



An Investigation into the Proliferation of Online Video News Consumption in Cape  
Town, South Africa

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the past few years society has seen an exponential growth in the use of online media. This research paper specifically looks at the growth of online news videos and the extent to which consumers are embracing this new story telling format in comparison to traditional news mediums.

Through the use of Linkert style surveys, this research paper aims to understand the prevalence and acceptance of online news videos from the consumer's perspective. This research paper seeks to understand the roll that online video news plays in society and decipher whether or not online video news is simply an addition to the digital media landscape in South Africa or a driver of change in news production and consumption. This research papers also aims to understand the roll of social media, and thus the influence of off-site platforms on branding. The answers to these questions will provide broadcasters vital information for future production and brand building initiatives.

It will be shown in this research paper that there is a high prevalence of news consumption through social media sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. It will also be shown that there is a high prevalence and interaction with online news videos but that the respondents did not find these videos to be significantly more compelling than text articles.

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## **1. Chapter 1: Introduction**

This research paper reported on the proliferation of online news videos within the Cape Town region of South Africa. This research paper was therefore a quantitative paper that attempted to understand the degree of online news consumption from the user's perspective. This chapter firstly contextualised online news video as well as defined the rationale behind this research paper. This chapter then explained the problem and purpose statements as well as the research questions and objectives. The key concepts of this paper were conceptualized and a brief summary of the research methodology and paper structure was provided.

### **1.1. Background and orientation**

In the past few years, the world has seen an immense growth in online news video consumption. This new visual storytelling format which is commonly found on platforms such as Facebook and YouTube, has influenced the researchers own consumption of news broadcasts. No longer does the researcher feel the need to read a newspaper, watch the 7 o'clock news or even go onto online news websites, as the majority of the interactions with breaking news stories are bought to the researcher's attention through social media platforms. The researcher came to realise that Facebook and other media platforms are used as a gateway for news companies to reach both their current consumers and potential consumers on a global level. According to Kalogeropoulous, Cherubini and Newman (2016) the majority of online news videos are consumed through off-site platforms such as Facebook, rather than on one's own website. But what does this offsite branding mean for the future of news organisations and what media forms are best suited for these social media platforms?

### **1.2. Rationale**

This research paper attempted to shed light on the magnitude of the up and coming online news trends and thus indicated the degree to which people are dependent on online news videos for information consumption and the degree to which news companies in South Africa are dependent on offsite social media platforms to reach their consumers. This rationale however is not a newly developed concept but has in-fact been growing in importance and research prevalence. This research paper therefore made use of previous studies such as the Reuters Institute's study on *The*

*Future of Online News Video* (2016) as well as the *Between Tradition and Change* article written by Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2009) and expanded on this information from within a South African context.

This research paper argued that there is an importance in understanding how the growth of social media is playing a prominent role in the everyday life of society as a whole. It is important for news companies to understand how rapidly information is spread via social media as well as the format in which this information is consumed and what that means for the future of digital news. There is an importance in understanding how South Africans conceptualise the changes in news consumption and whether they believe it is a growing trend that suits their needs.

### **1.3. Problem and purpose statement**

The evolution of news media as well as where various media choices are publicised are a matter of branding and brand building and therefore must be prioritised by news companies. Technological advancement has caused an increase in the dissemination of information which poses a significant threat to how information is consumed and how news companies should deal with this competitive environment. Social media has allowed news organisations the opportunity to increase their customer base, while at the same time poses the threat of being left behind. This research paper sought to comprehend the new trend of the online news video and understand how important such a trend is in the South African environment. This research paper also sought to understand the problem of off-site branding and how this effected brand-loyalty on social media platforms.

#### **1.3.1. Research questions**

The primary research questions for this study were stated as follows:

1. To what extent, if any, do Cape Town residents gain their breaking news stories through online news videos on social media platforms?
2. To what extent, if any, are online news videos perceived to be more compelling than news articles and what implications does that hold for the future of news companies in South Africa?

### **1.3.2. Research objectives**

#### **1.3.2.1. Primary objective**

The primary objective of this research paper was to evaluate Captonians' consumption of breaking news stories through online news videos and social media platforms.

#### **1.3.2.2. Secondary objectives**

The secondary objective of this research paper was to evaluate whether the above social media platforms are seen as more compelling than text articles.

### **1.4. Conceptualization of key concepts**

The most pertinent concepts of this research paper were social media, online news video, news, consumption and off-site branding.

#### **1.4.1. Social media**

Social media refers to a means of interaction which is computer/technology-mediated. Social media allows for the sharing of all forms of information and all forms of media. Social media enables instant global connectivity through virtual communities and networks (Objar, & Wildman, 2015).

#### **1.4.2. Online news video**

According to Kaloperopoulos, Cherubini and Newman (2016) an online news video is a visual news storytelling format which is made for the internet itself. This media format is a short snippet made by traditional news companies and media organisations which can be accessed and viewed on cell phones, tablets and computers. Online news videos are often found on social media platforms as well as online news portholes, however their content and scope differ between different companies.

#### **1.4.3. News**

News is the publishing of any information which is regarded as noteworthy and previously unknown.

#### **1.4.4. Consumption**

Consumption was regarded in this research paper as the viewing of online news videos for the reason of gaining information and news.

#### **1.4.5. Off-site branding**

Off-site branding is when a brand touch point is encountered online, however is not on the brand's own website but on a separate platform such as Facebook. Off-site branding may be planned or unplanned but is usually the result of information sharing on social media.

### **1.5. Overview of Research Methodology**

This research paper made use of a post-positivist research design and conceptual approach, and was conducted in Cape Town, South Africa. Quantitative data was collected by means of a Linkert style survey. The surveys were handed out face-to-face and distributed through online platforms. The subsequent data was analysed using descriptive analysis as well as secondary literature. A comprehensive research methodology was discussed in Chapter 3.

### **1.6. Structure of the paper**

This research paper was divided into the following chapters:

**Chapter 1:** Chapter one serves as an introductory chapter including the problem and purpose statement, the research objectives and a conceptualisation of key terms.

**Chapter 2:** Literature Review, including a theoretical foundation explanation and categorised review of literature.

**Chapter 3:** Research Methodology, including the research paradigm, the research design, the research population and sample, the method of collection and analysis, the credibility, transferability, reliability and validity of the method as well as ethical considerations and limitations.

**Chapter 4:** Results and Discussion, including the realised sample, the descriptive analysis of each survey question and its subsequent answers as well as a discussion on the results.

**Chapter 5:** Conclusions and Recommendations, including answers to research questions, the implications of these answers as well as possible limitations and recommendation for future research.

### **1.7. Summary**

This chapter has given a brief overview of what to expect in this research paper. This chapter has contextualised the problem as well as explained the problem in terms of the questions that are being asked, why these questions are being asked and the objectives of these questions. This chapter has also conceptualised the key terms that will be used throughout, as well as provided a brief description of the research methodology that was used.

## **2. Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter was to review previous literature that is of a similar manner to this research paper. This is an important aspect of this paper as past research and knowledge provided guidance for my own research and conclusions. This chapter first of all provided a theoretical foundation based on Ströber's theory on the evolutionary process of media. This chapter then provided a review of literature in which the decline in text consumption and increase in online consumption was discussed. The formatting of online news will then be revealed in terms of conciseness and speed as well as the mediums used. This review of literature then assessed the possible need for a new economic model in terms of news production as well as social media and the ethical considerations needed for online platforms.

### **2.2. Theoretical foundation**

Rudolf Ströber's theory of media evolution proposes that media's progression is not simply the result of technical innovation but rather is the consequence of a two-stage process involving invention and "social institutionalizing" (2004:483). The basis of Ströber's theory is linked to the macro theory of evolution as well as Joseph Schumpeter's theory of invention and innovation. Ströber argues that media, as like evolution, is complex, emergent and based on time. However Ströber also argues that the evolution of media is very much based on cultural phenomena and therefore is not only somewhat planned through invention but subsequently and unpredictably changed through social institutionalisation .(Ströber, 2004).

Ströber first of all argues that the history of media can be tracked through its past "improvements", "where new features are adapted for old purposes" (2004: 488). The online news video is an example of such an improvement; the purpose of news communication remains at the fore, yet is communicated through a new medium. Ströber argues that media evolution takes place through three phases; the invention phase, the innovation phase and the diffusion phase. He suggests that it is during the innovation phase that society takes a medium such as telegraphy, film or the internet and transgresses the medium into a new realm such as the telephone, movies and

the worldwide web (2004:491). It is during the diffusion phase however that succeeding improvement becomes increasingly cheaper and widely available due to competition. He argues that this stage is crucial to the evolution of all media forms, as speed and cheapness continually increase and thus dictate financing (2004:493). Ströber therefore argues that the “institutionalisation” of an invention firstly encompasses the discovery of new possibilities which is followed by both the adaption of new media as well as the adaption of economic models. In terms of the online news video, we find that the traditional news medium has transgressed toward the new medium of video which has enabled the cheap and easy access of news for the greater public. The online news video has also, according to Kalogeropoulos *et al.*(2016), been competition driven rather than public driven. The online news video therefore has to a substantial degree followed the theorised evolutionary process of Ströber.

### **2.3. Review of literature**

According to Bourdieu, Castells, Habermas, Horkheimer and Adorno media previously has and continues to play a prominent role in society and with increasing internet usage, it is not surprising that newspapers have had to enter into new media systems (Mitchelstein & Boczkowski, 2009). Ströber’s theoretical foundational reveals both the evolution of media formats as well as the implication of modifications. The proliferation of the online news video indicates, according to Ströbers theory, an adaption of economic models as well as an increase dissemination speed. This review of literature will delve into the above aspects laid out by Stöber’s theory as well as additional research information.

#### **2.3.1. Decline in consumption**

According to the study conducted by Wilma Stassen, the South African newspaper industry is currently experiencing a constant decline in readership and thus revenue (2010). According to Stassen (2010), the average decline between five of the top Western Cape newspapers over the last decade is 36.76%. Stassen specifies however that this is an international trend that can even be seen with some of the most renowned newspapers such as the New York Times and the Chicago Tribune (2010). Stassen argues that the decline in readership is due to the migration toward online communication (2010).

### **2.3.2. Online news**

According to Stassen (2010), the Mail and Guardian was the first online news service in South Africa, however, today News24 is the largest online news company with an average of 1.2 million local users per month. In 1997 Fredin first conceptualised online news articles as non-linear documents which would allow for a more flexible understanding of problems; a dynamic understanding which he conceived was not possible with the traditional newspaper article (1997). He envisioned a user driven media platform in which active “metastories” could be created by the user (1997). Although Fredin’s theory has not been fully actualised, he is still accredited with laying the basic frame work on how one would access and personalise news in the online space.

According to the study conducted by the Project for Excellence in Journalism in 2008 “eight out of 10 Americans say the internet is a critical source of information in their lives” (Mitchelstein & Boczkoski, 2009). Ketterer found that the users of online news found significant value in following article links that were associated with the story at hand and thus expected more from online platforms than traditional newspapers (2001). According to the World Association of Newspapers, 44% of worldwide newspaper editors believed that in ten years from now (2009) the majority of the population would be reading their news online (Mitchelstein & Boczkoski, 2009). This prediction correlates with the research done by Kaloperopoulos, Cherubini and Newman in 2016.

Online news services however have been transformed over the last decade. What at first was a simply internet access of the original traditional story has now become a medium on its own. The online news platform is now a multimedia haven where content is most often coupled with either audio, video or animation in a flash format (Currie, 2006). Bockzkowski and Mitchelstein (2009) argue that the multimedia element of the internet has forced journalists into a new realm of storytelling where the choice of medium for each story influences reader/viewer potential.

### **2.3.3. Concise information**

Jakob Nielsen, an acclaimed usability theorist, found that the users of online news preferred condensed articles rather than large sets of information (Currie, 2006). In 1997 Nielsen recognised the need to not only shorten online texts but also to make the web page itself scannable and concise (Currie, 2006). This is consistent with the research done by Lowery in which it was found that online news users crave summaries of stories rather than in-depth reports (Currie, 2006).

According to De Wolk (2001), the multimedia advantages of the internet have created a richer news consumption experience than traditional newspapers. De Wolk argues that “Multimedia is a hallmark of what will distinguish the news and information of the future...The ability to click to see, hear and read more” (2001:16).

### **2.3.4. Increased speed**

The news industry has changed not only the way that news is consumed but also the rate that it is released (Stassen, 2010). According to Mitchelstein and Boczkoski online news services have diminished the “twice-a-day news cycle” and have allowed for instant news updates which can be easily found on the internet or even directly sent to one’s phone, email or social media newsfeed (2009 and Stassen, 2010). Mitchelstein and Boczkoski point out the change in publication speed from a study conducted in 1998 where most stories were published toward the end of the day as compared to a more recent study which found that constant publication throughout the day is a standardised norm (2009). The general population no longer has to wait for the morning newspaper as breaking news stories are more often than not heard about within a few hours (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2016).

### **2.3.5. Online video news**

According to Kalogeropoulos, Cherubini and Newman (2016) over the past year there has been a substantial growth and investment in video news. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) concluded however that this growth is not due to consumer demand but has been driven by technological advancements, social media platforms and by media publishers themselves. Online video news is a compelling medium that not only gives a brief synopsis of a story but is quickly produced and released by news organisations

and therefore is a suitable innovation in terms of Ströber's theory. Kalpgeropoulos *et al.* (2016) however found that video news is a specific medium that only suits specific circumstances. Video news according to the studies done by Kalpgeropoulos *et al.* (2016) are best suited for big breaking news stories. The research done by Kalpgeropoulos *et al.* (2016) revealed that during a big breaking news story, such as the Paris attacks, online video usage can double as a result its captivating format as well as its rapid dissemination through social media platforms. Video news has already evolved into the new medium of "live streaming" where consumers are given even more immediate access to breaking news stories regardless of their whereabouts or their willingness to pay for such content (Kalpgeropoulos *et al.*, 2016).

### **2.3.6. Change of economic model**

According to Mitchelstein and Boczkoski (2009), the online news industry has struggled to find a consistent revenue stream. Mitchelstein and Boczkoski (2009) suggest that this insecurity is due to news companies both reverting back to traditional revenue strategies such as advertising and subscriptions as well as being over reliant on new revenue streams such as e-commerce and targeted advertising based on user profiles.

Research conducted by Bustamante, Chan-Olmsted and Ha as well as Herbert and Thurman all indicate that advertising however remains a primary revenue stream for the online news industry (Mitchelstein & Boczkoski, 2009). Mitchelstein and Boczkoski (2009) argue that advertising however does not guarantee substantial returns, thus indicating that a new economic model may be needed as most online news users are not prepared to pay for the service. According to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) online news services are finding a number of problems with display advertising around text and therefore are increasingly looking at online news videos as a future revenue driver. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) found that digital advertising revenues for news videos increased by 51% between 2014 and 2015. Advertising in this context mostly takes the form of pre-roll advertising and thus is viewed before the news content. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) however show concern over viewer resistance to such advertising techniques. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) also point out the reliance that many online news video services have with social media platforms such as Facebook

and Twitter, and the lack of revenue generated through such platforms. While there is a move toward online news videos there is a concern over a sustainable income from this medium.

### **2.3.7. Social media**

According to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) online video news is aimed at not only rejuvenating advertisement revenue but also at capturing audiences in a more engaging manner. News broadcasters are finding it increasingly more difficult to not only capture the attention of consumers but to also maintain a direct relationship with consumers (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2016). According to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) news broadcasters and print organisations have had to rapidly change their branding strategies as consumer behaviour has moved toward a greater reliance on social media platforms for everyday news consumption. According to Picard (2009, 10), news organisations have had to adapt their mantra's toward a more "anywhere, anytime on any platform" identity.

Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) reveal that video news consumption on social media pages such as Facebook and Twitter (off-site) is greater than on-site consumption and therefore are predominantly used by news agencies as a branding tool. According to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) off-site video news enables news organisations to engage with different segments of the population, especially the hard to reach younger generation. According to Stassen (2010), it is through social media platforms that news organisations are able to find and attract a future audience while at the same time engaging in meaningful real time conversations with these audiences. Picard (2009) reiterates this and states that it is through social media platforms that news organisations are able to better understand their audiences as well as source information from their audiences. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) argue that while social media platforms do not generate any substantial revenue for news organisations, these platforms are used in order to generate future revenue by constantly exposing the brand to the greater population and thus building the brand.

Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) argue that off-site news and video news is most commonly used and rapidly spread during the first few hours of a breaking news story. According

to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) off-site video news consumption can be largely attributed to those under the age of 35. Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) state that the younger generation's use of online video news serves as an indication of the potential growth of off-site video news consumption. Social media according to Stassen (2010) is here to stay and therefore should be invested in by news organisations as both a compelling way of engaging with audiences, disseminating information quickly and branding the organisation.

According to Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) Facebook is where the most online news videos are watched. This off-site platform allows a news organisation to create its own profile which users are then able to link to their profile and therefore, they do not need to go into the organisations page but directly receive everything that is posted by the organisation.

Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) state that the Facebook video consumption grew by 75% between 2015 and 2016, with an average of 8 billion video views per day. They show that news organisations such as CNN and the Huffington Post have increased their off-site video news content up to 100% in the last two years (2016). This exponential growth and investment into online video news reveals both the rapid growth of the medium as well as the advantages of using social media as a dissemination tool. They point out the correlation between the above phenomenon and the decline of television news consumption during the same time frame (2016).

A common concern found in the research between news organisations and social media platforms is the dependence that these organisations have on these platform and thus the power that these platform have over the organisations. Facebook already has regulations on post-roll advertising as well as live streaming. If Facebook decides to change its approach to online news organisations this may have a detrimental effect on the off-site news consumption and branding of the organisations (Kalogeropoulos *et al.*, 2016).

### **2.3.8. The digital divide**

According to Stassen (2010), an important consequence of online news and online video news is that it is reserved for those who have internet access and are internet savvy. Stassen (2010) argues that the online news medium is not a democratic medium and may in fact reinforce intellectual inequality. Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2009) agree with Stassen by stating that the purpose of news organisations as public service providers is lost when internet users are targeted for their revenue generating capabilities rather than their human rights. Mitchelstein and Boczkowski (2010) argue that internet access is limited to only a portion of the population and therefore creates a public sphere that is exclusive and elitist. This is an ethical consideration which may have an effect on the future growth of online news and online video news.

### **2.3.9. Discussion**

Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) conclude their paper with their concern over the prolonged growth of online news videos. They state that both the younger and older generations still value text news and that a future without such is unlikely especially due to the range of stories that text is capable of (2016). They also state that 97.5% of the general public's news consumption time is still spent with text and that 75% of respondents around the world hardly ever or never use online video news (2016). Nielsen concludes that news videos when used in the incorrect format can bore its viewers and thus should be used selectively (Currie, 2006). Kalogeropoulos *et al.* (2016) expect an evolution of both text and online news products but are not of the opinion that the one will replace the other.

## **2.4. Summary**

This literature review has examined the theoretical basis of this research paper as well as previous research within this area of study. Ströber's theory on the evolutionary process of media forms was discussed and revealed to match the evolution of online news videos. A review of literature was then conducted in which the decline on text news and the increase in online news consumption was elaborated on. The literature review then looked at the specifications of online news such as the conciseness and speed of this information as well as the video medium. Online news video was found to be a distinctive format increasingly used during breaking news stories. The need for

a new economic model when then discussed as well as the increased use of social media and the ethical considerations of such online platforms. It was shown that online video news has evolved rapidly and continues to grow in terms of its dissemination and format.

### **3. Chapter 3: Research Methodology**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter was to explain the methodology that was used in this paper. The paradigmatic stance was explained as well as the research approach and design. This research paper had a post-positivism stance towards the quantitative survey method employed on the below specified population and sample. This chapter explained how the data was collected and analysed and why such a method is credible, transferable, reliable and valid as well as ethically sound. The design and conceptualisation of a research paper had a direct impact on the quality of the study, and therefore is a vital foundation to the subsequent conclusions of this paper.

#### **3.2. Research Paradigm**

The positivist or positivist-empiricist paradigm is a leading paradigm in today's society where the general public view scientific language of social experiences as non-bias and value free (Ryan, 2006). Positivism suggests that absolute knowledge is attainable through experiment, observation and deduction (Ryan, 2006). The proceeding paradigm post-positivism, the paradigm on which this research paper is based, rejects this "positive" assertion of knowledge based on human behaviour (Creswell, 2003: 7). Post-positivism was established in the 19th century through the works of Mill, Newton, Locke and Comte, and more recently by Phillips and Burbules (Creswell, 2003: 7).

According to Anne Ryan, the post-positivist paradigm emerged due to growing awareness that dualistic ways of thinking are socially constructed and that neutral knowledge does therefore not exist (2006). Post-positivism recognises multiplicity and complexity and emphasises an ethical approach to dealing with social research and its participants (Ryan, 2006).

Post-positivism presumes that causes effect outcomes and therefore is deterministic in its stance (Creswell, 2003: 7). Post-positivism is also reductionist as it aims to reduce ideas into testable variables which constitute research problems and hypotheses such as the ones that this paper proposes (Creswell, 2003: 7). Post-

positivism aims to empirically observe and measure the outside world in such a manner that qualitative as well as quantitative data on human behaviour lies at the fore of the paradigm (Creswell, 2003: 7). Post-positivism assumes the governance of laws and theories, thus the research process begins with a theory, followed by the collection of data which either refutes or verifies this theory and ends with revisions and additional tests (Creswell, 2003: 7).

The main themes of the post-positivist stance according to Phillips and Burbules, as well as Anne Ryan are as follows. Firstly that an absolute “positive” truth can never be found, thus hypotheses are not proven but are rather an indication of non-rejection. The post-positivist method consists of theory testing from a distanced view where one’s own epistemological stance has been taken into consideration. Knowledge is shaped by both data and the rational consideration of both researcher and participant. Research pursues relevant and true answers and therefore upholds the standards of validity and reliability (2000 & 2006). A post-positivist stance can be assumed in this research paper.

### **3.3. Research design/conceptual approach**

The research design was used as a blueprint to guide the study as well as explain the procedures and methods used. The research design for this paper comprised of the conceptualisation of the approach and paradigm, secondary research which can be found in chapter two, as well as primary research which can be found in chapter four. In terms of conceptualisation, this research paper took on a post-positivist stance. The research question was answered by using quantitative data, with the understanding that objective data cannot be wholly achieved. A post-positivist stance was best suited for this research question because while positivist answers that can be quantified are sought, interpretivist concerns are also incorporated in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena witnessed.

### **3.4. Population and sample**

The population that this research paper focused on, was the residents of Cape Town, South Africa. This population was chosen due to its accessibility as well as its relevance in the South African market as many news industries are based in Cape

Town, South Africa. Within the Cape Town area there is a populous with a multitude of demographics such as race, language and economic status. This research paper had access to these different demographics and therefore was able to ensure a reliable and nonbiased methodology.

Within this population, this researcher sampled a selected few Cape Town residents. The sampling process is important as it allowed the researcher to focus on a selected few persons which are regarded as representative of the population. This research paper made use of purposive and convenience sampling, thus the sample was based on certain characteristics while at the same time convenient to the researcher in terms of availability and proximity (Zikmund & Babin, 2010). The sampling technique therefore was non-probability based.

This research paper however narrowed its scope to people who have available internet access at all times. Due to the inequalities of South Africa's past and present, many people do not have internet access or only have limited access and therefore cannot form part of this study as they are not connected to social media websites in a substantial way in terms of trend evolutions. This research paper also limited its sample to those that perceived themselves to be internet and social media savvy. This is an important aspect to the research methodology because if the sample contained people who do not use social media to begin with, the results will be skewed. This research paper was only interested in the perceptions of current social media users. This research paper also limited its sample to people who were between the ages of 18 and 45. These ages were chosen based on their influence and use of social media. The sample was comprised of all ethnic and gender groups.

### **3.5. Data collection**

Data was collected through purposive and convenience sampling, which required a sample size of 200 respondents completing a one page survey. The surveys were handed out and collected at random points around Cape Town. The surveys were also placed online and therefore were easily accessible for those who use online platforms. The surveys were based on a Likert scale, and therefore required the respondents to choose between four options, namely; strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly

disagree. Different sections of the survey also included different options such as, never, seldom, often and always, depending on the question asked. The Likert scale was chosen due to its ability to measure attitudes toward something and therefore was used to measure the attitudes of the sample toward online news videos.

### **3.6. Data analysis**

The Likert scale was chosen for the surveys in order for easy data analysis. The researcher looked at the median and the mode of the Likert results and not the mean as this scale is nominal. Through this analysis, one was able to conclude what the perceptions of online news are and if the perceptions correlated to one another. A narrative was sought from the data therefore insights were be subjectively gathered.

### **3.7. Credibility, transferability, reliability and validity**

Due to the chosen research paradigm of this paper, the validity, reliability and trustworthiness were kept in the highest of stead in order to avoid any positivist questioning or concern.

This paper firstly was credible because it aimed to reach conclusion that mirrored the real world. This research paper ensured that the methodology used was accurate and well recognised in order to gain trustworthiness. The recording and description of the results was accurate and well documented. This research paper was also credible due to the sampling techniques employed, as participants were be randomly sampled and not biasedly chosen. The standardisation of the survey questions ensured that no leading questions were asked. The ethical standards of the survey process also added to the credibility of the paper.

Transferability refers to the capability of findings being transferred or applied to other situations (Shenton, 2004). Due to the scope and context of this research paper however, one could not make any claim or judgment of whether the conclusions found could be generalised to the broader population or a different population. However due to the population, sample and context being meticulously explained, transferability is made possible for the reader.

The reliability of a research paper refers to the assumption that if the research was to be done again with similar methodologies and samples, similar conclusions would be met (Shenton, 2004). While qualitative research is context bound, reliability can still be ensured through the use of credible measures such as the ones explained above. Reliability was ensured as the collection and interpretation of the surveys was clearly explained. Explanation ensures the trustworthiness of this research papers methodology as one is able to judge and examine the methodology. The research design, data collection and reflection are therefore wholly explained.

Validity refers to whether a conclusion is met through objective means or through the characteristics and preferences of the researcher (Shenton, 2004). This paper therefore explains the reasoning behind every decision and conclusion made. This does not ensure objectivity, but instead ensures that if there are any predispositions to a judgment, that disposition be explained and outlined. Reflective summaries are therefore made use of.

### **3.8. Anticipated contribution**

This research paper aimed to give an indication of how many Capetonians make use of online video news as a primary information source during breaking news stories. This information will shed light on this new storytelling trend and its possible branding advantages and disadvantages. This research paper aimed to give an indication of media change as well as the significance of this change.

### **3.9. Ethical considerations and limitations**

The main ethical issue that this research paper faced during the collection and tabulation of the data is the anonymity of participants. The surveys therefore did not ask for or at any point refer to the names of the participants. Before the survey process began each participant was given the option of non-participation and was also briefed on what exactly that which was expected of them as well as the reasoning for the study.

The surveys and their questions did not entail any form of discrimination in terms of race and gender and did not ask any personal questions or questions that were not

related to the above research question. Refer to Appendix A for full survey transcription.

This research question did not intend to cause any harm and therefore did not survey any person without their prior permission. Any person may also have chosen to discontinue with the survey at any point. All data collected was kept in the strictest of confidence.

### **3.10. Summary**

This chapter has discussed the paradigmatic stance of the proposed research method as well as the research approach and design. This chapter has explained both the population and sample which was used in the research as well as how the data was collected and analysed from the sample. Importantly this chapter has reviewed why the methodology was credible, trustworthy, reliable and valid as well as why this research method was ethical and non-intrusive.

## **4. Chapter 4: Results and Discussion**

### **4.1. Introduction**

In this chapter a descriptive data analysis of the survey results was done with the use of pie charts, modes and medians. Modes and medians were the best form of descriptive analysis as Linkert style survey questions were asked. The realised sample was explained and each survey question and its respective results were be analysed. A discussion of the results and their correlation with the review of literature in Chapter 2 was discussed.

### **4.2. Descriptive data analysis**

Descriptive statistics according to Maree, is a collective term for different statistical methods used to “organise and summarise data in a meaningful way” (2016). Due to the quantitative nature of this research paper, descriptive statistics were used to explain the basic features of the realised sample and the measures used. The descriptive analysis therefore gave an overview of the results of each survey question as well as the mode and median.

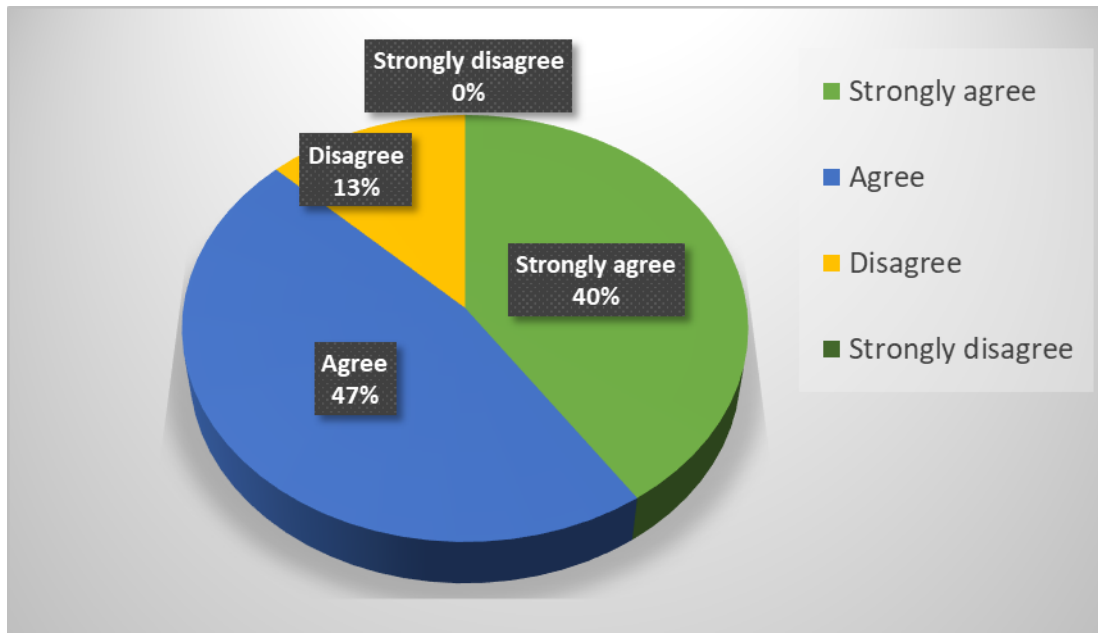
#### **4.2.1. The realised sample**

The surveys reached and gathered 158 responses, all of which were located within the Cape Town area. Demographic data, such as the respondent’s age, gender and race were not specified in the survey and therefore cannot be commented on, however all respondents were between the ages of 18 and 45. All respondent’s claimed to have sufficient internet access and believed themselves to be social media savvy.

Majority of the surveys were completed through online platforms, such as Facebook and Google Forms. 128 responses were recorded online and 30 responses were recorded face-to-face.

## 4.2.2. Survey questions and measures

### 4.2.2.1. Question 1 results

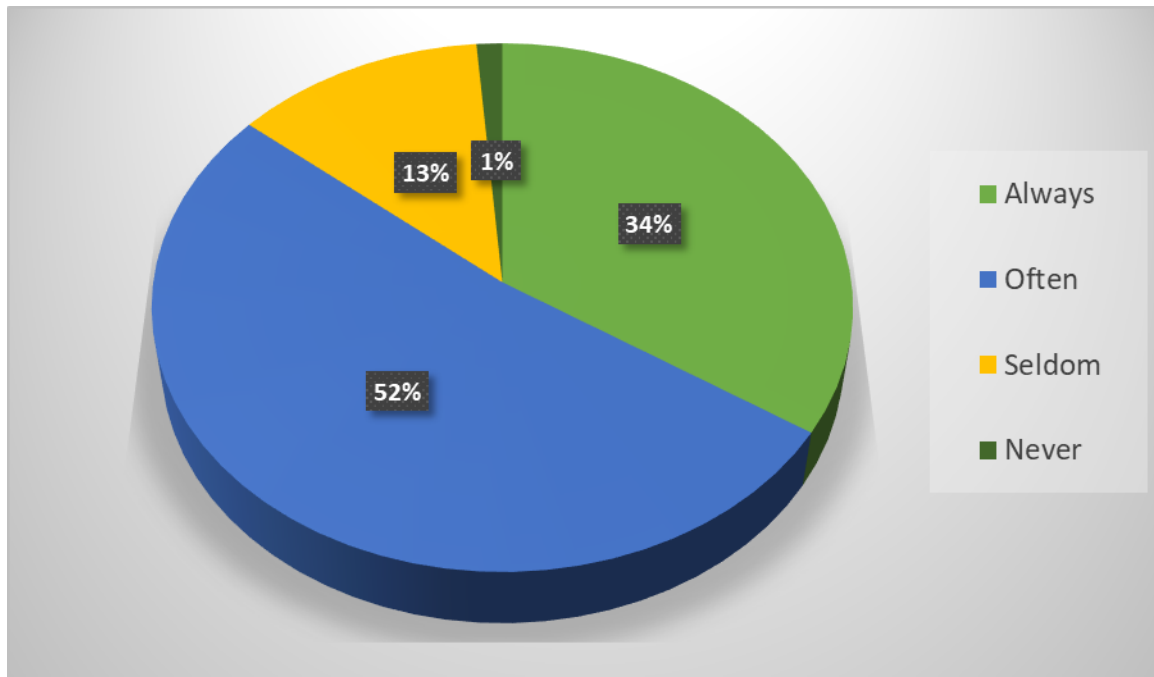


**Figure 1: The prevalence of respondents who said to agree or disagree with whether they most commonly first hear about breaking news stories through social media platforms.**

The above pie chart represents the respondents' attitudes toward the question "I most commonly hear about a breaking news story through social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter". It can be observed that 40.5% (64) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement whereas 46.8% (74) of respondents agreed with the statement. 12.7% (20) of respondents disagreed with the statement and zero respondents strongly disagreed.

The mode and median for the above data was therefore an attitude of agreement. 87.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement revealing a strong alignment between breaking news stories and social media platforms.

#### 4.2.2.2. Question 2 results

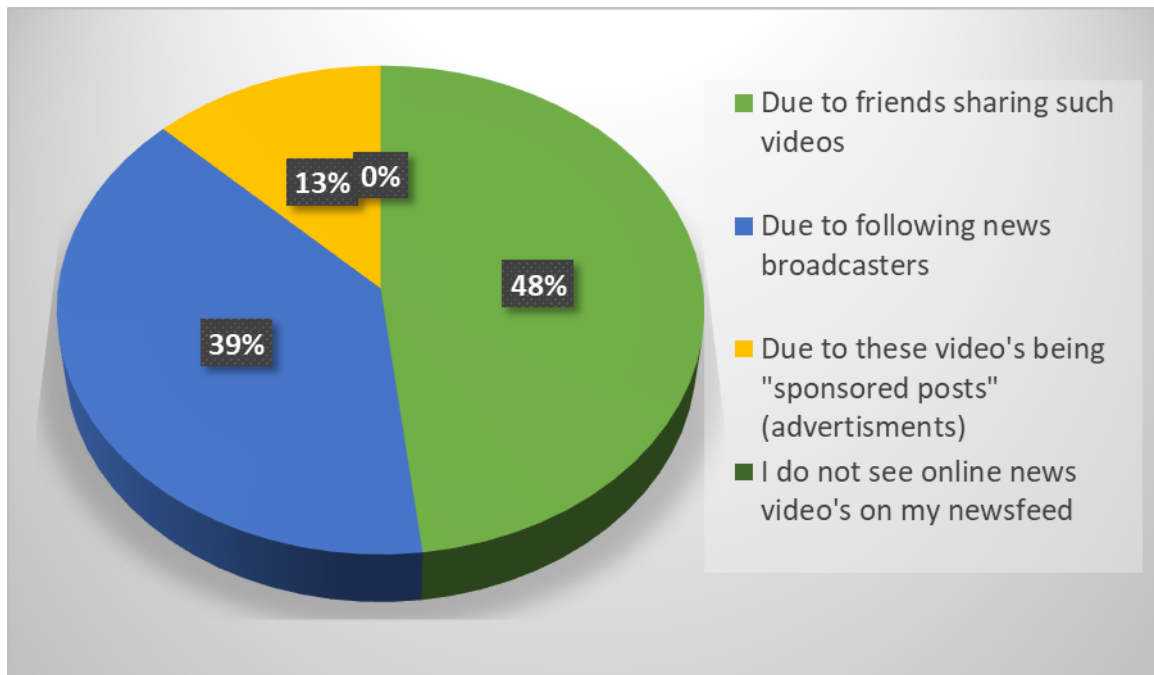


**Figure 2: The frequency of how often the respondents believed to see online news videos on their social media pages.**

The above pie chart represents the respondents' frequency of interaction with online news videos. 34.2% (54) of respondents felt that they see online news videos frequently on their social media newsfeeds whereas 51.9% (82) of respondents felt that they saw online news videos on their social media newsfeeds often but not always. 12.7% (20) felt that they seldom saw online news videos and 1.3% (2) of respondents' felt that they never saw online news videos on their social media newsfeeds.

Both the mode and the median for this measure of frequency was *often*. Only 2 respondents felt that they never saw online news videos on their newsfeed's whereas 86.1% of respondents answered that they see online news videos "often" and "always" revealing a high presence of online news video's on social media.

#### 4.2.2.3. Question 3 results

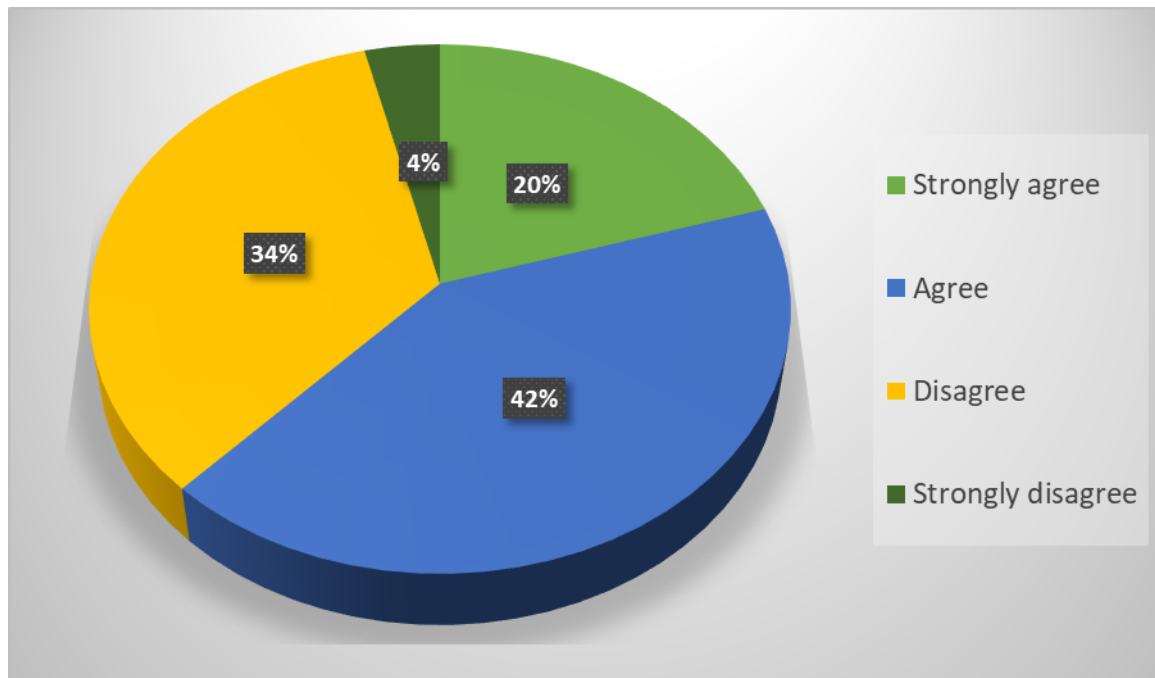


**Figure 3: The respondent's reasoning behind why they may see such online news videos.**

The above pie chart represents the respondents' reasoning as to why online news videos may appear on their social media newsfeeds. As can be observed 48.1% (76) of respondents believe that they have seen these video due to their friends sharing online news videos on social media. 39.2% (62) of respondents claim that they personally follow news broadcasters on social media and 12.7% (20) agreed that their interaction with online news videos were due to advertisements. Zero respondents claimed to have never see online news videos.

The mode for the above measure is therefore "Due to friends sharing such videos", whereas the median is "due to following news broadcasters".

#### 4.2.2.4. Question 4 results

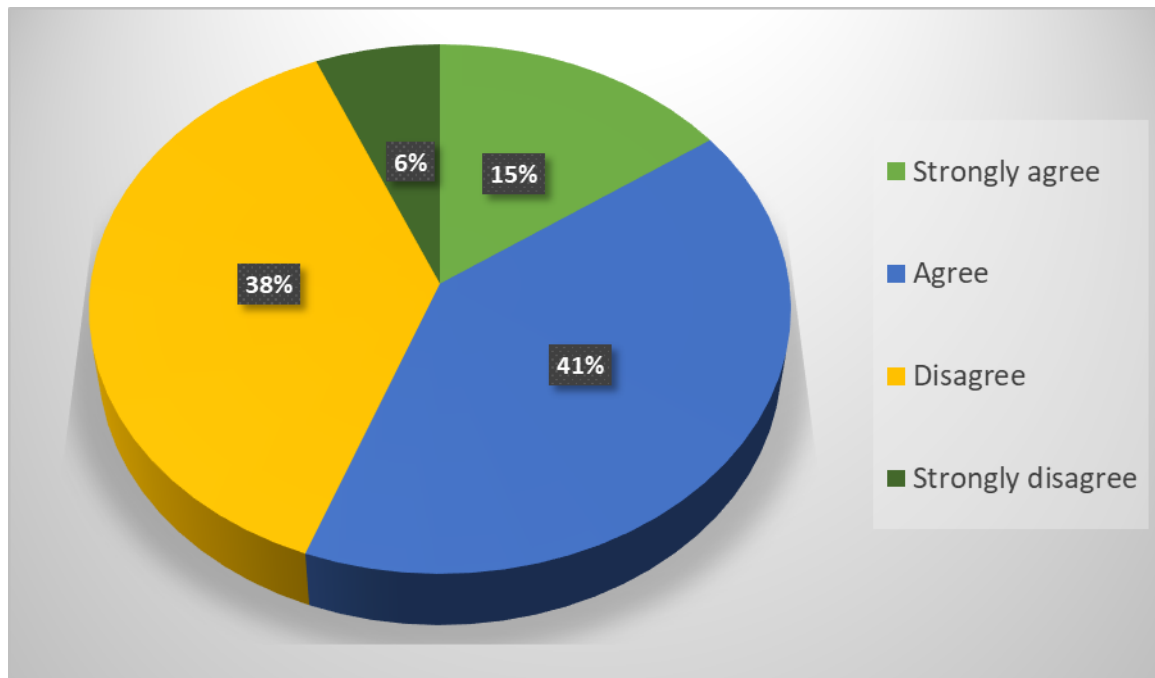


**Figure 4: The prevalence of respondents who agreed or disagreed that online news videos were more compelling than text articles.**

The above pie chart represented the respondents' attitude towards online news videos in comparison to text articles. 20.3% (32) of respondents strongly agreed with the statement, whereas 41.8% (66) of respondents simply agreed and 34.2% (54) of respondents disagreed with the statement. 3.8% (6) respondents strongly disagreed with the above statement.

The mode and median for the above measure was therefore agreement with the above statement. These results reveal that while 62.2% of respondents were inclined to agree or strongly agree with the statement, 38% showed signs of disagreement.

#### 4.2.2.5. Question 5 results

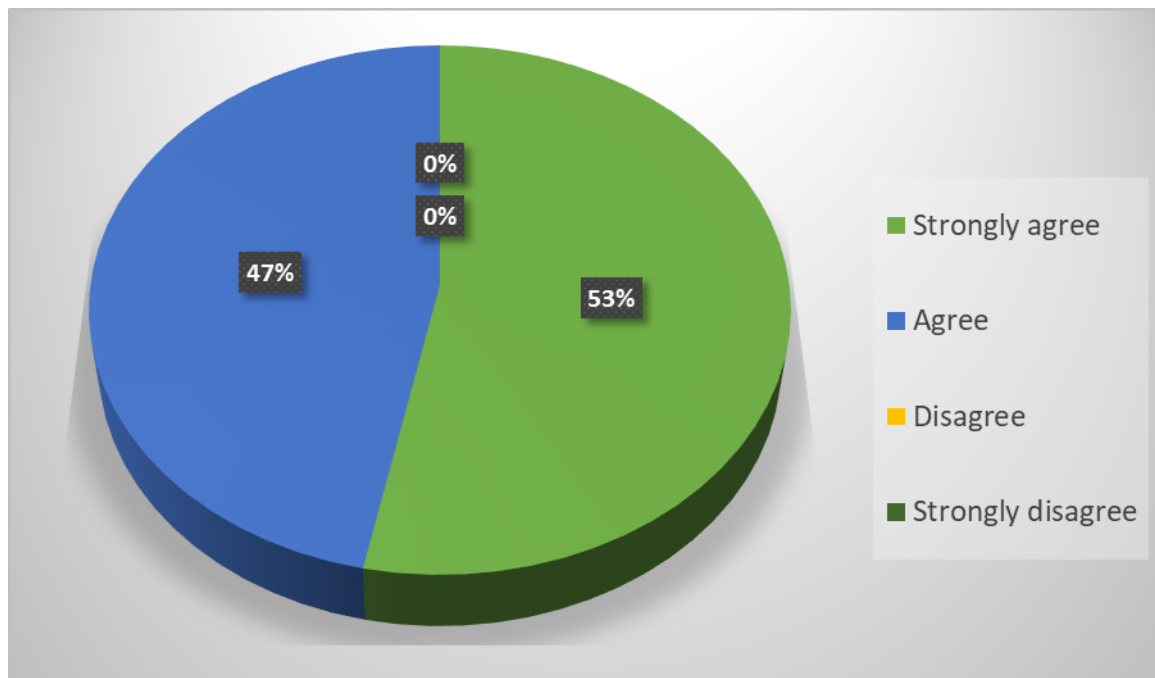


**Figure 5: The prevalence of respondents who agreed or disagreed with regard to whether they would rather follow up on a developing news story through social media and not television or text articles.**

The fifth survey question asked whether the respondent would rather follow a developing news story through online videos or through television or text. It was found that 15.2% (24) of respondents strongly agreed that they would rather follow a developing story using online news videos, whereas 40.5% (64) of respondents agreed with the statement. 38% (60) of respondents however disagreed with the statement and 6.3% (10) strongly disagreed.

The mode and median was found to be *agree*. The results reveal that the 55.7% of the respondents showed signs of agreement whereas 45.3% showed signs of disagreement. The data reveals that there is no significant sway toward either agreement or disagreement.

#### 4.2.2.6. Question 6 results



**Figure 6: The prevalence of respondents that agreed or disagreed that online news videos are increasing.**

The last survey question asked the respondent whether or not he/she believed online news videos were increasing. 53.2% (84) strongly agreed with the statement and 46.8% (74) agreed. Zero respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

The mode and median for this measure was found to be strong agreement. The results reveal a significant belief in the increase of online news videos.

#### 4.3. Discussion of results

The aim of the above survey was to establish the extent to which Capetonians gain their breaking news stories through online news videos on social media platforms. The questions therefore revolved around frequency, the reasoning behind that frequency as well as attitudes toward this medium and its expansion.

In correlation with the review of literature in Chapter 2, the results revealed a high correspondence between breaking news stories and social media platforms. The results therefore correlated with Mitchelstein and Boczkoski's findings that "eight out

of 10 Americans say the internet is a critical source of information in their lives” (2009). This research paper found that 87% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they heard about breaking news stories through social media platforms, thus revealing the importance of social media in information consumption.

This research paper found that 86% of respondents felt that online news videos appear on their social media newsfeed “often” and “always”, indicating a consistent presence of breaking news stories on social media. This information corresponds with Mitchelstein and Boczkoski’s findings that news is no longer broadcasted or released twice a day but in fact is constantly published throughout the day (2009). This finding also correlates with Kalogeropoulos’s *et al.* argument that the general population no longer wait for the morning paper or evening broadcast as breaking news stories are most often heard within a few hours (2016).

The results of this research paper revealed that 48% of the respondents did not follow news broadcasters on social media however still had online news videos appear on the newsfeeds due to their friends sharing such videos. This finding correlates with the arguments of Kalogerpulos *et al.*, Stassen and Picard, who all argue that social media enables wider consumer engagement and thus future revenue opportunities (2016, 2010 & 2009). This research finding has revealed the power of offsite branding and social media sharing in terms of brand awareness and brand building.

The findings of this research paper also revealed that all respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that the prevalence of online news videos is increasing. This finding correlates with Kalogeropoulous’s *et al.* findings that there has been a substantial growth and investment into online news videos (2016). The findings of this research paper however revealed that only 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that online news videos were more compelling than text articles. This percentage is not significant and potentially indicates a correlation with Kalogeropoulos’s *et al.* argument that the growth of online news videos is due to technological innovation and media publishers rather than consumer demand (2016).

The results of this research paper indicate that only 56% of respondents preferred online news videos to text articles when following a breaking news story. This

percentage is once again not significant and thus reveals that there is still a significant use of text articles in South Africa. This finding therefore does not wholly correlate with Stassen's finding that there is a decline in text consumption and a migration to online platforms in South Africa (2009).

The correlation between this research papers results and the findings of past literature ensures credibility. Reliability and validity was ensured through the sample selection and size, the design of the survey questions, the method of data collection as well as the non-bias data description and interpretation. The data and research instrument recorded data that directly correlated with the set objectives.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This chapter has provided a descriptive data analysis of the survey results through the use of pie charts, modes and mediums. The realised sample was explained and shown to consist of 158 respondents. Each survey question was analysed and a discussion of the results and their correlation to the review of literature in Chapter 2 was examined. The credibility, reliability and validity of the results was briefly revised from Chapter 3.

## **5. Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter provided answers to the posed research questions found in Chapter 1. The answers to these questions were provide a conclusion to this research paper in terms of objective meeting. In this chapter the implications that these conclusions may have on future practices as well as possible limitation and thus recommendations for future research were discussed. This chapter provided a reflective summery from the researchers prospective for validity purposes.

### **5.2. Concluding answers to the research questions**

The primary research questions in research paper were as follows:

1. To what extent, if any, do Cape Town residents gain their breaking news stories through online news videos on social media platforms?
2. To what extent, if any, are online news videos perceived to be more compelling than news articles and what implications does that hold for the future of news companies in South Africa?

The answers to the above research questions were as follows:

1. Based on the respondents and findings of this research paper, it can be concluded that the Capetonian respondents to a large extent gain their breaking news stories through social media platforms however this is not necessarily done through online news videos but possibly through other forms of media found on social media. Such an assertion could only have been made if more respondents showed a preference to online news videos over text, however this was not found to be the case.
2. Based on the respondents and results of this research paper, online news videos were not found to be significantly more compelling than text articles thus the increase in online news videos was not found to be caused by consumer demand within the sample. Social media however was found to be an important aspect to news broadcasters in terms of brand reach and awareness as many

respondents did not follow news broadcasters, yet still interacted with these brands due to social media.

### **5.3. Implications of findings for future practices**

This research paper, since its beginning, sought to understand the growth of social media and its increasingly prominent role in society. This paper began with the understanding that how information is spread and consumed is rapidly changing and therefore is an important aspect for news broadcaster to comprehend and act upon. This paper sought to give news broadcasters an understanding of the changing digital environment as well as their customers' perceptions of this environment in terms of the growth of online news videos. The objectives of this paper are believed to have been met.

This research paper has contributed an understanding of the prevalence of social media use with regards to news consumption in Cape Town, South Africa. This paper has also contributed an understanding of how important social media is for news broadcasters in terms of customer reach and awareness. This paper has revealed that online news videos are not necessarily more compelling than text articles and that online broadcasters should not forgo this medium. News broadcasters can therefore use this information to shape their online presence to suit the needs of their current and future customers.

### **5.1. Possible limitations and future research**

The most prominent limitation of this research paper is the size of the sample. This research paper was only able to reach 158 respondents which is not representative of the population. The size of the sample may have unknowingly skewed the data and subsequent results and interpretations. A recommendation for future studies is therefore to reach a larger and more representative sample of the population. I recommend that the researcher allow him or herself adequate time to do so.

A second limitation to this research paper is the choice of a single geographical region. This research paper made use of purposive and convenience sampling and therefore did not look beyond the Cape Town area. This is a limitation as Cape Town is an urban

area in South Africa and does not necessarily stand as a reference point for the rest of South Africa. I recommend future studies look at both Cape Town and Johannesburg and possibly a rural area too. The inclusion of more areas will allow the researcher to draw results that are more transferable and reliable.

A third limitation to this study is the number of variables that were measured. This study did not include variables such as race, age, or gender and therefore could not take such variables into account. I recommend future studies look at the ages of the respondents. There is a possibility that digital media is age dependent and that the degree of online news video appeal is determined by the age of the viewer rather than the location of the viewer.

A fourth possible limitation to this research paper may be the researcher's choice in using a Linkert style survey. The survey and results may be distorted due to a central tendency bias and social desirability bias. Central tendency may have occurred due to the respondents feeling the need to "agree" with the given statement due to it being a central answer when the respondent was unsure. Social desirability bias may have occurred if the respondent felt the need to "agree" with the statement because they believed that is the answer the researcher was looking for.

A fifth limitation to this research paper is that the majority of the surveys were done online. This method limited the scope of respondent to those who already use Facebook regularly. The results may have differed if more non-Facebook users were surveyed.

The researcher recommended that future research should be done into the different types of online news videos available and as well as how they may differ in terms of reach and attractiveness for consumer interaction. The researcher also recommends more research to be done on the occasions that online news videos are more regularly watched, such as breaking news stories or regular political updates. The researcher recommends more research be done on the presence of algorithms and online curatorship and how those aspects may affect the potential for increased viewing. The researcher also recommends more research be done on the act of watching online news video's, thus researchers should look at what barriers may prevent video

watching, such as buffering, and what may enhance video watching, such as automatic play.

## **5.2. Reflections**

Throughout the research process the researcher did not believe that their personal opinion and unconscious bias shaped the respondents answers or skewed the results. The researcher remained as objective as possible during data analysis and interpretation. The research process was conducted within an adequate amount of time, thus analysis was neither rushed nor swayed toward a desired answer but was analysed at face value. Data was collected in an ethical and due manner and therefore was not forced upon respondents. The researcher believes that credibility, reliability, transferability and validity are present in this research paper.

## **5.3. Finale conclusions**

This research paper has answered its research questions and therefore has met its research objectives through a quantitative data analysis and post-positivist stance. This research paper took ethics into consideration and did not cause any harm or discomfort to respondents. This research paper has provided a problem and purpose statement, a theoretical foundation, a review of literature, an in depth methodological overview, a descriptive analysis of the results achieved as well as conclusions and recommendations for future research. The scope of this research paper was kept concise and therefore has set a foundation for future expansion and opportunity.

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## Appendices

### A: Survey Questions

1. I most commonly hear about a breaking news story through social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube or Twitter.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
2. How often do you see such videos on your news feed?
  - Never
  - Seldom
  - Often
  - Always
3. Why do you see online news videos on your social media news feed?
  - Due to friends sharing such videos
  - Due to following news broadcasters.
  - Due to these video's being "sponsored posts"(advertisements)
  - I do not see online news videos on my news feed.
4. I find online news videos on social media platforms more compelling than text articles
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree
5. I would rather follow up on a developing news story through social media and not television or reading the newspaper.
  - Strongly agree
  - Agree
  - Disagree
  - Strongly disagree

6. I believe that online news videos are increasing.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

B: Safe Assign

An Investigation into the Proliferation of Online Video News Consumption in Cape Town, South Africa

Student Name: Kirsten Golding Student Number: 17000529 Supervisor: R. Drummond

**1 Submitted in partial fulfilment of Strategic Brand Communications Honours at Vega School, a brand of the Independent Institute of Education (IIE) on October 16, 2017.**

**ABSTRACT** In the past few years society has seen an exponential growth in the use of online media. This research paper specifically looks at the growth of online news videos and the extent to which consumers are embracing this new story telling format in comparison to traditional news mediums.

Through the use of Linkert style surveys, this research paper aims to understand the prevalence and acceptance of online news videos from the consumer's perspective. This research paper seeks to understand the roll that online video news plays in society and decipher whether or not online video news is simply an addition to the digital media landscape in South Africa or a driver of change in news production and consumption. This research papers also aims to understand the roll of social media, and thus the influence of off-site platforms on branding. The answers to these questions will provide broadcasters with vital information for future production and brand building initiatives.

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Final Research Report

Kirsten Golding on Sun, Oct 15 2017, 8:26 PM

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## **C: Ethical clearance form**