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# **Changing production practices of news and new audience configurations at BBC World Service**

**A case study of BBC Hausa on facebook**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION	PAGE
Contents Page	1
Contents Page	2
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Chapter 1. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Chapter 2. Literature Review</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1 Introduction	8
2.2 Social Network Sites	8
2.3 New 'Audience' Definitions	9
2.4 Media Convergence	10
2.5 Interactivity and Journalism	11
2.6 Citizen Journalism and Interactivity	12
2.7 Is the role of the journalist changing?	13
<b>Chapter 3. Methods of Data Collection</b>	<b>15</b>
3.1 Introduction and Definition	15
3.2 Research Approach and Reflexivity	16
3.3 Selection of Methodology and Cases	17
3.3.1 Qualitative Data Collection	17
3.3.2 Qualitative Audience Research	18
3.3.3 BBC in House Audience Data	18
3.4 Ethical Considerations	18
3.4.1 Ethical issues in Online Research	19
3.5 Research Limitations	20
3.6 Wider Applications of the Ethnographic Research	21
<b>Chapter 4. Data Collection</b>	<b>22</b>
4.1 Qualitative Data Collection and Data Analysis	22
4.1.2 Qualitative Interviews and meetings	22
4.1.3 Collecting Audience Research	23
4.1.4 Website statistics from SAGE Analytics	23
4.1.5 Facebook Analytics, observation and translations	23
4.2 Analysing the data	24
4.2.1 From Radio to Online	24
4.2.2 Convergence at BBC WS	26
4.2.3 Diaspora Audiences	27
4.2.4 Demographic Profile of Audiences	28
4.2.5 Facebook Enhancing Interactivity	29

## TABLE OF CONTENTS CONTINUED

SECTION	PAGE
4.2.6 Editorial values on facebook	33
4.2.7 Facebook Influencing the News Agenda	35
<b>Chapter 5. Interpreting the data</b>	<b>38</b>
5.1 Introduction	38
5.2 What are the implications of convergence for BBC Hausa producers and audiences?	38
5.3 Is BBC Hausa changing the way practitioners conceive their audiences?	39
5.4 Is BBC Hausa facebook enhancing interactivity?	40
5.5 Is BBC Hausa facebook changing the production practices of journalists?	41
5.5.1 Social Media and sourcing of news and comments	41
5.5.2 User Moderation	42
<b>Chapter 6. Findings</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>49</b>
1 - Interview Schedule	50
2 - Field Notes 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2010	51
3 - Field Notes 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	58
4 – SAGE and facebook Data	67
5 – Facebook Analytics	68
6 – Data Chart of posts per ‘fan’	69
7 – Facebook comments translated	70

# **Changing production practices of news and new audience configurations at the BBC World Service: A case study of BBC Hausa on facebook**

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## **Abstract**

This study addresses whether social media like facebook is changing the relationship between audiences and producers of news. Using an ethnographic approach the research follows both the news production and the consumption of social media at the BBC Hausa service through observation and interviews with producers and through analysing facebook statistics and BBC in-house audience data. The study shows that the majority of facebook 'fans' are diasporic, younger and more male skewed than average for the BBC Hausa radio audience in Africa. Practically no women take part of the debates on BBC Hausa facebook that predominately evolve around football and politics. Despite the increased potential of interactivity on facebook due to reduced moderation compared to traditional BBC message boards, few 'fans' interact on a day-to-day basis and the majority of interactions are in response to traditional news content. The producers do not interact directly with fans but instead use facebook as a source of news, commentary for radio programmes and an address book for eyewitness accounts from all over the world. The study raises important issues about the extent to which social media have a democratising and empowering force for audiences in Africa and for the wider global Hausa diaspora.

Keywords: BBC Hausa, Hausa, Nigeria, New Media, Internet, facebook, Social media, Social Network Sites, Interactivity, and Media Convergence

## Chapter 1. Introduction

One of the first statements made by Peter Horrocks, director of BBC Global News (of which BBC World Service is an integral part), when he took up the post in February 2010 was that BBC news journalists have to make better use of social media and become more collaborative in producing news stories.

'There's no excuse for failing to think about this and to throw yourself into it. If you don't like it, or you think that level of change or that different way of working isn't right for me, then go out and do something else, because it's going to happen, you're not going to be able to stop it.' ... 'This isn't just a kind of fad from someone who's an enthusiast of technology. I'm afraid you're not doing your job if you can't do those things. It's not discretionary' (Ariel 9 Feb 2010:2)

He urges all staff that work within BBC Global News to get prepared to pick up social media skills and leave a programme-based mindset behind to adapt to new technologies. This comes at a time where BBC World Service needs to make spending cuts in response to the UK government's cuts in public spending. The organisation is going through major shifts in management and structure in order to prepare to move from linear to more digital news provision and save money as a result.

***This research aims to:*** explore whether social media like facebook are transforming the relationship between producers and consumers at the BBC World Service?

BBC World Service (BBC WS) is a London based public broadcast organisation funded by the UK Government via a Grant-in-Aid from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO). Like the rest of the BBC funded by UK licence fee payers and more recent international commercial services, it remains a constituent part of the BBC, operating under the same Royal Charter and is accountable to the corporation's independent governing body, the BBC Trust. BBC WS has independent editorial and management autonomy from the government but a Broadcasting Agreement with the FCO defines how its broader objectives are shaped by a set of 'strategic international priorities' (FCO 2006). BBC WS currently broadcasts in 32 languages on Radio, Online and TV (in Persian and Arabic).

The BBC language service selected for this study is the second largest language service (apart from English) of the BBC WS, if counting Radio listeners, the BBC Hausa service. Last year in October the head of the service started a facebook group and now the BBC Hausa facebook (BBC HF) 'fan page' is the second most popular non English BBC facebook community with over 21,000 followers. Compared to the 21 million shortwave radio listeners

in Hausa speaking parts of Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone <sup>1</sup>, this number might seem rather insignificant. However, this study shows that facebook has implications for the type of audiences that are reached and how producers relate to audiences in form of interactivity and through changes in how feedback is integrated into traditional news programming. However, the implications of social media may not be as revolutionary or egalitarian as some authors suggests.

Literature on the state of the Nigerian media is often concerned with limited press freedom (Jose 1999) or Western domination and cultural imperialism (Enahoro 2002). In the colonial era, Nigerian newspapers were used as tools in order to spread Christianity and Western business interests in the region (Ugor 2009). Post independence radio and later television created a new space but instead of contributing to a more diverse media environment the state-owned media soon became a mouthpiece for nationalist values. In this context the BBC WS has broadcasted domestic and international news in Hausa for the past 50 years.

Hausa is the third most widely spoken language in Nigeria after English and Pidgin and the only Nigerian language BBC WS broadcasts in (Okwori and Adeyanju 2006). Nigeria is the most populous nation in Africa and is therefore an important market for the BBC. It makes up nearly 11% of BBC WS latest global audience estimate and is the second largest national audience after Afghanistan<sup>2</sup>.

Up until very recently the nature of broadcasting in Hausa has only involved radio broadcasts on shortwave radio and during this time the service has mostly targeted rural areas of Hausa speaking Africa. It is questionable whether BBC WS presence in Nigeria exists as a guardian of freedom of information to the country's citizens or as a postcolonial relic and a legacy of western domination in the region. Social media opens up important questions about who the service are going to reach in the future and what happens when the audience can talk back.

Scholars now argue that the growth of ICT and 'small media technology' such as mobile phones and video recorders have provided an opportunity for the inclusion of marginalised voices in Nigeria (Ugor 2009). Research into Hausa new media culture today by both Western and Nigerian scholars mostly focuses on media as a way of spreading Islamic values in the form of press and mass-mediated conversations told as popular fiction through video (Olukotun 2008). Other studies have examined how new media technology is now opening up a space for young Nigerians to communicate outside state control (Ugor 2009). For example, new technology has enabled some young Hausa authors and filmmakers in conservative northern Nigeria (Hausa Land), with a largely Muslim population, to defy Muslim traditions and censorship by illustrating young people's lives and romance (Uba 2006).

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<sup>1</sup> According to BBC in House research conducted in 2008 and KantarMedia 2010

<sup>2</sup> According to BBC WS annual report in 2009/2010



Scholarly research about new and interactive media in Nigeria is limited and little research has shown what implications new media has for journalism in Nigeria in general and in Hausa in particular. Previous studies of the BBC Africa Have Your Say (HYS) forum in English however show that despite the internet's potential of enabling communication from African perspectives; BBC's moderation still reinforces stereotypes about Africa (Ogunyemi forthcoming). The forum is underpinned by moderation and the discussions from forum participants often follow only the one topic raised by the moderator. In addition only discussions in the forums are set to comment on items within the main news agenda of the organisation. The discussions are then framed in order to fit into a particular programme format reinforcing a centralised, traditional form of news sourcing.

Previous academic research has focused on the shifting relationship between audiences and producers within BBC HYS message boards. The BBC languages services interactivity previously covered by scholarly research include studies on BBC Hindi, Urdu, Arabic and English (Gillespie, Herbert et al. 2010; Mackay, Tong et al. 2010; Herbert and Ali forthcoming; Ogunyemi forthcoming). These studies show how forums are limited in terms of providing a forum for global debate and instead work as 'public screens' of opinions, partly because of strict moderation (Gillespie, Herbert et al. 2010). The studies also reveal how the forums lack many characteristics of real debate and deliberation (Mackay, Tong et al. 2010), but how they sometimes can provide an alternative cultural sphere for controversial discussion for example in Arabic (Herbert and Ali forthcoming).

In addition, several studies have previously investigated the related issues of User Generated Content (UGC) and Citizen journalism at the BBC News hub providing news in English (Lee-Wright 2008; Harrison 2010). These studies have demonstrated that interactivity and citizen journalism are often used in the same way as other news sources, in order to reinforce BBC held worldviews. However, to date academic research has not covered social media such as facebook and its implications for BBC WS role for Hausa audiences.

The research questions and objectives for this study are to shed light on the following questions:

- **Main research question:** Does BBC Hausa facebook transform relations between producers and consumers at the BBC World Service?
- What are the implications of convergence for BBC Hausa producers and audiences?
- Is BBC Hausa enhancing interactivity? If so between who, for what purpose, and for what consequence?
- Is BBC Hausa facebook changing the way practitioners conceive their audience?

## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In order to understand if BBC HF is changing the production practices of news and changing audience configurations at the BBC Hausa service, it is necessary to examine previous studies in the area of social media (like facebook) in relation to literature regarding overall trends in media and news production. After having defined social media this literature review problematises the concept of a digital 'audience' and the need for thinking carefully about the nature of audiences in relation to social media. After that audience participation is contextualized within broader debates about 'media convergence' and the changing nature of media organisations, in particularly the BBC. Important themes about social media discussed in scholarly work have been concerned with interactivity, citizen journalism and the changing role of journalists. Each of these concepts, and the respective literature about them, is discussed within this literature review. This literature review is not exhaustive but aims to give context to social media within broader debates about media continuity and change, and also to provide a rationale for the research questions.

### **2.2 Social Network Sites**

Social Network Sites (SNSs) like facebook, Twitter, Linked-in and Youtube can be defined as sites that allow individuals a) to create a public or partially public profile within a system, b) to identify a list of other users with whom they share a connection and c) allow a user to view and cross-reference their list of connections with others within the system (Boyd and Ellison 2007:210). The term 'social media' is often used interchangeably with SNS in public discourse as well as in scholarly writing, e.g. "Social media, the term commonly referring to blogs and social network sites online" (Lariscy, Avery et al. 2009:314). In this research the two terms 'social media' and 'SNS' will be used inter-changeable as well.

SNS are a relatively recent phenomenon. Facebook, for example, was founded in 2004 but only really reached a critical mass in 2006/2007, and has therefore only just started to receive attention within academic literature. Studies on SNS have been about privacy (Christofides, Muise et al. 2009; Nosko, Wood et al. 2010), health information (Hawn 2009), terrorism (Weimann 2010), education (Roblyer, McDaniel et al. 2010), and political participation (Jackson and Lilleker 2009). This literature review, however, mainly focuses on SNSs' role in enhancing interactivity and influencing production practices within news organisations.

Scholarly writing about SNS often carries egalitarian values in scholarly literature, of empowering audiences by giving them access to tools where participation in media

production is possible (Rebillard and Touboul 2010). Social media tools are thought of offering an alternative to traditional media, where a more diverse range of voices can be heard (Leung 2009). For example, in the post election crisis in Kenya 2008 citizens could defy traditional news censorship by posting eyewitness accounts of the election process and following unrest directly on SNS (Mäkinen and Wangu 2008). Some scholars suggest that with the help of social media audiences are able to participate on almost equal terms as media producers or journalists (Napoli 2010). As Beer and Burrows note: 'Perhaps the key defining feature of Web 2.0<sup>3</sup> is that users are involved in processes of production and consumption as they generate and browse online content, as they tag and blog, post and share' (Beer and Burrows 2007:8).

Criticisms of the utopian ideals of SNS have been, for example, that relatively few active citizen reporters use social media tools and, even when they do, often belong to social elites (Rebillard and Touboul 2010). The idea of ordinary, non-trained audiences being able to produce their own media as a new concept is slightly misguided since cameras and personal camcorders have existed for several decades, instead it is actually the nascent forms of distribution via SNS sites that comprises the novelty (Napoli 2010). And, despite the ability for audiences to participate more actively in news, organisations continue to use very little content from SNS and generally user generated content (UGC) is still brought into traditional news frames (Örnebring 2008). The debate about the democratic possibilities of new media did not start with the birth of SNS, however. In order to understand how these debates are relevant to my research questions, it is first necessary to explore ongoing shifts in media and media production in recent years.

### **2.3 New 'Audience' Definitions**

Before we examine the changing relationship between producers and audiences in terms of interactivity, it is necessary to have a closer look at the term 'audiences'. The participatory qualities of the internet make talking about audiences slightly problematic because audiences usually refers to consumers of a one-to -medium like Radio or TV (Livingstone 2008). The traditional audience concept is commonly referred to as one-to-many broadcasting but increasingly new media allow many-to-many interactions. Is there a need to invent a new term for new media audiences? Even an alternative term like 'users' is problematic though, as 'users' loses the necessary collectiveness commonly associated with audiences, according to Livingstone (2008). So, before discarding the term audiences it is useful to consider Abercrombie and Longhurst's (1998) concept of the 'diffused audience', defined as being dispersed and fragmented and intertwined in everyday life (cited in Livingstone 2008). The

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<sup>3</sup> The term Web 2.0 is commonly associated with web applications that facilitate interactive information sharing, interoperability, user-centered design

notion of diffused audiences can be stretched to the concept of 'extended audiences'; where people are audiences in more places and (as a whole group) taking part in more activities, rather than just listening and watching (Couldry 2005). Hence, it may still be useful to refer to new media audiences as 'an audience' as long as the definition encompasses extended and active audiences.

SNS opens up new ways of referring to an audience, for example facebook refers to people who 'follow' an organisation (like the BBC WS), as 'fan's. Is facebook changing the way media practitioners perceive their audience and, if so, what implications does that have for academic research is one of the main questions for this research? Before looking more closely at the relationship between interactivity, journalism and production practices it is worth discussing concepts of media convergence in the context of the BBC WS.

## **2.4 Media Convergence**

It could be argued that SNS is part of a larger shift in production focus at the BBC WS; trends that in scholarly literature have been related to the concept of media convergence. In the autumn of 2009 Peter Horrocks, current director of BBC Global News, brought out a manifesto called 'The End of Fortress Journalism'. In the paper Horrocks called for a shift away from a focus on passive mass audiences - mainly reached by radio - towards interactivity on digital platforms where the audience help shape the content (Horrocks 2009:1). In order for the BBC to be able to make this transition, he calls more sharing of news production amongst different BBC departments; across radio, TV and Online; and sharing between BBC WS and BBC domestic UK services. He also wants the 32 language services increasingly to share and translate stories for each other in order to amortise costs and create synergies (Horrocks 2009).

Convergence can be defined as both the blurring of boundaries between channels and also the blurring of boundaries between production and consumption (Jenkins 2006; Deuze 2007). There are three important trends to consider in terms of participation in what Jenkins refers to as 'convergence culture', Jenkins (2006): Firstly, new tools give consumers the ability to archive, annotate, appropriate and rearticulate media content. Secondly, subcultures promote a do-it-yourself spirit in terms of media and web tools now available. Thirdly, there is an increasing flow of text between media platforms, which makes economic sense for media conglomerates (Jenkins 2006). It is, however, not clear from these definitions if media convergence is about doing better journalism or about cutting costs (Quinn 2005). Convergence often means that media workers need to work across different platforms radio, TV and Online (Deuze 2007). Media convergence could therefore critically be viewed as corporations trying to cut costs and undermine unions by introducing new ways of working

(McKercher 1997). One of the key aims of this research is to cast light on what the key implications of media convergence are for BBC Hausa producers and audiences.

As discussed above, audience participation is an important concept within the discourse of media convergence. In the section below attention will be focused on concepts of audience participation, interactivity and subsequent implications for production practices within journalism.

## **2.5 Interactivity and Journalism**

The way the term 'interactivity' is used within public discourse as well as in scholarly literature is somewhat dubious: It can mean anything from providing a story with a hyperlink, to forming virtual communities (Singer 2004). Within the BBC WS interactive forums, blogs and now SNS are seen as ways of realising the organisation's aim of fostering a 'global conversation'<sup>4</sup>. However, the term is most often associated with communication technology, the internet and the world wide web. Some scholars argue that interactivity is actually the technology or physical medium. Meanwhile others claim that it is the perception of the persons involved in the process of doing it (Kioussis 2002).

Perhaps the most quoted definition of interactivity is from Rafaeli (1988) who argues that in relation to online forums, interactivity is concerned with messages relating to each other and to previous messages. Hence, interactivity is about the sequence of messages and how they relate to each other (Rafaeli and Sudweeks 1997). Rafaeli and Sudweek's (1997) research involved computer-mediated communication within online forums. However it says little about interaction with news content. The next section examines how interactivity has been related to news production. Previous research into BBC WS HYS forums has found that whilst these forums function to bring together opposing views there is actually little direct interactivity on the forum, in the sense of those who post having 'a conversation'. Instead there is quite often a great deal of ill-informed illogical assertion, expressed in a rude manner. Opposing viewpoints are juxtaposed instead of there being much deliberation between the proponents (Mackay, Tong et al. 2010). The next section examines how interactivity has been related to news production.

Research into participation and journalism shows that the level of participation varies widely from audiences submitting their own original stories to people just voting for what content gets published (Deuze 2008). Massey and Levy (1999) adopt Heeter's (1999) four dimensions of interactivity relevant to journalism. These dimensions are:

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<sup>4</sup> BBC WS aims and objectives in the annual review 2009/2010

a) *complexity of content available*– this dimension relates to the complexity of news that the audience can choose to interact with,

b) *responsiveness to the user* – this relates to actual and not potential responsiveness. For example, if there is an email button to the editor it does not mean that the editor has the possibility of interacting with users because of time constraints etc,

c) *ease of adding information* – how easily users can add information to the content, i.e. co-create news,

d) *facilitation of interpersonal communication* – this dimension is closely related to Rafaeli's definition of interactivity, whereby users can interact with each other. Massey and Levy (1999) make a distinction between interpersonal interaction and content interaction. The latter is defined as "the degree to which journalists technologically empower consumers over content" (Massey and Levy 1999:141) or where users are able to respond to the news.

These definitions of interactivity indicate that there are different layers of interactivity that can take place in relation to news content; Massey and Levy refer to this as 'content interactivity' (1999 141). Whether BBC HF increases interactivity between audiences and producers is one of the research questions that will be considered within this research.

One dimension that is not brought up by Massey and Levy in great detail is that journalists may use content from so-called citizen journalists (people who contribute anything from a photo to a full story of original journalism) and then call this form of news-sourcing 'participation' or 'interactivity'. This form of participation is explained in the next section of this review.

## **2.6 Citizen Journalism and Interactivity**

Citizen journalism serves news organisations to meet particular needs in news sourcing, often giving access to markets and footage that otherwise would not have been possible. Examples of citizen contribution to news often remarked on in the literature are the 2004 tsunami, and the 7/7 London tube bombs (Allen 2006). It is worth asking the question of whether or not citizen journalism is leading to more audience participation in the making of news.

Participatory journalism where audiences participate in the production of news and 'user generated content' (UGC) both enable a dialogue between users and producers according to Allen (2006:5). It is not clear from Allen's whether he deems participation and interactivity as the same practice. However the two terms seem to be treated similarly and relate to similar concepts in daily discourse as well as in other scholarly writing on journalism.

Despite the potential of audiences to contribute to the news, UGC has created tension for BBC journalists who are trying to preserve traditional BBC values such as quality, impartiality and balance (Harrison 2010). In addition, sorting through UGC and verifying the truthfulness, authenticity or accuracy has come at great cost to the BBC because it is so labour intensive to keep up with the editorial values, according to Harrison (2010), who has carried out research at the BBC news hub.

There are two possibilities regarding UGC, it can either add to existing content in terms of feedback and comments, or original content produced by users can feature next to professionally produced news on equal terms (Deuze 2008). Research from two studies at the BBC shows that UGC is treated and selected as a news source like any other, a form of content to support the BBC's own agenda and values (Lee-Wright 2008; Harrison 2010). In a participatory news environment, there should be a diminishing role for 'gatekeepers' according to Bruns (2003) and instead journalists should act as 'gatewatchers'. However, previous studies at the BBC indicate that the former is still the case at the BBC (Lee-Wright 2008; Harrison 2010).

The second issue of citizen journalism that has been considered in previous work on the BBC is the extent to which UGC gets filtered through moderation (Gillespie et al 2010; Harrison 2010). Most news organisations keep a degree of editorial control over participatory news. However research shows that there is heavy filtering and moderation of BBC's interactive forums both at the BBC news room and BBC WS (Gillespie et al 2010; Harrison 2010; Herbert and Ali forthcoming). In trying to create balance and adhere to BBC editorial values, audience participation is limited. This debate indicates that production values and the role of the journalist have not changed greatly with the rise of interactive tools. The section below discusses the changing role of journalists in relation to participatory and/or interactive news.

## **2.7 Is the role of the journalist changing?**

Journalists still see their role as 'gatekeepers' according to Singer (2004:266) and Örnebring (2008:773). Gatekeeping is defined as 'the process by which selections are made in media work, especially decisions whether or not to admit a particular news story to pass through the "gates" of a news medium into the news channels' (McQuail 1994: 213).

Despite convergence, interactive forums and now SNS, traditional journalism is still the predominant practice of journalists. Journalists still discard 90% of what is being said in terms of UGC and continue to put these sources into the traditional news frame, Singer (2004) argues. Forum posts from SNS sites are included in news mainly in response to material produced by news organisation. Websites like Wikipedia and Youtube, Flickr and other SNS are incorporated and channelled through traditional media organisations but there is still



editing in place, claims Örnebring in a study of Aftonbladet in Sweden and the Sun in the UK (Örnebring 2008). The structure is controlled by the news organisation rather than content being “self organised” which means that production is still centralised rather than distributed amongst the audience (Örnebring 2008:783). Although this strict filtering might not seem very democratic, Shirky (2008) argues that filtering is crucial in a converged media environment because of the amount of information being generated and so filtering becomes an increasingly important task. Bruns (2003) argues that production can become more inclusive and democratic if journalists move from gatekeeping to gatewatching. Gatewatching is a more open way of approach to news with less moderation where the discussion between consumers and producers becomes the news (Bruns 2003).

Previous research into the BBC Africa ‘Have Your Say’ forums in English shows that, despite the internet’s potential of enabling communication from African perspectives, BBC moderation or ‘gatewatching’ still reinforces stereotypes about Africa (Ogunyemi forthcoming). The forum is underpinned by moderation and the discussions among forum participants often follow the one and only topic of the moderator. In addition, discussions in the forums are set only to comment on the main news agenda of the organisation. The discussions are framed in order to fit into discussion programmes, and for the website, indicating a centralised and traditional form of news sourcing (Ogunyemi forthcoming).

The review above indicates that despite new tools, ultimately, little journalism is interactive or participatory. At the BBC newsroom, there is still a large amount of gatekeeping and moderation taking place before any UGC from SNS or other interactive forums go up on BBC sites (Harrison 2010). Research by Ogunyemi shows that this is true in terms of interactivity on the African Have Your Say Forum in English. Whether this is the case at the BBC Hausa service has been researched for this dissertation. This literature review has discussed the need for new audience definitions, outlined debates about media convergence and then changing nature of media production. It has also distinguished between different forms of interactivity in relation to journalism and finally investigated the role of journalists as gatekeepers versus gatewatchers. Convergence, interactivity, citizen journalism and the role of the journalism are all concepts in one way or another relating to the relationship between journalists or news producers and their audiences. The main research question being addressed by this research is whether facebook has resulted in a change in the relationship between BBC Hausa produces and audiences.

The concepts reviewed in this literature has so far have not been set in relation to Africa and Hausa speakers because as yet there is not a developed body of literature in this area. This research aims to plug the gap in academic research about old versus new social media and the changing relationship between producers and audiences in the context of the BBC Hausa service.

## Chapter 3. Methods of Data Collection

### 3.1 Introduction and Definition

I feel slightly ill at ease calling my method 'ethnography'. With the limited time and scope of this research I was unable to do this method justice. Especially since the value of ethnographies is often in careful interpretation and 'thick description' (Vidich and Lyman 1998:75) a term which may not yet apply to this work? It is perhaps necessary to point out that there is a difference between 'ethnography' as a research approach and 'an ethnography' as the text generated by such research (Taylor and Smith 2008). I have attempted the former, but have a long way to go in order to produce the latter from the field notes, documents, emails, research reports and audio recordings collected during my time at the BBC WS. The methodology falls within the ethnographic tradition, and the knowledge produced for the dissertation were collected largely using a set of ethnographic methods. However, the end result could not yet be called an 'ethnography' of production.

There are many definitions of ethnographic research. One has been chosen in order to demonstrate what was attempted. "Ethnography is a method that allows the researcher to 'live' inside the culture of the group. 'Living' means being present for a considerable period of time when everyday activities, conversations, routines and processes take place so that relationships and dynamics are exposed. This method allows the outsider to hold a uniquely privileged position as they observe, understand and forge relationships inside the culture'." (Taylor and Smith 2008:7).

This definition is helpful because it describes the advantage of being on the inside of a group and being able to follow everyday activities and record the participants' experiences from their own point of view. I had the privilege of being inside the BBC WS from February 2010 to August 2010. In addition, have experience from working at the BBC WS for 18 months from May 2006 to October 2007 as a Senior Analyst for digital media. Previous academic research was also carried out within the BBC WS as a researcher for the AHRC funded 'Tuning in Project led by Marie Gillespie. This helped to "understand and forge relationships inside the culture" (Taylor and Smith 2008:7) and establish or re-establish relationships quickly, for example being included in social interactions such as lunches and birthday parties as well as ad hoc meetings seen relevant to this study.

This chapter outlines the philosophical approach, choice of methods, reflexivity and role as a researcher, selection of cases, research ethics, research limitations and wider application of the research.

### 3.2 Research Approach and Reflexivity

Researching one's own current or previous work place has many benefits, familiarity and ease of access being the most obvious. Unlike Georgina Born (2004:1-23) who also spent considerable amount of time within the BBC, I did not feel like an awkward anthropologist amongst media professionals. However, there are also potential disadvantages of a close relationship with the research setting (Blaxter, Hughes et al. 2008). The term 'going native' originates from white, educated male anthropologists researching 'native' societies or tribes, it puts emphasis on the researcher's role as a participant rather than an observer (Kanuha 2000:439). However, within the BBC WS I am already a 'native'. There are issues related to "being native" as opposed to "going native" (Kanuha 2000: 439) regarding where the researcher's loyalties lie. The knowledge that I would be reporting on what my participants were saying to me as 'an equal' and using it within an academic environment made me feel awkward even though I had asked for consent to do so. My concerns were that they may feel it a betrayal and that conclusions drawn would not reflect their professionalism. I had to practice the technique of putting my 'insider status' to one side and try to find the balance between an insider and an outsider (Kanuha 2000:445).

Before going into the research environment careful consideration was given to my participation in the life of the department. Would data collected be shared in order for the participants to use it for business purposes, or might that effect the results of the study? This effect is known as reactivity (Taylor and Smith 2008). As a social researcher, I often felt like I had to give something back to justify my existence in the system, and I realised quickly that the research on BBC Hausa interactivity could be very useful to BBC WS. The ambition was not to influence the organization but rather merely to produce knowledge. The resulting influence on the organisation however is part of that knowledge. It could be argued that the researcher is always an 'active participant', regardless of whether it is as a 'fly on the wall' or 'full participant' (Hammersly and Atkinson 2007). This notion is based on 'reflexivity' and the idea that the researcher is part of society so the researcher's own values become an inescapable feature of the research situation (Hammersly 2009).

Methodologically, reflexivity is the way the researcher relates to what is studied, including the researcher's presence within the research situation and how that has an effect on what is being studied (Taylor and Smith 2008). In acknowledging this effect and drawing from the situated knowledge produced within an ethnographic research setting, I can claim that my approach is influenced by constructivist philosophy (Hammersly 2009). Constructivists believe that a researcher is involved in reality construction when, for example, carrying out interviews or even attending a meeting (Hammersly 2009).

Although constructivist thinking influenced the research approach, there are still some issues worth addressing. It could be argued that constructivism is not critical enough. However, without critical theory it is difficult to really judge the media (Hesmondhalgh and Toynbee 2008). Therefore, despite broadly following a constructivist approach I still found it important to reflect on my reason for researching BBC Hausa. My thinking around this issue was that I believe that social media are changing news in unexpected ways; perhaps not always in the utopian way they are portrayed to do. It was therefore important for me as a social researcher to understand what impact for example facebook has on power relations between audiences and producers.

### **3.3 Selection of Methodology and Cases**

In selecting my methods I immediately rejected adopting a quantitative research approach as it was not necessary or possible to understand a statistically valid sample of producers. Instead it was important to understand the work practices of a few key individuals in greater depth. In addition, it was felt that the complexities of the research questions could not have been sufficiently explored through a pre-coded questionnaire (Hammersly 2009). Other research methods that could potentially have been employed include qualitative interviews with relevant staff. However, the rationale for adopting an ethnographic approach was to understand what journalists do as opposed to what they say they do. Hence it was necessary to be present on more than one occasion and to actually observe what they do instead of talking about what they do (Domingo 2008). The limitations to observing production are discussed later in this chapter.

#### **3.3.1 Qualitative Data Collection**

The research included observing the work of practitioners of digital and interactive media at BBC WS, at BBC WS Future Media (BBC WS FM) department and BBC Hausa Service. Data collection methods involved were: observation, attending meetings, in depth interviews, studying documents, emails, memos, intranet sites and briefing documents. Use was also made of BBC WS in-house statistical information and data collection systems including those for facebook and website usage. Observation and interviews were made of other professionals at the BBC WS for context, but the focus of attention was a relatively small group of workers from BBC Hausa who could help me answer my research questions.

### **3.3.2 Qualitative Audience Research**

An audience member who is a BBC Hausa 'fan' on facebook was also interviewed, though obviously not enough to draw conclusive findings. Recruitment took place through the network of the BBC Hausa service and the sampling method was 'snowballing'. A limitation of this method can be that the individual recruited might feel inclined to say positive things about the BBC due to their close affiliation with the organisation, however the interview has hugely valuable in terms of contextualising the statistical data collected from BBC Hausa facebook (BBC HF).

### **3.3.3 BBC in House Audience Data**

As a part of the ethnography of practitioners, BBC in house data sources for website trends and facebook were analysed. This quantitative analysis of data can be seen as part of ethnographic collection methods, because it is a way to understand what the practitioners know and understand of their audience. It is increasingly important for sociologists to be able to analyse data available from market research companies as well as transactional data (Savage and Burrows 2007). The way data is analysed for market research is quite different compared to how an academic might approach the data. For example, the aim of market research might be to understand how the BBC can reach 'opinion leaders'<sup>5</sup> whilst academic research might seek to understand how media can better serve all citizens in society including those who do not have sufficient access to information technology. However, these forms of data meet the need of organisations and therefore it is important to understand it (Savage and Burrows 2007). How the BBC's information systems come into being, and the decisions that are made based upon their results is a research topic in itself (Taylor and Smith 2008). However, analysis of the politics of the BBC WS audience research is not within the scope of this research.

## **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

There are a series of potential ethical concerns involved with carrying out research within an organisation. Firstly issues of privacy, informed consent and anonymity (Blaxter, Hughes et al. 2008). These were tackled by providing information about consent, anonymity, data protection and how to withdraw from the research according to the British Sociological Association's guidelines. The consent procedure was managed by using a three-step approach. Firstly an email was sent prior to the commencement of the research to inform all

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<sup>5</sup> One of the strategic goals of the BBC Global News Division is to reach opinion leaders (Mark former Directorate Secretary 29-03-2010).

employees invited to participate in the research about the objectives and the methods of the research. Secondly, the senior manager of the BBC WS FM department signed a form stating that sufficient information about consent, anonymity and data protection had been given to all staff participating in the research. Thirdly, for each interview carried out, an information form was distributed and participants were required to give verbal consent<sup>6</sup>. No issues arose from this consent form during the course of the research. In addition to consent, the analysis presented in this dissertation was made available to all key participants so that they had opportunity for 'right of reply'.

Other important considerations when researching individuals within organisations are the truthfulness of the participants and whether they gain benefit from the analysis (Blaxter, Hughes et al. 2008). Therefore findings were fed back to the team and participants were given a chance to give feedback on the results.

Another ethical issue when researching organisations is how business-sensitive data is handled. In order to prevent sensitive information leaking out, extra care was taken in terms of saving and transferring data between computers and information systems. All use of potentially sensitive information has been checked with relevant members of staff in order to make sure that it can be quoted for academic purposes.

### **3.4.1 Ethical issues in Online Research**

As part of the facebook analysis, a selection of the forum and the participants' discussions were translated by a member of the BBC Hausa team. This covert research of user comments raises ethical issues about privacy and participants consent. The concept of privacy in online research diverges amongst scholars. Some argue that everything online is within the public domain anyway and that those who participate know that what they post is not private. However others adopt the same ethical standards online as offline. The research community has not yet agreed on any online standards and there are no accepted ethical guidelines to follow (Sanders 2005). The BBC Hausa Social media editor who moderates the facebook group was consulted and advised not to seek consent as the openness and dialogue within the forum might be contaminated. It was agreed however that posts from the 'fan page', already in the public domain, be translated and analysed.

The proposed research as described above passed the assessment of the Open University Ethics Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> July 2010.

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<sup>6</sup> Given the research design, it did not seem realistic to ask staff to sign a form for every conversation. My supervisors and I were all of the opinion that this method was satisfactory both for the participants and for myself as a researcher.

### 3.5 Research Limitations

The ambition had been to follow as many producers as possible, for as long as possible through as many production processes relating to online and social media as possible. Due to the nature of the work that journalists and producers do however, it proved very difficult to monitor their work processes. The difficulty is partly due to convergence discussed in chapter 2 where producers increasingly work across different media platforms. When their radio shift is over they have to write out stories for online or post stories on facebook, resulting in that they are very busy (Suleman Producer BBC Hausa 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010). In addition, the main producer working on BBC HF mostly works from home (whilst being a student) because the online nature of what he does allows that flexibility. However, his flexible work schedule made it difficult to follow his work processes.

Understanding production through observation is near impossible unless the researcher has a knowledge of production. Although it could be observed how many people work in the office, what equipment they use, how they are running from one studio to another office, it is not possible to understand what they actually do, without them explaining every step. There are issues with interviews and spoken accounts of production as well, the obvious one is researcher bias where the researcher asks leading questions, or the respondent answers in a way that he/she thinks will please the researcher (Hammersly 2009). In addition, it may seem obvious but journalists and producers cannot explain what they are doing during a live broadcast or when they are writing a story because it would affect their output. Therefore, the nature of the production practices and the limited time the producers have in between their daily tasks makes it very difficult to get any substantial amount of time to be talked through the process as it is happening.

It was very helpful to spend time and interview key producers within the BBC Hausa service and at BBC WS FM and to enjoy freer access where many other researchers before me have struggled, see for example Born (2004). Despite the access, time was often spent waiting outside offices, production studios and meetings Bush House<sup>7</sup> in order to catch a glimpse of the participants en route to another meeting. This is a major limitation to this study and indeed all ethnographies of production of media content. In the future it seems necessary to take a more intrinsic role in the production practices in order to allow closer observation of practices. The language barrier may restrict such endeavors to researching an English speaking service.

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<sup>7</sup> The home of BBC WS

### **3.6 Wider Applications of the Ethnographic Research**

Carrying out ethnographic research is a balance between depth and breadth. The acquired knowledge of ethnographic recordings of lived experiences could have wider applications in terms of: new production practices, interactivity, SNS, Africa and Nigerian media. One of the major limitations to any qualitative research is that it cannot be replicated and tested elsewhere because the research is situation based (Hammersly 2009). Steps to make the findings more generalisable might have been to carry out multi-sited ethnographic research within the Hausa services of, for example, Voice of America, Radio Free France or Deutsche Welle, which has not been possible given the scope of this research.



## Chapter 4. Data Collection

### 4.1 Qualitative Data Collection and Data Analysis

At BBC WS I had the same level of access to the organisation's resources as a full time staff member. I was also able to interview BBC WS members of staff throughout the organisation in particularly those working within the BBC Hausa service. The main sources used all collected as part of the ethnographic style research used were a) qualitative ethnographic data including field notes taken from observation and attending meetings, emails conversations, reading memos, presentations and reports and informal chats, and b) quantitative website and facebook statistics. I have written extensive field notes and have saved 123 MB of documents on file. It was impossible to give account for every piece of data for this study due to this limited word count, however, the data collection methods used within these analysis are outlined below.

#### 4.1.2 Qualitative Interviews and meetings

Interviewees were chosen as a strategic sample of select staff involved in production processes related to the research topic. Names used in this dissertation are culturally sensitive<sup>8</sup>, as such pseudonyms have been used and job titles<sup>9</sup> changed as participants were promised anonymity. All participants were given a chance to read through the data analysis in order to give consent, however most did not feel it necessary. See interview schedule in Appendix 1. In some cases interviews were recorded and transcribed, in others where an audio recorder was felt likely to discomfort a respondent detailed notes were taken. An example of such field notes is found in Appendix 2.

In addition, observations from the BBC WS FM department meetings held weekly on Monday mornings at 10 can be found in sample field notes in Appendix 3. Chapter 4.2 highlights key findings from the minutes of nine such meetings analysed wherever appropriate, however most of the data collected has served as background information and is therefore not explicitly mentioned within the analysis.

Field notes, interview reports, and transcripts were colour coded according to themes relating to a) research questions, b) literature discussed in chapter 2 and c) insights that contributed the greatest understanding. Chapter 4.2 captures the analysis of those themes.

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<sup>8</sup> If the participant had a Hausa name, the pseudonym used is a Hausa name.

<sup>9</sup> The changed title still aims to reflect seniority and the kind of job they perform.

#### **4.1.3 Collecting Audience Research**

BBC WS marketing team carries out national surveys in select countries annually as an FCO requirement<sup>10</sup>. The BBC survey data collected in Hausa speaking parts of Nigeria, Ghana, Niger and Sierra Leone in 2008 and 2009 was analysed in the form of reports provided by the BBC WS in house audience research team. As this is their responsibility, it was not possible to analyse questionnaires and sample design and collection, so for the purpose of this research how BBC WS imagines its audience and what decisions are made based on the audience estimates are the element of interest rather than the reliability of the data collected.

#### **4.1.4 Website statistics from SAGE Analytics**

In addition to survey data, BBC WS uses web analytics in order to measure its online audience. As part of the ethnographic research BBC Hausa's website trends reported via the information system SAGE Analytics were reviewed. The main measure to estimate reach of the website audience is Unique Users (UU) which are counted using cookies (information stored on computers). UUs measure unique computers or web browsers and not individuals. Issues with relying on cookie counts involve over counting when people delete their cookies from their computer so that they appear as different users. Equally undercounting appears when websites are accessed from a library or internet café because many people appear as one cookie or one computer (Andersson, Gillespie et al. 2010). Reports about UU data between November 2009 and June 2010 were collated so that a trend-line could be drawn. This in the form of raw data, Appendix 4.

#### **4.1.5 Facebook Analytics, observation and translations**

The data from a facebook 'fan page' is only available to the 'webmaster' or administrator in this case Suleman producer at BBC Hausa. The data was exported into two Microsoft Excel spreadsheets one with "demographic insights" and one with "interaction insights". The data provided in its raw form showed daily BBC HF figures between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January and the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

The BBC HF community is centred on a 'fan page' administered by BBC Hausa producers. At the top of the page there is a button called 'Like' which means you are connected to that page and to 'like' a page you become a 'fan' and can see the content and post comments to the

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<sup>10</sup> Due to cost constraints they cannot survey all regions that receive BBC broadcasts, instead a selection of countries of strategic importance are selected to be surveyed each year. The results of these surveys make up the estimated global audience figure publicised every year

page. When the webmaster posts content onto the page, it appears as a feed on the page and on the users or the fan's own facebook profile page. 'Liking' a Page is different from 'liking' a piece of content that appears in the feed. When pressing the 'like button' for a piece of content it means that the user likes what is being said on the page.

Facebook collects data from users' profiles including a) demographic data such as gender, age bracket 13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55+ and geographic location in a list of countries showing the percentage of fans per country ranked in order of highest to the lowest percentage. All demographic data is generated based on the information the users add to their profile, this makes the data open to similar issues as survey data when it comes to false claims in terms of age, gender, and geographic location. b) the second set of measures is referred to as interaction insights, Appendix 5 show these measures provided in greater detail.

For the purpose of this research some of the measures described were considered more relevant in order to understand the nature and interactions of the community. The total 'fans' measure was used in order to get an understanding of reach. The number of 'wall posts' was counted in order to understand the content of the 'fan page'. The 'like' and 'comment' functions were analysed in order to understand engagement with posts and how users interact with the content and each other.

In addition, webdata from Monday 9- Friday 16 August 2010 was considered in order to understand the type of content, the number of fans posting content and the nature of posts within the community. The weekend was deliberately excluded as less interaction from both BBC Hausa and from 'fans' takes place. Posts for analysis were selected together with the staff at BBC Hausa. Due to limited scope and resources for this research it was not possible to translate all posts, instead a selection of the posts that were most interacted with by 'fans' was selected as illustration. One major limitation to this study is that it was not possible to translate more posts over a longer time period.

## **4.2 Analysing the data**

### **4.2.1 From Radio to Online**

BBC Hausa Service is increasingly turning its focus towards internet, mobiles and social media. The move from linear radio broadcasts to non-linear digital journalism is an overall goal for BBC WS in order to meet increased competition and save costs. Shortwave radio is a medium of the past and now the organisation is preparing to become a digital content

provider (BBC WS FM team meeting 01-02-2010). 'It's about survival, we have to move to digital platforms, we have to be seen as we are moving with the times otherwise we are not going to get funding' (Halima Managing Editor BBC Hausa 20-08-2010).

There are 21 million weekly listeners to BBC Hausa on shortwave radio in Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone according to BBC administered audience research in 2008. Most listeners are in Nigeria where there is increased competition from local FM broadcasters (Thomas Audience Research Manager 05-05-2010). The Nigerian National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) has banned international broadcasters like the BBC and VOA from broadcasting live on FM Radio since April 2004 (Alhassan 2006). The FM ban means that BBC Hausa's only option to maintain influence in Nigeria if shortwave radio is cut is to deliver content via new technology. Despite the push towards new platforms, the number of users of BBC Hausa online and via mobile phones is still low and only available to social elites.

'It is only the middle classes, politicians, academics who have access to computers and the internet via laptops and desktops. The young rural population has only just started getting access to the internet via mobile phones and they are not accessing news on their phones yet' (Halima 04-03-2010).

A total of 28,657 Unique Users (UUs) a week use the website [www.bbchousa.com](http://www.bbchousa.com) and 8,562 UUs used the website's mobile version in the week starting 13 June 2010 (SAGE Analytics). In addition, the BBC HF 'fan page' had 11,685 subscribers on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2010 and over 20,000 in August 2010 (after the completion of this analysis). Chart 1. below shows the trend line of UUs using [bbchousa.com](http://bbchousa.com) via a computer (in blue), via a mobile phone (in turquoise), and the number of fans (in pink). The trend line shows that [bbchousa.com](http://bbchousa.com) has grown by 20% between the weeks commencing the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009 and the 13<sup>th</sup> June 2010. The number of UUs visiting [bbchousa.com](http://bbchousa.com) via a mobile phone has tripled since its launch at the beginning of November 2009. Despite rapid growth the total digital audience, online, on mobiles and via facebook, adds up to less than 1% of the total BBC Hausa audience.

### BBC Hausa Digital Audiences Nov 09 - Jun 10

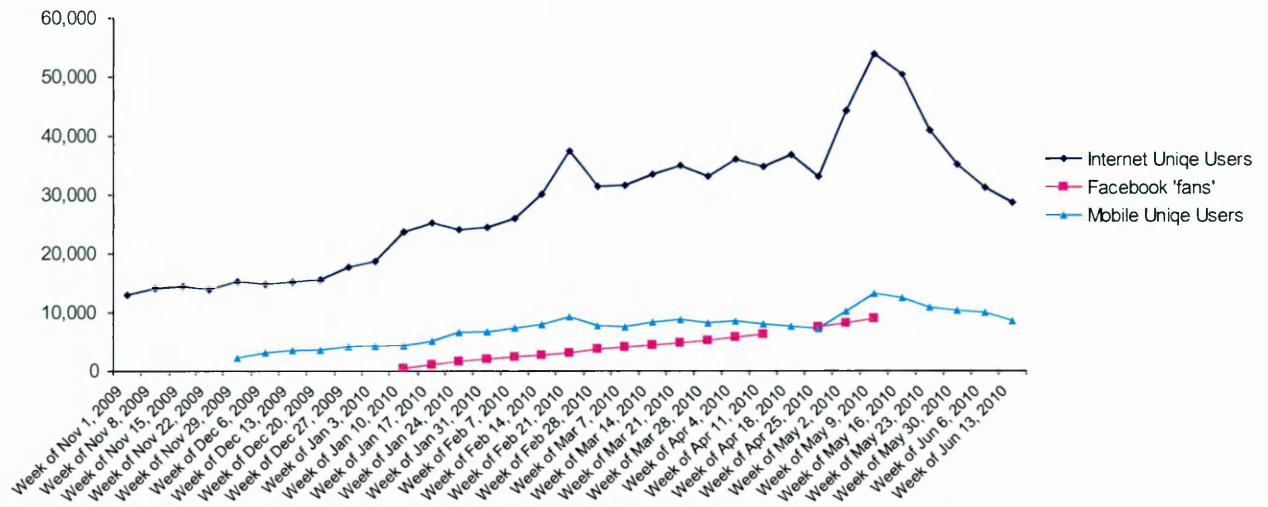


Chart 1.

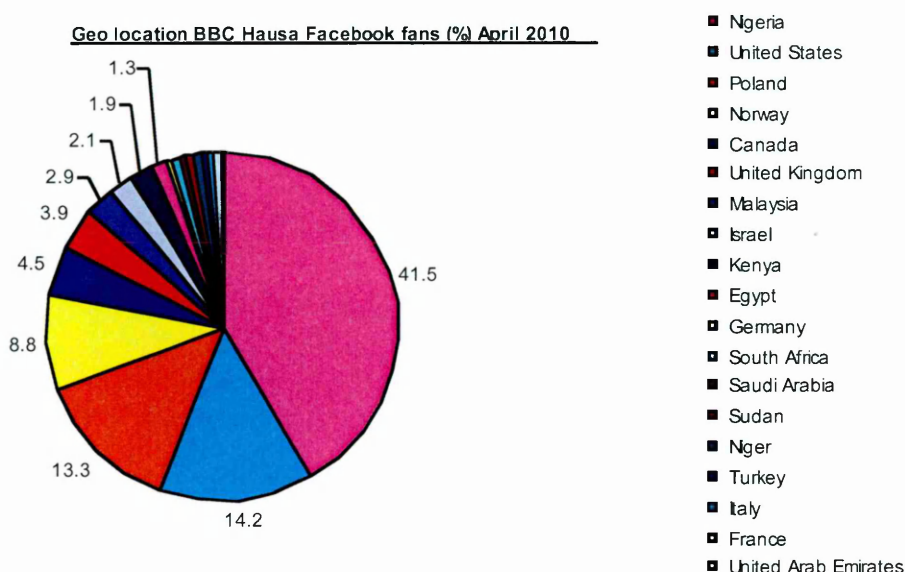
#### 4.2.2 Convergence at BBC WS

During this time of uncertainty the language services are trying to use any means to remain relevant in a changing organisation and media landscape. 'The language services all want to have a facebook page and have a conversation even if the service are not ready for it' (Tom, Interactive Editor BBC WS FM 09-08-2010). BBC Hausa amongst many other smaller language sites do not have an interactive Have Your Say Forum (HYSF) or a message board feature on their site. Facebook has become a way for language services with small online budgets to have a conversation with their audience using technology available free on the internet (Emma producer BBC WS FM 08-02-2010).

The BBC Hausa service has adopted the overall thinking around multi-platform news provision and Halima (04-03-2010), argues that 'the success of our digital platforms (the website, mobiles and facebook) is because we push people from one platform to the other'. Her vision is that the audience can listen to the radio, catch up on the latest programme online, discuss issues raised on facebook and read the news headlines on their mobile phone. However from analysis of the audience data it appears as if the audience using facebook and those listening to the radio are very different in terms of their demographic profile. Instead this research shows that facebook enables BBC Hausa to talk to a digitally connected audience who mostly live outside Africa and belong to a Hausa speaking diaspora, see analysis below.

### 4.2.3 Diaspora Audiences

Chart 2. below shows the geographic composition of 'fans' in percentage of UUs per country, in April 2010. The majority or 59% of all 'fans' are living outside Africa. However, Nigeria is still the largest single country where most 'fans', 41.5%, are situated (pink in chart). Second is United States (turquoise) 14.2%, third Poland 13.3%, fourth Norway 8.8% and fifth Canada 4.5%. The large proportion of BBC HF 'fans' from Nigeria is not surprising considering the growth in popularity of facebook in Nigeria. Facebook reports that membership in Nigeria has tripled in the past year and there are now over 1.6 million users compared to 570,000 in July 2009. There is also growth in other African countries with Hausa speakers: Cameroon has 151,500 facebook users, Ghana 549,980, and Niger 11,940 in July 2010<sup>11</sup>.



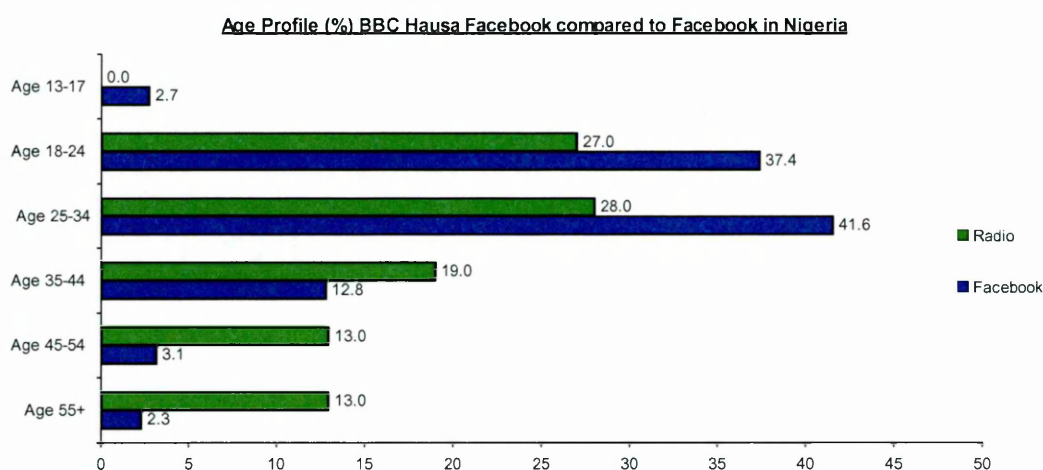
**Chart 2.**

Although the BBC Hausa producers are aware of the diasporic nature of the forum they still largely conceive their facebook fans to be based in Africa. Suleman (BBC Hausa Producer) argues that the users are immersed in the same kind of discussions about Nigeria, the world and football. The production practices of the BBC Hausa service do not appear to change as a result of a shift in geographic location of the audience. Instead the Hausa producers argue that the BBC Hausa audience have the same mindset irrespective of where in the world they are. For example, the majority of debates on BBC HF are about football and it is mostly Premier Football and the Spanish La Liga. All participants seem to be interested in Nigerian domestic politics and some follow international news stories (Suleman 29-07-2010).

<sup>11</sup> Information as to how many of these are actually Hausa speakers is unavailable.

#### 4.2.4 Demographic Profile of Audiences

The profile of BBC Hausa's facebook fans perhaps rather obviously shows that 'fans' are younger and more male skewed than the radio audience in Africa according to a comparison of BBC in-house research and facebook statistics, shown in Chart 3. The chart shows the demographic split of both the radio audience (in green) (measured in Nigeria, Niger, Ghana and Sierra Leone) in 2008 and facebook 'fans' (in blue) in April 2010. The data indicates that majority (81.7%) of all BBC HF fans are below 35 years of age, whilst 55% out of the Radio audience is below 35 year of age<sup>12</sup>, see chart 3. However, note that the radio audience is only measured from 15 years and over.



**Chart 3.**

The journalists working for BBC Hausa already knew that the majority (6 out of 10) of radio listeners are male from survey data. Facebook statistics show that 9 out of 10 'fans' on BBC Hausa are male. When monitoring the forum it is also possible to observe the lack of female participation. In Nigeria the majority (66%) of all facebook users are men however, the male skew is higher on BBC HF.

The reasons for women's lack of participation given by the BBC Hausa service are cultural issues, 'it's a bit like when a woman is a member of a motorcycle club, she only gets attention for being a woman not for being good at motorcycles' (Halima 20-08-2010). Halima urges me to remember that Hausa society is traditional in terms of gender roles, in addition there has been a lot of flirting and harassment of women on the BBC HF 'fan page', which resulted in many of them leaving or making their profile names gender-neutral (Halima 20-08-2010).

<sup>12</sup> This comparison is not really comparing like for like, in that the Radio audience is measured using a survey methodology and the facebook audience is measured using data profile data from facebook.

The overrepresentation of men can also be explained through the topics that are being discussed 'women want to discuss social issues on facebook, but most discussions on the forum are about football and these are actually incorporated in to the 6 min sport bulletin everyday' (Suleman 20-07-2010). The skew towards a younger age demographic is explained in terms of the popularity of football 'football has a huge following amongst the youth and the youth are the ones using the internet' (Suleman 13-04-2010). The BBC Hausa service sees facebook as a good opportunity to access youth and reach a younger demographic.

'The people who listen to Radio are older, facebook allows younger audiences to take ownership of the medium. In terms of radio they think don't bother about it grandmother, but the prospect of hearing their views broadcasted on the radio initiates them to listen to the radio.' (Halima 04-02-2010)

There is an interesting contradiction in what Halima suggests about youth not caring what the BBC says but still wanting to hear their voice on the BBC. This indicates that for the Hausa audience having your voice heard on radio still prevails.

#### 4.2.5 Facebook Enhancing Interactivity

There are different types of interactivity taking place on the BBC HF page. However the most significant type of interaction taking place is where news stories from bbchousa.com are automatically published through a feed on to the facebook page. The feed also appears on users' own personal profiles, see Fig 1. The picture shows a news story from BBC Hausa on the 14<sup>th</sup> August. Users are able to post their own comments below the article in response to the news or voice their own opinion about the content of the article. users are also able to press a 'like' button indicating that they like the content of the article. In 2. Wada Abubakar has 'liked' the article and Ismaila Garkuwa has written a comment in response to an article.



Figure 1. Screen grab from BBC HF 14<sup>th</sup> August 2010



Users can post their own topics and comments to the wall of the BBC HF page. The posts may or may not be in response to BBC Hausa's posts or to other members' posts, please see examples of user posts in Fig 3 which shows posts on BBC HF page on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2010.

The screenshot shows three user posts on a Facebook wall. Each post includes a profile picture, the user's name, the text of the post, and interaction options like 'Comment', 'Like', and 'Flag'. The first post is by Hussaini Aliyu Bena, the second by Buhari G Doya, and the third by Suleman Yahuza Daura. The fourth post is by Alhaji Ibrahim Blouse Nguru and is partially cut off at the bottom.

**Hussaini Aliyu Bena** Gamu cikin wata mai alfarma Allah ya gafarta muna.  
21 minutes ago · Comment · Like · Flag  
2 people like this.  
Write a comment...

**Buhari G Doya** Agaskiya yawancin mutane suna ini ne da ishin ruwa da yunwa abanza jama'an musulmi afakula  
31 minutes ago · Comment · Like · Flag

**Suleman Yahuza Daura** Jama'a barkan mu da yammacin a cikin Ramadan.  
44 minutes ago · Comment · Like · Flag  
Hussaini Aliyu Bena likes this.  
Write a comment...

**Alhaji Ibrahim Blouse Nguru** Daga gidan annabta, manzun Allah tsirada amincin Allah agareshi da'iyalansa yace, duk wanda yayi sallah raka'a 2 kowacce raka'a fatiha da kulhuwallahu ahad 13, inyaso yayi afarkon dare, kokarshan dare. Manzan Allah yace, narantse dawanda ya'aikoni annabi dagaskiya, Allah maigirma dadaukaka zaitayar damala'iku dubu dari...  
See More  
48 minutes ago · Comment · Like · Flag

**Figure 3. Screen grab from BBC HF 14<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

Fans initiate the majority of wall posts according to facebook data. The daily average posts were 143, the average number of comments in response to posts was 72, in addition an average 43 'likes' are left on BBC HF each day. (1<sup>st</sup> Jan – 8<sup>th</sup> May 2010). Around 15-20 of the daily wall posts are from the BBC Hausa service, with fans contributing the rest. Posts from BBC Hausa, especially football articles, often generate a lot of feedback comments; one post linking to a football article can generate more than 50 responses.

According to analysis carried out between the 9<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> August only 3% or 569 out of 18,545 'fans' actively posted or made a comment on to the BBC HF 'fan page' during those days. This shows that most fans are just following the discussions without participating. There is also a possibility that they have become 'fans' without following the discussions or reading the news feeds. Only 3 out of the 569 contributors or 'fans' contributed with more than 30 posts (the maximum number of posts for one 'fan' was 37 posts, 24 'fans' contributed between 20-29 posts, 183 'fans' posted between 2-9 posts and 355 only contributed with one post each,

see data chart Appendix 6. Thus there are a few active 'fans' that contribute heavily to the discussion, while the majority only contribute sporadically or not at all. One major limitation to this qualitative analysis is that it only provides a snapshot of the activity, as the time period is only one week. In order to understand patterns of participation in greater detail a longer time period would have to be monitored but given the volume of posts it was not possible to do so for this research project.

The most popular posts, in the period analysed judged by the number of comments and 'likes' left (total interactions) during the five-day period analysed were both BBC Hausa news items posted by the BBC producers. Due to the limited budget available for translations from Hausa to English, the comments translated in Appendix 7 are a selection of a) popular threads in terms of audience response and b) threads that the BBC Hausa producers thought were representative of the kinds of debates that usually occur on the BBC HF relating to a) football and b) Nigerian domestic politics, (Abdul-Aziz, Freelance journalist at BBC Hausa contributed to the selection and translated the posts all originally posted in Hausa). Please see the story posted by BBC Hausa below.

**BBC Hausa - Sports - Martin O'Neill has resigned from his position as the coach of Aston Villa.**

Aston Villa has announced that its coach Martin O'Neill has resigned from his position with immediate effect.

BBC Hausa [http://www.bbc.co.uk/hausa/sport/2010/08/100809\\_oneillresigns.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/hausa/sport/2010/08/100809_oneillresigns.shtml)

**Story published on BBC HF 9<sup>th</sup> August 4.51 PM**

The comments left in response to this post in about football relates to the news article and the respondents also relate to each other's posts either by responding to each other or by 'liking' each other's comments.

August 9 at 4:51pm · Comment · Like · Share · Report

5 people like this.

Inuwa Rabi: If you hear a drumbeat there must be a story. Perhaps the Aston Villa management fail to do what he hoped to see.

August 9 at 4:54pm · Like ·

Usman Yahaya Gaidam: This is surprising because Aston Villa had performed well in their recent games.

August 9 at 4:58pm · Like ·

Usman Muttaka: There must be a reason for his doing this since he is really a sports hero.

August 9 at 5:01pm · Like ·

Musa Skido: Or could he have found where he could be paid more?

August 9 at 5:03pm · Like ·

Dahiru Arzika Dange: You're right, son of the people of Gaidam. But whatever makes a mouse fall in to a fire must be hotter than the fire.

### **User comments in response to the above article in sequential order**

For the rest of the comments see Appendix 7

The second thread translated is about corruption amongst Nigerian politicians. Ending corruption is a strategic objective of the FCO in Nigeria (Jane BBC WS FCO Liaison 12-04-2010). Although the FCO do not tell the BBC WS what to publish it appears as if corruption is high on the BBC Hausa service agenda and it is also of interest to the 'fans' on BBC HF.

### **BBC Hausa - News – The ICPC (Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission) has started investigating Nigeria's parliament.**

The anti-corruption commission ICPC, has said that it is to start an investigation on members of parliament on suspicion of engaging in corrupt practices.

August 9 at 10:09am · Comment · Like · Share · Report

### **Story published on BBC HF 9<sup>th</sup> August 10.09 AM**

The posts are mostly positive towards an investigation being carried out. Seven posts agree with the investigation by ICPC while six posts express concern that the ICPC will not be able to carry out a just investigation because they are corrupt themselves, see post below by Aminu Yakubu.

August 9 at 11:55am · Like ·

Aminu Yakubu: There is a lot of hypocrisy in their work. What stops them from conducting an investigation all this long?

In addition, four 'fans' post that they agree with the investigation but that it is not enough that politicians be investigated, they need to be punished as well, one example is the post below from Abdullahi Ibn Hamman.

August 9 at 10:09am · Like ·  
Abdullahi Ibn Hamman: Starting an investigation is of no use if the culprits aren't going to be punished.

Seven posts agreed with the investigation, six 'fans' thinks that the former president Obasanjo is the one who should be investigated.

The comments described are examples of the type of conversations that take place on BBC Hausa FB. In order to really understand the nature of conversations it would be necessary to analyse more posts discursively. One observation is that the comments are quite short and do not really add depth to the content of the articles or to the debates that they convey. In an internal BBC WS document outlining social media strategies the following quote can be found.

"Don't expect high quality debates from facebook – Whilst the web can be a venue for high quality, reasoned and intelligent debate, this is not always the case and is rarely so on a mass-market, open platform such as facebook. Whilst the concept of interaction is rightly valued by the World Service, and is effectively facilitated by facebook, it is perhaps not the medium to engage in high level debates about more involved issues around content" (BBCWS 2010:5)

The report is a facebook review prepared by an external strategic marketing agency that reviewed different BBC WS offers on facebook and twitter in order to give recommendations on a common approach for the organisation. The quote illustrates the difficulty in achieving a meaningful debate on facebook, which can also be observed from the data translated from the BBC HF 'fan page'.

When comparing the interactivity between BBC HF and other international broadcasters facebook communities it appears as if BBC Hausa has managed to achieve a higher degree of interactivity with 143 posts per week compared to its competitors. Voice of America (VOA) is one of the most significant competitors to BBC Hausa as it broadcasts in Hausa and also has a Hausa facebook group, The VOA Hausa community on facebook has 2,824 fans (1<sup>st</sup> August 2010) and from monitoring the fan page for a week in July (1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> August 2010) it was apparent that there were only about 10-15 wall posts a day by a handful of fans. The broadcaster VOA posts infrequently and there are few comments and 'likes' indicating less activity in this forum compared to on the BBC Hausa 'page'. Radio France International (RFI),

another major broadcaster with a Hausa service, has 1,104 fans on facebook as at the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2010. On the RFI page the fans do not initiate posts, the broadcaster makes approximately 1 post a day and these are usually not met by comments or likes by the 'fans'<sup>13</sup>.

#### 4.2.6 Editorial values on facebook

Facebook presents a shift in how BBC WS deals with audience debates. The regular features of interactivity on BBC WS language websites are message boards or HYS forums where the audience can submit their comments. BBC guidelines prescribe a rigorous moderation procedure where all messages are pre-moderated before they are published.

'The moderation on a BBC HYS forums is so resource consuming - a producer sometimes has to go through 1,000 of messages in one day, the BBC has its reputation to protect and if message boards are not moderated there will be antagonistic views and abusive language.' (Tom Interactive Editor BBC WS FM 09-08-2010)

Due to the cost of managing HYSF not all BBC language sites gets access to this technology, instead they turn to free message board functionality available from social media.

'The interactive bit of the site has moved to facebook, I am not sure if that is the way we want to follow but that is how it is at the moment for Hausa' (Ivane BBC WS FM meeting 19-04-2010). Thus, facebook is a route to leapfrog BBC technology to start a conversation with the audience without having to invest money or convince BBC management to spend money on interactivity.

There are a number of issues that arise from allowing BBC producers to have interactive debates with audiences on facebook because the BBC is unable to apply its strict moderation policy, explained in the quote below.

'you do have to be careful about social media, you are on facebook's space not the BBC's space. Their terms apply. We can't apply our moderation policy because actually people are posting under facebook's policy not ours'  
(Emma, Senior Producer BBC FM)

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<sup>13</sup> One limitation to comparing BBC Hausa, VOA and RFI is that the comparison has not been done within the same time period so these analysis can only be indicative of the difference in interactivity.

The BBC are not able to moderate user posts on facebook because the posts are not owned by the BBC. The only way they can moderate is by shutting 'fans' out of the forum by removing their fan status. On the other hand the BBC can take a more relaxed approach to discussions away from their own sites.

'In a hypocritical way perhaps we wash our hands and say if someone is moaning and being offensive on facebook it is not on our site it is in facebook and responding to facebook terms and conditions, we take a more relaxed view.' (Tom 09-08-2010).

BBC Hausa producers are worried about maintaining BBC editorial standards on facebook. If 'fans' use the facebook group as a campaign site in the run up to the Nigerian election in 2010, it could compromise BBC values (Suleman 20-07-2010). The BBC Hausa producers have put up a warning text on asking the 'fans' to please respect each other and not to use abusive language. However, the 'fans' also moderates themselves according to Halima (04-03-2010). 'The users who have been on there for the longest act as gatewatchers<sup>14</sup> for the other users and they teach them BBC values, so we don't have to'.

In some ways it is easier to keep the discussion under control on facebook compared to on HYS forums, profiles are often attached to users own names, which makes the medium self-regulatory. 'Gone are the days when it was just you and a few friends on facebook, now your boss is probably on there as well' (Emma 12-04-2010).

#### **4.2.7 Facebook Influencing the News Agenda**

The BBC Hausa service frequently uses facebook as a source for commentary that can be built in to their news reporting. Facebook comments about football are used within the 6 min daily sports bulletin on Radio. In April 2010 BBC Hausa launched an audience participation programme called Ra'ayi Riga (Have Your Say). The programme was a direct response to the facebook fan page because it enables users to contribute more efficiently to the radio broadcast (Halima, Managing Editor BBC Hausa 20-08-2010). In the case of other services at the BBC, phone-in radio shows appeared before facebook. However, in terms of Africa where phone landlines are not that common, people can contribute via facebook on their mobile phones easier than to phone in to the show. However this raises issues about who is able to participate.

The radio trail about what the topic is going to be discussed for the week is broadcast on Tuesdays and members of the audience can send in their comments via facebook, the option

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<sup>14</sup> This was Halima's own phrase for 'fans' self-moderation.

is there to phone, Skype, send a text message, Twitter or email the service as well.

The topic for the weekly show 13<sup>th</sup> August 2010 was 'should women take a more active role in Nigerian politics?' (Abdul-Aziz, Freelance journalist at BBC Hausa contributed to the selection and translated the posts all originally posted in Hausa). Below are some of the comments there were posted in response to the question posted by BBC Hausa, all comments were posted by men<sup>15</sup>.

Although many posts are encouraging women to be part of politics, for example;

(RA'AYI RIGA)

Women should be allowed to participate in politics not only in Nigeria but also in other African countries because this will bring us development.

There are also many posts expressing that women have no place in politics and that they should remain good Muslims and obey their husbands.

August 13 at 12:54pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Zaharaddeen Getso: The Prophet, peace be upon him said, "The nation that install a woman as their leader would come to ruin. And if you look at the United States, a woman had never ruled their country, even though they are not Muslims and they have been practicing democracy for more than two hundred years. And there was Patricia Ette -, when she headed the House of Representatives in Nigeria everyone knew ...

An interesting observation about this debate is that the debate about women in politics takes place amongst men, and women themselves have not got a say in this conversation or perhaps they are scared off by intimidation and harassment by the male participants on the 'fan page'. The show is broadcast on radio on Fridays and the comments from facebook are incorporated in to the show as well as contributions from experts and officials. After the show the discussion continues online, especially on facebook (Halima 20-08-2010).

One incentive for the BBC Hausa audience to participate, is that their facebook comment might be mentioned on radio,

'Hausa people are crazy about radio and for somebody's name to be mentioned on BBC radio, BBC that is something, they will go to their peers and tell them my name was mentioned today, and it was mentioned on the BBC and they will tell

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<sup>15</sup> Please note that not all comments in relation to this question have been presented within this research. This is only a snap shot of comments left on the 13<sup>th</sup> August which is the day of the programme when most comments are left.

them and here it is (and send them the podcast)' (Suleman 13-04-2010).

The 'fans' are not allowed to set the topic for the programme 'no, not yet, there are still so many issues to debate, but perhaps in the future' (Suleman 13-04-2010). In that sense this radio programme is more a way for BBC Hausa to draw on the audience participation as a way of sourcing material for the programme rather than actually letting the audience set the agenda. The BBC Hausa team does not post comments in response to the 'fans' postings online. The only interactions they put out are news items (Suleman 20-07-2010). Thus there is no 'real' conversation between producers and audiences at the BBC HF fan page.

Instead the BBC journalists observed for this study still see their job as being that of curator and editor. Social media enables BBC WS to use content from audiences and to be part of the conversation that is already taking place.

'We can use the best of the content (from social media) on our websites; we are still doing our job of being curators. We are not censoring the noise, the noise is there if they want to go and find it, we are just highlighting the best. Instead of hosting the party under our own roof which is not important anymore.' (Tom interactive Editor 09-08-2010).

Thus social media is a safer way of having a conversation compared to message boards on the BBC's own sites, it is also much less resource heavy since there is no pre-moderation required.

Facebook is also a way of extending the BBC Hausa service network of citizen journalists.

'If there are floods or droughts, we can put a note on facebook and ask if anyone knows someone who is in the area, after a few minutes we have a telephone number to a person in the region.' (Halima 20-08-2010).

BBC HF is hence used in a sense like an extended address book of contacts to draw on when there are news incidents that need eyewitness accounts.



## **Chapter 5. Interpreting the data**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to bring together debates from the literature in Chapter 2 and compared them with the findings presented in Chapter 4 where the majority of analysis and supporting data from the varied sources considered is found. The headings of this chapter correspond to the research questions posed in the beginning of this study. The main research question however is discussed in Chapter 6.

### **5.2 What are the implications of convergence for BBC Hausa producers and audiences?**

Convergence can be defined as both the blurring of boundaries between audiences and producers but also the merging of different media platforms (Jenkins 2006; Deuze 2008). However, media convergence can also be viewed in critical terms as a tool for management to cut costs and re-shuffle resources (McKercher 1997). BBC Management currently use a terminology of convergence that encourages new ways of working by sharing material across platforms and departments but also through engaging with audiences through social media. This terminology has created a great deal of anxiety within the BBC Hausa service. As a result, social media tools have been seen as a way of preparing for the future and stay relevant in an organisation where priorities are shifting.

Ultimately, convergence seems to be a way for management to make cuts and shift audiences from shortwave broadcasts to digital non-linear forms of content provision. Such cuts would result in millions of potentially information poor listeners not being able to listen to BBC Hausa, unless there is a surge in listening over mobile phones. This research shows that BBC Hausa are reaching a digitally connected young diaspora audience outside Africa via new platforms like Facebook. Arguably these individuals already have access to a range of other sources of news. Whilst older, rural Hausa speakers in Nigeria, and other Hausa speaking parts of Africa do not have the same range of sources where national censorship of media is still strong.

The consequences of convergence in terms of working conditions has already resulted in radio producers now writing stories for online and distributing them via Facebook, ultimately taking resources from Radio production. The service has not received more resources, instead producers have to work harder and spread their skills thinner. This means that 1% of the BBC Hausa audience who can access digital platforms potentially get more of the

resources concentrated on them than the 21 million radio audiences who can only listen to shortwave radio. Thus, media convergence within BBC WS is both about connecting with audiences and about saving costs. Media convergence need to be investigated critically in terms of the political economy of media organisations like BBC WS. Further studies need to focus on the changing conditions of the media workers and the changes in work practices in more detail.

In order to really understand the changes in work practices of media workers at BBC Hausa it would be useful to follow producers when they work on different platforms. This would shed light on how much time they spend on each, what skills are required and what it means for how they relate to the news stories they produce and the audiences they serve. A lack of understanding the full range of multimedia production in detail makes it difficult to make conclusions about the implications of convergence and is a limitation of this study.

### **5.3 Is BBC Hausa changing the way practitioners conceive their audiences?**

Analysis of BBC HF 'fans' shows that 59% out of all BBC HF 'fans' are situated outside Africa. The digital audience is younger and more male skewed than the radio audience in Africa. It has previously been argued that the citizens that contribute to social media are social elites (Rebillard and Touboul 2010). Further research the characteristics of 'fans' are necessary in order to establish if this is the case with BBC HF. This research however shows that women are almost non-present within BBC HF and evidence from interviews with producers indicate that when women have tried to approach the forum they have been intimidated and driven away.

Despite this shift in the digital and SNS audiences' demographics, BBC Hausa producers still see their audience and one homogenous group with similar needs no matter where in the world they are situated. However, diasporic nature of the majority of facebook 'fans' could potentially open up new possibilities of how they see their audience and what topics and news they cover (Andersson, Gillespie et al. 2010).

BBC HF raises questions about whom BBC Hausa should be talking to. Are the young digitally connected diaspora going to be the target for BBC Hausa instead of the rural information poor in Africa? Wider issues for academic research relate to what new definitions of audiences need to be considered. Do we need to see audiences as citizens, fans, users or transnational communities online? What implications does this have for research methodologies where increasingly transactional data is available from organisations but social researchers often do not have access?

#### 5.4 Is BBC Hausa facebook enhancing interactivity?

These analysis shows that BBC HF 'fan pages' are more interactive than BBC's HYS message boards due to the decreased level of moderation. BBC HF is also more interactive in terms of posts added by 'fans' compared to competitors like VOA and RIF equivalent 'fan pages'. However, there are still a few dimensions of interactivity that are not being met within the interactions between producers 'fans' on BBC HF. The benefits provided by facebook do not overcome the fact that producers have limited time and cannot respond to audiences directly (Massey and Levy 1999: 144-147). The content posted by producers on facebook are news items, the producers never actually post perosnal messages or reply to directly to 'fans'. In addition, producers do not let users set the agenda of the facebook 'fan page' or allow them to choose the topic for interactive programmes where the facebook comments are used in radio broadcasts. Thus responsiveness is relatively low.

Another dimension of interactivity is 'ease of adding information to debates' (Massey and Levy 1999: 144-147). The conducted research shows that according to the functionality of Facebook it is easy to add information to BBC HF. There is no moderation from BBC producers stopping content from being published. However, occasionally 'fans' are blocked from the 'fan page' for having posted offensive comments. Despite the relative ease of contributing, only 3% of 'fans' contributed during the five day period analysed for the purpose fo this study. Hence, most 'fans' are just following the discussions in a one-to-many fashion. Perhaps this dimension of interactivity needs to take into consideration user perception of ease of adding information, i.e. who is a) willing to participate, women do not appear to be willing to participate for exmaple and b) who are able to participate? Access, literacy, sufficient knowledge of Hausa might be limiting factors. Motivation for contributing to interactive forums such as BBC HF is also worth investigating.

Massey and Levy (1999) makes a distinction between interpersonal interaction and content interaction where the later is explained as the extent to which users are able to respond to the news. This type of interaction where 'fans' respond to BBC news items seems to be the most frequent form on BBC HF. 'Fans' post comments and 'like' or add wall posts in response to news items. In addition, 'fans' comments are mostly brought in to traditional news frames.

When news organizations set out to encourage interactivity it is not always clear what is meant by interactivity and who is taking part. In addition, potential benefits or consequences of interactions are not clear. Literature about interactive audiences highlights the need to revisit definitions of audiences in light of participatory and many-to-many communication to diffused and extended audiences (Couldry 2005; Livingstone 2008). These analyses relating to interactivity and BBC HF raises important issues about the definitions and dimensions of interactivity. On BBC HF activity is still one-to-many communication where 'fans' get updated

on news or comments through their feed rather than actively participating. This research shows there is a spectrum of participatory audiences and offering social media and interactivity does not automatically achieve participation.

Other important questions are who have access to interactivity and who is talking to whom. In order to understand interactivity further it would be necessary to translate and analyse more posts from the BBC HF 'fan page' over a longer time period. The lack of longitudinal discursive analysis of the forum posts is a limitation of this research. It would also be beneficial to interview and follow 'fans' who participate on BBC HF in order to understand their perspective of the relationship with the BBC and its producers.

## **5.5 Is BBC Hausa facebook changing the production practices of journalists?**

Production practices encompass a vast array of processes and procedures, which were difficult to understand merely over the period in which this research was conducted. Instead the focus has been on production practices that directly relate to social media and which have been covered in previous scholarly debate relating to the topic such as: the role of journalists as gatekeepers of information, news sourcing and moderation.

### **5.5.1 Social Media and sourcing of news and comments**

In public discourse and scholarly writing citizen journalism is often described as the democratisation of news where citizen can contribute to the news on equal terms as journalists (Allen 2006; Deuze 2008). Others argue that journalists are still reluctant to give up their role as gatekeepers of news (Singer 2004; Örnebring 2008; Harrison 2010; Ogunyemi forthcoming). Social media content has not proven to change this paradigm (Rebillard and Touboul 2010). Research for this study suggest that BBC Hausa journalists still see their role as gatekeepers of information instead of seeing production as a partnership with the audience in line with previous research.

BBC HF has mostly served as an additional source for journalists to gather comments, eyewitness accounts and source news stories from within the social networks of their 'fans'. The way in which production practices have changed as result of facebook is the increased pool of people the BBC Hausa service can contact for commentary on the news. An important question is whether the material sourced from BBC HF are representative of the views of the greater audience not connected to digital platforms?

Previous research has shown that audience interactivity and social media content is often brought in to traditional news frames (Örnebring 2008; Ogunyemi forthcoming). At BBC Hausa, social media content is brought in to traditional radio programmes. BBC Hausa use the best content from facebook in radio broadcasts and discard the noise of the conversations that go on online. In order to accommodate and highlight the best from interactivity online, BBC Hausa has set up a new interactive programme (April 2010) as a way to bring discussions taking place on facebook back to the radio listeners. Peter Horrocks urges journalists to move away from programme based news (Ariel 9 Feb 2010:2), however, this has not been the case within the BBC Hausa service. BBC Hausa argues that their audience still wants to hear their own voice on radio. The incentive of being heard on radio for Facebook 'fans' is another interesting observation of this research and it indicates that in 'Hausa Land' and for its diaspora, radio is still the medium that carries weight and where ones voice needs to be heard in order to make a difference.

### **5.5.2 User Moderation**

Facebook makes it possible for BBC WS to save cost on interactivity because it does not require the same level of moderation as conversations on BBC hosted websites. The cost saving means that language services with smaller online budgets can add interactivity to their service. Questions that remain to be answered are: what does this relaxed view to BBC values mean for the BBC WS, and what are the implications for the quality of news interactions when audiences' news consumption and dialogue with news organisations move to social media sites.

Another observation in relation to moderation is that some of the work of the producers has now shifted to the audience. The most experienced 'fans' enforce BBC values amongst the newly arrived, they have become 'gatewatchers' (Bruns 2003) as the participating population start to self moderate. This signifies a major shift from how BBC HYS forums on BBC sites have been moderated in the past (Herbert and Ali forthcoming). This example of how audience participants become BBC influenced, which gives them, an understanding of BBC editorial guidelines needs to be investigated further.

In order to understand production practices of journalists on a deeper level it would be necessary to carry about further ethnographic research of production practices and follow journalists throughout the day as they carry out daily tasks. It is difficult to follow journalists and understand what they do through observation alone, it may be necessary for the researcher to be embedded within the practices in order to really understand how the processes work as a story is made for radio, written up for online and fed out on facebook, then commented on by 'fans' and brought back to radio.

## Chapter 6. Findings

The subordinate research questions discussed in Chapter 5 all relate to the changing relations between producers and consumers within the processes and practices of news construction. This concluding chapter aims to summarise those debates as well as comment on the implications of this study for future research.

All themes explored in Chapter 5 ultimately relate to the main research question 'does BBC Hausa facebook transform relations between producers and consumers at the BBC WS?' Media convergence deals with the changing structure and work practices of media organisations in terms the shift from reaching audiences on one platform to another. The shifting audience configurations are about changing audience demographics, and BBC Hausa being able to relate to new audiences in new ways whilst perhaps leaving others behind. Interactivity shows how audiences are interacting with content and the production practices on a day to day level but poses questions about who is interacting with whom? The production practices of journalists in relation to social media identify how journalists relate to their audiences through gatekeeping or gatewatching, sourcing of stories and moderation.

The thesis argues that despite the high hopes for social media to transform relationships between producers and consumers both from BBC management and by some scholars, facebook so far has had quite a small impact in terms of interactivity and change in how BBC Hausa producers make news. This argument is supported by the following points:

- The majority of audiences are still listening to shortwave radio in Africa whilst a small group of geographically dispersed 'fans' are able to interact online. In addition, out of the 21,000 'fans' on BBC HF, only a fraction interacts and writes posts on a daily basis.
- Women are almost entirely closed off from participating in conversations on BBC HF either through lack of interest or through intimidation.
- The quality and actual conversations taking place on BBC HF is often short and not necessarily meaningful in terms of adding arguments to debates about social or political issues.
- The producers have no real interactions with audiences, instead BBC HF is another news outlet where the service can 'broadcast' news. The comments 'fans' make are brought in to traditional news frames and used as commentary to enhance radio programmes.

However, in other ways relationships are shifting:

- Facebook is a less controlled environment compared to BBC HYS forums where heavy moderation takes place before a post goes online. Some of the control of BBC interactions with their audiences has shifted to facebook where BBC terms and conditions and editorial guidelines cannot really be enforced.
- Moderation is less rigorous on facebook compared to on other interactive forums hosted on BBC sites. On BBC HF some of the moderation work has shifted over to the most active 'fans', who teaches new audiences how to behave on a BBC forum.
- Facebook plays a significant role in the shifting demographics of BBC Hausa audiences where young diasporic digitally connected audiences can access news content in Hausa. This adds a transnational dimension to the Hausa audiences that may have an impact on the types of content and debates that are broadcasted on the BBC Hausa service.

Facebook has grown to a platform that reaches over 500 million users worldwide which makes it understandable that traditional news organizations see it as a channel to extend reach. Peter Horrocks Director of BBC Global News argues that producers have to engage with social media or leave the BBC, 'because it's going to happen, you're not going to be able to stop it.' (Ariel 9 Feb 2010:2). He seems to think that social media is pivotal in engaging with audiences in the future but what role can traditional news organisations play within social networks? The wider issues raised by this research relate to whether and to what extent social media have a democratising and empowering force for audiences in Africa and for the wider global Hausa diaspora.

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## APPENDIX 1 - Interview Schedule

<b>Job role</b>	<b>Interview time and date</b>	<b>Material</b>
John - Strategy Department BBC WS	30 min 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2009	Interview Report
Emma - Senior Producer BBC WS FM	30 min 8 <sup>th</sup> February 2010	Interview Report
Halima - Senior Editor Hausa Service	30 min 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	Interview Report
Mark - Directorate Secretary	60 min 29 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	Interview Report
Jane – FCO Liaison BBC WS	60 min 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	Audio Recording
Emma - Senior Producer BBC WS FM	60 min 12 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	Audio recording
Suleman - Producer BBC Hausa	60 min 13 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	Audio Recording
Thomas - Research Manager	60 min 5 <sup>th</sup> May 2010	Audio recording
Suleman - Producer Hausa	60 min 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2010	Interview Report
Tom - Interactive Editor BBC WS FM	60 min 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2010	Audio Recording
Halima and Suleman	180 min 20 <sup>th</sup> August 2010	Interview Report

## **APPENDIX 2 - Field Notes 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

### **FM&T team meeting 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2010**

Attending: FM&T people who were in the office.

ST started by introducing new people in the team. She mentioned something about 'super powers' which seem to be an editorial project – I will try to find out more about this.

ST started off by reading the team talk briefing. Issues that were brought up were:

Highlighting the success from the Haiti broadcasting in previous weeks. A Creole radio service was up and running only about 9 days after the earthquake. There was a eng stream on the Caribbean site with updates etc.

Peter Horrocks officially took over from Richard Sambrook this month. PH is no director of both BBC WS and BBC GND.

PH's mantra is collaboration.

Another thing that has happened this month is that more BBC WS language sites have been given the right to broadcast video in more than the original 6 languages. When the contract was re-negotiated for the 6 languages they negotiated a deal for all language services to be able to use English video. Some languages also have rights to use Reuters video.

They were also discussing a project where the language teams were sharing a video. The video was from Pakistan. The sharing of the video was very complicated and demanding and the team thought that it was a good example because it was so demanding.

PH also commented on the FM steering group meeting in team talk he mentioned that there is going to be more collaboration between IFS, BBC WS, BBC World.

There have been talks about BBC WS taking care of the BBC World programming site and that it would be transferred over in to top cat 2. The idea is that it is supposed to be more audience facing (I will try to explore what this means for them).

ST was talking about PH talk Fit for the Future last Friday. Amongst other things he was talking about that journalists should make use of the

ST encouraged everybody to have a look at Timmy's audience news letter. She said it is pretty useful and hilarious.

ST carried on talking about PH's talk Fit For the Future. ST said that PH was really stunned that there were so many people there. ST was a bit surprised that PH drew a picture on a flip chart with one circle with journalists inside, one with audiences inside and one around both circles with the BBC. ST thought it was quite funny that he saw BBC as such a big part of people's lives whilst "we" know that it is a tiny part of people's lives.

ST reflected on the introduction of PH's talk where he started off by talking about then he worked on "news night" where the culture was non sharing, people locked their desk drawers, no one knew their run down until a few minutes before. Now on the other hand he is all for sharing and collaboration.

ST reflects that it is quite clear that PH is passionate about technology. He thinks that all journalists now days have to understand technology in order to do their job properly.

Other news is that WS.com has launched an application for mobile headlines.

BBC Bangla launched last week.

BBC Burmese launches this week.

Tom did a presentation on new ways of using and sharing video. The presentation was quite technical and I didn't understand that much of the jargon.

What I did get was that it will be easier for users to email in video to top cat 2. I was not sure if this were "super users" who have been given a flip camera and work for the org or if it is end users.

There is a project where people (not sure who) but think people in bureaux have been given flip cameras to film around the world.

They want to do something to the way live video events are filmed.

They are planning to make line text in Eng for non Eng video and other way around.

Clip son mobile was another topic.

Tom said that it is very important to make sure that the tools FM builds are agnostic to user's tool so sharing is possible.

The big editorial theme this week is Iran and 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the revolution.

## **Thoughts**

To what extent are BBC WS FM&T a mirror department of FM&T? to what extent do FM&T in UK BBC just pass on ideas, infrastructure etc. to BBC WS? Does this lead to a UK centric approach to media and technology? What is a UK approach anyway?

There was a quite strong frustration about being part of the second or third tier of prioritisations as far as BBC is concerned. There are a lot of issues around sharing technology, interoperability, service levels, prioritisations, sharing of resources with the wider BBC. There seems to be more of a sense of it is better if we go off and do it our selves. Still this also indicates that FM&T are very much part of the wider BBC perhaps more so compared to the language services.

This is also a very interesting time going on. PH is new director of both WS and GND as from today. He seems to really push for getting BBC WS heard across the BBC. The language services are becoming more important in news gathering as the BBC makes cuts e.g. Lat Am. He is concerned about attribution and building the BBC WS brand it seems like. In addition the move to W1 is going to pose technological and organisational challenges on the organisation.

I need to start understanding more about how FM&T work with the language services. How do they make decisions about new technology, new tools and how do they conceive BBC objectives and audiences?

## **Meeting with Emma 08-02-2010**

### **45 minutes in the BBC Club in Bush House**

E is a Senior Producer responsible for Social Media at BBC WS FM department

*Notes from meeting:*

I showed E my one pager consent form and told her a bit about what I am interested in.

I asked her if she could talk a bit about how BBC WS do social media.

WS English have come quite far with their social media initiatives whilst the language services are still at a quite early stage. It depends a bit on what market it is about because some countries are more in to social networking than others, for example, Russia.

E is always telling different services that they need to be disciplined about what content they put out there. It needs to be content driven. Social networking initiatives work really well around seasons and special programmes but not so good for more generic everyday news output.

E has been working in social networking for 10 years. She worked for a network supporting a hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy. They started a simple networking initiative in 1999, she joined in 2001. They had personal spaces where people could write diary entries, bloggin before blogging was mainstream.

What she has brought from there is that social networking initiatives needs to Task, Trust and Tend. The users need to be set a task to keep them engaged, they need to be trusted to be able to get on with what they are doing without too much intervention but they still need to be tended for and encouraged and served.

E thinks that Digital Plant is a really good example of a working social networking page on facebook. The page was initiated by fans and now users just get on with it. Gareth Mitchell is one of the presenters and he is active in the community.

Smaller social networks needs to be tedfd a lot specially in the beginning; it might take 6 months before there is any kind of working interactions going on.

Sport world is another network that really works.

Different social networks are relevant in different countries. Russia has its own facebook version and google version. Orkut is popular in Brasil and India.

According to Gem Stone (social media guru in domestic) flickr don't think the BBC should be using flickr because they can afford to build their own photo sharing site. However the reason it is used is about the tagging, and reaching out to other groups that don't go to the BBC normally.

Youtube is used in terms of the syndication channels but also to share video for smaller languages.



The national and regional characteristics of social networking are key. In Russia blogging is absolutely massive and there is a passion for debate and different markets have different characteristics. There is a need for debate in many markets though.

I asked E how she sees facebook and twitter etc. working with the content on the sites, what roles do they will?

She told me that she always advises journalists to try to refer back to the site. Their idea is to build new audiences and engage with them in new ways not to give them exclusive content on facebook. They are not supposed to put out content exclusively on facebook that they are not going to put on the site. Facebook is not a replacement for the website.

I asked E if it was difficult to manage BBC's quite strict editorial guidelines on platforms such as twitter? She told me that it is actually quite straightforward. It should be seen as a broadcast medium and the same rules apply. If you wouldn't say it on radio, don't say it on facebook. She urges journalists to have two facebook accounts and not to blog, tweet or facebook about anything too personal, they need to make the audience feel like they are getting exclusive insights without revealing personal details.

I said that I thought automated feeds from the news site were a bit boring.

E told me that for example the Brazilian service is working with mixing automation with more exclusive content and getting the balance right.

I asked E about the Diaspora element to social networking.

She told me about the different characteristics of facebook and twitter and how facebook allows you to build from your own network and twitter can sometimes allow you to get to know new people. She gave examples from her own life where she has met people on twitter to whom she is now friends.

She said that what brings diasporas together is the idea of their cultural identity and that social networking is really good at managing that process of staying in contact with one's cultural identity but also to meet new people interested in the same things, for example a country, place of origin etc.

Examples of BBC WS social networking are:

Sports world

Persian

Business daily just have twitter

Mundo are really advanced and it is really working for them.

Russia are interesting but they use different versions of facebook etc.

E thinks that blogs are the most interesting social networks; she defined blogs as social networks. There disparate conversations are going on at the same time and comments happen on different blogs. It is difficult to know what is going on unless you know. Twitter is a bit same in that way. Everybody could have a very different blog or twitter experience.

Super Power is a big initiative going on in terms of a large editorial season about how the internet changed the world. E is going to look at how they can incorporate social networks for the season.

Other examples of Social network initiatives to look at:

Hausa have a facebook group. Traditionally their audience has been male and 20's, 30's very opinionated. On facebook this whole new or previously silent audience has emerged – women. Jamilah Tangaza is the one to speak to.

I asked E about English for Africa.

She told me about Caroline Jones-BU who went to 'the festival of the desert'[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specialreports/desert\\_festival\\_2010.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/specialreports/desert_festival_2010.shtml)

She tweeted, put stuff on youtube, blogged about it.

E is going to put together guidelines for how to do social networking at BBC WS this is something else I can follow.

E also told me about when she visited a radio station in Uganda who now when they had a website used it to pull their diaspora in and engage them in their content.

E was also talking about how mobile has changed networking in Africa. It is cheaper to facebook than to send a sms. It is a pay as you go culture.

This is one example of how different markets and different needs shape the media platforms, interactions and cultures around social media.

I mentioned how the head of the Bangla service showed me that all their interactions on facebook from Bangladesh are from mobiles. E agreed and confirmed how important mobiles are in Bangladesh.

The Bangla website just launched in 1024 which means that they now have a mobile site as part of the change. Bangla would be good to look at for understanding mobiles role in Social Networking.

End of Field Notes 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010

### **APPENDIX 3 - Field notes 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010, including interview**

This example of field notes contains my notes for one day on the 13<sup>th</sup> August. I did not usually come in to work on Tuesdays but this time I was there because Suleman was working on this day and he said he could spend some time with me. These notes have not been copy edited or structured, instead they are written in the way that I wrote them down on a piece of paper in order to show authenticity of the type of notes that I made.

#### **Interview with Suleman Online Producer BBC Hausa April 2010**

**Location: Bush House**

**Duration: 1h**

The interview was audio recorded with permission from the participant

The style of the interview was open-ended questions and open ended moderated discussion.

#### ***Background Participant***

S has been a producer with BBC Hausa since 2006. Prior to 2009 he was based in Abuja at the local BBC office there. In Abuja S initially worked as a Radio producer, where he planned and commissioned reports and decided on what content was to go out during the radio transmission. After a while S became responsible for the content on the bbchousa.com website.

In September 2009 S transferred to London in order to do his MA in journalism at a London University.

#### ***Multimedia***

Since S started working on Online content he can sense a greater emphasis on Online as a platform for the organisation.

“Because the BBC has started paying more attention on online now I had three more people in Abuja working with me”.

Improvements to the Online content recently made are an extension of the sports offer. The sport content is updated on a daily basis. Nowadays every report who works on the radio

transmission in the morning has to write up any good story for online and attach the audio clip.

Hausa is one of the first BBC languages and the first African language to have video rights from AP and Reuters. This means that service can publish clips from the news agencies on the website. In addition, the Hausa team now and reporters in the field bring the flip camera a long and if there is something to film they file the video and the producers can publish the video clip on the website. The video clips cannot be longer than 45-60 sec because the Internet in Nigeria is not that powerful. If the clip is longer it will take too long for the audience to download.

### ***Mobile***

Mobile is another area that BBC Hausa has moved in to. In Jan 2010 ahead of African cup of nation (football) in Angola the BBC WS launched mobile versions of Mobile companies are competing, people are not more inclined to mobile internet. There is more competition.

From press release

“As part of BBC World Service's multimedia strategy, Peter Horrocks will, on Tuesday 5 January 2010, unveil five new services for mobile phones via **BBC Hausa**, **BBC Swahili**, **BBC Somali**, **BBC Para Africa** (BBC Portuguese for Africa) and **BBC Great Lakes**.”  
04.01.2010

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2010/01\\_january/04/football.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2010/01_january/04/football.shtml)

S has observed that mobile companies are reducing their tariffs he thinks there will soon be legislation in favour of cheaper mobile services in Nigeria.

### ***Content***

BBC Hausa has four clusters or indexes. The website is just in the process of being re-designed to fit the rest of the BBC's websites. One of the most popular indexes is the sport index. The sports reported on are football (the most popular), tennis, and cricket. The most popular stories are about the premiership, and Spanish la liga.

“Football has a huge following amongst the youth and the youth are the ones using the internet”

### ***About football***

"We are seeing that they like it from the discussions on our Facebook group." They users have camps, Man United and Chelsea supporters.

The audience use Hausa Facebook as a forum to discuss football B says. If one team play and they are not doing well they all come to Facebook and the opposing teams tell them now look at you, you made all this promises. If a player has changed teams and is now playing on the losing team they discuss about it being bad luck etc.

Note to myself: I wonder if the interest is mainly around African footballers.

S tells me about how they incorporate the discussions on Facebook in to the 6min Sport radiobroadcasts. The sport offer is also available as a podcast.

### ***Convergence: African's are crazy about radio***

S tells me that it is a huge incentive for the audience to have their Facebook discussion mentioned on radio. The diaspora can listen to the stream or podcast on the website. S claims that if their name gets mentioned in the broadcast they can pass the podcast to their friends.

"Hausa people are crazy about radio and for some bodies name to be mentioned on BBC radio, BBC that is some thing they will go to their peers and tell them my name was mentioned today and it was mentioned on the BBC and they will tell them and here it is (the podcast)"

S promise me to look up stats for the podcast

### ***Facebook - convergence***

S speaks about their multimedia offer and explains how they have managed to integrate everything from radio, to Facebook, twitter. He claims that Facebook is where the debates take place.

Note to myself : It's interesting that Hausa has surpassed BBC WS prioritisation and because they don't have the interactive technology to have Have Your Say Forums they are using Facebook as an interactive forum.

I wondered what benefit Facebook brings to the audience?

It fits the audiences in so many ways B says. Facebook updates automatically, it allows them to start a discussion and it gives more awareness of topic, political stories, sports stories it comes to them on their Facebook page. If they miss a radio transmission they can now listen to it online. We now have mobile content. The audience can sit in their room and listen at their convenience.

Note to myself: When S discusses all the benefits of Facebook he often emphasise the benefits of Online, the on-demand aspects, it seems like he himself likes the fact that online gives more freedom to the audience to him, to the diaspora.

### ***Editorial values – Impartiality***

One important aspect of having Facebook debates is the need to maintain BBC editorial values says S. In the run up to the Nigerian election it is very important that people don't use the Facebook group as a campaign site since that would compromise BBC values. In order to stop people from spreading political messages on the website B and his colleagues monitors the activity on the Facebook group and the Facebook fan page. A Facebook group is a function in Facebook where Facebook users can be part of a group and share content and their profiles. Groups are mostly used by private groups and events or for campaigning for a cause and one off rallies. Fan pages are more used for corporate purposes in order to engage consumers with a brand and their products. BBC Hausa had both but realised that it was too much work. One of the reasons that the Facebook group was closed and all the members were migrated over to the fan page was because it takes too long to monitor both groups.

Three months ago we decided to close the group and only use the fan page, last Friday was the deadline (end of April) S explained.

S told me about one user in Nigeria who emailed the service because after having joined the fan page he could not access the discussions page on his mobile like he used to be able to in the group. This has happened a few times. S saw this as a sign of how the Facebook group is crucial to people's lives but also it's a sign that people do engage with the content from Africa.

### ***Editorial guidelines***

The pan BBC social networking principles are as follows:

- "With conversations, participate online; don't "broadcast" messages to users
- Don't bring the BBC into disrepute
- With moderation, only police where we have to; trust our users where we don't

- "Be open and transparent in our social media dealings"

I got these from E, see notes from 12<sup>th</sup> April

### ***Connectivity in Africa***

I probed a bit more about connectivity in Africa

Although the Internet is growing in Africa through the use of fibre optics, satellite internet etc. in rural areas mobile internet is still experiencing the highest growth rate. Internet content on mobiles is cheaper than internet cafés says B. Internet café is about £1/h whilst on a mobile you get 200MB in data traffic for £4, for that amount you can listen to VOA's broadcasts in Hausa for a whole week. You cannot yet listen to BBC audio content streamed on your mobile. According to B the mobile regulator in Nigeria recently reported 78.5m mobile users.

"Mobile is the future of broadcasting to Africa; I am saying that because if you can provide audio on mobile even no matter how poor people are almost everyone owns a mobile phone or have access to one"

It is more and more convenient to get news from a mobile phone. S emphasise that mobiles enable people to listen in their own privacy at their own convenience. S claims that Mobile is the future and in order to maintain the reputation in Africa the BBC needs to have new technology.

### ***Competition***

S looks at mobiles as a way of getting around competition. At the moment BBC Hausa is banned from SW in Nigeria. Local FM stations are increasingly popular which is reducing the significance of the BBC. The sound quality of SW is not good and mobiles would provide an alternative platform to listen to the BBC. S thinks that putting the audience in control and allowing them to listen on the go and catching up on programmes when ever they want will benefit the BBC.

I asked S what the major competitors to BBC Hausa are

The competitions S mentions are VOA, Deutsche Welle, Radio France International, Freedom radio in Kano (local radio station but partners with DW).About Freedom Radio: the sound quality is good and it provides political news although they have more local. Kano is BBC's biggest market.



According to S the competitors are not doing as much as the BBC in terms of new technology. The only exception is VOA who offers audio via Mp3. At the moment this is not provided by BBC Hausa. In terms of new media we are ahead of the competition B claims. B also claims that the competitor's online offer is sporadic and that the BBC website and facebook is updated at least 4 times a day.

### ***A new Interactive programme***

A new interactive programme every week we start trailing from Tuesday on radio, when morning this is the topic for this week. They send their views their phone number, on sms, text, email, facebook. On Friday we phone them up. Before we open the discussion on facebook. We take contributions from text messages.

We give attribution from Facebook, after we tell them go to Facebook.

"This person so so is debating, this is what they are doing. They can continue debating."

I asked him who poses the question

We set the topic for now. We have so many issues to discuss.

The initial topic, legislators decided that no body with no qualification can contest for political office. You have to have been to university in order to become a legislator. The house of common there has decided that. In order for people to make informed choices. Discussion on Facebook. Some people said it is good decision, they can't speak English, they are not well educated. At least university, they will make informed decisions.

Others say no you don't have to western education, they have knowledge of politics, they have knowledge of legislation.

We have a legislator, and a political scientist who discussed.

How did you help people to make an informed decision I asked?

It was a hot topic in Nigeria. In order for people to understand this topic, we used a legislator, political scientist, then we let people phone in and make their own contribution. The political analyst can explain the process of the legislation, the political process.

The selection is already going on people are leaving their number.

"I think these debates have a huge impact especially on the grassroots. Some of the legislators are grassroots; they don't have a lot of education. This can inform the people to stand up for their rights as citizens. If this debate did not take place they would not know what was best for them, even the legislators by listening to people's view, they might not have consulted them but now they know what the citizens who they are supposed to represent think and that might change their view. Maybe they were planning to support it before but now based on what the citizens are saying they might make a change to what they plan to do."

"They have a more informed debate about democracy"

They discuss almost everything including international news.

On Facebook you see comments, politics, local, business. As soon as there is something new, they discuss it.

The fans are creating topics. Most of the discussions are initiated by the fans. Apart from perhaps on Fridays, or for big news. 70% of discussions are initiated by listeners. They debate issues that were not transmitted by us.

My notes: This statement showed not be true when analysing the figures from Facebook.

Last week we had a reporter in Gusol, a reporter that caught an Islamic 23 year old, married a lady of 50 years, his mum is telling his child that she cannot accept it. According to Islamic its aloud. 60 year old married a younger lady but that is ok. Ladies are condemning why are men aloud to do this.

Who goes to Facebook I asked him.

Mostly youths but there are still 18 and above that what we have said. Different background some are well educated less educated from their comments. In terms where they are majority in Nigeria, mostly making contributions because they have access to internet, they have access to internet at school, business. Some times we get people from Poland. I need to look back, I now get weekly updates so I can have a look for you.

Some come from Europe, eastern Europe, but the majority are from Nigeria. Some times most posts come from the US the Diaspora have better access.

They are all immersed in the same discussions though.

Are everybody as good in speaking Hausa even if they live abroad I asked him?

The level of Hausa is varied, some sue idioms, sayings, the youths don't know about these, because of western education and modernity. Before people had to go to the country and stay with they're grandparents, in rural places to learn pure language and the right saying. Now because of modernity, people living in the cities. Now in the Facebook debates, young peoples are digging out these expressions, they listen to the trans mission where the debate starts, we are now using a saying to condemn another club. The young listeners are getting in to it. Most young people don't know, they might ask their parents or read about it.

Idioms are there "a plant or a vegetable that grow naturally, some people are doing food paste, sprouts to prepare, when such plant grows on a grave yard, they can' t use it. Something that has grown on the graveyard pales someone.

This is how they spice up the debate says S.

The few women that are there contribute in terms of social issues. Marriage, Northern trend divorce is getting higher. One question they debated was whose fault it is, men or women?

This debate was initiated by the service

Religion and corruption are other popular topics says S.

How about the new design how will that change what you do I asked him?

The re-design, the front page all the multimedia attractions, now so many items are buried within the site, now we can highlight more items. Everything is given prominence in the new design.

The site will also be easier to navigate.

Additional stuff I have found today

Facebook conversation <http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2230097918&topic=4743>

On the fan page

<http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=2230097918&topic=4743#!/group.php?gid=2230097918>

"Teejay Ahmed Nakande The fact is that no one speaks fluent hausaland instead we speak in slangs thats why we use English in a place where we think we cannot use the Hausa word

bcos it will sound odd...for example if u listen to hausa bbc news it kind of funny bcos they speak fluently in hausa...this applies not only to hausa but to all languages in d world. e.g Arabic,english and so on. In Nigeria no one speaks fluent english only when a pers

on is on an official thing..we normally use our slangs.”

Diaspora Orgs

<http://zumunta.org/>

Nigeria facebook page

<http://www.facebook.com/Nigeriapage>

Facebook influences Nigeria football team ban U-turn

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/10525699>

Multimedia Africa article BBC on mobile

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/institutional/2010/06/100626\\_annual\\_review\\_2010\\_africa.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/institutional/2010/06/100626_annual_review_2010_africa.shtml)

End of Field notes 13<sup>th</sup> April

**APPENDIX 4 – SAGE and facebook Data**

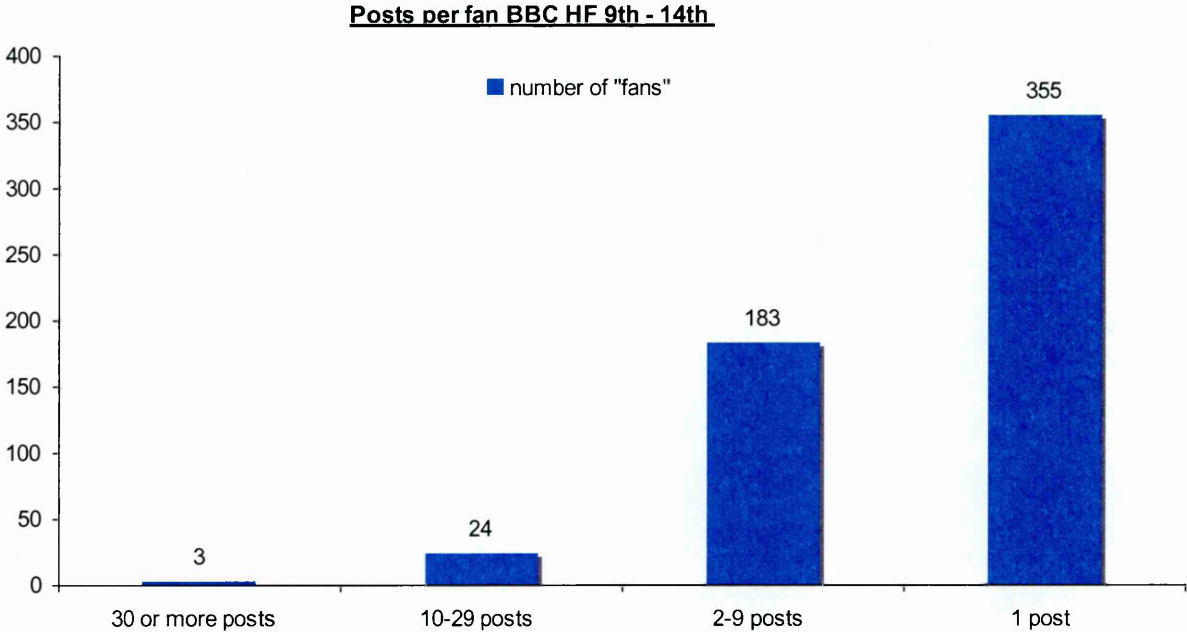
<b>Data Source</b>	<b>SAGE</b>	<b>FACEBOOK</b>	<b>SAGE</b>
<b>Date</b>	<b>Internet Unique Users</b>	<b>Facebook 'fans'</b>	<b>Mobile Unique Users</b>
Week of Nov 1, 2009	13,030		
Week of Nov 8, 2009	14,129		
Week of Nov 15, 2009	14,446		
Week of Nov 22, 2009	13,907		
Week of Nov 29, 2009	15,268		2,299
Week of Dec 6, 2009	14,829		3,139
Week of Dec 13, 2009	15,166		3,549
Week of Dec 20, 2009	15,605		3,593
Week of Dec 27, 2009	17,751		4,193
Week of Jan 3, 2010	18,700		4,246
Week of Jan 10, 2010	23,672	480	4,336
Week of Jan 17, 2010	25,293	1130	5,127
Week of Jan 24, 2010	24,067	1670	6,661
Week of Jan 31, 2010	24,505	2055	6,688
Week of Feb 7, 2010	25,988	2401	7,336
Week of Feb 14, 2010	30,136	2715	7,948
Week of Feb 21, 2010	37,453	3079	9,238
Week of Feb 28, 2010	31,464	3752	7,755
Week of Mar 7, 2010	31,631	4052	7,553
Week of Mar 14, 2010	33,474	4403	8,361
Week of Mar 21, 2010	35,016	4784	8,788
Week of Mar 28, 2010	33,179	5189	8,227
Week of Apr 4, 2010	36,033	5755	8,552
Week of Apr 11, 2010	34,791	6245	8,040
Week of Apr 18, 2010	36,806		7,619
Week of Apr 25, 2010	33,087	7455	7,235
Week of May 2, 2010	44,314	8164	10,196
Week of May 9, 2010	53,981	8906	13,224
Week of May 16, 2010	50,483		12,502
Week of May 23, 2010	40,963		10,815
Week of May 30, 2010	35,208		10,339
Week of Jun 6, 2010	31,273		9,994
Week of Jun 13, 2010	28,657		8,562

## APPENDIX 5 – Facebook Analytics

<b>Total Fans</b>	The total number of fans subscribing to the BBC Hausa fan page
<b>Post Quality</b>	Post Quality is determined by the percentage of fans that engage when content is posted to a Facebook fan page, the percentage is calculated using a seven-day average.
<b>Interactions per post</b>	The average number of interactions (clicks, views, likes, comments) per post
<b>Likes</b>	The total number of likes (from users pressing the like button indicating that they like the content)
<b>Comments</b>	The comments users leave underneath the posts in response to the posts
<b>Wall Posts</b>	The number of posts posted on the wall
<b>New fans</b>	The number of new fans per day
<b>Removed fans</b>	Fans that are removed by the webmaster
<b>Unsubscribes</b>	The number of fans who have unsubscribed
<b>Re-subscribes</b>	The number of fans who have unsubscribed and then re-subscribed
<b>Page views</b>	The numbers of pages viewed
<b>Unique Page views</b>	Page views only counts once for each individual
<b>Audio plays</b>	The number of times an audio has been opened from the page
<b>Video plays</b>	The number of times a video has been opened from the page
<b>Photo views</b>	The number of times a photo has been opened from the page

**APPENDIX 6 – Data Chart of posts per ‘fan’**

This chart shows how many fans posted, over 30 posts, between 10-29 posts, between 2-9 posts and 1 post each in the five days from 9<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> August 2010.



**APPENDIX 7 – Facebook comments translated**

Translated comments from BBC Hausa Facebook. The posts were originally posted in Hausa but translated in to English by a freelance journalist working for BBC Hausa.

**1. Story published on BBC HF 9<sup>th</sup> August 4.51 PM and following posts by users in sequential order**

<p>BBC Hausa <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/hausa/sport/2010/08/100809_oneillresigns&amp;shtml">http://www.bbc.co.uk/hausa/sport/2010/08/100809_oneillresigns&amp;shtml</a></p> <p>BBC Hausa - Sports - Martin O'Neill has resigned from his position as the coach of Aston Villa.</p> <p>Aston Villa has announced that its coach Martin O'Neill has resigned from his position with immediate effect.</p>
<p>August 9 at 4:51pm · Comment · Like · Share · Report</p> <p>5 people like this.</p> <p>Inuwa Rabi: If you hear a drumbeat there must be a story. Perhaps the Aston Villa management fail to do what he hoped to see.</p>
<p>August 9 at 4:54pm · Like ·</p> <p>Usman Yahaya Gaidam: This is surprising because Aston Villa had performed well in their recent games.</p>
<p>August 9 at 4:58pm · Like ·</p> <p>Usman Muttaka: There must be a reason for his doing this since he is really a sports hero.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:01pm · Like ·</p> <p>Musa Skido: Or could he have found where he could be paid more?</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:03pm · Like ·</p> <p>Dahiru Arzika Dange: You're right, son of the people of Gaidam. But whatever makes a mouse fall in to a fire must be hotter than the fire.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:07pm · Like ·</p> <p>Kamal Hussain Maigatari: You aint seen nothing yet! The more we wait, the more we'll see.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:12pm · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Usman Adam Imam: Good riddance! Of what benefit was he to them anyway?</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:16pm · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Ali Muhammed Geidam: This means it was too hot for him to handle. Some problems must have forced him to resign.</p>



<p>August 9 at 5:23pm · Like ·</p> <p>Sani Mohammed Tukur: Let him come to Manchester United.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:24pm · Like ·</p> <p>Mustapha Ahmed Romeo: Why must he come, Madridians? What persistence! As if he is Barca or Fabrigas.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:34pm · Like ·</p> <p>Shuaibu Muhammed Rijiyarmaikabi: Ha-ha-ha! We would certainly welcome him if he were to come to Chelsea.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:45pm · Like ·</p> <p>Awwal Yusuf Paiko: Aston Villa has suffered a big loss because they can't get anyone like him.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:54pm · Like ·</p> <p>Musa Mustapha Maty: There is no smoke without fire. O'Neill, you did the right thing. One day they will come to regret.</p>
<p>August 9 at 5:55pm · Like ·</p> <p>Muhammad Auwal Ismail: Our wish has been fulfilled. May all other premier clubs coaches resign except that of Arsenal, Gunners4life.</p>
<p>August 9 at 6:43pm · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Mukhtar Salisu: O'Neill, that was a clever move. The Chelsea coach too should go before it's too late.</p>
<p>August 9 at 7:05pm · Like ·</p> <p>Ibrahim Dalhat: That's a good one, Wenger!</p>
<p>August 9 at 7:11pm · Like ·</p> <p>Hassan Umar Dange: That was a wrong move, O'Neil, considering the fact that Aston Villa have performed well in their recent games. And, there is every sign that this time too, they are going to perform wonders.</p>
<p>August 9 at 7:37pm · Like ·</p> <p>Muktar Abubakar: No, Hassan. He should go home and rest and let others have a chance.</p>
<p>August 9 at 8:55pm · Like ·</p> <p>Henry King: Oh no, O'Neil! It means you've admitted defeat. You got to be patient sometimes. But you have tried. We'll never forget you and Jose Marinho of Madrid, whom you gave tough time to when he was with Chelsea.</p>
<p>August 9 at 9:52pm · Like ·</p> <p>Labaran Maiyaki Dange: Why, O'Neil! It must be fear that made you ran away, for this year, premier is open for grabs.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:54pm · Like ·</p> <p>Sailfullah Ibrahim: It's now, Aston Villa, that you'd realize your mistake!</p>

<p>August 10 at 6:17am · Like ·</p> <p>Yusuf Lawal: It's left to them to find someone else. This is how the world works. Today it's your turn, tomorrow someone else's. The world is full of surprises.</p>
<p>August 10 at 10:10am · Like ·</p> <p>Isahaq Hassan: PDP Committee of Trustees, are you going to do the right thing or only protect your positions?</p>
<p>August 10 at 2:09pm · Like ·</p> <p>Aliyu Umar Kubau: Now Morinho, you must look for another player.</p> <p>August 10 at 3:30pm · Like · 2.</p>

**2. Second translated story published on BBC HF 9<sup>th</sup> August 10.09 AM and subsequent posts by users in sequential order**

<p>BBC Hausa</p> <p><b>BBC Hausa - News – The ICPC (Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission) has started investigating Nigeria's parliament.</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk">www.bbc.co.uk</a></p> <p>The anti-corruption commission ICPC, has said that it is to start an investigation on members of parliament on suspicion of engaging in corrupt practices.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:09am · Comment · Like · Share · Report</p> <p>13 people like this.</p> <p>Salisu Umar: Correct!</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:09am · Like ·</p> <p>Abdullahi Ibn Hamman: Starting an investigation is of no use if the culprits aren't going to be punished.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:11am · Like ·</p> <p>Mohammed Aminu: Okay!</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:11am · Like ·</p> <p>Dunoma Zanna: They should be investigated and punished accordingly.</p>

<p>August 9 at 10:19am · Like ·</p> <p>Shuaibu Muhammed Rijiyarmaikabi: It isn't necessary to conduct any investigation. They are corrupt. The punishment is for them to return the money they have been given for the last three years.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:21am · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Muhammad San-Turakin Fcbk: What about Obasanjo?</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:23am · Like ·</p> <p>Auwal Sageer Yks: If the parliamentarians cannot investigate Obasanjo, he will on the other hand, snitch on them.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:24am · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Aminu Abubakar Shehu: That will be very good.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:43am · Like ·</p> <p>Bashir Tanko: How can focus be lost from what's more important for the less important?</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:48am · Like ·</p> <p>Mohammed Salisu: Okay, we heard you ICPC, but there shouldn't be any deception.</p>
<p>August 9 at 10:55am · Like ·</p> <p>Rabiu Ibrahim: May Allah give His hand towards conducting an honest investigation and in taking steps avert similar happening in future.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:02am · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Abatcha Kafi: Grant Turaki a waiver.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:09am · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Sarkin Malaman Facebook: Good. By Allah, it's high time. For all Nigerian leaders are thieves. By Allah. I hope they'll one day be reduced to begging.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:13am · Like · 2 people ·</p> <p>Muhammad Auwal Bauchi: May Allah guide them.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:18am · Like ·</p> <p>Haruna Aliyu: May Allah guide us all.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:30am · Like ·</p> <p>Abba S. Ibrahim: This is what they say...</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:40am · Like ·</p> <p>Bukar Abdullah: It'd be better to do the right thing.</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:52am · Like ·</p> <p>Dahiru Lawali Kagara: What's the use of the investigation?</p>
<p>August 9 at 11:55am · Like ·</p> <p>Aminu Yakubu: There is a lot of hypocrisy in their work. What stops them from conducting an investigation all this long?</p>
<p>August 9 at 12:18pm · Like ·</p> <p>Salisu Umar Galadunci: Well, it is Papa telling us that he's still around, hail and hearty! Long live Obasanjo!</p>

<p>August 9 at 12:18pm · Like ·</p> <p>Idris Mamman: ICPC, the old man too, should be stripped of his immunity so that he can be investigated. Make sure you're honest.</p>
<p>August 9 at 12:34pm · Like ·</p> <p>Muhammad Saleh: This is a showdown. Will Obasanjo win or the parliamentarians?</p>
<p>August 9 at 12:38pm · Like ·</p> <p>Alee Geidam: And what about the diva?</p>
<p>August 9 at 1:00pm · Like ·</p> <p>Mahammad Ahmad: Great!</p>
<p>August 9 at 1:32pm · Like ·</p> <p>Ahmed Tee Jay: May Allah guide them in doing the right thing and to be honest.</p>
<p>August 9 at 2:05pm · Like ·</p> <p>Mohammed Ajanah: Who'll investigate whom?</p>
<p>August 9 at 2:08pm · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Yusuf Lawal: Let investigations continue. This is the way they'll reveal each others scandals. And now the parliamentarians should investigate the embezzlement of the civil servants so that the common man can know where the truth lies. May Allah help the common man.</p>
<p>August 9 at 2:40pm · Like ·</p> <p>Yusuf Lawal: Now ICPC, if you finish this investigation, you should then investigate Obasanjo on the electricity contracts, for which the people don't know what happened to the money.</p>
<p>August 9 at 2:43pm · Like · 1 person ·</p> <p>Mohammed Aminu: If they are investigated and found guilty of embezzling public fund, they would be shamed in public by announcing it to the world, some of the money would be confiscated, then they would be let off. When the money is confiscated where is it taken to!? Allah help us!</p>
<p>August 9 at 2:59pm · Like ·</p> <p>Musa Yahaya: We leave you till the day of reckoning where you will have to explain in Arabic language.</p>
<p>August 9 at 3:26pm · Like ·</p> <p>Abdullahi Ladan Suleja: EFCC you shouldn't limit your investigation to just the parliament, you should include former President Obasanjo.</p>
<p>August 9 at 3:28pm · Like ·</p> <p>Mahammad A`mad: That's right!</p>
<p>August 9 at 3:29pm · Like ·</p> <p>Adams Mohd: Poppycock!</p>

August 9 at 4:02pm · Like ·

Abdullahi Rabi Rafukka: He was their role model.

August 9 at 5:07pm · Like ·

Nadiya Ibrahim: I see no reason why Obasanjo should accuse parliamentarians of being corrupt because when he was in power he turned them into what they are today.

August 11 at 1:08pm · Like · 3.

**3. User posts in response to the weeks question for the Interactive programme Ra'ayi Riga (Have Your Say) – ‘Should women take a more active role in Nigerian politics?’ User posts were sampled from the 13<sup>th</sup> August when the question goes online.**

(RA'AYI RIGA) Women should be allowed to participate in politics, not only in Nigeria, but also in other African countries because this will bring us development.

August 13 at 1:07pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Chiroma Hadi Khan Jallo likes this.

Yusuf Lawal Unlguwar Alkali, katsina: The negative way most people look at the women who participate in politics is the reason why women themselves feel reluctant to participate, no matter their qualification, education and experience.

August 13 at 1:07pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Badamasi Abubakar Kabir Sakaina: May Allah sustain it on Sunnah

August 13 at 12:54pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Yusuf Lawal: Involving women in politics would make them strive more towards education. They will be more independent, and the oppression they suffer from men would go down drastically. They will be able to liberate themselves by setting up women Organisations that would fight against injustice...

August 13 at 12:54pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Zaharaddeen Getso: The Prophet, peace be upon him said, "The nation that install a woman as their leader would come to ruin. And if you look at the United States, a woman had never ruled their country, even though they are not Muslims and they have been practicing democracy for more than two hundred years. And there was Patricia Ette -, when she headed the House of Representatives in Nigeria everyone knew ...

August 13 at 12:52pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Aboubacar Ali Sami: likes this.

Very good Abubakar Haruna Maroua. It's only now that I've heard a sensible opinion.

August 13 at 2:49pm · Like ·

Alhaji Ibrahim Blouse Nguru: Women, you better think hard, even at home you're being led, you and your children, how on earth could you dream of leading over 150 million people?

August 13 at 12:44pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Badamasi Abubakar (Mainasara): If women get involved in politics, do you think they will be able to bring about the development the men have failed to bring?

August 13 at 12:27pm · Comment · Like · Flag

(RA'AYI RIGA) Honestly, women should be involved in politics, not only in Nigeria, but also in other African countries because this will bring us quality democracy.

August 13 at 12:23pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Chiroma Hadi Khan Jallo likes this.

Alhaji Ibrahim Blouse Nguru: Ra'ayi Riga, BBC you should caution Nigerian women. They should be careful. Be faithful to Allah and your husbands. It is from the leading person that you understand depth of the water.

August 13 at 12:21pm · Comment · Like · Flag

Alhaji Yusuf Hisbah Wambai: May Allah reward you for your advice to women.