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## Integrating Broadcasting and Social Media for Enhanced Audience and Civic Engagement

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### Abstract

*For many decades, the broadcast media have held prominent positions in the mass media environment. However, the advent of social media has brought about a significant shift in people's exposure to, as well as, utilisation and consumption of mass media content. There is a tendency among media experts and users to believe that there is or should be a dichotomy between mass (broadcast) media and social media. This assumption is far from the truth. With creativity and appropriate technology, the two independent media forms could be integrated to achieve greater results. This integration could lead to increased audience engagement, particularly by serving as platforms for a strong public opinion, the deepening of democracy, and the democratisation of communication. Broadcast educators and practitioners should incorporate or harness social media as part of the media mix to achieve greater effectiveness in audience reach, participation, and utilisation of media contents. The integration of broadcasting and social media is not only made possible by information and communication technologies but has also become imperative because a large percentage of the broadcast audience is made up of members of the digital community.*

**Keywords:** integrating, broadcasting, social media, enhanced audience

## **Introduction**

Mass communication has remained an indispensable part of modern society, but how it is accessed has changed over time. While the mass media (broadcast media) have continued to be relevant, new media forms have been developed in the last few decades. The emergence of social media is either perceived to be a threat or a competitor to the earlier mass media platforms. This ought not to be so. Rather, if broadcast and social media are integrated, it would bring about greater reach, exposure, and access to, as well as utilisation, of broadcast media contents. By so doing, enhanced audience and civic engagement would be achieved.

## **Keywords**

- i. Integrating: This refers to the act or process of combining two or more previously independent entities in order to achieve specific goals.
- ii. Broadcast media: These are the electronic media, namely, radio, television, and film (movies).
- iii. Social media: These are digital platforms for online social interactions.
- iv. Audience/Civic Engagement: This refers to the act or process whereby people (audience members) engage in two-way communication with each other, either on a one-to-one, one-to-many, or many-to-many basis, either in real-time or separately, with each party serving as both the source and receiver, respectively.

## **Relevant Theory**

This paper uses the theoretical framework of technological determinism and information society theories. The technological determinism media theory states that technology essentially “causes” certain behaviours and the creation of social systems, thus determining the course of history.

Obot (2017, p. 1130) credits Marshall McLuhan with this theory (1965, 1970). Pavlik and McIntosh (2011, p. 86, 403) explain that when new systems of technology are developed, the culture of society is immediately changed to reflect the changes needed to use the new technology. There is a simple cause-and-effect analysis here between the introduction of new technology and the changes in society's way of thinking, feeling, acting, or believing.

Quoting Melody (1990), McQuail (2010, p. 104) explains an "information society to be those that have become dependent upon complex electronic information networks and which allocate a major portion of their resources to information and communication activities (Obot, 2013, p. 69).

McQuail (2010, p. 105), also quoting Van Dijk (1999), suggests that "modern society is in a process of becoming a network society: a form of society increasingly organizing its relationships in media networks that are gradually replacing or complementing the social networks of face-to-face communication." The information society is characterized by complex interactive communication networks.

## **Methodology**

This paper adopts the ethnomethodology approach. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2008, p. 45), this approach involves "the observation of microbehaviors in real situations." In communication, ethnomethodology also looks at conversations, including the ways in which participants manage the back-and-forth flow with language and nonverbal behaviours.

## **Broadcast and Social Media: Opportunities for Convergence**

According to Pavlik and McIntosh (2011), convergence refers to the merging of computing, telecommunications, and the media in a digital environment. With regard to broadcast and social media, convergence

occurs at the technological level. “This refers to specific types of media, such as print, audio, and video, all converging into digital media form. Activities that used to be separate or cumbersome are now easier and folded into the media experience” (Pavlik and McIntosh, 2011, p. 8). This is made possible by the computer and the internet.

Before the emergence of the internet, mass communication was largely one-way, from the source of the message to the receiver or audience. The audience was relatively large, heterogeneous, and anonymous. Audience members had relatively few means by which to communicate, either with each other on a mass scale or with the creators and publishers. However, “audiences in the age of convergence can communicate via email, online forums, and other interactive media more easily and quickly with each other and with those who create and publish mass communication content. In addition, they can create the content themselves and reach larger audiences for much lower costs than they could have with traditional media” (Pavlik and McIntosh, 2011, p. 12).

### **Types of social media**

Pavlik and McIntosh (2011, p. 260–266) identify the following types of social media:

**Email:** Email, or electronic mail, is an exchange of messages via telecommunication between two people. It is quite easy for an individual to create a mailing list and send out a single message to several people, in a sense “broadcasting” the message. Media organisations have taken advantage of mailing lists to help attract internet users to their sites or to send them information they have specifically requested.

**Discussion Boards and Web Forums:** A discussion board is a type of online “bulletin board” where internet users can post messages that can be seen by others coming to the discussion board and in which they can post responses to previous messages, post, or create their own discussions on a new topic. Discussion boards also allow for newsgroup formation.

Separating newsgroups by general categories, as well as letting anyone create their own newsgroups on any topic, helps make finding discussions of interest to users easier and facilitates users starting their own communities.

Now most media organisations have seen that providing a forum for readers to discuss news stories or other topics of interest related to the news has increased readers' engagement with the organization. At times, the conversation about a single news article may take on a life of its own, perhaps outweighing the original article in terms of the value of the information provided.

**Chat Rooms:** A chat room is a “virtual room” in which a community of users can visit and talk with each other through text messages in real time. Like discussion groups, chat rooms are usually divided by topic, ranging from highly technical computer issues to pop stars to sex.

Chat rooms differ from instant messaging, which also takes place in real time, in that instant messaging usually involves an online conversation between two or at most a few people.

Since chat rooms are synchronous or take place in real time, they can be effectively used by media organisations to promote special guests online and let the audience “speak” directly to them, much like a radio station would have a musician visit the station and talk to callers.

**Blogs:** Weblogs, or blogs, are web pages of short, frequently updated postings by an individual that are arranged chronologically, much like a series of diary entries or journal pages.

**Wiki** is a website that lets anyone add, edit, or delete pages and content.

**Social networking sites:** What distinguishes social networking sites from other types of social media is that, in some manner, they allow users to show the connections they have, or they allow others to see their social networks. Examples of social networking sites are: Myspace, Facebook,

LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube, Twitter, Tribe.net, etc.

### **Characteristics of Social Media**

The Centre for Social Media in the School of Communication at American University identifies the following five fundamental ways in which people's media habits are changing and provides an excellent framework within which to better understand social media:

- i. **Choice:** This means that more media types and channels compete with each other to attract the audience's attention.
- ii. **Conversation:** Conversation has remained a defining characteristic of social media. This has been enhanced by social media compared to what was possible with traditional or mainstream mass media.
- iii. **Curation:** On social media, people are empowered to do more with their contents; they act as their own filters, classifiers, and reviewers.
- iv. **Creation:** Social media users have the opportunity to create and share content.
- v. **Collaboration:** The willingness of people to collaborate on a common good for no personal gain is perhaps one of the biggest surprises one encounters when first examining social media.

### **Broadcast and Social Media: Enlarging the Space for Enhanced Audience and Civic Engagement**

People use both broadcast and social media to connect with society. Balnaves, Donald, and Shoesmith (2009, p. 225–26) note that people go online to connect with the news of their community, whether this is a geographical community or one formed around some other common bond. Weblogs, or blogs, are part of social media and are regularly updated online journalism websites where commentary, original reporting, and links to other content on the web are sorted in reverse chronological order (with the

newest items on top). Items posted to blogs are typically short. Most blogs are quick reads. Blogs offer interactivity and timeliness. All blogs offer audience members the opportunity to respond to what they read, see, or hear, and often the responses are incorporated into the blog (Obot, 2013, p. 71).

Social media serve as the 'voice of the voiceless'. Their contents are an aggregation of people's opinions, views, or expressions. Social media provides a potpourri of people's opinions or ideas. With equal access and use, users of social media enrich the public cyberspace with robust inputs on issues of public interest, which the traditional media of mass communication can tap into or build their agenda around.

Social media provide inexhaustible sources of citizens' contributions to national discourse, such as the federal government's removal of petroleum subsidiaries on January 1, 2012, the planned introduction of N5000 notes, air crashes, terrorist attacks and bombings, etc. Social media have greatly assisted in fulfilling Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the right to freedom of opinion and expression includes "freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." Likewise, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) stipulates that the right to freedom of expression "comprises the freedom to seek out, receive, and communicate information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontier, whether in oral, printed, or artistic form, or by any other means of the individual's choice" (UNESCO, 1981, p. 35). No other channel makes "the right to impart information" more possible and easier than social media, where everyone is a co-producer and user of information.

In the age of social media, communication has become more about human rights. According to UNESCO (1981, p. 172), "it is increasingly interpreted as the right to communicate, going beyond the right to receive communication or to be given communication. Communication is thus

seen as a two-way process in which the partners—individual and collective—carry out a democratic and balanced dialogue. The idea of dialogue, in contrast to monologue, is at the heart of much contemporary thinking, which is leading towards a process of developing a new area of social rights.”

Many social media sites, such as Facebook and YouTube, provide avenues for the exchange of ideas on issues of public and personal concern. It is in this regard that McQuail (2010, p. 156) notes that the big advantage of the new media “is the ready access for all who want to speak, unmediated by the powerful interests that control the content of print media and the channels of broadcasting. The potential of the new media to bypass established institutional channels does also seem to improve the chances for many and reduce their dependence on the various monopolistic sources of information and influence.”

Social media are not only “market places of ideas,” but virtual communities. Quoting Baghdady (2008), Obot (2013, p. 74) describes a virtual community as social relationships forged in cyberspace through repeated contact with a specified boundary or place (a conference or a chat line) that is symbolically delineated by topic of interest.” One of the current virtual communities is Facebook, which is a social utility that connects people worldwide. Facebook is a free-access website that allows users to join networks, such as a school, place of employment, or geographic region, to connect and interact with other people. Users can post messages for their friends to see and update their personal profile to notify friends of happenings in their lives.”

To enrich their content and/or improve their audience-generated content, mass media should integrate social media into their channels. While the media have the potential to structure issues for the public, those issues often become major issues for discussion on social media. Quoting Shaw and McCombs, Littlejohn and Foss (2008, p. 293) assert that 'the mass media may not be successful in telling us what to think, but they are

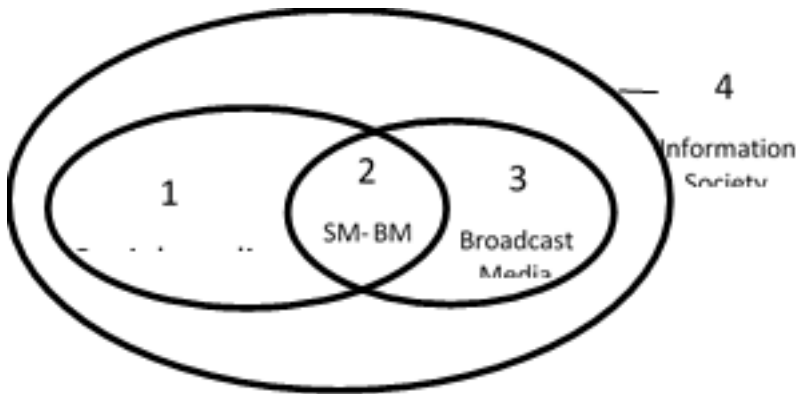


stunningly successful in telling us what to think about.' In other words, agenda-setting establishes the salient issues or images in the minds of the public.

Quoting Littlejohn and Foss (2008), Obot (2013, p. 72–73) explains that there are two levels of agenda-setting. The first establishes the important general issues, and the second determines the parts or aspects of those issues. In many ways, the second level is as important as the first because it gives us a way to frame the issues that constitute the public and media agenda. Media depictions frame events in a way that influences how audiences interpret them. This can happen through various textual features of the "story," such as headlines, visual components, metaphors used, and the way in which the story is told, to name only a few of the ways framing functions. They identify what they call 'a three-part process' of agenda-setting function. First, the priority of issues to be discussed in the media, or media agenda, must be set. Second, the media agenda in some way affects or interacts with what the public thinks, creating the public agenda. Finally, the public agenda affects or interacts in some ways with what policymakers consider important, called the policy agenda. In other words, the media agenda affects the public agenda, and the public agenda affects the policy agenda. Often, what is in the media and public agenda ends up as or simultaneously becomes social media agenda.

It is a general knowledge that there is a high traffic of users on social media. Social networking sites such as Facebook and YouTube provide a forum where discussions on personal, national, and international issues take place. Social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter provide a constant source of alternative news sources for users. Social media can also serve as sources or cues for investigative or follow-up stories in the mass media.

Broadcast and social media integration can be presented in the following model:



**A model for broadcast and social media integration for audience and civic engagement, Charles Obot (2019)**

1. Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Internet forums, blogs, microblogging, Wikis, social networks, podcasts, videos, and pictures.
2. Social media is a broadcast media interface for enhanced audience and civic engagement. Here, social media users set and/or build agendas for issues of concern to them and their communities. Similarly, the broadcast media that have a presence or accounts on social media have constant interactions with their audience members (social media users).
3. Broadcast Media: These include radio, television, and film.
4. Information society: a modern society where digital information and communication technologies have become part of the daily lives of people. This is also a society in which most community members have at least one 'push' technology that enables them to become part of the virtual community.

Social media has also led to the creation of virtual communities. Quoting Howard Rheingold, Baghdady (2008, p. 168) explains that virtual

communities are “social aggregations that emerge from the net when enough people carry on public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feelings, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace.” Social media is the only form of mass media that has either surpassed or rivalled radio as a mass medium in terms of audience following. In the opinion of Jan Fernback and Brad Thompson, quoted by Baghdady (2008), virtual communities are social relationships forged in cyberspace through repeated contact with a specified boundary or place (a conference or a chat line) that is symbolically delineated by topics of interest.' Social media have not only served communication functions, but they have also fulfilled social categories.

In traditional news media, the question is frequently asked, "Is it newsworthy?" But on social media, the question is, "To whom is it newsworthy?" Lee (2010, p. 273) notes that “digital camera users have often posted their pictures on the web to create self-presentations and to enhance social relationships. As bloggers, they provide particular pictures and information related to a local site, and they share them with their intimates or the public to be acknowledged by them. When people search the web for information about a locale, they are able to get a sense of the place before getting there and to visit the locale based on this information. Personal photographs provide visual details of numerous places, make them aesthetic and desirable, and consequently extend the pool of destinations that are considered worthy to visit.” Social media provide platforms for documenting or making comments “on everyday topics that shape people's lives in our neighbourhoods and in our towns; it involves reporting on all manner of personal tragedies, fires, auto accidents, crimes, etc.” (Lauterer, 2006, p. 26).

Broadcast and social media can be effectively utilised or integrated for enhanced audience and civic engagement. This can be done in several ways, which include the following:

1. **Storytelling on social media:** While it is true that many mass media audience members may not be interested in watching news

on television, listening to news on radio, or reading the same in print media, broadcasters can adapt or repackage their news to fit into the peculiar features or dynamics of Facebook, SnapChat, personal blogs, official pages, and Twitter for a better appreciation of users. This should be short, but it should capture the key points or parts of the story, since online users rarely have the patience required for mainstream mass media. According to Corcoran (2015), “given that presenters and reporters have just as much social clout on their personal accounts as the stations they work for, it is an obvious option... Presenters and reporters can now reach huge audiences themselves on social media.”

2. **Events livestreaming:** With a smart phone and internet access, one can livestream any event or anything, anywhere and anytime. This could be news, breaking news, sports, or anything of human interest.
3. **Platforms for news sourcing:** social media can be used as effective avenues for information gathering and synthesis. They can serve as platforms through which broadcasters can gather valuable information, such as opinions and voices, and sometimes find better materials for a story line. Vox pox on issues of public concern or current issues of general consequence can be conducted on social media by broadcasters. Often, many news stories are inspired or influenced by social media contents, such as posts, comments, and videos. However, I do acknowledge some of the challenges or risks involved in using social media for news sourcing. Among these challenges are the credibility of information, issues relating to the absence of gatekeeping by the producers of information published on social media, the absence of ethical compliance in the course of content creation, as well as internet availability, and being involved in using social media for news sourcing. Among these challenges are the credibility of information, issues relating to the absence of gatekeeping by the

producers of information published on social media, the absence of ethical compliance in the course of content creation, as well as internet availability, access, and affordability. Moreover, many of the social media content producers were not trained in journalism, and as such, any journalist who utilises social media content for his professional practice has to tread with caution.

#### **4. Social media as marking and branding tools for broadcasters:**

Broadcasters and stations can use the Twitter hashtags # and Facebook page # to promote their programs or interests with their followers (audience members) or conduct research. According to Chakraborty (2019), “internet tools like YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook are increasingly changing the way media is being produced, distributed, and consumed. Unconventional social media platforms, such as blogs, are also redefining journalism these days, allowing people to express their opinions on relevant issues. Today, the majority of journalists have blogs and use Twitter to conduct research on their followers. Every celebrity, show, broadcast station, and journalist has (or should have) a Twitter account where they engage and communicate with their fans and followers or promote themselves or their shows, according to the author. Chakraborty emphasises that 'hashtags are extremely popular for promoting an event or a cause.' YouTube is a veritable marketing or branding tool for broadcasters. Many people who do not watch television watch their favourite shows on YouTube.

Broadcasters, presenters, and reporters can also use blogs to interact with their fans and followers on a more personal level. Facebook is the primary social media platform used by television shows to promote launches, new episodes, or even the program as a whole. It is an incontrovertible fact that broadcast media and social media have, over the years, shared a symbiotic relationship in which both are dependent on each other for content and audience/civic engagement.

Integrating social and broadcast media would further democratize communication. UNESCO (1981, p. 166) defines the democratization of communication as a process whereby:

1. The individual becomes an active partner and not a mere object of communication.
2. The variety of messages exchanged increases and
3. The extent and quantity of social representations or participation in communication are augmented.

With creativity in broadcast programming, appropriate technology, and social media presence, audience and civic engagement would be achieved.

### **Some ways broadcast media can utilise social media to enhance audience and civic engagement**

Freeman, Klapczynski, and Wood (2019) have identified some of the ways in which broadcast stations and broadcasters can use social media to enhance audience and civic engagement. They assert that social media not only provide more bidirectional communication between the station and the audience, but it is also improving awareness, loyalty, and the station's reputation and brand image” (2019, p. 3–4). Social media also allows broadcast stations to stream their programs.

Social media, according to Freeman, Klapczynski, and Wood (2019, p. 4), can be used specifically in the following ways: "Firstly, it can be created, edited, or commented on (authorising). Secondly, users can share existing information or content, such as audio and video. Thirdly, user-driven scoring and filtering features are offered. These modes of usage are interrelated.”

Facebook, in particular, offers authoring mainly via its functions to comment, send private messages, and publish microblogs as status updates to friends. Sharing refers to the possibility to upload or link photographs, videos, or other content.

The authors further explain that while some broadcast stations have “Fan” pages, there are some stations that are running on “Friend” pages, the difference being that one must be personally accepted as a friend rather than getting the automatic acceptance from “Liking” to be connected. Friend pages have a maximum of 5,000 friends, but there are no limits to the number of likes a fan page can receive. Many broadcast stations either migrate to the fan pages, which are identical in appearance to the friend pages, or maintain both accounts.

Broadcast stations and broadcasts can have a social media presence to generate engagement, promote benchmark listening, promote or project on-air personalities, encourage the sharing of posts and links, video/photo sharing, contents, and scoring. The “wall” is an outstanding feature of Facebook, as it contains “posts” from the station and users. According to Freeman, Klaczynski, and Wood (2019, p. 7), the wall posts can be categorized into three areas, namely: (i) designed to generate engagement; (ii) promote station benchmarks and listening; and (iii) promote on-air personalities.

**Generating engagement:** The posts on broadcast stations' walls are generally designed to generate engagement on subject matters that are either topical or of great human interest.

**Promoting benchmark listening:** According to stations' Facebook efforts, driving users to the broadcast program or content appears to be the main goal. Specific special events that reoccur on-air at specific set times are called benchmarks. These benchmarks are unique specialty features that attempt to create return visits (habitual tune-ins) to the station. Most benchmarks are branded with a specific time that they broadcast as part of their name, and at times they mention the day it broadcasts if it was or is not a daily feature. Examples include programs like '60' minutes, 'Tuesday Live', and so on.

**Promoting personalities:** The promotion of on-air personalities is tied into station benchmarks and appointment posts. Sometimes, programme

promos are tied to celebrity or guest appearances or a popular on-air personality. For example, we could have a personality promotion like 'Keep a date with Charles Obot at 8 p.m. every Friday.'

**Sharing:** The method of 'sharing' comes in the form of posts that are often designed to create station website traffic, interaction through station blogs, sharing videos and photos, and contests.

**Posts and Links:** Topics are typically based on current events that directly relate to the station's target audience.

**Contests:** Broadcast stations' contents are designed to attract and retain listeners and viewers. Broadcasters have always devised creative ways for their audience members to participate in contests. These may take different formats, such as 'text to win,' 'question of the week,' etc.

**Scoring:** One key objective for stations, it seems, is to get social media (Facebook) users to 'Like' the station's page, which immediately connects them to the station's newsfeeds. The newsfeeds serve as the station's solicited advertisements, reminding users to tune in, surf the site, and view items on their Facebook page. Those that visit pages can 'Like' specific topics, posts, or pictures, or connect by clicking on the 'Like' button located by each of the posts.

## **Conclusion**

Social media has spawned a new community—the virtual community. Many, if not most, of the broadcast audience members are members of this new community and can be aptly called 'netizens.' Put another way, many broadcast audience members can be called citizens of the internet. Broadcast stations that wish to remain relevant must have both an online and social media presence. The advantages and strengths of social media or the opportunities offered by social media should be exploited by broadcast stations and broadcasters to engage their audience members and achieve greater audience participation in and input into broadcast contents. The voices of audience members amplified by given expression in social media promote audience and civic engagement and further engender democracy in communication.



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## Intonation As A Politeness Marker In Nigerian English

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### Abstract

*This research studies intonation as a politeness marker in Nigerian English. It aims to highlight the various ways intonation influences the perception of politeness among English-speaking Nigerians, show the interrelationships between intonation and politeness, and evaluate the importance of intonation in social interaction. The study adopts David Brazil's discourse intonation theory as well as the pragmatic theories by Ndimele and Kempson, respectively. Data were obtained from some sentences that the respondents were asked to read aloud and analyze. The University of Uyo town campus and the annex campus were the areas of study. Twenty-five students from the University from distinct Departments and levels of study made up the population samples. Findings revealed that the rise [] and fall [] intonation patterns index greater politeness in communication than other intonation patterns. The study concludes that intonation in relation to context, paralinguistic features, sentence types, the relationship between speakers, and other variables are the determinant factors in evaluating whether an utterance is polite or impolite.*

**Keywords:** Intonation, Politeness Marking, Nigerian English, Tone Patterns