

**The multiple uses of Social Media in Journalism: How the social media change the single-channel activities to Multi-channel communication in newsroom**

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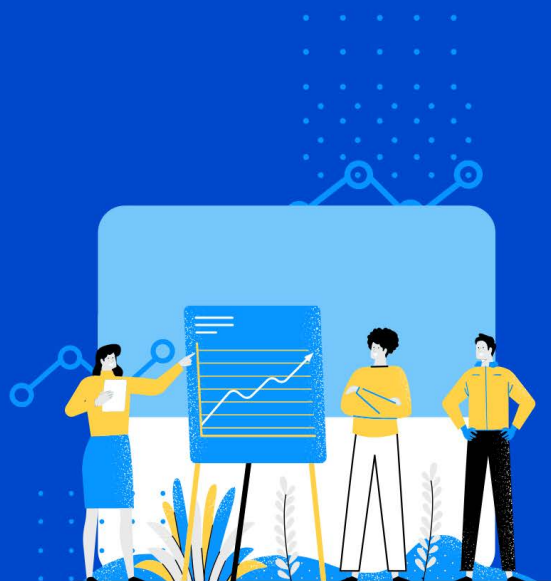
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## **Abstract**

This study looked at how multichannel communication and use of social media strategies by newsrooms are viewed by the audience. The study used quantitative methods to collect data through questionnaires. The results of the study have established that publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms. It was also established that the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news. The study also finds evidence that the way news is presented (articles, photos, and videos) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares. The implications of the results are discussed in the research.

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## 1 Chapter 1: Introduction

The internet has a long history with journalism, from the 1970s and 1980s where the early attempts failed, but were successful on a global scale as from the early 1990s (Noci, 2013). From then on, the use of online platforms in journalism has increased to accommodate social media as from the mid-2000s. The use of social media has opened up new possibilities in journalism and reporting, to result in having multi-channel communication strategies and tools for reporting (Heravi and Harrower, 2016).

Journalists are able to use different social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter as well as different tools such as computers and smartphones in their daily work. Therefore, new strategies in the newsrooms have become realities with endless possibilities. These strategies would that have different characteristics, different ways of application, as well as varying impact based on how the journalists utilise the social media and the impact on the communication between newsroom and public

One of the strategies resulting from use of social media by journalists in the newsrooms is as a platform to publish news stories. More than 80% of journalists have an official social media account linked and acknowledge by news organisations they work for and with according to (Djerf-Pierre, Gherseti and Hedman, 2016). These social media sites have different uses, but the main strategy is to ensure that a story is published as quickly as possible to reach as many people.

One advantage among many of using the strategy of publishing a story on social media is that it can get instant responses (John and Silberstein-Loeb, 2015), thus creating an environment of communication that is engaging and meaningful through the ability to get what the news readers think almost immediately (Molyneux, 2015).

Another impact is that the story can reach as many people as possible to generate more awareness, especially when the story is linked to the mainstream news delivery channels. The more the people talk about a story published on social media, the wider the reach journalists and news organisations have. For example, the BBC is has various mainstream news delivery channels such as radio and television. If the BBC publishes a story or part of a story on social

media, it might be likely that people would be interested in following up more of the story on the mainstream news channels. More certainly, the story would have been viewed by many more people when combining the different channels. Therefore, the use of social media can have an impact of enhancing awareness and attracting more people based on the multi-channel ability to engage as a result of social media publishing.

The second strategy is use of social media by journalists in newsrooms is during the news production and daily work. Social media present a unique opportunity to journalists to get lead on stories (Stassen, 2010), check the progress of developing stories from different sources (Kim and Lowrey, 2015), while accessing content generated by users (Prenger and Deuze, 2017). The increase in amount of videos, pictures, texts and other forms of information that many social media users post online has become a source of stories or information to some degree. Therefore, journalists can extract information from social media at different levels to form a story or part of a story.

## 1.1 Justification

With social media playing an increasingly significant role in journalism, the utilisation of the tool has become strategic for newsrooms, multiple channels of communication directly with news readers are now available thanks to social media, and there is bound to be an increase in interactions.

Numerous researches have been done on the use of social media by journalists, even with specific types of social media used as case studies. For example, (Vis, 2013) explains that Twitter has been used by journalists as a tool for reporting breaking news such as the 2011 UK riots among many other events live. However, there is a gap in research in terms of how these strategies of social media use (news publishing and news production) have impacted the communication in newsrooms. Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of these strategies through aspects like transformation from a single channel of communication to multi-channelling ability to reach readers in many ways at the same time would be crucial, especially from the perspective of the audience.

This research will contribute to the body of knowledge on how social media in a news organisation applies these strategies, and unveil in depth understanding of the outcomes in multi-

channel communication from what news readers on social media will explain. The research will help other news organizations plan how to effectively further use social media to help news production and communicate with readers in more dimensions to maximize benefits and avoid pitfalls, especially given that the news content is generated for the news readers. Hearing directly from the audience can help many news organisations adjust their use of strategies to fit how the social media users reading news like to.

The strategies used in newsrooms are aimed at making sure there is maximum interaction with the audience. Therefore, this research will investigate the various ways the audience interacts with and reacts to the news they see on social media. By understanding how the audience views the transmission of news via multimedia communication, the journalists could have a better understanding of how to strategically place their news and how to better utilise social media to create awareness and inform the audience.

## **1.2 Aim and objectives**

The aim of the dissertation is to find how the strategies used in social media communication by journalists in newsrooms work in detail when communicating with the audience. Through examining the characteristics of social media based on how the audience views news, as well as their impact and influence with regard to multichannel communication. The influence of social media seen through the audience reading different types of news is crucial to understanding how multichannel communication influences editorial decisions

The following are the research objectives:

1. To analyse the different social media strategies applied by journalists in newsrooms
2. To find out the user perception of social media strategies used by newsrooms when making editorial decisions
3. To examine research on the interaction and communication between newsrooms and readers when they read news through social media
4. To investigate how readers view news transmission through such multimedia channels.



### **1.3 Research question**

The following is the research question:

What is the influence and impact of social media strategies used by journalists on communication with the public?

## **2 Chapter 2: Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Journalism is an aspect within the society that is established and has been done in a manner that can be familiar to many for a long time. Journalism typically operates out of media organisations where stories are verified and published through media platforms. However, the emergence of technology has led to changes through the emergence of social media as a tool and as a platform. Journalists and their audiences alike can now access social media and view news. With the emergence of more powerful technology such as clouds, live news is now a common aspect allowing not just posting of news pieces and photos, but also live videos as events happen. Numerous media organisations from television to newspapers have adopted social media on different levels as a strategy and as a platform, primarily to increase the reach and communication to their audiences. This literature will analyse the views based on previous research and different perspectives of various researchers.

### **2.2 Relationship between journalism and the internet**

The internet has a long history with journalism, and has evolved from the 1970s from a series of failed upstarts in making newsrooms full digital, to the current possibilities where some news organisations are completely based online. According to (Prenger and Deuze, 2017), one of the earliest attempts at digital news was in the early 1970s when Teletext system. The system contained brief and instant pieces of news that readers chose from a list of news articles. This information was broadcast through the VBI (Vertical Blanking Interval).

Another attempt at online journalism was in 1979 when British newspapers used the videotext system to bring stories from newspapers to the readers through an online method. However, this system failed in 1986 in Britain, with the main reason cited as lack of meeting user demands (John and Silberstein-Loeb, 2015). After the failure of the British videotext system, American corporations created their own version in 1981. Similar to the British system, the American videotext systems were all closed by 1986 (Stephens, 2007).

One of the more relatively successful attempts at a lasting online solution for journalism was the computer Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) in the late 1980s (Kawamoto, 2003). Telephone modems and BBS software was used to distribute online news by small newspapers such as the Albuquerque Tribune, which was the first in 1989. By the early 1990s, many large and small companies started investing online. Nando is credited as the earliest serious and critical online news delivery system deemed professional according to (Scott, 2005). Around 1994, a surge of online users erupted due to the introduction of Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator browsers. Therefore, by 1996, there was a fully functional online presence by most newspapers.

Despite the fast paced progress of online journalism that has grown throughout the years, there was still a degree of criticism that came with the process such as from Elmer-Dewitt from Time Magazine who criticised newspapers for rushing to occupy the cyberspace with “largely unedited...., foolish, often tasteless....uninteresting or just plain wrong” journalism (Noci, 2013). However, proponents of the space explained that going online offered an area of interaction in real time between news readers and journalists (Quinn and Lamble, 2012).

### **2.3 Social media strategies**

The use of social media in newsrooms is now used at all levels where the journalists have their own social media as tools, while the media organisation also has its own social media channels. Almost all journalists now have at least three personal social media handles according to (Paulussen and Harder, 2014), with more than 90% of organisations everywhere having at least one social media site presence (Weaver and Willnat, 2016). The strategies applied in social media by journalists and media organisations in the newsrooms can be divided into two categories, which have various uses under each. One of the strategies is that the newsrooms use social media as a platform to publish news story, which will help to bring attention to the story, as well as bring interaction with the audience. The other strategy is that the journalist uses social media during their news production and daily work, to find aspects like the sources of the stories, to check background information, or simply to follow responses and gauge the mood of the audience.

Journalist use social media to post live reports, which implies that news, is shared as it happens or immediately after it happens (Wardle & Williams, 2010). The breaking news is important to

journalists because it implies that they get more followers and more recognition for their work if they are first to report on such stories (Djerf-Pierre, Ghersetti and Hedman, 2016). Social media is critical way to alert readers faster than waiting on television and newspapers to break such stories that will take time (Tandoc and Vos, 2016).

A direct association between a journalist and a media organisation can result into a symbiotic relationship in the newsroom, where journalists publish stories on their personal social media sites as well as the media house sites as a way to promote the brand. According to (Brandtzaeg et al, 2016), this association can be useful in increasing the visibility of a story as well as the media house, and thus making it easier for more people to be able to access a story. According to Franklin (2014), journalists who tailor the stories they post based on a specific group of people to meet certain needs are likely to have a larger impact on the audience. Creating articles that can tag a certain online community can also result into a more active conversation, which means that more readers are engaged. When readers see a news story that they feel is relatable and interesting, they are much more likely to follow the news thread and even share it after they have read the story.

Besides live reporting, journalists have the ability to expand the idea choice and type of news being displayed on mainstream media to social media. Based on the agenda setting theory, (Poell and Van Dijck, 2015) mention that journalists in the newsrooms choose which type of news would be released to the viewers and in what manner. By using social media as a strategy to disseminate news, the newsrooms further continue to control the agenda setting. Headlines being used on social media are attention grabbing and have an impact on the reader to want to view more. Bruns (2018) also mention that the news articles posted would often contain an issue that would compel people to reply and become engaged in the story.

The use of social media by journalists also influences how journalists brand themselves. Through the stories selected by the journalist, the response of the journalist towards reader comments, the way the journalists carry themselves, among other behaviours create a certain reputation for the journalist (Molyneux, 2015). Such references can be used during current work evaluation or future work search by the journalists when it comes to employers. Therefore, it is important that the journalist understand the impact of the strategy they are applying, whether they are posting a story or looking for sources to confirm their work.

According to Lăzăroiu (2014), the use of social media by journalists and newsrooms can be a tool and a strategy at the same time. This includes using social media to promote the goals of the brand or news company. Social media is also a tool for information gathering. Cohen (2015) further adds that social media can be used for networking, gaining sources, and increasing or staying in touch with contacts. Sharing news posts, following up on the audience responses, interacting with them, and overall monitoring their interest aids in the fulfilment of social media strategy by newsrooms.

Social media can be used as a tool for news production on a daily basis. Journalists are finding diversified ways to put to good use such content to produce news. Besides the content, engaging the news readers on social media to ask for their aid in news production is also starting to take shape. According to Heravi and Harrower (2016), finding willing participants to contribute in person to a story is also very easy through the site. Setting up meetings for companies and managers in different companies is also easy because of their Facebook presence. Lipschultz (2014) explains that nearly every company has a social media site and Facebook is the most common. Personal responses to posts, messages, and other activities makes Facebook a highly crucial tool for everyday use by journalists to contact people, follow up stories, or find willing participants.

In their daily activities, journalists apply the use of Twitter to update stories, especially developing stories that make people be engaged continuously. Examples include using Twitter to cover election results, with the updates being made on a regular basis. This makes a large group of people have a conversation about the same issue, which results into a trending headline. Therefore, while Facebook is a tool that can bring together communities to help journalists find topics or participants and reach them in a personal manner to participate in a story. While twitter can also do the same, its use has been directed towards being an active site that helps journalists to deliver headlines and stories that grab the attention of viewers and thus make an issue more visible (Newman, 2009). Many journalists and activists have used twitter to break out stories through breaking news, with the stories becoming a trending hashtag (Stassen, 2010). Often the stories are extremely important yet they have been ignored, and thus there is need to get global attention.

As Ju, Jeong and Chyi (2014) report, Twitter can also help journalists find important topics even if they are not trending, by looking at tools like Tweepster and Politweets on the site to get a sense of what people are talking about. One expert describes Twitter as a form of real time open communication that can lead to people who otherwise did not respond to other communication respond on Twitter (Diakopoulos, De Choudhury and Naaman, 2012). For example, some journalists wanting to get in touch with company executives can easily pose a question or an issue on Twitter, and will almost always get a response compared to sending an email. This is because people on Twitter pick up such threads and follows the conversation, and thus public opinion is in real time (Alejandro, 2010). Videos and pictures on sites like YouTube, Instagram, and Flickr are also a form of content being used by journalists to reach out to the audience directly.

## **2.4 Characteristics of social media used in journalism**

Social media being used by journalists has developed unique features that have allowed journalists to segment its uses into various critical roles. One of the major social media platforms used is Facebook, which has managed to grow from just a social networking site to the biggest network connecting different levels of people, from professionals to just people looking to socialise. Facebook has gathered popularity from audiences due to its ability to reach people and the various growing uses. For example, Skogerbø et al. (2014) point out that Facebook now attracts advertisers and encourages even small businesses to reach out to consumers within their vicinity. With more advertisers and consumers meeting on a platform like Facebook, it means that there is a high likelihood of more news articles to be seen by as many people as possible. The feature allowing Facebook to be a meeting point for different kind of businesses and consumers can also increase the views and need for certain segment of news such as business news. Therefore, journalists can also capitalise on the variety of needs being displayed by different people to push different types of news that might not gain traction when the right crowd is not available.

When it comes to the use of Facebook by journalists, many features make it very important for application, as the network has millions of users first of all, who are all connected to a given community. These connections lead to formation of specific groups of things and issues that

people like. Therefore Houston et al (2014) explains that journalists can be able to extract information from Facebook based on their affiliations and communities, which showcase their opinions about certain issues. The direct posts as well as comments from the audience help journalists gather information from a site like Facebook to be able to understand where the public opinion about a given issue lies. Even though issues of privacy and consent could come up, the expanding community and usage of the site allow people to participate in more formal ways of collecting data. Questions have been asked through Facebook, and thus journalists can further gain information (Lewis, Holton and Coddington, 2014).

Another crucial tool that has the attention of journalists and can be used on a daily basis in their strategy of social media application is Twitter. Twitter according to Meikle (2016) is a crucial site for micro blogging. This has been successful because of the ability to have threads of conversation that all talk about the same issue with real time updates as well. Twitter has specialised in allowing people as well as journalists to update issues on a regular basis, allowing constant stream of reporting as event happen. This type of news consumption has made readers more interested and engaged, because of the highly interactive format.

Another useful site is the use of YouTube, which is used to share videos from all over the world. YouTube has become an invaluable tool for journalists not just for posting news pieces, but also for researching and understanding in detail what might be happening to a story (Pollock, 2014). The site allows one to view videos that can be instructional and information not to mention detailed. YouTube now has millions of videos and billions of viewers, which are rising on a daily basis (Alejandro, 2010). Having a YouTube channel by a news agency can help to increase visibility of individual stories, especially by uploading short clips that would create an interest to find out more from those who are interested (Newman, 2009).

Besides YouTube, a crucial site for journalists is Flickr, which allows people to upload photos. The site is critical for journalists to access pictures taken by people or other journalists for events happening or happened in the past that might have been captured elsewhere (Ju, Jeong and Chyi, 2014). Pictures often tell a lot, from the way they were taken and what they portray. In news articles that might not have made it to international headlines in large media houses, Lipschultz (2014) reports that they have found pictures on Flickr that explain a lot on what people are feeling. Flickr also engages users at home besides the journalists, making it a powerful tool for

the journalists to post pictures of critical moments. According to Molyneux (2015), pictures have had some of the most powerful impact in journalism, given the many awards given to journalists who capture the most significant moments. Flickr allows journalists to communicate and engage with users not through videos or words, but through powerful pictures that explain themselves.

While social media has useful characteristics that can be applied in the daily process of preparing news or disseminating the news, there are many negative aspects within the sites that can lead to pitfalls. Using social media to confirm the background of a story or use it as a source can be very difficult (Stassen, 2010). Social media profiles such as in Facebook can be duplicated, faked, or be misleading depending on what a person wants to portray. According to Poell and Van Dijck (2015), some media houses have found themselves having to apologise for using quotes and stories from fake Facebook accounts. This can have serious social and political ramifications to the journalist, the media organisation, and the individual (Diakopoulos, De Choudhury and Naaman, 2012). Due to such complications, journalists have found themselves at a crossroad between the need to verify and publish a story as fast as possible to beat the speed that news moves in the internet, and the need to preserve the accuracy in the quotes and sources that maintains the journalist profession.

## **2.5 How journalists use social media strategies and their impact**

The journalism profession has for a long time relied on certain principles to ensure the preservation of accuracy and credibility of all parties involved. One such principle is the need to have credible sources who give truthful information and can go on record to verify a given news story before the story is published on any platform (Paulussen and Harder, 2014). Another important area is fact checking to make sure information provided by different sources is truthful and reliable so that it does not mislead readers. Therefore, when applying the social media strategies, it is important to understand how journalists are using these strategies in relation to the credibility of the story. One of the ways that affect the credibility is the ability to verify a story. Without a source that can go on the record, publishing a story would present difficulties. Social media has presented this dilemma because without being able to reach sources directly, it is hard to prove authenticity and reliability. This implies that the emergence of technology in newsrooms has changed some of the way journalists perceive news and news sources, and how this compares to other emerging issues in the society.



In various studies conducted recently on how journalists apply various strategies in social media, certain interesting trends are emerging. These trends help to explain how the strategies of publishing and production of news on social media are being applied and perceived by journalists.

According to Lewis, Holton and Coddington (2014) about half of all journalists have started finding and using social media as the main information source. The use of social media as a source is rising despite clear understanding of the low reliability of information found on the various sites as well as the inability to verify the information source. This is because as explained, the various sites are often filled with personalised information portrayed with the user needs in mind, and thus not easily verifiable. Therefore, while the social media strategy of news production is applied here, it is clear that it is faced with a direct challenge that could have a negative impact on the news.

Despite the low degree of reliability as a result of the subjective and biased information found on social media, more journalists are using crowd-checking as a more important way of following up on an issue. Meikle (2016) reports that more than 55% of journalists crowd-check their stories and it is done on social media, while only 44% of journalists with stories they find on social media fact-check their sources on other areas and other sources. This implies that what people are saying based on their personal opinions has become more important to some journalists and has been taken at face value. While it is good to consider the opinions and voices of the readers, these should be taken in the context of personal responses that could be biased, and not in the context of fact-checking. Again, the issue of negative impact on the strategy of news production through social media comes up.

Further evidence according to Cohen (2015) reveals that journalists continue to utilise and rely on user generated data such as tweets, posts, and videos. This implies that social media is more than just a tool for newsrooms, but a daily strategy actively involved in the search for news stories as well as evidence of the stories based on pictures and videos that the users are posting. Engaging the readers and sources of information saves time and resources for newsrooms involved in sending journalists to the field to verify the story (Lăzăroiu, 2014). In certain areas where journalists cannot reach due to insecurity such as war zones, the videos users upload have been used as evidence of what is happening. For example, the BBC has shown video clips on

many occasions of user uploaded content from areas like Syria, Afghanistan, Yemen, Israel, Palestine, Libya, Venezuela, and many more where war and crisis has intensified such that no media has reached (BBC Academy, 2017). The strategy of news publishing on social media is being focused on here, and it is clear that there are possible negative impacts as well when utilising social media. The evidence that many journalists now rely on user content is a positive step towards further application of the publishing strategy to pull in more viewers and news readers, but poses a risk. This means that not only can journalists interact with users through their own content, but social media can further allow users to provide their own content and interact with journalists on their own terms.

When it comes to the issue of consumers versus organisations, social media has become a centre stage where information is exchanged. Organisations are finding it easier and more convenient to issue formal statements via social media, offer apologies, among other forms of communication (Weaver and Willnat, 2016). This has been prompted by convenience and the consumer active take on organisations on social media. In case of issues with products, complaints, enquiries, or other issues, the consumers often use social media as a way of publicly forcing a response from organisations. Journalists find these exchanges a good source of information, especially if organisations have verified that they provide official statements through social media. Thus, social media allows the public to have a window into the way organisations work, and can thus be able to interact with these companies as well as with journalists to air their grievances and issues. Social media is a bridge between the audience, journalists, and companies.

However, the most interesting trend emerging is that some journalists are finding statements and information issued by organisations less believable compared to the consumer opinion (Bruns, 2018). Statements being issued by corporations and organisations in case of responses to complaints are treated with more scrutiny compared to user generated content. This hints that there could be a degree of bias that journalists could be displaying by prioritising and treating all consumers making complaints about organisations as victims, while vindicating organisations without sufficient evidence of fact checking both sides of the story. In case of consumer complaints, most headlines are usually designed to imply blame for organisations, which would be more interesting for a reader to click. Therefore, in this case, the use of social media to both

gain the information as a source and as a tool to post the article are strategies that are being used very different from how journalists would use mainstream media.

As Cohen (2015) reports, studies find that about 70% of journalists act different when using newsrooms through different forms of media. This implies that when using social media in newsrooms, journalists act different from when they use mainstream media. Kim and Lowrey (2015) mention the reason for such a stark difference in behaviour and delivery of content, and one reason is that on social media, the journalism and stories are driven more by views, likes, and clicks. The more the viewers, the more the comments, reactions, and likes, the more a story is considered successful in social media. Therefore to some degree, what the audiences demand in terms of content have begun to change how some journalists report the stories (Valenzuela, Piña and Ramírez, 2017).

This implies that controversial headlines and stories are the ones likely to stir people's reactions. Brandtzaeg et al (2016) also explains that traditional or mainstream media is an established area that has operating within certain rigid rules that all journalists adhere to, yet in social media these rules have not been strictly applied. The stakes for media houses and brands in mainstream media are higher, and thus more care is taken when setting the agenda of the story to minimise controversy or presenting stories without sources that can go on record. Therefore, journalists in newsrooms tend to act differently when applying different platforms, such as being more professional in using mainstream media and more controversial on social media to generate clicks, views, and likes. This is often in an attempt to create content that would resonate with the audience, or attract them to read more as well as be prompted to act through ways like sharing and liking.

The influence of how reporters act as a result of user groups on social media can be termed as a controversial impact of social media use on the publishing strategy. The possibility of a change in behaviour and reporting styles to attract more readers contradicts the values and ethics of journalism in reporting the truth as is without judgment or influence of personal bias (Djerf-Pierre, Ghersetti and Hedman, 2016). Such a secondary agenda to have more viewers can lead to a biased judgement, and thus implying that journalists should guard against this impact of social media when publishing their stories. The reporting should remain neutral and the same as if it were on a different channel when reported on social media.

The newsrooms are becoming more direct in contacting and engaging with readers and viewers through social media Franklin (2014). Responses during live news in newsrooms are now being aired directly. BBC, Al Jazeera and CNN among many more as global media organisations now use social media to get instant responses to a piece of news they are reading on air at that very moment, and then read the viewer responses immediately after finishing the piece of news (John and Silberstein-Loeb, 2015). Facebook and Twitter seem to be the main modes of instant response, thus indicating a direct engagement with the viewers. Therefore, the publishing strategy of social media applied in newsrooms further has an impact on the ability to pull viewers into a conversation and direct them into other channels of communication. Therefore, multi-channel communication is enhanced by social media, which is a positive impact.

This section has looked at how the journalists use social media based on evidence from different researches. This evidence has been used to determine the impact and influence of social media strategies (publishing and production) on the communication of journalists. For example as discussed, newsrooms can now link the social media sites of a story- through posting on different sites like Facebook and Twitter- along with other channels of news publishing when using the publishing social media strategy. This provides for multiple ways of communication, hence a multi-channel access to news by readers as well as multi-channel ways of getting feedback by the news organisations, and thus a positive impact. Regarding the production of news, evidence from research shows that more journalists are experiencing the need to extract information directly from multi-channel sources such as YouTube for videos and Flickr or Instagram for pictures. The use of user content from multiple channels is a positive impact to be able to gain information faster and in a less costly manner. However, there are negative impacts at the same time, especially when the news sources cannot be verified. Therefore, the influence of social media strategies by journalists in newsrooms can have mixed forms of impact, depending on how journalists choose to apply these strategies.

## **3 Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The aim of the current study is to investigate how the strategies used in social media communication by journalists in newsrooms work in detail. This was done through the examination of the characteristics of social media, how they are applied, as well as their impact and influence with regard to advantages and disadvantages towards communication. In order to achieve this aim, Creswell & Clark (2017) emphasizes the need to come up with an appropriate research method and methodology. The choice of a research method and methodology is determined by the aim of the study and the feasibility/practicality of the proposed method among others factors and this was the basis of selecting the research method in the current study.

Therefore, this chapter explains what methods are being used in the extraction of data to prove multi-channel communication strategies use in newsrooms, the justification of choice of methods, the researcher beliefs, as well as the ethical aspects applied.

### **3.2 Hypotheses**

H1= Publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms

H2= the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news

H3= the way news is presented (articles, photos, and videos) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares

H4= the story type (political news, sports news, social news etc) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares

### **3.3 Research design**

The research design selected in the research is the use of mixed methods. Mixed methods involve the application of both qualitative and quantitative studies in order to get a wide range of data.

Qualitative data is non-numerical data that is applied to research to help in the explanation,

analysis, and evaluation, and often explains why and how certain phenomenon is happening (Mertens, 2014). Quantitative data is numerical and statistical data that uses numbers to show trends, relationships, causation, and offer a display of what is happening, quantitative data shows trends and changes of certain phenomenon over a period of time (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative data was collected using semi desk based methods gathered from reports, journals, books, and other materials related to the research. Quantitative data, on the other hand, was collected using closed ended questionnaires, and the advantage of using this data collection technique is the fact that data can be collected from a large population, and that the collected data is more likely to be objective since it is quantitative in nature (Mertens, 2014). The use of mixed methods, therefore, ensures that the two approaches are able to complement each other and as such, facilitate comprehensive data collection process.

The two methods have advantages and weaknesses that make them useful for the research as well as limit the research. For example, qualitative methods have a high degree of depth when used in research, and can be used to gather information useful in exploring the reasoning behind why certain phenomenon happened, or why people took certain actions (Palinkas et al, 2015). The depth of details in offering reasoning is crucial in finding out the outcomes in a research. Qualitative methods have some weaknesses though, and some of them include lacking of breath because not much data can be collected on as many participants.

On the other hand, the use of quantitative methods offers a way to gather a large sample of data, which becomes more accurate and more representative with a larger sample in relation to the population (Walliman, 2017). Quantitative data thus has breadth in a research and can be used to increase the accuracy of the results. The weaknesses of quantitative data include the fact that information extracted from the data is not detailed enough, and does not tend to explain why the numbers and figures are as displayed (Morse, 2016). The use of quantitative data collection approaches can also be time consuming and utilise more resources.

When it comes to using mixed methods, both types of data are applied. This means that the weaknesses in one method can be supported by the strength in the other. For example, the lack in depth and detailed analysis in a method such as a quantitative one can be supplemented by the

ability to get details and depth in qualitative methods. Mixed methods can be carefully used to balance the type of data presented and ensure resources are also well balanced.

### **3.4 Research paradigm**

A research paradigm is a theoretical area of research methods that focuses on the perspective of the researcher when it comes to the epistemological stance (Bryman, 2016). There are three types of research paradigm that are positivist, interpretivist, and pragmatist. These three paradigms are often considered to be the background of the theoretical underpinning in the methods, since they define how a researcher views the data and what it should entail.

The positivist research paradigm according to (Mertens, 2014) is a perspective where researchers believe in the use of scientific facts and procedures, to ensure that data is collected and analysed in a unbiased manner. The stress on the facts uses methods that separate human knowledge from the data, and thus statistical and experimental approaches are preferred. A positivist paradigm focuses on showcasing data that is undisputed, and thus displays trends and occurrences over time (Palinkas et al, 2015).

The interpretivist method is a paradigm that explores the relationship between people and knowledge, as they interpretivists believe that human knowledge and experiences cannot be separated for the person who experienced those (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Therefore, the emotions, ideas, beliefs, and culture of people can be explored using this method, and thus it is considered biased to some degree because of the involvement of emotions and personal opinions. While subjective, this paradigm is sensitive to realistic issues that occur on a social level within the society, and a high degree of information depth can be extracted.

The pragmatist research paradigm utilises the best approach that is most practical to answer the research question. This means that pragmatists believe in the use of different approaches together or separately to make sure that the objective of the research has been achieved. Therefore, the researcher will utilise the pragmatist approach for this research, since it is the most practical and highly applicable. The justification allows for use of mixed methods to be applied, since they are the best way to answer all the research questions in this research. The pragmatist philosophical perspective ensured that the researcher is able to sidestep the contentions of objectivity and subjectivity in positivism and interpretivist.

### 3.5 Data collection

The data collection process will involve the researcher accessing both primary and secondary data from different sources that are all relevant and crucial to this researcher. The secondary data will be accessed mostly from previous literature or previous researches on the phenomenon under investigation, and thus both online and offline sources will be of use. Journals, books, articles, and publications from offline libraries or online sources such as Google Scholar and tandfonline will all be used.

There will be two methods of data collection applied, which include questionnaires with respondents selected through social media discourse, and a desk based research to gather secondary data on the research topic.

In the application of the social media method, data will be collected through searches and information gathering from three platforms that are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The choice of the three different types of platforms on social media is based on the fact that the three have different ways of delivering news and different impacts to the audience, and hence result into them being used differently. Different social media platforms have now evolved into having different uses, with twitter for example being used as a platform for breaking news (Shu et al, 2017). This social media method will be used to recruit participants who are news viewers in order to get more information from them through the survey.

The questionnaire survey will be done on the people who had read news on social media account, to find what they understand about social media and journalism. The survey through the questionnaire will also find out what kind of news they prefer read on social media and so on.

The data collected will entail specifics such as what type of news is being placed by newsrooms, including political news, economic news, breaking news, and other categories, and how the readers prefer this news. Collecting information on the various types of news will help the researcher to further understand what choices newsrooms have when posting news on social media as well as how viewers are embracing them and interacting with the journalists in newsrooms because of the audience choice or preferences. Another specific aspect of the social media data being collected will entail the following on stories such as likes, dislikes, as well as the retransmission rate through shares and tags. The likes and transmissions of stories help to



understand the feedback of the audience to the stories. The audiences will be asked about how they like to respond to stories and why.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

Data analysis will be done through various methods such as triangulation and thematic analysis for qualitative results, along with presentation of graphs, tables, and figures showcasing quantitative results. Thematic analysis involves the identification of patterns and trends in the qualitative data, and the use of these patterns to answer the overarching research questions (Creswell, 2014). Quantitative analysis was done using descriptive statistics and regression analysis. Descriptive statistics was used to describe the responses on the various survey questions, and this was crucial in providing an overall picture in the trend of the data. Regression analysis was used to test hypotheses by investigating the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

### **3.7 Research ethics**

All ethics in research will be observed, through ensuring that the various principles of research ethics are followed. These include ensuring privacy and anonymity for participants. There will also be choice for participants to withdraw at any time.

## 4 Results and analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on data analysis and discussion, and since the data collected in this study was mainly quantitative, the techniques used in the analysis are also quantitative. Analysis was done using descriptive and inferential statistics, where the former describes the data, while the latter investigates the statistical significance of the relationships between the variables. The chapter is divided into three main sections; the analysis of data from social media, the analysis of data from the public, and the discussion.

### 4.2 Data from social media

#### Descriptive statistics

The mean ‘likes’ on social media (Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter) was 1954.617 likes, with a huge standard deviation of 9152.9228. The mean ‘shares’ on social media was 705.265 with a huge standard deviation of 7042.3341. The mean ‘comments’ were at 578.813 and a standard deviation of 1953.8935. A conclusion that can be made from this is that social media users are more likely to ‘like’ and least likely to ‘share’ news on social media.

**Table 1; descriptive statistics**

#### Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Like	1169	1.0	283000.0	1954.617	9152.9228
Comment	1169	.0	48000.0	578.813	1953.8935
Share	1168	.0	218000.0	705.265	7042.3341
The way to present news	1169	1.0	3.0	1.262	.6542
Story Type	1169	1.0	13.0	6.176	2.3356
Valid N (listwise)	1168				

## Inferential statistics

### *Multiple Linear regression*

The decision rule of linear regression is as follows:

If hypotheses are stated as null and alternative, and analysis carried out at 95% confidence level:

If sig value  $< 0.05$ , then the null hypothesis is rejected/alternative hypothesis supported, that is, if sig  $< 0.05$ ,  $H_a: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$  is supported

On the other hand, if sig  $> 0.05$ , then the null hypothesis is accepted, that is, if sig  $> 0.05$ ,  $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$  is supported.

All the hypotheses in this study are alternative hypotheses.

**H3= the way news is presented (articles, photos, and videos) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares**

The model summary is an illustration of how well the model fits, and this is done by examining the values of R and R square. From the table below, it can be determined that the correlation between the dependent and the independent variables is positive, but weak, with  $R = 0.190$ . It can also be determined that the independent variables are only able to account for 3.6% of the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.036$ ), meaning that the model is not very reliable.

**Table 2, Model summary**

#### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.190 <sup>a</sup>	.036	.034	.6434

a. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like

The sig value, as shown in the table below is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, meaning that the relationship between the variables is significant, and that H3 is supported. However, this is also subject to further analysis in the coefficients table.

**Table 3; ANOVA**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.028	3	6.009	14.518	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	481.804	1164	.414		
	Total	499.832	1167			

a. Dependent Variable: The way to present news

b. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like

The value of beta explains the direction of the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables, and the sig value shows the statistical significance of this relationship. ‘Likes’ have a negative but non-significant relationship with how the news is presented (video, articles, photo), and ‘shares’ have a negative but non-significant relationship with how the news is presented (video, articles, photo). ‘Comments’, on the other hand, have a positive and significant relationship with how the news is presented (video, articles, and photo).

**Table 4; Coefficients**

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.225	.020		62.354	.000
	Like	-1.413E-6	.000	-.020	-.416	.678
	Comment	6.898E-5	.000	.206	4.357	.000
	Share	-2.463E-7	.000	-.003	-.086	.932

a. Dependent Variable: The way to present news

**H4= the story type (political news, sports news, social news etc) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares**

The model summary is an illustration of how well the model fits, and this is done by examining the values of R and R square. From the table below, it can be determined that the correlation between the dependent and the independent variables is positive, but weak, with R= 0.132. It can also be determined that the independent variables are only able to account for 1.7% of the dependent variable (R square = 0.017), meaning that the model is not very reliable.

**Table 5; Model summary**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.132 <sup>a</sup>	.017	-.002	2.3353

a. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like

The sig value, as shown in the table below 0.758, which is greater than 0.05, meaning that the relationship between the variables is not significant, and that H4 is not supported. However, this is also subject to further analysis in the coefficients table.

**Table 6; ANOVA**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.420	3	2.140	.392	.758 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	6347.823	1164	5.453		
	Total	6354.243	1167			

a. Dependent Variable: Story Type

b. Predictors: (Constant), Share, Comment, Like

All the variables (Like, comment, and share) showed non significance with sig values > 0.05 as shown in the table below:

Table 7; Coefficients

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.197	.071		86.904	.000
	Like	8.666E-6	.000	.034	.703	.482
	Comment	-6.152E-5	.000	-.052	-1.071	.285
	Share	2.090E-6	.000	.006	.200	.841

a. Dependent Variable: Story Type

*Correlation analysis*

Table 8: Correlation analysis

## Correlations

		Like	Comment	Share	The way to present news	Story Type
Like	Pearson Correlation	1	.791**	.356**	.142**	-.004
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.887
	N	1169	1169	1168	1169	1169
Comment	Pearson Correlation	.791**	1	.342**	.190**	-.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.452
	N	1169	1169	1168	1169	1169
Share	Pearson Correlation	.356**	.342**	1	.061*	.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.038	.979
	N	1168	1168	1168	1168	1168
The way to present news	Pearson Correlation	.142**	.190**	.061*	1	.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.038		.266
	N	1169	1169	1168	1169	1169

Story Type	Pearson Correlation	-.004	-.022	.001	.033	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.887	.452	.979	.266	
	N	1169	1169	1168	1169	1169

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 4.3 Data from the public

#### Descriptive statistics

In this sub section, the chapter describes the responses in the survey data; which constituted a survey with the public. Most of the descriptive statistics, however, are shown in the appendix section of this study.

Asked about the channels they choose when they want to hear about an event, a majority of the participants indicated that they would choose social media as shown below:

**Table 9**

What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Social media	48	71.6	71.6	71.6
	TV	5	7.5	7.5	79.1
	Newspaper	2	3.0	3.0	82.1
	Search engine	12	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

A majority also, at 64%, indicated that they had read news on social media platforms as shown below:

Table 10

Have you ever read news on social media platforms?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	64	95.5	95.5	95.5
	No	3	4.5	4.5	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

The participants indicated that they preferred certain social media platforms over others as shown in the table below:

Table 11

Do you have a preference on which social media platform you like to read news on?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	66	98.5	98.5	98.5
	No	1	1.5	1.5	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

A majority of them indicated that they prefer Facebook, followed by those that prefer YouTube as shown in the table below:

Table 12

Please name the social media platform(s) you prefer to read news on					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	33	49.3	49.3	49.3
	Twitter	11	16.4	16.4	65.7
	YouTube	23	34.3	34.3	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	



Video is the news presentation that appeals to a majority of the news consumers as shown in the table below, followed by news presented in article form.

**Table 13**

<b>What kind of news presentation do you think appeals to you more on social media platforms?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Article	15	22.4	22.4	22.4
	Video	36	53.7	53.7	76.1
	Photo	16	23.9	23.9	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

Asked why they prefer social media to see news, a majority indicated that the main reason is improved verification of sources when news is reported, and this is summarised in the table below:

**Table 14**

<b>Why are you choosing use social media platform to see news?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Improved verification of sources when they report news	36	53.7	53.7	53.7
	They give credit to verified news sources	15	22.4	22.4	76.1
	Enhanced standards of social media news editing when news is posted on this site	11	16.4	16.4	92.5
	Increased depth of conversation on news posted on this site	3	4.5	4.5	97.0
	Reduced focus on number of responses but more on the story	2	3.0	3.0	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

The most common interactions on social media are the 'Likes' as shown in the output below;

Table 15

What kind of interactions have you had?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Like	40	59.7	59.7	59.7
	Comment	20	29.9	29.9	89.6
	Retweet	7	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

Sports news, political news and entertainment news are some of the most watched news or engaged with news, since as shown in the table below, the participants indicated that this is the type of news that they would most likely comment about.

Table 16

In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to comment?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Political News	17	25.4	25.4	25.4
	Social News	6	9.0	9.0	34.3
	Sports News	21	31.3	31.3	65.7
	Entertainment & Arts News	10	14.9	14.9	80.6
	Stories News	2	3.0	3.0	83.6
	Health News	1	1.5	1.5	85.1
	Science & Technology News	2	3.0	3.0	88.1
	Family News	1	1.5	1.5	89.6
	News Trending	7	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

The above trend is the same for 'liking' since people are more likely to like political, sports and entertainment news as shown below;

Table 17

In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to like them?					
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		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Political news	21	31.3	31.3	31.3
	Social News	5	7.5	7.5	38.8
	Sports News	18	26.9	26.9	65.7
	Entertainment & Arts News	9	13.4	13.4	79.1
	Stories News	2	3.0	3.0	82.1
	Health News	2	3.0	3.0	85.1
	Science & Technology News	1	1.5	1.5	86.6
	Family News	2	3.0	3.0	89.6
	News Trending	7	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

The above trend is the same for 'sharing' since people are more likely to like political, sports and entertainment news as shown below;

**Table 18**

<b>In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to share them?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Political news	19	28.4	28.4	28.4
	Social News	5	7.5	7.5	35.8
	Sports News	18	26.9	26.9	62.7
	Entertainment & Arts News	13	19.4	19.4	82.1
	Stories News	1	1.5	1.5	83.6
	Health News	2	3.0	3.0	86.6
	Science & Technology News	1	1.5	1.5	88.1
	Family News	1	1.5	1.5	89.6
	News Trending	7	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

An overwhelming majority indicated that social media makes them engage more with the news as shown below:

**Table 19**

Does social media make you engage more with the news?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	62	92.5	92.5	92.5
	No	5	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

The reason the participants believed social media made the engage more with the news is the fact that readers get more news often compared to watching TV or reading newspapers, different channels have different strengths and weaknesses in their news, and the fact that there is coverage of more events than before, giving one more options of news. This is shown below:

**Table 20**

Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Readers get more news often compared to watching TV or reading newspapers	18	26.9	26.9	26.9
	Social media news has increased the number of people to socialise with	15	22.4	22.4	49.3
	It increases the trustworthiness of the news to be able to confirm from multiple sources	8	11.9	11.9	61.2
	There is coverage of more events than before, giving one more options of news	11	16.4	16.4	77.6
	Different channels have different strengths and weaknesses in their news	15	22.4	22.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

An overwhelming majority also believed that social media has created a bridge between you and news organizations and journalists as shown below:

**Table 21**

<b>Do you think social media has created a bridge between you and news organizations and journalists?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	55	82.1	82.1	82.1
	No	12	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

### **Inferential statistics**

**H1= Publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms**

The model summary below is also an illustration of how well the model fits, and this is done by examining the values of R and R square. From the table below, it can be determined that the correlation between the dependent and the independent variables is positive and very strong, with  $R = 0.947$ . It can also be determined that the independent variables are able to account for 89.8% of the dependent variable ( $R \text{ square} = 0.898$ ), meaning that the model is very reliable.

**Table 22; Model Summary**

<b>Model Summary</b>				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.947 <sup>a</sup>	.898	.885	.131

a. Predictors: (Constant), Why are you choosing use social media platform to see a news?, Do you have a preference on which social media platform you like to read news on?, Have you ever read news on social media platforms?,

Why did you What kind of news presentation do you think appeals to you more on social media platforms?, Does social media make you engage more with the news?, What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?, Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?

The sig value, as shown in the table below is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, meaning that the relationship between the variables is significant, and that H1 is supported. However, this is also subject to further analysis in the coefficients table.

**Table 23; ANOVA**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.841	7	1.263	73.812	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1.010	59	.017		
	Total	9.851	66			
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think social media has created a bridge between you and news organizations and journalists?						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Why are you choosing use social media platform to see a news?, Do you have a preference on which social media platform you like to read news on?, Have you ever read news on social media platforms?, Why did you What kind of news presentation do you think appeals to you more on social media platforms?, Does social media make you engage more with the news?, What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?, Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?						

In the output below, the value of beta (positive or negative) shows the direction of the relationship of each independent variable with the dependent variable. The sig value shows the statistical significance of this relationship. From the output below, only two variable statements; “Does social media make you engage more with the news?” and “What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?” showed significant positive relationship with the dependent variable.

**Table 24; Coefficients**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.

		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.428	.175		2.444	.018
	Does social media make you engage more with the news?	.248	.118	.170	2.095	.040
	Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?	.002	.034	.010	.071	.944
	What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?	.360	.030	1.093	11.814	.000
	Have you ever read news on social media platforms?	.052	.134	.028	.385	.701
	Do you have a preference on which social media platform you like to read news on?	.052	.163	.016	.317	.752
	Why did you What kind of news presentation do you think appeals to you more on social media platforms?	-.022	.052	-.038	-.413	.681
	Why are you choosing use social media platform to see a news?	-.104	.062	-.285	-1.670	.100
a. Dependent Variable: Do you think social media has created a bridge between you and news organizations and journalists?						

## **H2= the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news**

To test his hypothesis, we also investigate the fitness of the model, and as pointed out, this is done using the model summary, and this is done by examining the values of R and R square. From the table below, it can be determined that the correlation between the dependent and the independent variables is positive and very strong, with  $R = 0.950$ . It can also be determined that the independent variables are able to account for 90.2% of the dependent variable ( $R^2 = 0.902$ ), meaning that the model is very reliable.

**Table 25; Model summary**

### **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.950 <sup>a</sup>	.902	.890	.088

a. Predictors: (Constant), What kind of interactions have you had?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?, What kind of interactions have you had?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Youtube?, Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Facebook?, What kind of interactions have you had?

The sig value, as shown in the table below is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, meaning that the relationship between the variables is significant, and that H2 is supported. However, this is also subject to further analysis in the coefficients table.

**Table 26; ANOVA**

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.172	7	.596	77.367	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	.455	59	.008		
	Total	4.627	66			

a. Dependent Variable: Does social media make you engage more with the news?

b. Predictors: (Constant), What kind of interactions have you had?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?, What kind of interactions have you had?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Youtube?, Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?, Have you ever interacted while reading news on Facebook?, What kind of interactions have you had?

In the output below, the value of beta (positive or negative) shows the direction of the relationship of each independent variable with the dependent variable. The sig value shows the statistical significance of this relationship. From the output below, only three variable statements; “*Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?*”, “*What kind of interactions have you had?*”, and “*Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?*” did not show significant relationship with the dependent variable.



Table 27; Coefficients

Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.000	.054		18.381	.000
	Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?	-4.972E-15	.024	.000	.000	1.000
	Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?	5.670E-15	.053	.000	.000	1.000
	What kind of interactions have you had?	.227	.060	.586	3.787	.000
	Have you ever interacted while reading news on Facebook?	-.682	.078	-1.273	-8.715	.000
	What kind of interactions have you had?	.682	.061	1.639	11.244	.000
	Have you ever interacted while reading news on Youtube?	-.227	.067	-.430	-3.373	.001
	What kind of interactions have you had?	5.298E-15	.052	.000	.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Does social media make you engage more with the news?

#### 4.4 Conclusion

The analysis in this chapter has established that publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms. In other words, these are the social media strategies that have been found to be most effective. It was also established that the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news. The study also finds evidence that the way news is presented (articles, photos, and videos) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares. The study, however, found no evidence to support the claim that the story type (political news, sports news, social news etc) has affects the number of likes, comments, and shares.

## 5 Discussion

Journalism and the internet have a long relationship, which has developed over time to encourage even traditional news rooms to have multimedia channels that they can use as an avenue to reach the audiences. Social media has become an even more engaging channel, where newsreaders can now access all types of news that media organisations post on a regular basis. According to Nielsen, R.K. and Schröder (2014), social media is now so popular among audiences that it has become an indispensable tool to news organisations. The use of social media by news readers has become so popular, that some scholars warn of the threat it poses to the integrity of journalism.

News organisations employ a variety of strategies to attract audiences and newsreaders when utilising social media. Social media as a vital component in news organisations has thus had an expanded role in the way the media organisations make editorial decisions Thurman (2011). The types of news, how the news is presented, where it is presented, as well as the timing of the presentation are crucial to how the readers will react to such news. Therefore, three significant strategies on the way social media is crucial to newsrooms and new organisations when communicating with their audiences have emerged.

One of the ways that news organisations use social media is for sourcing news in order to be able to find out what is happening, edit a story and present it to the readers. Social media is now a hub of information when organisations, individuals, and even state organs are posting information considered relevant. Based on the propaganda model by Herman and Chomsky, news organisations are always strategically placing their journalists in areas where news could occur because of the costs and financial constraints that do not allow them to be everywhere (Paulussen and Harder, 2014). Social media has emerged as a less costly alternative to source news as Welbers et al (2016) explains, given that UGC can be utilised to locate news as well as a direct news resource.

Another use of social media by news organisations to communicate with the audiences is through using it to publish news. Media organisations consider news publishing to be critical through social media because of not just the financial aspects, but also the traffic it generates that can be converted into viewership of traditional media organisations (Lee and Tandoc, 2017).

Newspapers, radio, and television now have social media channels where they post full stories or

part of the story. Therefore, social media viewers get to interact with traditional journalism at all times.

Media organisations through their journalists use social media for daily activities besides finding and publishing news. Journalists can follow up on their sources in person through social media, observe or follow other developing situations, track the viewership and reactions of users, as well as follow up the statistics of the audience through aspects like traffic, number of shares and likes and so much more. This aspects forms one of the core approaches to how journalists and their editors make decisions on what type of news to post and where o post it. Traditionally, Twitter is considered a hub for breaking news mostly, and thus user reactions and discussions will drive the way news organisations interact with the users.

Al-Rawi (2017) mentions that some news organisations might feel that they need to tailor products to the news readers in order to attract them. The researcher insists that there is need for taking the focus away from the numbers being attracted to social network sites by a news story despite the practical and financial advantages that news organisations might gain. Through their gatekeeping theory, Shoemaker and Akiba (2009) also talk about the aspect of journalists needing to maintain their ethical and journalistic integrity when reporting news even on new forms of media such as social networking sites.

According to Bright and Nicholls (2014), there are numerous advantages in the use of social media for news organisations, especially when statistics indicate increased popularity, agreeing with Al-Rawi (2017). Bright and Nicholls (2014) however further warn of the possibility of the rise of populism as a result on depending on news going viral, which would stem from the need for increased popularity based on statistics that overrides editorial judgement. Several researchers such as Lee, Lewis, Powers (2014) and Thurman (2011) have researched and confirmed how the news click habits from the audiences as well as their preferences of the type of news directly affects how news is placed on social networking sites, as well as directly affects the editorial decisions made in the newsrooms during the process of searching for stories, dissemination, and production.

Kalsnes & Larsson (2017) explain that “while comparably early media company strategies for user involvement were optimistic in nature and geared towards deliberation and debate,

challenging financial situations and issues with online moderation have shifted editorial strategies in this regard towards the distribution variety of audience involvement.” With evidence from Krumsvik (2015) and their own, Kalsnes & Larsson (2017) further make a case of how news readers are critical to the editorial decisions by news organisations, which has led to distribution of news in a way that should be able to drive traffic in a certain manner. Thus by understanding how newsreaders respond to the multichannel communications strategies and stories being posted on social networking sites as highlighted in this paper, many news organisations can further be able to make sense of how news readers will be provided with meaningful content.

The interaction between newsreaders and newsrooms is monitored by news organisations in real time in order to see the amount of time spent on a news piece, the number of clicks on each news type, the likes and share and many other metrics employed by news organisations (Kormelink and Meijer, 2018). Based on previous research, Kormelink and Meijer (2018) explain that media organisations take the relationship between news clicks and various metrics at face value, and thus implement their decisions based on that. Most dominated types of news are based on crime, sports, and entertainment. From this, Tenenboim and Cohen (2015) explain that media organizations deem that the news audiences on social media are interested in news junk rather than news related to significant public affairs that affect the social, economic, and other forms of well-being for people such as political, business news, and international relations. However, Kormelink and Meijer (2018) consider it very important for the news organisations to understand in detail what clicking and not clicking on news actually means, and whether these metric actually translate to what audiences and news readers perceive of the news being posted. Therefore, it is crucial for the news organizations to actually understand how the audiences see and perceive news outside the metrics as investigated in this research. The evidence in this study strongly supports continued publishing of news through social media by both new and traditional media organizations as a way to increase interaction. However, this study is in stark contrast to the literature presented to show that the metrics indicating certain types of news drive clicks and interactions with the audience.

## 6 Conclusion and recommendation

This study aimed at to finding out how the strategies used in social media communication by journalists in newsrooms work in detail when communicating with the audience. Through examining the characteristics of social media based on how the audience views news, as well as their impact and influence with regard to multichannel communication.

The objectives focused on analysing the various social media strategies as used by newsrooms when preparing news, understanding the audience perspective when it comes to the types of news being published, as well as examine the multichannel interaction based on various social media networks between the newsrooms and the readers.

The results of the study were investigated through various hypotheses. The first hypothesis that stated that publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms was supported by the results of the study. The implication of this result is that news organisations should continue to communicate and report their news through social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. This is because users are finding it easier to connect with these organisations through the social networking sites, especially when they are not involved in viewing news through the traditional methods. This result is supported by literature, which shows an increasing number of social media users engage with news organisations through social media.

The second hypothesis, which was also supported by the data stated that the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news. This hypothesis further supports the evidence from the first hypothesis where specific strategies were deemed significant by newsrooms in trying to reach the audiences.

The third hypothesis was also supported in stating that the way news is presented (articles, photos, and videos) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares. How the media chooses to present the news through social media to the audience is important to the users. According to literature, this aspect is support because the number of likes and shares are more likely to increase in news pieces with videos and pictures in them. While

plain articles are also significant, some readers tend to see viewing videos as an easier and more interactive approach than reading.

Finally the fourth hypothesis stated that the story type (political news, sports news, social news etc) has a statistically significant relationship with the number of likes, comments, and shares. This hypothesis was not supported. Literature shows that the type of news does have a significant relationship with the likes and shares, which is why it influences editorial decisions. This study indicates and recommends that media organisations should not take the metrics at face value, especially those that show that certain types of news like entertainment and sports is more interesting than politics to viewers. There is need for getting first-hand information in the perception of viewers with regard the type of news they like. In other words, there might not be a direct relationship between clicks on a story and how the users like that type of news, as it could mean something else. Kormelink and Meijer (2018) found other reasons besides liking a particular type of news on why readers clicked on different news types on social media. Some of the reasons included cognitive considerations (for example associative gap between the topic and the headline of a story, incorrect facts, and supersaturated facts among others) affective considerations (such as the fact that the news was annoying, it was bullshit, and gleeful annoyance among others), as well as pragmatic considerations such as the news not fitting the pattern. Therefore, news clicks by the audience seen through newsrooms metrics should not be necessarily used to make editorial decisions by news organisations when using social media to communicate with the audience as they might not correspond to actual perception of the news story.

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## Appendix

### 6.1 Descriptive statistics

Political news					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	11.9	11.9	11.9
	2	8	11.9	11.9	23.9
	3	22	32.8	32.8	56.7
	4	18	26.9	26.9	83.6
	5	11	16.4	16.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

Social News					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2	4	6.0	6.0	7.5
	3	15	22.4	22.4	29.9
	4	21	31.3	31.3	61.2
	5	26	38.8	38.8	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

Sports News					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	20.9	20.9	20.9
	2	11	16.4	16.4	37.3
	3	17	25.4	25.4	62.7
	4	14	20.9	20.9	83.6

	5	11	16.4	16.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Entertainment &amp; Arts News</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	5	7.5	7.5	7.5
	2	15	22.4	22.4	29.9
	3	16	23.9	23.9	53.7
	4	24	35.8	35.8	89.6
	5	7	10.4	10.4	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Stories News</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2	4	6.0	6.0	7.5
	3	10	14.9	14.9	22.4
	4	23	34.3	34.3	56.7
	5	29	43.3	43.3	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Health News</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	6	9.0	9.0	9.0
	2	8	11.9	11.9	20.9
	3	16	23.9	23.9	44.8

	4	23	34.3	34.3	79.1
	5	14	20.9	20.9	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Science &amp; Technology News</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	4	6.0	6.0	6.0
	2	16	23.9	23.9	29.9
	3	21	31.3	31.3	61.2
	4	20	29.9	29.9	91.0
	5	6	9.0	9.0	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Family News</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2	5	7.5	7.5	9.0
	3	8	11.9	11.9	20.9
	4	25	37.3	37.3	58.2
	5	28	41.8	41.8	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>News Trending</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	11.9	11.9	11.9
	2	13	19.4	19.4	31.3

	3	27	40.3	40.3	71.6
	4	13	19.4	19.4	91.0
	5	6	9.0	9.0	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	32	47.8	47.8	47.8
	No	35	52.2	52.2	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Have you ever interacted while reading news on Facebook?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	40	59.7	59.7	59.7
	No	27	40.3	40.3	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>What kind of interactions have you had?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Like	39	58.2	58.2	58.2
	Comment	23	34.3	34.3	92.5
	Share	5	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

<b>Have you ever interacted while reading news on Youtube?</b>					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

Valid	Yes	37	55.2	55.2	55.2
	No	30	44.8	44.8	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

What kind of interactions have you had?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Like	44	65.7	65.7	65.7
	Comment	23	34.3	34.3	100.0
	Total	67	100.0	100.0	

## 6.2 Questionnaire-public

1. What channels do you choose when you want to hear about an event in the first place?  
1=Social media 2=TV 3=Newspaper 4=Search engine 5=other
  2. Have you ever read news on social media platforms?  
1=Yes 2=No
  3. a). Do you have a preference on which social media platform you like to read news on?  
1=Yes 2=No  
b). Please name the social media platform(s) you prefer to read news on  
  
1=Facebook 2=Twitter 3=YouTube
  4. What kind of news presentation do you think appeals to you more on social media platforms?  
1=Article 2=Video 3=Photo 4
- H1= Publishing of news, news sourcing (User generated Content), and use of social media for daily journalistic work are the significant social media strategies used by newsrooms**
5. Why are you choosing use social media platform to see a news?  
1=Improved verification of sources when they report news  
  
2=they give credit to verified news sources  
  
3=Enhanced standards of social media news editing when news is posted on this site



4=Increased depth of conversation on news posted on this site

5=Reduced focus on number of responses but more on the story

6. On social media platforms, based on a scale of 1 to 5, how likely are you to read the following types of news?

	Type of news	1	2	3	4	5
A	Political news					
B	Social News					
C	Sports News					
D	Entertainment & Arts News					
E	Stories News					
F	Health News					
G	Science & Technology News					
H	Family News					
I	News Trending					

**H2= the use of social media strategies by newsrooms enhance the interaction and the engagement of the public with the news**

7. a). Have you ever interacted while reading news on Tweet?  
 1=Yes                      2=No
- b). What kind of interactions have you had?  
 1=Like   2=Comment      3=retweet
8. a). Have you ever interacted while reading news on Facebook?  
 1=Yes                      2=No
- b). What kind of interactions have you had?  
 1=Like   2=Comment      3=share
9. a). Have you ever interacted while reading news on Youtube?  
 1=Yes                      2=No
- b). What kind of interactions have you had?  
 1=Like   2=Comment

In questions 7-9, if you have chosen yes, explain what makes you want to interact with the news?

10. In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to comment?

	Type of news	
A	Political news	
B	Social News	
C	Sports News	
D	Entertainment & Arts News	
E	Stories News	
F	Health News	
G	Science & Technology News	
H	Family News	
I	News Trending	

11. In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to like them?

	Type of news	
A	Political news	
B	Social News	
C	Sports News	
D	Entertainment & Arts News	
E	Stories News	
F	Health News	
G	Science & Technology News	
H	Family News	
I	News Trending	

12. In social media Which of the following news type make you more like to share them?

	Type of news	
A	Political news	
B	Social News	
C	Sports News	
D	Entertainment & Arts News	
E	Stories News	
F	Health News	
G	Science & Technology News	
H	Family News	
I	News Trending	

13. Does social media make you engage more with the news?

1=Yes                    2=No

14. Why do you think so? What impact do you think this has?

1=readers get more news often compared to watching TV or reading newspapers

2=social media news has increased the number of people to socialise with

3=it increases the trustworthiness of the news to be able to confirm from multiple sources such as different social media and TV

4=there is coverage of more events than before, giving one more options of news

5=different channels have different strengths and weaknesses in their news

15. Do you think social media has created a bridge between you and news organizations and journalists?

1.Yes 2.No

16. If you choose Yes, please explain the reason

### 6.3 Module Level Ethical Review Form (MLERF)

#### COMM5600M Dissertation and Research Methods

Student ID	200990636
Your name	Yue Zhao
Name of project/ dissertation supervisor	Holly steel

**Are you planning to conduct fieldwork with (data on) human participants for your dissertation?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
------------	-----------

Yes (This includes online research methods and secondary data analysis).	yes	
No		

**If you ticked ‘no’ you do not need to take further action in respect of ethical approval.  
Please proceed to the declarations in Part C.**

**If you ticked ‘yes’ you need to complete Part A.**

**NB: You should discuss research ethics with your supervisor and ask them to review and approve your application form. You must submit your form with your supervisor’s signature to the COMM5600M assignment submissions area in Minerva by 25 March, 2019, or before you begin fieldwork (whichever is soonest). Please note that you cannot commence fieldwork until your Ethics Form has been approved and signed by your supervisor.**

## Module Level Ethical Review Form (MLERF)

## Part A: Ethical considerations within block ethics approval

Ethical review is required for all research involving human participants, including research undertaken by students within a taught student module. Further details of the University of Leeds ethical review requirements are given in the *Research Ethics Policy* available at:

<http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchEthicsPolicies>.

**Basic project details.**

Provisional title/ topic area	The multiple use of Social Media in Journalism: How the social media has changed the single-channel activities to Multi-channel communication in newsroom		
Proposed start date (dd/mm/yy)	07/04/2019	Proposed end date (dd/mm/yy)	07/07/2019

**Summarise the aims, objectives and method of the research (max 300 words).**

*Provide a brief summary of the research, outlining the aims and objectives and/ or research questions and the proposed methodology. Explain how research participants will be identified, approached and recruited and what they will be asked to do.*

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The research aims to find how journalists and news organizations use social media during their work and how they use social media to communication and interact with audiences. Research aims include:

1. To investigate how the BBC newsrooms could effectively and appropriately use different social media platforms based on their different properties.
2. To find out how journalists use social media in news production.
3. To investigate how the quality of investigative reports, the number of published articles and user participation could be effected by multichannel communication using social media.

I will interview journalists to examine how social media has influenced them during their work, how they use social media during the process of producing news stories. I will send email or send message through Facebook to contact their work account. I will also carry out an online survey for journalists who use social media when they produce the news story.

- 4 To investigate how the audience understand news though social media and what kind of news they look at more on social media. The online survey is for audiences who follow the BBC social media account.

**What is the source of the data?** (Indicate with an 'X' all that apply)

New data collected for this research	yes
Data previously collected for other research	
Data previously collected for non-research purposes	

Data already in the public domain (including Internet-based research)	Yes
Other, please state: _The data collected from the BBC social media _____.	yes

**How will the data be collected?** (Indicate with an 'X' all that apply)

Through one-to-one research interviews	yes
Through focus groups	
Self-completion (eg. questionnaires, diaries)	yes
Through observation	
Data previously collected for other research	
Data previously collected for non-research purposes	
Data already in the public domain	Yes
Other, please state: _____.	

**Will the project involve any of the following** (Tick as appropriate)

	Yes	No
Discussion of sensitive topics, or topics that could be considered sensitive (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)		No

Prolonged or frequent participant involvement		No
The possibility of harm to participants or others (including the researcher(s))		No
Participants taking part in the research without their knowledge and consent (eg covert observation of people in non-public places)		No
Participants who are vulnerable (eg children under 16, people with learning disabilities, adults with mental incapacity or mental illness, offenders)		No
People who are unable to give their own <a href="#">informed consent</a>		No
Potential conflicts of interest		No
Researcher(s) in a position of authority over participants, eg. as employers, lecturers, teachers or family members		No
Cooperation of an intermediary to gain access to research participants or material (eg head teachers, prison governors, chief executives)		No
<a href="#">Internet-based research</a> or other visual/ vocal methods where participants may be identified who may not expect their communication to be accessed by third parties	yes	
Translators or interpreters (other than self)		No
Fieldwork taking place outside the UK		No
Other (please state):		No

**If you answer ‘yes’ to any of the questions in Part A, Section 5, then Part B of the form will need to be completed.**



**Personal safety**

Will your fieldwork be outside the University campus?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
	yes	

**If you answer ‘yes’ to this question, you will need to complete the separate risk assessment form and send this to your supervisor to review.**

**Research data management**

Will the research involve any of the following activities at any stage (including identification of potential research participants)?	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Examination of personal records by those who would not normally have access		no
Sharing data with other organisations		no
Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers	yes	
Publication of direct quotations from respondents	yes	
Publication of data that might allow individuals to be identified	yes	
Use of audio/ visual recording devices	yes	
Storage of personal data on any of the following:		

	FLASH memory or other portable storage devices		no
	Home or other personal computers	yes	
	Private company computers		no
	Laptop computers		no
<p>Explain what will happen to the data you collect once you have completed the module:</p> <p>Guidance is available at <a href="http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchDataManagement">http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/ResearchDataManagement</a> and at <a href="http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection.html">http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/data_protection.html</a>.</p>			
<p>All research data should be stored on the University's secure M: Drive (on which extra space may be requested if required). Data should be anonymized and personal information about research participants should be kept separately from the data.</p>			

If you have answered 'yes' to any of the questions under 7, you must ensure that you follow the University of Leeds [Information Protection Policy](#) and the [Research Data Management Policy](#).

**If you answered 'no' to the items in Question 5 in Part A, you do NOT need to complete Part B. Please now complete and sign Part C.**

**If you answered 'yes' to any of the items in Question 5 in Part A, you will need to complete Part B of this form which requires you to explain your suitability to undertake the proposed research.**

**If you answer 'yes' to this question, you will need to complete the separate risk assessment form and send this to your supervisor to review.**

The form will then need to be reviewed by the module leader. If the project is authorised by the module leader, you will then need to submit an ethics application to the Faculty Research Ethics Committee. This can take up to 6 weeks, so it is important that you discuss this with your supervisor as soon as possible. The application form for full ethical review and further information about the process are available at <http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/UoLEthicsapplication>.

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