

**SOCIAL MEDIA UTILIZATION FOR NEWS GATHERING BY PRINT MEDIA
JOURNALISTS IN LAGOS METROPOLIS**

BY

ONYEBERECHI GLORY CHINWENDU

16020601005

**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
MOUNTAIN TOP UNIVERSITY, OGUN STATE**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this work was carried out by Onyeberechi, Glory Chinwendu at the Department of Mass Communication, Mountain Top University, Ogun State, Nigeria under my supervision.

Dr. Chinyere Mbaka

(Supervisor)

Dr. Babatunde Oni

(Head of Department)

DEDICATION

This work is humbly dedicated to God Almighty God for his divine guidance and strength to produce this work. Also to my loving parents for their support and encouragement and to all lecturers of the department of Mass communication in Mountain Top University who have instilled knowledge in me.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most profound gratitude goes to God Almighty for guiding and sustaining me throughout this programme. I would not have gone this far but for him. I am immensely grateful for his provision, good health, determination, the will power to embark on the degree program and much more.

Special appreciation to my amiable supervisor, Dr. Chinyere Mbaka, who amidst tight schedules; took out time to go through this work to make all necessary corrections. Her patience, advice, perfectionism and encouragement were of immense value in the course of this work. God bless you abundantly ma.

I also owe my appreciation to my Head of Department; Dr. Babatunde Oni who has been a father to my colleagues and I and has also had an impact on our personal and career development, other lecturers in my department; Prof. Anaeto, Dr. Oriola, Dr. Udeh, Dr. Akila, Dr. Odunlami, and Mrs. Richards for all the knowledge they have instilled in me during my four years in the institution which have helped me achieve this academic success. The good Lord shall reward you all.

I acknowledge the great efforts of my parents, Mr. Vincent Onyeberechi and Mrs. Benedicta Vincent for all the love, encouragement and spiritual, financial, material, moral support. You both shall definitely reap the fruit of your labour.

My spiritual directors are not left out, Pastor Olumide Adesina, Dr. Young Ademola and Pastor Olumide Tanimowo. God bless you all for your wonderful prayers, friendship and words of encouragement. Your reward no doubt is in heaven. Also worthy of note are my amazing friends, course mates, co-supervisees and colleagues, especially; Olutade Sarah, Akpan Winner, Ndubisi Victory, Adediran Bosede, Otiotio Emmanuel, Ebhota Ruth, Abraham Victor, Oludayo Dolapo, Kayode-Joseph Daniel, Chidebelu Chinaza, Somesi Michael, Folorunso Enoch, Adegbola Damilola, Arungbemi Bunmi, Agbabiaka Remilekun, Olusesi Yinka. I say a huge thank you to all of you for being there for me. You all shall exceed limits and excel in all endeavours.

To those who contributed directly or indirectly to the accomplishment of this work, I say thank you. You all are great and I wish you all God's blessings.

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ABSTRACT

The growth of social media has incontrovertibly charted new frontiers for conventional journalists. Social media platforms have not only emerged as important news platforms for the public but also useful tools for journalists. Media houses have now formed digital divisions solely tasked with operating websites and social media handles. The huge flow of information through social media platforms makes journalism more of a desk job; leaving less time for field works and research. This study sought to find out the extent to which print media journalists utilize social media for news gathering. It also examined the social media tools that print media journalists use and challenges they encounter while gathering news as well as how the information gotten from the social media is verified before dissemination. The study used questionnaire to collect data from 50 respondents who were purposively sampled. The collected data was analysed and the results presented through tables, frequencies and percentages. The findings of the study revealed that print media journalists make adequate use of social media for news gathering, twitter and YouTube are the tools used mostly by print media and credibility of the source is the challenge mostly encountered by print media journalists. The study recommended better ways of utilization of social media, enhancement of credibility of the social media content, adherence of ethical standards and policies, strict gate keeping rules to ensure quality of content.

KEYWORDS: *Social media, Utilization, News gathering, Print media, Journalists*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

With the advent of the internet, a lot of opportunities have been provided to the media profession. It has made Information processing fast and has offered new and easy ways of gathering information to reporters as well as making their reports relevant.(Uwom, 2014).“The Internet can, in principle, offer many more sources and more diverse news than any given newspaper or television channel, and allows the receiver to select according to personal interests” (McQuail, 2010, p. 419).

Kaplan & Haenlein (2011) described social media as a group of Internet-based applications that build on the technological foundations and allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. Social media can also be described as an online resource used by individuals to share content such as video, photos, images, text and many forms of exciting graphics. These resources include blogs, vlogs, social networks and many more.

For news organizations, Social media have continued to take on a major role in news processes at different levels. They are not only used to share content amongst people but also serve as a medium of connecting their news products to consumers. Their use in newsrooms has challenged the standing definitions of mass communication as the lines between personal and mass media have been significantly blurred. (Elastus, 2013). Thurman (2017) opines that Social media have become an essential tool employed daily or weekly by various journalists in many countries to monitor events, find sources, and verify information.

Through a study based on editorial survey, Jennifer Alejandro (2010) found that newsrooms use social media networks mostly for breaking news and making a presence in the social media sphere. The survey showed that journalists are beginning to exploit social media to gather, receive, collect and share news and they need to be competent to cope with the change. The job of news gathering has indeed been made less tasking by social media as reporters do not necessarily have to be very mobile to get reports, they can surf the net and also subscribe to big news agencies to keep their reports fresh. Also, when there is an international event, the media

house can view it live on the net and must not necessarily send a reporter to that location to get news. (Uwom, 2014).

The scope of the reach of social media, the extent to which they are used and the quantity and form of content uploaded by users have made them a unique resource, with the information that is of interest to a wide range of users including journalists.(Thurman, 2017).

The main purpose of this study is to establish the extent social media is being utilized for news gathering by print media journalists and the challenges encountered as well.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The rise of social media platforms reflect a new phase of the revolution and development of new media in the globalized world (Adegbilero-Iwari & Ikenwe, 2014). Social media have had an impact on news gathering processes among the traditional or mainstream media like television, radio and newspapers. News is that which those who contribute to its production make it. The social actors involved in the construction of news have grown and expanded beyond the newsroom leading to the extension of the locus of news production. Reporters do not necessarily need to travel far as they can have correspondents give them up-to-date information from anywhere. Reporters do not need to go a far distance to gather news due to the availability of social media and content.

However, the use of social media in the print media sector has some detrimental consequences. The internet is considered to be a threat to media professionalism in the sense that while journalists are trying to gather and send news across quickly before it gets stale, there is the tendency of unchecked facts. In an attempt to generate news quickly and compete for scoops, it could lead to facts not being verified and can result to the spread of fake news.

Also the spread of fake news prompted the Nigerian Senate to introduce the Protection from Internet Falsehoods and Manipulations and Other Related Matters Bill 2019, which is also known as the Social Media Bill. The idea behind the introduction of the bill is to curb the spread of misinformation and fake news in Nigeria, which has undermined the unity of the nation, according to the Nigerian Senate. This study therefore seeks to find out the extent to which social

media is utilized for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos and how the information gotten from the social media is verified to avoid disseminating fake news.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To analyse the extent of usage of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos.
2. To determine the social media tools that print media journalists use to access and gather news.
3. To find out the challenges encountered by print media journalists while gathering news from the social media.
4. To ascertain how the news information gathered from the social media is verified before dissemination.

1.4 Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the extent of the use of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos metropolis?
2. What are the social media tools used by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis to gather news?
3. What are the challenges encountered by the print media journalists while gathering news from the social media?
4. How is the news information gathered from the social media verified before dissemination?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study aims to bring to light, the potentials that abound in news gathering using the social media and the advantages of social media use for news gathering by news organizations. It will highlight the opportunities and challenges the social media networks provide in news gathering and find out how news can be verified to avoid gathering and disseminating fake news. The findings will be useful to new organizations that seek to gather first hand news on social media platforms. The findings of this research will also add to the plethora of existing literatures on the subject matter and act as a handy material for students who may have interest in researching further on the topic.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study “Social media utilization for news gathering by print media journalists” is confined to Nigeria media space narrowed down to the Lagos metropolis. This will assist in getting a true perspective on the utilization of social media and the kind of challenges faced by print media journalists in Nigeria in their day to day efforts at news gathering. The findings of this study will be based on the data collected (questionnaire) from print media journalists.

1.7 Definition of Terms

For a proper understanding of this work, key terms used are defined based on their conceptual relevance to this study.

Social Media

Internet based tools that give users quick electronic communication of content.

Print Media

A medium of mass communication in form of printed publications like newspapers and magazines.

Utilization

The act of making effective use of something.

News

Noteworthy information that has happened recently.

News Gathering

The process of researching and collecting news for broadcast.

Journalist

A trained professional who collects, writes edits and processes news.

News Correspondent

An on-scene reporter who verifies the situation of things and relays the news.

News Blogger Someone who writes and reports informational news, videos and pictures relevant to a society on a blog.

News room

The central place where journalists work to gather news.

Citizen Journalism

The act of someone who is not trained professionally as a journalist to actively take part in the process of gathering, investigating, reporting and sharing news and information.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Review

This chapter reviews various literatures related to the area of study. To provide academic background and empirical support to this study and also to make this work comprehensive, the literature will be reviewed under the following concepts: Defining Social Media, Traditional media versus social media, Print Media, News Journalism, Social media & News gathering, Social media and Fake News.

2.1.1 Defining Social media

According to Belch (2009), social media is the future of communication. It is a place where there are countless collection of internet based tools and platforms that increase and enhance information sharing. For Huang & Benyoucef (2013), social media refers to Internet-based applications constructed on Web 2.0, while Web 2.0 refers to a concept as well as a platform for harnessing collective intelligence.”

Social media is basically any online tool that allows for the production, publication and sharing of content material online and fosters interaction. Popular examples of social media applications include Flickr, Instagram, Wikipedia, Twitter, Facebook, Blogs, You Tube, Tik Tok, Telegram, Palm chat and many more.

Ron Jones (the President of Symmetric Internet Marketing) expressed that social media is basically an online media category where people chat, engage, share, network and bookmark online. Most social media platforms promote dialogue, input, views, voting, comments and information sharing from all stakeholders.

In general, social media are inter-connected computer tools that enable users to share ideas, information, images, videos and even more with each other through technological networked devices and are viewed as a key communication tool in media and other organizations. From the above ideas on social media terms, it is evident that the engine of social media evolution is the advancement of internet.

Social media is best understood as a community of new forms of online media that share most or all of the following features:

- Participation: Social media fosters input, feedback and contributions from everyone who is interested.
- Openness: Most social media platforms are open to feedback and participation. They encourage feedback and the sharing of information. There are rarely any barriers to having access and making use of content.
- Conversation: Whereas traditional media provides a one way communication mechanism, social media is better seen as an arena for two-way interaction.
- Community: Social media allows groups to form quickly, share common interests and communicate effectively.

Looking at the above, social media possess some distinct features that separate it from traditional media. Therefore, social media rapidly becomes an important and powerful means of communication through internet overriding. Above all, according to Alejandro (2010), what makes social media of peculiar interest to journalism is how it has become influential as a tool for communication and breaking news. This means that users of social media will announce their current events as breaking news like professional journalists do.

2.1.2 Traditional Media versus Social Media

Traditional Media includes radio, television, newspapers, magazines, and other print publications. Social media tools include among others, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Wikipedia, Flickr, Whatsapp, MySpace, Instagram, and LinkedIn. These are the latest wave of digital, computerized, or networked information and communication technologies that use internet connection.

Traditional media and social media provide information. Social media have become more popular through social interaction using Internet and Web based technologies. People share various forms of personal experiences ranging from life stories to the value of a product or service purchased via social media. Traditional media such as radio, television, newspaper, to name a few, could be presented with challenges such as high expenses and restrictions on access

to archived content. On the other hand, social media often only requires internet access as specialization is not a requirement for the generation of social media content.

Along a comparable line, Craig (2009) opines that the Internet has changed a great deal about how news is generated and transmitted. Journalists now can do their work on their own. Although several journalists still work in news organizations, it is not certain how long that will continue to be the case.

The emergence of alternative media is transforming the media business landscape. Social media thus shifts the flow of news from the traditional media to digital journalism. According to Kleis, Cornia, and Kalogeropoulos, (2016), many people get news via digital media and increasingly access news through mobile devices especially smart phones and also rely on social media and other service providers in terms of how they access and find news. Furthermore, Cheney Thomas (2013) notes that the rise of social media has brought major changes to journalism. Journalists find news by using trending hash tags to see what politicians and other group of people are writing and discussing about. As complexities emerge in the age of social media, new social media tools are developed to find story leads, verify facts, share news, and fuel interest. These valuable journalistic tools promote the incorporation of social media into newsrooms, eventually affecting the structural, functional, and ethical dimensions of professional journalism.

2.1.3 Social Media Tools

Social media tools are the facilities that are utilized in the internet space interacting with a wide range of people. The different social media platforms and the functions they perform all fall under social media tools. Hester Group (2010, as cited in Yamamichi (2011, p. 5), expressed five sub-categories of Social Media:

1. Social News (Digg, Twitter, Slashdot)
2. Social Networking (Facebook, MySpace, Orkut)
3. Social Sharing (YouTube, Flickr, Tumblr)
4. Social Bookmarking (StumbleUpon, Delicious, Meneame), and
5. Social knowledge (Wikipedia, YahooAnswers, Squidoo).

Also, Cann (2011) also clarified types of social media terms by splitting three domains into sub categories i.e., communication, collaboration and multimedia.

The first communication domain includes:

1. Social networking: Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace
2. Blogging: Blogger, LiveJournal, TypePad, WordPress
3. Micro blogging: Twitter, Yammer, Google Buzz
4. Aggregators: Google Reader, Netvibes, Pageflakes, iGoogle;
5. Location: Foursquare, Gowalla, Facebook Places.

The second Collaboration domain includes:

1. Social bookmarking: Delicious, Diigo, BibSonomy
2. Social news: Digg, Reddit, Newsvine
3. Wikis: PBworks, Wetpaint, Wikia
4. Social documents: Google Docs, Dropbox, Zoho
5. Project management: Bamboo, Basecamp, Huddle
6. Social bibliography: CiteULike, Mendeley; and
7. Conferencing: Adobe Connect, GoToMeeting, Skype.

The third multimedia domain includes:

1. Live streaming: Justin.tv, Livestream, Ustream
2. Photographs: Flickr, Picasa, SmugMug
3. Video: Viddler, Vimeo, YouTube
4. Presentation sharing: Scribd, SlideShare, Slidrocket; and
5. Virtual worlds: OpenSim, Second Life, World of Warcraft.

As mentioned above, typology of social media are ambiguous, though the functions of all social media promote communication for interaction in different ways.

2.1.4 Print Media/Print Media Journalism

Print media is one of the earliest forms of mass media. Humans in early times communicated through writing and drawing on surfaces. According to Oxford reference, Print media is broadly any written or pictorial form of communication produced mechanically or electronically. In terms of format, printed mass media in detail includes newspapers, magazines, books, fliers, newsletters, fliers, bulletins etc. Print media/journalism evolves with the introduction of paper and print technology and some of its characteristics are:

- The contents of the message are printed, can be read anywhere and anytime
- Message content can be read repeatedly

- Writing is limited to columns and pages
- It is periodic and usually limited by days, weeks, months
- The language is usually formal
- The sentences can usually be long and detailed

Print media and journalism today is threatened by the presence of broadcast media as well as social media. However it is still very important in present journalism as well as mass media because of some certain demography which subscribe to it.

2.1.5 News Journalism

Journalism is an industry and information is one of its raw materials. Information undergoes a variety of refining processes before it is manufactured as a product in its final form which is the printed or broadcast news item Ura(1992). Also Ura (1992) pointed out that most novice media practitioners restrict their efficacy by overlooking this manufacturing process which are in four stages. The first process is source; the origin of information. The second is selection – why and how journalists decide to report certain stories and disregard others. Coverage is the third and it involves the time journalists go out to the field to research the information. The final stage, preparation, deals with the news item from the moment it leaves the journalist's computer to the point at which no further alterations of form or content takes place.

News is both a product and a point of view in its nature. As a product, Hough (2004) claims that news is gathered, processed, packaged, and sold by newspapers, news services, news magazines and other periodicals as well as by radio, television and cable stations and networks.

This implies that news is not a finished product by its nature; rather it is compiled, sorted out and arranged before dissemination. More so, news is a point of view. According to Hough (2004), news is what people want to know; whatever interests them, whatever contributes to their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Nowadays, both media professionals and audiences are struggling for the quality of news in a digital environment where print media, broadcast media and internet based social media platforms abound. The 5 Ws and an H is the crux of all news: Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How? A good news story provides answers to each of these questions.

2.1.6 Social media and News gathering

In a technically advanced world and from the standpoint of global village that we find ourselves, there is need for news gathering to be carried out through another technological system known as the social media. The import of Social media on news gathering cannot be overemphasized as events happening live at our back yard can be covered for the world at large to see via media channels such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Tiktok, Twitter and the likes.

As a result of the advent of social media, orthodox institutional media no longer have sole authority to news production (Folorunso,2010). This has led to the paradigmatic shift and the redefinition of the phase of journalism in Nigeria and the world at large.

Social media and user-generated content are constantly at the core of the process; they shape the strategic course and practice of journalism. (Newman,2009). According to Raymond and Lu (2011), journalists are turning to Facebook and other social media platforms to gain information which would assist them in their story research and investigation. Despite fears that the internet is threatening journalism, scholars are now convinced that the emergence of social media complements journalism. Newman (2009: 42) argued that ‘there is growing consensus that citizen journalism and social media are not going to replace mainstream media, but will be complementary to it’.

A valuable number of journalists are discovering that social media can be good sources for leads, research and even breaking news that the mainstream media can pick up on and amplify. Therefore, Social media continues to generate greater influence among journalists and their audience. Social media has become the first point of call when people seek to know what's happening around them.

2.1.7 Social Media and Fake News

Social media utilization has been increasing social interaction beyond one's boundary and enriches users in generating information. Tiryakioglu and Erzurum (2011) pointed that social network sites offer several possibilities such as socialization of individuals, ability to communicate with people living anywhere in the world, ability to be a member of a group which may not have been possible in real life due to geographical and physical constraints, self-expression and the ability to receive information and share it.

Thanks to new technology, anyone can freely provide any information without recourse to the concept of journalism as an advocacy of truthfulness. According to Stovall (2005), the culture of journalism is the concept of honesty, objectivity, persistence and competition. Journalists must approach their jobs with an honest frame of mind, seeing what they do as a public service rather than as a way of making money.

According to Allcott and Gentzkow (2016), In comparison to previous media technologies, social media networks have a radically different structure. With no significant third-party filtering, fact-checking or editorial judgment, content can be relayed among users. Therefore, social media contents are determined only by users rather than gatekeepers. The reason is that, social media information has no regulation; consequently, users can provide whatever comes to their mind be it right or wrong. Therefore, the free flow of social media news through an open door for everyone can result in the spread of fake news. Shu & Sliva (2017,) pointed out that Social media is a double-edged sword for news consumption. Its cheapness, quick access and rapid distribution of news lead people to look for social media news. On the other hand, it enables the wide spread of “fake news”.

Weedon, Nuland and Stamos (2017) revealed that the term “fake news” has emerged as a catch-all phrase to refer to everything from news articles that are factually incorrect. The overuse and misuse of the term “fake news” can be problematic because we cannot recognize or adequately resolve these concerns without common definition.

Silverman (2016) says that most popular fake news stories were more widely shared on Facebook than most popular mainstream news stories. Since most fake news contributors are intentionally eager to motivate audiences, they get many followers, but conventional media do not encourage it without verification.

According to Allcott and Gentzkow (2016), fake news arises in equilibrium because of the following reasons:

- It is cheaper to deliver than precise signals, consumers cannot infer accuracy costlessly, and consumers can enjoy partisan news.
- For some consumers, fake news may generate utility but it also imposes private and social costs by making it more difficult for consumers to infer the true state of the world.

- The flexible form of producing and disseminating fake news through different media platforms are affecting news consumers, and has also led to the devaluation of the journalism arena.

According to Shu & Sliva (2017, p. 1), “The extensive spread of fake news has the potential for extremely negative impacts on individuals and society.” This shows that wide spread of fake news is negatively affecting consumers. Therefore, news making in the mainstream media organizations and through online social media production should follow journalistic principles and facts should be verified before dissemination.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

New Media Theory

This theory concerns itself with how the advent of new media has affected the media landscape. Manovich (2001) points to new media in the 21st Century as the biggest revolution in the history of media. He argues that while the printing press in the fourteenth century and photography in the nineteenth century had a transformative influence on the development of modern society and culture, today, we are in the midst of a new media revolution – the shift of all culture to computer-mediated forms of production, distribution, and communication.

Manovich (2001) argues that this new revolution is more profound than the previous ones, and we are just beginning to register its initial effects. Indeed, the introduction of the printing press affected only one stage of cultural communication – the distribution of media. Similarly, the introduction of photography affected only one type of cultural communication -still images. In contrast, the computer media revolution affects all stages of communication, including acquisition, manipulation, storage, and distribution. It also affects all types of media (texts, still images, moving images, sound, and spatial constructions).

A key concept in journalism is that of objectivity, yet new technological changes are not making it easier for journalists to achieve this objectivity. An active awareness of (the potential added value of) new media technologies and cultural plurality makes the core value of objectivity more complex (Deuze, 2005).

Nyabuga and Booker (2013) weigh in on the question of gate keeping as it relates to traditional journalism practices of fairness and accuracy arguing that in online journalism, the virtues

associated with accuracy, truth, impartiality, ethics, fairness, balance, respect for autonomy of ordinary people are barely respected.

Although new technologies have affected the amount of information and the rate of reception, it is not clear whether these have had any significant effect on the quality of information and news. There are claims that rising competition and the obsession to provide exclusive news may have negatively affected the quality, reliability, and validity of information. Although immediacy is important particularly among audiences which want to know what is going on around the country, sometimes the media houses do not have the time, capacity, or other resources to authenticate the information sent out as breaking news. This means the new technologies may in fact contribute to unreliable and raw information that may affect the credibility of established or conventional news media organizations to provide reliable news. (Nyabuga and Booker, 2013: 27)

Newsgathering capabilities and interaction with audiences has seen a massive transformation, on the other hand is the question of traditional journalism values being compromised on the altar of immediacy. Deuze (2005) writes that within the news organization, a perceived essential by-product of convergence, multimedia's careful embrace of interactivity as well as a merging of different cultures (print, broadcast, online; 'hard' and 'soft' news, marketing and editorial) challenges the individual professional with various perceptions of objectivity. Although these developments are welcome in a fast-changing media environment, the quality and even credibility and reliability of news and information are sometimes questionable (Nyabuga and Booker, 2013). Scholars like Klinenberg (2005) argue that more attention needs to be paid to examine how organizations responsible for producing the news and information work.

This study seeks to shed some light on the utilization of social media for news gathering by print media journalists, while at the same time establishing how they verify information gathered from social media so as to avoid disseminating fake news.

2.3 Empirical Review.

According to a study carried out by Jennifer Alejandro in 2010 in the University of Oxford, it was revealed that journalists are beginning to leverage on social media to receive, gather and distribute news, and they need to be multi-skilled to cope with the change. In the area of news and information, Alejandro (2010) argues that social media has not only revolutionised news

consumption habits of media audiences but also has had an impact on news gathering processes among the traditional or mainstream media - television, radio and newspapers.

A study carried out by Didiugwu, Ezugwu and Ekwe in 2015 assessed the use of social media by journalists in Nigeria. Three hundred and ninety-nine registered journalists in South East Nigeria were used as respondents in the study and findings showed that Nigerian journalists make adequate use of the social media. Also a study by Zakaria and Ofori-Birikorang (2018) carried out in Ghana show how social media has become vital in news gathering within media organisations. They appear to be leveraging the significance the social media platforms provide for information collection or news gathering in order to facilitate their work.

It is pertinent to know that the importance of social media in this current dispensation for journalism cannot be overemphasized. Social media usage is growing each day as revealed by the studies highlighted above. Therefore, this research seeks to explore the dynamics of Social media utilization for Newsgathering among print media journalists in Lagos metropolis.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Haralambos and Holborn (2004) described research methods as systematic way of producing knowledge through which finding of a study are either acceptable or rejected. This chapter describes how the study was conducted. It presents issues such as research method, population, sample size as well as sampling technique. Other important issues considered here are the research instrument, administration of research instrument as well as method of data analysis adopted.

3.1 Research Design

Nworgu (2001) defines research design as a plan or blue print which specifies how data relating to a given problem should be collected and analyzed. It provides the procedure for the conduct of any given investigation.

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. Ohaja (2003) explains that survey is a study of the characteristics of a sample through questioning that enables the researcher to make generalization concerning the population of interest. The descriptive survey was adopted for this study because of its suitability in studies that deal with public perception.

3.2 Population

The study location for this study was Lagos with a population of over 20 million people. However, the population target for this study was print media journalists.

3.3 Sampling Technique

Sampling technique is the means through which respondents are selected for the study. This is the procedure through which respondents will be chosen for the study.

This study adopted the purposive sampling technique. According to Neuman (2011: 267), purposive sampling is a non-random sample in which the researcher uses a wide range of

methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population. Purposive sampling (also known as judgmental sampling) is a valuable sampling type for special situations. This sampling technique allows a researcher to use cases that have the required information with respect to the objectives of his or her study.

According to Patton (2002), Purposeful sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases whose study illuminate the questions under study. Therefore, subjects are handpicked because they are informative or they possess the required characteristics. In this case, Purposive sampling technique was used to pick 50 respondents who are information-rich to represent the media professionals (print media journalists) in the location of research.

3.4 Sample Size

A sample is a smaller representation of the larger population. It allows the researcher to choose in such a way that all the elements in a population are well represented. The proposed sample size for this study was anchored on the quantitative method. The sample size for the study was 50. The sample size afforded the researcher the time and the ability to reach all respondents within the limited time frame within which the study was carried out. The sample size was manageable enough in terms of gathering accurate, reliable and valid data for proper generalization of research findings on behalf of the whole population.

3.5 Research Instrument

The main instrument used to gather data for this study was the Questionnaire. This is one of the major research instruments in gathering information in social research. It is a list of series of written questions designed by a researcher which is to be served to respondents to elicit adequate information from them in order to fulfil the objectives of the study and also answer the research questions. Fifty copies of the questionnaire (**online survey questionnaire**) were administered to respondents for the study.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

(Allen & Yen, 1979) as cited in Rosemary (2013), defined validity as the level to which the instrument measures what it is meant to measure. Validity refers to the degree which the

instrument fully measures the study of interest. The questionnaire was reviewed by the supervisor who assessed all the features and component parts of the questionnaire for grammatical and ambiguity errors.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The research employed the use of questionnaire as a data collecting instrument. The questionnaire was structured in an online survey format and was distributed to the respondents on the internet via hypertext links. A Google form was created for the online survey and sent to the respondents to fill.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to the way in which the collected data will be presented and interpreted in a meaningful way and in which explanations are given for observations (Soyombo, 2003). The method of data analysis used for this study was the quantitative method.

Data generated from the questionnaire was scientifically processed through the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The quantitative data obtained was evaluated through uni-variate mode of analysis. The uni-variate analysis described and explained the variation in single variables, simple percentages, frequencies and tables.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents analysis and findings of the study as set out in the research methodology. The study findings are presented to examine social media utilization for news gathering by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis. The data was gathered entirely from the questionnaire as the research instrument. The socio-demographic data of the respondents were analysed to provide an insight of the type of respondents who participated in the study. Other sections of the data analysis were done in congruence with the research objectives.

4.1. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

4.1.1. Response Rate

The study targeted 50 respondents in collecting data with regard to social media utilization for news gathering by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis. From the study, all 50 respondents filled-in the questionnaires making a 100% response rate.

4.1.2. Analysis of Section A (Demographic Data)

The study sought to determine the demographic profile of the respondents by establishing the gender of the respondents, marital status, age, and years of experience as a print media journalist. The findings were discussed in the subsequent findings below.

4.1.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The researcher classified the respondents according to their gender to get representation from both genders hence eliminating biasness. The findings were as represented in table 4.1

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	24	48%
Female	26	52%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

From table 4.1, demographic and personal data of the respondents as shown by gender revealed that 24 (48%) of respondents were male, while 26 (52%) were female. This shows that female respondents participated more in the study than male respondents did. This also means that the representation of the respondents in this survey was unbiased.

4.1.2.2 Marital Status of Respondents

The researcher sought to establish the marital status of the respondents. The findings are represented in table 4.2 below;

Table 4.2: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	35	69%
Married	15	31%
Separated/Divorce	0	0%
Widowed	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

From table 4.2, the profile of respondents by marital status shows that 35 (69%) of the respondent surveyed were single, while 15 (31%) surveyed were married, 0 (0%) surveyed were separated/divorced, and 0 (0%) were widowed. Therefore, majority of the respondents were single.

4.1.2.3 Age of Respondents

The researcher sought to establish the age distribution of the respondents. The findings are represented in the table 4.3 below;

Table 4.3: Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-25 years	12	24%
26-30 years	29	58%
31-35 years	7	14%
36-40 years	2	4%
41 years and above	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

From table 4.3, demographic data for age shows that 12 (24%) of the respondents were in the age group of 18-25 years, 29 (58%) were in the age group of 26-30 years, 7 (14%) were between the ages of 31-35 years, 2 (4%) were between the ages of 36-40 years, while 0 (0%) of respondents were 41 years and above. Therefore, according to this result, majority of the respondents were in the age group of 26-30 years, which represented 58% of the sample.

4.1.2.4. Years of Experience

The researcher sought to establish the years of experience of the respondents as a print media journalist. The findings are represented in table 4.3 below;

Table 4.4: Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than a year	15	29%
1-5 years	23	45%
6-10 years	8	16%
Above 10 years	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

From table 4.4, demographic data for years of experience shows that 15 (29%) of the respondents had less than a year of experience, 23 (45%) had 1-5 years of experience, 8 (16%) had 6-10 years of experience, while 5 (10%) of respondents had experience of above 10 years. Therefore, according to this result, majority of the respondents had 1-5 years of experience, which represented 45% of the sample.

4.1.2. Analysis of Section B

Research Question 1

What is the extent of usage of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos?

To answer this question, items 1, 2, 3 4 and 5 of the questionnaire were examined.

Item 1: Are you on Social Media?**Table 4.5: Social Media Presence**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	100%
No	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

From Table 4.5, all 50 respondents indicated that they were on social media. This represents 100% of the research sample.

Item 2: How is your knowledge of Social media?**Table 4.6: The extent of the respondents' knowledge of social media**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	34	68%
Good	14	28%
Fair	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.6 shows the level of respondents' knowledge of social media. 34 (68%) of the respondents had a very good knowledge of social media, 14 (28%) of the respondents had a good experience of social media while 2 (4%) had a fair knowledge of social media. The results above shows that majority of the respondents had a very good knowledge of social media, which represented 68% of the sample.

Item 3: Which type of media do you prefer for news gathering?**Table 4.7: Type of media preferred for news gathering**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional media	13	26%
Social media	37	74%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.7 shows the type of media the respondents prefer. A total of 13 (26%) respondents preferred the traditional media while 37 (74%) respondents preferred the social media.

Item 4: Do you gather news using social media?**Table 4.8: Response to whether the respondents gather news using social media or not**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	47	94%
No	2	4%
Don't know	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

The table above shows whether the respondents gather news using social media or not. The results shows that majority of the respondents gather news using social media which accounted for 94% of the sample, 2 (4%) of the respondents do not gather news using social media while 1 (2%) of the respondents don't know if they gather news using social media.

Item 5: How often do you gather news on social media?**Table 4.9: Level of News gathering on Social media**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	19	38%
Often	24	48%
Hardly	7	14%
Never	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.9 shows how often the respondents gather news on social media. Nineteen (38%) of the respondents gather news very often, 24 (48%) of the respondents gather news often on social media, 7 (14%) hardly gather news on social media, while 0 (0%) never gather news on social media. This result also indicates that majority of the respondents often gather news on social media which represented 48% of the sample.

Research Question 2

What are the social media tools that print media journalists use to access and gather news?

To answer this question, items 6and 7 of the questionnaire were examined.

Item 6: How knowledgeable are you with the use of social media tools for gathering news?

Table 4.10 Level of Knowledge of Social media tools for news gathering

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	22	44%
Good	26	52%
Fair	2	4%
Don't know	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.10 shows how knowledgeable the respondents are with the use of social media tools for gathering news. A total of 22 (44%) respondents are very good with the use of social media tools for gathering news, 26 (52%) of the respondents are good with the use of social media tools for gathering news, 2 (4%) are fair with the use of social media tools for gathering news, while 0 (0%) don't know how knowledgeable they are with the use of social media tools for gathering news. This result also indicates that majority of the respondents are good with the use of social media tools for gathering news which represented 52% of the sample.

Item 7: Which of these Social media tools do you use in gathering news?

Table 4.11: Social media used in gathering news

S/N	SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS	GREAT EXTENT	SOME EXTENT	LITTLE EXTENT	NO EXTENT
1	Twitter	29	12	1	6
2	Facebook	14	13	11	12
3	Instagram	19	13	11	5
4	Blogs	13	20	11	4
5	LinkedIn	5	13	12	14
6	Youtube	15	21	8	5
7	Wikipedia	16	24	2	6

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.11 shows the responses of the social media tools used in gathering news. The result shows that majority of the respondents use Twitter to a great extent in gathering news while majority of the respondents do not use LinkedIn in gathering news.

Research Question 3

What are the challenges encountered by print media journalists while gathering news from the social media?

To answer this question, items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the questionnaire were examined.

Item 8: Do you encounter challenges while gathering news from social media?**Table 4.12: Response to whether respondents encounter challenges or not while gathering news.**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	40	80%
No	10	20%
Don't know	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

The table above shows whether the respondents encountered challenges while gathering news from social media or not. The results shows that majority (40) of the respondents encountered challenges while gathering news from social media which accounted for 80% of the sample, 10 (20%) of the respondents do not encounter challenges while gathering news from social media.

Item 9: How often do you encounter challenges while gathering news from social media?**Table 4.13 Level of challenges encountered while gathering news from social media**

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very often	8	16%
Often	27	54%
Hardly	13	26%
Never	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.13 shows how often the respondents encounter challenges while gathering news from social media. 19 (16%) of the respondents encounter challenges very often while gathering news from social media, 27 (54%) of the respondents often encounter challenges while gathering news from social media, 13 (26%) hardly encounter challenges while gathering news from social media, while 0 (0%) never encounter challenges while gathering news from social media. This result also indicates majority of the respondents often encounter challenges while gathering news from social media, which represented 54% of the sample.

Item 10: Which of these challenges do you encounter while gathering news from social media? (Tick as many as applies to you)

Table 4.14: Challenges encountered by print media journalists while gathering news from the social media

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Credibility of the news source	46	93.9%
Access to news	11	22.4%
Nature of the source	31	63.3%
Copyright issues	21	42.9%
Political challenges	7	14.3%
Cyber security issues	18	36.7%
Socio-cultural challenges	5	10.2%
Religious challenges	1	2%
Financial constraints	3	6.1%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.14 indicates the challenges encountered by the respondents while gathering news from social media. The respondents had the choice to pick more than one option from the questionnaire. This result shows that the challenge faced by majority of the respondents is credibility of the news source.

Item 11: What other challenge do you encounter while gathering news from social media?

The following are other challenges that the respondents face while gathering news from social media;

- Fake news
- Network challenge
- Data
- Credibility
- Not enough details for clarity
- Authenticity
- Finding the real source of the news
- Facts not stated clearly
- Unavailability
- Network

Item 12: Do you think the importance of gathering news from social media outweigh the challenges it poses?

Table 4.15: Responses to whether the importance of gathering news from social media outweigh the challenges it poses or not

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	31	62%
No	15	30%
Don't know	4	8%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

Table 4.15 above shows whether the importance of gathering news from social media outweighs the challenges it poses or not. The result shows that majority 31(62%) of the respondents think the importance of gathering news from social media outweigh the challenges it poses, 15 (30%) of the respondents do not think the importance of gathering news from social media outweigh the challenges it poses while 4(8%) of the respondents don't know if the importance of gathering news from social media outweighs the challenges it poses.

Research Question 4

How is the news information gathered from the social media verified before dissemination?

To answer this question, items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 of the questionnaire were examined.

Item 13: Do you verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating?

Table 4.16: Response to whether respondents verify news information from social media or not

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	32	64%
No	16	32%
Don't know	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

The table above shows whether respondents verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating or not. The result shows that majority 32(64%) of the respondents verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating. 16 (32%) of the respondents do not think verify the news information gathered from social media before

disseminating while 2(4%) of the respondents don't know if the respondents verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating.

Item 14: If YES, how do you investigate the credibility of the information before disseminating?

The following indicates how the respondents investigate the credibility of the information before disseminating;

1. Checking with the originator
2. Contacting the source and confirming the news from other courses too.
3. Through other reliable sources
4. Check mainstream media and credible sources
5. Contacting the source and confirming the news from other sources too
6. Through visual representations like photographs and videos
7. Eye witness and other news platform

Item 15: Is there an existing mechanism in the media industry where your work is verified before published?

Table 4.17

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	19	38.8%
No	15	30.6%
Don't know	15	30.6%
Total	49	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

The table above shows if there is an existing mechanism in the media industry where your work is verified before published. The result shows that majority 19 (38.8%) of the respondents indicates that there is an existing mechanism in the media industry where your work is verified before published. 15 (30.6%) of the respondents indicates that there is no existing mechanism in

the media industry where your work is verified before published, while 15 (30.6%) of the respondents indicates that they do not know if there is an existing mechanism in the media industry where your work is verified before published.

Item 16: If YES, what is the mechanism in your media organization?

The following indicates the mechanism used in media organization to verify any work before been published;

1. Filtered through other journalists and authorities
2. The editor contacts the source
3. Never discussable
4. They do have correspondents
5. Check and balance
6. Online platform of journalists
7. Investigating
8. Cannot be revealed
9. News agencies

Item 17: Do you follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating?

Table 4.18:

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	41	82%
No	4	8%
Don't know	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Source: Researcher's Analysis, 2020

The table above shows if the respondents follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating. The result shows that majority 41 (82%) of the respondents indicates that they follow the ethics and regulations laid

down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating 4 (8%) of the respondents indicates that they do not follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating, while 5 (10%) of the respondents indicates that they do not know if they follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following findings emerged in answering the research questions.

Research Question 1

What is the extent of the use of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos metropolis?

The first research question was to find out the extent of usage of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos. The respondents all use social media and according to table 4.6, 68% of respondents have a very good knowledge of social media. Also in table 4.7, 74% of respondents prefer the use of social media in gathering news, and as shown in table 4.9, majority of the respondents often gather news using social media. In the view of this, there exist satisfactory uses of social media in news gathering among print media journalist in Lagos.

This is in tandem with Alejandro (2010) study that argues that social media has not only revolutionized news consumption habits of media audiences but also has had an impact on news gathering processes among the traditional or mainstream media that include television, radio and of course newspaper(print media).

Research Question 2

What are the social media tools used by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis to gather news?

This question was to know the social media tools that print media journalists use to access and gather news. Majority of the respondents have a good knowledge of the social media tools used

in gathering news. As shown in table 4.11, majority of the respondents use Twitter and YouTube to gather news while LinkedIn is the social media tool that they hardly use in gathering news.

Research Question 3

What are the challenges encountered by the print media journalists while gathering news from the social media?

The research question attempted to seek answer to the challenges encountered by print media journalists while gathering news from the social media. According to table 4.12, 80% of respondents say they encounter challenges when gathering news using social media and 54% of respondents in table 4.13 say they experience challenges often when they engage in gathering news using social media. While they experience challenges like credibility of the news source, access to news, nature of the source, copyright issues, political challenges, cyber security issues, socio-cultural challenges, religious challenges, and financial constraints; credibility of news source is the challenge encountered most as indicated by 93.9% of respondents. The least challenge encountered is religious challenge as shown in table 4.14. Majority of the respondents went on to say that the importance of gathering news using social media outweighs its challenges as revealed in table 4.15 with 62% of respondents indicating yes.

This affirms with what Hermida(2012) implied that the rise of social media has a consequence on the editorial and ethical standards of traditional journalism.

Research Question 4

How is the news information gathered from the social media verified before dissemination?

The fourth research question attempted to know how the news information gathered from the social media is verified before dissemination. In table 4.16, 64% of respondents went on to say they verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating. They stated the following as ways in which they verify news gathered from social media

- Checking with the originator
- Contacting the source and confirming the news from other courses too.

- Through other reliable sources
- Checking mainstream media and credible sources
- Contacting the source and confirming the news from other sources too
- Through visual representations like photographs and videos
- Eye witness and other news platform

Also in table 4.17, 38.8% of the respondents indicated that there is an existing mechanism where news gets verified before being published in the media industry they work. These mechanisms include:

- Filtering through other journalists and authorities
- The editor contacts the source
- Correspondents
- Checks and balance
- Online platform of journalists
- Investigating
- News agencies

While others said their mechanism cannot be discussed nor be revealed. Majority of the respondents as high as 82% shown in table 4.18 indicated that they follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 SUMMARY

The study examined Social media utilization for news gathering by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis. The New Media theory was reviewed for the course of this study. In order to achieve the objective and answer all research questions, the primary method of data collection was adopted and the research instrument used was questionnaire. This study made use of SPSS to analyze the data. The following are the findings that originated from this study;

1. There is a great use of social media in gathering news by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis.
2. Twitter and YouTube are the social media tools used by print media journalists most of the time in gathering news.
3. A major challenge print media journalists in Lagos metropolis encounter while gathering news using social media is the credibility of the news source.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This research project concludes that social media has become part of our human existence and an important tool for news gathering by print media journalists. Although as important as social media is, the study shows that its use is not void of challenges. However the importance of gathering news using social media outweighs the challenges it poses.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

Going by the findings and conclusions above, this study draws various recommendations for print media journalists.

- Print media organizations should ensure competent personnel are trained and assigned for sourcing news on social media and editorial checks should be enhanced.

- In gathering news using social media, Print media journalists should ensure they are in alignment with the regulatory standards for procedure.
- For information to be credible and newsworthy, print media journalists should be able to properly access the credibility of the source of the news. The digital footprint of sources should be examined in order to protect the integrity of news production in the media house.
- Ethical standards and policies should be strictly adhered to by print media houses. Greater emphasis should be given to the validity and credibility of the social media content and not just fast breaking of news. Proper guidelines and policies on the usage of the media for news gathering should be provided to guarantee standards and professionalism.
- Content from the social media should be subjected to strict gate keeping rules to ensure quality and newsworthiness of the content in the media house.

5.4 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Due to the Corona Virus pandemic and lockdown, the researcher was not able to physically administer the questionnaire copies to respondents. It was administered through Google forms.

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APPENDIX

Dear Respondent,

My name is Onyeberechi Glory, a final year student of the Department of Mass Communication, Mountain Top University. I am carrying out a research on “Social media utilization for news gathering by print media journalists in Lagos metropolis” in partial requirement for the award of a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree in Mass Communication. Please kindly tick and fix in your sincere response. All answers will be treated in strict confidence and used only for academic purposes. Thank You.

SECTION A (Please tick the appropriate option)

Sex: Male Female

Marital Status: Single Married Separated/Divorced Widowed

Age: 18-25 years 26-30 years 31-35 years 36-40 years 41 years and above

Years of Experience as a print media journalist: Less than a year 1-5 years 6-10 years Above 10 years

SECTION B

Research Question 1: The extent of usage of social media for news gathering among print media journalists in Lagos.

1. Are you on Social media platforms?

- a) Yes
- b) No

2. How is your knowledge of Social media?

- a) Very good
- b) Good
- c) Fair

3. Which type of media do you prefer for news gathering?

- a) Traditional Media
- b) Social media

4. Do you gather news using Social media?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

5. How often do you gather news using Social media?

- a) Very Often
- b) Often
- c) Hardly
- d) Never

Research Question 2: Social media tools that print media journalists use to access and gather news.

6. How knowledgeable are you with the use of social media tools for gathering news?

- a) Very Good
- b) Good
- c) Fair
- d) Don't know

7. Which of these Social media tools do you use in gathering news?

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TICK IN THE APPROPRIATE CELL IN THE TABLE BELOW:

KEY: G=GREAT EXTENT, S=SOME EXTENT, L=LITTLE EXTENT, N=NO EXTENT

	G	S	L	N
Twitter				
Facebook				
Instagram				
Blogs				
LinkedIn				
Youtube				
Wikipedia				

Others, please specify _____

Research Question 3: Challenges encountered by print media journalists while gathering news from the social media.

8. Do you encounter challenges while gathering news from social media?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
 - c) Don't know
9. How often do you encounter challenges while gathering news from social media?
 - a) Very Often
 - b) Often
 - c) Hardly
 - d) Never
10. Which of these challenges do you encounter while gathering news from social media? (Tick as many as applies to you)
 - a) Credibility of the news source
 - b) Access to news

- c) Nature of the source
- d) Copyright issues
- e) Political challenges
- f) Cyber security issues
- g) Socio-Cultural challenges
- h) Religious challenges
- i) Financial constraints

11. What other challenge do you encounter while gathering news from social media?

12. Do you think the importance of gathering news from social media outweigh the challenges it poses?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Research Question 4: How the news information gathered from the social media is verified before dissemination.

13. Do you verify the news information gathered from social media before disseminating?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

14. If YES, how do you investigate the credibility of the information before disseminating?

15. Is there an existing mechanism in the media organization where you work that verifies information from social media before publishing?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

16. If YES, what is the mechanism in your media organisation?

17. Do you follow the ethics and regulations laid down by law and professional bodies on verifying information before disseminating?

- a) Yes
- b) No
- c) Don't know

Thank you for your response.

