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Facebook users interacted with the BBC Trending television program

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Abstract:

This research paper aims to examine the extent of the audience interaction with the BBC channel program "BBC Trending" through social media and television. The descriptive method was employed, followed by distributing electronic questionnaire forms to a group of Facebook users and Trending followers simultaneously. The questionnaire was divided into two axes along with the personal data of the respondents. The study sample consisted of 300 individuals randomly selected. The results revealed that the use of social media as an alternative to television is characterized by a shift in the audience's preference for news and television programs. This transition is considered a strong and competitive alternative to traditional television channels, marked by increased viewer interaction and content production.

Keywords: Interaction; Facebook users; BBC Trending.

Jel Classification Codes: XN1, XN2.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The study of the interaction between television programs and social media plays a vital role in understanding the transformations occurring in the field of journalism and media in the era of technological advancement and digital transition. The focus is primarily on audience participation in traditional media, especially in the citizens' interaction with television programs through social media platforms. With the evolution of Web 3.0 technology, social media has become a powerful tool enabling citizens to participate in news gathering using smartphones and digital cameras to document events and share them across various platforms.

Activists and bloggers rely on these platforms to disseminate their content, contributing to user interaction and engagement by facilitating collaboration between professional journalists and the public to achieve the broadest possible news coverage in the shortest time possible.

Social media platforms emerged in the last decade of the twentieth century and underwent significant development in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Initially, these platforms provided simple services for online personal communication. One of the standout platforms was Facebook, which allowed its users to create personal profiles (Salim, 2005, p. 05).

Social media sites such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube are considered integral parts of technological innovations in modern communication. They have facilitated easy user interaction in a digital environment. For example, Facebook seeks to create an environment where individuals can regularly log in to track the activities of friends and colleagues, exchange their personal activities, interact about common interests or hobbies, send messages, and join groups and networks (Gunter, 2012, p. 05).

It is noteworthy that interactive television programs have also enabled viewers to participate through social media, making them active contributors to television content production and shaping public opinion.

Social media platforms thus serve as important complements to interactive television programs, integrating traditional television with modern technology and communication platforms. An excellent example of this integration is the program "BBC Trending" on the Arabic-speaking BBC channel. This program reflects the viewers' role as active partners in TV program development. Based on the discussed facts, the following general question arises:

• How do viewers of BBC Arabic channel interact with the program BBC Trending through social media?

This general question can be further broken down into a set of specific questions, including:

A- Why do viewers of the BBC Arabic channel choose to watch the "BBC Trending" program through social media?

B- How do Facebook users manifest their interactions with the BBC Trending program?

1.2. Study Hypotheses:

• General Hypothesis:

Viewers of BBC Arabic channel interact more with the program "BBC Trending" through social media than they do by directly watching it on television.

• Specific Hypotheses:

A- BBC Arabic channel viewers may not always be able to watch the "BBC Trending" program on television, leading them to resort to social media to follow it at different times, under

various circumstances and in different locations.

B- There are diverse aspects of interaction by Facebook users with the BBC Trending program.

1.3. Importance of the Study:

The significance of the study is evident through its main title, which focuses on investigating a contemporary and controversial topic—the increasing reliance of the audience on social media. This poses a real challenge for professionals in the visual media industry, requiring television stations to understand ongoing developments dynamically and adapt to them flexibly.

These developments signify, in the long run, an integration leading to the disappearance of traditional boundaries between old and new media sectors. Thanks to the interaction between the audience and content producers, both sides can better understand each other and develop new content that meets the needs of both. BBC Arabic, as one of the channels that adopted this feature through the program BBC Trending, serves as an example highlighting the importance of social media platforms in the media arena, providing immediate interaction allowing the audience to direct attention towards important issues and events.

1.4. Study Objectives:

The objectives can be categorized into three:

A- Cognitive Objectives:

• Attempt to understand and comprehend the close relationship between social media users and the BBC Trending program.

• Investigate the significance of interaction between social media users and the BBC Trending program.

B- Civilizational Objectives:

• Keep pace with the evolution and progress in the fields of media and communication, emphasizing the interest in the audio-visual domain as a proactive step in the digital transition.

• Analyze the technological advancement level of global channels and their programs to propose solutions that help media channels achieve more positive outcomes.

C- Academic Objectives:

• Contribute to establishing new ideas and research in the field of audio-visual media.

• Attempt to understand the contemporary context and the future of audio-visual media in the midst of digital transformation and the trend towards smart media and social media.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Defining Study Concepts:

Scientific studies and research rely on concepts and terms in their formation. Therefore, it is crucial to define these terms from the beginning of the study to avoid confusion and ambiguity. This involves providing precise definitions for each term and clarifying their various and necessary meanings in this context. The study is based on several fundamental concepts related to study variables, and the most important ones are highlighted below, along with linguistic, terminological, and procedural definitions for each term:

A- Interaction:

-Linguistically: Derived from "tafa̅'ul" (interaction), events quickly interacted, meaning they had an impact on each other. Interaction, in the sense of influencing one another. The plural form

of the word is "tafā'ulāt" (interactions). (Samaha, 1984, p. 341)

-Terminologically: It is a concept created to indicate a specific form of the relationship between audio-visual and viewers. It aims to transform passive viewers into active elements that influence programming. However, the gradual and diverse use of the interaction concept now indicates all types of audience participation in the message and the creation of feedback. (Al-Ayyadi, 1998, p. 109)

-Procedural Definition: The process of transferring and exchanging ideas and opinions among individuals to facilitate the message's delivery through agreed-upon methods and signals. This interaction can lead to changing individuals' behavior based on the information and interactions that occur in this process.

As for electronic interaction, it is a communicative and mutual impact dialogue that occurs between two or more users through mutual interaction between feedback and positions. The producer must adapt to the needs of these followers effectively. It also gives them an appropriate degree of freedom for active participation and involvement in the production process, based on the information provided by the program.

B- User:

- Terminologically: The actual creator of content and its producer, where content takes the form of original creations or rewrites of classic media content, making these contents a unique cultural industry. (Al-Hamami, 2013, p. 22) Thus, the transition to a "new person carrying the characteristics of digital technology in his mind, body, and behavior, as his components and inclinations have changed." (Mansouri, 2016, p. 123)

In this context, Sadek Al-Hamami refers to the public's liberation from the guidance of traditional media and enjoying the freedom to receive, produce, and publish content.

- Procedural Definition: The user, in the context of our study, is primarily related to the person who participates in producing and sharing content on social media platforms. Every user of these platforms can be considered a content producer in the digital environment. This trend is based on the idea of aligning the concepts of "user" and "producer" in the context of using social media platforms. It is noted that this interaction can be attributed to the characteristics of second-generation web users and subsequent generations, where the concept of the audience in media and communication evolved from mere content consumption and reception to active participation and involvement in the production as an advanced part of this use in new media.

C- Facebook:

-Linguistically: The dictionary of media and communications defines "Facebook" as a "social networking site founded in 2004 that allows the publication of personal profiles." It was initially created to serve university students, faculty, and staff but expanded to include everyone. (Danesi, 2009, p. 117)

-Terminologically: Facebook is considered one of the most important social networking sites. It is not only a social forum but has become an easy technological base that allows anyone to do whatever they want. (Sadeq, 2008, p. 218)

-Procedural Definition: Founded by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004, Facebook is a leading online social media platform with widespread popularity. This platform allows users to create personal accounts, communicate with friends and family, and share diverse content, including photos, posts, and comments. Beyond being a social networking tool, Facebook has become a platform for displaying business, celebrity, and institutional content. Users can like pages, follow their

favorite people and pages, and join discussion groups on specific topics. Facebook offers interactive features such as stories, instant messaging, and live video streaming, enhancing its position as a significant source for information exchange and communication on a global level, significantly influencing digital culture and communication in the modern era.

D- BBC Trending Program:

It is a newscast that reviews what is being discussed on social media platforms. It lasts for thirty minutes and is presented by Rania Attar and Serena Gokuh, succeeding Ahmed Fakhoury, airing five days a week at 3 PM GMT on BBC Arabic TV and social media. The program covers the most popular news widely circulated on social media, discussing them in-depth and analyzing their dimensions. The "Trending" newscast aims to provide a type of communication between traditional news broadcasts and social media, using the latest technologies. The program is characterized by its innovative spirit, conveying events through social media in an interactive and innovative way. Despite the presence of many satellite channels that offer segments about social media, the "Trending" program remains at the forefront, garnering millions of views and comments on YouTube. The program is considered a futuristic model for news broadcasts, presenting events in a non-traditional way and discussing the impact of news in the digital world through monitoring various social interactions, relying on comments, tweets, and hashtags on social media platforms.

2.2. Studies related to the topic:

• The first study:

Conducted by the researcher Nawal Barakat (2016), titled: "Reflections of Using Social Media on the Pattern of Social Relationships: A Field Study on a Sample of Algerian Users," unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Algiers 3, Algeria. (Barakat, 2016)

This research addressed the issue of the impact of social media users on the structure and nature of relationships within Algerian society. The main question posed in the thesis was:

What is the nature of Algerians' use of social media? And what are the main implications of that on the prevailing social relationships among them? The researcher relied on the descriptive methodology to achieve the study's objectives and chose a purposive sample, focusing on users of social media in Algeria, aiming to represent various age groups, whether inside or outside the country, with a sample size of approximately 1000 individuals. The study reached several general conclusions, highlighting that many real relationships of individuals in their social environment, including family, relatives, neighbors, workmates, or even study relationships, have shifted from the real world to the virtual world. Real-world relationships have withdrawn, and virtual relationships, facilitated by social media, have expanded and deepened. The study emphasized the enhancement of virtual relationships, including connections with friends met solely through social media, altering the distinguishing features of the real world, where interactions took place in physical spaces based on the researcher's findings.

• The second study:

Conducted by the researcher Mohamed Amin Aboub (2022), titled: "The Impact of Social Media on Participation in Digital Content Production," a doctoral thesis in the field of media and communication sciences, University of Algiers 3, Algeria. (Aboub, 2022)

This study aimed to explore how social media users exploit the features of these platforms

in producing digital content in various contexts and topics using multiple media. The study also sought to understand the impact of social media features on the quantity and quality of content produced by users in the Arab region. To achieve these goals, a sample of 406 individuals from various Arab countries was used, and data were collected through observation, digital participation, and digital questionnaires. The main results of the study were as follows:

-The study showed that users of social media in the study use an average of 3.46 different platforms, indicating the diversity of platforms and media they interact with. The study also highlighted users' preference for platforms such as Facebook and YouTube due to the features offered by these platforms.

-The study emphasized the importance of the ease of use of social media platforms and the adoption of content production using multiple media. Additionally, the use of smartphones to access these platforms was highlighted, contributing to an increase in the quantity and quality of digital content produced via social media.

-The study indicated that the term "use" fundamentally includes the concept of "production" on social media platforms. This implies that every user is a producer of digital content in any form and can create new content using various media.

Commentary on previous studies:

• It is evident from the presentation of previous studies that media and communication are undergoing a crucial stage in the era of new media, particularly concerning research exploring various challenges and issues related to the new media landscape. This transitional stage requires a reconsideration of the scientific foundations underlying media and communication research in the digital environment.

• This necessity is particularly clear in the methodologies of research, where multiple challenges arise in employing traditional research methods to study the behavior of social media users. These challenges manifest in significant differences between the characteristics of modern media and their audience compared to traditional media. Consequently, researchers need to reassess the theoretical and methodological frameworks they rely on in their studies to adapt them to the new reality.

• This update allows researchers new opportunities to explore and analyze recent developments in the field of media and its social impacts. In this context, it becomes essential to conduct a precise evaluation of the tools and concepts used in media research and work on their development to align with the variables of the digital age and the aspects of interaction through social media.

- Utilization of previous studies in the current study:

• Identification of the study's elements: (problem, concepts, methodology, tools)

• Preparation of the study tool, represented by the electronic questionnaire.

• The results of these studies can help interpret the results of the current study and provide guidance in discussing the findings.

3. Method

3.1. Study Methodology:

We used a descriptive-analytical methodology in our study, aiming to describe the phenomenon as it is in reality, then analyze and interpret it, linking it to other phenomena. This methodology relies on a detailed and specific description of a specific phenomenon or subject in either qualitative or quantitative form, often within a defined time period or through development

covering several time frames.

3.2. Study Population and Sample:

Our study community consists of users of the Facebook platform who follow the BBC Trending program, totaling 1200 users. We used a random sample comprising 300 individuals.

3.3. Study Tools:

We relied on a questionnaire tool that was designed and formulated after the steps and stages mentioned earlier. The questionnaire includes 17 questions distributed as follows:

-Personal data: 3 questions (representing the characteristics and features of the research community).

-Axis One: The use of social media as alternative platforms to follow TV programs, questions 01 to 07.

-Axis Two: Aspects of interaction of Facebook users with the BBC Trending program, questions 08 to 14.

We adopted three alternatives according to the Likert scale as follows:

- No.
- Sometimes.
- Yes.

Before the final preparation of the form, its validity was tested through two fundamental methods. Initially, we distributed a sample questionnaire to identify any shortcomings or ambiguities by distributing 10 forms. Then, we presented the form to several professors for assessment. Based on the opinions and observations gathered, necessary adjustments were made, and the form was finalized.

After completing the data transcription process, we need methods and mechanisms to explain and analyze the data to interpret the phenomenon in detail. We relied on the following:

A. Quantitative Analysis Method: Conducted through numbers and percentage data presented in the form of statistical data, digital tables indicating correlational relationships, providing vitality and effectiveness to solid numbers and percentages. This allows extracting and scientifically discussing the results. Various quantitative analysis methods were employed in this study.

B. Qualitative Analysis Method: Describing and explaining the data and results, attempting to link pre-specified causal relationships in the theoretical section to the field section, and comparing different data based on variables, aiming to bring the study out of the realm of fixed tables and repetitions, forming a link between the theoretical and field aspects for study integration and coherence.

3.4. Questionnaire Reliability and Validity:

A. Questionnaire Reliability:

Table (01) shows the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to measure the reliability of the study tool.

Reliability of the Study Tool	Number of Statements	Cronbach's Alpha α
	14	0.856

The table above indicates that the overall reliability coefficient of the study reached 0.856 for a total of 14 questionnaire items. This indicates that the questionnaire has a high degree of reliability and can be relied upon in the field application of the study according to Nunnally's scale, which sets a minimum reliability threshold at 0.70.

B. Questionnaire Validity:

Regarding the validity of the questionnaire, we mean that "the questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure" (Al-Nawaisa, 2015, p. 84), and it "reflects the intended content according to its relative weights." Validity, in general, means that the questionnaire measures what it is supposed to measure and accurately reflects the content intended to be measured.

Table (02): Illustrates correlation coefficients between the axes and the total score of the questionnaire.

Axis Statements	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Value
Axis One	0.73	0.000
Axis Two	0.88	0.000

From the results of the table above, all Pearson correlation coefficients between the two axes and the total score of the questionnaire are statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05. The minimum correlation coefficient for Axis One was 0.73, while the maximum for Axis Two was 0.88. Therefore, all axes are internally consistent with the questionnaire as a whole, confirming the internal consistency validity of the questionnaire.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

-Presentation and Analysis of the First Hypothesis:

Hypothesis Text: Social media is used as alternative platforms for following TV programs.

Table No. (03): Shows the results of the Chi-square test (Kai Square) for Axis One.

	Frequency	Percentage	Kai Square	Degree of Freedom	Significance Level (α)	Significance Meaningful	Significance
Low	0	0%	65.64	5	0.05	0.000	Significant
Medium	65	21.66%					
High	235	78.34%					
Total	300	100					
Tabulated Kai Square Value 50.0							

Comments and Discussion:

According to Table No. (03), it is evident that the number of individuals with a low level in Axis One is 0 (0%), while those with a moderate level are 65 (21.66%), and those with a high level are 235 (78.34%). The Kai Square value, calculated as 65.64, is higher than the critical Kai Square value (50.0). The significance value (0.000) at a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom (5) indicate that the statistical significance is achieved. Therefore, the first hypothesis is statistically significant.

This means that television networks view the internet as an alternative means to distribute content, competing to capture the attention and follow-up of the audience through their extensive interactive capabilities, as suggested by the study (Edwards, 2012). This is supported by Abdo Khalid Jamal study, "From Television Networks to Social Networks," indicating that the spread of social media led television channels to create pages on these networks to reach a wider audience

and interact with them more directly (Abdo, 2021).

Consequently, the level of the study participants or the study variables in Axis One ranges from moderate to high. This implies that the participants perceive social media as alternative platforms for following TV programs. The partial hypothesis one is thus confirmed.

-Presentation and Analysis of the Second Hypothesis:

Hypothesis Text: There are aspects of interaction of Facebook users with the BBC Trending program.

Table No. (04): Shows the results of the Chi-square test (Kai Square) for Axis Two.

	Frequency	Percentage	Kai Square	Degree of Freedom	Significance Level (α)	Significance Meaningful	Significance
Low	22	7.33%	115.73	7	0.05	0.000	Significant
Medium	43	14.33%					
High	235	78.34%					
Total	300	100					
Tabulated Kai Square Value 37.5							

Comments and Discussion:

Table No. (04) indicates that the number of individuals with a low level in Axis Two is 22 (7.33%), with a moderate level being 43 (14.33%), and a high level being 235 (78.34%). The Kai Square value, calculated as 115.73, is higher than the critical Kai Square value (37.5). The significance value (0.000) at a significance level of 0.05 and degrees of freedom (7) indicate that the statistical significance is achieved. Therefore, the second hypothesis (There are aspects of interaction of Facebook users with the BBC Trending program) is statistically significant.

The most prominent interactive mechanisms according to (Ahmed Adel, Sharif, & Ahmed, 2013)include the preference for videos and topics presented by others, ranking first at 76.02%. This is followed by sharing topics with another user (Share) at 17.28%. The category of signaling or sending notifications for any update (tags) ranked third at 3.08%. Additionally, the category of putting emphasis or marking received a percentage of 2.17%, and the forums and blogs category came in fifth and last place at 1.45%.

Therefore, it is concluded from the results that there are indeed aspects of interaction of Facebook users with the BBC Trending program, and this is statistically significant at a significance level of 0.05. Hence, the partial hypothesis two is confirmed.

General Hypothesis Presentation and Analysis:

General Hypothesis: BBC channel viewers interact more with the "BBC Trending" program through social media than they do by directly watching it on television.

Table No. (05): Displays the results of the (Chi-square) test for all survey axes.

	Frequency	Percentage	Kai Square	Degree of Freedom	Significance Level (α)	Significance Meaningful	Significance
Low	0	0.00%	54.30	8	0.05	0.000	Significant
Medium	44	14.70%					
High	256	85.30%					
Total	300	100					
Tabulated Kai Square Value 50.0							

Comment on the table and discuss it:

The table (Table 05) provides insights into the vocabulary levels of participants across different axes. It reveals that there were no participants with a low level of vocabulary (00) in the total axes, accounting for 0%. Meanwhile, those with an average level were 44 participants, constituting 14.70%, and those with a high level were 256 participants, representing 85.30%.

Notably, the calculated value of (Kai Square) stands at 54.30, which is higher than the tabulated value of (Kai Square) at 50.0. The significance value (p) is 0.000 at a significance level of 0.05, with degrees of freedom (df) equal to 08. Comparing the significance value with the significance level, it is evident that sig < α, indicating statistical significance. Therefore, the general hypothesis is accepted.

The study by (Amari, 2016) discussed the use of the news channels "France 24" and "BBC" on the social media platform "Facebook" as part of a global electronic scientific awareness strategy. The channels utilized the virtual space of Facebook as a fertile ground to study the interactive preferences of their audience. This was achieved by analyzing the number of comments left by the audience on news posts. The use of Facebook allowed the channels to create a new and interactive audience, integrating users into the media process without restrictions or conditions, and without considering identity, gender, geographic affiliations, and at no cost. Users express their opinions freely in language, manner, and style, bypassing what is known as the "gatekeeper." This interaction enabled the channels to achieve the interactivity they aimed for with their viewing audience on the television screen. Thanks to the interactive feature of Facebook, the news channels became national channels.

This aligns with the current study, which explored the various digital interaction methods with the BBC Trending program on social media platforms. The results suggest that BBC viewers interact more with the program on social media than they do by watching it directly on television. This conclusion is statistically significant at the 0.05 significance level, indicating the general hypothesis is achieved.

After presenting the overall stages of the study, from methodological steps through the methodological aspect to the applied section where we outlined the study's field features, discussed hypotheses, and analyzed various numbers, statistics, and commented on the tables, we have reached several results summarized as follows:

- The use of social media as an alternative to television is characterized by a shift in the audience's preference to follow news and TV programs through these platforms. This transition is seen as a strong and competitive alternative to traditional TV channels, enhancing viewer

interaction and participation in content production.

- The program "Trending" on the BBC channel addresses a variety of topics fundamentally, with a focus on interaction and participation through social media. It aims to strike a balance between traditional news broadcasts and the use of social media.

- Followers of the "Trending" program on Facebook exhibit active comments and widespread engagement, highlighting the significant role of Facebook in encouraging participation and generating social dialogue around the program's content.

- The "Trending" program demonstrates a positive and strong impact on the Facebook platform, witnessing notable user interaction with the content. This illustrates the benefit of using social media platforms to attract audiences and improve the quality of the program's content.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, as a summary of our study, it is essential to highlight the multifaceted and diverse interaction with interactive television programs through social media platforms. Through the analysis of data and study findings, it becomes evident that television channels are adopting new strategies to interact with their audiences. Users of social media platforms are actively participating in determining the topics to be discussed in TV programs.

The "TRENDING" program on BBC NEWS Arabic is a vivid example of this transformation. It neutrally addresses news trends through social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. The program aims to achieve integration between traditional media, citizen journalism, and media convergence. This integration is evident in the dynamic interaction between old and new media, blurring the boundaries between them.

By encouraging interaction between the audience and producers, the program has led the audience to watch episodes and engage with them directly, even re-watching them through social media platforms. This opportunity has allowed a better understanding of both the audience and producers, leading to the development of new content that meets the expectations of both parties in the era of digital transformation and television audiences.

Suggestions:

To enhance academic and scientific assistance in the audiovisual field, here are some new ideas that have been beneficial in this context and can contribute to increasing the interaction of TV viewers through modern technological platforms rather than traditional television. These include:

1. Improve Interactive Viewing Experience: Provide user-friendly interfaces for effective interaction during television program viewing. Offer options for viewers to choose the storyline or influence the story's development. Incorporate contests, prizes, or other activities to attract and encourage participation.
2. Engage the Audience as Part of the Program: Integrate viewers into part of the program through interactive segments or hosting discussions through social media platforms, enhancing the sense of participation and interaction.
3. Involve Users in Content Creation: Open the door for users to participate in content production by suggesting ideas, voting on decisions, and proposing topics for future episodes, thus providing a seamless integration between social media platforms and television.

4. Use Data Analytics and Artificial Intelligence: Analyze interaction data from social media platforms using data analytics and artificial intelligence techniques to understand viewers' preferences and provide content that meets their expectations.

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