

**THE USE OF TWITTER TO ENGAGE WITH RADIO LISTENERS: CASE STUDY  
OF COMMERCIAL RADIO STATION, CAPRICORN FM, SOUTH AFRICA**

**MASTER OF ARTS (MEDIA STUDIES)**

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**THE USE OF TWITTER TO ENGAGE WITH RADIO LISTENERS: CASE STUDY  
OF COMMERCIAL RADIO STATION, CAPRICORN FM, SOUTH AFRICA**

by

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DISSERTATION

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**Supervisor: DR E.J MALATJI**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree Master of Arts in Media Studies has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged

**Mothiba MM (Miss)**

**19/ 04/ 2021**

## **DEDICATION**

This research project is dedicated to myself and my loving family.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I thank the Almighty God for his goodness, mercy and strength to complete my research.

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I pass my sincere heartfelt gratitude my supervisor, Dr E.J Malatji for inspiration, encouragement, pressure and guidance he provided throughout this research project. May God bless him profusely.

## **ABSTRACT**

This study used concurrent mixed research method on the use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners at a commercial radio station in Limpopo, South Africa. The study evaluated the use of Twitter to engage with radio station listeners on Capricorn FM. The study described and explored how Capricorn FM integrated Twitter into their programmes and explain the benefits of using Twitter as a toll for listener's participation. The study was premised on mass communication theories namely, New Media Theory and Practice Theory.

Detailed literature review, non-probability sampling, semi-structured interviews, content analysis, thematic analysis, SPSS were explored under the research methodology section. Both the responses and tweets postulate that Twitter function as an engagement platform. Furthermore, digital technologies have been introduced in radio which makes it easier and possible for radio stations to integrate different platforms to engage with listeners.

Often in media the term engagement tends to be narrowly used to refer to interaction and listening. The findings of the study suggest that Twitter offers an effective engagement between listeners and a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM. The findings revealed that listeners engaged more with news, current affairs and entertainment content that entails of music polls, celebrities' updates and real-life stories. Furthermore, Capricorn FM's use of Twitter has been beneficial in a sense that they could post content to non-listeners for reading purposes and could reach more people and new listeners.

Consequently, tweets provide platform for listeners to ask questions or, replies to any communications from the station. Engagements were highlighted through likes and retweets of tweets by the Capricorn FM Twitter account. However, this study recommended that more radio stations should integrate Twitter on their programmes to also benefit and be more progressive. Additionally, more organisations should understand how the facets of radios changed and affected the operation and production since the integration of Twitter.

## **KEY WORDS**

New media, internet, convergence, digital, twitter, Capricorn FM, radio.

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AM - Amplitude Modulation

DSTV – Digital Satellite Television

FM - Frequency Modulation

ICT - Information Communication Technology

SPSS - Statistical Package for Social Science



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

Radio is the broadcast of sound through electromagnetic waves (Barker, 2009). It is the most broadly used electronic around the globe for communication (Hayens, 2015). Radio has a reach of 98% of the population of South Africa, which is about 54 million people (South African Audience Research Foundation, 2017). It is, therefore, evident that radio is the most preferred medium.

New media technology is changing radio culture in various ways (Chiumbu & Ligaga, 2013). In general, the new media technology is resulting in a change of how radio stations operate. The term 'new media' explains digital technology, which has several uses, with emphasis on advanced technology structures (Lesame, Mbatha & Sindane, 2012). Although new media technology is redefining communication, researchers consent that radio remains the most powerful means of communication (Daloz & Verrier-Frechette, 2000; Moyo, 2012).

Lesame, Mbatha and Sindane (2012: 03) opine that "New media are digital in nature and are frequently employed through communicator or media organizations to communicate to audience via cooperative means such as the internet". One of the new media technologies are social media, which is a wide term that is utilised to apply to a variety of new innovations, with wikis, virtual universes, micro blogs, social networking sites, and video sharing sites, to give a few examples (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010) In this investigation, the attention was on Twitter and radio. Twitter is a typical microblogging site that has developed since it was propelled in 2006 (Schonfeld, 2009).

Radio stations in South Africa have implemented the practice of microblogging to connect with their audiences and to extend their airwaves (Mare, 2013). The commercial radio stations model this trend (Chiumbu & Ligaga, 2013). Moreover, some radio stations now use a diversity of alternative broadcast strategies to widen the spread of leveraging their procedures on other new media technology like internet and mobile phones (Mabweazara, 2013). Furthermore, with these types of new

developments in digital technology, radio has additionally expanded its variety of options in programming and response, with the newly found skill to listen to audio streamed over the internet (Mabweazara, 2013) by redefining radio consumption practices (Barker, 2009).

Digital technology in radio is a paradigm modification from analogue towards digital form of depiction. In other words, radio material has progressed comprehensibility, storability, networkability and fluid since it can without much of a stretch be scattered through a variety of computerised stages, for example, digital broadcasts, Webcasts, Web sites and social media (Moyo, 2012). The statement demonstrates that digitisation allows content for radio audiences to be readily available and accessible a wide variety of media platforms. The vital aspect of the integration of new radio platforms is that it creates diverse of interactive platforms, therefore redefining notions of the public (Nassanga, Manyozo & Lopes, 2013).

Being greatly accessible due to digitisation and convergence, radio has become more participative, and is bridging the social and digital gap (Moyo, 2012). Participation in radio creates awareness, allowing participants to be informed about their ever-changing needs and eagerness to accept public and technological changes (Salleh, Hassim & Adam, 2009). It is very important for every radio station to have listeners that participate on their communication platforms (Ferguson & Greer, 2017). Radio stations practice social networking sites as instruments which enable stations to describe themselves as friendly and expressively connected to their listeners (Ferguson & Greer, 2017).

This study focused on a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM, based in Limpopo Province, South Africa. The researcher selected Capricorn FM as it is the only commercial radio station in Limpopo Province with a market driven programmes that are relevant, current and plays music that is trending. Capricorn FM is first commercial radio station in the province that is broadcasted in English 70% and 30% other vernaculars namely, Sepedi, Tshivenda and Xitsonga (Capricorn FM, 2018).



Broadcasting content of the commercial radio station contains 70% music and 30% talk shows. The music features a variety of urban genres in Rhythm and Blues, Soul, Afro-pop, Afro-soul, Hip-hop, Kwaito, House, Jazz and Gospel music (Capricorn FM, 2018). Capricorn FM has both primary and secondary audiences. Primary audiences are aged between 25 and 49, and its secondary audiences are aged 16 and 24. These audiences are not gender specific. The station is unique, it can communicate to 300 000 consumers in their own languages in the province (Capricorn FM, 2018). This study evaluated Capricorn FM's use of a social networking site (Twitter) as an engagement strategy for audience participation.

## **1.2 RESEACH PROBLEM**

Mass media such as radio expect to have participation from most individuals, especially their listeners. Therefore, radio stations go extra mile to engage listeners to participate on their platforms using new forms of technology. Nowadays, radio stations use digital technology such as social media to engage and communicate with their listeners (Rosale, 2013).

Radio stations post on their social media accounts during shows to engage with their listeners and this allows listeners to participate using their social media platforms. In recent years, listeners were only able to participate on radio shows via phone calls and short message service (SMS). However, new technology such as social media provide a greater platform for radio stations to instantly engage with listeners.

Radio stations use microblogging sites such as Twitter, nonetheless, the question remains, are these sites effective for use on radio? How listeners are considered part of these microblogging sites? And do radio stations use microblogging to strategically engage with listeners? This study managed to answer all the questions.

Some radio stations do not have the capacity to facilitate social media engagement with listeners. There is a need to embark on this study of nature to expose factors that hinder the effective engagement between radio stations and listeners on social media. The study used scientific research methods to expose factors that hinders the effective use of Twitter by radio station.

### **1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The study contributed towards the present information about Twitter and radio station. The study revealed information of Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation in radio stations on South Africa. The study explored information of audience participation issues, experienced by a Limpopo's first commercial radio station, Capricorn FM. However, using Twitter as one of audience engagement strategy, added knowledge relating to factors that influence and affect audience participation. The study could benefit radio stations, be it commercial or local and media persons who aspire to major in social media management and digital technology, by highlighting the pros and cons of utilising Twitter as an instrument for audience participation in radio programming spheres.

Moreover, this study was useful in supporting considerable features involving audience participation on radio growth programmes in South Africa, and Limpopo Province in particular. The findings provided appropriate information on general presentation of radio stations in the province, relative to their predictable roles as sources of audience participation communication progress. The study could also stimulate more researchers to conduct comparable studies in future.

### **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.4.1 Aim of the study**

The aim of the study was to evaluate the use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners on Capricorn FM. The current study investigates the effectiveness of engaging with radio listeners using Twitter and highlight how Capricorn FM strategically invites listeners participation.

#### **1.4.2 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to:

- a) Describe how Capricorn FM station integrate Twitter into their programming;
- b) Explore how Twitter can be used as a tool to engage more with listeners; and
- c) Explain the benefits of using Twitter sites as a tool for listeners' engagement.

### **1.4.3 Research questions**

1.4.3.1 How effective is Twitter as an engagement platform for audience participation?

1.4.3.2 How does the station integrate Twitter content into programming?

1.4.3.3 Do you use Twitter to influence audience participation?

## **1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW**

This section reviews the existing literature regarding the use of Twitter as an engagement approach for audience's participation in radio. The section assisted the researcher to work with information of previous research on how social media has been used by radio stations as participation tool.

### **1.5.1 Technological convergence**

Digitisation and the internet are primarily moving media markets, mainly radio (Cordeiro, 2012b). Additionally, mobile phones in technologically advanced countries are changing the essence of radio over the world (Gordon, 2012; Carlsson, 2006; Buckley, 2000). According to Kagiso (2018:03) "African countries struggle to accommodate new or additional radio services through existing analogue technology". However, advances and innovation in broadcasting technology allow broadcasters to expand their services to reach more audiences (Kagiso, 2018). Moreover, radio is changing as a technology, and has changed radio practices while technological convergence on radio also appears to carry the ability of democratising and opening radio to audiences (Moyo, 2012).

The multiplication of radio spaces has been brought by digital technologies such as mobile phones and internet. Increasing convergence between telecommunications and broadcasting on radio implies that there are some fascinating changes with regards to form, content and culture (Moyo, 2012). Furthermore, the internet and convergence of radio offer radio stations a chance to close the breach between producers and listeners in a networked public scope (Benlker, 2006), and provide other medium platform to reach recent and possible audiences (Bosch, 2013). Regardless of the development of radio convergence with digital audio technology, radio remains a significant tool for local influences (Albarran, Anderson, Bejar, Bussart, Daggett & Gibson, 2007).

Radio is perceived as mostly invisible to its audiences basically because it signifies the unseen. However, digital technologies changed radio into a medium that can be seen and heard (Ferguson & Greer, 2017). In overcoming one of the challenges of being the unseen, radio stations present station images and perceptions in a dominated society with several communication channels that consist of social media (Gioia, Hamilton & Patvardhan, 2014). Today's society spend more time on social media sites. Therefore, radio stations' social media presence is vital as it facilitates station visibility and audience participation (Karttunen, 2017). Social media platforms differ in their core content and in users' perceived fulfilments of the network (Ferguson & Greer, 2017).

The incorporation of social media in radio broadcasting may lead to a closer connection with listeners, stronger social funding and a more feeling of regulator (Hsu, Yen & Chang, 2007; Marker, 2007). However, social media platforms functionalities may instil a countless challenge (Freberg, Saling, Vidoloff & Eosco, 2013) because "radio stations need to thoroughly and proactively pay attention to all related user-generated content and how such content is public amongst consumer and suppliers of information" (Veil, Buehner & Palenchar, 2011:11). Currently, radio stations choose a format that will make them stand out to attract only a certain group of people using a variety of filters such as age groups and music genres (Karttune, 2017).

Alhabash and Ma (2017) found that entertainment and ease were the top two motivations for radio stations' usage of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. The optimism regarding radio stations using social media's potential has not fully been extended to rural areas due to the digital divide (Nassanga, Manyozo & Lopes, 2013). Social media is purposively used in radio for several ways, and radio have new content to build on the rise of social media to form as programming (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2012).

### **1.5.2 Participation of audience using social media**

Majority of journalists frequently use social networking sites for publication of news stories, or to improve details outside of the normal news sequence (Bosch, 2010). Some social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are progressively interconnecting with old mainstream outputs. The preceding statement suggests that

news production is occasionally more participatory with news producers, journalists and listeners via social networking sites to distribute updates. Therefore, radio audiences can get more involved in radio through social media, and can engage directly with radio broadcasters, journalists and other listeners (Paine, 2011).

The practice of social networking sites by radio stations, especially community radio stations, has raised a melodramatic transformation in the regular newsroom routine, through journalists' regularly inspection of social networking sites for bulletin updates or breaking updates (Bosch, 2014). Social networking sites show a selective character in terms of amplifying and filtering mainstreamed media content (Mare, 2013). This new phenomenon of intense technological connectivity that has enhanced the mode of communication between media personnel and the public helps community radio stations to fulfil their mandate of engaging with audiences in a participatory way.

The advantage of using social media relates to the proliferation of data sources and the skill for those usually situated as receivers of transformation messages to involve, to request and to produce communications for themselves (Paterson, 2013). The active involvement of listeners in radio programming has been operative in helping them realise their reputation not only as receivers of advance messages, but correspondingly as valued foundations of information (Waningasundara, 1987). Moreover, radio has greater impact on listeners through involving them directly in radio programme production (Salleh, Hassan & Adam, 2009).

Radio stations no longer perceive listeners in the traditional way, where radio audiences are planned around identity, politics or communal social relation, but relatively as based on interacted sociality (Bosch, 2013). Therefore, radio stations use social media as an engagement tool for audiences. Furthermore, Bosch (2013) states that commercial radio stations practice social networking sites to extend their dissemination, involve radio listeners and social media users, and create conversations beyond the airwaves.

Ferguson and Greer (2014) state that Twitter is not accomplishing well in broadening audiences but Lazarsfeld (2011) postulates that a good setting of orientation could help listeners to be equipped and to better comprehend, while listeners informed in

advance about contents of a serious listening programme are more likely to listen (Lazarsfeld, 2011). The microblogging site Twitter has converted one of the most general services used by radio broadcasters to engage with their audience and build communities of listeners (Bonini & Sellas, 2014).

One of the biggest advantages of using Twitter compared to Facebook and Instagram is that, its real time communication where followers can notice a post that needs instant attention resulting fast communication (Karttunen, 2017). However, that is why the researcher selected Twitter amongst other social media platforms that radio stations use to engage with their listeners. Facebook is essentially a channel utilised unidirectional to communicate content, while Twitter is a progressively intuitive platform (De Torres & Otros, 2011).

## **1.6 ROLE OF THEORY IN THE STUDY**

This section describes the theoretical framework that formed the foundation of this study and explain why the selected theories are relevant to the study. The study employed New Media theory and Couldry's Practice theory. Both theories helped to build a foundation for the study and understand some of the key terms. The researcher chose these theories because they establish the relationship between mass media and audience practice or participation.

In South Africa, there were few radio stations with social media accounts over the last few years and these were Metro FM, Radio 702 and other radio stations to name a few that had social media presence (Bosch, 2014). To that extent, while this was the case in Limpopo Province, it seems that this trend has been gaining attraction around the world. Radio stations understand the need for audience engagement, participation and interaction so they are seeking different ways to create such platforms that are immediate (Karttunen, 2017).

### **1.6.1 New media**

Participatory culture is defined as a practice of publishing tools accessible by popular websites such as YouTube, Wikipedia, Facebook and Twitter as converted and revived equation between improved communicative involvement through technology and independent communication and action (Jenkins, 2006). In general terms, it refers

to users and audiences who can participate in media in a variety of ways than they previously could.

It is an emerging culture that absorbs and responds to the explosion of new media technologies that making it possible for average consumers to archive, interpret, appropriate and recirculate media content in powerful new ways. It also focuses on expanding access to new technologies, to foster the skills and cultural knowledge necessary to deploy those tools towards our own ends (Jenkins, 2009: 05).

The statement explains the ability of users in the participation of digital technologies. The introduction of digital technology and different platforms denotes that radio experience changes within the operating representations. Twitter allows listeners to engage on a different and more interactive level and to share content. It only intensifies a condition between more noteworthy cooperative interest through new online innovations and independent communication bypassing traditional chains of command and confinements (Langlois, 2012).

In the context of popular website, Twitter as a phenomenon for this study has increased communication between audience and the radio station. Capricorn FM is using Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience's participation which demonstrates a participatory culture where listeners can use new technologies to engage and share content with the station.

A few researchers (Benkler, 2007: Jenkins, 2006) have echoed some hopeful cases on how the improvement of devices encourage user-generated content that is major to the ascent of another participatory culture, where there is no partition among producer and audiences but instead the rise of publics effectively occupied with making and sharing culture (Langlois, 2012).

The term participatory was made to comprehend and offer concentration to the results of new media. Online participatory media permitted the allowance to convey needs from social, political and economic point of view (Zimmer, 2008). However, this

opportunity includes some significant downfalls as far as further putting people inside systems of observation, marketing and advertising is concerned (Zimmer, 2008).

Communication is a matter of first importance; a human issue and online advances that encourage the creation and sharing culture. This means that internet offers a platform that allows human operators to grow new social acts of communication and ways of voicing themselves to exchange denotations, depictions and information (Langlois, 2012). The use of Twitter by radio stations has created a culture of sharing content between active audience and radio stations. Additionally, communication is an important feature that Capricorn FM values for engagement purposes with their listeners.

With reverence to new media, the basic framework that should be created is not only about outlining the rise of social practice of communication but the adjustment of old and new power relations. The framework will also consider practices of communication that are inalienably techno cultural, human exercises in past communicational conditions are presently continually intervened by programming as the specialist that joins users to hardware as well as to culture (Langlois, 2012). The use of microblogging sites such as Twitter as a communication practice, connect the station and the audience.

New media, according to Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Kelly and Grant (2009), offer the opportunity for a participatory culture, and highlights the transition seen in media production, distribution and use over the last three decades; changes that are technological, cultural, textual and conservative. New media offers audiences a platform to treasure information that was previously inaccessible. Another contributor to new media is digital engagement, which was also significant to this study.

Many radio stations have realised that their stations cannot simply rely on the strength of call-in to sustain the participation, they have therefore started to make use of digital engagement. Digital engagement transforms, organises and creates the opportunity for listeners to interact and engage in a way that no other media platform can. The digital landscape is rapidly evolving, resulting in indefinite and unbalanced environment that brings both exciting opportunities and complex challenges for



organisations that engage with audiences through digital channels such as websites and social media (Carlson, 2017).

Digital engagement requires a commitment to content as a discipline, backed by a technical and operational backbone (Cutten & Venneman, 2014). This backbone enables the rapid creation, delivery and curation of assets, personalized to audience according to needs, activity, behavior and devices. Capricorn FM listeners has variety of choices to decided and choose which devices to tune in and engage with.

There are three fundamental factors that are critical to the success of digital engagement activity: there must be a defined digital audience, an understanding of what constitute engagement needs to be in place and appropriate goals must be set, allowing outcomes to measure organisations to identify whether or not they are succeeding (Prince, 2013). This statement highlights factors of audience engagement in a digital era and how audience actively engage.

In the context of media and communication, convergence is the tendency of separate media technologies, cultural forms, and/or social practices to come together to perform similar functions and make new hybrid media systems (Jean, 2017). In this sense, it is a key driver of economic, technological, and cultural change in the media environment. Convergence, then, is one of the constitutive dynamics of new media (Hartley, Burgess, & Bruns, 2013).

Many media companies recognised the need to be premeditated to exploit the internet and that means they must involve not just the same old media properties and content online, but also new and innovative offerings participatory culture (Jenkins, 2006). The first step towards integrating participatory culture and new media paradigms involves reconsideration of the process of social articulation in the participatory media condition through restored thoughtfulness regarding the regularly powerful arranged conditions that empower them (Langlois, 2012).

Apparently, focusing on organised conditions requires growing the thought of social expression to consolidate the systems of specialised, institutional, commercial and political entertainers that cultivate the material and social condition of new media

(Langlois, 2012). In that sense analysing the organised states of social expressions ought not be decreased to the subject of whether participatory media frameworks permit users to impart yet basically of how online participatory media oblige and deal with the open-endedness of social expression.

Twitter as a new media brings sense to radio stations. It has become a participatory medium that allows communication to express ideas from cultural, political and social issues. Media advances are focal in the improvement of practices of communication that prompts a more extensive comprehension of importance as not just constrained to address of representation and interpretation yet in addition reliant on material factors, for example, methods for expression (Langlois, 2012).

The development of participatory media sites of altered programming programmes articulating conventions in various manners to tailor the representation of information requires an alternate conceptualisation of networks conditions at a specialised level (Langlois, 2012).

The growth of internet service and a wide assortment of small applications, for example, Twitter has changed the internet to operates on a diverse communicative and cultural logics. For example, social media and other internet services make use of a comparable set of conventions but collect them differently to create dissimilar communicative, commercial and noncommercial models.

Consequently, instead of inspecting the web under the supposition that it is comprised of a steady arrangement of conventions, it is more profitable to take a gander at the modularity of protocol that substitutes different social logics (Langlois, 2012). The common feature of all participatory media platforms is that they do not only allow users to express themselves by enabling content transmission but also establish the customised networked conditions within which something could be culturally meaningful and shareable. Moreover, the platforms act as a manager that enables, directs and channels specific flows of communication as well as specific logics of transformation of data into culturally recognisable and valuable signs and symbols.

Social networks such as Facebook offer an outline of dissemination dynamic enacted stages; anyway, the platforms work a progression of separation among users by offering communicational rewards relying upon what the users decides to do (Langlois, 2012). Twitter offers radio stations a platform to communicate, distributing ideas and information to audiences. Radio stations approval for Twitter application and giving third party admission to one's Twitter data, thus consuming greater variety of communicative opportunities that allow participations and engagement.

### **1.6.2 Practice theory**

Innovative Information Communication Technology (ICT) (satellite communications, the computer, the Internet and its various applications, digital technologies, broadband and mobile telephony), together with innovative approaches to regulations and ownership (initiated by economic trends such as marketisation, including the privatization and liberalisations of media markets) have brought about almost an entirely new media landscape (Couldry, 2004).

The theory has the assumption that new media landscape has different regulations and ownership, hence it caters for new media and new society. Characteristics of new media landscape include, new distribution platforms to increase multimedia approach, for example, radio via internet and the current development of high level of interactivity between communicators and listeners (Farrel Lowe & Hujanen, 2003).

Radio is one type of mass media that has developed a new landscape of being able to distribute some of its content through the internet on microblogging sites such as Twitter. Radio uses Twitter to interact with its audiences on a daily base. Practice theory contends that media examination should begin not with media writings or establishments, however with what individuals are essentially doing with media, and what the media are for all intents and purposes doing with individuals over an entire scope of circumstances and context (Couldry, 2004).

In the context of the postmodern and postcolonial paradigms, this theory is closely linked with new emerging debates about practice. The new media and society gave rise to postmodern and postcolonial paradigms. In postmodern paradigm, it is contended that given the qualities of the new society where decent variety and

pluralism are emphasised, and to which the media plays up and have become so large, changed and inescapable can never again be portrayed definitively or exhaustively regarding old hypotheses and ways of thinking (Couldry, 2004).

Old theories predict what the media do to people unlike the new society that have new media and theories that postulates that people have changed their ways around media and are diverse for different media. Postcolonial paradigms attempt to arrange and comprehend mass communication and the media with regards to bigger international accounts of worldwide and social power (Couldry, 2004). The paradigms note that regulated information and hypotheses about issues, for example, race, class, sex, sexuality and the media are or were exposed to powers of expansionism.

Practice theory seeks to focus people's attention on the media as practiced in life, society and the world, and how media as practice (a tradition, habit, custom, routine) broadcasters and organises other human practices and understandings (Couldry, 2004). In the context of the postmodern and postcolonial paradigms, practice theory is closely associated with new developing debates about the practice of media.

The assertions of the theory in hand is how media are practiced in real life by the people whom where considered as passive. The radio station is considered as a practitioner of media because it has an account for microblogging where in most cases it is owned by individuals to connect with friends. In addition, radio can distribute information to active audiences that engage and express their views.

In the context of postmodern and postcolonial paradigm, radio stations have adopted the use of social media microblogging site such as Twitter that provides platform to share content, engage with listeners and get immediate feedback from participating listeners. Twitter account holders instantaneously engage with radio stations and audiences sharing the same interests. Capricorn FM has a Twitter account that allows them to perform different duties for the station and for the listeners. Therefore, Twitter enables audience engagement for the station.

Fourie (2010:180) practice theory is "enshrined in the latest media developments that deviate from traditional media debates about effects of media, political economy, ideological nature of media, and the passive audience". Observing at how almost

every radio station owns a social networking site account, there is a realisation that radio is using social networking sites in a different context than people. This applies to why radio stations are using social networking sites.

In the light of practice theory, the ideological nature of media and passive audiences do not exist, only those who practice the media have changed the shift of the effects of media, meaning they would only have the effects of practicing media, which means they would only have the effects of practicing media. Radio stations are now able to communicate with listeners, interact and exchange ideas, opinions and information on social media like Twitter (Bosch, 2013). Radio stations, through the use of social networking sites like Twitter, now have the platform to create audience's participation, therefore communicating with their audience and learning about the content that excites users or influences participation.

Practice Theory needs to answer the following questions:

- What does it mean, or what is it like, to live in a media saturated world?
- What does it mean to live in a society dominated by large-scale media institutions?
- What does the idea mediation really mean?
- What is the role and product of media practice in ordering other practices across the social world? (Couldry, 2004; as cited in Fourie, 2010:181).

This theory compresses what people are doing with media in their everyday lives. However, for the purpose of this theoretical framework, Capricorn FM was considered as an individual practicing media by having a social media account to connect with its listeners. Capricorn FM connects with its audiences and discusses different topics that are not controlled by any regulation or guidelines on how to discuss their content posted on the account.

Couldry (2004) also grants a particularly useful typology of media practices correlated to the internet: searching and searching enabling, showing and being shown, presenting, archiving, keeping with news, commentary, screening out and keeping all channels open. Social media differs from traditional media as users are not just

receivers but can also share and create content, comment on it and, interact with each other. It is also easy to use and cost free.

Twitter is one of the most popular used social media by radio stations. However, Couldry's (2004) states that work starts to open the chance of exchange among humanism and media studies; however, those in media studies must keep on separating the unique properties of media from other social domains to connect meaningfully with commitments made with social humanism.

Practice theory suggests another paradigm called cultural system, which suggests a new shift of media research that exposed people's focus broader to take a whole variety of practices in which media consumption and media interrelated talk is entrenched, including practice of avoiding media inputs (Couldy, 2004). However, such practices may not be part of what generally refer to by media culture but as practices orientated to media.

One of the most known general shifts of media are convergence. Convergence is a dynamic of change. In the most neutral and general sense, it describes the tendency for separate streams or pathways (matter of technologies) to come together (Burgess, 2017). Twitter and radio have come together as a new shift of technology. This is a new practice in media that highlight how the practice of media influenced by new technology has chaged.

Swidler (2001) as cited in Couldry (2004) shares a different view explaining that the point of the practice hypothesis is to supplant a more established thought of culture with inner thoughts or implications with an alternate investigation of culture as far as two kinds of public observable processes. The estimation of training hypothesis is to pose inquiries about what individuals are doing and how to categorise what they are doing, dodging the disciplinary or different predispositions that would naturally peruse their activities.

## **1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This section comprehends the research methodology, research methods, sampling, data collection techniques, data analysis technique and quality criteria of the study.

### **1.7.1 Methodology**

The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The researcher selected these methodologies in order to induce from one's strengths, and to minimise the weakness of the other. These research approaches also projected a single study that answered questions about the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of radio using Twitter from the point of estimation of employees of Capricorn FM who are active on Twitter.

The researcher used concurrent triangulation method, where quantitative and qualitative data were gathered and analysed simultaneously (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005). Triangulation method is a one segment design in which the researcher implements quantitative and qualitative methods at the equal timeframe in equivalent weightiness. Additionally, it has been considered a concurrent triangulation design for its single effectiveness (Hansen, Creswell, Plano Clark & Guttment, 2003).

The researcher selected this method to be able to collect data as priority was given to both types of data, that is to be selected by the radio station and Twitter as an engagement strategy used to create listeners' participation, and analysed the data using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Using the qualitative research methodology, the researcher asked participants questions to acquire in-depth information. A qualitative study seeks to capture in-depth information of aspects being researched (Babbie, 2008). It aims to answer the question of why things are the way they are and how they came to be that way.

The study employed the phenomenological research approach, which aims at clarifying people's lived situations in everyday life (Smith, 2015). Phenomenological approach focuses on the participant's perception of the event and tries to answer the question of experience (Williams, 2007). In the current study, the phenomenon was Twitter as an engagement strategy for listeners' participation as used by a radio station. Employees included those with experiences of posting on the Twitter account of the station.

### **1.7.2 Research design**

The study has employed exploratory and descriptive research designs within qualitative and quantitative research methodologies respectively (mixed method). The study explored how Twitter is used as an engagement strategy for listeners' participation on Capricorn FM and it also explained how the station integrated Twitter into their programmes.

The exploratory design is associated to phenomenology which focuses on qualitative investigations addressing a phenomenon particularly in the field of social sciences (Goddard & Melville, 2004). Thus, this study examined the use of Twitter as an engagement strategy for listeners participation in a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM.

The study employed descriptive research, which involves identification of characteristics of a phenomenon based on the investigation of correlational between two phenomena (Williams, 2007). The researcher used the approach to determine the correlation between radio and Twitter. The researcher also identified features of a radio station using Twitter for listeners' participation and outlined how Twitter was featured in the radio stations' programmes.

### **1.7.3 Population and sampling**

Primarily, it is significant to define population to describe how a sample of this study was selected. Population is a collection or class of themes, variables, perceptions or phenomena. A sample is a subset of the population which is illustrative of the entire population (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The population of this study comprised 42 Capricorn FM employees. In addition, 81080 Capricorn FM's Twitter feeds were part of the population. The researcher selected Capricorn FM as it is the first and only commercial radio station in Limpopo Province.

The researcher selected the non-probability sampling procedure which does not allow the guideline of measured probability (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). Non-probability sampling has different sampling methods, including purposive sampling, which allows one to purposively choose the research elements grounded on a list of characteristics (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The researcher selected purposive



sampling method to be able to purposively select relevant sample for the study and it was applicable to both research methods.

The researcher selected this method because not all Capricorn FM staff produce the content on social networking sites of the station and deal with the strategy of the radio station. Only employees of Capricorn FM who are dedicated to dealing with the radio station's social media account and updating social media sites were relevant to the study. The researcher purposively used employees responsible for Twitter account of the radio station.

Capricorn FM's Morning Drive and Afternoon Drive Twitter feeds from March 2020 to June 2019 were purposively selected for this study. The researcher selected both shows as they were the most listened to and had huge listeners participation than other shows of the radio station.

#### **1.7.4 Data Collection method**

The researcher collected qualitative data using semi-structured interviews, which are commonly defined as guided interviews that matters are predetermined to new questions and perceptions that arise from discussions and visual analysis (De Stage, Holloway, Mullins, Nchabeleng & Ward, 2002). The researcher asked questions and follow-up questions that participants have created when answering the interviewer's (researcher's) questions.

The researcher quantitatively deployed the content analysis method as a data collection method. Content analysis can be used to locate and measure patterns of what the media produce. It also provides a systematic way of making inferences about patterns of images, printed words or verbal data in order to describe and quantify their meanings and to interpret their consequences (O' Shaughnessy, Stadler & Casey, 2016). Content analysis has helped to find patterns of how the Capricorn FM radio station tweets and describes the meanings of the station's tweets.

Content analysis can be used by media and communication scholars to locate and measure patterns in what the media actually produce (O' Shaughnessy, Stadler & Casey, 2016) by investigating representative content such as words that aspect in, for example, newspaper articles, explanations on a blog and political dialogues (Du Plooy-

Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The researcher collected the tweets from the Capricorn FM's Twitter account and made interpretations of the tweets.

### **1.7.5 Data analysis methods**

This study's research design was concurrent triangulation design (Creswell, 2006), which allowed the researcher to analyse both qualitative and quantitative data. For qualitative data, the researcher deployed the thematic analysis method to analyse data. Thematic analysis can be used to identify data themes that had not been identified prior to conducting research (Ezzy, 2002).

The researcher selected the thematic data analysis technique to establish and identify many aspects on the role of Twitter as an engagement strategy for listener participation. Thematic analysis has been defined as a technique of classifying and writing themes within data (Williamson & Wittakor, 2014). Interview data were analysed thematically by grouping them in order to identify repeated aspects that helped in developing new themes.

Thematic analysis requires a dialect between ideas and data. The researcher developed ideas, that shaped and tested data before analysis. When the researcher had gathered data, the first step was to find focus from the data, manage, read and annotate, create categories, link the data and lastly produced themes.

Quantitatively data were analysed using SPSS. It is defined as an inclusive software package that permits individual to import or enter data straight into spreadsheet environment, use and analyse data and generate tables of graphic statistics to include a variety of graphs and charts (Rovial, Barker & Ponton, 2013). The researcher used SPSS Windows-Based computer to analyse tweets. The researcher selected this analysing method to determine how often the station tweets, the type of content the station posts, how often it uses Twitter to engage with listeners and how listeners engage with the station on Twitter.

The researcher generated descriptive statistics to present, summarise and describe quantitative data in a manageable way (Black, 1999). However, descriptive statistics are frequently used to show data in a sensible technique using graphs, charts and percentiles (Taylor, 2005). With the use of SPSS, the researcher gathered the data

from the station's Twitter account and arranged data into the software. The SPSS produced results that the researcher presented and interpreted.

#### **1.7.6 Quality Criteria**

Since this was a mixed method research, the researcher focused on the quality criteria of both qualitative and quantitative research. To maintain quality in the study, qualitative research requires credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Roller & Paul, 2015). The criteria for qualitative research are as follows:

**Credibility** – this has to do with precision with which the researcher interprets data provided by the participants (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The study identified, established and described the subject of the study accurately.

**Transferability** – this narrates a different external validity or generalisability, in which the problem of representing applicability of one set of results to another framework rests more with the investigator who would make the transfer (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport, 2005). To confirm transferability the outcomes of the study was related to comparable situations or entities.

**Reliability** – this refers to the quality of the method of incorporation that takes place between data collection method, data analysis and the theory created from the information (Shenton, 2004; Collins & Hussey, 2003). The researcher attempted to account for varying settings in the phenomenon selected for the current study as well as variations in the design created by gradually refined consideration of setting.

**Confirmability** – it refers to the application of the same reliability audit to inspect evidence in the data that purportedly supports the researcher's results, interpretations and recommendations (Roller & Paul, 2015). To ensure confirmability the researcher documented the procedure for the inspection and re-inspection of data throughout the study.

Quantitative research requires internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity for the measurability of the results (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

Internal validity – Gay and Airasian (2000: 345) define internal validity as "the condition that detected differences on the dependent variable and a direct outcome of the self-regulating variable, not some other variable". This was achieved by creating no errors in the design of the study even though any study has small errors.

External validity – Johnson and Christensen (2000: 200) define external validity as "the level to which the outcomes of a study can be generalised to and across populations, backgrounds, and periods". In the current study, this was achieved by confirming the extent to which the method designated reflect the reality of the concept that is being investigated. It was be achieved by confirming that should there be another research using the same sample the results will be the same as that of the current study.

Reliability – this refers to the value of the measurement method, suggesting that the similar data would have been collected each time in repetitive observations of the same phenomena (Babbie, 2010). Reliability was achieved through consistency, where the researcher involved different methods and individual interviews.

Objectivity – The value drawn from positivism that, as far as likely, researchers should remain separated from what they study. Therefore, results depend on the nature of what was studied rather than on the behavior, beliefs and ethics of the researcher (Payne & Payne, 2005). The researcher achieved this by not using their opinion and remained unattached to the study.

## **1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

Most institutions require that firm ethical considerations be obeyed to when researchers conduct studies, especially when the study includes human beings (Du Plooy- Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). The researcher sought and acquired ethical clearance from The Research Ethics Committee (TREC) and was granted the approval to conduct the study with the selected participants.

Ethics provide us with procedures in terms of what can be considered proper or/and improper behaviour, which refers to approaches, procedures or perceptions that can help the researcher on how to act, analyse complex issues and what is considered acceptable issues.

Ethical considerations involved voluntary participation, informed consent, no harm to participants, no deception, informing the participants about the purpose of the study, anonymity and confidentiality (Resnek, 2011). The study used the stated ethical considerations as they are applicable for the study since the researcher relied on people for data. The researcher informed the research participants about the purpose of the study in good time as well as collected and analysed data honestly and without bias, to ensure the validity and reliability of findings.

### **1.9 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 2**

This chapter has introduced the study '*The use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners: A case study of a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM*'. The chapter motivated why the topic was chosen for study and formed. The study intended to evaluate the use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners on Capricorn FM, this too was clearly elucidated in the chapter. Additionally, the study introduced and discussed the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter two focuses on the literature review which entails literature of scholars related to the topic.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reviews the literature of existing studies regarding the use of Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience's participation in radio. This section assisted the researcher to know if social media used by radio station as a participating tool has been researched before.

### **2.2 OVERVIEW OF EXISTING LITERATURE**

Literature review is an essential feature of any academic project and it effectively creates a firm foundation for advancing knowledge (Webster & Watson, 2002).

The radio industry is currently striving to become a more Web-based and multimedia organisation framed by interchangeable elements, while the intangibility of radio content places the radio broadcasting industry within the social industries system, which depends upon defining distinct audiences (Cordeiro, 2012a)

This part of the chapter reviews literature related to the study articulating, an understanding around the research problem. Moreover, profound studying issues and benefits related to the use of new digital technologies in creating platforms for audience engagement in radio are explored. This part of the chapter examines the views and arguments by scholars and researchers of radio and social media.

#### **2.2.1 Radio and new media technology**

Radio has advanced from its initial type of family-style amusement whereby families used to listen together at home to a portable and individual partner (Karttunen, 2017). Radio is currently a virtual, organise, versatile space while simultaneously staying a physical space when conceptualised in its studio group (Moyo, 2012). Radio has become more technical as rules are being rewritten and its tradition is changing with new technology.

Radio is presently considered more open, scattered, through informal spaces of substance creation (Moyo, 2012). New media innovation has brought about a medium that is engaging, allowing listeners to choose what to tune in to and how and where to get to it. Digitalisation and the internet are essentially changing media markets, especially to radio (Cordeiro, 2012b).

Additionally, mobile phones are changing the essence of radio over the world, particularly in the mechanically propelled countries (Gordon, 2012; Carlsson, 2006; Buckley, 2000), while most African countries are still developing and adapting to the new technologies.

According to Kagiso (2018) African countries struggle to accommodate new or additional radio services through existing analogue technologies. Most researchers such (Moyo, 2012; Bosch, 2013; Kurttunen, 2017; & Rosale, 2013) argue that new media are the arrival of social, technological, and cultural change in radio. However, advances and innovation in broadcasting technology allow broadcasters to expand their services and reach more audiences (Kagiso, 2018). Advanced technologies are changing the culture of radio on how they reach and communicate with audiences.

However, radio is dynamic as a technology and radio practices have changed while technological convergence additionally seems to convey the guarantee of democratising and opening radio to audiences (Moyo, 2012). These new technology changes have been celebrated for offering media consumers more choice to participate and control content, thus creating more opportunity for activity (Metzger & Flanagin 2002). Radio with new technology offers audiences a platform to choose what to tune into and, participate when content is relatable.

Digital platforms directly and indirectly influence radio practices in terms of production, dissemination and subsequent consumption of radio content (Moyo, 2012), that is available on the computer, mobile phone, and other digital devices (Cordeiro, 2012b). Radio has become more available than before compared to other different gadgets.

Moreover, digital platforms take a social, economic and geographical character that create an information and communication platform to access to radio and other media through variety of advanced platforms. Radio content is currently created, made available on the web and caused accessible through streaming, to download and digital broadcast (Cordeiro, 2012a).

New technology has created a radio that is multimedia, multi-platform and convergent. Moreover, that has a clear sound and picture, it is more intuitive, participatory, shareable, repeatable, reproducible, accessible, adjustable, unpredictable, literary

and on request (Moyo, 2012). Radio listeners now have access to an increasing amount of content. Additionally, radio listeners have access to news, information and entertainment in different platforms and formats that are more attractive to their needs.

More prominent openness of radio to audience, therefore, means that digitisation and convergence can conceivably make radio more participative inside and across social barriers (Moyo, 2012). This means radio is becoming more participative, accessible in time and place (Rosale, 2012), vertically or horizontally within and across social classes (Moyo, 2012). Moreover, most radio stations are using new media in the creation and dispersal of content, although to varying degrees and at various stages of the production chain.

New media in this manner offer the double opportunities and cut-off points to the association of audience in content creation invention. Radio content is not rigidly tied to frequency waves as this radical change by new media technology meaning that radio content can without much of a stretch be disseminated through a pyramid on platforms like podcast, webcasts, websites and social media.

Since the digital turn in radio audience are not, at this point alone and imperceptible yet associated with numerous others in an assortment of groups of friends with broadened arrangement of social and cultural capital (Bonini, Caliandro & Alessandra, 2016). Researchers Greer and Ferguson (2018) agree with this notion as they state that digital technology has enable radio stations to interconnect visually, audibly and with greater frequency.

Radio as an old medium with a notion that it is the theatre of mind that can produce pictures in the minds of audiences as well as the use of individual receivers' mind (Verma, 2012). Audiences were creating their own image of their presenter through their mind and how the studio looked like. Arguably digital media have certainly changed the notion of theatre of the mind, as people are increasingly visible on radio (Moyo, 2012).

Radio is less restricted to the theatre of mind (Patnode, 2011), claiming new advanced communication has given site visitors the visual stage whereupon station delineates themselves, their audience and their communities (Greer & Ferguson, 2018).



Moreover, the ascent of internet and mobile phones has allowed old media organisations to change themselves from top-down, single direction media institution into participatory organisations that more regularly interact with their audiences via new media (Willems, 2013).

Radio has become more interactive and involved with audiences. With new media technologies and mobile phone radio has also become a two-way communication. Greer and Ferguson add that radio stations can now display pictures of talents in the studio at a remote broadcast to enable listeners to see broadcasters doing what they frequently hear on radio (Greer & Ferguson, 2018). Radio uses mobile phones to take pictures and use the internet to upload them on different platforms where they interact with their audiences.

Radio stations post pictures about themselves, yet additionally highlighted pictures of patrons and commercials that outline the association among the station and its supportive network (Greer & Ferguson, 2018). This is because visuals have the capacity to enhance reality (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001). With that in mind, new technologies have changed how radio used to be perceived as a state of mind as it has now become a visible medium.

Ferguson and Greer (2017) hold the same idea that radio has for some time been seen as basically concealed to its audience to a great extent since it speaks to the inconspicuous; anyway, advanced innovations have changed radio into a medium that can be seen and heard. Overcoming the perception of being the unseen medium, radio stations have included station picture and discernment in a general public ruled by numerous communication vehicles that presently incorporate social media (Gioia, Hamilton & Patvardhan, 2014).

Nevertheless, it is important to note that through these so-called technologies, radio has transformed and changed its culture and characteristics. Radio is now more accessible, participative and gives audiences the opportunities that were previously unobtainable. The general public has the opportunity to participate in a two-way communication platform, to have a clear sound and access to the picture of radio

presenters and the studio. And lastly, the opportunity to see faces behind the voices with new media technologies.

### **2.2.2 Participation of audience using new media**

Mainstream media such as radio are exploring new ways of communicating with their audience (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). New media are also seen as extending informative radio spaces and changing the idea of audience engagement (Chiumbu & Ligaga, 2013). Radio and new media are creating a participative feature for audience.

Moreover, radio through new media has created more channels for audiences to communicate, participate and engage with radio stations. Audience participation on radio programmes is designed by various variables that can be comprehensively alluded to as hierarchical and institutional displaying (Moyo, 2012).

Willems (2013) conducted a study on the role of new media in audience participation through the perception of radio producer based in six radio stations in Zambia. The study aimed to offer a basic way to deal with thoughts of participation, which inspects the particular ground-breaking role of new media in procedure of support, the agency of common individuals adding to radio production, the role and enthusiasm of radio producers who are welcoming and directing this participation.

The study engrossed on six radio stations: one public broadcaster, the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Phoenix, Q FM and Flava FM, Radio Icengelo and Sky FM. Zambian radio stations have a rich history of involving listeners in their content production (Willems, 2013).

Zambian listeners have continuously been enthusiastically interrelating with stations they listening to (Spitulnik, 2009). The crucial question that the study attempted to answer was in what kind of procedure audience participate when they bring in, send an instant message or leave a comment on a radio broadcast's Facebook fan page. Although the current study attempted to answer how social media is used as a participation tool for audience participation.

Willems (2013) has discussed that Zambian listeners participate by tuning in as well as by talking to or like the radio. This is confirmed by how various expressions much of the time begat by radio presenters have been fused into ordinary language. Another

measure in which listeners would participate in radio content productions was through letters, broadcast personal messages and phone-in programme.

The study stands the ground that Zambia radio broadcasts have eagerly incorporated new media into their promoting and income producing procedures. In Zambia new media such as social media is related with youthful, working class audience who approach web through their mobile phones. Listeners participate in the creation of radio content by texting or leaving comment on Facebook (Willems, 2013).

Findings from the study show evidently that new media have moved the level of influence between radio producers and audience for the audience. The internet has made it simpler for audience to rapidly illuminate themselves about specific issues which has squeezed radio producers to investigate their stories more completely and have improved the nature of audience interest.

Additionally, because of the more noteworthy availability of mobile phones, a more prominent extent of Zambians is currently ready to add to content creation, either by messaging data on another story, by contributing their viewpoint in a live conversation programme or a leaving comment on Facebook (Willems, 2013).

Moreover, new media are interactive, the study exhibited that there is nothing innately participatory in the utilisation of internet and mobile phones by radio broadcasts since audience information directed by means of these media can be easily censored as antiquated letters from listeners. The promptness and immediacy of mobile phone calls have ostensibly enabled audience more as commitment to live telephone in programmes cannot be handily overseen by producers as SMS or Facebook posts.

New media therefore offer both opportunities and restrict the inclusion of audience in content creation; Carpentier (2009) shares the same idea that new media have changed and enabled audiences' participation. Audience contribution to content production is an opportunity created by new media technologies.

New media, for example, internet and mobile phones have been praised as exceptionally intelligent media that have empowered audience to take part in the creation of content; this has veiled how old media, for example, radio have put forth attempts to include their audience in programming (Carpentier, 2009).

New media through radio have shaped a new platform for participation where feedback is provided to audiences and radio producers. This can build audience loyalty and attract more audiences. Additionally, new media create a rapport between radio and its audiences where audiences are offered an opportunity to be part of the production and distribution of the content.

### **2.2.3 Technological convergence**

Historically the emerging of entirely new media technologies have always been joined by overstated celebration about their effect on society and its establishments (Winston, 1998). New media have not just offered more extensive exhibit of chances to audience and consumers to take an interest in their own media creation (Paterson & Domingo, 2011) but have also offered radio an opportunity to be a two-way communication channel with audiences to engage.

In general, the utilisation of new media has prompted another narrating method that connects with the audience in more traversable manners (Pavlik, 2001). New media have created radio as a medium that is open, have audiences that are more advanced and participative. Technological convergence on radio with internet and mobile phones have possibly multiplied, pluralised radio spaces as radio convergence and opened radio audience (Moyo, 2012).

Radio convergence refers to the assembly of once in the past unmistakable content conveyance platforms, for example, sound, video and text to shape, yet hearty multivocal radio medium (Kalodzy, 2006; Jenkins, 2006). Assembly is a helpful idea to draw in with the coming together of media advancements, practices and spaces such as radio where communication and feedback are essential.

Radio combination results from elements in innovation, cooperative energies of media, registering and broadcast communications, increasing the value of existing procedures and making new ones (Cordeiro, 2012b). Advanced turn and radio intermingling can be hazy, and they interrelate, anyway computerised turn in radio alludes to a paradigmatic move from analogue to twofold types of representation (Moyo, 2012).

The growing convergence between telecommunications and, broadcasting in radio means that there are some exciting changes in procedure, contents and culture (Moyo, 2012). Furthermore, the convergence of radio and the internet is exciting in that it offers radio stations the opportunity to close the gaps amongst producers and listeners in the networked public sphere (Benkler, 2006); and provides an additional medium through which to influence existing and possible audiences.

Notwithstanding the emergence of radio convergence and digital audio technologies radio is still a significant tool for local connections (Albarran, Anderson, Bejar, Bussart, Daggett, Gibson & Way, 2007). In simple terms, it means that even though new media has changed radio in most aspects, radio remains a communication tool for information.

Convergence of radio and the internet have offered exciting opportunities to radio stations to close the gap between producer and consumer in the networked public sphere (Benkler, 2006), as well as offering an additional medium through which to reach existing and possible audiences (Bosch, 2014). Radio convergence has brought different features that affect each department of the radio station and operation from producers to listeners.

Some of the features brought about by convergence have involved discussion groups, blogs and opportunities (Boczkoowski, 1999; Schultz, 2000). Features such as discussion groups and, blogs enable radio journalist to interact with their listeners; while readers of radio Web sites and social media outlets enable journalists and audiences to exchange their opinions among themselves (Al-Rawi, 2016).

With the convergence of radio news are perused and shared considerably more than previously, as it has become a social experience (Redden & Witschge, 2012). Radio intermingling has made radio content compressible, storable, networkable and fluid since it would now be able to stream consistently across various media. Audiences also form part of the production as radio convergence enables an opportunity for them to distribute and share content with radio.

In a recent study conducted in Southern Africa on radio convergence by Moyo (2011) casing four countries, the practice of digital media by radio and its public was

practically high in the region. In the countries the latter study (Moyo, 2011) in South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, the take-up and utilisation of the internet and mobile phones by radio was at any rate on a basic level, making the foundation more open through the different digital foundation of Webcasting, social media, podcasting and versatile streaming.

The practices of new online and digital media platforms by radio stations have changed, opened and democratised radio as an institution and extended spaces for audience participation or interaction. Some of the changes captivating on radio cannot be completely said to be driven by technological convergence of radio but they are also a product of a dialect process where radio is also actively patter into autonomous mobile and online social practices by audience (Moyo, 2012).

A good example of changes in radio could be how texting and sending of SMSs by audiences and it could show how radio has mainstreamed public mobile cultures in its content production, dissemination and consumption practices. Also, digital platforms have shifted radio from being a momentary medium to a medium that audiences can pause, store, recover and distribute at their own convenience.

The emerging trend across different countries from different articles is that there is a relatively high uptake of the internet and the mobile phone's interactive platforms to produce and disseminate news and current affairs content (Moyo, 2012). Radio provides content to audiences via internet and mobile phones which are huge platform to consume, communicate and engage with the content.

Online forms of communicative engagement have simplified ideas of cooperative and shared communication in traditional media organisations (Bosch, 2014). Additionally, internet plays a vital character in the preparations of news stories on mobile phones gathering information (Moyo, 2012). Journalists and producers can have information disseminated at the tips of their hands while audiences can have access to information easily.

Rosale (2013) examined the different ways in which the FM bandwidth radio has incorporated mobile technology and use it as fragment of its programming. Radio stations such as Kiss FM and Virgin Radio FM were specifically selected to examine

on their uses of mobile technology in their morning drive shows (Rosale, 2013). The goal was to describe and observe some of the scopes of participation and audience engagement using technology in radio broadcast of Kiss FM and Virgin Radio FM.

The stations deployed the practice of mobile technology and social media on several facades through their live shows, the web, mobile applications and through networking sites involving primarily of Facebook and Twitter (Rosale, 2013). Mobile technology provides options for listeners to follow and listen to programmes wherever and everywhere using wireless technology, accessing the websites in a mobile friendly format.

Twitter as one of the social networking sites used by radio stations, listeners are normally asked to follow the station's account where they can send and receive messages through their mobile device (Rosale, 2013). Both Kiss FM and Virgin Radio FM radio stations have active Facebook with varieties of information, promotions, programmes, events, sample music and photos of artists. The page allows students to like and be connected to receive endless updates on the listener's Facebook main page.

The current study selected Capricorn FM, the radio station that has a Twitter account used to disseminate information and news to listeners. The station has a podcast that provide listeners an opportunity to catch up on programmes anywhere. This is all made possible by the technological convergence that Capricorn FM have access to. Since the radio station has access to mobile technology, listeners are able to engage and disseminate content from the station.

### **3.2.4 Radio converged listeners**

Radio as a medium has an everyday life where listeners spend more time-consuming media in digital forms (Cordeiro, 2012b) and how radio has changed for the past years has led researchers to believe that there are different listeners. Listeners have become increasingly profitable, and this efficiency comprises of both age of one's own content and the flow of media content (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013).

Furthermore, Papacharissi and Mendelson (2011) add that social networking sites in a converged environment such as radio being converged allow listeners to serve both

as consumers and producers of media. Listeners are now integrating the audios, that there are those who listen to radio traditionally through FM broadcast and those who stream online and interact on social networking sites.

Additionally, listeners are discovering radio websites, engaging actively by creating and sharing content in the social framework of radio station websites (Slot & Frissen, 2007). Radio no longer has listeners but online listeners (Cordeiro, 2011a). Online listeners are always actively looking for content that correspond with their online requirements (Bakker & Sadaba, 2008). Cordeiro (2011b) considers online listeners as those who primarily use internet-based technologies to listen to radio, in most cases comparatively expert with technology and are thorough web users.

Online listeners are active members of social networking sites (Cordeiro, 2009; Codeiro, 2011b). They are mostly the followers of technology, they listen to radio for comfort and participate in social networks activities of the radio stations (Cordeiro, 2009). This suggests that listeners that are active on online technologies such as social media are most likely to be online listeners and converged. Through the internet listeners can stream online and have access to social media content disseminated by a radio station. Listeners who engage with the station on social media are likely to stream online to listen to radio.

### **2.2.5 Radio and social media**

Today radio broadcasts attempt to stand apart from one another by picking a platform that pulls in just certain group of individuals, for example, unique age group or audience of certain music classification (Karttunen, 2017). Furthermore, radio must compete with other media sectors as new types of media platforms and entertainment increasingly springing up and this informs if the radio is dying.

One of the good reasons to save radio from dying like other customary media is to offer audience and give them break from decision making (Kopp, 2016). Another bit of leeway is that sound is a ground-breaking medium (Karttunen, 2017). However, even with different formats and evolution that changes radio and its tradition, radio is still listened to, because it has been able to offer interesting content (Murmman, 2013).



One of the evolutions in radio industry is social media. In line with that a study of, Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson and Seymour (2011) notes that social media is key for the radio industry revolution. Social media have been “progressively utilised by radio broadcasters as a chance to engage with their audience and building networks of audience” (Bonini & Sellas, 2014: 126).

The incorporation of social media in radio broadcasting may lead to closer connection with listeners, stronger social support and a greater feeling of control (Hsu, Yen & Chang, 2007). Additionally, social media have scooped conventional media in breaking news and standardised journalists utilise these informal communities to issue reports or to add subtleties to outside (Bosch, 2010).

Similarly, the use of social media in radio will have drastic changes in how news is gathered and, how they communicate with listeners and programmes. Meijer and Kormelink (2015) add that radio stations are involved more than ever before on social media platforms and they use them as an opportunity to market and distribute their content.

Social media extends public participation to great masses (Arvidsson, Caliandro, Airoidi & Barina, 2015). Studies on social media and radio have in general spotlight on experts who are utilising emerging communication innovations (Lasora, Lewis & Holton, 2012) and prominent journalist via web-based networking media (Hermida, Lewis & Zamith, 2014). However, there are fewer studies on how social media are integrated into radio stations programmes and how they are changing the operations of radio.

Nevertheless, the functionalities of social media platforms may pose a great challenge (Freberg, Saling, Vidoloff & Eosco, 2013) because radio stations need to closely and proactively monitor all related user-generated content and how such content is shared amongst consumers and contributors of information (Veil, Buehner & Palenchar, 2011). Additionally, the integration of social media in radio production and interaction routines make the immaterial capital data created by networked listeners become public and tangible (Bonini, Caliandro & Alessandra, 2016).

Today, radio stations attempt to stand out by selecting a format or trend that appeals only a positive group of people using a variety of filters like age groups and music genre (Karttune, 2017). However, by standing out a radio station still must keep listeners glued to their station and not neglect their loyal and target audience. Yet radio is doing statistically approximately as well previously (Murmman, 2013; Barboda, 2014).

Therefore, radio stations have developed multimedia content, storing and sharing online content such as videos, audio archives and pictures, incorporating weblogs, photoblogs, podcasts, videocasts, wikis in their websites with connected sharing platforms, such as social media (Cordeiro, 2012a). Such multimedia can attract audiences when available on different social media platforms and can only be shared when radio stations have active operating social networking sites.

Pavlik (2001) adds that many radio stations offer hyperlinks on their websites and social media channels. Today's society spends more time on social media sites therefore, radio stations' social media presence is vital as it creates station visibility and audience participation (Karttunen, 2017). Furthermore, listeners are connected to the online profile of a radio programme and are longer undistinguishable or private and similarly for their opinions and emotions.

Hence, radio has changed from a traditional method of one-way communication strategy to a method that allows listeners to interact with their content (Al-Rawi, 2016), listeners to customise online platforms to their own preferences (Chung, 2008; Chung & Yoo, 2008), and sometimes airing readers' comments (McElroy, 2013). This created a two-way communication where listeners can interact with their favourite programmes, interact with news and other content shared on social media or Websites.

Similarly, the increased prevalence of the mobile phones has changed the practice of news gathering (Bosh, 2014). Journalists can transform the news frame to accentuate broader social and political themes on social media (Parvlik, 2001). However, the use of social media content is more likely to be effective when a target audience is highly engaged (Warwick, 2013).

Furthermore, journalists can post about other topics and stories by which to generate leads and more sources for stories and to keep interaction with their respective listeners on social media (Greer & Ferguson, 2018). This has allowed journalists to have access to news leads, to gather news, to disseminate news easily and to create discussion to engage with listeners to hear their views.

Unique tendencies that a radio station should adopt to stay connected in today's digital era are cross media publishing. Cross media is defined as including more than one form of public communication such as radio, television, the internet and the newspaper (Cambridge, 2017). A good illustration of cross media is when a radio station distributes content or interacts with its audience on different social media platforms providing them with content or when radio station uses audio podcast and websites to disseminate the same content as the one on their programmes.

There is another word which is normally mistaken for cross media but has a different meaning even though it correlates. Transmedia storytelling – a term used in similar context that practices description to draw together the different channels and platforms (Rowless, 2014). In simple terms it means that a radio station can tell a single story across multiple platforms and formats using digital technologies.

The content of the story can moreover be independent from each other or be interrelated to complement each other (Karttunen, 2017). Channels such as social media and audio streaming are used by radio stations to tell a story, complement each other and disseminate information for audiences. Using multiple platforms also gives the radio station more prominence (Kopp, 2016). This is why it is important for radio stations to have different platforms to communicate and be more involved with their audiences.

Traditional media are adopting new technologies like social media to communicate with listeners. Generally, radio stations are now more involved than before with social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter as they provide an opportunity to promote and dispense radio content (Hermida, Fletcher, Korell & Logan, 2012). Radio

is adopting social media at a rapid rate to communicate and to be involved with their listeners.

Over the last decade, social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter have been growing significantly and millions of people have integrated these platforms into their daily lives (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). Furthermore, radio has integrated the use of social networking sites and extended the possibilities for audience participation (Shaw, 2010).

A superior comprehension of the elements and ramifications of social network sites may fill in as key information for the public broadcasting sector, for example, radio, to coordinate these new platforms and in this manner legitimise their administrations (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). Social networking in radio has become a way to engage with listeners, understand the needs of listeners and know their values and beliefs. It is also a way for the radio station to receive feedback about their content, how the radio station meets or not meet the needs of listeners and enrich their experience.

A research comparing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat initiates that entertainment and convenience were the top two motivations for using each platform in radio (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). Another research by (Waterloo, Baumgartner, Peter & Valkenburg, 2017) found that social media users rated the relevance of expressing positive or negative emotions differed by platforms, with Instagram and Facebook users perceiving the network as more appropriate for positive emotions related to Twitter.

Furthermore, Twitter is viewed as having more informational content while Instagram is seen as personal and social in nature (Greer & Ferguson, 2018). Out of all the three social networking sites, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, radio has seen the appropriateness of Twitter more than the others. With the use of new technologies and mobile phones it has become easier for radio stations and journalists to utilise social media in their programmes or news gathering.

There has been growth in radio stations utilising social media for communication, to involving listeners in discussions and for participation. Social media have changed how journalists gather news stories, to tell stories and disseminate information.

Furthermore, social media have allowed radio stations to tell stories on a different platform complementing their programmes.

### **2.2.6 Participation of audience using social media**

Radio stations have always found a way to interact or allow audience to participate. In the first year of broadcasting, audiences only started participated with radio station via mails and phone calls (Karttunen, 2017). As the years passed new technical developments such as text messages, email and web pages provided radio with new contact approaches to offer for their listeners (Karttunen, 2017).

With recent developments, interactivity of radio stations and audiences has increased by the invention of social media. Radio stations offer different kinds of contacting options for audience participation but the format that the radio station offers to the audiences should have an influence on the participation. This can be determined by, for instance, race, age and location.

Audience participation creates responsiveness and hence inspires them to seek more information to their growing need. Furthermore, audiences are guided by information seeking behaviour and they are more excited to absorb and accept social and technological changes (Sellah, Hassan & Zakariah, 1993).

Social media have taken traditional media in breaking news and ordinary journalists frequently practice social networking sites to issue news stories or to enhance feature outside of the typical news cycle (Bosch, 2010). Some of the social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter are increasingly intersecting with traditional mainstream outputs.

This suggests that news production is occasionally more participatory with both news producers or journalists and listeners using social networking sites to issue news. Therefore, radio audiences can get more involved in social media, and engage directly with radio broadcasters, journalists and other listeners (Paine, 2011).

Social media expand the conceivable outcomes for audience participation, although they are an approach to connect with audience, appreciate what they anticipate from the medium and advance their experience (Shaw, 2010). Social media are a space for communication and socialisation that intrigue to an adjustment in the manner media

connect with their audiences (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). Twitter is a space for communication and its radio stations to connect with audiences and making their experience with the radio station a worthwhile.

Visuals via social media have given listeners an ongoing look at broadcast operations and ability, while upgrading collaboration with radio stations (Ferguson & Greer, 2018). Blog posts, online social networks posts, shares and comments, videos and audio are apparatuses that cultivate audiences' opinions and participation (Cordeiro, 2012b). Therefore, visuals formulate and frame more participation through social networking sites like Twitter as audiences can interact with a familiar face they have seen.

Willems (2012) adds that audience participation is encircled inside a corporate rationale of boosting promoting revenue by selling individual information from mobile phones and social media. Moyo (2012), additionally, agrees that technological convergence of conventional radio and the new computerised media unquestionably makes types of audience communication or cooperation on radio.

With that in mind new digital medium such as Twitter creates new channels of audience interaction. However, technical convergence in radio has allowed radio stations to have active Twitter accounts to engage with audiences. This is largely through the station being developed and shifted to a new era of new technologies advancing radio.

It is believed that in privately owned radio stations participation by audiences in news and current affairs programmes was always prejudiced by profit making objective of such station (Moyo, 2012). This means that participation of audiences also depends on the possession and funding of radio station and its profits. Social media has been an exceptional tool for communication and have formed a resolution of being able to influence the media content that one consumes (Barboda, 2014; Rowless, 2014; Lee, 2011).

Although the radio station permitted audience participation in their recent affairs programmes through text messaging, social media and email, it has always been converted within context of the politics of advertising and sponsorship as the lifetime of commercial radio (Moyo, 2012). A commercial radio station with more sponsorship

and advertising has a good opportunity to have audience participation influenced by its corporate image.

Al-Rawi (2016) did a study that investigated the online comments of news items posted on the Facebook pages of two popular Arabic-language radio channels: Radio Monte Carlo-France24 and Radio Netherlands Worldwide (RNW). The study examined over 184,000 comments with a special focus on the most liked post to understand how audiences interact on social media. The results of the study indicated that audiences seem to be more engaged with posts that encourage participating in broad issues, interacting with clever quotes, and less so with reading breaking news (Al-Rawi, 2016).

The study also examined how social media users of these two Facebook radio sites responded to posting differed from their own opinions, and seemingly actively engaged with contrasting or oppositional views or sentiments (Al-Rawi, 2016). The above statement adds as evidence that radio stations engage with their listeners using Facebook, while it relates with the current study's one objective to examine how Capricorn FM actively engage with their listeners using Twitter.

The Web geometric tool called NVivo10-Ncapture was employed to extract the Facebook comments of the Radio Monte Carlo and RNW Facebook pages from February to December 2014 (Al-Rawi, 2016). The two radio stations shadow different methods to appeal to their social media audiences. The study discovered that many sectors of the social-media audience show suggestion of careful media exposure and are mostly drawn towards detailed issues or procedures. Nevertheless, the top posts confined breaking news stories, which indicates that the social media audiences of the mentioned radio stations are more involved to other topics like reading well-known quotes and participating in competitions (Al-Raw, 2016).

The active involvement of listeners in radio programming has been operative in helping listeners understand their reputation not only as receivers of advanced messages but also as valued sources of information (Waningasundara, 1987); and radio has expanded much encouragement on the listeners by getting them directly involved in radio programme invention (Salleh, Hassan & Adam, 2009). Audiences can utilise the internet and mobile phones to take an interest out in open discussions on radio,

however all the while, they cannot shun the concealed hand of the market which change them as consumers (Moyo, 2012).

Participation on radio offers the audiences a sense of value and importance, which can lead to active and encouraging interest in what a radio station caters for. Radio has expanded much encouragement on audiences by getting them directly involved in the production (Salleh, Hassan & Zakariah, 2009). Audience involvement in radio creates a positive rapport with the radio station and helps build audience loyalty.

Access to social media allows radio stations to appear apparent and to situate themselves in a wider global context, but it has possibly opened access and participation for audiences who use social media and have active accounts. Furthermore, the use of social media assists radio stations to have several communication channels that increase participation and engagement between the stations and audiences.

Most of the radio studies mentioned in the previous chapters focused mostly on international radio stations and there are currently no studies in Limpopo Province about the use of social media in radio. Research in Limpopo Province on radio stations focused mostly on sustainability of community radio stations, women in radio, radio drama and some that focused on health communication promotion on radio.

The current study has seen a gap in social media usage by radio stations research and recommended more researches to focus more on radio stations platforms of participation and interaction in a new digital media era. The new era empowers users, producers and audiences to be more active and participative.

### **2.2.7 History of Twitter**

Boyd and Ellison (2008: 214) define “social networking sites as a Web-based service that allow users to construct a public or a semi-public profile within a bounded system. They articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, a view and traverse their list of connections to those made others within the system”. While social networking sites were initially established to connect with friends, they have evolved into influential tools for communication and for retrieving news (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). A powerful tool that is no longer used by friends, it has grown into a multipurpose



platform. Within the social networking sites landscape, Twitter has become one of the most popular services, as a microblogging platform that allow users to publish short messages and share them with a network of followers (Hu, Tang, Tang & Liu, 2013). The above statement suggests that Twitter is categorised as a microblogging platform.

Microblogging services are extensively used to share information or opinions in various domains. Twitter was launched in October 2006 as a microblogging service communication tool (Liu, Cheung & Lee, 2010). It syndicates the fundamentals of blogging, the proximity of instant messaging, the connections of social networking sites and an informal incorporation with mobile phones (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). Twitter permits users to add friends, blog, add pictures and videos.

Furthermore, Twitter permits people to share and consume thousands of bits of information and is flexible and a tangible time nature that generates a dynamic environment for sharing content (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). As Twitter allows individual use, radio has an opportunity to use it for the same reason as an individual would, but the radio serves individuals with information.

It is used to attract new audience, to reach a wider listenership, share content with audiences and to engage with the audiences. That is what this research project sought to do – to find out how radio uses Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation and how Twitter is integrated into radio programs.

### **2.2.8 Twitter used by radio stations**

Twitter is used as a tool to broadcast information, at odds with a space that encourages and rewards expression in a more personal and human tone (Herrera & Requejo, 2012; Marwick & Boyd, 2011). Moreover, Twitter is used to distribute breaking news stories (Jordaan, 2013). Radio stations use Twitter to disseminate news and self-importance (Ferguson & Greer, 2011) and Instagram is also added to their communication tool (Ferguson & Greer, 2018).

The practice of retweets, mentions or links is measured in a positive light on Twitter as these practices are supporting the concept of transparency in digital journalism (Van der Wurff & Schonbach, 2011). The more a tweet is retweeted or mentioned, the more chances of it reaching more people and gaining momentum. In the context of

radio, journalists have shown interest in using Twitter and it has become useful in their profession.

Journalists' use of Facebook and Twitter were recorded as the utmost often used social networking sites (Al-Rawi, 2016). Journalists has personal Twitter and Facebook accounts. According to Lasorsa, Lewis and Halton (2012: 26) "journalists' use of Twitter is an indication of opening gates to allow others to participate in the news production process".

Journalists often encountered news stories on social media sites, particularly Facebook and Twitter, but they must seek verification of the content found on the social media sites from more traditional, official and mainstream sources (Al-Rawi, 2016). However, the absence of professionalism and fairness on social networking sites can discredit a journalist without verification. This statement highlights the fact that news on social networking sites should be verified as they are not reliable, as journalists are using Twitter as lead for their stories. Radio has designed participatory journalism through social networking sites which engage journalists and audiences, enabling multi-directional communication amongst these two groups.

In a study Ferguson and Greer (2011) analysed radio station content of Twitter posts and initiate that the number of followers and number of tweets were interrelated to station format. Herrera-Damas and Hermida (2014) studied how talk radio stations have adopted Twitter for promotion, branding and engagement at an institutional level.

The study focused on the organisational adoption of Twitter to help understand how talk radio stations represent themselves through institutional rather than individual accounts (Herrera-Damas & Hermida, 2014). The current study analysed and described how Twitter is used as an engagement tool for audience participation in a commercial radio station.

Ferguson and Greer (2011) studied the Twitter profiles of a hundred American radio stations and determined that messages from music stations were mostly positive, while talk radio stations focused their tweets on news content. The analysis of their study suggested that the stations mainly use Twitter as a one-way medium to broadcast news updates, relatively than to engage with audiences.

Ferguson and Greer (2011) suggest that the use of Twitter by talk radio stations provides an exciting instance into how the media organisations assimilate unsettling technologies into everyday practices as the central nature of talk radio is being able to interact with listeners. Furthermore, Ferguson and Greer (2011) hold the thought that talk radio allows spontaneous interaction where audiences actively participate by calling during the shows but previously the internet phone-ins on radio and television were one of the rare avenues for members of the public to express themselves in the mainstream.

Crider (2012) argues that the interaction between the host and the audience via telephone calls propositions an exclusive form of public participation in the media. The central nature of talk radio is being able to interact with the broadcast station and other listeners. Berland (1990) agrees that talk radio offer listeners a sense of approachability to and interact with its audience.

In Herrera-Damas and Hermidas's (2014) study, Twitter shares some likeliness with talk radio, and it might be said that it gives an open mic platform to open relational communication that can be utilised to communicate oppositional and questionable perspectives. Twitter's arranged engineering is practically identical to radio as it take into consideration huge scope of communication progressively dependent on irregular relationship among companions and followers similarly as radio talk which depends on a comparing connection among host and audience (Herrera-Damas & Hermidas, 2014).

Both Twitter and radio substitute a sense of ambient familiarity (Thompson, 2008) and they are advantageous in that they can function in the background and do not request the persistent attention of listeners or broadcaster (Hermida, 2010). To study how Canadian talk radio stations were using Twitter, Herrera-Damas and Hermida (2014) observed the messages, since their resolution, the practices of retweets, replies, mentions, adoptions of hashtags and practice of links.

The selected three talk radio stations in Ferguson and Greer's (2011) study include, CJOB68, CKNW 980 and CJAD 800, their Twitter accounts were analysed from 13 to 20 July 2010. Ferguson and Greer (2011) repeated the examination for a similar time

a year later to analyse how the utilisation of Twitter had developed. Damas and Hermida (2014) coded tweets directly from the Twitter Web site and were mostly intrigued by the reason for each tweet, since this variable is the most identified with the institutional use of Twitter.

In addition, the study sought to get familiar with the degree to which the talk radio broadcasts were exploiting all mixed media affordances of Twitter. The fundamental utilisation of Twitter by each of the three radio broadcasts was to give feature news, which was in accordance with past exploration on the utilisation of Twitter by news associations in a few countries (Rindfuss, 2009; Greer & Ferguson, 2011; Holcomb, Gross & Mitchell, 2011).

Herrera-Damas and Hermidas (2014) measured a lot of factors to find out how far the three radio broadcasts were utilising the intuitive usefulness of Twitter, for example, retweets, notices and answers. The outcomes propose that Canadian talk radio broadcasts still cannot seem to get a handle on the conversational part of Twitter as association between institutional records and listeners were uncommon (Herrera-Damas & Hermidas, 2014).

On several occasions, Twitter was used to distribute breaking news while in other tweets offered news updates that contained practical information for the listeners (Herrera-Damas & Hermidas, 2014). Radio stations send out tweets to promote their on-air content, drive listeners to the station and serve as an ideal channel to publicise interviews or commentary coming up on the broadcast which is to promote content on air.

Herrera-Damas and Hermidas (2014) discoveries on the utilisation of Twitter are chances with the way talk radio works as a space for relational interchanges that depends on the participation of a portion of its audience. Tweets are used to broadcast news, mostly with links back to the home stations websites and virtually with no exchange taking place.

Additionally, the conclusions proposed a divergence between the way talk radio considers its institutional existence on social media and the use of Twitter by individuals employed by the station (Herrera-Damas & Hermidas, 2014). The study

also suggests that Twitter is used as a space to broadcast to an audience, relatively than to engage and reply with the public. The current study sought to describe and analyse how radio uses Twitter to engage with audience.

Ferguson and Greer (2014) called attention to that Twitter is not performing great in enlarging listeners. However, Lazarsfeld (2011) notes that a decent casing of reference could assist listeners with being prepared and to have a better understanding more readily comprehend genuine, because listeners that are educated or informed ahead of time about content of a genuine listening programme are bound to tune in.

However, Bonini and Sellas (2014) hold the thought that the microblogging platform Twitter, has become one of the most popular social media services used by radio broadcasters to engage with their audience and build communities of listeners. The current study anticipated and highlighted how Twitter has become a major platform for the commercial radio station selected for this study to attract audience and to build a rapport with existing audience.

One of the major advantages of using Twitter related to Facebook and Instagram is its real time communication where followers can notice a post that would have needed instant consideration which is better for fast communication (Karttunen, 2017). Which is why, therefore, the researcher selected Twitter amongst other social media platforms that radio uses to engage with their listeners.

Facebook is fundamentally a channel used unidirectional broadcast of content, while Twitter is more of an interactive platform (De Torres & Otros, 2011). Normally, on Facebook presenters are found interacting with the audience, and creating conversation (Cordeiro, 2012b). Additionally, the current study sought to address the relationship that radio stations create with audiences and the content audiences highly participates in.

Bonini and Sellas (2014) conducted a study on Twitter as a public service medium, a content examination of the Twitter was used and made by Radio Audizioni Italian and Radio National of Spain. The study analysed the practice of public radio in social media

converging on the use of Twitter by the two radio stations. It meant to investigate how the two radio broadcasters used Twitter. The examination also aimed to comprehend how public service operators familiarise themselves with new multi-platforms scenario, which should drive them to transform their relationship with their listeners.

Both radio stations Radio Audizioni Italian and Radio National of Spain practice Facebook frequently for broadcasting their content and schedules, without any sense of issuing, but they had a social media strategy (Bonini & Sellas, 2014). Additionally, some of their social media strategies were to be the place audience are, interact with audience while dodging disentanglement, tune in the audience' voice and ultimately to carry traffic to the Website.

Bonini and Sellas (2014) concluded that Twitter was used as a tool for mostly unidirectional purposes. Twitter is for the most part seen as a stage for educating audience progressively about the content offered by the radio flow and for driving audiences towards the utilisation of recorded content, and many of the tweets to show items to the audience and request that they expend them.

The current study sought to investigate whether Twitter is a powerful tool for audience participation or not for a commercial radio station. However, Bonini and Sellas (2014) concluded that Twitter is not an influential tool for audience construction for Radio Audizioni Italian and Radio National of Spain. Twitter can still be a significant tool for serving audiences, linking listeners among each other, allowing them to join the discussion and be part of the Twitter timeline (Bonini & Sellas, 2014).

Radio station in good position pursues their followers to join the conversation, framing high quality content for audience and listens to audiences' views. The current study aimed to analyse and discuss the real worth of the incorporation of Twitter into radio programmes, showing the recurrent patterns of communication use of Twitter. Furthermore, the current study was conducted in a different era in terms of how the new digital era has developed and will produced different and more finding of Twitter being used in radio.

Bonini, Caliandro and Alessandra (2016) conducted a study on understanding the estimation of network publics in radio utilising computerised techniques and informal

social examination to comprehend Twitter publics of two Italian national radio broadcasts. The two radio stations namely, Radio DeeJay and RAI Radio, were used to examine how the system comprised of public help radio audience active on Twitter extraordinarily separates itself from the system of audience connected to the private radio broadcast as far as online practices, informal network structure, show of social capital and influence are concerned.

Findings from Bonini, Caliandro and Alessandra (2016) study shows that Twitter network publics of Radio DeeJay and RAI Radio, work very contrarily and has offered a present different internal structure. Furthermore, findings showed that the Twitter profile of RAI Radio functioned as a compound for social relations amongst its listeners, providing the opportunity for its listeners to link with each other through the conversation and comments of its own radio content (Bonini, Caliandro & Alessandra, 2016). However, the current study sought to comprehend the relationship amongst listeners connected and sharing same interest in being active participants of the radio station on a Twitter platform.

These are listeners who, apart from tuning in to radio, collaborate with it and among one another via social media associated with radio, partaking in aggregate conversations that emerge from the content communicated by radio (Bonini, Caliandro & Massarelli, 2016). Furthermore, such listeners are mostly followers of the radio station's Twitter account and are likely to create social relationship with each other.

The system of social relationship uniting the radio stations with their Twitter followers and followers connecting with one another, characterise a form of special capital of radio itself (Bonini & Sellas, 2015). Radio station needs to have popular users who are potentially capable of mobilising a great network of audience. The current study focused on a commercial radio station that has popular presenters who mobilise many audiences and followers. Although the station can have followers and listeners or both, followers are loyal listeners.

The study referred and reviewed to above has proved that the system of social connections of a Twitter profile for a radio constitutes real social capital. The study also shown from the findings that there are two hubs, to be specific followers or

audiences, who have more significant roles than others do, and along these lines attention is worth more than that of others, claiming they are more equipped for attraction in the consideration of followers and intensifying message.

The current study highlighted topics that listeners mostly engaged with. Additionally, this study provided information regarding profile of a commercial radio station (Capricorn FM station), the content posted, how Twitter is integrated in their programmes and how information controlled in profiles on Twitter offer diverse perceptions into the conformation and characteristics of their target market.

#### **2.2.8.1 Benefits of radio stations using social media**

Radio station's use of social media has emerged since new digital technologies. Social media can be utilised for radio purposes from multiple points of view and new kinds of radio content can be worked around the ascent of social media as a major aspect of programming (Bertot, Jaeger & Hansen, 2013).

In their study, Alhabash and Ma (2017) found that entertainment and convenience were few reasons for radio stations to practice the use Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter. The optimism regarding radio stations using social media's potential has not been fully extended to rural areas due to the digital divide that exists (Nassanga, Manyozo & Lopes, 2013).

Radio stations that are developed or those that are still developing have the opportunity to use new technologies with less disadvantages such as digital divide. Radio stations with listeners experiencing digital divide have lower success rate as listeners are established from lower financial groups with less access to normal network or mobile empowered phones (Bosch, 2014).

The advantage of using social media in radio stations narrates to the flourishing of information sources with the ability to receive developed messages, to engage, ask questions and create messages for audiences (Paterson, 2013). The current study answered few questions regarding how social media platforms like Twitter are used in a commercial radio station to engage with audiences. Furthermore, the study discussed few advantages and disadvantages of using Twitter by the radio station selected for the study.



Commercial radio stations use social media platforms to extend their dissemination of information and to engage with radio listeners, media uses and creates conversations beyond the airwaves (Bosch, 2013). While in community radio stations social media plays a specific intensifier and channel of prevailing media content (Mare, 2013); with network journalists frequently depending on this significant source of news notwithstanding their statement despite what might be expected (Bosch, 2014).

The current study analysed and explored the use of social media such a Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation. The study highlighted how the said commercial radio station benefits from using Twitter, and how radio stations not using Twitter are underprivileged.

### **2.3 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 3**

This chapter reviewed the use of Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation. Different researchers have researched on various audiences' participation of radio stations. From the studies conducted by the researchers it is clear and fitting to conclude that indeed social media platforms are part of engagement strategies for radio stations to assist with audience participation that is effective. Social media and social networking sites, such as Twitter, support as an engagement strategy for audience participation.

The next chapter focuses on the definition of operational techniques. To give a glimpse into the chapter, the definition of operational techniques entails analogue radio, radio convergent, engagement, commercial radio station, e-listeners, social media and Twitter.

## **CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter key concepts that are used in the study are defined according to literature studied and reviewed.

### **3.2 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

#### **3.2.1 Analogue radio**

Historically, radio is the sound of an intangible voice talking, murmuring, singing and warbling into the ear of another individual however experienced by many at the same time (Edmond, 2015). Radio is the transmission of sound through electromagnetic waves (Hayens, 2015). It is the mostly widely used electromagnetic means of communication on the globe (Haykin, 2005). Radio remains a significant field of social articulation, business, governmental issues and instruction (Edmond, 2015). Moreover, radio is the essential technique for communication.

Radio is still the mostly used analogue broadcast technology that transmits the sound in radio waves or electromagnetic radiation (Jenkins, 2006). Radio is viewed as a personal medium, where a host is addressing a crowd of people. However, the broadcast reaches a mass audience (Herrera-Damas & Hermida, 2014). A host without audience is meaningless which means the host needs to be creative to be able to address the mass as individuals that can relate to the voice behind.

Today, there are two diverse analogue technologies used which are, amplitude modulation (AM) that was developed in 1920s; and the frequency modulation (FM) technology of the 1960s that offers improved sound quality (Katturen, 2017). Furthermore, today radio is multimedia, multiplatform and convergent in nature. Digital radio varies from the FM period, in that it has sound and image, and is more collaborative, increasingly participatory, shareable, repeatable, reproducible. In light of this, it worth noting from the onset that Capricorn FM is a radio station using frequency modulation technology. It offers listeners a clear sound through traditional radio and podcast.

This era allows radio listeners to listen to radio simultaneously with digital radio that offers a clearer signal and subsequently better sound quality. One of the most attracting factors for listeners is an improved sound that is clear and adequately loud.

Webcasting enables radio stations to record a show and distribute the recorded show online for later tuning in. Additionally, webcasting allows listeners to have an opportunity to listen to what they might have missed on and to listen at any time desired.

Radio is a companion, confided in source and soundtrack for our living, it is entwined into our lives so intently that it is like brushing our teeth (Lewis, 2000). Radio is one of the quickest developing media of communication around the world because of its versatility, minimal effort and adaptability. Radio stretches audience members a feeling of progression with more seasoned types of personalities and networks while it empowers distinctly modern types of public activity (Karttunen, 2017).

Radio has consistently empowered consultation and cooperation through telephone in projects and studio audience. It is arguably the new technology has changed the nature of radio by extending the digressive spaces and attracting audience nearer to production and station's institutional procedures. Furthermore, new technology has

The accessibility of radio content has created a clear distinctive nature of a new radio advantage. Having radio content accessed online has changed technicalities involved in the production of the content. Producers must have vast communication channels to share the content. This has created an opportunity for listeners to have a variety of content to choose from.

### **3.2.2 Radio convergence**

Convergence among old and new media has prompted a space where old and new media impact (Willems, 2013), grassroots and corporate media meet, and the intensity of media user and media producer associate in unusual manners (Jenkins, 2006). Capricorn FM has managed to converge their look as a brand to interact and use technology to be advanced and developed. Convergence helps the radio station to use new media to produce and interact with their listeners.

Convergence results from elements in technology, cooperative energies of media, figuring and broadcast communications, enhancing existing procedures and making new ones (Cordeiro, 2012a). It also establishes an advanced culture in which every device and content is reconceptualised as digital and this also applies to radio broadcasting (Cordeiro, *ibid*). Convergence allows a change in straight media interchanges, by supporting the one-to-numerous conventional models of communication, yet additionally building up coordinated, numerous to-one or many-to-numerous interchanges, empowering discussions between users (Jenkins, 2006).

Convergence in radio alludes to the system design that broadcasters have embraced to blend beforehand particular media into regular interfaces (Cordeiro, 2012a). Capricorn FM as a station has adopted new technology that allows them to have podcast, live shows outside the studio and create websites. The radio station is currently available online which allows listeners to listen from anywhere.

Radio stations are in addition developing multimedia content, storing and sharing online (pictures, audio archives and pictures), incorporating weblogs, photoblogs, podcasts, videocasts, wikis into their websites with associated sharing platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter (Cordeiro, 2012a). Radio convergence has redefined and recreated radio. It has changed the culture of radio and radio practice. Radio content is now available and accessible everywhere. Features such as podcast, online comments and polls, have changed radio. Listeners can not only access audio and video posted on online by the radio station. Furthermore, radio has converted into something more than just an audio.

### **3.2.3 Digital technology**

Digital technology is “the use of technology to radically improve performance or reach of enterprises” ( Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014). Digital technologies include, for example, smart objects, the internet of things, business intelligence and social media (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019). There are different approaches to digital technologies but for the purpose of this study discussed digital technologies in radio. Digital technologies are the technology radio stations use to improve communication and engagement for listeners.

The introduction of Internet or streaming radio, satellite radio, and MP3s and other digital file formats with the multi-source compatibility of these digital technologies, radio is currently experiencing yet another challenge—one that shifts the way in which radio is talked about and how it is used (Kin & Ho, 2018). Broadcasters already react by inventing new channels to distribute their content, by partnering with other broadcasters, and by building up own software departments (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019).

Digital technologies have replaced analogue technologies for storing and accessing music and other audio recordings, post-processing audio recording (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019). Digital technologies allow Capricorn FM to store their content and record their content for their listeners to access such content anytime. In view of emerging digital technologies, radio stations should be orientated toward embracing digital technologies to transform them into innovative digital solutions.

Besides the importance of digital technology adoption, radio also need to have capability to manage and make the best use of digital technology in innovation process because capability expedite innovation process by integrating and mobilizing both human and technological strengths and resources (Henfridsson, Mathiassen & Svahn, 2014). The radio industry has been successful in adapting to various digital technology forces throughout its history in order to remain successful (Albarran, 2002).

Additionally, only few radio broadcasters are trying to various digital broadcasting standards have been drafted and implemented by radio stations and electronics manufacturers over the last decades (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019). Digital technologies are and will continue to be pivotal for innovations in radio broadcasting, and currently, many radio broadcasters are not able to develop digital products such as apps and at the same time make sure that appropriate new content formats are delivered (Kin & Ho, 2018).

Radio has been challenged by several innovative digital technologies, each drawing listeners and forcing radio to update its programming in order to remain a competitive media option (Albarran, Anderson, Bejar, Bussart, Daggett, Gibson & Way, 2007). The

radio industry has been successful in adapting to various forces throughout its history in order to remain successful (Albarran, 2002).

Like other industries, radio broadcasting is affected by a digital transformation and is currently undergoing major changes that are affecting their listeners (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019). Listeners have rooted in new technologies and with digital technologies radio face the challenge to meet their listeners needs on those digital technology devices, not the other way around, as it was the case for traditional radio (listeners bought devices to consume the program). But with the multitude of different devices, different expectations emerge, as stated above. Broadcasters need to be present on all devices because users expect them to be (Hirschmeier, Tilly & Beule, 2019).

Radio stations that effectively manage digital technology can expect to gain in one or more three areas: better listener experience and engagement, streamlined operation and new line of production model (Majchrzak, Markus & Wareham, 2016). However, with the combination of digital and based infrastructures, abundant internet availability, changing listener attitudes, smart broadcasting devices of all kinds, and other changes, the radio broadcasting industry is already undergoing a more complex and fundamental digital transformation.

Another changing expectation identified was the opportunity for listeners to socially interact with the radio program. Listeners nowadays use social networks like Facebook and Twitter and they do not want to participate in a new social network for sharing radio content. Capricorn FM listeners are generally interacting and engaging with radio programmes using Twitter.

### **3.2.4 Engagement**

Engagement is a two-way process linking communication and listening, with the goal of creating common advantage (Nyirenda, Makawa & Chapita, 2018). There are different approaches to engagement but for the focus of the study engagement discussed in the context of listeners and radio. Engagement is essential for the improvement, growth and development of radio stations. Capricorn FM prioritises engagement with as it helps to understand the needs and views of their listeners.

Simply because engagement implies a higher level of involvement in communication system.

Radio stations use television and social media have been utilised to connect with the general society (Anikeeva & Bywood, 2013). However, this usage may lead to fewer effective resources-poor setting and can be primarily accessible to a smaller proportion of the population. One of the primary dimensions of radio broadcast is to provide listeners with a way to pass time and engage in conversation (Rosale, 2013).

Interestingly, radio is a successful source of information in resources-helppless settings because of expanded availability and the potential for wide inclusion to different types of media (Lunt, 2005). Radio stations engage with listeners through participation different methods with the use of digital technology like text alerts, Twitter, Facebook, listening live and blogs (Rosale, 2013). Capricorn FM engages with listeners on different platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter and Short Message Service. Furthermore, platforms like social media help give a solid direction and some viability as far as how stations draw in audience members utilising digital innovation.

Engaging listeners, providing them with content whenever and wherever they are using digital technology is certainly a good advantage to radio (Rosale, 2013). Capricorn FM provides listeners with content on different platforms for engagement. Listeners use different platforms of their choices, but the station shares same content on all platforms.

It is essential for a radio station to engage with their listeners as it helps with the station development, growth, listenership and to meet the needs of listeners. Engagement help with feedback on how the radio station's content affects and how the radio station deals with societal issues that listeners are facing. This helps to improve engagement and to a certain extent sustain a loyal following on the part of the listeners (Rosale, 2013). However, the most essential factor of engaging with listeners in radio programming is make them to understand their significance as receivers of messages as well as important sources of information. The radio station gains more encouragement from listeners by receiving them directly involved in radio programme production.

The level of engagement in radio is measured in terms of listenership (recurrence of tuning in, duration of listening every day and number of advancement programs tuned in to), recurrence of criticism to radio broadcast (through letter, call-ins, discussing with radio staff, social media and input to radio broadcast through local development organisations) and recurrence of direct inclusion in radio program arranging and production.

### **3.2.5 Commercial radio station**

Hilliard (2014) describes radio formats as a blend of program content, broadcaster style, effectiveness of programming, commercial material and procedures listener criticism and quality room. However, programmes developed and produced by radio stations differ in the use of different practices to deliver the formats to the targeted listeners. Radio stations are classified by arrangements based on programmed content and music.

While formats for commercial radio station are often defined as narrowcasting because radio station targets narrow demographics using restricted range of style, artists, and on the other hand are mass application formats that pursue to entice an additional diverse audience, often by playing records from a broader musical variety (Ahlkvist & Faulkner, 2002). Furthermore, such formats follow trends and play whatever music is popular.

Understanding how music reaches the commercial airwaves requires a variation in programmer practice. Fundamental to such comprehension is recognising that music software engineers intervene between the recording industry and their audience (Ahlkvist & Faulkner, 2002). The music must work for the station's formats, be effective in targeting desired listeners and provide promotional support for the station.

Commercial broadcasters attempt to set up a quality programming structure that bears them the chance to assemble more audience to draw in advertisers (Hansen, 2006). Commercial broadcasting denotes to a service functioned for profit and is essentially sponsored through marketing. A station can similarly receive part of its funding non-commercially, from government, an organisation and marketing (Karttunen, 2017).



Capricorn FM is a commercial radio station based in Limpopo Province, South Africa. It is the first commercial radio station in the province and broadcasts in English and 30% vernacular languages namely: Sepedi, Tshivenda and Xitsonga (Capricorn FM, 2018). The broadcasting content of a commercial radio station contains 70% music and 30% talk shows. The music features a variety of urban genres in Rhythm and Blues, Soul, Afro-pop, Afro-soul, Hip-hop, Kwaito, House, Jazz and Gospel music (Capricorn FM, 2018). The station is unique, it can speak to 300 000 consumers in their own languages in the province (Capricorn FM, 2018).

In opposition to public broadcasting service, commercial stations are market driven and, in this manner, diminish their programming in accordance with current market trends and goals. Commercial radio stations' programming is designed primarily for profit that comes from advertising revenue and the radio stations are owned and controlled by private individuals, or by commercial enterprises (Fraser & Estrada, 2001).

Moreover, commercial radio stations have been effective, both in terms of interesting substantial audiences and parlay into commercial gain. Listeners have sufficient attention in the programming of commercial radio stations by turning them into some regularities. In commercial, radio stations radio programmes are designed to attract a large number of audiences that could be sold to consumer product advertisers through programme sponsorship (Bosch & Mullins, 2012). Today radio broadcasts attempt to stand apart from one another by picking formats that pull in just a specific group of individuals, for example, unexpected age gatherings or the audience members of a specific music classification (Karttunen, 2017). Capricorn FM has programmes that advertise products and such shows are normally sponsored by a brand or products.

Capricorn FM is the only commercial radio station in Limpopo Province with a market driven programmes that are relevant, current and plays music that is trending. The station uses four languages with the aim of accommodating people residing in the Limpopo Province and others in neighbouring provinces.

Capricorn FM has a vast variety of competitions and promotions throughout its programmes to advertise, to attract sponsors and to stand out from other radio stations. The station depends on advertisers to thrive and their quality programmes help to build loyalty with existing listeners and attract more advertisers.

### **3.2.7 Radio listener**

For the past few years' listeners of radio were invisible in radio and confused to its private range, excluding in the event of phone calls through a programme and, currently listeners are connected to the online profile of any radio programme. They no longer undistinguishable or private, same goes for their thoughts and reactions (Bonini, Caliandro & Massarelli, 2016).

With the emergence of the internet and other new digital technologies Cordeiro suggests that radio no longer has traditional listeners only, but online listeners known as e-listeners (Cordeiro, 2011b). E-listeners are defined as those audiences who essentially use web-based advancements to listen to radio (Cordeiro, *ibid*). In most cases they are comparatives in innovation, they concentrated web users, are dynamic individuals of social network and intense into music and new types of entertainment search (Cordeiro, 2009; Cordeiro, 2011a).

On the other hand, there are networked listeners who listen and connect to radio, interface with it on social networking sites, and take part in collective discussions that arise from content broadcasted (Bonini, Caliandro & Massarelli, 2015). Furthermore, there are online listeners who listen to radio for comfort and, take part in social networks although rarely update their profile as they state that they do not have enough skills to explore the web for things that interests them (Cordeiro, 2009; Cordeiro, 2011a).

Moreover, listeners are becoming progressively beneficial and profitability comprises of both generation of one's own content and the dissemination of media content (Jenkins, Ford & Green, 2013). These listeners have skills to explore the web and interact with content that entertains. Besides traditional radio listeners also listen to audio content available on podcast, web-radios, online music playlist, music portals and music communities (Cordeiro, 2009). Skills are essential for e-listeners since radio

now uses new technologies. Moreover, the utmost significant feature of e-listeners is that they combine radio and other forms of audio media digest.

Capricorn FM caters for different listeners since it has content that e-listeners and networked listeners have access to. The station has podcast, listeners that use internet-based technologies to listen to Capricorn FM and interact with others on social networking sites such as, Twitter, Facebook and WhatsApp. Ultimately, such variety in content availability enables the station to keep their loyal listeners and attract new ones. This shows how much the station uses new advanced technology.

Radio broadcasting has improved radio tuning in by including online intelligent apparatuses, sight and sound highlights and intersection social fringes through moderators and communication with individuals on social network (Cordeiro, 2012b). The central nature of radio is being able to interact with the broadcast station and additional listeners. However, Laor, Galily and Tamir (2007) suggests that radio offers listeners a sense of availability and collaboration within its own community.

### **3.2.8 Social Media**

Social Media are a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content. (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010: 61). Social media are Internet-based channels that allow users to opportunistically interact and selectively self-present, either in real-time or asynchronously, with both broad and narrow audiences who derive value from user-generated content and the perception of interaction with others (Carr & Hayes, 2015).

Social media refer to digital technologies emphasizing user-generated content or interaction (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Terry, 2009). Often social media are referred to by channel characteristics, either identifying directionality of messages (Kent, 2010) or using specific tools like Facebook or Twitter to exemplify modes of interaction (Howard & Parks, 2012). Although several definitions exist, there remains a lack of a formal, concise, and mutually agreed-upon definition of social media (Effing, van

Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010), particularly across disciplines.

Social media have often been conceptualized techno-centrally, based on specific devices or tool affordances, often considered to be synonymous with Web 2.0 or the collaborative web (Agichtein, Castillo, Donato, Gionis, & Mishne, 2008). Web 2.0 refers to web-based, collaborative tools relying on user-generated content that constantly evolve and improve (O'Reilly, 2005). Web-based services allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system (Boyd & Ellison, 2007).

Lewis (2010: 11) noted social media simply serve as a, "label for digital technologies that allow people to connect, interact, produce and share content social media and social network sites". Although social networking sites by their nature are typically social media tools, not all social media are inherently social networking sites (Carr & Hayes, 2015). Unfortunately, this definition has frequently been errantly cross-applied as an overarching definition of social media. Even more problematic has been the conflation of "social media" and "social network sites (boyd & Ellison, 2007). Twitter is one of the social networking sites to communicate and interact with listeners.

boyd and Ellison (2007) seminally defined social network sites as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. Capricorn FM has created a social media account with the public which in the context of this study are listeners. Social media as a distinct subset of media tools that share a common set of traits and characteristics, where the affordances for disparate individuals and groups to contribute to the creation of the content they are consuming provide intrinsic value far greater than what each individual site feature provide (Carr & Hayes, 2015).

The convergence of the personal and professional in social media will affect how individuals expect to interact with organizations and how they utilize the opportunities afforded by social media for selective self-presentation (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Capricorn FM listeners use social media for selective reason of being able to engage with the station.

A daunting challenge for many social media professionals is to establish definitive codes of effectiveness and translating social media use into tangible organizational benefits (Loechner, 2012). Various perspectives exist when conceptualizing listeners social media engagement. One approach focuses on the manner in which listeners use social media tools to interact with organizations (Adams & McCorkindale, 2012; Wigley & Lewis, 2012).

The rapid diffusion of smartphones and mobile devices (e.g., tablet computing) is facilitating access to social media through applications and direct interfaces, often without going through a web browser (Carr & Hayes, 2015). This suggest that social media users do not need to use the web browser to access social media. Capricorn FM and their listeners may not necessarily use application to access Twitter but can resort to using their smartphones and mobile services.

### **3.2.9 Twitter**

It was first made accessible for the public in 2006. Twitter is an internet based social network system that permits users to post brief comments about their whereabouts (Morris, 2009). Furthermore, Java, Finin, Song and Tseng (2007: 202) consider “Twitter as one of the most popular microblogging platforms of human expressions through which users can easily produce content on breaking news, public events or products”. It is a social network system that offers both connectivity and pointers at people’s lives (Johnson, 2009). Capricorn FM created a Twitter account in 2013 since its availability in 2006.

Subsequently, since its inception, Twitter has not only provided communication to people but also distributed shadow news about occurrence (Ferguson & Greer, 2011). Capricorn FM uses Twitter to disseminate information, to entertain their listeners and to engage with their listeners. Twitter is the modern service in the line of social network programmes that have involved Facebook and Myspace, separately of which have different features and uses (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). It is exclusive in relation to other social network services (Greer & Ferguson, 2011).

One of the uniqueness of Twitter is the conciseness posting regularity in which users have a habit of posting “tweets” (Java, Song, Finin & Tseng, 2007; Grossman, 2009), the speed, mobility and the aspect of the concept followers (Johnson, 2009; Murthy, 2018). Nevertheless, posts on Twitter remain less than 200 characters, users can lead their followers to more inclusive information, from entrenching links to sites with added thorough content (Johnson, 2009). Capricorn FM tweets to engage and share content of their programmes; even though Twitter allows 200 characters, the station minimise the characters to deliver the message.

Twitter users can follow one another without the requirement for mutuality and accepting or following each other. Moreover, majority of tweets are public and reachable to everyone (Broersma & Graham, 2012). Additionally, Twitter allows the user to follow updates from other members added as friends but also individuals who are not friends are able to view the updates without being added as friends, they are considered followers (Java, Finin, Song & Tseng, 2007).

Capricorn FM has followers which are listeners that receive updates from the station. The station choses to make their updates public or available only to those Twitter users who are following the station. This notion helps their listener to engage and interact with the content posted on Twitter. Hermida (2010) describes Twitter as an awareness system that assist people to know, make sense of each other’s events and notice trends or topics covering under the news radar. The use of hashtags and retweets can broaden the awareness. Capricorn FM uses trends to communicate and provide information to their listeners. Moreover, the station uses Twitter for awareness through different campaigns such the Cancer Awareness or World Blindness Day.

Radio stations in South Africa have implemented the practice of microblogging to connect with their audiences and to extend their airwaves. Commercial radio stations model this trend (Chiumbu & Ligaga, 2012). Twitter shares some comparisons with radio in that it offers an open-mic platform for public social communication that can be used to direct oppositional and debatable views (Herrera-Damas & Hermida, 2014).

Capricorn FM provides the listeners with a platform to communicate, express their views and to provide information. The radio station requests its listeners to inform them of any irregularity they are experiencing in their society, that could be traffic or mistreatment or abuse from government officials. Moreover, Twitter's network design is equivalent to radio as it considers enormous scale of communication progressively dependent on irregular rapport between friends and followers, just as broadcast is grounded on a conforming relationship between host and listeners (Hu, Tang, Tang & Liu, 2013).

Twitter gives marginalised listeners a platform for participation, and this assists in giving them a voice. Apparently, Twitter has created a sphere where listeners can voice their opinions, experiences and interact with other listeners. Capricorn FM uses Twitter as an engagement tool for the growth and development of the station. Moreover, the station uses Twitter to inform, educate, attract and entertain listeners. The radio station has assigned individual employees that tweet all day about the station's different programmes, polls for music, breaking news and competitions.

### **3.3 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 4**

In this Chapter, the concepts: radio, radio convergent, engagement, commercial radio station, digital technology, listeners, social media and Twitter were defined and explored. Radio is measured as a friendly medium, whereby a host speaks to audiences. Radio convergence outcomes from dynamics in technology, collaborations of media, computing and telecommunications.

Radio is a trusted informant and soundtrack for living. While convergence in radio refers to the network architecture that broadcasters have adopted to merge formerly distinct media into mutual interfaces. There are different types of radio stations, but the radio station chosen for this study was a commercial radio which denotes a service

functioning for profit and is basically financed through marketing. For the past few years' listeners were invisible in radio and confused in private sphere, excluding in the event of phone calls during a programme. Because of the internet emergence and digital technology listeners are now interacting and communicating differently. Twitter not only has provided communication for individuals but has been used to disseminates news about events including those in radio stations.

Chapter four discusses aspects of the methodology including: the research design, sampling procedure, data collection method, data analysis method, quality criteria and ethical consideration. The aspects of research methodology will be discussed, in the next chapter.



## **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter describes the research methodology of the study. This section incorporates the research methodology, research methods, sampling, data collection techniques, and data analysis technique and quality criteria of both qualitative and quantitative research of the study. The study employed qualitative and quantitative research methods in order to determine how Twitter was used as an engagement strategy for listeners and how it promoted participation of listeners on radio.

### **4.2 METHODOLOGY**

The study engaged both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The researcher selected these methodologies to induce from the strengths of one's strength and to minimise the weakness of the other research approach. The research project also projected a single study that answers questions about the multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of radio using Twitter from the point of estimation by employees of the radio station.

The use of qualitative research method allows the researcher to ask participants questions and find in-depth information. A qualitative study seeks to capture in-depth information of aspects being researched (Babbie, 2008). It aims to answer the question of why things are the way they are and how they came to be that way. This is one of the strengths of qualitative research method. While quantitative research method holds that the researcher should remain distant and independent of what is researched (Creswell, 2003). This is one of the strengths of quantitative research method.

The researcher used concurrent triangulation designs, where quantitative and qualitative data are gathered and analysed simultaneously (Hanson, Creswell, Clark, Petska & Creswell, 2005). The researcher selected this design to be able to collect data. Nevertheless, priority was given to both types of data, to collect data from selected radio station. Twitter as an engagement strategy was used to create listeners' participation, and to be able to analyse data using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

The study employed the phenomenological research approach, which aims at clarifying people's lived situations in everyday life (Smith, 2015). The focus of a phenomenological approach focuses on the participant's perception of the event and tries to answer the question of experience (Williams, 2007). In this research, the phenomenon was Twitter as an engagement strategy for listeners' participation as used by a radio station. Employees for participation in the study including those with experiences of posting on the Twitter account of the station helped with the perception of the event and answered questions from background of experience.

### **4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The study has employed exploratory and descriptive research designs within qualitative and quantitative research methodologies respectively (mixed method). The study explored how Twitter is used as an engagement strategy for listeners' participation on Capricorn FM and it also explained how the station integrated Twitter into their programmes.

The exploratory design is associated to phenomenology which focuses on qualitative investigations addressing a phenomenon particularly in the field of social sciences (Goddard & Melville, 2004). Thus, this study examined the use of Twitter as an engagement strategy for listeners participation in a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM.

The study employed descriptive research, which involves identification of characteristics of a phenomenon based on the investigation of correlational between two phenomena (Williams, 2007). The researcher used the approach to determine the correlation between radio and Twitter. The researcher also identified features of a radio station using Twitter for listeners' participation and outlined how Twitter was featured in the radio stations' programmes.

#### **4.3.1 Population and sampling**

It is vital to define population to describe how a sample of this study was be selected. Population is a group or class of themes, variables, perceptions or phenomena. A sample is a subset of the population which is illustrative of the entire population (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The population of this study comprised of 42 Capricorn FM employees (Capricorn FM, 2018). In addition, 81080 Capricorn FM's Twitter feeds

were also part of the population. The researcher selected Capricorn FM as it is the first and only commercial radio station in Limpopo Province, with listeners that range from the age 15 – 45 and diverse cultures (Capricorn FM, 2018).

The researcher used the non-probability sampling procedure. The researcher selected this procedure as within its methods there were different sampling methods such as purposive sampling. The researcher used purposive sampling method to help to select the samples that are suitable and have relevant information for the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling that is normally employed in qualitative study. Additionally, purposive sampling was used under circumstances that this research illustrated or highlighted a typical, normal tweets with the intention to achieve breadth understanding of Twitter.

The non-probability sampling procedure does not allow the guideline of measured probability (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The researcher purposively selected 13 out of 42 employees responsible for posting on the Twitter account of Capricorn FM radio station. The researcher selected only 13 employees as they will be able to give relevant information with regards to effectiveness of Twitter for their radio station.

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to purposively choose the research element stranded on a list of features (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). Additionally, the researcher purposively selected Twitter feeds of a Morning Drive show and Afternoon Drive show of Capricorn FM to sample the population.

The researcher used this method because not all Capricorn FM staff members produced the content on social networking sites of the station and dealt with the integration of Twitter in the programmes of the radio station. Only 13 employees of Capricorn FM radio station dedicated to dealing with the radio station's Twitter account and updating the feeds were relevant to the study.

Since this study used both qualitative and quantitative methods it was therefore appropriate to have both sets of data. Additionally, Capricorn FM's Morning Drive and Afternoon Drive show Twitter feeds from March 2020 to June 2020 were used for this study. The researcher purposively selected tweets for Morning show and Afternoon show out of 81080, there were only 898 that were tweeted from March 2020 to June

2020. Only 898 tweets were selected since there were the only available tweets from Morning Show and Afternoon show for the duration of the study. The researcher sampled both shows as they were the most listened to and had more listeners' participation than other shows of the radio station. The purposive sampling was applicable to both qualitative and quantitative research method.

#### **4.3.2 Data Collection**

Respectively, this study was a concurrent triangulation which permitted the researcher to gather and analyse qualitative and quantitative data at the same time.

Qualitative research regularly utilises numerous types of information in an investigation, and these could be: perceptions; interviews; objects; composed reports; audio-visuals materials and anything that can help to answer their research questions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001); while quantitative research preserves the assumption of an empirical standard that involves the collection of data to quantify information that is exposed to statistical treatment in order to support estimates (Creswell, 2003).

Additionally, quantitative examination underscores target estimations and the factual, scientific, or numerical investigation of information gathered through surveys, polls, and overviews, or by controlling prior measurable information utilising computational strategies (Babbie, 2010).

This aspect details the data collection technique and various methods of collecting data. The researcher used semi-structured interview to collect information from the participants. The researcher selected this data collection technique because it improved the understanding of Twitter as used by a radio station and helped the researcher to do follow up questions of what the participant has answered. The researcher again used content analysis to collect data. Content analysis helped to locate and measure patterns in how the radio station uses Twitter in their programmes to engage with listeners.

#### **4.3.3 Data collection techniques**

Data collection techniques are the instruments utilised to gather data from the participants. The techniques can be interviews, questionnaires, observations and content analysis. The researcher used semi-structured interviews and content

analysis to gather data about Twitter being used as an engagement strategy for audience participation by a radio station.

The main data collection instrument was the researcher who played a major role and managed the interviews without any help from anyone. The interviewer played a role in making decisions during the interviews that were used in the study. The interviewer took notes using a pen and a journal and voice recordings mobile phone that have audio recorder during the interviews with the participants.

#### **4.3.4 Semi- structured interviews**

The interview is one of the most frequently utilised methods of collecting qualitative data (Drew, Hardman & Hart, 2005). Interview can be extremely structured or wholly open- ended, depending on the persistence of the interview (Drew, Hardman & Hart, 2005). The researcher collected qualitative data using semi-structured interviews, which are commonly defined as guided interviews whose matters are predetermined, and new questions and perceptions arise from discussions and visual analysis (De Stage, Holloway, Mullins, Nchabeleng & Ward, 2002).

Semi-structured interviews have a guided interview between the researcher and the participants where topics prearranged, and new questions ascended as a result of the discussion that gave the researcher information. The researcher asked follow-up questions that participants have created when answering the interviewer's questions and such follow up questions were incorporated in the final interview schedule.

#### **4.3.5 Characteristics of Semi-structured interviews**

This section dealt with the characteristics of semi-structured interview as a data collection method used in the study. The following aspects are the features of semi-structured interview in qualitative research (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006):

- The interviewer and respondents take part in a proper meeting.
- The interviewer creates and utilises a 'talk with manage.' This is a list of inquiries and subjects that should be secured during the discussion, for the most part all together.
- The interviewer follows the guide yet can follow effective directions in the discussion that may wander from the guide when the individual feels this is fitting.

The researcher followed the following procedure for the interview:

- Made an appointment with the participants at a time that suit them.
- Arranged for a quite environment to conduct the interviews which was few of office premises at Capricorn FM station in Polokwane.
- Prepared a set of questions for the interview.
- Prepared mobile phone as a sound recording device.

The interviewer did the following before the interview:

- Thanked the participants for taking their time to partake in the study.
- Explained the process of what would happen and that it will be unstructured interview, so there will be follow up questions.
- Asked the permission to conduct the interview, take notes (Pen and Journal) and record everything that will be discussed.
- Each interview took 15-20 minutes.

The researcher transcribed audio into words. Transcribing is converting speech to text word for word to develop themes and sub-themes. Transcribing is a common practice when conducting interviews as it enables the researcher to perform analysis. Additionally, the researcher proofread the transcribed text and double check each word with the recordings. Fortunately, English was used to conduct all the interviews.

#### **4.3.6 Content analysis**

Content analysis can be utilised to locate and measure patterns in what the media produce. Krippendorff (2004: 18) define content analysis as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use ”. It also provides a systematic way of making inferences about patterns of images, printed words or verbal data in order to describe and quantify their meanings and to interpret their consequences (O’ Shaughnessy, Stadler & Casey, 2016). Content analysis helped to find patterns of the station tweets and described the meanings of tweets.

Content analysis can be used by media and communication scholars to locate and measure patterns in what the media actually produce (O' Shaughnessy, Stadler & Casey, 2016) by investigating representative content such as words that aspect in, for example, newspaper articles, explanations on a blog and political dialogues (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The researcher used this technique to explore texts, visuals, behavioural patterns of Capricorn FM's Twitter account on how they engage with their listeners and how to make sense of the content posted.

Data collection of this technique involves the following two step process:

- The researcher must analyse material and put them in a frequency table each characteristic or quality mentioned.
- The researcher must segment; the depiction of materials contemplated, the attributes and characteristics considered, a representation of the method, the measurable examination indicating the recurrence table and reaching determinations about the examples, topics found in the human communication (Williams, 2007).

The researcher followed the above-mentioned steps to collect, make sense and describe 898 tweets from Capricorn FM's Morning Drive and Afternoon Drive Twitter feeds from March 2020 to June 2020.

The research did the following to obtain tweets.

- Thanked the station for allowing the researcher to have access to the Capricorn FM Twitter account.
- Logged on Twitter account of Capricorn FM for tweets from March 2020 to June 2020.
- Selected only tweets from 6am-9pm which are for the Morning drive show and tweets from 3pm-6pm which were tweets for the Afternoon drive show.
- Recorded tweets after two days on Microsoft excel from 1<sup>st</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 to 1<sup>st</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

The researcher transcribed each tweet to a numeric sequence that represented both tweets from the Morning drive and Afternoon drive shows.

#### **4.4 DATA ANALYSIS METHODS**

For this section of the study the researcher used two different data analysis methods for qualitative and quantitative data. According to Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2000: 149) data analysis is “conducted so the scientist can identify predictable example inside the information, for example, the consistence covariance of two or more variables”. Additionally, data analysis is about understanding the collected data to draw conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry (Babbie, 2008).

In addition, a rational research for the interviews conducted with the aim of giving a clear identification of the general thinking of Capricorn FM employees responsible for operating the Twitter account of the radio station. The researcher transcribed data recorded interviews into words to develop themes and sub-themes. Additionally, the researcher paraphrased common ideas emanated from transcribed words.

The researcher used thematic analysis for qualitative data which identified themes in their data that they had not specified prior to conducting the research (Ezzy, 2002). All these aspects helped the research to transform from a descriptive structure into having a deeper understanding of themes, concepts and meaning that emerged from the data. Thematic analysis has also been defined as a method for identifying analysis and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Williamson & Wittakor, 2014).

In terms of the results presentation, the researcher displayed using expressive themes. Transcribed data and notes were analysed thematically by grouping them in order to identify repeated aspects that can help to develop new themes. Additionally, the themes showcased the variations and thoughts of Capricorn FM employees responsible for the station’s Twitter account.

Twitter feeds assisted with the aim of showing the description and the pattern of tweets of Capricorn FM radio station.

Quantitatively data was analysed using SPSS. It is defined as an inclusive software package that permits individual to import or enter data straight into spreadsheet environment, use and analyse the data and generate tables of graphic statistics to



include a variety of graphs and charts (Rovial, Barker & Ponton, 2013). The researcher used SPSS v24.0 Windows-based computer.

The researcher used SPSS v24.0 to determine how often the station tweets, the type of content that is posted on the Twitter account, how often the station uses Twitter to engage with listeners and how listeners engage with the station on Twitter. SPSS generates descriptive statistics to present, summarise and describe quantitative data in a manageable way (Black, 1999). However, descriptive statistics are frequently used to show data in a sensible technique using graphs, charts and percentiles (Taylor, 2005).

When the data was captured into SPSS, the researcher was able to create diagrams and charts in a functional manner to present and interpret the tweets, which in this case are data. This was possible as the SPSS v24.0 has option to generalise how individual want to present data by selecting few variables.

#### **4.5 QUALITY CRITERIA**

Since this was a mixed method research, the researcher discussed the quality criteria of both qualitative and quantitative research. In direction to maintain quality in the study, qualitative research requires credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Roller & Paul, 2015). The criteria for qualitative research are as follows:

**Credibility** – this has to do with precision with which the researcher interprets data provided by the participants (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014). The study described and established the subject of the study accurately and identified the subject of the study.

**Transferability** – this narrates to an alternative to external validity or generalisability, in which the problem of representing applicability of one set of results to another framework rests more with the investigator who would make the transfer (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delpont, 2005). To confirm transferability the outcomes of the study were applicable to comparable situations or entities.

**Reliability** – this discusses the quality of the method of incorporation that takes place between data collection method, data analysis and the theory created from the information (Shenton, 2004; Collins & Hussey, 2003). The researcher challenged to

account for varying settings in the phenomenon selected for study as well as variations in the design created by a gradually distinguished consideration of setting.

Confirmability – the application of the same reliability audit to inspect evidence in the data that purportedly supports the researcher's results, interpretations and recommendations (Roller & Paul, 2015). To ensure confirmability the researcher documented the procedure for inspection and reinspection of the data throughout the study.

Quantitative research requires internal validity, external validity, reliability and objectivity for the measurability of the results (Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davies & Bezuidenhout, 2014).

Internal validity – Gay and Airasian (2000: 345) define internal validity as "the condition that detected differences on the dependent variable are a direct outcome of the self-regulating variable, not some other variable". This was achieved by creating no errors in the design of the study even though any study always has minor errors. The researcher rectified all errors and avoided errors as much as possible during data collection and data analyses.

External validity – Johnson and Christensen (2000: 200) define external validity as "the level to which the outcomes of a study can be generalised to and across populations, backgrounds, and periods". It was achieved by confirming the extent to which the method designated reflected the reality of the concept that is being investigated. Validity was also achieved by confirming that should there be another research using the same sample the results will be the same as those of the current study.

Reliability – this refers to value of the measurement method, suggesting that the comparable information would have been gathered each time in repetitive observations of the similar phenomena (Babbie, 2010). Reliability was achieved through consistency where the researcher involved different methods and individual interviews. The researcher was consistent throughout the research during data collection and data analyses.

Objectivity – the value drawn from positivism that, as far as likely, researchers should remain separated from what they study. Therefore, results rely on the nature of what was studied rather than on the behaviour, beliefs and ethics of the researcher (Payne & Payne, 2005). The researcher achieved this by not using their opinion and remained unattached to the study.

#### **4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

This section explains the ethical consideration of the study. Most institutions require that certain ethical consideration be adhered to when conducting research, especially when human beings are involved (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014).

Ethics provide procedures in terms of what can be considered adequate and improper behaviour, which refers to approaches, procedures or perceptions that can help the researcher on how to act, analyse complex issues and what is considered acceptable issues.

Firstly, the researcher was granted an ethical clearance to engage with the participants where the researcher had a letter of permission from Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) to conduct a research study at Capricorn FM. The letter explained the researchers' study topic that needed employees from the station to participate in. Additionally, the researcher contacted Capricorn FM through an email about the study with an attachment of gatekeeping letter and the ethical clearance. One of the employees from the station later contacted the researcher for a schedule with dates and time to interview relevant employees with knowledge about the use of Twitter by the station.

All the participants of the study participated voluntarily. The researcher explained to the participants that being part of the study is on voluntary basis – was not paid. Informed consent forms were given to all the participants. All participants signed the consent forms before the researcher interview and record them. These forms are used for legal measures if the researcher comes across them and to avoid inconvenient distress.

All participants remained anonymous in the study, together with the information that was disclosed. All participants were interviewed separately in the comfort of their

offices or working space to ensure privacy. All participants were not put under any risk or discomfort to force and threaten them to participate. The study did not falsify the results or reveal any Capricorn FM secret information that the researcher might have been advised to be kept confidential.

The researcher additionally promised to avail all the findings of the study to the station and respondents who might request it. With regard to all the participants' information the researcher kept them confidential and did not use them without the participant's permission. The researcher informed the participants about the purpose of the study. All the participants understood the topic before the interview and were interviewed once they agreed to be part of the study.

Lastly plagiarism was circumvented by noting all scholars, academics, author and sources of information that the study employed or referenced. The Harvard referencing style was utilised in the research study to ensure proper acknowledgement of the sources used.

#### **4.7 RESEARCH PROCEDURE**

It is significant to classify the advantages and disadvantages of this study and to assess the level of evidence and degree of recommendation. One of the advantages of this study was the use of two research methods, thereby eliminating some limitations that could have been had just one research method been used instead. This study was a concurrent research design where all procedures such as data collection and data analysis were conducted simultaneously. Concurrent research design helped to prioritise both research approaches.

The sampled population was selected purposively to explain the benefits of using Twitter sites as a tool for listeners' engagement through interviews as not all the population had enough knowledge about the operation of Twitter by the station. Additionally, the researcher accessed the Twitter feeds of Capricorn FM Morning Drive and Afternoon Drive Shows that show how Twitter could be used as a tool to engage more with listeners.

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners on Capricorn FM. Evaluation of the station was consistent with the design of

the study and the methodology as the researcher used semi- structured interviews to be able to explain how Capricorn FM station integrates Twitter into their programming. The researcher also used content analysis to describe and interpret tweets of Capricorn FM on Twitter.

Data were collected in a way that helped to address the aim and objectives of this study. Furthermore, semi-structured and content analysis assisted in answering the research question of this study such as: “how does the station integrates Twitter content into programming?”

Both thematic analysis and SPSS data analysis techniques supported in achieving the aim and objectives of this study. Furthermore, in order to maintain the quality of the study both qualitative and quantitative criteria was used. The study described and established the subject accurately and identified the subject of the outcomes of the study was applicable to comparable situations or entities. The researcher documented the procedure for thorough inspection of the data during interviews and content analysis throughout the study.

Additionally, for the researcher to achieve the aim of the study, purpose and objectives no errors were created in the design even though any study always has small errors. This was achieved by confirming the extent at which the method designated reflects the reality of the concept that is being investigated, through consistency where the researcher involved different methods and individual interviews, and by not using their opinion and by remaining unattached to the study.

As mentioned in Chapter one, the findings of this study contribute towards the existing information about Twitter and radio and, to reveal information on Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation used by radio stations in South Africa. Lastly, to describe information on audience participation issues experienced by a Limpopo Province’s first commercial radio station and add knowledge relating to factors that influence and affect audience participation.

#### **4.8 SUMMARY AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 5**

This chapter focused on the research methodology. It presented the research methods used, qualitative and quantitative methods; the methodology presented in this chapter

also entailed the research design, and the method that used to gather data, the population and the sampling procedures. The qualitative and quantitative research methods descriptions were discussed and restructured. Furthermore, data collection techniques and data analysis methods for both methods were identified.

Chapter five encapsulates data analysis and interpretation.

## **CHAPTER 5: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents data analysis and interpretation. The data were collected through the two research methods employed in the study. The data were collected to evaluate whether the use of Twitter to engage with audience is effective in a commercial radio station, the state of Twitter and how it is integrated in radio to engage with listeners. The data concentrated largely on how radio uses Twitter to engage their audiences; the type of content audience engage with; how audiences engage with the radio station on Twitter; engagement growth; effectiveness of Twitter; benefits and advantages of using Twitter. These aspects comprehended the research problem and helped to address it while fulfilling the objectives that were also set out.

Additionally, these aspects formed part of the various themes and description for the data presentation. Qualitatively, themes were refined into sub-themes to focus on details that bring a multi-layered insight into research while descriptive statistics present, summarise and describe quantitative data in a manageable manner. Themes and descriptions of the research findings were presented on different measures such as reports and charts.

### **5.2 RESEARCH AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

#### **5.2.1 The research aim**

The aim of the study was to evaluate and explore how Twitter is used as an engagement strategy for listeners' participation on Capricorn FM. Since the study used mixed methods, interview questions helped to provide a platform for employees at the radio stations that are responsible for content on Twitter and explained how they use Twitter as an engagement strategy.

Twitter feeds of Capricorn FM helped to provide content on how listeners participate with the station and described how Capricorn FM station integrates Twitter, a social media platform, into their programming.

#### **5.2.2 Research questions**

As already discussed in chapter one of the dissertation based on the purpose of the study, the research questions and sub-questions were as follows:

- a) Why does the station have a Twitter account?
- b) What kind of content is posted on the account in terms of news, information or entertainment?
- c) Which content do audiences mostly engage with?
- d) How does the station integrate Twitter content into programming?
- e) Do you use Twitter to influence audience participation?
- f) How do you use Twitter to influence audience participation?

The objectives of the study were to describe how Capricorn FM station integrate Twitter into their programming; explore how Twitter can be used as a tool to engage more with listeners; and explain the benefits of using Twitter sites as a tool for listeners' engagement. To meet the aim and objectives, this chapter presents the most relevant qualitative and quantitative findings and the analyses of the study.

In content analysis, most of the texts from Twitter were generic to get a better understanding of how Twitter is used by the Capricorn FM radio station and how they engage with their listeners. The text further probed a better understanding of the content the radio station post, what shows are on air, what to expect throughout the show as well as views of the audiences.

This section deals with face-to-face interviews conducted with different employees of Capricorn FM, and the specific demographics of the employees are different gender, different roles and different perspectives on the relationship of use between Twitter and radio. The results are derived from these interviews and data gathered from their responses which are specifically focused on the use of Twitter by their radio station and how they use tweets to engage with their listeners.

Thematic analysis is a method of analysing qualitative data gathered and is usually applied to interviews transcript. The researcher closely examined the data to identify common themes, ideas or patterns of meaning that came up repeatedly in the transcript of interviews. This was a good approach as the researcher was trying to find



out perception, views, opinions, knowledge and experience of Capricorn employees about Twitter.

### **5.3 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEWS**

In face-to-face interviews, some questions posed were generic to get a better understanding of where the commercial radio, Capricorn FM station's mind-set is and to have a broader take on the respondents understanding of Twitter and as an engagement tool. The interviews further probed respondents to offer insights into radio and Twitter, as well as their views of where radio is heading in terms of how digital technologies have transformed it. The questions asked included questions on policies and issues that affect radio integrating Twitter into their programmes and how radio stations without an active Twitter account could adapt and ensure survival.

The participants of the study were asked a set of questions regarding their role at the station, the kind of content they post, the benefits of using Twitter, the factors that influence audience participation on Twitter, how digital technologies are changing the culture and tradition of radio. The participants were also asked to outline how they integrate Twitter content into their programmes to provide insight in the content that listeners engage with mostly.

The following discussion highlights the responses to the face-to-face interviews that were conducted with the assistance of audio recording of the interview. All the participants remain anonymous due to the information discussed for the course of the study. The participant's views and ideas were analysed according to the following themes: Employee demographics; Twitter account profile of the station; content listeners engage with; target audience and reach; influence and benefits of audience participation on Twitter; the use of Twitter for issues related to the station and the policies that uphold the station; and the disadvantages of not using Twitter.

#### **5.3.1 Capricorn FM employee demographics**

This sub-section provides details of the participants used in this study in terms of gender and roles the participants play at the station.

**Table 5.1: Participants Profile**

<b>Participants n. o</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Role(s)</b>
1.	Female	Head of digital content producer
2.	Female	Head of news and sports
3.	Male	Sports reporter
4.	Female	News reporter
5.	Female	Producer
6.	Male	Producer
7.	Male	Producer
8.	Female	Presenter
9.	Male	Presenter
10.	Female	Presenter
11.	Female	Deputy News Editor
12.	Female	Online content producer
13.	Female	Marketing manager

The participants of the study were 13 and the roles of the participants as employees of the station were a mixture of this nature: two heads of department; two readers (News and Sport); three producers; three presenters; one deputy news editor; one online content creator; and one marketing manager. The two heads of department were both females, one sports presenter was a male, while the news reader was a female. Two of the producers were female while one was a male; and two of the presenters were female and one male. The deputy news editor, marketing manager and online content creator were all females.

The demographic characteristics of the participants show that the majority (09 out 13) of the participants were females and male participants were only four (4). Thus, this shows that employees responsible for Twitter are predominately females at the commercial radio station, Capricorn FM in the Limpopo Province, South Africa.

### 5.3.2 Themes and sub-themes emerged during data analysis

Themes and sub-themes reflect how Capricorn FM employees use Twitter to engage with listeners and how Twitter is integrated into programmes are discussed as follows.

Five themes and 26 subthemes have emerged during the data analysis of the research findings on the use and integration of Twitter into programmes to engage with listeners in a commercial radio station in Limpopo Province.

The main themes developed are:

- a) Creation of Twitter account profile for Capricorn FM;
- b) Influence and benefits of using Twitter for audience participation;
- c) Content listeners easily engage with. Disadvantages of not using Twitter; and
- d) The future of radio.

The summary of themes and sub-themes emerged are presented below.

**Table 5.2: Themes and sub-themes**

<b>MAIN THEMES</b>	<b>SUB-THEMES</b>
<b>1. Creation of Twitter account profile for Capricorn FM.</b>	1.1 Description of the creation of the Twitter account 1.2 The importance of creating the Twitter account 1.3 Employees responsible for the management of the account 1.4 Schedule to post on the account 1.5 Notification of Twitter account
<b>2. Influence and benefits of using Twitter</b>	2.1 Content that influence participation and help understand listeners 2.2 Reaching and attracting new listeners 2.3 Creation and gathering of content for reporting

	<p>2.4 Instant information for Twitter</p> <p>2.5 Broadcast live for field events</p> <p>2.6 Monitoring of Capricorn FM reputation and views of listeners about the station</p> <p>2.7 Marketing for existing and attracting new clients</p> <p>2.8 Promotion of shows</p> <p>2.9 The use of Twitter and issues related to the station policies that uphold the station</p>
<b>3. Content listeners easily engage with for participation</b>	<p>3.1 Content that different target market finds easy to engage with</p> <p>3.2 Efforts to create content engageable</p> <p>3.3 Explanations of how different shows create participation</p>
<b>4. Disadvantages of not using Twitter</b>	<p>4.1 Lowers chances of engaging new audience</p> <p>4.2 Loose revenues for marketing purposes and a new platform to advertise</p> <p>4.3 Missing out on a different platform to recruit new listeners</p> <p>4.4 Build a barrier to communicate openly and know listeners needs and enjoys</p> <p>4.5 Rare to find a radio station without a Twitter account</p>
<b>5. The future of radio</b>	<p>5.1 Facets are yet to change</p>

	<p>5.2 Possibilities to operate, produced and broadcast anywhere</p> <p>5.3 Storable and shareable content</p> <p>5.4 More opportunities for radio operation and production</p>
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### 5.3.2.1 THEME 1: Creation of Twitter account profile for Capricorn FM.

The findings indicated that Capricorn FM officially opened a Twitter account in 2013 to communicate and engage with listeners. This was evident in the following sub-themes that have emerged from this theme.

#### Sub-themes

- 1.1 Description of the creation of the Twitter account
- 1.2 The importance of creating the Twitter account
- 1.3 Employees responsible for the management of the account
- 1.4 Schedule to post on the account
- 1.5 Notification of Twitter account

#### Sub-theme 1.1: Description of the creation of the Twitter account

The findings of the study exposed that the commercial radio station created a Twitter account to communicate with listeners and to post content online for listeners. Few months after the creation of the account there were few followers compared to now with 35080 followers. Since the creation of the account there are hundreds and thousands of tweets, retweets and likes; although the number of followers and quantity of tweets were not related. The station's Twitter account has much content posted on it as possible to keep it active and relevant.

The findings are supported by participant 02 who said, *"The account has about 81080 tweets that the station have twitted, that contain different content or information for the main account while there is another account for news which has about 118900 tweets"*.

The findings, therefore, show that Capricorn FM has a Twitter account created to serve different purposes, depending on the content. The account is used to tweet different information as such there are two accounts created that belong to the radio station.

### **Sub-theme 1.2: The importance of creating the Twitter account**

The study findings discovered that Capricorn FM opened a Twitter account as a need to meet listeners' expectations of a commercial radio station. As a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM is expected to have appealing platforms that are trendy to engage with listeners.

The finding, therefore, suggests that it was important to create a Twitter account for Capricorn FM and to further have two separate accounts for listeners to differentiate content for their different preferences. This appears to be a significant move, having two Twitter accounts, as it enables the station to separate content and for listeners to know where to go for news content.

The findings were supported by participant 02: *"As the station, we decided in 2013 to open a Twitter account to engage with listeners, besides other platforms. This was important as we need to have different platforms to cater for all our listeners"*. Another participant, participant 01 added that: *"Because of news that are read by everyone we further decided to open another account for news"*.

The findings were further supported by participant 02 who said: *"News start at 6am until 7pm and the account is active throughout the day as we use it to update listeners with headlines, news stories and provide pictures and videos to support the news stories"*. Another participant, 04, added that: *"I sometimes search for news on Twitter by checking the trends and visit a credited Twitter account of other News organisation"*.

Therefore, the findings show that Twitter can further be used to gather and to report news, as it enables news reporters to use it to scout for news even though reporters should always verify their facts before reporting.

### **Sub-theme 1.3: Employees responsible for the management of the account**

The finding illustrated that only few employees of the station manage the Twitter account. Participant 02 said: *"I edit and oversee most of the content as content should*

*be double checked to confirm its quality for the account*". In most cases the content must be short and precise as Twitter allows a certain number of characters on one post.

The findings were confirmed by participant 01: *"It is important to have few people responsible for the page; that helps to avoid the repetition of content. Opening the account has been the best decision the station took as it has opened some opportunities for the station"*. Throughout the day it is important for the employee to keep an eye on the account to monitor activities and content. It therefore implies that only two or three of the participants manage the content posted on the Twitter account of the station, and these two or three employees can be responsible should there be issues or any predicament concerning the account.

#### **Sub-theme 1.4: Schedule to post on the account**

The findings of the study revealed that there is no formula or specific time to post even though it is relevant for some show programmes. Since the station have two separate Twitter accounts, the News account does not have a specific time schedule, as at any moment news that are trendy and of public knowledge may come up, and listeners may need to know about; therefore, the timeline of the News account should have that content.

The finding was supported by participant 02 who said: *"Content such as news are not scheduled as news are worthy throughout the day. We normally post news that go on air and content that support the stories reported such as pictures and videos. What you find on air you are likely to read about it on the News account timeline"*.

Another participant 012 added that: *"Some programmes invite participation by sticking to a time frame to allow listeners to comment on the issue raised. For example, there is the Afternoon show drive between 3pm and 6pm which has a feature where listeners write to us a scenario of their real-life problems to ask for advices from other listeners"*.

The findings, therefore, show that it is not necessary to have a schedule to tweet, it depends on the type of account content is posted.

### **Sub-theme 1.5: Notifications of Twitter account**

The study identified that not every employee gets the notifications of the Twitter account such as who likes, retweets or replies to the content posted on the station's Twitter account. Notifications are linked to those in control, and it is they who regularly check to monitor the account's activities.

This was confirmed by participant 011 who indicated that: *“Part of my job is to monitor trends and post most of the content on the account. It is easy for me to reply to replies from listeners and see who likes and retweets as I spent the whole day on Twitter. I also monitor all our other social media platforms”*.

Furthermore, participant 012 added that: *“As part of marketing it is great to be on a good note with the public. Should it be that we are trending, or a listener has a bad opinion about the station or something does not sit well with them, we should be notified of such to do damage control before it builds a bad name to our clients for who we use Twitter to advertise”*.

The findings, therefore, show that only few employees responsible for the Twitter account receive notification. It is important to receive notifications to monitor activities around the account. Furthermore, it is important not to have many people receiving notifications of the account, as four people can attend to the same issue thereby causing confusion on the account timeline, unlike when the account is handled by only one person.

### **5.3.2.2 THEME 2: Influence and benefits of using Twitter**

The findings of the study identified a wide range of benefits and influences associated with using Twitter as a tool for audience participation. Current trends influence participation, help reach and attract new listeners. Creating content that listeners are familiar and engageable with is outlined in the following sub-theme:

#### **Sub-themes**

2.1 Content that influence participation and help understand listeners

2.2 Reaching and attracting new listeners



2.3 Creation and gathering of content for reporting

2.4 Instant information for Twitter

2.5 Broadcast live for field events

2.6 Monitoring of Capricorn FM reputation and views of listeners about the station

2.7 Marketing for existing and attracting new clients

2.8 Promotion of shows

2.9 The use of Twitter and issues related to the station policies that uphold the station

### **Sub-theme 2.1: Content that influence participation and help understand listeners**

Employees that were interviewed articulated that content is very essential to identify and to anticipate listeners' reaction, that helps to understand the type of content listeners are more likely to engage with.

The above view was illustrated by participant 07 who said: *"Trends and current affairs mostly influence the participation of listeners on Twitter. Trends such as what is trending on Twitter bring influence as we try to simplify content for their understanding; that way they understand and engage"*. Participant 04 also added that: *"Current trends drive the participation and help the station to understand better what appears interesting to the listener to further understand their need. Since the outbreak of Corona Virus, listeners have flocked to our Twitter page or news to get clarity and to stay updated"*. This helps in preparing content for listeners.

Participant 05 observed: *"Listeners engage with real life stories. In the afternoon we have a 30 minutes slot where we ask listeners real life issues such as problems, they are encountering in their love lives and ask others who have experienced the same issues to help with advices. This content is educative and informative for listeners"*.

Participant 09 added that: *"Listeners tend to engage with polls where they vote for music chats and vote for 'the number one song' for the week or vote for best five songs"*

*of the week. Music polls are considered entertainment content. Furthermore, music polls help the station to understand music that is mostly appraised by listeners and help the music department with creating playlists for different shows". Participant 07 noted that: "Listeners loves winning or rewards, hence they are more participative when there are competitions. The station runs competitions monthly; the competitions are featured mostly on Morning shows".*

These findings conclude that current affairs, music polls, competitions, real life issues and trending topics invite the participation of listeners because listeners find the content interesting and engageable. The findings further suggest that Capricorn FM should always be aware of what is trending and be up-to date with what is going on around the world.

### **Sub-theme 2.2: Reaching and attracting new listeners**

The findings outline that the station benefits from using Twitter as it attracts new listeners. Retweets and likes to help the station reach new listeners through their interaction with old listeners and interaction with the station's Twitter account.

Participant 08: *"Listeners retweet the station's tweets, like the content. That means our listeners' followers get to see their posts which the station's tweets are; that way their followers are likely to tune in as long as the content is more appealing to them".*

Participant 010 said: *"Our Twitter header has transmitters and frequency all the time. This is to accommodate new listeners to tune in, unlike having to ask us on Twitter what the frequency is. In some comments we recognise new listeners when they comment that they have enjoyed the show and it is their first-time tuning in".*

These findings suggest that Capricorn FM benefits from using Twitter by increasing their listenership. The findings further suggest that Twitter influences an increase of listenership with the help from old listeners, even though it was not one of the station's strategies to increase listenership.

### **Sub-theme 2.3: Creation and gathering of content for reporting**

The study demonstrated that the production and operation of radio has changed since the invention of Twitter. Production is vital because it is the content that keeps loyal

listeners and attracts new ones. Additionally, operation changes as new technologies arise and bring new creative and promising way to stay relevant in news reporting and show producing.

Participant 02 said: *"In the morning I check what is trending on Twitter before we have a brainstorm session with journalist, where we come up with leads story and decides who reports on what for the day. Checking our Twitter account helps me to know what is trending that is newsworthy"*.

Participant 04 said: *"It is important to lookout for news online, be it social media or on a trusted news website; that way we are able to report news that is current. This means I use Twitter to collect news ideas; however, it is important to double check and verify the stories before reporting"*.

Participant 011 added that: *"Capricorn FM news account has more full stories than those we report on air. With Twitter we are able to provide our listeners with pictures and videos since on air we can only play audios"*. The findings of the study imply that Capricorn FM uses Twitter to report and collect news for listeners. Additionally, to ensure that their news reporting is fair and truthful they verify them before reporting.

#### **Sub-theme 2.4: Instant information provider**

The findings of the study show that it is important to post on the timeline of a Twitter account and stay active. This was further confirmed by participants who verbalised the following.

Participant 012: *"We perceive Twitter as an instant information provider which is why it is essential to post content that is more informative"*. Participant 01 added that: *"One of our purposes as a radio station is to provide information and keep our listeners informed. What is said on air you are likely to find it on our Twitter account. A Twitter frequent user to our account is more informed than the one tuned in"*.

This concludes that Capricorn FM uses Twitter to instantly inform listeners. The content found on air is also found on Twitter. It further implies that listeners who cannot tune in for news updates can still read headlines on Twitter.

### **Sub-theme 2.5: Broadcast live**

The findings suggest that Twitter is used to broadcast live for studio interviews or performance. Additionally, it can be used to broadcast live from field events, be it for news reporting or marketing event for the station.

This is confirmed by Participant 013 who said: *“We are encouraged to go live when we are at events for marketing purposes, to invite more people to events and to show people that the event is indeed happening”*. Another participant 09 added that: *“As some listeners have never met us in person, live broadcast shows them what we do when we are in the studio presenting; also, this gives them an idea of what is happening on events we talk about on air”*.

This means that Twitter has an option not only to write on the timeline but to also go live. Additionally, Twitter helps the station to go live on events they want to broadcast and show to their listeners via Twitter.

### **Sub-theme 2.6: Monitoring of Capricorn FM reputation and views of listeners about the station**

The findings of the study identified that even though Capricorn FM radio station uses Twitter to communicate with listeners, they might not be on a good impression for all the listeners. What is a better way to communicate when one does not like content? Listeners use Twitter to send reviews of the station on how they feel, be it a presenter's skill or the content presented on shows.

This is confirmed by participant 013, who said: *“Even though we use Twitter to communicate with our listeners they also use it to communicate with us. A listener once posted on our timeline that they could not get the number of a specialist who was in our studio. Further added that “some listeners once had bad comments about the station aiming to tarnish the stations’ image”*.

Participant 03 also added that: *“One time a listener did not like a certain sports commentator and the listener vied his opinion on how the presenter did not do justice to the soccer match”*.

The findings therefore suggest that listeners use Twitter communicate with the station. And further that, it is important to monitor what listeners are communicating to make sure that their comments are not harmful to the reputation of Capricorn FM as a brand.

### **Sub-theme 2.7: Marketing for existing and attracting new clients**

The findings of the study suggest that Twitter is used as a marketing tool to advertise products for clients. The station's marketing takes every opportunity to advertise, be it on air or Twitter. This is confirmed by participant 13, who noted; *"We post advertising content on Twitter and have on air adverts. We are sustained by marketing or our clients"*.

Participant 01 further added that: *"As a commercial radio station it is vital to advertise on every platform at any chance we got. Our clients depend on that. I was very happy to know that we can also use Twitter to advertise and we sometimes have competitions on different platforms to further advertise products for our clients"*.

### **Sub-theme 2.8: Promotion of shows**

The findings of the study suggest that most of the content on Twitter account of Capricorn FM comprise of the station' shows. Shows that are on air through-out the day are posted on the Twitter timeline to inform listeners about shows to expect and who presents on the show by posting the presenter's picture.

This is confirmed by participant 07 who said: *"A day before every show I send a rough structure of the show to the online content producer. We even have meetings with presenters and the online producer to brief each other about the content for on air shows and content for our social media platforms which include Twitter"*.

Participant 012 added that: *"I believe that to promote shows on Twitter prepares our listeners to know what to expect on the show, be it a competition time or teaser time. I further add pictures to the content to add the face to the voice that listeners hear on radio"*.

This notion creates a spectrum of how Twitter is changing the notion of radio been an unseen medium. The findings suggest that Capricorn FM uses Twitter to promote their shows. Additionally, Twitter is changing the idea of how broadcasters perceive it as an unseen medium that fascinates the mind of a listener by creating a certain face for the voice heard.

### **Sub-theme 2.9: The use of Twitter and issues related to the station policies that uphold the station**

Each organisation has policies and ethics that employees should adhere to. Such ethics make up an organisation as a brand that its employees represent. Capricorn FM employees represent their brand even on their personal Twitter account.

This is confirmed by participant 02 who said that: *“Every Capricorn FM employee must follow basic rules on how they conduct themselves even on their personal social media account. Employees are part of the Capricorn FM brand and are expected to uphold themselves in a good manner for the brand they work for”*.

Participant 011 said that: *“Sometimes listeners check my personal account for news; therefore, I post content that is fair, objective, truthful and does not amend to hate speech. It is also important to add on my personal account that I work at Capricorn FM, as it helps to grow my account and listenership from my friends on social media”*.

Participant 01 added that: *“What employees post on their personal account somehow reflects what they believe in, what they stand for and it must not conflict with what their employers stand for. As soon as I was employed by Capricorn FM, I became careful of what I post, what I engage in and what I share”*.

The findings reveal that employees become the brand that they work for. Employees should follow their work ethics even on their personal social media accounts to avoid scandal and bringing bad reputation to their organisation. Policies and ethics should not be complied with only at work, but even in one’s personal social space.

The findings, therefore, suggest that Capricorn FM benefits from the use of Twitter besides influence and being used as an engagement tool to engage with listeners. Content details are the influencer of participation.

### 5.3.2.3 THEME 3: Content listeners easily engage with for participation

Employees that were interviewed suggested that it is not all content that listeners engage with as some contents are easy to engage with while some are not. These contents are reflected in the following sub-themes:

#### Sub-themes

3.1 Content that different target market finds easy to engage with

3.2 Efforts to create content engageable

3.3 Explanations of how different shows create participation

#### Sub-theme 3.1: Engagement with different target market

The findings revealed that not all the targeted market of the station engage with all content. The study indicates that content such as entertainment many of the target market find it easy to engage with. The station caters for audiences from 15 years old to a typical 45 years old. Additionally, not all the target audience are catered for by the station's use of Twitter.

Participant 01 said that: *"Youth from the age of 25-38 years is our primary target audience and they mostly engage, hence the station's content is more appealing for such an audience"*.

Participant 012 observed that: *"It is significant for the station to know the target audience as it helps to prepare content and be creative in a relevant way for such an audience"*.

Twitter is mostly used by the same age group that is Capricorn FM's target audience. Moreover, participant 09 added that: *"Followers on Twitter are middle class and it comes handy to know that we have such a target audience as we will assume that our target audience uses Twitter and has a Twitter account"*.

#### Sub-theme 3.2: Efforts to create content engageable

The findings suggest that the station takes initiatives to make content on Twitter engageable and relatable. For as it stands, with content that is engageable listeners tend to engage with and that can be through likes, retweets and replies.

Participant 01 confirms that: *“Our content on Twitter are concise and simple for listeners to read. Additionally, we sometimes use different languages that are mostly spoken in our Limpopo Province. That is Sepedi, Tsonga and Venda”*. Participant 07 further added that: *“We use hashtags that are fun and short. We further post funny video and pictures”*.

Another participant 07 added that: *“Our station has a variety of official languages speakers. We try to make the content as local as possible”*. The findings imply that Capricorn FM station’s employees work hard to keep their Twitter account local, relatable and engageable and participative for the audience.

### **Sub-theme 3.3: Explanations of how different shows create participation**

It is essential for every show to have participative listeners, as this shows that somewhere out there are listeners paying attention. Each show may use different strategies according to its target audience, but the whole idea is to make listeners participate.

Participant 06 noted: *“Most of the content that we post on Twitter during the show are question like, which means they ask our listeners questions. A good example is a midday show where we are asking how listeners’ day is going, what they are upto or what made their day”*.

Another participant 05, said: *“We sometimes invite guests or performers in our studio to create participation by asking our listeners to send their questions to the guests. This means we grant our listeners an opportunity to ask any question”*.

Findings reveal that it is essential for each and every show to have audience participation. Content for each show together with presenters and producers need to keep the show alive.



#### **5.2.3.4 THEME 4: Disadvantages of not using Twitter**

The findings of the study identified a wide range of the advantages and benefits of using Twitter. A lack of Twitter account for a station could result in disadvantages that may not benefit either the station or the listeners. Advantages are outlined in the following sub-themes:

##### **Sub-themes**

4.1 Lowers chances of engaging new audience

4.2 Loose revenues for marketing purposes and a new platform to advertise

4.3 Build a barrier to communicate openly and know listeners needs and enjoys

4.4 Rare to find a radio station without a Twitter account

##### **Sub-theme 4.1: Lowers chances of engaging with new audience**

The findings suggest that a radio station without an active Twitter account is lowering platforms to engage with their listeners. It is essential to use all different platforms to engage with loyal audiences and new ones.

This was confirmed by Participant 02 who said that: *“Not using Twitter for audience engagement and using will have an effect on listenership growth and are losing an opportunity to use a new platform of engaging with new audience”*.

Participant 03 said: *“We learn new things everyday as the station and I also believe that our listeners also learn something, therefore as a station not to be up to date will mean a loss on recruiting new audiences that love trying new things”*.

Participant 08 further added that: *“A radio station not using Twitter will grow their listenership slowly as people are always online and Twitter sometimes reminds them to tune in as soon as they see content that is interesting. Reading engageable content on Twitter is easier to engage with”*.

##### **Sub-theme 4.2: Loose revenues for marketing purposes and a new platform to advertise**

The findings suggest that Twitter can be used as a marketing tool to advertise for clients. As such, not using Twitter is a loss on revenues for the commercial radio station. Additionally, the station will not be able to recruit new clients to advertise for.

Participant 013 said in this regard: *“When we do marketing campaign, we also create some content for Twitter, that way we use all our digital platforms to advertise. A radio station without a Twitter account is losing out on using this platform for advertising”*.

Participant 010 further added that: *“Sometimes when we announce on air about certain products and we tend to let listeners to go to Twitter for more information. We refer listeners to Twitter knowing that there will be pictures to accompany the products”*.

This implies that Twitter is used as a marketing tool to advertise for the station’s clients.

#### **Sub-theme 4.3: Build a barrier to communicate openly and know listeners needs and enjoys**

Communication between listeners and a radio station is essential. Any communication channel that is open gives listeners an opportunity to engage and communicate with a radio station. In light of this, Twitter is considered an open communication channel for users.

Participant 03 and Participant 07 said that: *“A radio station without Twitter is lacking an instant communication channel between them and their listeners”*. Another participant, 08, added that: *“Sometimes listeners use Twitter to send reviews of the show or of a certain presenter”*. A radio station without Twitter will never experience such reviews from their listeners. The study assumes, therefore, that Twitter is a great communication channel between listeners and a radio station.

#### **Sub-theme 4.4: Rare to find a radio station without a Twitter account**

In a new era where most mass media are using new technologies to improve and upgrade it is rare to find an organisation that does not use Twitter. This was confirmed

by participant 04 who said that: *“With new technologies it would be rare to find a radio station without a Twitter account”*.

Participant 07 added that: *“Any radio station can have a Twitter account, but the issue should be its activeness, observing how often content is posted, the type of content posted and how the account is managed”*.

The study implies that most of radio stations in a digital era have a Twitter account. However, it is important to keep a Twitter account of a radio station active to engage with listeners and to provide them with different content.

### **5.3.2.5 THEME 5: The future of radio**

The employees who were interviewed came along with suggestion on how the future of radio would be like considering the invention of digital technologies in radio. How radio would be in the future is discussed in the following sub-themes.

#### **Sub-themes**

5.1 Possibilities to operate, produced and broadcast anywhere

5.2 Storable and shareable content

5.3 More opportunities for radio operation and production

#### **Sub-theme 5.1: Possibilities to operate, produced and broadcast anywhere**

The findings reflect that with the growth of new technologies radio will have new possibilities to operate differently. Radio will be produced and broadcast anywhere comfortable for presenters. This is confirmed by participant 011 who said that: *“In the future, broadcaster will be able to broadcast from home or anywhere they are. There will be no need to be in the studio to go on air”*.

Participant 06 said: *“We are now able to broadcast on events unlike before where we can only broadcast in studio. We also have radio stations on DSTV bouquet, where listeners can listen to us around the world. If such is possible now, imagine where and how things will be like in 5 years’ time”*.

This highlights how radio in the future will change in how it operates, it is produced and broadcasted. Moreover, it will be more flexible.

### **Sub-theme 5.2: Storable and shareable content**

The finding implies that new technologies have enabled radio content to be stored and shared easily. In the future it will also be more shareable and stored than now.

This is confirmed by participants 09 who confirmed that: *“Currently they can record shows and listen at a later stage. We call such a function podcast; this is where listeners who were unable to catch certain shows or interviews can catch-up”*.

Another participant 05 added that: *“The more radio is able to keep up with new technologies the more chances it stands with a bright future. In the future listeners will be able to store radio content anywhere and share everywhere. Who would have thought that we will be able to listen to radio in our own cars or even our mobile phones?”*

Participant 07 additionally said that: *“In future we will be able to retrieve radio content storable in archives and listen with our grandchildren and allow us to share with our loved ones to remind them of old times. You-tube has already had that option, some radio stations take videos of their presenters and posted them there”*.

This confirms how radio in the future will be advanced on how it is stored, accessed and shared as anything is possible with new technologies. Radio stations must keep up in this digital era to be able to continue serving their listeners.

### **Sub-theme 5.3: More opportunities for radio operation and production**

The findings reveal that new technologies will bring more opportunities in the future. Such opportunities will be in the operation and the production of radio. Operation such as broadcasting from home will grant technicians the opportunities to create and manufacture microphones and gadgets.

Participant 08 confirmed that: *“Since the station has a Twitter account, we had to hire an online content producer who was very informed about social media, social media marketing. That helped us a lot as a station”*. Another participant, 04, added that: *“As*

*of now our listeners are able to use internet to listen to us. For me this is the power of new technologies that such is possible. More opportunities are yet to come”.*

The findings, therefore, show that the facets and practice of radio will be in a different prospect in the coming years. Employees of Capricorn FM gave different perspectives with relevant examples of how far radio has come as a medium and how new technologies have changed some of its aspects so far.

### **5.3 REPORT: ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA**

This section deals with quantitative data collected through content analysis to help find patterns of how the station tweets and describes the meanings of tweets. The quantitative information was introduced in either table configuration or by diagrams and different designs. That is to introduce information outwardly for a quick comprehension. Every introduction of information gave a sign of numerical scores and rates as per related classifications to give a diagram of the gathering of information. Besides, the visual introduction of information (tables, diagrams, and charts) in numbers and rates empowered the researcher to offer an analytical description and understanding of information by methods for enlightening measurable descriptive statistical procedure.

#### **5.3.1 Content Analysis**

Content analysis technique assisted to explore texts, visuals, behavioural patterns of Capricorn FM's Twitter account from March 2020 to June 2020, on how the radio station engages with listeners and how to make sense of the content posted for the Morning and Afternoon drive shows. Most of the texts from the account were generic to get a better understanding of how Twitter is used by the radio station, and how they invite participation from listeners and how they engage with their listeners. The texts further probed a better understanding of the content that the radio station posts, what shows are on air, what to expect throughout the show as well as views of audiences on different topics of the shows.

The collected data from the content analysis were statistically transformed by means of SPSS v24.0 Windows-based computer. It offered the researcher the opportunity to present data visually and graphically. The results are discussed in a systematic order as they appear on the account and the transcript of content analysis. Firstly, the

demographic information about the Twitter account of Capricorn FM, how many followers, tweets and likes the station has from August 2010 when it was created.

The next discussion indicates tweets per month on the morning and afternoon drive shows; likes, retweets and replies of tweets per show and lastly the type of content the station posts are also discussed. The data permitted the researcher to obtain a picture and overview of the pattern of how and when the station tweets. The other section highlights information about the engagement of listeners, as well as which show listeners engage with frequently or mostly. The last section highlights an active participation between the station and listeners.

### 5.3.2 Profile of the Capricorn FM radio station

This sub-section provides details of Capricorn FM’s Twitter account profile variables starting from the name of the account to the year accounts started operating.

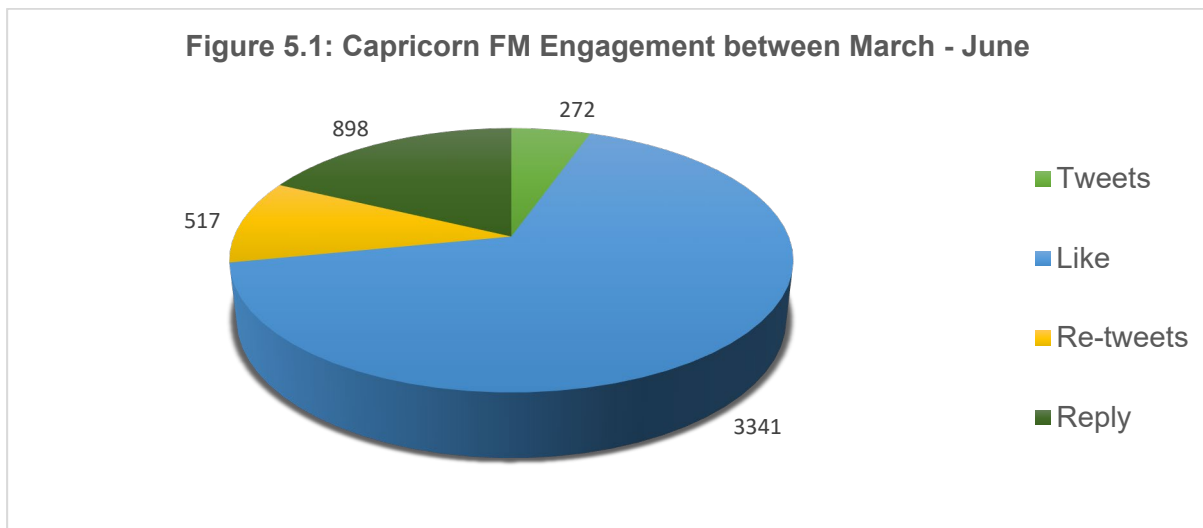
**Table 5.3: Profile of Capricorn FM Twitter account**

<b>Twitter account</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Followers</b>	<b>Follows</b>	<b>Tweets</b>	<b>Likes</b>
Capricorn FM	2010	114900	1202	81080	5130
Capricorn FM News	2013	35080	371	118900	617

Capricorn FM station has two different Twitter accounts where one is for news and the other one is for different shows. According the head of News and Sports, the station decided to open two different accounts to separate content and to able to deliver to their audiences; the accounts are named as this way: Capricorn FM and Capricorn FM News.

Capricorn FM Twitter account was created in August 2010 and has 114900 followers, 1201 that the station follows, 81080 tweets and 5130 likes by the station. Whereas Capricorn FM News Twitter account was created in 2013 and has 35080 followers, 317 follows, 118900 tweets and 617 likes.

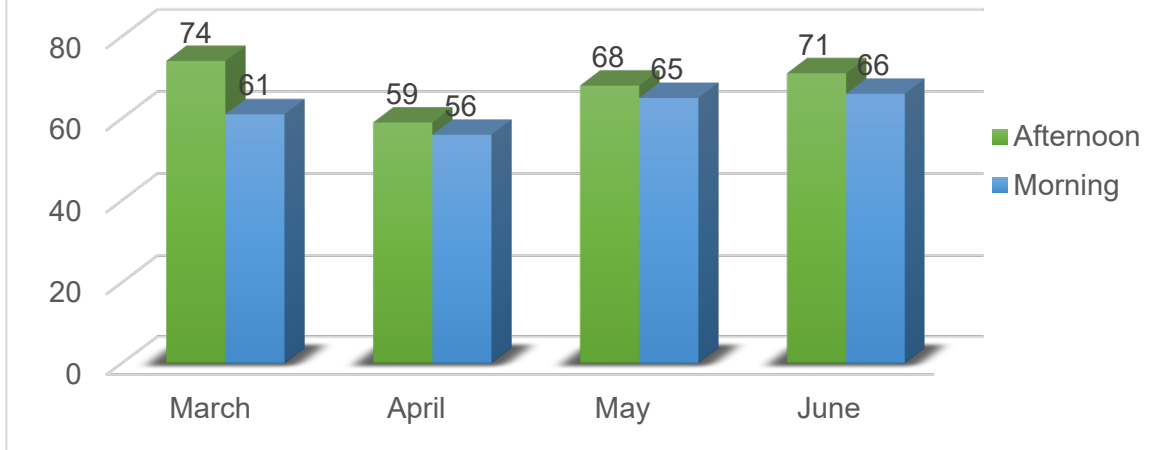
The following discussion and figures highlight the activeness of the Capricorn FM Twitter account for shows selected for the study. The figures highlight two shows selected for the study: a Morning Drive show and Afternoon Drive show. Capricorn FM station named their Morning show 'On the Go Breakfast' and their Afternoon drive show is named 'Just Drive'. Both Shows were selected to show engagement between listeners and the radio station.



### 5.3.3 Engagement between listeners and Capricorn FM station

In addition to the Capricorn FM Twitter account from March 2020-June 2020, the account has 272 tweets, 3341 likes, 517 retweets and 898 replies as reflected on **figure 5.1**. The engagements highlight tweets, likes and replies of the Morning show and the Afternoon drive show selected for the duration of study.

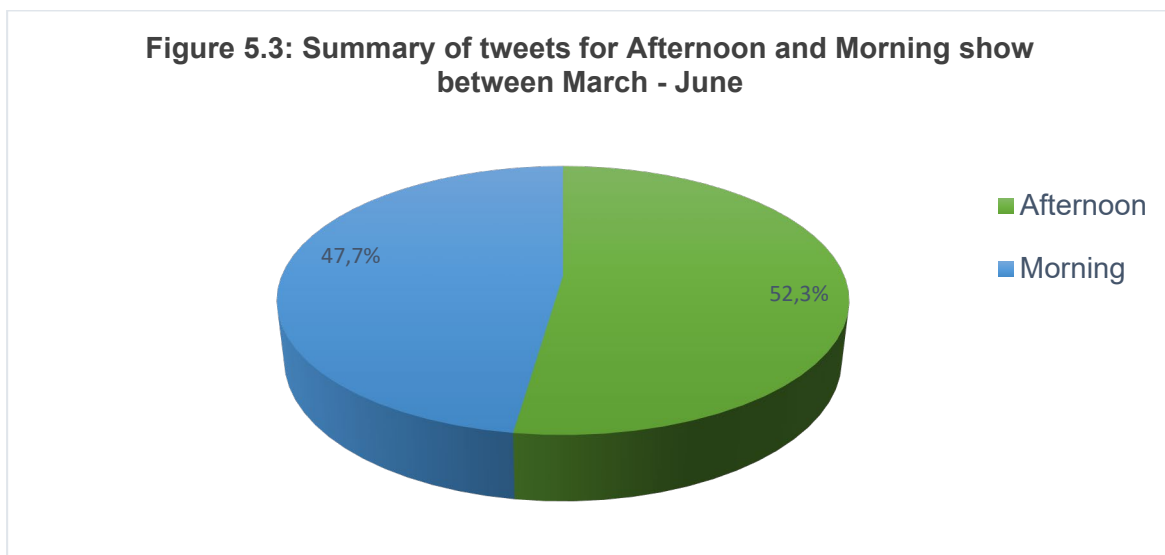
Figure 5.2: Capricorn FM Tweets from March - June



#### 5.3.4 Capricorn FM station tweets between the Morning and Afternoon show

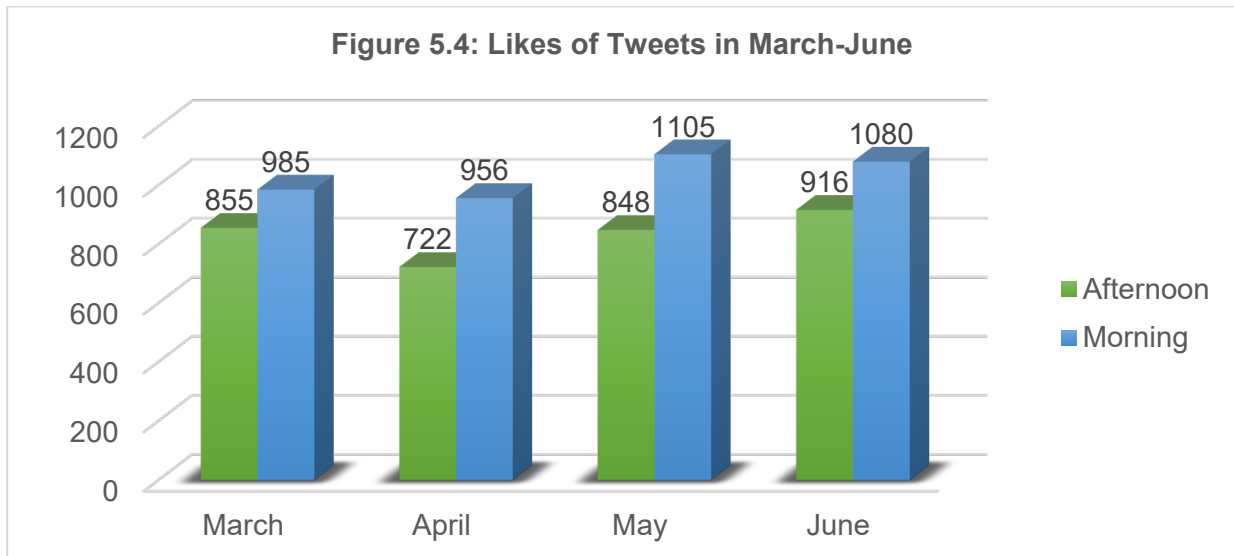
Considering that Capricorn FM Twitter account from March until June there are 272 tweets, the study focused on the Morning and Afternoon drive shows. In March for the Afternoon drive show there were 74 tweets while Morning drive show had 61 tweets. In April Afternoon drive show had 59 tweets while the Morning show had 56 tweets. In May, Afternoon show had 68 tweets while the Morning show had 65 tweets. Lastly, in June the Afternoon drive show had 71 tweets while the Morning show had 66 tweets.

Figure 5.3: Summary of tweets for Afternoon and Morning show between March - June





In summary the Afternoon drive show had 272 tweets while the Morning show had 248 tweets both for March 2020. In addition of the summary of Afternoon show and Morning shows, 47.7% of tweets are from the Morning show and the remaining 52,3% offer tweets from Afternoon show.

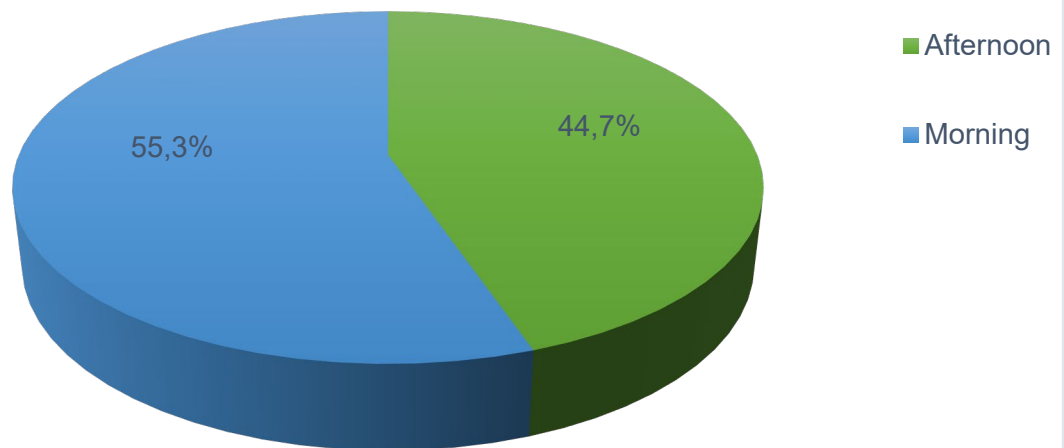


### **5.3.5 Likes between March - June for both Afternoon and Morning show**

As an engagement between the station and listeners likes of Capricorn FM's Twitter account posts are discussed below. From tweets of Afternoon show in March were 855 likes while the Morning show had 985 likes. In April there was a drop in likes for the Afternoon drive show compared to March while the Morning show had 722 which is a rise compared to March.

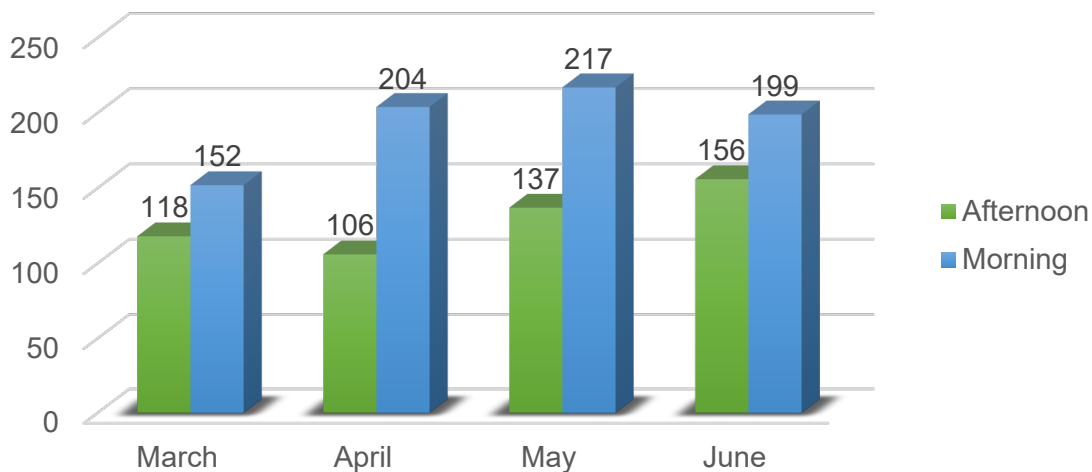
In May there was a rise in likes for both Afternoon show with 848 and Morning show with 1105. Lastly in June the Afternoon show had 916 likes while Morning show had 1080 likes.

**Figure 5.5: Summary of Likes for Afternoon and Morning show between March - June**



In summary the Afternoon show had 3341 likes from March 2020 to June 2020, while the Morning show had 4126 of likes by listeners. In addition to the summary of Afternoon show and Morning shows; 47.7% of likes were from the Afternoon show and the remaining 52,3% from the Morning show.

**Figure 5.6: Retweets of tweets from March-June**

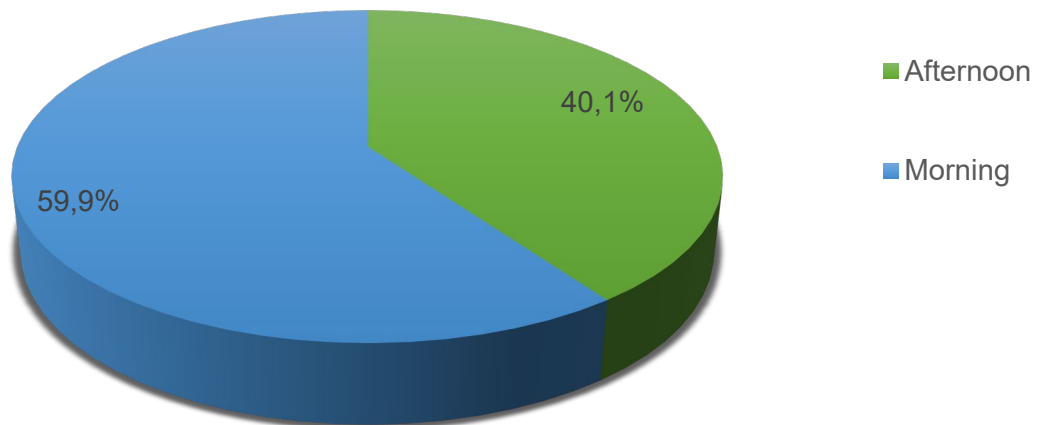


### 5.3.6 Retweets between March-June for both Afternoon and Morning show

As a form of engagement between Capricorn FM and listeners, there are tweets that listeners retweet. From tweets of Afternoon show in March there were 118 retweets while in the Morning show there were 152 retweets. In April there were 106 retweets for Afternoon show while the Morning show had 205. In May there was an increase of retweets for both shows: The Afternoon show had 137 while Morning show had 217.

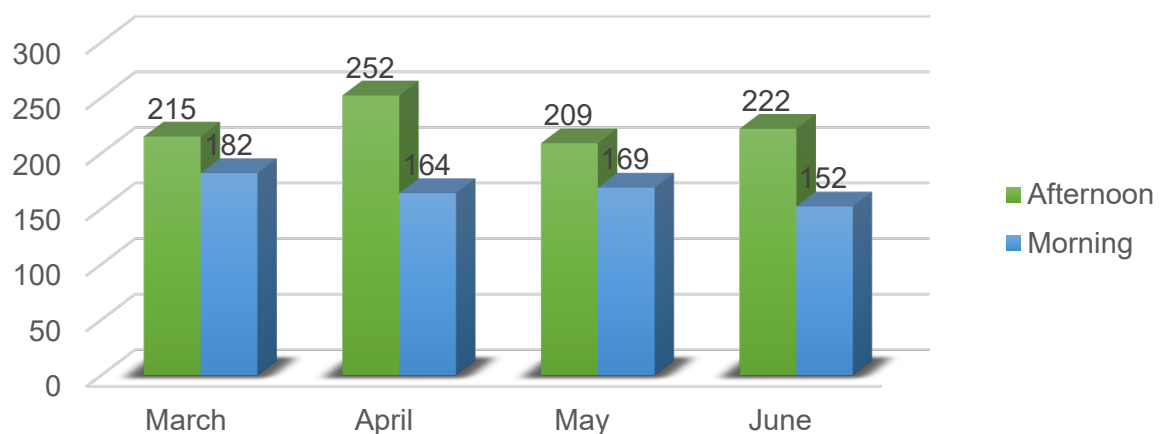
Lastly in June there were only 145 retweets in the Afternoon show while the Morning show had 199 retweets.

**Figure 5.7: Summary of Re-tweets for Afternoon and Morning show between March - June**



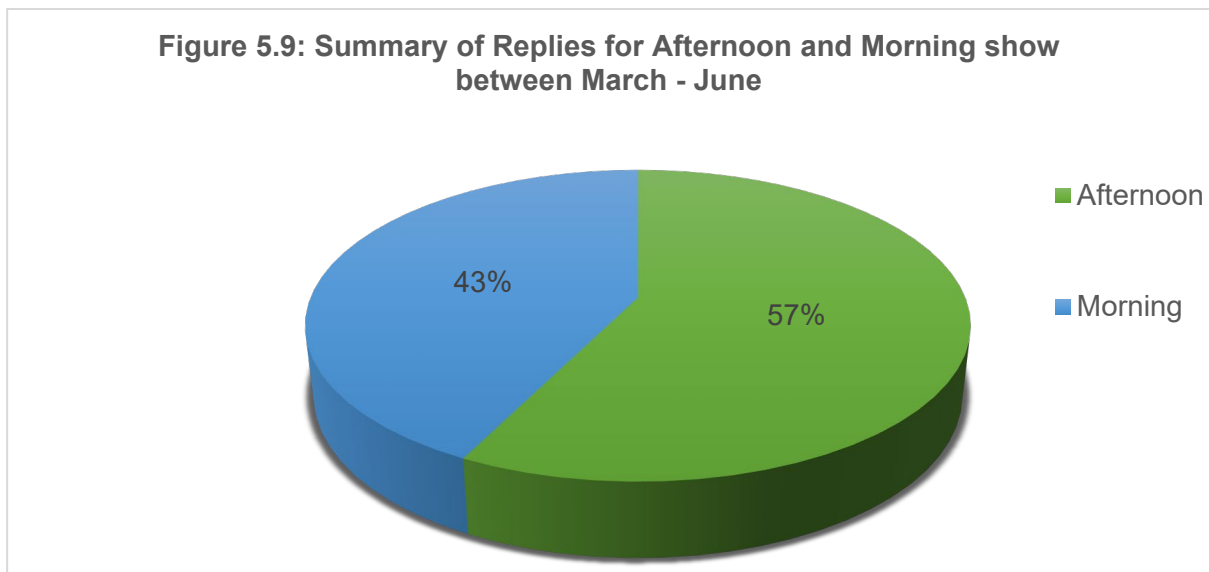
In summary the Afternoon show had 571 retweets from March 2020 to June 2020 while the Morning show had 772 of retweets by listeners. In addition to the summary of Afternoon show and Morning show, 40.1% of retweets are from the Afternoon show and the remaining 59,9% retweets are for the Morning show.

**Figure 5.8: Replies of Tweets March-June**



### 5.3.7 Replies of Tweets between March-June for Afternoon and Morning show

Replies as form of engagement between listeners and Capricorn FM where there is meaningful communication. From tweets of the station's Afternoon show in March 2020 there were 215 replies while 82 replies were from the Morning show in March 2020. In April there were 252 replies for the Afternoon show while the Morning show had 64 replies. In May 2020 there was a decrease of replies for the Afternoon show with 209 replies while the Morning show had an increase of 69 replies. Lastly, in June 2020 there were 222 replies for Afternoon show while the Morning show had 52 replies.



In summary, the Afternoon show had 896 replies from March 2020 to June 2020 while the Morning show had 667 of replies by listeners from March 2020 to June 2020. In addition to the summary of the Afternoon show and Morning show, 57% of the retweets are from the Afternoon show and the remaining 43% retweets are from the Morning show.

The following section discusses content that the station posts on the Twitter account from March to June 2020 between Afternoon and Morning show. Firstly, the researcher discusses the content of tweets from March until June 2020 for Afternoon show. Content of tweets are categorised as follows:

Entertainment – these are content that entertain listeners such as music polls, news about artists on the show, new music releases;

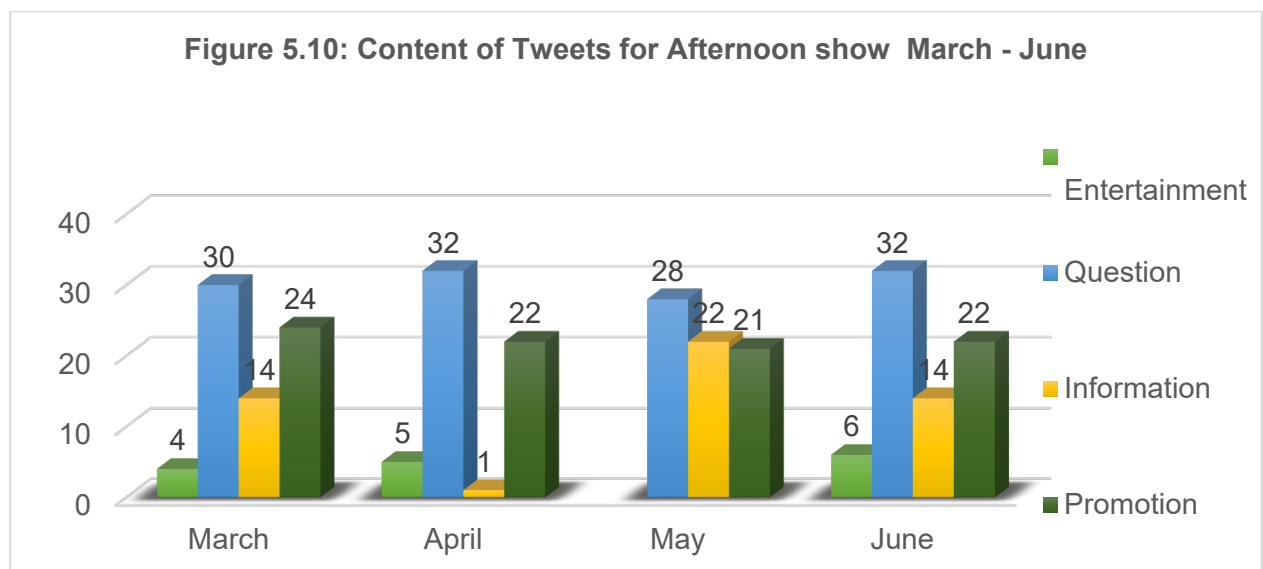
Questions where the station ask on a tweet on how listener feel about certain issues, could be how listeners feel about drugs or even scenario for advices;

Content such as traffic reports, an address from municipality, campaign of the month like Youth Month and Africa day;

Show promotion entails what to expect on the show, who are the presenters and the name of the show and;

Lastly, are competition, where a listener can win a certain amount of money, a voucher or a hamper.

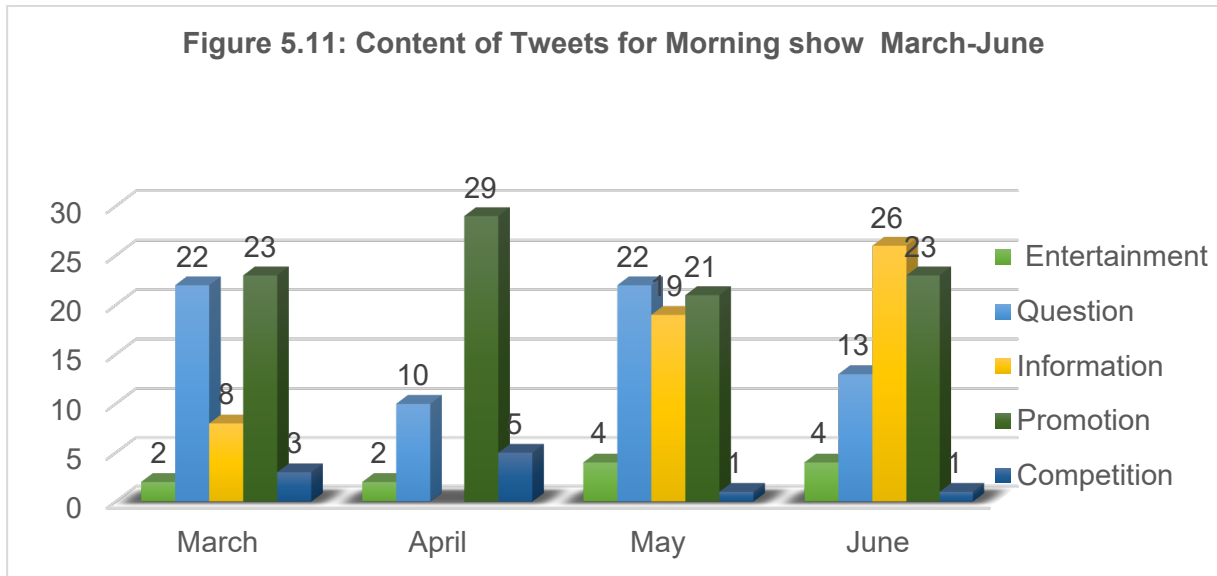
Another discussion entails content between Afternoon and Morning shows. Lastly the researcher summarises the content of tweets to highlight the most content the station tweets and on which show.



### 5.3.8 Content of tweets for Afternoon show March- June

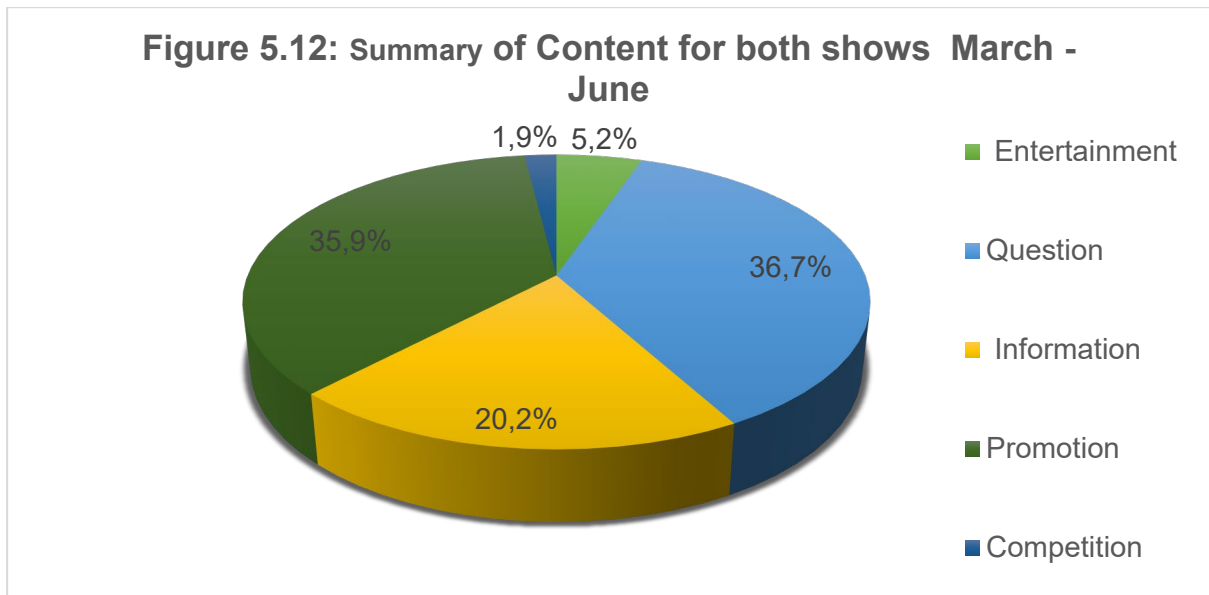
The above figure represents tweets content for the Afternoon show from March until June 2020. In March there were four tweets of entertainment, 30 tweets of question, 14 tweets of information and 24 of show promotion. In April, there were five tweets of entertainment, 32 tweets of question, one tweet of information and 22 tweets of show promotion. In May there were no tweets of entertainment but there were 28 tweets of question, 22 tweets of information and 21 tweets of show promotion. Lastly, in June there were six tweets of entertainment, 32 tweets of question, 14 tweets of information

and 22 tweets of show promotion. The afternoon show content depicted that there were no tweets of competition for the duration of the examination.



### 5.3.9 Content of tweets for Morning show from March- June

The above figure represents tweets content for the Morning show from March until June 2020. In March there were two tweets of entertainment, 22 tweets of question, eight tweets of information, 23 of show promotion and three tweets of competition. In April, there were two tweets of entertainment, 10 tweets of question, there were no tweet of information, 29 tweets of show promotion and five tweets of competition. In May, there were four tweets of entertainment and there were 22 tweets of question, 19 tweets of information, 21 tweets of show promotion and one tweet of competition. Lastly, in June there were four tweets of entertainment, 13 tweets of question, 26 tweets of information, 23 tweets of show promotion and one tweet of competition.



In summary on the content of Capricorn FM Twitter account posts for Afternoon and Morning show, there were 27 tweets of entertainment, 189 tweets of question tweets, 104 tweets of with information, 185 tweets of show promotion and only 10 tweets of competition. In addition to the summary of the content for the Afternoon and Morning shows, 5,2% of tweets are entertainment, 36,7% of tweets are question, 20,2% of tweets are information, 35,9% of show promotion and 1,9% of competition.

#### **5.4 REPORT: FINDINGS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA**

From the year (2013) Capricorn FM opened a Twitter account, the station has managed to tweet hundred thousand tweets and listeners have managed to follow, like, retweet and reply. Reviewing all the diagrams, the findings highlight that listeners engage with tweets from the Capricorn FM account through likes, retweets and replies. Additionally, the data only highlights engagement from March–June 2020 for two shows, the Morning show (06:00-09:00am) and the Afternoon show (15:00-18:00pm).

Findings depicted in **figure 5.1** highlight that there are more likes compared to other forms of engagement from listeners. However, tweets are posted by the station while likes, retweets and replies highlight engagement from listeners. With that in mind listeners' likes represent a form of communication that confirms to the station that listeners are aware of the tweets tweeted on Capricorn FM Twitter account by the station.

Results depicted in **figure 5.3** suggest that between the shows selected for examination, Capricorn FM's Afternoon show have more tweets compared to the Morning show. This suggests that the station posts more tweets for the Afternoon drive show as compared to the Morning show.

Results depicted in **figure 5.5** suggest that between the shows selected for examination, Capricorn FM's Morning show has more likes compared to the Afternoon show. These likes highlight engagement of listeners to the station's Twitter account. This means listeners engage with tweets from the Afternoon show through likes.

Results depicted in **figure 5.7** suggest that between the shows selected for examination, Capricorn FM's Morning show has more retweets compared to the Afternoon Drive show. These retweets highlight engagement from listeners with the station's Twitter account as the retweets are retweeted by the listeners.

Results depicted in **figure 5.9** suggest that between the shows selected for examination, Capricorn FM Afternoon show has more replies compared to the Morning show. This highlights that listeners participate more in the Afternoon show as replies are sent by listeners. As mentioned before, listeners seem to be more active during the Afternoon show than the Morning show of the station.

Findings in **diagram 5.12** illustrate that Capricorn FM tweets more content of questions which invites engagement with their listeners' views and less content of competition. This highlights that for tweets that ask listeners questions, listeners are likely to answer with replies to communicate and engage with the station. Questions can be content that listeners can voice out their views on issues or topics that are more relatable to them. This confirms that the goal of Capricorn FM to integrate Twitter into their programmes to engage with listeners has been reached as listeners engage with the station.

## **5.5 MERGING OF RESULTS**

The presentation of the study's findings let to the merging of the results. Table 5.13 below summarises the merging of the two sets of data.



**Table 5.4: Merging of findings**

<b>QUALITATIVE THEMES</b> <b>Semi-structured Interviews</b>	<b>QUANTITATIVE CONSTRUCTS</b>	<b>QUANTITATIVE THEMES</b> <b>Content Analysis</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of Twitter account profile</li> <li>• Influence participation</li> <li>• Benefits of using Twitter</li> <li>• Listeners engagement</li> <li>• Content engageable</li> <li>• Different shows</li> <li>• Flexible production and operation</li> <li>• Rare operation without Twitter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Profile of Twitter account</li> <li>• Likes, retweets and replies</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Content of questions</li> <li>• Understanding of Morning and Afternoon show</li> <li>• Morning show more engageable</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Content clear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good explanation</li> <li>• Time interval</li> <li>• Time specified</li> </ul> <p>Further explanation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear text and visuals</li> <li>• Behavioural pattern of tweets</li> <li>• Statistically formed</li> </ul> </div>

**5.6 FINDING DISCUSSION**

The findings were presented in a description format, whereby after the description of the findings was presented. The themes that emerged from the merging of the two

sets of data were presented. The findings of this study were discussed based on the themes and the sub-themes together with the constructs that have emerged during data analysis. These included the individual semi-structured interviews conducted, the content analysis, and the findings from the SPSS. Both findings differs in a sense that content analysis findings made sense of text and pictures while SPSS v24.0 assisted to categorise and present findings

The following section describes, analyses and highlights the framework of the study.

### **5.7 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS**

The study is framed on two theories, new media and practice theory. Both theories hold different assumptions but have managed to frame and support this study.

New media holds the assumption that it offers the opportunity for a participatory media culture, and highlights the transition seen in media production, distribution and use over the last three decades brought by changes that are technological, cultural, textual and predictable. The study has highlighted how participatory media culture such as Twitter has increased communication and production of information. Twitter produces and distributes information between listeners and the radio station herein studied.

Furthermore, new media has brought breakthrough by introducing transformed audiences that have adopted new channels of communication that are more participative to express ideas and views. In the context of transformation of new media, the social networking site Twitter has increased communication between audience and the station. Capricorn FM is using Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience's participation which demonstrates a participatory culture.

Listeners' use of Twitter through likes and replies highlights a new form of engagement that differs from the old one, where listeners used to engage with radio stations through phone calls and short message service. These are the results of integrating Twitter into Capricorn FM programmes which has been brought about by new media. Findings have depicted how engagement and communication has changed because of new media.

New media has the assumption that media companies recognised the need to be premeditated to exploit the internet. This assumption describes how media companies such as Capricorn FM has recognised the need to exploit internet and this is highlighted on how a radio station has a Twitter account. Additionally, Capricorn FM not only offered the same old media properties but further has content online as new and innovative offerings to exploit internet. Data of the study supports this assumption as the station's content that can be found on air can also be found on Twitter. Indeed, new media has brought changes to traditional media.

Another theory that framed this study was the practice theory. The theory holds the assumption that new media landscape has different regulations and ownership, hence there is the new media and the new society that it caters for. New media landscape such as new distribution platforms, for example radio via internet and the recent development of high level of interactivity between communicators and audiences. This assumption highlights changes in the operation and production of radio.

Furthermore, changes in radio have brought new audiences that it caters for. The finding of the data highlighted how listeners participate on Twitter and that confirms how the station caters for new audiences that use Twitter. Capricorn FM further caters for new audiences by integrating Twitter into their programmes.

Practice theory contends that media examination should begin not with media writings or organisations, however with what individuals are for all intents and purposes doing with media, and what the media are for all intents and purposes doing with individuals over an entire scope of circumstances and context. This assumption suggests that people can practice media in real life. The current study has highlighted and proved that people practice media in real life; a radio station operates a social media account which from its origin, is for people to connect with other people, and the station as well.

Capricorn FM has an account that practices media in real life and the findings confirm that the station has an active Twitter account. Listeners are also practicing media by being able to engage with the station on Twitter. Indeed, it highlights how listeners practice media by being able to communicate and send information by being part of the station's Twitter account.

In terms of practice theory, the ideological nature of media and passive audiences does not exist; only those who practice the media have changed the shift of the effects of media as they are able to practice the media, which means they would only have the effects of practicing media. The findings of this study confirm that Capricorn FM does not have passive audiences as it has been shown that the audience of the radio station are intelligent to express their opinions on a variety of matters through replies on Twitter.

Both theories assumptions have been confirmed by the findings of the study. This statement supports the reasons for the researcher to select these two theories to frame the study.

### **5.8 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 5 AND OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 6**

This chapter has presented the qualitative data analysed for the study based on the information collected from the participants. The participants' responses were gathered individually by means of conducting face-to-face interviews with each participant. The questions were asked with the purpose of determining the aim and objectives of the study was, to explore how Twitter can be used as a tool to engage more with listeners and explain the benefits of using Twitter as a tool for listeners' engagement.

Additionally, this chapter has presented the quantitative data analysed for the study based on data collected from Capricorn FM Twitter account. Content analysis was used to collect tweets respectively from March 2020 to June 2020. Tweets were collected with the purpose of shaping the aim and objectives of the study and to highlight the engagement between the station and listeners on a daily basis for the duration selected.

Finally, the next chapter presents the conclusions of these key objectives of the study. The study conclusions are based on the findings that were analysed thematically and using SPSS in the preceding chapter.

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter appeals the dissertation to a close by enlightening specific areas that Twitter is used as an engagement tool between radio and listeners. It also provides recommendation for future areas with regards to Twitter used by radio stations. In addition, the chapter provides conclusions for the completion of the study which are insightful of qualitative and quantitative findings that were produced in Chapter 5. It further offers an outline of the aims and objectives of the study.

### **6.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

This study is centred on the use of Twitter by a commercial radio station to engage with radio listeners. It is quite apparent, based on this research that Capricorn FM uses Twitter to engage with listeners on a daily base and thereby making Twitter a platform for listeners to instantly engage with the radio station. The way that content on Twitter is shaped allows for an entirely new engagement tool between listeners and the radio station. There are different social media platforms that the radio station (Capricorn FM) uses to engage with listeners, however, this study focused on Twitter as one of engagement platforms of listeners and the station.

Twitter is not only for Capricorn FM but globally, it is used as an engagement tool and many other media spectrums have adopted to use it. Radio is another media spectrum facing a drastic change in operation and tradition. A growth in digital technologies has been exponential and this has sent traditional medium into panic to change, unless mediums offer the right content and receive good feedback. If the medium has adopted new digital technologies and content is engaging and interactive, it will draw receivers or audiences to the brand and create loyalty.

Audiences also had to change the ways in which they interact or communicate with their preferred medium. It is a choice to adapt with change or stick to the most comfortable platform to interact or communicate with their preferred medium and be able to give feedback. For each medium feedback from receivers or audiences is very important as it help to grow and build a loyal rapport with receivers. Additionally, radio is yet to change with every change that new technologies bring as long as the main goal is to serve the audience and strive for engagement with the audience.

### **6.3 CONCLUSION**

This section presents conclusions drawn from the study basing on the objectives that were formed in Chapter 1, which indicated that Capricorn FM station integrates Twitter into their programming. Twitter is used as a tool to engage with listener and one of the benefits is that it has managed to attract new listeners. Additionally, Twitter increased growth in listenership and become an instant provider of information even when listeners are not tuned in. New digital technologies have brought change in different aspects and the media are very hard to stay connected and not lose its receivers.

However, the research problem in Chapter 1 indicated that very little or no research on any similar topic was covered in Limpopo Province which is why the study explored the use of Twitter by a Limpopo Province's first commercial radio station and its effectiveness to use on radio. Additionally, it also unpacked how are listeners part of these microblogging sites and do radio stations use microblogging to strategically engage with listeners.

Then in Chapter 3, the literature review assumed that new digital technologies are primarily changing the face of radio across the world; and innovation in broadcasting technology allowing broadcasters to expand their service and reach more audiences. Nonetheless, after the research findings were analysed, it was proved that new digital technologies have changed operational techniques in radio and services such as microblogging, and radio stations, Capricorn FM in this regard, have expanded their reach for audience and participation.

Additionally, microblogging service has raised change in regular operation from newsroom on how to update, break news to audience and invite participation from audience. The last assumption made by respondents of the study are linked to issues related to policies that uphold the station and the disadvantages of not using Twitter. The latest figures reveal that the Capricorn FM station post content that asks listeners questions to allow participation.

With that in mind, it makes sense for radio stations to have an effective and appropriate social media platform, which will reach more of their audience. Capricorn FM uses Twitter effectively to engage and communicate with listeners and for marketing purposes for different clients as it attracts new clients and serve the existing once.

The following section discusses objectives of the study.

- **Describe how Capricorn FM station integrate Twitter into their programming**

In line with the objective listed above, the data collected from some respondents and tweets shows that Twitter is integrated into programming through posting content available on air and on Twitter. This would mean that the station has to keep the account active by posting content relatable and available to listeners, including content that invites participation. Capricorn FM also needs to concentrate on a keen way to engage with listeners via Twitter to interact, with the station posts such as pictures, video and questions that are more interesting.

Participants in control of the Twitter account understand the target market and have certain timeline on when to post and how to post the content. However, Twitter is additionally integrated in programmes to get new listeners and to cater for online listeners who may not have a moment to listen to radio but can get the idea of the topic on air. Integration of Twitter in radio further helps the station to engage with listeners on a different platform preferred by different listeners. This suggests that Capricorn FM meets the needs of listeners on different platforms available.

- **Explain the benefits of using Twitter sites as a tool for listeners' engagement**

The objective listed above highlighted most benefits that radio station appreciates from Twitter. Findings of the study explain better some of the benefits. Capricorn FM reaches new audiences through Twitter. Other radio stations that do not have active Twitter accounts are missing out on a good opportunity to grow listenership. Additionally, the data highlighted that the station gets new clients through Twitter. Participants in control of the Twitter account had a better understanding and stand a good chance to persuade other radio station to keep Twitter account active and interesting.

As an aspiring researcher and an academic, the researcher has learned a lot from this research project. The researcher has learned how it is important to use both research methods – qualitative and quantitative method. I have learned how radio has changed and yet to change further with digital technologies. Other researchers should learn that

using both methods of research are worth the challenge and rigour of effort as it gives an opportunity to be able to differentiate research methods, their weaknesses and strength. The researcher believes that since the heart of every research is methodology, being able to understand methodology would pave more ways to research credibly. Additionally, other researchers should put more interest in radio and digital technologies on how they are changing the facets of radio.

#### **6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The following limitations were confronted during the study but since the researcher used both research methodologies, most of limitations were minimised

- The study was limited to only employees with much understanding of Twitter and how it is integrated into their station.
- There was not enough research completed on the topic, which posed challenges from a context perspective (the study had no reference to similar studies conducted in Limpopo Province).
- The study was limited to one commercial radio station situated in Limpopo Province.
- There were not enough case studies conducted on Twitter and radio.

#### **6.5 REMARKS**

Radio is changing as a technology and has changed radio practices while technological convergence on radio also appears to convey the promise of democratising and opening radio to audiences (Moyo, 2012). While capabilities are needed by audiences, it seems like radio would still grow to a much better medium that is adaptable and dynamic. It also seems that radio will survive the advent of the digital technological age with the benefits of becoming much accessible and interactive.

Theories and participants posit that new digital technologies have brought a new set of skill and change to the traditional media. However, the value of radio needs to be recognised and their goal is fulfilled. It is clear that radio is in a good state even with transition and their core objective of listeners' engagement online and offline is still important. While is a case of Twitter working, same efforts should be done on different



engaging social media platforms. This allows a well-balanced strategy for engagement and interaction in the future. While data suggest that Twitter influences participation on radio, there would still be those who prefer old ways to participate such as call-in and short message service.

## **6.6 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- More research on radio and integration of new media should be conducted

I recommend that other researchers should conduct more research on radio and new media. Furthermore, researchers should research more on how new media are and integrated into radio

- More radio stations should integrate Twitter on their programmes

I recommend that more radio station should integrate Twitter into their programmes for different benefits such as growth in engagement and listenership and to attract new listeners. Not only should Twitter be integrated into programmes but be used to post good content that is engageable and relatable for listeners.

- More organisations should understand how the facets of radio have changed and how it affects the operation and production

Organisations such as competitors of radio should understand that radio is now available anywhere because of the invention of new media into radio. Therefore, radio's operation and production have changed to a different turn where radio content can be found on social media, listeners can listen on their favourite radio shows on the internet.

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**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A: CONSENT FORM**

**TITLE:**

**NAME:**

**Email Address:**

## **1) INTRODUCTION**

You are invited to participate in this research study undertaken for a Master of Arts Study at the University of Limpopo.

Before you are part of this study you should fully understand what is involved.

If you have any questions that are not fully explained in this leaflet feel free to ask the researcher

If you agree to volunteer to participate, you will be asked to sign the consent form.

## **2) THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

The aim of this research is to evaluate the use of Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation. You have specifically been selected for participation in this study based on your experience as part of the radio station.

## **3) EXPLANATIONS AND PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED**

A theme of questions would be asked by the researcher and the interview will last from

30- 40 minutes. Please be advised that the researcher will be conducting a face-to-face interview. Although the researcher might be taking some notes and using a sound recorder to record as not all things the participants say will be able to notes down. Because there will be a sound recorder please be sure to speak up so that in the recorder your comments are audible.

## **4) RISK AND DISCOMFORT INVOLVED**

The researcher will not involve any form of discomfort, be it physical, emotional and psychological discomfort.

## **5) POSSIBLE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY**

Participation in this study will give you the opportunity to reflect your views and experiences as an employee responsible for the Twitter account of the radio station. It is also aimed that the study would serve as a guideline for other radio stations on the challenges of audience participation with microblogging tool particularly as an engagement strategy.

I understand that if I do not want to participate in this study, it will not be held against me

I may withdraw at any time

Ethical approval

This study is authorized by the Research Ethics Committee which grants ethical clearance before commencement of research to oversee the research carried out at University of Limpopo in relation to ethical issues. The study adheres to the guidelines of ethical committee of The University of Limpopo.

You are free to discuss your participation in this study with the researcher contactable on: email (mamohlotlo@gmail.com).

## **6) INFORMATION**

I have read the information contained in the consent form. Any question I have asked has been answered to my satisfaction and if I have further questions concerning this study, I should contact the researcher.

## 7) CONFIDENTIALITY

All the responses obtained whilst conducting the study are regarded as confidential. The result will be published or presented in such a way that you remain unknown.

## 8) FEEDBACK

If you would like to be invited to a meeting where the findings will be presented or if you are interested in obtaining a summary of the findings, please indicate how you would like to receive the summary preferably via email.

## 9) CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

I hereby wish to take part in this study

I have agreed to participate in this study voluntarily.

**Person obtaining informed consent**

**Date**

**(Number of participant)**

**Researcher**

**Date**

**(Full names)**

Please tick a box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without given reason

3. I agree to take part in the above study without duress

4. I agree to interview /sampled group/ consultation being audio recorded

5. I agree to use the anonymised quotes in publication

\_\_\_\_\_  
Number of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of researcher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

Date of the interview... /...../.....

**UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO**

SCHOOL OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATIONS STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA STUDIES, COMMUNICATIOS AND

INFORMATION STUDIES

Name of the interviewer... ..

Position .....

Date .....

Good morning. I am Mamohlotlo Melbonia Mothiba. This interview is conducted to gather data for an MA thesis. The aim of the session is to find out from you as an employee of a radio station using Twitter as an engagement strategy for audience participation and the extent to which it influences the participation of audiences in programs for a commercial radio station. I believe that you are in a good position to provide the necessary information because the station you are employed at is currently using Twitter. The radio station is also in control of what gets to be on the Twitter account of the station.

If you agree, our conversation will be recorded so that I can capture all the details as I carry on with attentive conversation with you. I also guarantee the confidentiality of your comments.



Please answer the following questions to your best of knowledge.

1. Please state your gender

.....  
.....

2. Please state your job responsibility

.....  
.....

3. When did the station open a new account?

.....  
.....

4. Do you know how to operate Twitter account of the station?

.....  
.....

5. Are you in anyway linked to notifications of the station account, if so how?

.....  
.....

6. How many followers does the account have and follows how many?

.....  
.....

7. With the certain age that the station caters for, do you think the number of followers?

.....  
.....

8. What kind of content is posted on the account in terms of news, information or entertainment?

.....  
.....

9. Which content do audiences mostly engage with?

.....  
.....

10. Who monitor all related content and how such content is shared amongst audiences and contributors of information?

.....  
.....

11. Are there time slot to post on the account?

.....  
.....

12. Why do you have time slots?

.....  
.....

13. How does the station integrate Twitter content into their programming?

.....  
.....

14. Do you use Twitter to influence audience participation, and how?

.....  
.....

15. Are there policies that guide the content to post on the account station's Twitter account?

.....  
.....

16. What are some of the benefits of using Twitter besides as an engagement tool with audiences?

.....  
.....

17. What are some of the factors that influence audience participation?

.....  
.....

18. Radio has long been perceived as primarily unseen medium to its audiences largely because it represents the unseen; however, digital technologies have transformed radio into a medium that can be seen, what your views on this notion are.

.....  
.....  
19. Do you think that digital technologies are changing the culture and the tradition of radio and where do you think radio as a medium will be in the next 5 years?

.....  
.....  
20. To what extent do the organizational and institutional context shape the uptake of the use of Twitter by the employees of the station?

.....  
.....  
21. Do you use the Twitter account for other specifics related to the station?

.....  
.....  
22. Do you think with the cost of microblogging as they use data influence the participation of audience on Twitter?

.....  
.....  
23. What are your views on stations that do not have active Twitter account?

Thank you for your participation. It is highly appreciated.



**University of Limpopo**  
School of Languages and Communication Studies  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa  
Tel: (015) 268 3084, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: carol.lesame @ul.ac.za

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**TO: WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**  
**CAPRICORN FM**

**cc: UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO**

**FROM: PROF NC LESAME**  
**DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA, COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION STUDIES**

**DATE: 16 APRIL 2020**

Dear Sir/ Madam

**RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT CAPRICORN FM, LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

Ms **Mothiba MM**, student number: **201209889**, is a Master of Arts student (Media Studies) at the University of Limpopo and is currently conducting research on the topic entitled: **“The use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners: A case study of a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM”**, towards the attainment of the degree.

This letter kindly requests you to please allow her to undertake the research as her study requires to conduct interviews with employees at your station who manage the

Twitter account of the station. The results of the study will be made known to you and will eventually be beneficial to your station and the community as whole because information is power. The study findings could assist the study to know more about the radio consumers who listed to Capricorn FM.

At present, I am unable to physically sign this letter offline because of the Coronavirus Lockdown period. However, the email (digital) signature will act as the formal signature as I will send this letter by electronic mail (e-mail) to recipients.

Thank you and kinds regards,

**Prof NC Lesame**

**(MA RESEARCH CO-SUPERVISOR FOR MS MOTHIBA)**



University of  
Limpopo

Department of Research Administration and Development  
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South  
Africa

Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

**TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE  
CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**

**MEETING:** 24 April 2020

**PROJECT NUMBER:**

TREC/8

**9/2020: PG PROJECT:**

**Title:** The use of Twitter to engage with radio listeners: A case study of a commercial radio station, Capricorn FM  
**Researcher:** MM Mothiba  
**Supervisor:** Dr EJ Malatji  
**Co-Supervisor/s:** Prof NC Lesame  
**School:** Languages and Communication Studies  
**Degree:** Master of Arts in Media Studies

**PROF P MASOKO**

**CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics

Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

**Note:**

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

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20 September 2020

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This letter serves to certify that I have edited the research report titled: **THE USE OF TWITTER TO ENGAGE WITH RADIO LISTENERS: A CASE STUDY OF A COMMERCIAL RADIO STATION, CAPRICORN FM**, by Ms MAMOHLOTLO MELBONIA MOTHIBA (201209889). To my knowledge, the work has been thoroughly edited. Unless tampered with prior to your reception of the edited work, I trust you will find the editing quality in order.

Regards



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**MR NS RATAU (EDITOR)**

12 September, 2020  
Pretoria, South Africa

To whom it may concern,

I hereby confirm that I undertook the language editing for the dissertation,

THE USE OF TWITTER TO ENGAGE WITH RADIO LISTENERS: CASE OF COMMERCIAL RADIO  
STATION, CAPRICORN FM, SOUTH AFRICA

by

MAMOHLOTLO MELBONIA MOTHIBA



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