time with existing social networks (Lietsala, 2008). Social networks have profiles that could be a virtual reflection of individuals and organisations. These sites allow people to build personal web pages and then connect with friends to share content and communication. The biggest social networks are MySpace, Facebook and Bebo (Mutwiri, 2011). Social networks show more of a users profile unlike content sharing sites would give more room for the content itself. Social networks such as Linkedln assist could assist journalists in being aware of change of contact information for people they are networked with. Since people publish personal "news" such as their location on social networks like Google+ and Facebook, such posts of prominent personalities can create news tip offs.

2. Blogs

Perhaps the best known form of social media, blogs is online journals, with entries appearing with the most recent first. According to (Lietsala, 2008) blogs have certain characteristics that make them different from other social media including; that blogs tends to be written with a personal conversational style, blogs have links and trackbacks services that make easy to insert links to other websites and sites for reference and further information. Blogs can also be subscribed to. A person who has subscribed to a blog gets an alert often via email when the author adds a new post. Blogging sites such as WordPress and Blogger allow for comments from readers. Some media organisations in Kenya among them Standard, Nation and Capital FM websites have blogs where their journalists write in a style that is somewhat different from how they would do news.

3. Wikis

These websites allow people to add content to or edit the information on them, acting as a communal document or database (Mutwiri, 2011). The best-known wiki is Wikipedia; the online encyclopaedia which has millions of articles is various international languages. A wiki website does not lose track of the different versions of a document even after update (Lietsala, 2008). Wikis are an example of collaborative sharing social media.

4. Podcasts

Podcast is a portmanteau of the words "iPod" and broadcast. This is because Apple's iPod was the first portable media for which podcasting scripts were developed. Podcast refers to audio or video files that are published on the internet and are available by subscription. Subscribers receive podcasts from internet and store or play them through their portable devices.

5. Forums

An online forum is a series of "bulletin/posting board" areas where people can discuss topics and connect to new people through the internet. It allows individuals to connect, share and explore ideas with communities all over the world. Forums are not live chats, but rather an area to leave a message and allow people to respond with their thoughts. Most forums are facilitated by "moderators" who help engage discussions, keep the topics on track and ensure that forum participants are respectful of each other (University of Calgary, 2010). Examples of forums in Kenya are http://nipate.com a site where discussion about politics, entertainment and sports among Kenyans within the country and the Diaspora go on and www.kictanet.or.ke a platform for people and institutions interested and involved in 1CT policy and regulation. Forums came about before the term "social media" and are mostly for online discussions often around specific topics and interests, such as politics, technology and sports.

6. Content communities

These are online communities which organise and share particular kinds of content. Though they look like social networks, since users have to register and have their own profiles, the sites focus on sharing particular type of content than niceties with friends (Lietsala, 2008). The most popular content communities tend to form around photos (*Flickr*), bookmarked

links (*delicio us)* and videos (*YouTube)* (Mutwiri, 2011). Others like *Dopplr* let people publish their travel plans. Content sharing sites helps participants to easily chop content into smaller pieces that makes consumption easier and available in multiple locations. For example a news clip from a broadcaster's bulletin can be uploaded on YouTube as oppose to the whole bulletin.

7. Microblogging

Microblogging is a combination of blogging and instant messaging. They allow users to create a short message of between 140 to 200 characters that is posted on their profile which gets broadcasted to their followers or friends instantly (Anamika, 2010). These messages or updates can be submitted by a variety of means, including text messaging, instant messaging, email, digital audio or video. The small amounts of content from microblogging can distributed through the web and mobile phone networks. *Twitter* is considered the leader in microblogging in many parts of the word save for china where *weibo* is. Others microblogging sites are *FriendFeed, Tumblr, Posterous* and *Plunk* among many more.

2.3 How Journalists Have Used Social media

Social media has been both a blessing and curse to the practice of journalism. Despite fears that it might erode the principals of journalism in telling stories, various media houses have embraced them, for instance global new agency Reuters has adopted the use of social media to generate content but with caution:

> "We are committed to aggressive journalism in all its forms, including in the field of computer-assisted reporting, but we draw the line at illegal behaviour" (Reuters, 2012).

The situation is not different for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) which over the years has diversified the use of social media from diseminating information to incooporate sourcing. In an assessment by one of the organisation's journalists, the use of social media is increasingly how BBC journalist gather news.

> "On one day in January (2012) nine minutes on BBC Newsline's twenty eight minute programme was the direct result of stories sourced via socila media" (Macauley, 2012).

Macauley elaborates how Facebook contributed to one of their stories in his blog:

> "An exclusive interview by Health Correspondent Marie-Louise Connoly with the family of a baby who had died from Pseudomonas infection came after the child's father posted on our page and we contacted him privately".

In Kenya the Standard Group which is the parent company of Radio Maisha, the usage of social media is governed by two policies: the groups Editorial Policy and the ICT Acceptable Use policy. Whereas the Editorial Policy giudes the conduct of journalists in collecting and diseminating content, the ICT Acceptable Use Policy states that users of ICTs "...must respect other's rights to privacy and freedom from intimidation, harassment and annoyance," (The Standard Group Limited, 2009). The organisation discourages unauthorized copying or communication of copyright protected material (such as music and videos), without the express or implied permission of its owner.

At Capital FM in Nairobi, communication by reporters to the newsroom via social media is also seen by audiences who follow the organisation's social media outputs.

The organisation's Editor is quoted as saying that they allow their reporters to tweet from the field and copy to the Capital FM *Twitter* handle (Karongo, 2012). This, in a bid to be ahead of other media houses whose guidelines require reporters to inform their respective offices before putting such information to the public domain.

Despite these varied use it is noted that social media does not mean the end of contact books, phone calls, and quiet conversation with key informants (Macauley, 2012).

For Reuters journalists, the guideline is to use information gotten from social media as a tip that allows the journalist to check out and report the information themselves in the regular way, quoting sources that are considered to be more solid. Content sourced from social media are declared so. Where the organisation has little information about a particular source, that too is declared to the audiences (Reuters, 2012).

Other ways already in use for sourcing content from social media include:

- Opening stories for comments and encouraging journalist to blog and converse with audiences
- Give people channels for providing content, for instance having a page within the organizations website where user generated content can be posted, and
- Hosting blogs (Lietsala. 2008. pp. 142-150).

2.4 When do Journalists use Social Media?

Journalists and media organisations that already employ social media in gathering news content do so in selected situations. Social media are depended more when gathering news through traditional methods (such as. face to face interviews, eye witnessing, press conferences) are hampered or not effective. This is especially true in countries or circumstances where the regular free flow of information is impeded (Reuters, 2012).

Journalists like being the first to tell of a newsworthy happening. This they do through breaking news, which are stories that are happening real- time or something that had not come to the public limelight (Diakopoulos, 2012). Social media is rapidly being taken as the first form for breaking news unlike previously when that duty lied on radio. Whereas this might seem more of a dissemination role of the social media, other journalists are likely to pick a cue and develop their stories from such breaking news. When the US Marines killed the then Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden in May I, 2011. the news first broke out on social media. Indeed a Pakistani IT consultant Sohaib Athar using his twitter handle @ReallyVirtual unkwowingly tweeted the attack blow by blow. However, due to time differences people in other parts of the world including Kenya slept through the drama on social media and came to learn of Bin Laden's death from traditional media. In such a situation (where people were asleep when the news was breaking on social media) the roles were reversed, the news was broken by mainstream outlets leaving digital and social media to fill in the gaps through the day. That is when the mainstream media work to verify, contextualize and amplify stories from social media (Newman, 2011).

2.5 Social media a boon or gloom?

Social media can help journalists do their job but could also harm their reputation and reflect unprofessionalism especially if what they collect from social media is later proven not to be genuine. This is the fate that befell media organisations and journalists who used gruesome pictures purporting to show the dead body of Osama bin Laden. The pictures were later proven to be falsified (Newman, 2011).

Regarding authentication Kenya's minisrty of Infromation and Communication permanet secretay Bitange Ndemo is quoted noting that social media are there to flag and give direction to traditional media. That news is disclosed in social media and the mainstream media are expected to clarify the issues — whether it is a complete fabrication or not (Dahir, 2012).

Another aspect of social media that determines how fruitful or useless to a journalist they can be lies on networking. Individuals create online profiles through which they can join other networks or interact with people more openly and with trust. However, (Lietsala, 2008) warns that people can pretend to be someone else or simulate reality using social media. This poses real threat for radio journalists who depend on social media for their news content. For instance, on twitter there are more than six accounts registered by people who purport to be Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki.[6] Any radio journalist who depends on such accounts as source of their news content will surely be misled.

A method that has been employed by other users to authenticate content gotten from social media is to categorize the accounts into *organization, journalist* and *ordinary individual accounts.* Features used for the classification include the user's network/structural features (such as the number of Twitter followers), activity features (such as frequency of posts and presence of URLs), interaction features (use *of Twitter* retweets, mention and reply functions that indicate interaction with other users), as well as semantic features (named entities mentioned by the user, and the topic distribution of their posts). For instance it would be reckless to believe that a statement on *Facebook* claiming that the ministry of internal

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[6] Unlike other accounts that declare they are parody those who purport to be the president do not issue direct indication that they are not. They include @MwaiKibaki, @KibakiMwai, @Emilio_Kibaki, @KibakiEmilio, @Kibalonzila and @kibakimoi all these account have followers some of who are journalist.

security has issued a curfew in Nairobi without seeing an accompanying URL to the ministry's official page.

This study therefore sought to verify how radio journalists who use social media for their news content classify who to network with and how to establish authenticity.

Social media can also spell doom to journalists if caught plagiarizing. One value that separates news from other writings or material aired on radio is its credibility; that it has to be believable and trusted. (Nation Media Group, 2008). Credibility is acquired through getting facts and figures right; these have to be sourced from reliable sources. However, sometimes due to the need to achieve this important value, journalists have plagiarized and infringed copyrights. This has led to copyright policy issues; a handbook for Journalists by Reuters says material that a journalist did not gather themselves should clearly attributed in stories to the source, including when that source is a rival organisation (Reuters, 2012). Similary, the Standard Group's ICT Acceptable use Policy forewarns journalists who may infringe on copyright protected content that such actions "violates the law and is contrary to SGL's standards of conduct and business practices," (The Standard Group Limited, 2009).

There are also concerns that because social media aggregates content sometimes from the same sources, there is likelihood of the same content being copied to multiple sources hence resulting into a monotonous repertoire. The task for radio journalists who uses social media to source news content would therefore be how to keep abreast with new happenings and avoid regurgitating to audiences what they have already accessed through the same social media.

Social media are not fully open as it may thought to be, someone who wants to use them must be registered unlike search engine which do not require someone to have an account (Lietsala, 2008). Further, users only communicate with those they know, for instance in *Facebook* only friends can share much or write on each other's wall, on twitter a user cannot write a Direct Message to someone they are not mutually following. This is therefore likely to hamper optimal gathering of news by radio journalists.

Previous studies have also pointed to language barriers, digital divide, media literacy, insufficient personal competencies, subjective views and personal agendas as some of the challenges that may prevent smooth collaboration between radio journalists and people who can be content sources.

2.6 Theoretical framework

2.6.1 Introduction

This section explains theories that informed the research question. The theories chosen were Gatekeeping and Uses and Gratification. To two had been settled on because gatekeeping explains how journalists sieve through information they publish whereas Uses and Gratifications theory provides concepts of how journalists can use social media when their role changes to be that of audiences.

2.6.2 Gatekeeping Theory

Gatekeeping theory was proposed by psychologist Kurt Lewin (1947) who argued that in human relationships there are various checkpoints that a message has to get clearance from before it reaches the intended audience. These checkpoints may either constrain or facilitate the passage of news items through the gatekeeping process (Cassidy, 2006). Those clearances are the gates and those who operate the clearances are the gate keepers. Over the years gatekeeping as a theory of mass communication has evolved and become more complex to include many elements of communication (Roberts, 2005).

Indeed (Cassidy, 2006) quotes one of modern times proponents of gatekeeping theory Pamela Shoemaker arguing that gatekeeping is a complex process that can be studied in five levels namely, individual, routine, organizational characteristics, extra-media and ideological. In this regard the theory informed this study in terms of the hierarchical levels at which journalists use social media to gather news (organisational characteristics). The levels of gate keeping in the studied included reporters, editors, and news readers.

2.6.3 Gatekeeping and social media

From literature review it can be concluded that individual perceptions and journalistic routines affect whether a potential content would be considered newsworthy or not. Though previous studies have been done on traditional media, this study interrogated its finding in

line with those before to determine if indeed individual and commonly held routines affect how journalists treat potential content from social media.

Several studies have been done about gatekeeping with outcomes being similar. Cassidy (2006) reports that a study by David Manning White and another by Glen Bleske on the effects of gatekeeping on journalism found out that an editor's decisions were "highly subjective and based on the gatekeeper's own set of experiences, attitudes and expectations of what constitutes news". In this regard this study will probe how individual journalist's factors such as professional background, attitudes, values and beliefs contribute to how they gather or rather gate-keep content from social media.

Another study also concluded that gatekeeping is a process based on forces operating on more than just the individual level of analysis and suggests that routine level forces also play a prominent role in journalistic decision making. According to Cassidy (2006), routine forces are crucial factors which determine how journalists construe the world of activities they confront. Routines are based on professional norms (norms are different from ethics of journalism; norms refer to commonly held views in the news industry on whether a story is newsworthy or not).

Acknowledging Further the impact of routine, Cassidy (2006), argues that:

> Official sources are the ones used most frequently in news reports. This is because the power structure of society is perceived by journalists to be the legitimate site for gathering news. Similarly, journalists also routinely use journalists from media organizations other than their own, as well as other publications, as points of reference. ... editors often read prestige publications such as *The New York Times* for story ideas and that reporters stood a better chance of having their ideas accepted by the editors if a story on that subject had already appeared in such a publication (Cassidy, 2006).

Borrowing from the above argument this study assessed whether Radio Maisha and Easy FM journalist's gatekeeping is shaped by what people in power (politicians, prominent businessmen and scholars, among others) other journalist,   and 'prestigious media organisations' say on social media.

2.6.4 Context as a determinant of using social media

In a stud> done by Waver and Wilhoit entitled *The American Journalist in the 1990s* and quoted by Cassidy (2006) among the roles journalists undertake as they 'gatekeep' include:

- Interpretive/investigative
- Disseminator
- Adversarial
- Populist mobilize

Tied to the third objective of this study, the above roles will be inform formulation of data collection instruments in order to establish the context in which radio journalists use social media as a source of news content.

2.6.5 Gatekeeping's deficiency in assessing social media

Though gatekeeping argues that there are gates controlled by gatekeepers to be crossed before publishing some information, social media have challenged this. Anyone can now publish any information through social media. Singer (2006) states that, "anyone can publish anything on the Internet, the ultimate free speech zone, with virtual impunity; moreover, the publisher can choose to remain anonymous." Gatekeeping theory originated in a period where internet communication and social media were nonexistent and therefore does not explain in detail how journalists sieve and prioritize content sourced from social media. Considering that social media brings to the journalist content from all over the world, the theory does not anticipate whether proximity is part of the gates controlled by radio journalists before deciding if a potential content in newsworthy.

Some scholars have argued that gatekeeping is basically a descriptive theory with little, if any, predictive power (Roberts, 2005). Despite that, gatekeeping theory will assist this study in summarizing various forces that come into play as Radio Maisha and Easy FM journalists make decisions about what content to select and in what priority from the myriad available on social media.

2.6.6 Uses and Gratifications Theory

Because gatekeeping theory explains factors that affect communication from the journalist's and the media's side, it is not sufficient to analyse social media whose major contributors are not journalists. Moreover, when journalists use social media as source of content, their role changes from that of originators to consumers. Gatekeeping theory does not address how audiences use media. To supplement this shortcoming, this study employed Uses and Gratifications Theory.

Though the Uses and Gratifications theory dates back to the beginning of empirical mass communication research, its modernization and description is credited to Elihu Katz, Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch who in 1973;1974 researched and published a paper on the theory in the communications research journal *The Public Opinion Quarterly.*

The theory postulates that goals oriented behaviors indicate that audiences do not simply wait passively to receive whatever content come their way. They seek content from the media they anticipate will provide them with certain kinds of experiences (Lowery & DeFleur, 1995).

Uses and Gartifications Theory is as a result numerous previous researches that found out that the use of media depends on the perceived satisfactions, needs, wishes and motives of the prospective audience. (McQuail, 2005) writes about one study published by Lazerseld and Stanton (1944; 1949) which focused on the reason for popular appeal of different radio programmes, especially *soap operas* and quizzes. The studies led to unexpected findings including one that showed that radio *soap operas* that were often dismised as superficial and only meant to fill time were found to be significant espscially to their listerners mostly women.

2.6.7 Uses and Gratifications of Social Media

The central focus of the Uses and Gratification Theory is what people do with media rather than what media does to them. The theory is audience oriented and not conservative (Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974). The theory guided this study in assesing how journalists use social media when their roles change to that of audiences. The needs of the audience that the media satisfy are classified into five categories.

There are five needs and gratification for people that are fulfilled by the media. These are:

- Cognitive needs
- Affective needs
- Personal Integrative needs
- Social Integrative needs
- Tension free needs

Cognitive needs:

People use media for acquiring knowledge and information. People with this need, will for instance watch quiz programs on TV. In the internet front, search engines users make use of these to gain more knowledge.

Affective needs:

This includes all kinds of emotions, pleasure and other moods of the people. An example is person watching television series may cry when watching because of being engrossed in the programme to the point of affecting their emotions.

Personal Integrative needs:

This is the self-esteem need. People use media to reassure their status, gain credibility and stabilize. For instance, that people watch TV, buy newspaper and magazines to fulfil their self esteem needs. These products also help them change their life style.

Social Integrative needs:

It encompasses the need to socialize with family, friends and relations in the society. Media plays an important role in integration, for example people do not seems to have social gathering in weekends, instead they do such social interaction using media sites like MySpace, Facebook, weibo among others.

Tension free needs:

People sometimes use the media as a means of escapism and to relieve from tension. People tend to relax watching TV, listening to radio and satisfying their other needs for entertainment there by relaxing from tension (Communication Theory, 2010).

In the interest of this study's research question cognitive and social gratifications needs are the two aspects of needs that were taken into considreation.

The study made a presumption that journalists mostly need social media to fullfil their cognitive needs, that is, to acquire knowledge and information. With this assumption, the theory guided the study in assesing who radio journalists network with in social media and the nature of content they get form social media. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch (1974) assertion that media researchers ought to be studying human needs to discover how much the media do or do not contribute to their creation and satisfaction formed the basis for this study in answering the question of how radio journalists use social media to get news content.

The proposition by Uses and Gratifications Theory that audiences (in this case the journalists) use media for social integrative needs provided guidance to the study in assessing what social considerations motivate radio journalists to use the social media they use. This helped answer the question which social media are commonly used amongst the different cadres of radio journalists.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the study design, study area, population, sampling, data collection and methods of analysing that were used in the study.

3.2 The Study Design

By its very nature communication studies is a social science and therefore, the natural study design would have been qualitative. However, due to inherent shortcomings of qualitative or quantitative methods when used alone, this study utilized the two with a bias towards qualitative method. Qualitative design is where, techniques and measures that produce more than discrete numbers are employed. The resultant data is in the form of words rather than numbers. The advantage of the mixed method design is that it goes beyond statistical results usually reported in quantitative research (Mugenda &Mugenda, 1999).

The mixed method design assists in better assessing the different objectives of this study. For instance, to know the extent to which radio journalists use social media as source of news, quantitative technique was used to yield percentage and frequencies. To answer the research question such as what challenges radio journalists face when using social media as tools to source news content, qualitative technique was used. This was done by conducting Focus Group Discussions with editors and each station's most active prosumer in order to elicit useful in-depth explanation as opposed to hard statistics.

3.3 Study Area

This study was carried out at two commercial radio stations in Nairobi owned by different media houses. These were Radio Maisha a Kiswahili radio station and Easy FM an English radio station. Radio Maisha is owned by the Standard Group which also runs the Standard Newspapers, K.TN television, Publisher's Distribution Services (PDS) and Outdoor a subsidiary that specializes in outdoor advertising. Easy FM is owned by the Nation Media Group which also publishes the Nation newspapers (weekday and weekend editions) the organisation also own NTV, QTV, and QFM among other newspapers. The study was

conducted with radio stations staff in working in Nairobi. Each station's prosumers from Nairobi were also included in the FGDs.

Prosumer is a combination of two words, *producer* and *consumer,* these are audiences who not only consume content but also participate in the origination and creation of such content. According to (Gerhardt. 2008) the term "prosumer" originated with Alvin Toffler, who first used the term in his 1980 book *The Third Wave.* Toffler defined the prosumer as someone who blurs the distinction between a "consumer" and a "producer." Prosumers typically embrace Web 2.0 technologies such as social networking (Facebook, MySpace), blogging, podcasting, mobile communications, and other Internet-based technologies and services that allow people to stay connected whenever and wherever they desire. Prosumers use social media technology that is easily accessible to then and that best suits their lifestyle.

3.4 Study Population

Because the study area was Nairobi, the population consisted of journalists who worked with Radio Maisha and Easy FM in Nairobi. In this case the definition of a journalist taken is that of Weaver and Wilhoit, as quoted by Cassidy (2006), that "a journalist is a person who has responsibility for the preparation or transmission of news stories or other information". These are the study's population because they have some similar characteristics that differentiate them from other populations -say continuity presenters- (Mugenda &Mugenda, 1999). The population of such people at Radio Maisha in Nairobi was 14 and at Easy FM they were 9. In this population are editors, general reporters, business reporters and sports reporters. Listeners of Radio Maisha and those of Easy FM who were domiciled in Nairobi and who regularly contributed to news content made the study's population of prosumers.

Table 1: Population of journalists at Easy FM Nairobi

	Anchor	Editor	Business Reporter	General Reporter	Political Reporter	Sports Reporter
Male	2	1	0	2	2	0
Female	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total	3	1	0	3	2	0
Grand Total					9	

Table 2: Population of journalists at Radio Maisha Nairobi

	Anchor	Editor	Business Reporter	General Reporter	Political Reporter	Sports Reporter
Male	I		0	2	2	4
Female	3			2	0	0
Total	4	2		4	2	4
Grand total						17

3.5 Sampling

A sample is a subset of a particular population, or a smaller group obtained from the accessible population (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). In other words a sample is a fraction of the population. Consequently sampling is the process of selecting a unit or units for inclusion in the research from the population. According to Mugenda (1999), sampling has to be done in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they are selected. To select a sample the researcher uses a sampling frame which is a list of individuals in the population. There are two methods of selecting a sample from the sampling frame namely probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling also known as random sampling is a method of selection of units from the population in which every individual in the population has a specified chance of getting included in the sample. Non-probability sampling on the other hand is a method in which such a statement about the chance of any unit in the universe getting included in the sample cannot be made.

For this study all individuals in the populations at Radio Maisha, Easy FM were included in the study. A complete enumeration or collection of details from the population is called a census (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This is because the population is small and can be covered within the study's time frame and budget.

There are various reasons why a census could be chosen as a method of data collection: Canada's state organisation in charge of statistics (Statistics Canada) enumerates some reasons:

Sampling variance is zero: There is no sampling variability attributed to the statistics because it is calculated using data from the entire population. Detailed information about small sub-groups of the population is made available (Statistics Canada, 2011).

In other words census minimises the discrepancy between the sample characteristics and the population characteristics referred to as sampling error.

The consideration for a census was also taken because of the inherent danger of small samples, that they do not reproduce the salient characteristics of the accessible population to an acceptable degree (Mugenda & Mugenda. 1999).

Typical disadvantages that can result from using census as a way of identifying a group from which data is to be collected were considered and found to be surmountable. According to (Statistics Canada. 2011) some of those disadvantages include:

Cost: Conducting a census for a large population can be very expensive.

Time: A census generally takes a longer to conduct than a sample survey.

Response burden: The amount of response can be overburdening as they are received from every member of the target population.

Control: A census of a large population is such a huge undertaking that it make difficult to keep every single operation under the same level scrutiny and control.

All these were considered and found not to be hindrance in any way to this study.

Purposive sampling was used to get the prosumers. Purposive sampling is a technique that allows the researcher to use respondents that have the required information with respect to the objectives of the study (Mugenda &Mugenda. 1999). The criteria for selecting prosumers for this study was based on feedback received by each station through their social media platforms regarding their news content. With the help of journalists in those stations the researcher was able to identified sixteen (eight per station) individuals who had in the period between May 1, 2012 and July 1, 2012 had contributed to the stations news content through social media. The prosumers were contacted through messaging on Facebook or Direct Messaging through twitter. They later provided their phone numbers and were given details of the FGD venue.

3.6 Data collection procedures

To collect the necessary information to meet this study's objectives and answer research questions, the following instruments were used; questionnaires and focus group discussions (FDGs). The questionnaire included both open ended questions and closed ended questions. Close ended questions in the questionnaires will be used to obtain important information about the population like their level of education, the type of social media tools they use for gathering news and whether opinion on social media affect the journalist's angling of stories. Open ended questions were used to find out the context in which social media are used to gather news content. The editors and their assistants at both Radio Maisha and Easy FM were not included among those who received questionnaires.

Two FGDs were conducted for this study; one for each station editors, their assistants and six prosumers per a discussion. FGDs are guided discussions addressing a particular topic of interest or relevance to the group and the researcher (Berg, 2009). The purpose of the FGDs is to gain knowledge about a particular topic or need by interviewing a group of people directly affected by the issue (ETR Associates, 2010). In this regard the FGDs were done with editors, their assistants and their respective prosumers to clarify on issues that my not have been covered in depth by questionnaire response from reporters. Because the approach is triangulation, the FGD did not have to wait for response from questionnaires.

FGDs are highly efficient in collecting data since the amount and range of data are increased by collecting from several people at the same time; group dynamics help in focusing on the most important topics and it is fairly easy to assess the extent to which there is a consistent and shared view about a theme. The participants tend to enjoy the experience when conducted in a conversational manner (Robson, 2002).

Despite these advantages, focus groups have certain weaknesses. The number of questions asked is limited, conflicts may arise between respondents. Power struggles may detract them from the interview and conflicts of status may occur. For the two FGDs confidentiality was the only challenge experienced, some prosumers who use pseudonyms in their social media accounts did not want to come for the FGD as they feared they would blow their cover. This made the researcher to look for more within the set time range to make the FDG.

Separate FGDs were conducted: one for Radio Maisha and another for Easy Fm, each FGD had eight participants consisting of an editor their assistant and, five prosumers and the facilitator. The FGDs were held at a restaurant in Nairobi town that provided a neutral and informal setting in the afternoon each lasting one and a half hours. All conversation were tape recorded. Each session followed the same structure with six identical questions being put to the groups. The participants were allowed to introduce themselves and given a chance to explain of their experience in relation to the use of social media and news gathering. This was just an icebreaker.

3.7 Research Instruments

This study used questionnaires and a focus group discussion guide to gather information. The questionnaires were sent via SurveyMonkey to allow self administration, respondents were asked to fill in on their own email delivered questionnaires. This was desirable because the respondents are literate and could access internet, the researcher had obtained the email addresses of all the respondents. Using SurveyMonkey also ensures that respondents filled in the questionnaires at their most appropriate time. This ensured a higher rate of return.

To help differentiate between questionnaires from Radio Maisha and Easy FM, different methods of collecting the questionnaires were used for the two. For Easy Fm an option of *SurveyMonkey* that allows a personalised email to be sent to the respondent was used. For Radio Maisha a web link was sent through each of the respondents email ensuring that when they responded their questionnaires did not mix with those from Easy FM.

An FGD guide was developed to steer discussions with editors, their assistants and prosumers. The discussion guide is a set of questions that the researcher used to probe and guide discussions to meet the objectives and elaborate on aspects that were anticipated may not have been fully covered by open ended questions questionnaire. The probing would bring in even subconscious issues that the informants may not be aware are of significant to the study. This is because a using this approach, "researchers strive to learn through discussion about conscious, semi-conscious and unconscious psychological and socio-cultural characteristics and processes among various groups" (Berg, 2009).

These instruments will be developed and pretested in a pilot amongst people who have characteristics similar to the actual population. In this case the piloting will be done among interns. Since the researcher will conduct data collection personally, there will be no need to train interviewers. The piloting will be useful to the researcher in practising conducting focus group discussions, deliver questionnaires and to gain constructive feedback.

3.8 Data analysis and interpretations

Data obtained from the field is normally raw and difficult to analyse. However, dues to the use of web based survey solution SurveyMonkey it was easy to receive the quantitative data in an already systematically organised, analysed and format.[7] However, because of financial constraints and logistics of subscribing for a- paid- for- *SurveyMonkey* account the researcher decided to re-enter the data into the already available SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The results are descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages presented graphically.

The qualitative data will be interpreted and presented in narrative form comprising of themes, patterns and verbatim. For the qualitative data resulting from FDGs analysis will be done using SPSS Text Editor Software to generate themes and categories after coding. A code is a word, abbreviation or a phrase that represents raw data from the filed in a manner that can be understood by computer programs for analysis (Mugenda &Mugenda, 1999).

Stewart (2006) quotes (Sayre, 2001) arguing that there are distinctive perspectives that are relevant to qualitative analyses of focus group data, that much of reality and the meaning and categories that frame everyday life are essentially social creations. Focus group analyses that reflect this view tend to emphasize how group members collaborate on some issue, how they achieve consensus (or fail to), and how they construct shared meanings about commercial products, communications, or social concerns. Another perspective that was useful for this study is that of interpretivism which "...accepts the prior perspectives (like what would have already been put down on questionnaires) but are sceptical about taking focus group respondents' words at face value. Researchers from this school owe much to ethnographic studies that focus on both individuals' words and actions, particularly to the science of body

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[7] See appendix III, IV and V for a print screens capturing pages with the research finding analysed by SurveyMonkey.

language and facial expressions (Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2006). Where such body language and facial expression would still be remembered vividly by the resercher they could be used to analyse and intepret the data.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to assess the extent and context in which radio journalists employ social media to gather news content. The study was conducted in Radio Maisha and Easy FM in Nairobi. The findings of two focus group discussions conducted for each radio station and questionnaires responded to by journalists from the stations are presented in this chapter.

The study sought to answer the following questions:

To what extent do radio journalists use social media as a tool for gathering news content?

How do radio journalists use social media for gathering news content?

Under what circumstances do radio journalists rely on social media to gather news content?

What are the social media that radio journalists use to gather news content?

What are the guidelines that govern radio journalists in gathering news through social media?

4.2 Radio journalists use social media to gather news

From the study, it was clear that radio journalists have adopted social media as one way of gathering news content. All the journalists who responded to the questionnaire answered to the affirmative to a question whether they used social media to gather news content.

This was confirmed during the FGD for Easy FM where a discussant said:

Discussant 4 FGD 2...   *Generally every journalist does use social media as a referral point, social media we are looking at Facebook and especially twitter and blogs where there are certain comments and remarks that you get from people that will direct a potential news story angle... so you can't eliminate and drive into a particular genre of journalist, I think every journalist literally in this day and age uses social media (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

To do thai, the journalists have registered in more than one social media site which they use for different purposes For instance, whereas Twitter w as used as a source of referral and hint for breaking stories, YouTube is used as an archive for sourcing audio.

TaMe 3: How often radio journalists use social media to gather news content

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Every time	3	17.6	17.6	17.6
	Usually	1	5.9	5.9	23.5
	Frequendy	12	70.6	70.6	94.1
	Sometimes	1	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Figure 1: How often radio journalists use social media to gather news
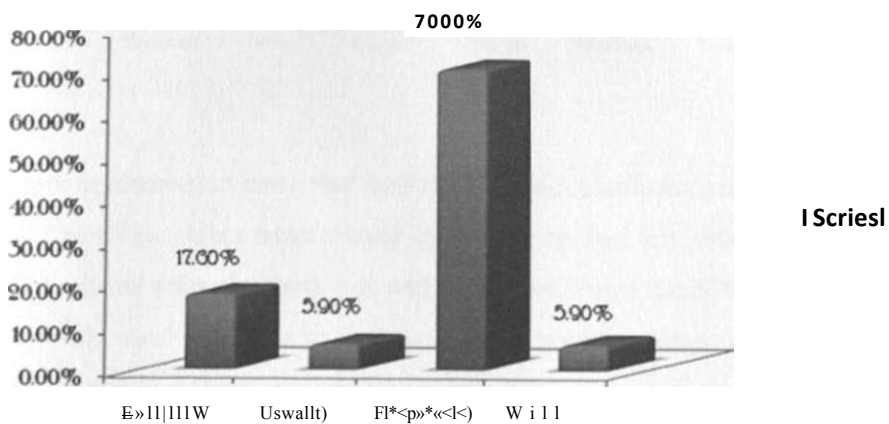
Table 4: Social media platforms in which radio journalists are registered

Facebook	94.10%
Twitter	100%

Google +	29.40%
Blogger	23.50%
WordPress	11.80%
YouTube	23.50%

Figure 2: Social media platforms in which radio journalists are registered
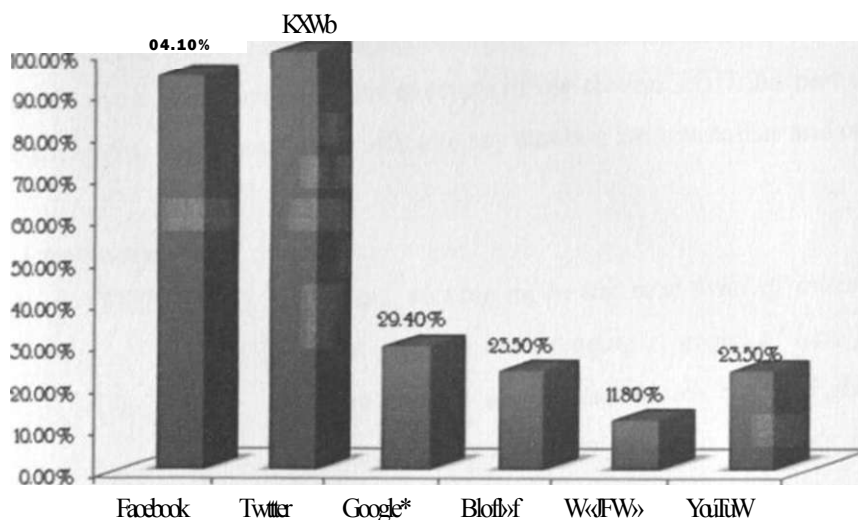
Despite registering in more than one social media platform journalists reported to have been using twitter to gather news related content more than any other. Social media was used to gather content related to both soft and hard news From the FDGs it was realised that twitter was mostly used as a point to find direction of big happenings and to gather and gauge what potential news sources are talking about. Journalist who reported to have sourced news content from Facebook said they did so because postings on Facebook provided significantly more details that could be used for a story. A reported cited an incident where the then Kenyan minister for Foreign Affairs Moses Wetangula was stranded in Mali following a coup in that country. According to the journalist, the minister provided content worth considering as news given the situation.[8] The journalists also reported to frequently use YouTube to

' In March 2012, While Wetangula was attending an African Union meeting on peace and security Mali's government was overthrown by the military leaving the minister and his entourage stranded in a hotel.

source audio which was not in their archives or what they might have capture completely. Such audio was recorded from local and international television stations with a caveat that the television story was not an exclusive.

4.3 How radio journalists use social media for gathering news content

From a quantitative aspect, the question of how radio journalists use social media in relation to news gathering would look like one with a simple answer; to contact sources, to research, and to alert the news desk of a story happening on ground (see diagram 3). However, from the FDGs, how journalists use social media to gather news content seemed to be the most divisive and controversial aspect in the emerging trend of including social media in the news production cycle. Here are verbatim excerpts of the second FGD. As part of confidentiality requested by the discussants, it is suffice to say that two are journalists and one is a prosumer.

4.3.1 Lazy journalists

Discussant 3 FGD 2:   *We are moving on to the next level of journalism, but I also think that we are breeding a group of lazy journalists in the sense that, I don't need to do much, I don't need to call someone, I just need to follow a reputable journalist — who follows the traditional way of doing things who is also on social media and whatever information they get is like credible truth. So for me it is either to retweet or like or emphasise whatever they are saying. So we are breeding a group of lazy journalists who cannot make phone calls or use whatever is posted on social media as an entry point to a story. I think we are losing touch as much as we are progressing (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

Discussant 1 FGD 2:   *Times are changing, here the challenge is delivering the end product; it is not a matter of what mechanisms you use.*

Transport from that country had also stalled. It was during that time that the Wetangula regularly updated his Facebook page with what was happening. In one such update he wrote "Situation worsening; curfew imposed. Airport closed. Heavier gunfire can be heard repeatedly. Received call from AU chief Dr Jean Ping,"

Nowadays the level of working smart has been greatly compared (sic) to how efficient you can use your capability to get the material you want, so (name of discussant 3) *speaking that it is breeding laziness, laziness here is relative. Because if you ha\'e a shorter path to what you want why should you stick to the, to the....* (Interjection form discussant 2 disagreeing)

Discussant 2 FGD 2:   *No! 1 beg to differ, I beg to differ, I thoroughly beg to differ there, the reason why you are a journalist is because you understand the ethics of it, there is no way you can literally write an entire story by looking at Martha Karua Twitter feeds, Raila Odinga twitter feeds, remember, -however much the arguments are- may be Martha Karua is the only person who does actually tweets, but we have others who literally employs 'tweeters', alright, you have six people on your payroll who are actually twitting for you, who in most cases are part of the lazy generation who will not bother about verifying information. So there is no way you can tell me you can sit in that newsroom and tell me you are working smart and yet you are compromising news that you will be churning out which has a long time effect to the society. Get out of your sit, go to field and verify the information! So there is absolutely no escape from traditional forms of news gathering. That's where you draw the line between a true journalist and the average Joe who masquerades as one (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

The same talk of social media making some journalist not adhere to all procedures of news production came up in the first FDG for Radio Maisha, though it was less heated the sentiments were significantly similar as captured in the verbatim bellow. Both discussants were prosumers:

Discussant 5 FGD 1:   */ think journalists are not working; many are becoming armchair journalists or let me say freelancers are working*

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> *more... because you can get pictures, videos, arui audio through the internet (FGD 1, 1807/2012).*

Discussant 2 **FGD1:** *It is unfortunate what he is saying about journalists becoming lazy. But to me 1 see it as an advantage, because you cannot be everywhere every time, you can t have correspondents everywhere. Social media cannot be ignored. It is up to them* (media) *so when he picks* (pointing at the editor) *my news about something that has happened may be in Rongai. it is up to them to go and see the credibility, so I just make their work easier but it is up to them to go and verify and nicely package the news for the public. Although what he is saying about laziness is unfortunate (FGD 1. 18/07/2012).*

Figure 3: How radio journalists use social media for gathering news content
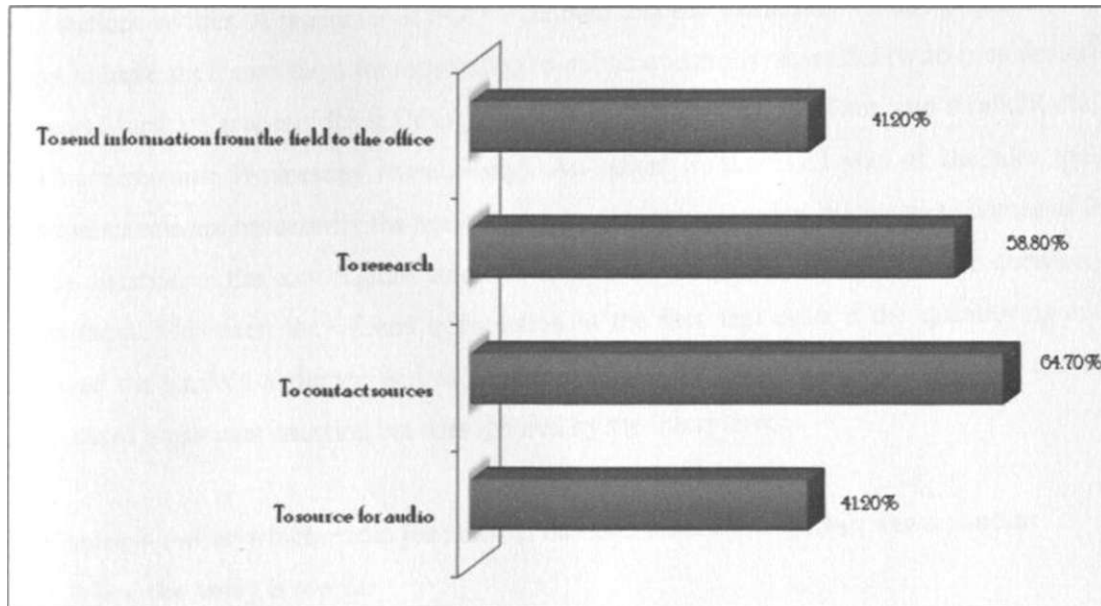
A significant number of journalists surveyed said they used social networks (such as Facebook and Linkedln) to establish a friendly rapport with potential news sources and opinion leaders so as to have it easy communicating with such people when the need arises. Of the 17 journalists who responded to the question 'how do you use social media to gather news content' a majority of those who identified themselves as general reports also indicated

thai thev use social media to send information from the field to the office. This was later independently confirmed by editors in the FGDs who said they use social networking sites to communicate with reporters, correspondents and contributors. Prosumers in both FDGs also claimed that they had witnessed journalists covering different stories communicate amongst themselves on social media, most of the time discusing the potential news. The journalist in the FDGs also pointed out that they use social media to verfy information gotten through other means. For intance if a report of a fire outbreak is reported in the CBD, the journalists would ask those in the vicinity to confirm to them whether indeed it is true as they made their way there or decide if they need not to go at all.

4.3.2 Twitter as an interview tool

Radio Journalists said they have been using twitter to ask news sources questions in what has come to be known as *twitterview*. The reporter tweets the question and the respondent tweets back the answer. The tweets are then used to form a story to be published in various ways including news bulletins, website publications or just consumed by those following the a radio stations twitter. A prosumer in FGD 1 claimed that the *twitterviews* made politicians in Kenya to have their own days for responding to public questions on twitter (with presidential aspirants Martha Karua and Raila Odinga having hashtag #AskMarthaThur, and #Talk2Raila, on Thursdays and Wednesday respectively). An editor in the FGD was of the idea that *twitterviews* are not necessarily the perfect way to conduct interviews with news sources as it creates distance in the conversation and the interviewee might not respond to the questions put to them. However, they found consolation in the fact that even if the question is not answered the radio's audience will at least know that the journalist or a particular media house asked a relevant question but was ignored by the interviewee.

4.4 Contexts under which radio journalists use social media to gather news content

4.4.1 When the story is too far

Whereas one of the world's renowned news agency says social media are depended more when gathering news through traditional methods (such as, face to face interviews, eye witnessing, press conferences) are hampered or not effective, especially in countries or circumstances where the regular free flow of information is impeded (Reuters, 2012), journalists who took part in the study did not prioritise this despite a report about press

freedom categorising Kenya as 'Partly Free' (Freedom House, 2012)[9]. All respondents said they employ social media to gather content when the happening is 'too far' from where they are. Slightly over a third of the respondents said that they depend on social media to source news content from where they do not have correspondents. From the FDGs it was clear that the context of use of social media to source news content are varied and change from day to day. For instance that it could be used to source news that is considerd to have a short life time — like an accident that has just occurred and has been confirmed and would not be need for major radio bulletins other than a brief traffic alert to motorists. Even as radio journalists admitted that they would use such the alerts as news content, prosumers had a different observation.

Discussant 2 FGD I: *Social media comes in hand when I he re is a catastrophe or something important, they come in handy because they are very fast many people can get the information quickly. I remember there was a time there was a heavy rain I was around Kitengela, the roads were flooded, I took a picture and alerted Red Cross, some media houses used that alert but Red Cross was accredited. But I do not have a problem with that (FGD 1, 18/07/2012).*

4.4.2 When there is breaking story

Another argument emerged that social media are used when there is a breaking story and not necessarily when there are resource restrictions necessitating crowd sourcing Newman, (2009).

Discussant 5 FGD 1: *Funding is not a major reason, it comes to who is the first person having the news. I know the joy of a journalist is to be the first one to break the news, you feel like you've done something (FGD 1, 18/07/2012).*

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[9] The Freedom of the Press index is an annual survey of media independence in 197 countries and territories. It provides numerical rankings and rates each country's media as "Free," "Partly Free," or "Not Free", in 2012 Kenya was ranked 18 same as Uganda, in the region, Tanzania was ranked higher at position 12.

Discussant 1 FGD1:   *To add on thai. 1 can say it is competition, it is not like previous years when there was KBC alone, they had all the time to collect the news and tell people later. Nowadays you cannot claim to break the news at three and someone had the story at nine. You 11 not be breaking anything (FGD I, 18/07/2012).*

4.4-3 The only place where Kenyans are frank

From the survey it can also be concluded that the perception by journalists that Kenyans are a cowardly people has encouraged the journalist to scout for their views from the sodal media This is what a discussant had to say:

Discussant 2 **FGD** 2:   *Literally social media is people talking but on a different platform you can still get a story from there. I you look at the Kenya society, to be honest, a lot of people tend to be chicken, the average person will not walk up to you and say ABCD... they will vent out on social media. So that s how you can feed off, you can tell the mood of Nairobi or Mombasa by what people who live there are talk about or respond to on social media, so social media is a plus to journalists not a curse (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

Figure 4: Contexts in which radio journalist use social media to gather news

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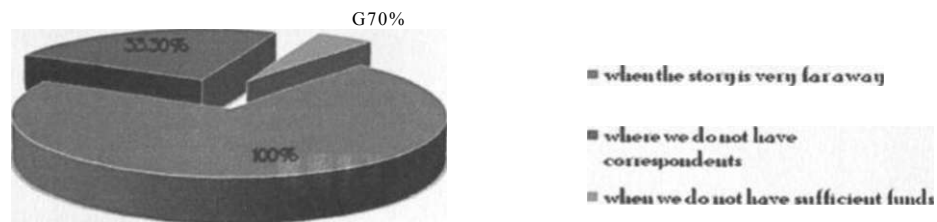
4.4.4 To know what the 'neighbour' is doing

From the findings it can be inferred that radio journalists use social media when they want to confirm a certain story with other media houses or journalists. Response from all the 17 journalists who responded to the questionnaire are is that they check what other media houses are saving on social media about a story. As to how often they do that, a rruyority said frequently. With this trend where a majority of journalist use social media as tools for gathering, monitoring and even shaping story angles then as (Nguyen, 2006) argues "future journalists will need to be trained to not only become critical gate-keepers but also act as listeners, discussion and forum leaders/mediators in an intimate interaction with their audiences."

From the FGD it emerged that journalist also look at what their colleagues who are considered to be pacesetters are saving:

Discussant 5 FGD1: *After I get certain breaking information I will try and verify, meanwhile I will look at the 'big names' also; we all look at the big names@MohaJichoPevu . 1 will look at Macharia Gaitho, he is a reputable editor seasoned through the years. Remember I am also looking at mentors, who would I like to be like in ten years down the line? In Journalism you need to know what your neighbour next door is doing (FGD 1, 18/07/2012).*

Diagram 5: **How often radio journalists check what other media houses say on social** media
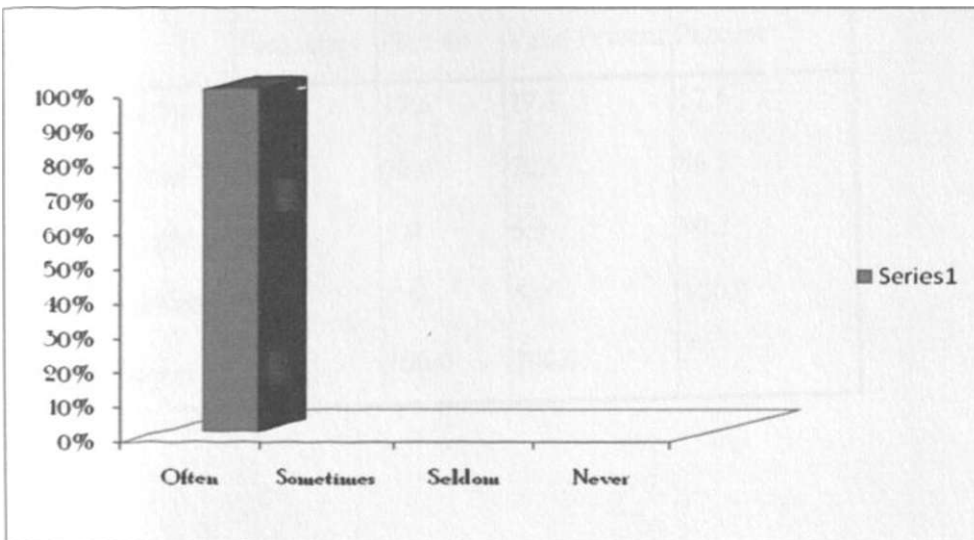
4.5 What are the social media that radio journalists use to gather news content?

From the first research question it was evident that above 70% of radio journalists used social media tools to gather news content. Despite indicating that they are subscribed to more than one social media, the journalists pointed at three media as their preferred tools for gathering news content with twitter being the most preferred. As will be evident in another section of this paper, the preference for the microblogging site twitter will also emerge as a major challenge of the employing social media tools in gathering news content.

Those who chose twitter said they frequently use it because it has "mature' users and since they only need a hint for news and then "Confirm if the information is correct to avoid defamation". On the other hand those who frequently use Facebook do so '"because it has a large number of following". Despite the large preference for twitter a discussant in FGD 2 argued that different social media tools serve different purposes; that blogs are good for in-depth comments and linking with other sites, twitter is faster and almost instant while Facebook is used by many Kenyans. They summarised that twitter is practical for contacting acquaintances and public discussions while Facebook is appropriate for connecting and reconnecting with personal friends. The respondents who mentioned Google + said they preferred to use it to search information while YouTube was preferred for providing a wide library of audio.

Table 5: Social media mostly used by radio journalists

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	3	17.6	17.6	17.6
	Twitter	12	70.6	70.6	88.2
	Google+	1	5.9	5.9	94.1
	YouTube	1	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	17	100.0	100.0	

Figure 6: Social media mostly used by radio journalists

a«o%   ago*

17.00%

70.00%

- fdrtltoolc
- Twill.,
- GoogUt
- ^ o.,Tnl>»
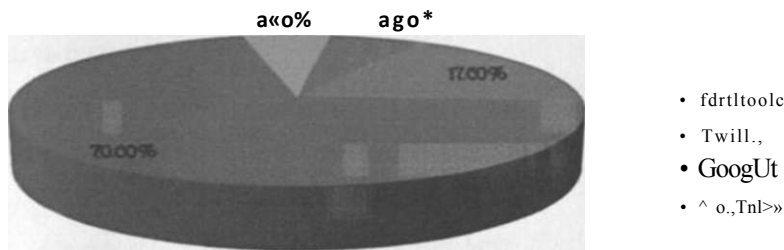
4.6 What governs radio journalists' use of social media

4.6.1 Company Social Media Policy

Despite being a relatively new phenomenon in the trend of mass communication development, various media houses already have guidelines to govern how their journalists use social media Both the Standard Group and the Nation Media Group (the parent companies of Radio Maisha and Easy FM) have rules that direct the use of ICTs in news production Despite this, 20% of the journalists who responded to the questionnaires are unaware of the existence of any official policy towards the use of social media for official purposes.

Together with official guidelines provided by their organisations, journalists also reported to have developed ways of using social media especially with regards to verification of information gotten via social media Here are some verbatim of what guides the journalist in using social media to gather news content.

Discussant 7 FGD 1:   *...By not following people but institutions,* (inteijection from the moderator but the institutions are not everywhere) *but you see those institutions have representatives everywhere like the Standard Group has correspondents everywhere, the correspondent tweets to the Standard then the Standard puts out. Like now on Facebook there are four accounts of Miguna Miguna. you ask a question and it is responded to immediately. So who do you follow? My guideline; follow them but don t trust what they say (FGD 1. 18/07/2012).*

(This FDG was conducted just after Miguna Miguna had launched a book "Peeling Back the Mask' and left Kenya leaving a heated debate both in the mainstream media and online).

4.6.2 Who to network with on social media

Since twiner appears to be the most used social media in news content gathering, the debate about who to follow for optimum benefit arose in the second FGD. The discussants had varied opinions.

Discussant 1 FGD 2: *A lot of journalists will have disclaimers saying this is a professional profile or saying whatever I say here has nothing to do with the organisation I work for. It pretty much about research, you don't just follow anyone randomly because they have a lot of tweets. Yes they have a lot of tweets but how many are worth your while. If you are a journalist investigate don't just follow randomly. That's why some people have two accounts; a social one and a professional one if you want to follow them with your personal account great! Even though social media is 'social' there are still some elements of professionals within that social sphere. As journalist if you want to build your credibility then have that professional profile as opposed to haphazardly yapping all about things and following and retweeting people who have absolutely no credibility (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

Discussant 3 FGD 2: *...She talked about having two profiles, to me I think you can chose to follow anyone whether they make sense or not. A journalist must be able to feel the pulse of the people around especially of the people around. Then juggling between the profiles, you can chose to follow the big people the small people whether they make sense or they don't you get to know also from people (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).*

The suggestion that journalists should only consider online posts from institutions rather than individuals as reference for potential news stories was also discussed with mixed feelings in the second FGD.

Discussant I FGD 2: *Nation (NMG) has a social media policy which is meant to assist in case anybody would want to take legal action against the nation or an individual reporter; they have to set parameters. They would prefer journalist not to be quick to twit information that has potential big*

impact on the society. You are required to inform your editors first, they it return evaluate and can give you the authority to go ahead and tweet whatever it is your are tweeting. It is away of verification (FGD 2, 27/07/2012).

4.6.3 Plagiarism and copyright issues

Though from FGDs and essay responses a significant portion of journalists seemed to be concerned with guidelines that deal with credibility and accuracy of a story sourced through social media, media organisations have looked further into other issues that may attract litigation such as plagiarism and copyright infringement.

The Standard Group's ICT Acceptable use Policy forewarns journalists who may infringe on copyright protected content that such actions "violates the law and is contrary to SGL's standards of conduct and business practices," (The Standard Group Limited, 2009).

However, prosumers of Radio Maisha felt less worried with plagiarism or copyright infringement should their material be used as content for the radio's news even without being acknowledged.

Discussant 5 FGD I: *News is something different, you don't own news you just break the news because you are the first person to have it. But if you pick a picture from another media house and use on your website or Facebook page to accompany your news that is when copyright issues arise because that picture belongs to another media house (FGD I, 18/07/2012).*

Discussant 3 FGD1:   *For me if you pick news I ha\'e posted and just paraphrased it I wouldn't be mad. But if you pick what I have written word by word and used it without acknowledging that is not fair. It is actually a violation of the law (FGD 1, 18/07/2012).*

Though plagiarism did not seem to be an immediate worry for some radio journalists and their prosumers, a loss of credibility is always a threat. Journalists even in organisations that were in the forefront of adopting social media have suffered credibility dent when they used social media content without proper verification. A case in point was the purported images of the dead body of Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden. (Newman, 2011).

An occurrence that depicts the danger of believing that news 'does not have its owner' was a news flash in the K24 Television about a grenade attack in Garissa, North of Kenya, just

twelve days after another attack that had killed 17 people. Viewers who saw that "breaking news' some of them journalists and active prosumers went ahead and posted on their social media accounts how there was another attack in Garissa. It later turned out that 'breaking news' was as a result of mix up in the stations transmitted graphics.[1]" K24 apologised and in suite those who had shared that also had to apologise or delete.

4.7 Challenges for radio journalists use of social media

Journalists have indicated that the use of social media to source news content is inevitable. In their use, journalists have identified bottlenecks for the use of social media to gather news; key among them being incomplete information, incredible information, inaccurate information, and misleading information.

Other than challenges related to the content gathered, journalists also pointed out to technical issues such as unreliable internet connectivity, incompatible formats in case the content sought is a picture or audio and the difficulty of following too many platforms. The problem of many social cites to follow is a problem to journalists who have not started using social media aggregation sites such as *FriendFeed, TweetDeck,* and *Storify.*

In the two FGDs the feeling that social media is breeding lazy journalists came up again at the point of discussing challenges. It was also argued that journalist preference for twitter over social media platforms could be a major contributor to the challenge of incomplete information. This is because twitter has a capacity for user to input a maximum of 140 characters per tweet.

4.7.1 Editors overlooking their reporters

Reporters also expressed their displeasure that their editors' perception of a story are of late being affected by what other 'prestigious' media organisations and journalists are saying about a story on their social media.

Discussant 2 FGD I   *...you have your information you have verified at very serious levels. However you might find a certain boss would decide go with a feed from another media house and simply going within that as a story regardless of whether that media house has*

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[10] **Through its twitter handle @K24Tv the station wrote #K24 would like to apologize for an error regarding breaking news update on television 'Grenade attack in Garissa'. See the image in Appendix F.**

verified its information or not. It is a trust issue and the mentality editors have (FGD 1 18072012)

Figure 7: Challenges faced by radio journalists in sourcing content from social media
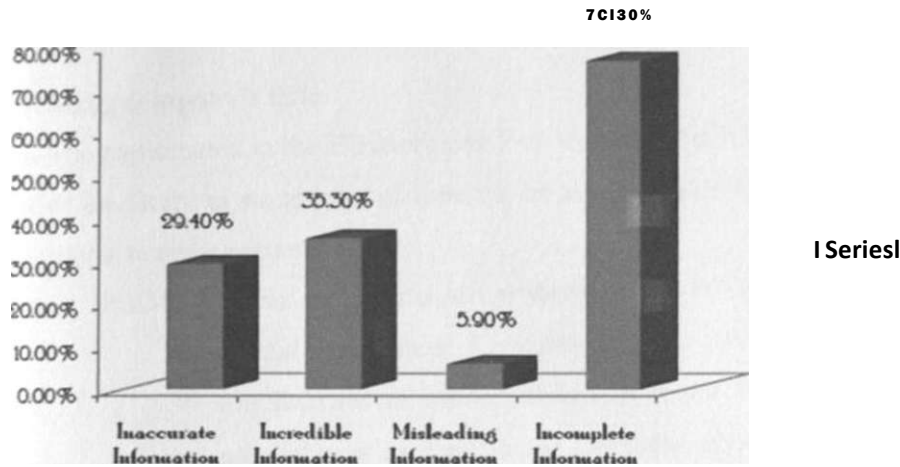
4.7.2 Difficulty in identifying credible prosumers

From the focus group discussion, the journalists pointed out that being a relatively new filed it is difficult to identify prosumers or opinion leaders with a track record of credibility whose words can be communication on social sites can be taken as serious news tip off or venfication for a story. This is made serious by the fact that many people who join online debates remain anonymous or use mysterious pseudonyms making it difficult to find the truth or validity of what they claim publicly. This leaves all the burden and risk (including the danger of being sued for defamation, libel and breach of privacy) on the side of a journalist who decides to use information from such anonymous people.

4.7 J Social media is not an open society

The study confirmed one challenge that was mentioned in the literature review that optimum benefit cannot be gotten from social media unless someone was registered user. Anybody who wants to use social media must be registered unlike search engines where a registered acoomt is not mandatory (Lietsala. 2008).

From FGD 2 journalists and prosumers alike agreed that to fully get to know a communication happening with news makers (especially dignitaries) the user must first be

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registered and be accepted by that particular user in their group. For instance in *Facebook* only friends can share much or write on each other's wall, and on twitter a user cannot write a Direct Message (DM) to someone they are not mutually following." This, it emerged hampers optimal gathering of news that is still not public or which the radio journalists would like to treat as exclusive and not take to the Time Line.

4.7.4 Wasting company's time

Editors who participated in the FGDs voiced their concern that without sufficient discipline journalists are likely to waste a lot of time on the social platform without doing something that contribute to news content.

Discussant 5FGD1   *Social media is a two pronged; it can be used for entertainment and gainful engagement. For example, if the company allows journalists to use YouTube to source audio that is not in the archives, there is a possibility of an indiscipline journalist spending more time watching entertainment like music, or any other video. For Facebook and Twitter, the reporter can spend more time communicating with friends and checking their pictures (FGD 1 18/07/2012).*

Other than wasting company's time by not working, one of the prosumers who was a training journalist at the time of the FGD pointed out the possibility of a reporter in the filed getting too engrossed in tweeting or exchanging instant messages via IMS such as Google Talk and in the process not concentrate of the story they are covering.

" As of July 2012 Kenya's presidential hopefuls who were among frequent users of twitter to communicate were following very few journalists Martha Karua @MarthaKarua was following 52, Peter Kenneth (SPeterKeneth followed 89, Raila Odinga @RailaOdinga followed 63. The Chief Justice @WMutunga followed 46. Most of the handles followed by these personalities were media organisations and other institutions meaning that there were minimal chances for a radio journalist to contact them in a confidential manner using their social media.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings and recommendations from the study. It also gives suggested areas for further studies.

5.2 Summary

Findings from this study conducted at Easy FM and Radio Maisha in Nairobi show that a majority of radio journalists often used social media to gather news content. The context of use of social media include when gathering breaking stories, when the story is too far from a given journalists location, when the story's lifetime is considered to be short.

Radio journalists use social media for communication with their sources and colleagues. There are instances where interviews are done over the microblogging site twitter in what has been termed *twitterview*. A majority of the journalists reported using social media tools for researching and finding content that they don't have in their libraries including audio. Social media are also used to send information by reporters in the field back to the office. Such material is sending in the form of Instant Messaging or tweets which are copied to the radio stations twitter handle.

Twitter is the commonly used social media platform by journalist to gather news content, for both soft and hard news. Journalists reported incomplete information from social media as a key challenge in using them as part of news collection tools. Other challenges highlighted include incredibility of some information since those who post them use pseudonyms or are completely anonymous. Some journalists, especially editors hold the fear that social media are breeding lazy journalist. In the same breath some journalists in the lower level of the hierarchy are dissatisfied that their editors to don trust them by looking at what other 'prestigious' media outlets or journalist have done before and forcing the reports to take angles similar or close to those of others.

Media organisations have started putting in place guidelines that govern journalists' use of social media in news gathering. The guidelines borrow greatly from each media house's editorial policy and general journalistic ethics. Media houses also have in place guidelines so as to control anything that might lead to legal battles in case of defamation, libel, plagiarism

and copyright infringement. On their side journalists have formulated unwritten rules that help them verify information gotten from social media. Some have resorted not to follow unverified accounts on twitter, while other give credence to social media communication from organisations and not to individuals.

Social media are not replacement for traditional methods of collecting news content. Journalists still need to make calls, attend press briefings, meet their sources physical and observe things own their own to verify lets their credibility is lost for taking information posted on social media by people, some of whom have no journalistic training or are intentionally malicious. Social media can be used in three aspects by radio journalist, sending out content to their audiences, improving and maintaining contact with audiences other than collecting news content.

5.3 Conclusion

Though this study focused on the use of social media to source news, from literature review, journalists response to open ended questions in the questionnaire and FGDs it was clear that social media server two other functions which are integral in the adoption of this new trend in journalism. Social media enhances interaction and engagement with audiences and distribution of news. Though social media are important for journalists and media organisations that want to better their news gathering by widening their networks and speed of getting to know what is happening, they do not replace the traditional way of verifying information nor allow one ignore ethics of journalism. The challenge is for the society and journalists to find a way to encourage people not to be anonymous or to stop using mysterious pseudonyms if news gathered from social media are to be sufficiently credible, and easily verifiable.

This study derived the following conclusions, that;

1. A majority of radio journalists use social media as tools for gathering news content
2. Radio journalists use social media to communicate with sources, to research and gather material and to send content back to the office from the field

3. A significant number of radio journalists use social media to gather news when there is a breaking story, when the story is physical far, and when the story's lifetime is considered short

4. A majority of radio journalists chose the microblogging site twitter as their preferred social media tool for gathering news content

5. Radio stations have guidelines to be followed by journalist in gathering news content, however, close to a quarter of the journalists are unaware of these guidelines

6. A major challenge for journalists who source content using social media is incomplete information, followed by incredible information and inaccurate information.

5.4 Recommendations

Radio journalists should be made aware of their organisation's social media guidelines to follow when using such sites to gather news content

Journalists should be encouraged to join social media so as to gain optimum value. Social media is not 'open' only those who are signed up and interact with a majority in the networks get to know what is happening.

Journalist should consider social media aggregation instead of rely on single sites or using them independently. This could minimize the problem of incomplete information. Social media aggregation tools such as *storify, FriendFind* and *TweelDeck.*

Journalist should be encouraged to have smart phones and other portable devices so as to use social media whenever they are and when network coverage allows.

5.5 Suggestion for further study

This study recommends these areas for further study

How can social media aggregation be enhanced to reap maximum benefit from newsworthy conversations going on across social media?

Is it true that social media are breeding lazy journalists? How widespread is it, and what can be done to curb it?

Why do radio journalists prefer twitter to collect news content than other social media?

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Appendix I: Questionnaire

A questionnaire for journalists on the extent and context to which radio journalists employ social media to gather news content; a case study of Easy FM and Radio Maisha

Purpose of the study

Acknowledging that social media has become an integral part of all spheres of life including news gathering, this study seeks develop a clear picture of how radio journalists use social media to get news content and how such usage can be enhanced to ensure that radio retains its relevance in bringing useful and trustworthy news.

Please fill answer the all questions to the best of your knowledge

Chose as appropriate

Male [ ] Female [ ]

Job Title

Business Reporter [ ] News Reader [ ] Political Reporter [ ] Sports Reporter [ ] General Reporter [ ]

Highest level of education attained

Masters [ ]

Bachelors [ ]

Diploma [ ]

Certificate [ ]

1. In which social media platform(s) are you registered? (Tick as much as you have subscribed)

   Facebook [ ]

   Twitter [ ]

   Google + [ ]

   B logger [ ]

   Word Press [ ]

   YouTube [ ]

   Any others specify

2. Do you use social media to gather news content? Yes [ ] No [ ]

3. How do you use social media to gather news content?

    i.   To send information from the field to the office [ ]

    ii.   To research [ ]

    iii. To contact sources [ ]

    iv.   To source for audio [ ]

    v.   Briefly describe Any other use bellow

4. What type of news is mostly gathered using social

        I.   Hard News []

        II. Soft News [ ]

5. Under what circumstances do you use social media to gather news content?

    i.   When the story is far away [ ]

    ii.   Where we do not have correspondents [ ]

    iii. When we do not have sufficient funds [ ]

Any   other

6. Which social media do you mostly use to gather news?

7. Do you check what other media houses are saying on social media about a story? Yes
   [ ] N o [ ]

8. How often do you check what other media houses are saying through social media?

    i)   Often [ ]

    ii)   Sometimes [ ]

    iii) Seldom [ ]

    iv)   Never [ ]

9. What challenges do you face when using social media to source news content?

    i.   Inaccurate information [ ]

    ii.   Incredible information [ ]

    iii. Misleading information [ ]

    iv.   Incomplete information [ ]

    Please   state   any   other   challenges   here

10. From your experience, how often can you say radio journalists use social media to gather news content? Please tick one.

    i)   Every time [ ]

    ii)   Usually [ ]

    iii) Frequently [ ]

    iv)   Sometimes [ ]

    v)   Occasionally [ ]

    vi)   Rarely [ ]

    vii) Never [ ]

I 1. In your opinion which would be the best way to use social media to gather news?

12. Does your media house have a policy on use of social media to gather and report news? Yes/No

    news? Yes/No

If yes, what is the policy?

If no, what guides you on how to use social media to gather and report news?

Thank you for taking time to fill in this questionnaire

Focus Group Discussion Guide

Introduction

Hello, my name is Bernard Oginga a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi's School of Journalism. Thank you for coming. I am not here to share information, or to give >ou my opinions. Your contribution is what matters. There are no right or wrong answers, you can disagree with each other, and you can change your mind. I would like you to feel comfortable saying what you really think and how you really feel.

The purpose

We are here today to talk about your experience in using social media in gathering news content. The purpose is to get your perceptions of the extent and context to which radio journalists employ social media to gather news.

Discuss procedure

As you can remember form the communication sent out to set up this meeting, I will be taking notes and tape recording the discussion so that I do not miss anything you have to say. Everything is confidential. No one will know who said what. Feel free to respond to me and to other members in the group without waiting to be called on. However, it would be orderly if only one person talked at a time. This discussion will last approximately one and half hours.

Questions

1. Are social media used to gather news content in radio stations?

    - From your observation, what portion of daily news is gathered through social media tools?

    - Comparing traditional methods of gathering news and social media, which one is frequently used in the newsroom?

2. How are social media used to gather news content?

    - Are social media used to send or gather news content from possible sources or colleagues using social media?

    - Are social media used to research? Which ones and how?

- Are social media used to solicit for information/ material from the general public to create content for news?
- How is the information sourced through social media sieved to remain with only that which is newsworthy?

3. Briefly discuss how each of the following is used in gathering news content:
- Social networks (Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn). How do you ensure that you reap maximum benefit from social networks you join?
- Blogs
- Wikis
- Podcasts
- Forums
- Content communities
- Microblogging

4. Under what situations are social media used to gather news?
- Are there ways to ascertain that a tip off gotten from social media is credible?
- Why would you use social media instead of other techniques?
- Is funding or availability of staff part of consideration when dispatching a reporter instead of complete reliance on social media?

5. What difficulties are there when using social media to gather news content?
- How do you ensure that content is not inaccurate, deceptive, unreliable, incomplete and misleading?
- Has social media affected how you sieve what goes to audiences? How?
- How do you deal with issues of plagiarism and copyright infringement?
- What do you do to ensure that the material you have gathered is not a repetition of what has already reached your target audience through other means?

6. Should radio stations have policies for social media use by journalist? Which would be the best guidelines?

Closure

Though there were many different opinions about social media and radio news content, it appears unanimous that_____. Does anyone see it differently?

Is there any other information regarding your experience with social media and gathering radio news that you think would be useful for me to know?

Thank you very much for coming, your time is very much appreciated and your comments have been very helpful.

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The Extent and Context in which Radio
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Appendix IV

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skipped question			0

10 Prom your experience, how often can you say radio journalists use social media to gather news content? Please tick one	i< Create Chart + Download	
	Response Percent	Response Count

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Appendix V

Create Chart

How do you u if toe ill media to gather new» content?

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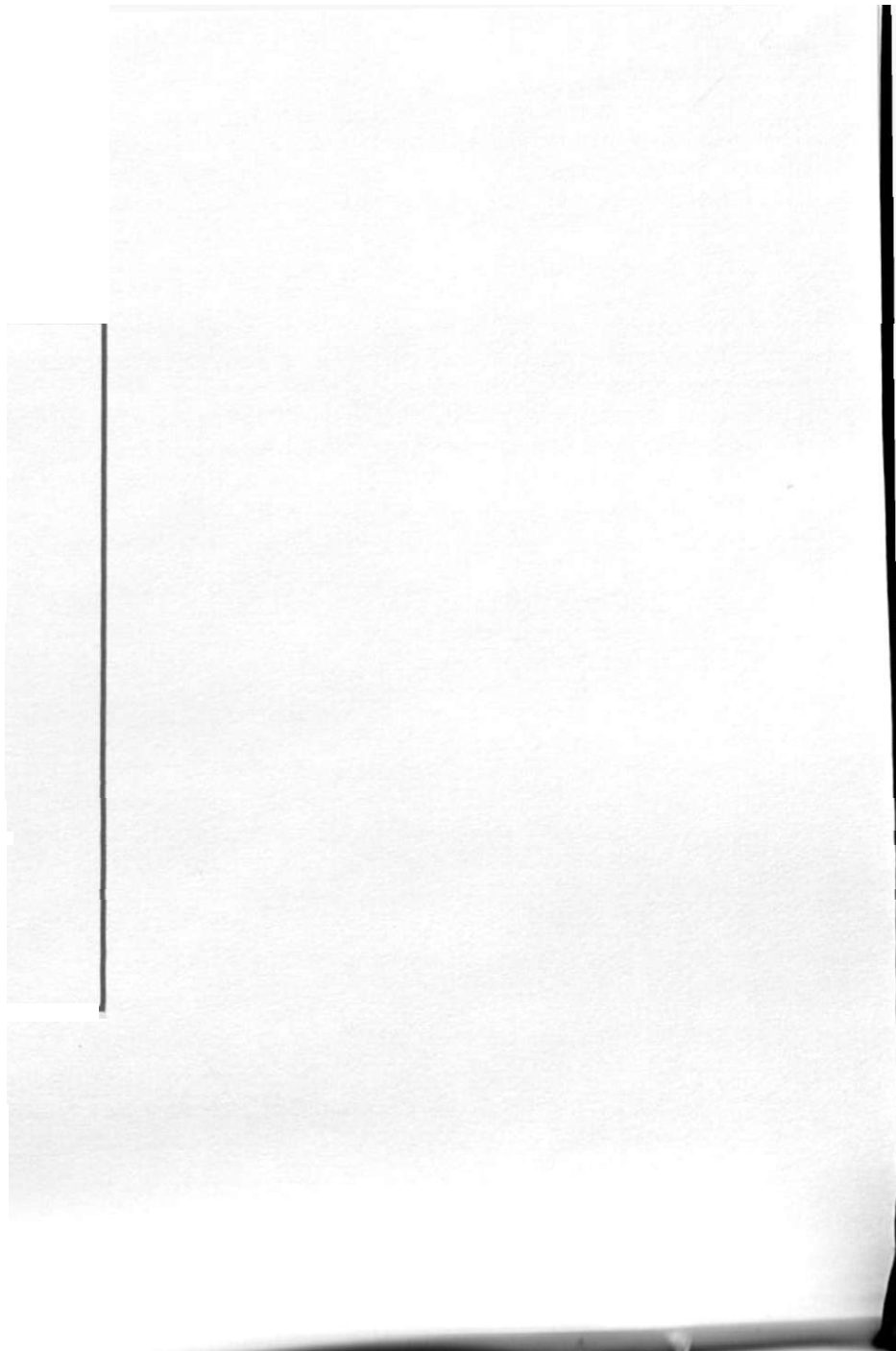
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