

News and the Public Sphere in a Multi-Ethnic Society.

A case study of the BBC's Regional Television News Programme:
Midlands Today.

By

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD.

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June 2009

ABSTRACT

In light of the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000 - with the aims/objectives of the BBC to *reflect the nation that we serve* (Dyke 2000), this study undertook a methodical analysis of the output of the Midlands Today programme. This enabled an assessment to be made upon whether the BBC's 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice' on Midlands Today, in terms of this programme reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output. The finding of this analysis was then used to determine to what extent, this programme's output could be deemed to be a reflection/depiction/articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

The analysis of 258 Midlands Today programme's broadcast over the periods of 2002 to 2008, revealed that the output of this programme consistently fails to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region - to where it broadcasts.

This study identified that the primary reason for this finding, is because of the lack of a cultural change in the news production process, as employed on the Midlands Today programme; a cultural change that would facilitate and encompass the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, hand-in-hand and alongside the aims/objectives of the news production process.

Therefore, Midlands Today's failure to contribute to the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, can be understood in terms of this programme being shaped by at least 2 separate *forces* - both 'vying' and 'competing' for the 'air space' within the Midlands Today programme. The first: the aims/objectives of the news production process; the second: the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Without a significant cultural change, the first *force* - the news production process, will always take priority, supersede and inadvertently *negate* the second.

Shirley D. Burgess

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

During the course of this study, I have been helped by many people. My thanks are due firstly to my supervisors, Dr Olga Linné and Dr Gillian Youngs, who so patiently read my manuscripts and whose advice, support and encouragement throughout the research period, have proved to be an invaluable source of hope and inspiration. Secondly, I would like to express my gratitude to the BBC for granting me unequivocal access to the study site and Personnel. My thanks are also due to John Beckett of the computer centre at the University of Leicester, for his help and assistance. I would also like to say thank you to my parents: Courtney Delacey Burgess and Marjorie Doreen Burgess for their support and encouragement. They both used to say to me: "*Shirley don't take your foot off the pedal... keep your foot on the pedal!*" Well, thank you Mummy and Daddy... love you both!

And finally, I would like to mention my late sister Gazelle Avonda Burgess, to whom I dedicate this work. PEACE!

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SUMMARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

ANO	Assistant News Organiser
AP	Associated Press
ASBO	Anti-Social Behaviour Order
BA	Broadcast Assistant
BAFTA	British Academy for Cinema and Television
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
BJ	Broadcast Journalist
C4	Channel Four
CBA	Commonwealth Broadcasting Association
CDN	Cultural Diversity Network
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
CRE	Commission for Racial Equality
C&W	Coventry & Warwickshire
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DG	Director General
DIG	Diversity Implementation Group
DMD	Diversity Monitoring Database
DWP	Department of Work and Pensions
ENG	Electronic Newsgathering
ENPS	Electronic News Production System
EPA	Equal Pay Act
ER	English Regions
GOVT	Government
GUMG	Glasgow University Media Group
HR	Human Resources
HRLP	Head of Regional and Local Programmes
H&W	Hereford & Worcestershire
MECs	Minority Ethnic Communities
MORI	Market Opinion Research Organisation
MP	Member of Parliament
NDD	News Diversity Database

NHS	National Health Service
NIB	News-in-brief
NTO	National Training Organisation
ONS	Office for National Statistics
OOV	Out-of-vision
PACT:	Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television
PSB	Public Service Broadcaster
PTC	Piece-to-camera
RIMA	Race in the Media Awards
RRA	Race Relations Act
RTS	Royal Television Society
SBJ	Senior Broadcast Journalist
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UK	United Kingdom
UPI	United Press International
US	United States
Voxpop	Voice-of-the people
WM	West Midlands

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The Cultural Diversity Network was founded in 2000 with the aim of modernising the portrayal of ethnic minorities in mainstream programming and ensuring that racial diversity on-screen and behind the screen reflects today's multicultural Britain. It seeks to provide a platform for collective action by its members. In the last two years we have seen the CDN membership grow in number and refocus its activities to address some of the key issues facing diversity in the media. (Sophie Turner Laing, Chair of the CDN 2006-2008¹).

The misrepresentation, stereotypical characterisations, inflammatory reporting and the under-representation/employment of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) working in the media, as well as the role the news media can play in the articulation of race relations in the British society, has been the subject of much empirical academic vigour, discussion and commentary for decades (Butterworth 1967; Halloran 1974, 1977, 1981; Hall *et al* 1978; Hall 1987, 1990; Hartmann and Husband 1970, 1974; Hartmann *et al* 1974; Downing 1975, 1985; Husband 1975;

¹ <http://www.culturaldiversitynetwork.co.uk/>
[CDN website page: Accessed: 12/11/08]

Critcher et al 1977; Troyna 1981; Cohen 1982; Sumner 1982; Tumber 1982; Joshua et al 1983; Miles 1984; Murdock 1984; Burgess 1985; Murray 1986; Solomos 1986, 1989; Barry 1988; Gordon and Rosenberg 1989; van Dijk 1991; Twitchin 1992; Philo and Beattie 1999; Cummerbatch et al 1996; McLaughlin 1999; Ross and Playdon 2001).

However in October 2000, the major broadcasting companies in Britain joined forces to set up the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN). The ultimate aim of the CDN is to try to address many of the concerns and issues highlighted in the studies cited above. Namely: the (mis)/representation/portrayal of minority ethnic communities (MECs) in the media's output, and the under-employment of those from the MECs working within the media industry.

So for academic researchers within this field of study, these are very exciting times. One could almost say... 'revolutionary', because for the first time ever, it would seem that the 'gap' between what academics have pontificated about for so many decades, and what the media industries now say they are concertedly trying to achieve in terms of the portrayal, representation, inclusion and increased employment of those from the minority ethnic communities... is now being closed!

This proactive and collaborative action taken by British-based broadcasting companies, has for many if not all, included the incorporation of a diversity policy within their particular media organisation.

The BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), which is a member of the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN), became one of the leading lights in this area when Greg Dyke, the former Director General (DG) of the BBC, implemented a pan-BBC diversity policy² into the framework of this organisation in 2000. This was often accompanied with Dyke's relentless proclamations that the BBC wants to: "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000). In so doing, Dyke made the portrayal/representation of MECs on-screen and behind the screens (i.e. employment), a primary focus of this diversity policy. Dyke certainly made many people 'sit up and listen', when during an interview on BBC Radio Scotland, he stated that: "I think the BBC is hideously white" (Dyke 2001a³).

The BBC's commitment for change even went as far as Dyke setting employment targets in 2000, as an indication of how

² Unless otherwise stated, when reference is made to the pan-BBC diversity policy in this current study, it is in relation to the policy as it relates specifically to minority ethnic communities (MECs). It is important to make this point because the BBC's overall diversity policy also focuses upon other 'aspects' of diversity, such as age, disability, faith, gender, sexuality, class/education, family/marital status, geographical location, language/accent, communication style (Ghelani 2003).

³ This comment was made by Greg Dyke when he was being interviewed on BBC Radio Scotland's *The Mix* programme on Sunday 7th January, 2001 @ 21:00 GMT.

many people from the MECs should be employed by the corporation by the end of 2003. These targets were met and since then subsequent targets have been re-set and increased on a regular basis.

Therefore, given the overall aims of the pan-BBC diversity policy to *reflect the nation that it serves*, the main objectives of this current study is to examine to what extent, the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice' on its regional television news programme: Midlands Today. As such, empirical research for this current study was undertaken into this as yet un-chartered territory. Has the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy, resulted in the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, as conceived by Husband (1996, 1998, 2000) on the Midlands Today programme?

1.1 Rationale and Hypothesis of the Study:

News and the public sphere in a multi-ethnic society

A very succinct way of articulating the 'notion' of the public sphere which was first conceptualised by Jurgen Habermas (1989), is by describing it as the *space* that exists between state and citizen(s); the space that enables dialogue and the exchange of ideas to travel backwards and forward between these two entities.

The following definition provided by Curran (1991), details the role that the public sphere occupies in society - in its most *effective* and *purest* of forms:

"According to classical theory, the public sphere (or in more traditional terminology, 'public forum') is the space between Government and society in which private individuals exercise formal and informal control over the state: formal control through the election of governments and informal control through the pressure of public opinion. The media are central to this process. They distribute the information necessary for citizens to make an informed choice at election time; they facilitate the formation of public opinion by providing an independent forum of debate; and they enable the people to shape the conduct of government by articulating their views. The media are thus the principal institutions of the public sphere or, in the rhetoric of nineteenth century liberalism, 'the fourth estate of the realm'." (Curran 1991:2).

Developing upon this understanding of a public sphere, Husband (2000) goes one step further by conceptualising the role that a multi-ethnic public sphere *should* undertake in a multi-ethnic society:

"A multi-ethnic public sphere must reflect the diversity present in society in such a way as to facilitate the autonomous expression of ethnic identity of both minority and majority ethnic groups, and of national identities. Additionally it must provide for the exchange of information and cultural products across these communities of identity." (Husband 2000:209).

Taking on board Husband's (2000) definition of the aims and purpose of a multi-ethnic public sphere, the hypothesis and rationale of this current research study is that the successful translation of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy into 'practice' on the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today, could possibly lead to the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere via this programme's output and as such, provide a 'space' where members of the minority ethnic communities (MECs) who have traditionally been afforded 'limited' access to participate within the public sphere of the news media (Halloran 1974; Downing 1975; Critcher et al 1977; Glasgow University Media Group, 1982; Dijk 1993), may now gain increased access to participate and as such, gain the 'right to communicate and to be understood' (Husband 1996, 1998).

And if there were ever a need to provide strong justification and unequivocal support in favour of the establishment/formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere as conceived by Husband (2000), then it came in August of 2006 when the then Government's Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly MP, launched the *Commission on Integration and Cohesion*. The role of the taskforce assigned to this Commission was to try to come up with practical ideas and solutions that would help to encourage better integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain - irrespective of their race,

culture, creed or religious beliefs. At this juncture, it would be useful and apt to present excerpts from the address made by Ruth Kelly MP, to those present at the launch of the Commission - on Thursday 24th August 2006:

"Thirty years on from the Race Relations Act and the Commission for Racial Equality, the context of today's society arguably poses some of the most complex questions we have ever faced as a nation...

"In our attempts to avoid imposing a single British identity and culture, we have ended up with some communities living in isolation of each other, with no bonds between them.

"I think we face the clear possibility that we are experiencing diversity no longer as a country, but as a set of local communities. Each experiencing changes in a different way with some being affected more than others.

"For some communities in particular, we need to acknowledge that life in Britain has started to feel markedly different since the attacks on 9/11 in New York and on 7/7 in London - even more so since the events of two weeks ago⁴.

"But evidence at a national level, via the regular government citizenship survey, which consistently shows that people who live in the most ethnically diverse areas are the ones that have the most positive perceptions of ethnic minorities. It seems that those who are the most frightened about change are those that have been least exposed to it." (Ruth Kelly MP, 2006⁵).

⁴ Ruth Kelly MP is referring to the planned terrorist attacks in August 2006. The police and security services were able to foil the plot to carry liquid explosives onto aeroplanes at London Heathrow airport, which were destined for the United States and Canada.

⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/aug/24/uksecurity.terrorism>
[Guardian newspaper website page: Accessed: 25/8/2006].

The point to be made here is that *if* there is a lack of integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain, then one possible reason could be because fundamentally, there is a lack of *understanding* and *knowledge* about each other; disparate groups and communities live in this country but do so outside of each other's sphere.

However, a multi-ethnic public sphere as articulated above by Husband (2000), and as conceived within this current research study could in theory, possibly help to 'squash' such concerns and fears that Ruth Kelly MP makes reference to. Thus allowing for "...the exchange of information and cultural products" (Husband 2000:209) and in so-doing, contribute to a greater understanding across and between all communities and groups of people, by allowing the expression of different ways of interpreting and viewing the world... to be 'communicated' and 'understood' (Husband 2000).

It is therefore contended within this current study that the news media, particularly television which is still considered to be one of the most 'trusted' sources of purveyors of information (Harrison 2000), to be *the* key cultural site that has the capacity, potential and ability to facilitate the articulation of the different ideas and views that exist within the British society.

Prior to the inception of the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN), and prior to the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy, it could be argued by critics of the public sphere that the *notion* of a *multi-ethnic* public sphere was just that - a 'notion'... a 'utopian' idea - particularly when one takes into account the wealth of past research studies that criticise the way in which MECs have traditionally been portrayed/represented and inequitably excluded from gaining access to the news media.

However, given the proclaimed intentions of the BBC - "to reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000), there may now be a 'meeting of the minds'... whereby academic theorising about a 'multi-ethnic public sphere' (Husband 2000), may now become a reality... in the form of a 'new model'...

"We still too often portray ethnic minorities as problem centred - bugged by crime, bad housing, poor schooling, poverty. And on and on it goes. We rarely rate the high performers, the entrepreneurs, the innovators, the risk takers, the campaigners. We need a new model that reflects today's world - that sees the valued contribution of all peoples to shaping today's Britain."
(Dyke, 2000:4).

And there lies the nucleus, *raison d'être* and hypothesis of this current study...

- Could this 'new model' that Dyke (2000) alludes to, lead to the establishment of a 'multi-ethnic public sphere' as advocated by those with the fore-sight, such as Husband 2000, Downing and Husband 2005, to understand the impact that this could possibly have upon improving community cohesion by creating a 'space' that enables citizens of Great Britain to gain a better understanding of each other?

Politically, if the BBC via its regional television news programme - Midlands Today, creates a multi-ethnic public sphere via a 'new model' as a direct off-shoot of the successful translation of its pan-BBC diversity policy into practice on this programme, then this could potentially 'radicalise' the way in which MECs are portrayed/represented and included in the public sphere; the public sphere as articulated by the regional television news genre vis-à-vis 'Midlands Today' and as a result, MECs may gain the *right to be understood* (Husband 1996) within the British society. This in turn could possibly have a direct and positive impact upon the way in which race relations is articulated in the news media in Britain, whereby the means for interpreting and framing events or occurrences in this society, is not solely from a "white perspective" (Husband 1975: 15), but from a 'multi-ethnic perspective' that encompasses views from all 'races', ethnicities and classes.

Furthermore, this 'new model' could again in *theory*, serve as a template for other news media organisations to follow suit and adopt. As a result this could have far-reaching consequences insofar as helping the British society to achieve 'community cohesion and integration' amongst all citizens of this country and "contribute to a just and thus - indeed *only* thus - peaceful and stimulating society" (Downing and Husband 2005:xii).

1.2 Choice of the BBC as the media organisation to research

We are the British Broadcasting Corporation. Our role is therefore to explore and articulate the meaning of Britishness in a multi-cultural devolving Britain. (Dyke 2001b).

The BBC was considered to be the most-suited media organisation upon which to focus this research study. This decision was based upon the following reasons:

- i) When the pan-BBC diversity policy was implemented in 2000, it was estimated that the BBC received nearly £30m annually in Licence Fees from the Black and Asian communities (Dyke 2001b). 9 years on, this figure has obviously increased due to the growing number of people from the MECs living in

Britain - as indicated in the last census in 2001 (ONS 2001), as well as the inflation over the years. Therefore it could be argued that more than any other broadcasting organisation, the BBC - as this country's main public service broadcaster (PSB) has a 'moral' duty and obligation to ensure that its programmes are a true reflection and representation of the multi-cultural, multi-ethnic society that makes up the UK population. This point was underlined by the BBC's former Director General, Greg Dyke (2000):

"Every household pays our wages and funds our programmes through the privilege of the Licence Fee, and because of this we are charged with providing programmes and services for everyone and we are publicly accountable for doing so." (Dyke, 2000:2).

- ii) The BBC plays an immense role in the cultural fabric of the British society. This importance was recognised in a statement made to the House of Commons in February 2000 by Chris Smith MP (former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport) who described the BBC in the following manner:

"The BBC is Britain's most important cultural institution and we have a duty to ensure that it can continue to play a central place in the nation's life." (Chris Smith MP, 2000⁶).

⁶ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2000/feb/21/bbc2>
[Guardian website page: Accessed: 22/2/2005].

Similar sentiments were also espoused by the current Director General of the BBC (Mark Thompson), thus demonstrating that the BBC recognises the role that it can, and does play in the *National Conversation* on community/social cohesion:

"The BBC is an important builder of social capital, seeking to increase social cohesion and tolerance by enabling the UK's many communities to talk to themselves and each other about what they hold in common and how they differ." (Thompson 2004).

iii) Whilst the employment practices of 'positive discrimination' is legal in the U.S, it is *illegal* in the UK. However, what is possible within the legal framework of the UK context is 'positive action'. Therefore, with the setting of employment targets by the BBC in its bid to try to increase the number of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) that it employs, the BBC has arguably done more than any other media organisation in the UK, to fully engage with the available legal possibilities to challenge marginalisation.

iv) Although the meeting of the employment targets set by the BBC may on one level indicate that the pan-BBC diversity policy (i.e. to increase the

employment of those from the MECs) is being achieved, there is thus far no empirical research evidence to suggest or indicate, that the aims of this policy to: "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000) is being achieved via the BBC's programming output. Therefore, in terms of this current research study, the above will be assessed via the analysis of the output of the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today.

- v) Based upon the "defining elements of a model of a viable multi-ethnic public sphere", as conceptualised by Husband (2000:209), a final reason for selecting the BBC as the media organisation to research, was because it was considered within this current study that 'on paper' and 'in theory', the BBC was the most-suited media organisation that could possibly fulfil the role of a viable 'multi-ethnic public sphere' (see Husband 2000:209-10).

1.3 Choice of BBC Birmingham as the Research Site

Of all the BBC English Region sites, BBC Birmingham was considered to be the most appropriate site at which to conduct this research study. This decision was based upon both historical and contemporary reasons:

- i) Historical: BBC Birmingham was the first BBC site to 'house' a multi-cultural television unit in the 1990s. Therefore, it was considered that this site has a history of delivering television programmes targeted at the minority ethnic communities.

- ii) Contemporary: The last census conducted in 2001 revealed that outside of London, Birmingham has the largest ethnic minority population in the UK (ONS 2001).

Also, the BBC's Asian Network offices (radio) are based in Birmingham and Leicester. So once again, BBC Birmingham is right at the heart of cutting-edge initiatives, i.e. a network radio station specifically targeted at a minority ethnic community.

Therefore, for the reasons as stated above, it was considered that BBC Birmingham encompasses a 'culture' that lends itself well to being a site that could possibly facilitate a multi-ethnic public sphere as defined by Husband (1996, 1998, 2000) and as a result, be a site that could articulate the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands region.

Also, at the time of conducting this research study key BBC personnel involved in the formation, implementation and/or monitoring of the pan-BBC diversity policy for English Regions, were situated at the BBC Birmingham site or were essentially based in Birmingham. Such personnel included the following:

- a) Governor of English Regions.
- b) Controller of English Regions.
- c) Diversity Editor for English Regions.
- d) Diversity Advisor for English Regions.

A final factor influencing the choice of which BBC site to focus this study upon, was the fact that throughout the research period for this current study, I was a BBC permanent member of staff based at BBC Birmingham, where I worked as a broadcast journalist in the Current Affairs and Features department. Therefore it was considered that the working relationships that had already been established with those working on the Midlands Today regional television news programme, as well as with the personnel based at BBC Birmingham who worked in the area of diversity, would prove to be beneficial and help to facilitate the collection of the required data.

1.4 Choice of Midlands Today as the regional television news programme to research

Cottles's (1993) study entitled: *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City* makes differentiation between network and regional television news programmes, and asserts that the 'tone' and 'presentational styles' employed by regional television news programmes tend to be more populist in its approach: "... popular journalism is inclined to appeal directly to sentiment and empathy, invoking first hand testimony and the individual human interest... Whilst serious journalism presents its claim to objectivity via the authoritative and detached tones of its news presentation and accessing of expert opinion, popular journalism is inclined to parade its moral communication and championing engaged opinion in the name of the people and common sense" (Cottle 1993:8).

Therefore, in light of the comments made by Ruth Kelly MP (see p.7), and in light of the findings of Cottle's (1993) study, it was considered that the 'public sphere' as articulated via the regional television news genre of Midlands Today, may be well-suited, equipped and receptive to facilitating the exchange of dialogue between and amongst different groups of people from the West Midlands region. It was also considered that the Midlands Today programme had a

vital role to play in mediating the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands.

Also, in his conceptualisation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, Husband (2000) asserts that:

"The demography of minority ethnic communities and minority national populations may not be such as to render them commercially viable audiences for particular media." (Husband 2000:210-11).

However, as the Midlands Today programme broadcasts to the West Midlands region - a region that is 'home' to the largest ethnic minority population in the UK outside of London (ONS 2001), it was considered that the minority ethnic population in this region was significant enough in numbers, for Midlands Today to wish to 'court' as potential viewers, as opposed to 'ostracise'.

1.5 Research Objectives

The overall aim/objectives of this research study is to examine to what extent, the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy has facilitated the establishment of a multi-ethnic public sphere on the BBC's regional television news programme - Midlands Today. Therefore, this study specifically examines the extent to which this programme

reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output and as such, *reflects the nation that it serves*.

Particular attention was paid to the following areas:

i) The analysis of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy. This was achieved by situating this 'paper' policy within the managing diversity implementation model, devised for this study, which identifies the key constituent elements that a managing diversity policy is considered, *should* 'possess', in order for the policy to successfully achieve its aims and objectives.

ii) The undertaking of an in-depth and extensive analysis of Midlands Today programmes, to enable an assessment to be made of how effective the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy 'to reflect the nation that it serves' is realised via this programme's output.

To assist in the above analysis (no.ii), the following aspects of the Midlands Today programme were examined:

- i) The news-gathering process as employed on this programme.
- ii) The news sources that are consulted to find relevant news stories for inclusion in the programme.

- iii) The primary definer(s) of the news stories featured on the programme, i.e. the news sources that 'set the news agenda' of the story.
- iv) The news values that are applied by this programme, when considering if a story is 'news-worthy'.
- v) The subject-matter/topics of the news stories featured on the programme.

Attention was also given to the Contributors included in the news stories featured on the Midlands Today programme, in terms of:

- i) The type of access afforded to Contributors participating in the news stories broadcast.
- ii) The Social Group of the Contributors included in the news stories.
- iii) The ethnicity of the Contributors featured in the news stories broadcast.

A multi-disciplinary approach was adopted to achieve the above research objectives/aims of this study, both in terms of the theoretical frameworks adopted and the research methodology applied.

1.6 Scope of the Study

For the purposes of this current study, it should be noted that unless otherwise stated, when the term minority ethnic communities (MECs) is referred to, it is attributed to people who are from the 'visible' ethnic minority communities. There are of course, other groups of people currently living in Britain who could quite rightly be classified as 'minorities'. For example, Romany Travellers, and with the 'opening up' of Europe there are now 27 member states that have joined the European Union. Therefore, citizens 'originally' of those countries entering into Britain, could increase the groups of people who could be classified as being from a minority ethnic group living in this country.

However, the focus and scope of this current study is fundamentally upon those who have 'traditionally' been regarded as 'minorities' in the British society. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, it should also be noted that ethnic groups such as South Asian, South East Asian, African, Caribbean and Mixed could in general terms, fall under the generic ethnic heading of 'Black'. As such, this study takes on the definition of 'Black', as provided by Stuart Hall (1987); a means of...

"referencing the common experience of racism and marginalization in Britain and, as such, came to provide the organizing category of a new politics of resistance, amongst groups and communities with, in fact, very different histories, traditions, and ethnic identities." (Hall 1987:163).

Therefore at times, the term MECs may be interchanged indiscriminately with the word 'Black'.

1.7 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis is presented in 10 chapters. Chapter 1 as discussed above, provides the rationale and hypothesis of this study. This chapter also explains why BBC Birmingham and its regional television news programme - Midlands Today were chosen as the study sites, and outlines the aims, objectives and scope of this research study.

Chapter 2 is the first of two theoretical frameworks referred to in this study, and provides an outline of the primary theoretical framework within which this study is situated. Namely, the 'social organisation of news work approach' to the study of the news media. This chapter also identifies key areas to explore, which are regarded as being salient to this current study.

Chapter 3 refers to the troubled 'historical' relationship between those from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) and the news media. By referring to the socio-cultural context within which the news media operates, aspects of the news values as delineated by Galtung and Ruge (1965) is discussed, in a bid to proffer an explanation as to why the news media had 'traditionally' mis/represented MECs in terms of portrayal and/or representation. This chapter also looks to the future by outlining some of the initiatives being undertaken by the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN) in its bid to try to re-dress the issue of (mis)representation/portrayal of MECs on-screen, and its attempts to increase the number of people from the MECs employed in the broadcasting industry.

Chapter 4 examines the theoretical writings and thinking on managing diversity policies. This chapter outlines the main differences that are considered to exist between equal opportunity policies and managing diversity policies. The aim of this chapter is to also identify the constituent elements that are considered to be essential for a managing diversity policy to contain, in order for the aims and objectives of the policy to be successfully achieved. The constituent elements identified in this chapter is then used to develop a managing diversity implementation model, within

which to situate the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy for analysis.

The research methodology employed within this study is outlined in Chapter 5. A multi-disciplinary, eclectic approach was adopted. The designing of the research tools were informed by the research questions of this study, as well as by the theoretical frameworks within which this study is situated. A description of the study group is also provided. Details of the research methods employed is discussed, explaining how the method of 'triangulation' was used to help inform the research methods adopted. Quantitative: consisted of a content analysis of the output of the Midlands Today regional television news programme and a questionnaire survey which was disseminated to journalists working on this programme. Qualitative: the undertaking of participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom and the conducting of one-to-one in-depth interviews with Senior BBC personnel.

Chapter 6 is the first of four chapters in which the empirical research findings of this current study is presented. To aid analysis, this chapter situates the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy within the managing diversity implementation model (developed in Chapter 4 of this study).

The one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with BBC personnel provides the qualitative data imparted within this chapter.

Chapter 7 examines the regional television news genre as typified by the Midlands Today programme. To assist in the analysis of how well-suited this programme may *lend* itself to being a site that could possibly *house* a multi-ethnic public sphere, the purpose of this chapter is to provide an understanding of the landscape that this programme *inhabits*. The finding of this chapter is informed by the quantitative data obtained from the analysis of 253 Midlands Today programmes and the analysis of the 2708 news stories that were featured within these programmes.

Chapter 8 specifically examines to what extent, the output of the Midlands Today programme reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region. The finding imparted within this chapter is based upon the analysis of the 5044 Contributors who were featured in the news stories broadcast in the programmes analysed. This chapter concludes by asserting the extent to which, the output of the Midlands Today regional television news programme could be deemed to be a reflection/depiction/articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

Chapter 9, the final chapter of findings from this current research study, makes the "implicit explicit" (Halloran 1974:12) by providing a 'behind the scenes' in-sight into the 'corporate nexus' of the Midlands Today regional television news programme. In a bid to try to identify any key microscopic/internal factors that may have had a bearing upon the eventual output of this programme, the analysis conducted in this chapter is situated within the theoretical frameworks of the managing diversity implementation model (discussed in Chapter 4) and within the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media (discussed in Chapter 2). The aims/objectives of this chapter were achieved by drawing upon the findings of the questionnaire survey, the participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, and by referring to the information imparted in the one-to-one in-depth interviews.

Chapter 10, the final conclusion of this research study, provides a summary of the main findings, suggestions/recommendations for further research, and policy considerations for the BBC, re. the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere on its regional television news programmes.

CHAPTER TWO

NEWS PRODUCTION PROCESS

2.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to identify a main theoretical framework within which to situate this current research study. The reason for undertaking the above, is to assist in the analysis of the news production process as employed on the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today.

There are various theoretical approaches that can be adopted when studying the news media:

- Political Economy Approach.
- Culturological Approach.
- Social Organisation of Newswork Approach.

To summarise with an overview of each of the above approaches...

The political economy approach to the study of the news media essentially focuses upon the political and economic

constraints placed upon the media. Such constraints would include patterns of ownership and control in media organisations to assess how these factors may affect editorial decisions, and consequently the news media's output (Schiller 1973; Smith 1973; Gitlin 1980; Hall 1981b; Turrow 1984).

Some advocates of this approach also purport that the media acts as a 'social agent' for the powerful by serving the ruling classes insofar as espousing the ruling ideas of the epoch and in so doing, ultimately assists in sustaining the status quo (Hall *et al* 1978; Hall 1981b; Cohen 1982; Herman and Chomsky 1988).

Turning now to the culturological approach to the study of the news media. The main focus of this approach is upon the socio-cultural milieu within which news organisations operate. This approach emphasises the constraining forces of broad cultural traditions and symbolic systems which may possibly influence the final news output.

For example, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) put forth the view that media discourse is framed in a way so as to make 'sense' of an event by drawing upon ideas that resonate with cultural themes. Such resonances it is claimed, enables the media 'messages' to appear *natural* and *familiar*. Invariably then, these shared understandings take place

within a dominant culture - described by Richard Hoggart (1976) as the 'cultural air'.

From the theoretical perspectives of the above two approaches to the study of the news media, the demands of the news production process such as the daily rituals and activities of the newsroom personnel, is less significant, and less influential on the final news output than the influences of external factors such as the political, economic or cultural environment surrounding media organisations. Whilst the afore-mentioned approaches focus upon the macroscopic factors that may impact upon the news media's output, the social organisation of newswork approach which is favoured by Gans (1979, 1985) focuses upon the microscopic, i.e. the internal workings of a newsroom as a means of trying to understand why news becomes what it becomes.

Therefore, the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media, attempts to understand how journalistic rituals and efforts on the job, may be constrained by organisational and occupational demands. This in turn is considered to have an impact upon the final news product.

Adopting such a parochial focus and approach to the study of the news media, could be deemed to be at the expense of not taking into account external factors (i.e. political, economic and cultural), which may possibly have a bearing upon the final news product.

To this extent, this study concurs with Schudson's (2000) contention that although each of the above three approaches to the study of the news media may have many strengths, they do also individually have weaknesses. As such, there is a strong argument to be put forth, that the ideal scenario when analysing the news media, would possibly be to combine each of these three theoretical frameworks within one study, in order to:

- Counter any weaknesses or omissions in each of the individual approaches, and
- Provide a comprehensive view on the way in which media messages are produced.

Adopting such a mixed-theoretical approach (as described above), could also have the advantage of offering insights into the ways in which different influences in the news production process are combined in a single composite product (Curran et al 1982; Herman and Chomsky 1988).

However, given that studies such as those by Tunstall 1971; Tracey 1977; Schlesinger 1978; Hetherington 1985 have highlighted how the media across the United Kingdom are influenced by much of the same political, economic, cultural and social factors, it is contended within this current study that the BBC (like any other media organisation), cannot be held accountable for the political, economic or cultural landscape within which it operates. However, what the BBC can be held accountable for, particularly in terms of the primary focus of this current study, is its internal operations and systems that have been put into place to assist this corporation in achieving its aim to *reflect the nation that it serves*. This point is also made in light of the fact that since the implementation of its diversity policy, the BBC has regularly spoken of changing the culture and working practices of this corporation (Dyke 2000, 2002b).

Therefore, as the main focus of the phenomenon under investigation in this current study is to examine the extent to which the pan-BBC diversity policy, i.e. the 'theory', translates into 'practice' on its regional television news programme: Midlands Today, it was decided that the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news

media would be the most appropriate theoretical framework within which to situate this study.

However, this study does acknowledge that such a microscopic approach to the study of the news media, may leave itself wide-open to criticisms of falling guilty of "media-centrism" (Schlesinger 1990: 62), and may appear to go against Tunstall's (1974: 36) "...plea for somewhat less micro-sociology and somewhat more macro-sociology", in terms of investigations conducted into the news media. Therefore, it should be noted that the first part of the next chapter (Chapter 3) examines aspects of the historical, socio-cultural and political landscape within which the British news media has operated. The purpose of undertaking this investigation in Chapter 3 is two-fold:

- i) To try to understand the 'external' factors that may have *historically* influenced the British news media's portrayal and (mis)/representation of MECs.
- ii) To identify any areas that may assist in providing theoretical considerations for this current study.

Bearing the above factors in mind, and guided by the overall aims and objectives of this current study (as outlined in Chapter 1), the remainder of this chapter focuses upon the

most salient aspects of the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media.

2.1 The Social Organisation of Newswork Approach

News and news programmes could almost be called random reactions to random events. Again and again, the main reason why they turn out as they do is accident - accident of a kind which recurs so haphazardly as to defeat statistical examinations. (Statement made by a British reporter to sociologist Graham Murdock: in Schudson 2000:176).

Despite the above often-held view amongst purveyors of the news media, i.e. journalists who will proclaim that they "just report the world as they see it" (Schudson 2000:176), 'news' is not simply a 'random act'. News is in fact a "social construction of reality" (Schudson 2000:176); "news is what newspapermen make it" (Gieber 1964:173); news is "manufactured by journalists" (Cohen and Young 1973:97); "news, like all public documents, is a constructed reality possessing its own internal validity" (Tuchman 1976:97); "news is the result of the methods news workers employ" (Fishman 1980:14), "the news is the account of the event, not something intrinsic in the event itself" (MacDougall 1968:12) and "news is the end-product of a complex process which begins with a systematic sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories" (Hall et al 1978:53).

In essence then:

"At any given moment, billions of simultaneous events occur throughout the world... All of these occurrences are potentially news. They do not become so until some purveyor of news gives an account of them. The news, in other words, is the account of the event, not something intrinsic in the event itself."
(MacDougall 1968:12).

To follow on from the above (MacDougall 1968), it is useful to try to determine what makes 'news', news? What is the criterion used to deem an 'event' or 'occurrence' news? Broadening this out then, what are the internal processes and procedures involved in the production of news by media organisations?

A useful starting point in terms of trying to unearth answers to some of the above questions, is by examining aspects of the 'newsgathering' process.

2.2 Newsgathering Process

Central to all news media organisations is the gathering of stories that will then become 'news'. In the pursuit to find relevant stories for their particular medium, a number of different methods (which are described below), are employed by the news media to try to ensure that a

constant stream of potential news stories keep flowing through.

2.2.1 Newsroom Personnel: Journalists

A primary source used for gathering news is via the personnel of the newsroom - namely journalists. Aside from those who may be regarded as Senior Managers in a newsroom, (for example the News Editor), journalists tend to be employed either as a 'generalist' or as a 'specialist'.

Essentially, the generalist journalist will cover all types of stories on a variety of different topics, whilst the specialist journalist (usually referred to in the newsroom as a Correspondent) will cover stories on a particular topic/subject - such as crime, health, politics, home affairs, entertainment and so forth.

Newsrooms also utilise journalists in a 'territorial' manner insofar as attaching reporters to certain parts of the region/country/world, when it is considered that the designated location will offer a frequent supply of news stories. Therefore, in the same way that a Correspondent becomes a specialist on a particular subject, so too does the journalist based in a particular geographical location,

become a specialist in terms of matters pertaining to that location. Over a period of time, Correspondents gain specialist knowledge on the subject/region and in many respects, is considered to be an 'expert' in their own right, on their particular subject-matter/location.

It has been noted by various studies that the "specialisation of Correspondents is the highest level of differentiation in the newsroom and attracts the highest prestige" (Golding and Elliott 1979: 98). Due to the higher status afforded to specialist journalists, they are also more likely to get "...much of their work onto the front pages of the newspapers" (Negrine 1989: 145).

In addition, several studies have also found that newsrooms are increasingly becoming more reliant upon the specialist journalist as news gatherers (Seymour-Ure 1968; Tunstall 1971; Gans 1979; Golding and Elliott 1979; Golding and Middleton 1982; Morrison and Tumber 1985; Negrine 1993; Hackett 1991; Schlesinger et al 1991). The reason for this is because of the benefits yielded from having specialists in a newsroom. As well as gaining specialist knowledge on a particular subject, they also build up close relationships with news sources related to their specialist subject-area (Tunstall 1971) and as such, are able to gather a regular

supply of material on their subject-matter from their news sources (Negrine 1989).

Whilst generalist journalists are obviously needed in a newsroom (and actually most journalists employed within a newsroom fall into this category), it is quite understandable why specialist journalists are of such great importance and of 'premium' to a newsroom. For example, in addition to the benefits mentioned above, as the specialist becomes more knowledgeable of their subject-area/location, they are "arguably better to grasp nuances and to distinguish the important from the merely dramatic" (Hackett 1991:106), than say for example the generalist reporter who may be less familiar with the subject-area. Such a benefit saves time and avoids wasting newsroom resources in terms of the specialist journalist being able to avoid going off on an irrelevant tangent. Also, a major problem with unfamiliarity of a subject/topic is that it could possibly lead to distorted reporting, since the reporter may "cover one side of a story without ever knowing there are other sides" (Gans 1979:49).

Concern over how the news media has historically (mis)represented/portrayed/omitted minority ethnic communities (MECs) in its news output (this is discussed in

greater detail in Chapter 3), could to some extent (but not solely), be said to stem from the media's lack of knowledge and inability to pick up on nuances vis-à-vis matters pertaining to MECs. Therefore, in terms of this current study and in light of the various studies (cited in Chapter 1), which criticise the way in which MECs have 'traditionally' been represented in the news media, this study examines what (if any) procedures/processes have been put into place by the Midlands Today regional television news programme, to help facilitate the *understanding* of the 'nuances' of MECs, and to also assist this programme to build up contacts/news sources from within these communities.

A final point to be made on 'specialists' (i.e. Correspondents) in a newsroom, is that it has also been noted by previous studies that in many respects, the subject-matter/topics that newsrooms choose to assign to specialist journalists provides an insight into the importance *that* news medium places upon particular subject-matters/topics. As pointed out by Hall *et al* (1978:53) these tend to be the story-subjects that the news media is attracted to and as such they "...become pre-directed to certain types of event and topic in terms of the organisation of their own work-force (e.g. specialist Correspondents and departments, the fostering of institutional contacts, etc.)." This further underlines

the importance placed upon specialists in a newsroom and draws attention for this current study to examine if the Midlands Today programmes' desire to meet the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, i.e. to *reflect the nation that it serves* (in this instance the West Midlands region), is reflected in the subject-matter/topics to which this programme has deployed to Correspondents.

2.2.2 The 'wires'

Use of the 'wires' to source news stories, allows journalists to sit at their desk in front of a computer screen and gather news stories. Stories retrieved in this manner are sent in by news agencies such as Reuters, AP (Associated Press) and UPI (United Press International). Material supplied by news agencies is trusted and respected. Therefore, newsrooms receiving stories via the 'wires' do not apply the usual procedures of checking/verifying such stories for authenticity and accuracy, before deciding upon whether or not to publish or broadcast details of the story.

The extent to how much a news organisation relies upon stories supplied by news agencies has been shown to vary from country to country. In a cross-national comparative

study, Golding and Elliott (1979) found that newsrooms in countries such as Nigeria, depended heavily upon the 'wires' as a source for obtaining stories, whilst countries such as Ireland and Sweden depended much less upon news from these sources.

News stories available to newsrooms via the 'wires' can range from the international to the local and everything else in-between. However local stories (for example, from the West Midlands region) would ordinarily need to be of a great magnitude with far-reaching consequences for such stories to have been gathered by a news agency and included on the 'wires'. Given this point, this study also examines to what extent, the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today relies upon stories available from the 'wires'.

2.2.3 News Sources: Primary Definers of news stories

News-workers are predisposed to treat bureaucratic accounts as factual because news personnel participate in upholding a normative order of authorised knowers in the society. Reporters operate with the attitude that officials ought to know what it is, their job is to know... In particular, a newsworker will recognise an official's claim to knowledge not merely as a claim, but as a credible, competent piece of knowledge. (Fishman 1980:144-45).

A very important newsgathering method employed by newsrooms to try to find stories is via news sources. Classically, 'accredited' news sources can be divided into two distinct categories: official and non-official.

Official news sources are those of state bureaucracies and organisations, namely government departments. Non-official news sources are generally considered to be institutions and organisations that are not part of state bureaucracies - such as trade unions, opposition groups to the government and campaigning groups.

The term 'primary definers' is used to describe official and non-official news sources because these news sources are considered as providing the primary and first definition of events - which then becomes 'news' and in essence, set the news agenda. Hall *et al* (1978) put forth the viewpoint that the representatives of major social institutions (i.e. official and non-official news sources) are "accredited" because of their institution's power, position of authority and because they represent the 'people' (as MPs, Ministers), or 'organised interest groups' (e.g. trade unions, campaigning groups). One other 'accredited' news source according to Hall *et al* (1978:58) is the 'expert': "...the disinterested pursuit of knowledge

- not his position nor representativeness confers on his statements objectivity and authority."

For a number of reasons, Schlesinger (1990) argues that the 'primary definition' is more problematic than it may at first, appear to be. From Schlesinger's (1990) viewpoint, the broad characterisations put forth by Hall *et al* (1978) is unable to take account of contention *between* official sources. For example, if there is dispute amongst members of the same political party or government over an issue of policy, who would be classed in this instance as being the primary definer? Schlesinger (1990) also raises the question of whether or not it is possible for there to be more than one primary definer to a news story.

Another criticism levelled by Schlesinger (1990) is that Hall *et al*'s (1978) formulation fails to register the well-established fact that news sources will sometimes try to influence the construction of a story by using 'off-the-record' briefings/comments. In this instance, the primary definer of the story would remain 'unknown' but they would still nevertheless, have set the news agenda - albeit anonymously to the public.

Schlesinger (1990) also points out that although Hall *et al*'s (1978) reference to MPs and Ministers as primary definers intends to include all representative voices, it

does not take into account the fact that some members of the political class are at times, afforded more access to the news media than others:

"So not all these 'representative' figures can themselves be treated as having equal access. Unfortunately, there is nothing in Hall's formulation of primary defining, which permits us to deal with such inequalities of access among the privileged themselves." (Schlesinger 1990:66).

Schlesinger (1990) highlights many valid conceptual flaws with the concept of 'primary definers' as articulated by Hall *et al* (1978) and illustrates in the above cited examples, the problematics in trying to operationalise this theory of primary definers. Although other equally valid criticisms have been levelled (Hackett 1991; Anderson 1993; Linné 1993; Miller 1993; Schlesinger and Tumber 1994), it is still nevertheless contended within this current study that the basic ethos behind Hall *et al*'s (1978) classifications, still holds validity and significance for understanding the newsgathering process, and for understanding the choices that are made in relation to what 'events' or 'occurrences' are included in the news output.

Therefore, in relation to the overall aims and objectives of this current study - specifically in terms of the formulation and the possible practical existence of a multi-ethnic public sphere via the BBC's regional

television news programme: Midlands Today, it is considered useful to examine how heavily/little a reliance is placed upon 'official' or 'non-official' primary definers as news sources to provide the first definition of an event, i.e. news story broadcast on this programme. In effect, although the news media will invariably give access to other 'voices' in terms of seeking 'balance' and 'objectivity', it still nevertheless means that if one were to follow through with Hall *et al*'s (1978) theoretical thinking on primary definers, 'official' or 'non-official' news sources would primarily be setting the news agenda, with the other 'voices' just 'responding' to give their counter-views.

Also, although Schlesinger (1990) in the above citation, quite rightly speaks of Hall *et al*'s (1978) formulation not being able to take account of unequal access amongst those regarded as primary definers (i.e. the 'privileged'), it then begs the question: what of those who are not 'accredited' with the 'hierarchy of credibility' and not deemed to be 'primary definers'- neither 'official' nor non-official'? How do such individuals compete and gain access to the public sphere via the news media and as such, set the news agenda?

One other area warranting exploration before moving on, is that whilst the political economy approach may offer some explanations as to why the news media turns so regularly to primary definers (i.e. the 'powerful'), another explanation can possibly be found in the 'routinisation' of news work (Tuchman 1973). One of the routines employed by the news media involves turning to primary definers as a regular news source. This is because it is believed that not only are these news sources between them, able to cover the breadth of stories that the general public is likely to find of interest, but also because the information provided by primary definers is considered to be reliable and authentic (Tunstall 1971; Hall *et al* 1978; Gans 1979; Golding and Elliott 1979; Fishman 1980; Manning 2000). Therefore, such news sources tend not to be subjected to the usual customary checks for authenticity, which proves to be a less time-consuming option for the news media; hence the media's preference to constantly gravitate in the direction of primary definers.

Hall *et al* (1978) sum up the above points when acknowledging the pressures imposed upon journalists to meet deadlines, and how the 'professional demands of impartiality and objectivity' combine to bring about the following:

"...a systematically structure over-accessing to the media of those in powerful and privileged institutional positions. The media thus tend, faithfully and impartially, to reproduce symbolically the existing structure of power in society's institutional order. This is what Becker has called the 'hierarchy of credibility' - the likelihood that those in powerful or high-status positions in society who offer opinions about controversial topics will have their definitions accepted, because such spokesmen are understood to have access to more accurate or more specialised information on particular topics than the majority of the population. The result of this structured preference given in the media to the opinions of the powerful is that these 'spokesmen' become what we call the *primary definers* of topics." (Hall et al 1978:58).

As will be discussed in Chapter 3 of this current study, the effects of the news media's reliance upon 'primary definers' has at times, proved to be highly problematic in terms of how MECs have been portrayed, represented and 'defined'. Furthermore, it calls into question the role the news media plays in the circulation of political information as a necessary service for a healthy democracy. In other words, if the news media relies so heavily upon primary definers as news sources, how does such a scenario contribute to a healthy public sphere, or more to the point in terms of this current study - 'a healthy multi-ethnic public sphere'?

Therefore, the use of primary definers as a central element of the newsgathering process is of great interest to this

current study - particularly in light of the introduction of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, which has the ultimate aim of the BBC *reflecting the nation that it serves...*

- Has the Midlands Today programme developed newsgathering methods and strategies that will accommodate the inclusion of views from 'non-traditional' primary definers, in such a way that these 'other voices' are able to give the 'first primary account' of events and as such, set the news agenda of news stories as opposed to simply responding to a news agenda that has been set by 'traditional' primary definers?

The above will be explored and examined within this current study.

2.2.4 21st Century methods of sourcing news stories

Outlined above are traditional newsgathering methods employed by the news media to source material for potential news stories - such as, journalists, news sources and the 'wires'. However, with the continued technological advancements and the public's growing use of the internet, emails, mobile telephone text/picture messaging, coupled with the growing encouragement from television news programmes inviting the public to get in touch to share their comments/viewpoints on topics featured on their

programmes (Manning, 2000), this current study examines to what extent and to what effect, these 'new' ways of sourcing material is utilised by Midlands Today in terms of trying to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

Therefore, the question to ask is: are 'non-traditional' methods being implemented by this programme, in order to give more access to those from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) who historically, have been afforded limited access to the news media - via the news media's 'traditional' methods of sourcing material? This point of a 'lack of access' to the news media by those from the MECs, was underlined in a study conducted by van Dijk (1993). This study examined selected sources from the British Press in the 1980s, and the finding revealed that in only 3.8 percent of items on minority ethnic affairs, were those from the minority ethnic communities allowed to speak for themselves.

2.3 News selection process: "Gatekeepers"

Besides the availability and suitability of the news story (Gans 1979) - how is news selected? What considerations aside from the market for the news outlet (i.e. the audience), and in the case of the commercial news media

sector, advertisers - play a role in the final stories selected?

Over the years there have been several interpretations on the news selection process employed by the news media (Hall et al 1978; Gans 1979; Golding and Elliott 1979). Many media researchers who have studied the process of news selection (as part of the news production process), have adopted the methodological approach of observing and interviewing media practitioners in order to examine how 'news' stories are selected (White 1950; Gieber 1964; Tunstall 1971; Epstein 1973; Tuchman 1973, 1976; Schlesinger 1978; Gans 1979; Golding and Elliott 1979; Fishman 1980; Hetherington 1985; Sigal 1986; Ericson et al 1987, 1989, 1991; van Dijk 1988; Hackett 1991).

However, it was American social scientist researcher Kurt Lewin (1947), who initially came up with the term *gatekeeper* when he conducted one of the earliest studies into the news selection process.

Lewin (1947) noted that the 'gate areas', i.e. the gates through which potential news stories needed to 'enter' were controlled by rules or individuals; to use the term as coined by Lewin (1947), controlled by a 'gatekeeper' who

"as individual or group is in power for making the decision between in and out" (Lewin 1947:145). Lewin (1947) speaks of individuals or groups *in power*, with regards to making the decision as to which stories will be included and used. In this respect, the 'gatekeeper' has the authority and power to 'allow' or as the case may be, 'disallow' certain news stories from passing through the gate. In essence then, this means that many stories become 'lodged' at the outside of the gate in terms of not passing through the gate of the media outlet (whether that be the print or the broadcast media), whilst other items will pass through the gate and subsequently be included in the news outlet.

Since Lewin's (1947) study, there have been numerous other studies on the 'gatekeeper' model, and according to Tunstall (1971:23), this study by Lewin (1947) could be credited as being the "main theoretical backing to a series of studies dealing with news gatekeeping."

However, unlike Lewin's (1947) study which suggests that there was essentially only one 'gatekeeper', White (1950) argued that there are many channels through which the news flows - many gates, with each gate playing a role in the gatekeeping process: "the process of choosing and discarding is continuously taking place" (White 1950: 384).

Halloran *et al* (1970) refers not only to the 'internal' gates within the newsroom, but also to the gatekeeping process beginning with the newsgatherers (i.e. journalists), and regards all members of the news production process as potential 'gatekeepers' - a view also shared by Chibnall (1981). For example, if a journalist working in a newsroom is out and about just walking down the road, and is presented with a story from a member of the public, but the journalist does not deem the story to be 'newsworthy' enough to be included in the news programme/newspaper, then it is likely to be ignored and discarded and not even get through the literal 'gate' of the organisation. In his study entitled: *News is What Newspapermen Make it*, Gieber (1964) also points out that there are other gatekeepers in the news selection process.

White's (1950) study of *Mr Gates*, identified that only one-tenth of all news items available via the wire copy was accepted and used by *Mr Gates*. In an attempt to try to understand the reasons behind *Mr Gates* decisions, White (1950) focused his study upon the rejected nine-tenths of the wire copy. In summary, White (1950) concluded: "how highly subjective, how reliant upon value-judgements, based upon the *gate keepers* own set of experience, attitudes and expectations the communication of news really is" (White 1950:386).

Although this classic study by White (1950) made a valuable contribution towards understanding the news selection process, it has been open to criticism, with other researchers extending upon White's (1950) theory. Subsequent studies have detected a number of weaknesses in White's (1950) original model and as such, looked towards modifying or replacing White's (1950) model (Snider 1967; Brown 1979; Tracey 1977; McQuail and Windahl 1993; Stempel 1985; Shoemaker 1991; Shoemaker and Reese 1991; Whitney and Becker 1991). Chibnall (1981) went as far as to state that the gatekeeper model was "dangerously simplistic" (Chibnall 1981:75).

Some of the criticisms levelled at White's (1950) model are as follows:

- a) White's (1950) model emphasises that the news selected, depends highly upon the attitudes and experiences of the gatekeeper, but takes no account of organisational factors. For example, as noted by Shoemaker (1991), the gatekeeper in a big newspaper might be "required to apply organizational rules more and depend on their idiosyncratic logic, less than gatekeepers in smaller newspapers" (Shoemaker 1991:56). From Shoemakers' (1991) point of view, it is also necessary to consider matters that may affect the

internal processes of a newsroom, such as the organisational and institutional aspects (e.g. size, news sources, audiences, markets, government, interest groups, other media), which may in turn influence the decisions made by journalists in terms of their selection of stories. In the case of a programme such as the BBC's television news programme Midlands Today, which falls under the regional television news genre, the stories selected for inclusion on this programme would need to have some relevance to the region to which it broadcasts. In this instance, the West Midlands.

- b) Another criticism worth noting of White's (1950) model is that 'gatekeeping' can also be affected by the ideology of the social system in which the gatekeeper exists. Proponents of this viewpoint contend that this may cause the gatekeeper to select stories that serve the purposes of the powerful and the elite. In such a situation, the gatekeeping process could be a tool for shaping a false consciousness (Gitlin 1980; Shoemaker 1991).

From Chibnall's (1981) point-of-view, the significant 'gatekeeping' takes place within the context of reporter/source interaction, and so the view held is that

"while superficially attractive, this model is misleading and can blind us to vitally important elements and processes of news manufacture" (Chibnall 1981:76). However, whilst there may be validity in this criticism, it is contended within this current study that the gatekeeper model is still a useful concept to examine in terms of trying to understand why some stories may or may not be admitted by the 'gatekeepers' on the BBC's regional television news programme Midlands Today.

Having discussed the various arguments and thinking on the 'gatekeeper' model, it is considered that the research methodology adopted within this current study will assist in the examination of the 'gatekeeping' methods employed on the Midlands Today programme. Similar to the research methods adopted by White (1950) and Gieber (1964), this study undertakes participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom, as well as one-to-one in-depth interviews with Senior managers working on this programme (such as the News Editor and the Head of newsgathering). In addition, the questionnaire survey disseminated to journalists working on Midlands Today also examines aspects of the 'gatekeeping' process as employed on this programme. Therefore, it was considered that the application of a mixed-methodological approach would assist in the understanding of any factors (including organisational and institutional rules), that may

impact upon the decisions made by the 'gatekeepers' on this programme.

2.3.1 News Values

Another important factor that warrants consideration in terms of the news selection process as employed by the news media, is this *notion* of 'news values'. The word 'notion' has purposely been chosen, to describe a concept that even journalists themselves, cannot often seem to be able to define in a clear conceptual manner (Hall 1981a).

For example, journalists will often speak of a story needing to have good news values in order for it to be deemed to be 'newsworthy', and then ultimately be considered as 'news'. However, when asked to define exactly what news values a story should possess in order for it to be classed as newsworthy, the response from journalists is oftentimes vague, and 'revolves' around responses such as: '*I just know...it's instinctive*' or '*it's a hunch*' or '*it's a gut feeling*' (Source: Participant observations). Such vagueness is illustrated in a pamphlet entitled: *The Task of Broadcasting News - a study for the BBC General Advisory Council*, which was published by the BBC:

"The news value of a story is something immediately recognisable, intuitively sensed by a journalist who has been schooled in provincial or national newsrooms... The 'graduates' of that school soon learn to spot the significant news point, the relevant detail, the interesting human touch, which distinguish the newsworthy story - the material with news value or news merits - from the candidate for the sub-editors spike." (Aldington and Baron 1976).

Hence the reason why Hall (1981a) describes this concept of 'news values' as being:

"...one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of 'the news' as if events select themselves. Further, they speak as if which is the 'most significant; news story, and which 'news angle' are most salient are divinely inspired." (Hall 1981a:234).

However, whilst journalists seem to struggle to provide definitive classifications of the news value elements 'needed' by a story in order for it to be deemed as newsworthy (Halloran 1977), academics through research and the studying of the news media have developed a number of theories around this perplexing matter of news values, in their pursuit to define the re-occurring factors that seem to make a story 'newsworthy' (Galtung & Ruge 1965; Warner 1968; Tunstall 1971; Hartmann and Husband 1974; Chibnall

1977; Golding and Elliott 1979; Hall 1981(a), 1981(b); Hetherington 1985; van Dijk 1988; Bell 1991; Fowler 1991).

According to Golding and Elliott (1979), news values are used as criteria to select from all the material available in the newsroom, in order to distinguish between stories deemed worthy/not worthy for inclusion, and are also used as guidelines for the presentation of news - determining what to emphasise, what to omit or where to give priority in the presentation of a news item.

In the study entitled: *News as discourse* (van Dijk 1988), it was noted that different types of news values may be distinguished when news values are formulated in the economic terms of news production within profit-orientated organisations:

"Constraints such as sales and subscriptions, budgets for news gathering, or the amount of advertising, to name only a few factors, determine the general limitations of editorial spaces. Assumed beliefs and opinions of both powerful news actors (sources) and the public determine agendas for topics and issues and the ideological orientation of opinions formulated or implied by selection or treatment of stories." (van Dijk 1988:120).

van Dijk's (1988) definition of news values - rooted in economic constraints, differs from the view held by Chibnall (1977) who concentrates on the 'common sense knowledge' shared by journalists and the audience. This is similar in thought to Hall et al (1978), who make reference to the application of news values as being the "professional ideology of what constitutes 'good news' - the newsman's sense of *news values*" (Hall et al 1978:53).

Whilst the above examples provide broad definitions of news values and how this is then used by the news media to determine what/what not to include in their product, Galtung and Ruge (1965) have provided one of the most comprehensive outlines to date, as to the meanings behind the various news values that may be used to determine a story 'newsworthy'. This classic study by Galtung and Ruge (1965) entitled: *The structure of foreign news: the presentation of the Congo, Cuba and Cyprus*, has received criticisms in terms of its limitations because the study concentrates on major crises in Congo, Cuba and Cyprus, whereas day-to-day coverage of lesser events may be of some importance (Tunstall 1971). However, Galtung and Ruge's (1965) study does still bear merit and has proven to be applicable to studies that are not necessarily focusing specifically upon foreign news.

In their study, Galtung and Ruge (1965) were able to delineate twelve main factors, i.e. news values that could be deemed as making a story newsworthy: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, consonance, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, reference to elite nations, reference to elite people, reference to persons and reference to something negative. The more news values a story possessed, the more likely a chance it had of being selected as news and be deemed as newsworthy.

This issue of the news media's reliance upon the above stated news values (Galtung and Ruge 1965), is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter (Chapter 3), to illustrate how the application of such news values to stories of a race-related matter, contributed to the way in which MECs had *historically* been portrayed/(mis)represented in the news media.

Suffice to say, this current study uses the questionnaire survey disseminated to Midlands Today journalists, to enable the analysis of the news values that are applied when deciding upon whether or not a story is 'newsworthy' enough to be included on Midlands Today.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter outlined three theoretical approaches to the study of the news media.

The political economy approach and the culturological approach both focus upon macroscopic factors that may impact upon the news media's final output. The political economy approach concentrates on patterns of ownership and control in media organisations, whilst the culturological approach focuses upon the constraining forces of broad cultural traditions.

However, in a bid to identify why the news media's final output becomes what it becomes, the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media, focuses upon microscopic aspects of the news production process. Areas of interest to this approach are the internal workings of a newsroom, and the journalistic rituals and efforts that may be constrained by the organisational and occupational demands of the job. Based upon the research objectives of this current study, the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media, was considered to be the most apt theoretical framework within which to situate this study.

The newsgathering process employed in a newsroom was identified as playing a pivotal role in shaping the overall news output. Central to this process are the personnel, i.e. the journalists who are either employed as 'generalist' reporters, who cover a wide variety of different story topics, or as 'specialist' reporters - commonly referred to as 'Correspondents', who will focus upon a particular subject-matter or a particular geographical location. The subject-matter/topics assigned to Correspondents provide an insight into the importance *that* news media places upon particular subjects/topics. Therefore, stories covered by Correspondents have a greater propensity to *make* the news output and as such, Correspondents occupy a higher 'status' in the newsroom than the 'generalist' reporter.

This chapter also highlighted that a very important aspect of the newsgathering process is the use of news sources to assist in the finding of stories for inclusion in the news output. 'Accredited' news sources are categorised as being either 'official' news sources (i.e. government departments) or 'non-official' news sources (i.e. institutions and organisations that are not part of state bureaucracies). Classically, such news sources are classified as being the 'primary definer' of news stories

because they provide the 'primary' and first definition of the story and as such, shape the 'angle' taken on a story and the 'news agenda' of the news story.

Although criticisms have been levelled at the conceptualisation of 'primary definers', this concept was still considered to hold validity and relevance in terms of the objectives of this current research study, insofar as examining to what extent - in light of the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to reflect *the nation that it serves* - members of the MECs, and as such, 'non-traditional' primary definers of news stories are afforded the opportunity of being the 'primary definers' of some of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

The news selection process employed by newsrooms to assist in deciding upon the stories to include in the final news output, was another microscopic feature identified by the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media.

The methodological approach of 'observations', which was adopted by studies examining the news selection process employed in newsrooms identified that 'potential' stories

need to get past the 'gatekeeper(s)' in the newsroom, who decide upon whether or not a story will be included in the final news output. Therefore, this current study includes an examination of the 'gatekeeper' system in operation on the Midlands Today programme.

The discussion in this chapter on journalists' application of 'news values' to stories, in order to determine whether or not a story is 'newsworthy', highlighted that this is a very perplexing matter - with journalists' themselves struggling to provide clear definitions as to what makes a story newsworthy. However, the study conducted by Galtung and Ruge (1965) provides one of the most comprehensive lists to date, of the various news values that a story may 'possess' in order for it to be deemed as newsworthy. Therefore, this current study refers to the news values delineated by Galtung and Ruge (1965), in the analysis of the news values used by Midlands Today journalists in their assessment of whether or not a story is 'newsworthy'.

Overall, this chapter has identified the salient aspects of the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media. This has assisted this current study by guiding and informing the areas to analyse, in terms of the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme.

CHAPTER THREE

BLACK PEOPLE AND THE BRITISH MEDIA: A TROUBLED PAST... *BUT PERHAPS*... AN OPTIMISTIC FUTURE?

3.0. Introduction

It is so important for you and me to spend time today learning something about the past so that we can better understand the present, analyse it, and then do something about it. (Malcolm X⁷).

Adhering to the philosophy as espoused in the above citation taken from a speech made in the 1960s by American Black Activist Malcolm X, the first part of this chapter looks 'back' to the *PAST*, by examining the British news media's 'troubled' relationship with minority ethnic communities (MECs), insofar as the way in which this section of the British society was (mis)/represented and portrayed in the news media. By drawing upon the news values as identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965), an explanation is proffered as to why such a situation may have existed.

The second part of this chapter looks 'forward' to the *FUTURE*, and turns its attention to the work of the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN), which aims to:

⁷ <http://www.brothermalcolm.net>
[Website accessed: 09/4/2007]

"...modernise the portrayal of ethnic minorities in mainstream programming so that racial diversity on and behind the screens reflects today's multi-cultural Britain." (CDN newsletter No.1: 2000).

Outlined are some of the actions that are being collectively undertaken by the major broadcasting companies in Britain, via their affiliation with the CDN - in a bid to try to improve upon the way in which MECs are represented both on-screen and behind the screens - in 21st century Britain.

3.1 Traversing the Terrain: Black people and the British news media - why so problematic?

One effect of this emerging news framework has been that the perspective within which coloured people are presented as ordinary members of society has become increasingly overshadowed by a news perspective in which they are presented as a problem... Most importantly - and this is the essential feature of the Press treatment of race - coloured people have on the whole not been portrayed as an integral part of British society. Instead the Press has continued to project an image of Britain as a white society in which the coloured population is seen as some kind of aberration, a problem, or just an oddity, rather than as 'belonging' to the society. (Hartmann *et al* 1974:159).

Hartmann *et al* (1974) made the above observations in their 1974 study entitled: *Race as News*, in which they conducted a study into the handling of race in the British national

press from 1963 to 1970. Subsequent research studies since 1974, have shown through their findings that by and large, the British news media was still *guilty* of the charges laid down at its feet in 1974, by Hartmann *et al* (Downing 1975; Critcher *et al* 1977; Hall *et al* 1978; Halloran 1981; Troyna 1981; Tumber 1982; Murdock 1984; Barry 1988; Gordon and Rosenberg 1989; Hall 1987, 1990; van Dijk 1991; Twitchin 1992; Gillespie 1995; Gabriel 1998)... and the studies go on and on!

The findings of the studies cited above, would therefore suggest that this well-spotted 'emerging news framework' by Hartmann *et al* (1974), ceased from 'emerging'... and 'emerged'! Emerged into a fully-fledged news framework, within which 'race' and issues/stories deemed to be of a race-related nature were situated.

It is therefore suggested within this current study, that a possible key to unlocking the reasons for the development of this 'news framework' and as such, key to possibly unlocking answers to the above question posed in the title of the subsection of this chapter: *Traversing the terrain: 'Black people and the British news media - why so problematic?'*, is not necessarily by doing in the words of Downing and Husband (2005:25), a "crazed bibliographical gallop" of the voluminous amount of studies conducted into the said area of

interest, but by situating the above observations made by Hartmann *et al* (1974) within the theoretical framework of the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media (discussed in Chapter 2). More specifically, by examining journalists' reliance upon the application of 'news values' (Halloran 1981) - "the set of unwritten, though widely shared professional criteria which help journalists to decide which issues and events are 'newsworthy' (Troyna 1981:81).

By referring to the news values as thoroughly delineated by Galtung and Ruge (1965) which were briefly touched upon in the previous chapter (Chapter 2), it is possible to evaluate how the application of these news values to 'race' and 'race-related' stories, adversely impacted upon the way in which minority ethnic communities (MECs) were portrayed/represented (Halloran 1974). This in turn will also help to shed light upon how and why this news framework emerged.

One of the news values identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965) is that a story should be 'meaningful' (F₄), i.e. to the news media and audience. Galtung and Ruge (1965) also identified other facets that pertained to this particular news value of 'meaningfulness', such as the following:

- Cultural proximity:(F_{4.1}) - the story should have 'cultural proximity', i.e. interpretable within the cultural framework of the reader/viewer/listener. In essence then, the news story needs to have cultural resonance in order for the details to appear *natural* and *familiar to the reader/viewer/listener* (Hall et al 1978) and as Galtung and Ruge (1965) state, central to this particular news value is ethnocentrism.

Therefore, before analysing how this particular news value of 'meaningfulness' (F₄) contributed to the news framework under discussion, it is useful to provide the following historical context of an aspect of the British society.

After the end of World War II, several hundred thousand immigrants from the New Commonwealth countries settled in Britain over a comparatively short period of time. As a consequence of this migration, the issue of race-relations was placed high up on the agenda as being problematic, by politicians such as Enoch Powell MP who gave his infamous 'rivers of blood speech' (Jones 1982). As Jones (1982) points out:

"... because immigration at that time was particularly strongly identified with colour, strong ethnic, cultural and religious differences, a fear-based stereotype was created identifying immigrants from the West Indies, Asia and Africa." (Jones 1982:7).

As Halloran (1977) notes, the:

"media do not exist in isolation and must be studied in relation to other institutions within the wider social, economic and political settings." (Halloran 1977:10).

It therefore follows then that the media:

"...reflect the society within which they operate." (Halloran 1977:15).

So if we now return to the news value currently under discussion, i.e. 'meaningfulness' (F₄) and bear in mind the following assertion made by Husband (1975) that...

"It is precisely because racist beliefs are so endemic amongst the white native population in Britain that we must anticipate a tendency for the content of the media to be interpreted in such a way so as to reinforce the existing prejudices." (Husband, 1975: 24).

... it is then possible to understand that in order to make the incipient 'Black' presence in Britain 'culturally understandable' to the majority of the British public, a 'news framework' emerged, which as described by Hartmann et

al (1974), portrayed Britain as a 'White' society where MECs were:

- a) Presented as a problem.
- b) Not portrayed as an integral part of British society.
- c) Not seen as belonging to this society.
- d) Not presented as ordinary members of society.
- e) Seen as some kind of aberration and oddity.

(Hartmann *et al* 1974).

Similarly, a study conducted by Troyna (1981) into the way in which 'race' was reported in the national and local newspapers in Leicester and Manchester, as well as the local radio stations in these two cities, also concurred with Hartmann *et al's* (1974) study.

The findings of Troyna's (1981) study reached the following conclusions:

- a) Black people tended to get into the news media for negative reasons. Therefore, they were constantly portrayed as a 'problem'.
- b) That the media's concern over race-related matters shifted from a focus on the number of Black people entering Britain, to an emphasis on the problems

alleged to be associated with their presence in the country. Essentially...

"...the 'external threat' has simply been transmuted into 'the outsider within' as the media continue to project a limited and ethnocentric picture of the world" (Troyna 1981:80).

- c) Cultural differences were belittled, and the Black community was seen as different from the mainstream population. An *'oddity' and of 'not belonging'*.
(Troyna 1981).

Whilst the news value of 'meaningfulness' may be a contributory factor as to why this news framework (Hartmann *et al* 1974) may have initially emerged, it is contended within this current study that this alone, does not go far enough into explaining why this framework continued to exist. However, by examining some of the other news values as identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965), which are outlined below in table 3.1 (p.72), it is possible to illustrate how these news values individually and collectively, contributed to this news framework (Hartmann *et al* 1974), and how and why the application of these news values continued to sustain the news framework under discussion.

Table 3.1
News Values identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965)

News Value	
F ₁	Frequency: story would need to be able to fall within the frequency of the publication (daily, weekly, monthly etc.) or in the case of broadcast media, within the frequency of the news programme.
F ₂	Threshold.
F _{2.1}	Absolute intensity.
F _{2.2}	Intensity increases.
F ₃	Unambiguity: Clear interpretation, free from ambiguities in its meaning.
F ₄	Meaningfulness: The more meaningful the story is to the news media and its audience.
F _{4.1}	Cultural proximity: Interpretable within the cultural framework of the listener or reader.
F _{4.2}	Relevance: story may occur in a culturally distant place but still have relevance/meaning for the reader or listener.
F ₅	Consonance: The more consonance the story has with the mental image of what one expects to find, the more probable that it will be included.
F _{5.1}	Predictability.
F _{5.2}	Demand.
F ₆	Unexpectedness: The more unexpected the story.
F _{6.1}	Unpredictability.
F _{6.2}	Scarcity.
F ₇	Continuity: If the story has already made it into the news, the more likely it will continue to be defined as news.
F ₈	Composition: An event may make the news to give a variety of different types of stories in a particular newspaper/programme.
F ₉	Reference to elite nations: The more probable the story will make the news.
F ₁₀	Reference to elite people: The more the event concerns elite people, the more probable it will make the news.
F ₁₁	Reference to persons: The more the event can be seen in personal terms - as due to the action of specific individuals, the more probable that it will become a news item.
F ₁₂	Reference to something negative: The more negative the event in its consequences, the more probable that it will become a news item.

Source: Reproduced from Galtung & Ruge (1965) - Paraphrased by Author.

Before moving on, it should be noted that the news values under discussion are not necessarily presented in order of

'importance' in terms of their effect/impact upon news stories pertaining to MECs, nor for that matter, in the order that they are presented by Galtung and Ruge (1965) in Table 3.1 above (p.72) .

Rather, the news values under examination are presented in an order that illustrates sequentially how one news value can feed into another news value, which can feed into another news value, which can feed into another, and so forth - thus helping to keep this news framework (Hartmann *et al* 1974) 'alive and kicking'!

News Value: Consonance: (F₅)

In order for a story to meet the news value criterion of 'consonance' (F₅), it should fulfil the 'mental image' of what one expects to find, and because it is expected, it makes for ease of understand-ability and interpretation. From the news media's perspective where airtime/column space is limited and a premium, and where the journalist is constantly working towards meeting tight deadlines, it is clear to understand why such a news value would be attractive, in terms of deciding upon which stories to select for inclusion in the news output.

However as mentioned previously, because a news framework had already been established, whereby MECs were reflected/portrayed as being a 'problem' - an 'oddity' an 'aberration' and so forth... (Troyna 1981), the application of this news value of 'consonance' can result in the news media readily 'tuning' into stories/events that 'fit' that bill. In essence then, this news value continued to aid and abet the perpetuation of the news framework that had already been established.

In addition, a consequence of fulfilling the news value of 'consonance' in relation to MECs, is the danger of falling into the trap of portraying individuals as a 'collective group' - simply bound together by their 'race' and skin colour, resulting in stereotyping. Stereotyping can almost be regarded as a 'shorthand' method used by the news media to describe/explain events/occurrences and at times, can be used to help simplify a complicated world and 'reality'.

Therefore once a stereotype had been created in relation to the portrayal of MECs, and was constantly being revisited by the news media as a frame of reference, it become almost immutable and impervious to change - as MECs were now readily slotted into an available categorisation, that made it more 'culturally understandable' for the indigenous

population. Ironically then, any exceptions to the stereotype created, could in fact be considered to be *the exception to the rule...* and not the 'norm', even though it could quite possibly be the *norm*.

News Value: Unambiguity: (F₃)

The news value of: 'unambiguity' (F₃), requires a story to be unambiguous i.e. 'simple' and 'straightforward' with a clear interpretation. However, the application of this particular news value of 'unambiguity' to stories pertaining to MECs, could sometimes result in the omission of relevant details to help give the story a context.

For example, an eye-catching, sensationalist headline in the Sun newspaper was: "Scandal of £600-a week immigrants" (Sun: 4th May 1978). This news story was about two Asian families who had been expelled from Malawi without any possessions and placed temporarily in a hotel at a cost of £600-a week. However, no background information was provided in the news story, such as how historically it was Britain who had indirectly caused this 'displacement' by taking Asians to East Africa as indentured labour to build the railways, and had then subsequently abandoned them there. Therefore, although the way in which this news story was presented, fulfilled the news value of: 'unambiguity' - simple and straightforward with a clear interpretation, it was at the

detriment of the way in which members of a minority ethnic community were portrayed to the British public, because little background information on the deeper circumstances of the afore-mentioned situation was included in the news report.

Studies have also shown that the news media had a tendency to focus upon the manifestations of inter-group conflict, as opposed to providing background information to explain underlying reasons for that conflict (Hartmann and Husband 1970, 1974; Halloran 1974; Critcher *et al* 1977; Troyna 1981). Some of these studies also assert that background information could have included matters such as the scarcity of resources in terms of housing, healthcare and employment. Instead, the news reports tended to infer that immigrants caused, rather than exacerbated deficiencies in resources. Therefore the news value of 'unambiguity' as described above, can also feed into the news value of 'meaningfulness' (F₄) and 'consonance' (F₅), because the lack of detail in the stories enables the story to fulfil the latter two news values, and thus enables the perpetuation of the news framework identified by Hartmann *et al* (1974).

News Value: Reference to something negative: (F.₁₂)

The more 'negative' (F.₁₂) the event in terms of its consequences, the more likely it is to be considered as newsworthy.

The problem with such a news value in terms of the minority ethnic communities (MECs), was that because they were perceived as being a negative addition to the British society, the news media was likely to continue to tune into events that depicted this. This assertion is substantiated by the study conducted by Troyna (1981), where the findings revealed that Black people tended to get into the news media for negative reasons. Similarly, Halloran (1974) also asserted that MECs were ordinarily not afforded substantial access to the news media, and so they may need to engage in 'negative' behaviour before the media notices them, or before they are given the opportunity to put forth their point of view.

Hartmann *et al's* (1974) study also revealed that the day-to-day tensions and problems which were of concern to the Black population, were not necessarily of primary concern to the White public, and that it was only when 'Black' concerns impinge upon the indigenous population - such as social disturbances, that the 'event' then became 'newsworthy'. As such, the media's interest in MECs was focused upon

situations that were perceived as 'threats' or as 'problems'. Once again, the focus of the news media continued to perpetuate the news framework under discussion (Hartmann *et al* 1974).

News Value: Unexpectedness: (F₆)

This particular news value of 'unexpectedness' (F₆), which also includes the subcategories of 'unpredictability' (F_{6.1}) and 'scarcity' (F_{6.2}) applies to events that break from the social norms that favour the consensus and the official ideologies of the status quo. This news value also applies to events that infringe upon our 'sense of normality' and 'sense of the everyday' (Hall *et al* 1978). For example, if people protest, it is expected that they will do so in a peaceful manner and within the structured confinements of society.

Therefore from the news media's point of view, the 'uprisings' in Bristol, Brixton, Liverpool, Manchester and other parts of Britain in 1981, would have been deemed as 'unexpected' and hence newsworthy because they were not peaceful and stepped outside of the consensus. Also, in very literal terms, these 'uprisings' would have appeared to be unexpected for the very reasons as noted by Hartmann *et al* (1974), that the day-to-day distresses and concerns of those

from the MECs were not noted until the after-effect of these distresses encroach upon society at large.

The above example of the 'uprisings' also satisfies the other news value of 'negativity' (F₁₂), because the public at large would quite understandably consider such behaviour/actions as being irrational and negative. Also, given the media's tendency to be event-orientated in terms of the types of stories that are covered, it is highly likely that little background information would have been provided by the media in the lead up to the 'events'. Background information could have included for example, the issue of police harassment (Cohen 1982).

The omission by the media of such background information, fulfils yet another news value - that of 'unambiguity' (F₃), because to try to explain allegations of police brutality/harassment towards members of the MECs prior to the 'uprisings', would probably have taken a great deal of effort for the majority of people living in Britain to understand. It would also have gone way beyond their comprehension, because such alleged claims about the police would not fulfil the news value of F₄ - 'meaningfulness' (as discussed above):

"That black people are a problem for the police is inferred in the pattern of crime reporting; that the police are a problem for black people is rarely and grudgingly admitted." (Critcher et al 1977: 176).

Also, as the police in this instance, would be considered to be the 'primary definers' of such news stories, they would also have set the news agenda on stories relating to the 'uprisings' and as such, set the initial parameters within which the 'uprisings' would have been discussed and judged by the news media. Hence, the news framework (Hartmann *et al* 1974) continues!

Also, Molotch and Lester (1982) noted that whilst the police could be regarded as having 'habitual access' to the news media, those from the MECs could be considered as having 'disruptive access', and that those who have disruptive access...

"... must 'make news', by somehow crashing through the ongoing arrangements of newsmaking, generating surprise, shock or some more violent form of 'trouble'. Thus, the relatively powerless disrupt the social world to disrupt the habitual forms of event-making... This 'obvious' disruption of normal functioning and its challenge to the received social world prompts the coverage of the mass media. The disruptive occurrence becomes an event because it is a problem for the relatively powerful." (Molotch and Lester 1974:108).

News Value: Threshold: (F_2)

For an event/story to satisfy the news value criteria of 'threshold' (F_2), it would need to have reached a certain level of importance. Also, if it reaches the point of 'absolute intensity' ($F_{2.1}$) or the 'intensity increases' ($F_{2.2}$), then these factors would all aid in the deeming of the event/story as newsworthy.

However, as those from the MECs were generally 'ignored' and excluded from access to the news media until disruptive behaviour occurred (Molotch and Lester 1974), when the news value of: 'threshold' (F_2) is also applied to events/stories pertaining to the MECs, then collaboratively, these two news values can result in the sustaining of the 'emerging' news framework that Hartmann *et al* (1974) identified.

News Value: Reference to elite people: (F_{10})

The news value of 'reference to elite people' (F_{10}) contends that the more an event or story concerns 'elite people', then the more likely it will be considered to be newsworthy.

In terms of the MECs, there have been various examples throughout the years where those deemed to be 'elite' people, have made the news by racialising situations.

In the 1960s, it was Enoch Powell, the then MP for Wolverhampton South-West, who made various speeches against the number of Black people migrating to Britain. Powell was described by Jones (1982) as being the person who:

"...struck the match which lit the fuse which caused the explosion which made racism acceptable to many people; crystallised the unspoken fears of many, and structured racism into British society." (Jones 1982:9).

As Enoch Powell was considered to be an 'elite' by the fact that he was an MP, he was afforded space in the news media to air his views (Cashmore and Troyna 1990). This, in spite of the fact that as claimed in a study by Critcher et al (1977), Powell's statements were not facts, but scenarios and speculation. However, Powell's comments were automatically deemed to be 'newsworthy' because he was part of the already politically powerful/elite, and so would therefore be regarded as being a 'primary definer' (as discussed in Chapter 2).

"The 'structure of access' - whose activities and opinions become defined as newsworthy - operates against the black experience. There is no way any black group or individual could have come to have the same status, and thus press access, as Enoch Powell... The fact that the press automatically believes the utterances of the powerful to be newsworthy has the particular effect in the race issue of allowing the principle issues to be defined by white authority." (Critcher et al 1977:176).

Downing's study (1975) which was an analysis of television news on discussions of 'race' and race-related matters, highlighted that coverage was dominated 40 percent (40.0%) by Government Ministers and MPs. This again provides more evidence of the fact that those from the MECs were immediately placed at a disadvantage because of their lack of access to the news media. The lack of access afforded to MECs was also a point remarked upon by the Glasgow University Media Group (1982) who stated that the media is 'open access' to the powerful.

News Value: Frequency: (F.₁)

The news value of 'frequency' (F.₁), refers to the frequency of the news media's output. For example, weekly or daily newspaper or news programmes.

If we refer once again to Enoch Powell MP, it is claimed by Jones (1982) that to some extent, Powell was able to manipulate the media by providing advance copies of his speeches, and by releasing these over the weekend to ensure that he would receive coverage on the Saturday and Sunday, with continued coverage/reaction on the Monday. By understanding how the news media operated, Powell also gave pithy sound-bites (Jones 1982), thus simplifying the task of converting his speeches and comments into good copy, with

little effort required on the part of the news media. The approach that Powell adopted to ensure as much as possible that he would receive coverage, also satisfied another news value - that of: 'unambiguity'.

Therefore, with such a force to be reckoned with in Enoch Powell MP, MECs were automatically placed at a very direct disadvantage.

News Value: Continuity: (F.7)

The news value of 'continuity' (F.7) also came into play with the news media's treatment of Enoch Powell's statements. This news value essentially means that if an 'event' or 'story' has already been tapped into by the news media, then similar stories will be regarded as being newsworthy. Therefore, once Powell had opened up the 'numbers' debate in terms of the amount of people migrating from the New Commonwealth countries to England, other stories with this theme would also be covered by the news media. Therefore, even if the debate and discussion was focused upon challenging Powell's assertions, the news media still kept the debate 'alive', by situating the discussion(s) within a framework originally defined by Powell - thus giving credence, even if by default, to Powell's viewpoint on this subject-matter.

Generally speaking though, because a news framework had been created which regarded those from the MECs as being problematic for the British society, stories/events depicting such concerns would also fulfil the criteria of 'continuity'.

It should be stressed however, that the news values as discussed thus far, are standard news values that are generally applied to all news stories, and not just to stories pertaining to be on a 'race' or race-related matter. Journalists are attracted to events/stories that have elements of 'drama', 'unusualness', 'of human interest', 'unexpectedness', 'controversy', 'recency', 'scarcity', 'rarity', 'unpredictable', 'problematic', 'violent', 'negative', and all those other elements as identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965). The more news value elements a particular story/event possesses, the more it will increase the likelihood of it being deemed as newsworthy.

However, the problem that existed in terms of the way in which MECs were portrayed in the news media, was that once a news framework had been created (as identified by Hartmann *et al* 1974), it appeared to be very, very difficult for the news media to 'break out' of this framework, when covering stories that pertained to those from the MECs.

It should also be noted that the media's difficulty in trying to break away from a news framework that has been created, does not only apply to 'race' or race-related matters/stories. In a study entitled *Demonstrations and Communication: A Case Study*, Halloran et al (1970) found that in the build up to an anti-Vietnam War demonstration, a news framework had already been created which expected violence to take place at the demonstration. So when the actual demonstration *did* take place, the news media still depicted it as being violent, even though eyewitness accounts would testify to the opposite - that it was in fact peaceful.

Similarly, because a news framework had been created around industrial disputes, portraying the actions of the 'strikers' as being unreasonable and detrimental to the particular industry affected, and essentially detrimental for the country, it was found that the publics' perceptions as to the causes and the background details was 'skewed', because they were given a 'narrower range of causes' by the news media (Glasgow University Media Group 1982).

The two examples cited above (i.e. anti-Vietnam war demonstration and the reporting of industrial action), illustrate that 'news frameworks' are not *solely* created on matters pertaining to the MECs. However, there is one

significant, distinguishing factor. Whilst in the above two examples, individuals are bound together by their actions or because they have 'consciously' chosen to be affiliated to an organisation or group, in the case of MECs, the only factors that may bind them all together may possibly just be their 'race' or skin colour. However, the news framework as created by the news media, potentially bound all MECs together, irrespective of class and gender, beliefs or non-beliefs and so forth; thereby, maybe creating misconceptions amongst the general public and furthermore, attaching a problematic label to all MECs - given the news framework that has been discussed above (Hartmann et al 1974).

However, the putting into 'action' of the overall essence of the following citation, may possibly have helped to dissuade and alleviate the news framework under discussion:

"There is then, a case for a thorough examination of the application and implications of 'news values' in the mass media. The 'taken-for-grantedness', the apparent inevitability, the legitimisations and justifications of the situations, and, at times, the making of virtue out of journalistic necessity should not be allowed to go unchallenged."
(Halloran 1977:11).

Bearing in mind the above 'call for action' by Halloran (1977), the research methodology employed within this current study allows for a thorough investigation into the

news values applied to stories under consideration for inclusion on the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today.

The research methodology employed within this study, is also informed by research methods applied by other empirical research studies that focused upon the 'news media' and/or 'race-related' subjects/topics (Table 3.2, p.90).

- The study conducted by Hartmann *et al* (1974): *Race as News* which identified the news framework under discussion in this chapter. This study involved a contents analysis of newspapers.
- *Racism and the Mass Media* (Hartmann and Husband 1974). This study consisted of a social survey via the use of an 'interview schedule' and 'questionnaire survey' to examine the indigenous population's views on the 'Black' presence in Britain, and to examine to what extent, the news media may have played a role in informing the held-views.

- Downing's (1975) study entitled: *The (Balanced) White View*, involved a content analysis study of television news.
- *Race in the provincial press: A case study of five West Midlands newspapers* (Critcher et al 1977), involved a content analysis of five regional newspapers.
- *Public Awareness and the Media: A Study of Reporting on Race* (Troyna 1981), employed the research methods of a content analysis and a social survey.
- The study by Hall et al (1978), entitled: *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order*, involved a content analysis and discourse analysis of the media's handling of race.
- Cottle's (1993) study on regional television news entitled: *TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City* used the research methods of a content analysis of the Central television News programme, as well as the undertaking of a production-based analysis.

Table 3.2
Research methodologies used in previous studies on:
'race'/race-related matters and the news media.

TITLE OF STUDY	METHODOLOGY USED IN STUDIES			
	Content Analysis	Social Survey (involving the Public)	Discourse Analysis	Production-based study
Race as News: (Hartmann, Husband and Clark 1974)	✓	✗	✗	✗
Racism and the Mass Media: (Hartmann and Husband 1974)	✗	✓	✗	✗
The (Balanced) White View (Downing 1975)	✓	✗	✗	✗
Race in the provincial press: a case study of five West Midlands newspapers (Critcher et al 1977)	✓	✗	✗	✗
Policing the Crisis (Hall et al 1978)	✓	✗	✓	✗
Public Awareness and the Media: A Study of Reporting on Race (Troyna 1981)	✓	✓	✗	✗
TV News, Urban Conflict and the Inner City (Cottle 1993)	✓	✗	✗	✓

✓ = Methodology Used in Study;

✗ = Methodology: Not Used in Study.

3.2 Bridging the gap: The Cultural Diversity Network (CDN)

The CDN aims to modernise the portrayal of ethnic minorities in mainstream programming so that racial diversity on and behind the screens reflects today's multi-cultural Britain. (CDN newsletter no.1: 2000).

Since October 2000, many of the major broadcasting companies in Britain, joined forces via the Cultural Diversity Network

(CDN) in a bid to try to address the issue of the way in which MECs are portrayed/represented on-screen, as well as trying to increase the number of MECs who are employed within the broadcasting industry.

Since its inception in 2000, the CDN membership has grown, and as of 2009, the broadcasting companies and media-related bodies/organisations that are affiliated to the CDN were as follows:

- a) BBC
- b) ITV
- c) ITN
- d) Channel 4
- e) Five
- f) BSkyB
- g) Virgin Media Television
- h) MTV/Viacom
- i) Turner (A TimeWarner Company)
- j) BAFTA (British Academy of Film and Television Arts)
- k) PACT (Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television)
- l) Skillset (industry body which supports skills and training)

The CDN is chaired by a Senior member of staff from an organisation that is a member of the CDN. Clive Jones, the then Chief Executive of Carlton Television was the first

chair of the CDN. Greg Dyke, the former Director General of the BBC took up this tenure for one year, taking over from Channel 4 in December 2003⁸. Since 2004, the position of chair of the CDN has been held for two years as opposed to one year, and the current chair of the CDN is Andy Duncan: Channel 4's Chief Executive.

In 2009, the CDN stated its 'Diversity Pledge':

"The Diversity Pledge demonstrates major broadcasters' absolute commitment to promoting wider diversity - as a way to connect with all of our audiences to tap into talent from all communities and as a catalyst for creativity.

"We hope that the Pledge will help to encourage the UK Independent production sector to give greater consideration to diversity issues..." (CDN website page⁹)

In order to let as many people as possible know about the various opportunities available to them in the broadcasting industry, the CDN has progressed from producing newsletters in hardcopy form, to imparting information via its website pages which details all of its activities.

The ultimate aim of the CDN is similar to that of the pan-BBC's diversity policy, and the citation at the top of this

⁸http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2003/10_october/09/greg_dyke_cdn.shtml
[BBC website page: Accessed: 12/11/2003]].

⁹<http://www.culturaldiversitynetwork.co.uk/>
[CDN website page: Accessed: 28/3/2009].

section explicitly states that the CDN wishes to improve the representation of MECs both on and off-screen.

Over the last two years, the CDN states that it has put into place: 'more robust portrayal monitoring systems' and has undertaken audience research to gain a deeper understanding of the viewing requirements of those from the MECs (Source: CDN newsletter, 2008).

Also, noting that there is an overall lack of people from the MECs employed at Senior level positions within the broadcasting industry, the CDN members commissioned research to investigate why this might be the case, and in light of this under-representation the CDN launched a 'Senior level mentoring scheme' in August 2008. The aim of this initiative is to match mentees with mentors who occupy Senior positions within the broadcasting industry. For 12 months, the mentor will support and encourage the mentee and provide them with advice to help them progress and develop within their chosen occupation. There are currently 17 participants taking part in this initiative: 8 are female, 9 are Asian (Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani), 3 Black Caribbean, 3 Mixed and 2 are Black African (Source: CDN Newsletter 2008).

A current mentor is Krishnan Guru-Murthy - Presenter of Channel 4s News at Noon. Guru-Murthy acknowledges the

challenges that face those from the MECs wishing to progress within the media industry. With reference to his mentee, Guru-Murthy states the following:

"I'm really looking forward to mentoring Daniel and helping him negotiate the intricate workings of the television business. My generation of people from ethnic minorities have done well at getting on screen and into production but not so well at getting the positions of real power so I want to help give the next generation the confidence to reach the top." (Krishnan Guru-Murthy; 2008) Source: CDN Newsletter, 2008.¹⁰

3.3 Conclusion

By situating the news media within the socio-cultural and political context within which it operated, at the time of when several hundred thousand immigrants from the New Commonwealth countries settled in Great Britain, possible explanations have been posited as to why the 'emerging news framework' that Hartmann *et al* 1974 identified... 'emerged'; a framework where MECs were constantly being regarded and portrayed as being... 'a problem', 'an aberration', 'an oddity' (Hartmann *et al* 1974)... 'of not belonging', 'the outsider within' (Troyna 1981).

¹⁰ <http://www.culturaldiversitynetwork.co.uk/>
[CDN website page: Accessed: 10/12/08].

By applying the news values as identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965) to stories pertaining to MECs, it was possible to identify how and why 'historically', a news framework had 'emerged' and persisted. Once MECs had been labelled with the tag of 'trouble' (Hartmann et al 1974; Troyna 1981), journalists' reliance upon the use of news values to help determine whether or not a story is news-worthy, became detrimental towards MECs in terms of the way in which these news values were applied to stories pertaining to MECs.

The latter part of this chapter identified some of the measures being taken by the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN), in its bid to try to address the issue of the portrayal of MECs on-screen, and the under-representation of MECs holding Senior level positions within the broadcasting industry.

The details contained within this chapter assisted this current study by informing the methodological approach adopted by this study, and further re-enforced (from the previous chapter - Chapter 2), the need to examine the news selection process and the use and application of news values by the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today.

CHAPTER FOUR

MANAGING DIVERSITY: IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

4.0 Introduction

The underlying philosophy of managing diversity implies that an organisation can gain competitive advantage by enhancing its performance through leveraging human capital, not in spite of, but because of its racial, sex and ethnic composition...

It rests on the premise that the organisation will be able to serve increasingly diverse customers, meet increasingly complex business and management problems by actively seeking and managing a diverse workforce. (Stephenson and Lewin 1996:168).

It is not unusual to hear any of the following phrases being used in a multitude of different types of organisations/industries, as part of everyday language: 'workforce diversity' (Ivancevich and Gilbert 2000), 'workplace diversity' (Totta and Burke 1995; Gardenswartz and Rowe 1998), 'diversity management' (Lynch 1994) or 'management of diversity' (Cassell 1996). Any of the above phrases (and many others) would indicate that a managing diversity policy has been implemented within the organisation.

However, on perusal of the academic literature available on managing diversity, it soon becomes apparent that this field of study is somewhat problematic (Kandola and Fullerton (2004), contentious (Lynch, 1994) and very much in its embryonic stages when compared to other academic disciplines. For example, questions abound include how do you even define managing diversity (Kandola and Fullerton (2004) and whether or not managing diversity is any different to equal opportunities (Kimulti 1993)?

Furthermore, although the citation used at the top of this chapter may appear to be 'self-explanatory' and indeed, reflects the ethos and essence as to why it is often stated that many organisations (including the BBC) may choose to implement a managing diversity policy (Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004), much of the available literature focuses upon the conceptualisation of what managing diversity actually means in 'theory', as opposed to how to implement a managing diversity policy within an organisation to enable it to translate into 'practice', so that the aims/objectives of the policy can be successfully achieved.

Therefore, considering the bountiful amount of literature on this subject-matter, there is a noticeable dearth of available literature on how a managing diversity policy should *practically* be implemented within an organisation

(Ivancevich and Gilbert 2000; Wentling 2000; Maxwell et al 2003; Kandola and Fullerton 2004). Authors such as Diamante and Giglio (1989), Kandola and Fullerton (2004), Maxwell (2004) highlight that even with the best of intentions, it is the specific constituent elements incorporated within a managing diversity policy that can to a very large extent, determine how effective or successful the implementation of that policy will be in terms of achieving the aims and objectives of the organisation.

Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to identify the most pertinent areas of contention within this field of study, in a bid to developing a practical managing diversity implementation model within which to situate the pan-BBC diversity policy for analysis (discussed in Chapter 6). This managing diversity implementation model will then in turn, be used as the foundation upon which to examine how the pan-BBC diversity policy translates into practice on its regional television news programme Midlands Today, to enable the successful achievement of the aims/objectives of this policy - to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000). In this instance on a microscopic level - vis-à-vis reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

4.1 The Emergence of Managing Diversity

It was the highly influential publication by the Hudson Institute: *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century* (Johnston and Packer 1987), that is often cited as being the catalyst and galvanising force behind organisations beginning to value the notion of having a diverse workforce (Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004). The Hudson Institute's publication focused upon the demographic changes occurring in the U.S and amongst the findings stated that by the Year 2000, immigrants would be the largest share of increase in the U.S population and workforce since World War One.

This revelation spurred U.S businesses into action, by considering how best to effectively 'manage' and 'harness' this pending scenario. "No longer could they rely on their staple supply of human resources..." but instead, would "have to rely more on people from diverse groups of the population" (Maxwell 2004:182), or face the prospect that "... organisations which continue to rely on the traditional pool of white, able-bodied males will be ignoring valuable potential in the remaining population and will thus run the risk of losing out to competitors" (Kandola and Fullerton 2004:37).

Less than ten years after the Hudson Institute's publication, it was estimated that approximately 40 percent of companies in the U.S had instigated a managing diversity policy (MacDonald 1993). It was also almost a decade after the publication of *Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century* (Johnston and Packer 1987), that the concept of managing diversity first began to seep into the consciousness of UK organisations - both in the public and the private sectors, and be discussed and debated within the UK context (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

4.2 Defining Managing Diversity

As stated previously, although the term 'managing diversity' may on first appearance seem to be self-explanatory, i.e. to manage a diverse workforce, it is important to note that this concept can be interpreted by different organisations in many different ways (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

Therefore, in a bid to find a definition for managing diversity, Kandola and Fullerton (2004) compiled a very comprehensive list of the various definitions and interpretations that have been purveyed. This then allowed Kandola and Fullerton (2004) to identify key re-occurring words/themes which in turn, enabled the development of the following definition of managing diversity:

"The basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and workstyle. It is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everybody feels valued, where their talents are being fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met. (Kandola and Fullerton 2004: 8).

The above definition provided by Kandola and Fullerton (2004) will be adopted within this current study. This definition also encapsulates the essence of the public proclamations made by the BBC since the introduction of its diversity policy in 2000, which aims to *reflect the nation that it serves*. This, it is thought, will enable the corporation to meet its business goals by appealing to its growing diverse audience - locally, nationally and globally (Maxwell 2004).

4.3 The difference between Managing Diversity and Equal Opportunity policies

For some, the phrase *managing diversity* is just semantics - the 21st century 'buzzword' for equal opportunities (Thomas and Roosevelt 1996). Lynch (1994) goes one step further by describing managing diversity as "a new future-oriented proportionalism" that "...helps businesses harness this

demographic destiny by exorcising the invisible demons of institutional racism/sexism and cleansing white male-culture" (Lynch 1994:32). Others take the viewpoint that whilst these two concepts are different (i.e. equal opportunities and managing diversity policies), they are nevertheless inextricably linked (Bagshaw 2004). Proponents of managing diversity will posit that there are fundamental differences between these two concepts (Kandola and Fullerton 2004) and will often cite some of the following, as key differences.

a) External versus Internal

Since the 1970s, organisations in the UK have been compelled by law to comply with the various equal opportunities (EO) legislation enacted by the government, to ensure equality of employment and opportunity for all people irrespective of their race, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs/faith or sexual orientation (McDougall 1996; Wilson 1996; Wilson and Iles 1999). Such EO legislation includes the Race Relations Act 1976, the Equal Pay Act (EPA) 1970, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 and the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.

Therefore, the driving force behind organisations in the UK implementing equal opportunity policies could be considered

to be 'externally-driven' because non-compliance by an organisation would amount to the 'breaking of the law'.

Table 4.1 below, provides a list of some of the EO legislations passed.

Table 4.1
Equal Opportunities Legislation.

RACE AND ETHNICITY	RELIGIOUS BELIEFS
Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976; Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000; Race Regulations 2003.	The Employment equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003.
GENDER	GENDER REASSIGNMENT
The Equal pay Act (EPA) 1970; The Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) 1975 (Amended in 1986); The Gender Equality Duty (2007).	The Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999; The Gender Recognition Act 2004.
DISABILITY	AGE
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Act 1995; The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment Regulations 2003); Disability Discrimination Act 2005.	Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	HUMAN RIGHTS
The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulation 2003.	Human Rights Act 1998.

Conversely, although managing diversity policies also have a commitment to equal opportunities for all, the implementation of such a policy is 'internally-driven'. This is because it is self-imposed, as opposed to being because of the need to try to fulfil legal requirements (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

That said, Lynch (1994) puts forth a counter-argument to managing diversity policies being internally driven. Lynch (1994) states that managing diversity policies have been

externally 'thrust' upon businesses due to changing demographics. Indeed, a classic example of managing diversity being externally driven is in South Africa - following the dismantling of apartheid (Human 1996).

b) Human Resources versus Organisational Strategy

The implementation and monitoring of equal opportunity policies within an organisation, is usually the specific domain and responsibility of the Human Resources (HR) department (Kandola 1995; McDougall 1996; Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

However, managing diversity policies are strategically implemented within an organisation and the achievement of the goals/aims of the policy are driven forward by top management (Kandola 1995; Kandola and Fullerton 2004), and are also regarded as being the concern and responsibility of all employees (Ross and Schneider 1992; Kandola and Fullerton 2004). As such, managing diversity policies are fully integrated within the organisation and so are not solely isolated to just one department (i.e. HR), as in the case of equal opportunity policies.

However, criticisms have been levelled at this strategic approach to implementing managing diversity policies because

of: "its potential to remove equality altogether from organisational agendas through the integration into mainstream management" (Maxwell *et al* 2003:245).

c) Groups versus Individuals

In this instance, the differences cited between EO and managing diversity policies is the focus that each of the two concepts adopt in their bid to tackle inequalities or diversity in the workplace/organisation.

Equal opportunity (EO) policies focus upon group membership based upon noticeable external differences such as age, gender, race, disability (Bagshaw 2004). The groups targeted by EO policies tend to be typically the groups of people who have faced discrimination or unfair treatment/under-representation due to their race, gender, age, disability or sexual orientation (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

Managing diversity policies are regarded as having a much broader focus than equal opportunity policies because they focus upon the individual (Kandola 1995; Kandola and Fullerton 2004), and acknowledge differences that go beyond the visible group differences, as discussed above (Iles 1995). As 'managing diversity' policies focus upon

individual differences it also takes account of unseen, non-visible differences such as the 'personal' qualities of the individual and the potential benefits of having individual differences within an organisation (Ross and Schneider 1992; Kandola 1995; Liff 1997; Bagshaw 2004; Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

A major flaw identified with equal opportunity policies focusing upon, and affiliating individuals to the visible group differences is that it is contended that EO policies do not have the capacity to cope with differences between and within the groups. However, by focusing upon the *individual* in the way it is claimed that managing diversity policies aim to do, it is asserted that as a consequence of this 'approach', such policies are better equipped than equal opportunity policies to address such a scenario as discussed above (Liff and Dale 1994; Kirkton and Greene 2000).

Also, whilst equal opportunity policies could be regarded as being targeted exclusively at minority groups, managing diversity policies are intended to be inclusive of all people - including White males who traditionally, have not been subject to discriminatory practices in the workplace/organisation because of their race and/or gender.

However, criticisms have been levelled at managing diversity policies focusing upon *all* individual differences. Proponents of this viewpoint believe that having such a broad outlook could lead to a 'dilution' in the attention given to the groups of people who have traditionally been under-represented in the workplace, and who are primarily the focus of equal opportunity policies.

d) Focus on the 'negative' versus focus on the 'positive'

Equal opportunity policies have traditionally focused upon trying to avoid/eradicate the 'negative' impact that differences/diversity in the workplace/organisation can sometimes engender, such as discrimination or unequal treatment. Therefore, the ultimate aim of EO policies is to try to eliminate discriminatory practices within the organisation it is claimed that such policies can lead to resentment from: "...those who feel they have a vested interest in the status quo" (Bagshaw 2004:154).

Conversely, it is contended that managing diversity policies start from a 'positive' standpoint insofar as differences and diversity in the workplace being welcomed, celebrated and embraced, because it is regarded as being positive for the business needs of the organisation (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

e) Social Justice versus Business Case

Equal opportunity (EO) policies have traditionally focused upon giving individuals 'social justice' and 'equality', particularly those considered to be in a minority within the workplace/organisation. Such individuals would include those from the minority ethnic communities (MECs), women and people with disabilities. Therefore, EO policies have a focus upon trying to ensure equal social justice for everyone (Rennie 1993).

Proponents of managing diversity policies (Kandola and Fullerton (2004); Maxwell 2004) focus upon the business case and will often put forward reasons as to why it is not only important, but also necessary for the business/organisation to implement a managing diversity policy to aid the future success of the business/organisation (Cassell 1996; Wilson and Iles 1999; Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004).

Whilst there is generally wide-spread support for managing diversity policies, there is also criticism that the fundamental ideology pushed forward vis-à-vis the business case argument is flawed on moral grounds because it "represents a tool for management intervention and control, and that it implies the commodification, rather than individualisation of people for business gain" (Kirby and

Harter 2001). This is an interesting stance taken by Kirby and Harter (2001) because it is in direct contradiction to a central element of managing diversity policies, which is that such policies 'encourage' individualism (as discussed previously).

As the business case is often the most cited reason given by businesses/organisations as to why a managing diversity policy has been implemented (Kandola and Fullerton 2004), this will now be given further attention within this current study as a means of understanding why the implementation of such a policy has become so imperative for so many businesses/organisations - including the BBC (Dyke 2000).

4.4 The Business Case for Managing Diversity

The business case argument pushed forward in relation to the implementation of a managing diversity policy tends to focus upon two areas:

- a) The need to react and respond to the demographic changes occurring (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).
- b) The financial benefits that a managing diversity policy is expected to bring to the organisation. (Cassell 1996; Wilson and Iles 1999; Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

4.4.1 Business Case Argument no.1: Changes in the UK demographics

The last census conducted in 2001 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) revealed that the UK demographics had changed significantly since the previous census in 1991 - specifically in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. Such changes help to underline to businesses the need for them to also move along with these changes or as mentioned previously, face the prospect of possibly losing out, by excluding groups of people who may have traditionally been under-represented in the workplace/organisation.

For example, apart from the fact that the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 makes it illegal to discriminate in the workplace against a person because of their age, the UK is rapidly becoming an 'ageing' population. The data from the 2001 census reveals that for the first time ever, the UK has more people aged over 60 than under 16, and that there are five times more people aged over 85 than there were in 1951 (ONS 2001).

It is also worth noting that since the census of 1991, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was passed in 1995. As discussed previously, whilst managing diversity policies have a different approach to equal opportunity policies, all businesses/organisations still need to comply with this

law. In addition, the ethos of managing diversity welcomes people with disabilities in the workforce and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) provides many examples of this in action and of businesses looking beyond an individual's disability.

In terms of the female gender, the census of 2001 also revealed that of the 58,789,194 people living in the UK, the female gender population was slightly greater than the male gender population. At the time of the census, females represented just over 50 percent (51.4%) of the population, whilst males represented slightly under 50 percent (48.6%) of the population (ONS 2001). In addition, on analysing the gender population figures in more detail, it reveals that whilst the male population between the ages of 0-19 was slightly greater than the female population: 7,559,213 (51.2%) and 7,209,924 (48.8%) respectively, from the ages of 20 to 90 and over, the female population is greater (ONS 2001). Therefore, this is yet another clear indicator to businesses/organisations that the greater number of people of working age will be 'female' in gender (Table 4.2, p.112).

Table 4.2
Gender population by age ranges in the UK.

AGE RANGE	GENDER				TOTAL FOR AGE RANGES	
	MALE		FEMALE		Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)		
0-4	1786036	51.2	1700433	48.8	3486469	5.9
5-9	1914865	51.2	1823295	48.8	3738160	6.4
10-14	1987690	51.2	1892919	48.8	3880609	6.6
15-19	1870622	51.1	1793277	48.9	3663899	6.2
0-19	7559213	51.2	7209924	48.8	14769137	25.1
					100.0	
20-24	1765417	49.8	1780734	50.2	3546151	6.0
25-29	1895543	49.0	1971572	51.0	3867115	6.6
30-34	2199874	49.0	2293711	51.0	4493585	7.6
35-39	2277799	49.2	2348011	50.8	4625810	7.9
20-39	8138633	49.2	8394028	50.8	16532661	28.1
					100.0	
40-44	2056630	49.5	2094950	50.5	4151580	7.1
45-49	1851464	49.6	1884500	50.4	3735964	6.4
50-54	2003224	49.6	2037213	50.4	4040437	6.9
55-59	1651417	49.5	1687444	50.5	3338861	5.7
40-59	7562735	49.5	7704107	50.5	15266842	26.1
					100.0	
60-64	1409676	48.9	1470272	51.1	2879948	4.9
65-69	1241382	47.8	1355461	52.2	2596843	4.4
70-74	1059151	45.3	1280080	54.7	2339231	4.0
75-79	817711	41.6	1149218	58.4	1966929	3.3
60-79	4527920	46.3	5255031	53.7	9782951	16.6
					100.0	
80-84	482697	36.7	830850	63.3	1313547	2.2
85-89	226833	30.1	525954	69.9	752787	1.3
80-89	709530	34.3	1356804	65.7	2066334	3.5
					100.0	
90 and over	83202	22.4	288067	77.6	371269	0.6
90 and over	83202	22.4	288067	77.6	371269	0.6
					100.0	
TOTAL	28,581,233 (n)	48.6%	30,207,961 (n)	51.4%	58,789,194 (n)	100.0%

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: ONS 2001.

Since the previous census in 1991, the most recent census of 2001 also revealed that the minority ethnic community (MEC) population had increased from 3 million to 4.6 million - representing 7.9 percent (7.9%) of the total UK population (Table 4.3, p.113).

Table 4.3
Ethnic population of the UK.

ETHNICITY	TOTAL (n)	PERCENTAGE (%)
White population	5,4153,898	92.1
Ethnic minority population	4,635,296	7.9
TOTAL	58789194(n)	100.0%

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: ONS 2001

It should also be noted that the 1991 census did not include data on the minority ethnic population in Northern Ireland, therefore it is not exactly possible to compare 'like' with 'like', i.e. 1991 census with the 2001 census in terms of the minority ethnic population (ONS 2001). All things considered though, according to the ONS (2001) statistics, the MEC population grew by slightly over 50 percent in Great Britain between 1991 and 2001 - from 3.0 million to over 4.6 million (ONS 2001).

Upon examining the breakdown of the MEC population in the UK, the overall ethnic classification which represented the largest share of ethnic minorities was: 'Asian/Asian British', totalling: 2,331,423 and representing slightly over 50 percent (50.3%) of the total ethnic minority population in the UK. Those classified as: 'Mixed', totalled 677,117 and were the second largest ethnic group, representing 14.6 percent (14.6%) of all ethnic minorities in the UK. It should be noted that the category of: 'Mixed' was a new ethnic category included in the 2001 census. The ethnic classification of: 'Black/Black British' totalled

1,148,738 and represented slightly less than 25 percent (24.8%) of all ethnic minorities. The UK 'Chinese' population amounted to: 247,403 and represented slightly over 5 percent (5.3%), whilst those classified under the category of: 'Other ethnic groups', totalled 230,615 and represented 5 percent (5.0%) of all ethnic minority groups in the UK.

The 2001 census also provides data on the population of the different ethnic groups falling under the broad categories of: 'Asian/Asian British' and 'Black/Black British'. It indicates that the largest ethnic group were those classifying themselves as 'Indian'. This ethnic group represented over 1 million - totalling 1,053,411 and amounted to 22.7 percent (22.7%) of all minority ethnic communities (MECs) in the UK. The next largest ethnic group were those describing themselves as 'Pakistani', totalling 747,285 and representing just over 16 percent (16.1%) of the MEC population in the UK. Those described as: 'Mixed', represented the third largest ethnic group, totalling 677,117 which represented slightly over 4.5 percent (4.6%). The ethnic groups of 'Black Caribbean' and 'Black African' represented the fourth and fifth largest ethnic group, with the total Black Caribbean population amounting to 565,876, representing slightly over 12 percent (12.2%) of all MECs, and those describing themselves as Black African totalled

485277, representing 10.5 percent (10.5%) of all MECs living in the UK. Ethnic groups which each represented under 10 percent (10.0%) of the ethnic minority population in the UK were: 'Bangladeshi' - 283,063, amounting to 6.1% of the MEC population; 'Chinese' - 247,403 (5.3%); 'Other Asian' - 247,664 (5.3%); 'Other ethnic groups' - 230,615 (5.0%) and 'Black Other' - 97,585 (2.1%). Table 4.4 lists the above details.

Table 4.4
UK Ethnic minority population broken down into the specific ethnic groups.

ETHNICITY	TOTAL (n)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Indian	1,053,411	22.7
Pakistan	747,285	16.1
Mixed	677,117	14.6
Black Caribbean	565,876	12.2
Black African	485,277	10.5
Bangladeshi	283,063	6.1
Chinese	247,403	5.3
Other Asian	247,664	5.3
Other ethnic groups	230,615	5.0
Black Other	97,585	2.1
TOTALS	4,635,296	100.0%

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: ONS, 2001.

The above statistics will enable businesses/organisations that are wishing to implement a managing diversity policy to clearly identify the ethnic make-up of the UK population. Therefore, this information is very interesting in terms of the 'ethos' of managing diversity policies because studies have shown that there are differences in working practices between ethnic groups. For example, the finding of an American study entitled: *Effect of ethnic*

group cultural difference on cooperative and competitive behaviour on a group task (Cox et al 1991) revealed that 'working approaches' to the undertaking of a task can vary from one ethnic group to another. It was found that whilst individuals from the ethnic groups of: 'Asian', 'Black' and 'Hispanic' displayed 'co-operative' working behaviour in terms of undertaking a group task, 'Anglo' individuals displayed 'individualistic' working behaviours. Furthermore, the findings of this study by Cox et al (1991), also highlighted that when 'Anglo' individuals undertook a group task in a 'mixed' group with individuals who displayed 'co-operative' working practices (i.e. those who were 'Asian', 'Black' or 'Hispanic'), then 'Anglo' individuals also became more 'co-operative' in their undertaking of a group task.

Therefore as stated previously, whilst equal opportunity policies focus upon equal treatment and fairness in the workplace for *all*, managing diversity policies also take into account the 'individual characteristics' that an individual may bring to an organisation that may prove to be beneficial to the organisation and as such, managing diversity policies welcome and encourage individual differences (Ross and Schneider 19992; Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

As will be discussed later on in this chapter, effective managing diversity policies assume the view that for an organisation to harness, and thus embrace a diverse workforce, it is considered essential for the culture of the organisation to change to enable the 'welcoming' of groups of people who may traditionally have not made up a large share of its workforce (Kandola and Fullerton 2004). In addition, as teamwork is usually an aspect of many businesses/organisations, particularly in the case of a media organisation such as the BBC that is actively seeking to increase the employment of those from the MECs, the findings by Cox *et al* (1991) are very encouraging for businesses/organisations implementing a managing diversity policy.

4.4.2 Business Case Argument No.2: Benefits to Business

The list of benefits to a business as to why it should implement a managing diversity policy is long, and often includes the following:

- Organisational flexibility.
- Greater creativity within an organisation.
- Attracting and retaining staff.
- Greater access to talent from diverse backgrounds.

(Gardenswartz and Rowe 1998; Cox and Blake 1991; McEnrue 1993).

However, others such as Kandola and Fullerton (2004), state that some benefits claimed are hard to prove, adding that not all benefits are 'proven' and that some so-called benefits are 'debateable' or 'perceived' benefits.

4.5 Managing Diversity Implementation Model: Devised for this study

Having studied a number of companies who have instituted a managing diversity policy, Kandola and Fullerton (2004) have come up with a list of the various constituent elements that a managing diversity policy *should* possess, in order for it to be successfully implemented within an organisation to enable the meeting of the aims/objectives of the policy. These elements, along with others identified from consulting other research studies, have assisted in the devising of the managing diversity implementation model developed for this current study.

4.5.1 Clarity of the organisation's vision

When implementing a diversity policy into an organisation, it is regarded to be imperative for the organisation to define what diversity means to its organisation. As mentioned previously, managing diversity can mean different things to different organisations. For example, it may mean

being able to compete in a global market or being able to ensure that the services it provides are relevant to its diverse customers (Kandola and Fullerton 2004). Therefore, it is important that the organisation has clarity of its vision in terms of diversity. This in turn will help to provide its employees with clarity on what the purpose and aims/objectives are for the organisation.

4.5.2 Extent of Top Management commitment

As mentioned previously, a distinct difference between equal opportunity policies and managing diversity policies is that the latter does not rely upon the Human Resources (HR) department within an organisation to push forward its policy. Rather, top management commitment to achieving the aims of the policy is considered to be crucial and vital to aiding the successful implementation of a managing diversity policy. The thinking behind this is that this type of policy should be visibly-led from the top, in a bid to encourage all employees within the organisation to follow suit.

4.5.3 Setting of clear objectives

Clear and specific objectives of the managing diversity policy should be set. This then allows the organisation to

have a clear focus upon what it is trying to achieve via its diversity policy.

4.5.4 Degree of Accountability

Top/Senior management in particular, need to take some accountability for the active pursuit of the aims/objectives of the diversity policy. In addition, the ethos of managing diversity policies means that all employees are accountable because it is in their self-interest for the business to meet its aims and objectives, in order for it to flourish and to be able to compete with other businesses.

4.5.5 Extent of Co-ordination

Once a diversity policy has been introduced, it is imperative that the co-ordination of the policy is 'tight', and that it does not just remain a 'paper' policy in the way that some might argue an equal opportunities policy may be. Also, efficient co-ordination within the organisation helps to keep employees up-to-date with any matters relating to the managing diversity policy.

4.5.6 Auditing and Assessment of Needs

Kandola and Fullerton (2004) refer to organisations who wish to implement a managing diversity policy needing to conduct an audit and assessment of their needs, in order to establish from the out-start, how far or close they are to the meeting of the policies aims/objectives. Similarly, Farrer (2004) have developed a 'diversity driver' which highlights the need for organisations to clarify their current strengths and weaknesses, prior to the implementation of their managing diversity policy.

4.5.7 Degree of Communication within the Organisation

It is essential that organisations implementing a managing diversity policy, communicate details of this policy within the organisation. This allows all those involved in the organisation to be aware of the policy and as such, to be kept up-to-date on its progress in terms of helping the organisation to meet its aims and objectives. This also helps to encourage employees to have a focus and awareness of the fact that a managing diversity policy has been implemented.

4.5.8 Degree of Communication outside of the Organisation

Organisations deciding to implement a managing diversity policy benefit by informing those outside of the organisation that such a policy exists. The thinking behind this strategy is that if for example, an organisation has traditionally been regarded as not being very welcoming to a diverse workforce, then it is important that those on the 'outside' of the organisation are aware of the changes afoot or taking place within that particular organisation. Therefore, the communicating of the policy 'outside' of the organisation helps to draw attention to the fact that the organisation is working towards having a diverse workforce and as such, may encourage under-represented groups to apply to work at that particular organisation.

4.5.9 Degree to which Actions and Strategies are evaluated

Once a diversity policy has been introduced, it is very important that the actions and strategies of the policy are continuously evaluated, in order to identify any changes that may be needed to assist the meeting of the aims/objectives of the diversity policy.

4.5.10 Change in Organisational Culture

A final constituent element of a managing diversity policy - which many argue is the *most* crucial (Kandola and Fullerton 2004), is the need for organisations implementing a managing diversity policy to undertake a change in the 'culture' of the organisation.

In theory, it is considered that a change in organisational culture will allow individuals entering that organisation to be able to feel comfortable about retaining their diverse characteristics at work, without subordinating them to conform to group characteristics, or according to Liff (1997), the 'white male standard'. Furthermore, it is argued that without a cultural change in the organisation, it is almost a foregone conclusion that the diversity policy will fail (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter examined and discussed some of the complexities that ensue around managing diversity policies. In addition, the differences cited between equal opportunity policies and managing diversity policies was also examined.

Having reviewed the available literature on managing diversity policies, a managing diversity implementation

model was identified, which lists the constituent elements that it is considered, a managing diversity policy *should* possess in order for it to be successfully implemented within an organisation to meet the aims/objectives of the policy.

This managing diversity implementation model will be used to situate the pan-BBC managing diversity 'paper' policy within, in order to conduct an analysis of this policy (Chapter 6). This implementation model will also be used to help inform how this 'paper' policy translates into 'practice' on the BBC's regional television news programme, Midlands Today.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the methodological framework adopted within this current study. This was informed by the theoretical considerations arising from chapters 2, 3 and 4. The study group and site of investigation is also described, as well as the sampling methods, data collection and data analysis techniques employed within this research study.

5.1 Access to the Research Site and Study Group

This study was conducted at the BBC Birmingham site. Before the study could get underway, an email was sent to the Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM), to seek permission to be allowed access to the following:

- i) the research site for the purposes of this study.
- ii) the relevant BBC personnel and BBC documentation to enable the collection of the required data, using the research methods as outlined later on in this chapter.

The HRLP-WM subsequently arranged for us to have a meeting. The specific aims and objectives of the study were discussed, and permission was granted to me by the HRLP (WM) to conduct the research, as outlined to him. In support of this study, the HRLP (WM) also decided for the BBC to pay for one year of my tuition fees at the University of Leicester.

Following that initial meeting, individual meetings were subsequently held with the Assistant HRLP for the West Midlands, the Midlands Today News Editor (i.e. Output Editor), the Input Editor (i.e. Head of Newsgathering), the Diversity Editor for English Regions (ER) and the Diversity Adviser for ER. At each individual meeting, all of the above BBC personnel were informed of the aims and objectives of the study. Any questions raised were answered, and the role that each individual was required to undertake within this study was also explained, as well as the participatory role of the Midlands Today journalists.

Finally, information about the research study was disseminated in August 2001 to all staff working at BBC Birmingham - via the internal newsletter which at the time, was called: 'Mill Mutterings' (*Appendix A*).

There is no doubt that my being based at BBC Birmingham as a Broadcast Journalist (where I worked in the Regional Current Affairs and Features Department), helped to pave the way for the unprecedented and unhindered access that was granted to the "production process and the corporate nexus" (Downing and Husband 2005:26), whereby no restrictions were imposed upon the collection of the type of data required for this study. As such, I acknowledge that I was placed in a very privileged position. This point is made in light of it often being cited how difficult it is for academic researchers to gain access into media organisations, due to the organisation's lack of co-operation and suspicions of researchers (Halloran 1974, 1981; Gardner 1982; Downing and Husband 2005). It has also been cited that even on those rare occasions when access has been granted, it is often subject to a lack of independence being afforded to the researcher by the media institution (Halloran 1974); this was not the case in this instance.

Although my connections to BBC Birmingham proved to be tremendously advantageous on the one hand, it does need to be noted that from the out start, I was very much aware that this 'insider status' could also prove to be slightly problematic for some of the data collection methods employed within this study; namely the one-to-one in-depth

interviews, questionnaire survey and the participant observations conducted. This will be discussed below in greater detail under the relevant sections.

5.2 Research Design

The research design of this study has been informed by its overall aims and objectives, and by the main theoretical approaches that were consulted. Therefore, based upon the afore-mentioned factors, it was decided that a mixed methodological approach would be adopted because of the many benefits that such an approach can yield within a single study:

- a) Triangulation in the classic sense of seeking convergence of results and using the research methods employed to help inform another.
- b) Complimentary, in that overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge.
- c) Elaboration upon results.
- d) Discovering paradox or contradiction.
- e) Extending the breadth of enquiry.

Also, in a study of terrestrial television news which was conducted over a five year period by Harrison (2000), various research methods were incorporated - including content analyses, newsroom observations and interviews with journalists.

Therefore, taking all of the above into consideration as well as the theoretical frameworks (discussed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4), a mixed-methodological approach was adopted for this current study, which drew upon the disciplines of qualitative and quantitative research methods to help facilitate as deep an insight as possible into the area under investigation.

To briefly recap, this study is essentially grounded and informed by relevant theoretical frameworks incorporating three different fields of disciplines and 'thinking':

- a) The social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media (*Chapter 2*).
- b) The news media's 'historical' way of covering race/race-related news stories (*Chapter 3*).
- c) Managing diversity policies (*Chapter 4*).

Whilst the above is not necessarily in itself, the only reason for adopting a mixed-methodological design, such an approach does nevertheless keep in line with the eclectic and holistic approach adopted in the multi-disciplinary theoretical frameworks within which this study is situated.

The research design for this study inter-relates four different research methods to aid the collection of the required data:

- I) One-to-one in-depth interviews.
- ii) Participant observations.
- iii) Questionnaire survey.
- iv) Content analysis.

The first two methods (one-to-one in-depth interviews and participant observations) were conducted concurrently. Although these two aspects of data collection continued throughout this investigation, the data gleaned from these research methods was also used to help inform the devising of the questionnaire survey, and aided in the devising of the required tools to conduct the content analysis; namely, the television news codebook and the television news coding frame.

5.3 One-to-one in-depth interviews

One-to-one in-depth interviews were conducted with key BBC personnel involved in formulating, implementing or monitoring the pan-BBC managing diversity policy. Each interviewee consented to their interview being recorded onto a dicta-phone.

The overall aim of using this research method was 3-fold:

- i) To help deepen an understanding of the pan-BBC diversity policy.
- ii) To further understand how this policy relates specifically to the minority ethnic communities.
- iii) To add nuances and texture to the quantitative data collected for this study.

In addition, the one-to-one in-depth interviews sought to establish the following:

- iv) The role each individual played in the devising/implementation/monitoring of the BBC's diversity policy.

v) The level of understanding of the BBC's diversity policy amongst those interviewed.

vi) The consistency of understanding, re. the BBC's managing diversity policy amongst those interviewed.

Overall then, the information gleaned from the one-to-one in-depth interviews was essentially used to inform the findings of Chapter 6 of this study, which focuses upon the pan-BBC *paper* diversity policy, before moving onto the findings of how this policy translates into *practice* on the Midlands Today programme.

The interviews were semi-structured to allow for flexibility and some degree of structure. Whilst it is acknowledged that data obtained from semi-structured interviews does not lend itself to systematic analysis in the same way that other research methods would permit (such as a questionnaire survey or content analysis), this was not considered to be a flaw/weakness for this current study because the purpose of using this research method in this instance, was to allow those who were being interviewed, the space to shed light and understanding upon the phenomenon under investigation, as opposed to trying to obtain quantifiable data.

Two interview schedules were devised to help facilitate the asking of questions to the two study groups, as identified below.

Prior to commencing the one-to-one in-depth interviews with the relevant BBC personnel, there were two areas in particular that were considered needed to be addressed:

- i) As I was already known to many of the interviewees, it was essential for me to try to keep my 'distance', insofar as not getting drawn into conversations (during the interviews) whereby for example, the interviewee might ask my opinion on aspects of the BBC's diversity policy given that I was a member of staff. The devising of the interview schedules assisted in my staying focused upon the questions that needed to be answered by the respondents.
- ii) Prior to commencing each of the one-to-one in-depth interviews, the respondents were informed by myself that whilst I may be aware of the BBC's diversity policy, the purpose of asking what may seem to be 'basic' questions in relation to this policy, is

because it was important to obtain *their* personal views/opinions and understanding of this policy.

Being very much aware of the above issues (prior to conducting the one-to-one in-depth interviews) helped to avoid the possible 'pitfalls' as outlined above.

On the odd occasion, whenever I felt that I was being *drawn* into a 'conversation' by the interviewee, re. my 'personal' views/opinion on any of the questions in the questionnaire survey, I would refrain from putting forth any views/opinions, and would 'politely' but 'assertively' bring it back onto track, re. the questions listed in the interview guide.

Standing back now, to be reflective upon the research methods employed within the undertaking of this study, it is difficult at times to not wonder/consider whether my 'race' - as a Black female of African Caribbean heritage - posed to be problematic for the study group(s), insofar as their responses to the questions asked in the one-to-one in-depth interviews and the questionnaire survey.

However, what can be assertively stated is that I do believe that the agreeable reception of all those participating in this study, was to some extent, largely down to the fact that Greg Dyke, the then Director General (DG) of the BBC - who implemented the pan-BBC diversity policy into the Corporation, made this one of the central 'themes'/initiatives during his tenure at the BBC (January 2000 - January 2004). Therefore, one could take the stance that the undertaking of this study was 'of good timing', insofar as the BBC's DG at the time, impressing upon *all* staff, the importance that the BBC places upon achieving 'diversity' within the Corporation.

Therefore, I am very much of the view that *at the time*, the responses that were received to the questions in the one-to-one in-depth interviews and the questionnaire survey are likely to have been the responses that would have been received by anyone, of any 'race' undertaking similar research as this study - *at the time*.

5.3.1 Interview Schedule No.1

Interview schedule No.1 (*Appendix F*) was used for BBC personnel involved in devising, implementing and/or

monitoring the pan-BBC diversity policy for English Regions.

Such individuals included the following:

- i) Governor of English Regions.
- ii) Controller of English Regions.
- iii) Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM).
- iv) Overall Head of Diversity at the BBC.
- v) English Regions Diversity Editor.
- vi) English Regions Diversity Advisor.
- vii) Chair of the West Midlands Diversity Implementation Group (WM-DIG).

This interview schedule was divided into the following sections:

SECTION A: Background information on the respondents:

The purpose of this section was to elicit basic background information on the informant/interviewee. It also aimed to establish their role in relation to the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

SECTION B: BBC's overall Diversity Policy:

This section aimed to glean general information on the BBC's overall pan-BBC diversity policy. It also aimed to gain an understanding into why the policy was implemented and to

provide an insight into the respondents' understanding of this policy.

SECTION C: BBC's Diversity Policy in relation to the minority ethnic communities:

The purpose of this section was to gain an insight into the respondents' understanding and/or interpretation of the pan-BBC diversity policy, specifically in relation to the minority ethnic communities (MECs). This section also aimed to gain an understanding of the ways in which the policy is monitored and how information about the policy was disseminated to BBC staff.

SECTION D: Diversity Policy in relation to BBC Birmingham and Ethnic Minorities:

The questions in this section focus upon eliciting information on the pan-BBC diversity policy - specifically in relation to BBC Birmingham and the minority ethnic communities.

SECTION E: Cultural Ethnic Diversity in relation to the West Midlands regional news programme - Midlands Today:

This section of the interview schedule focuses upon how the pan-BBC diversity policy is applied to its regional television news programme, Midlands Today.

5.3.2 Interview Schedule No.2

Interview schedule No.2 (*Appendix G*) was used when conducting interviews with key BBC personnel who by the very nature of their job (i.e. working directly on the Midlands Today programme), were in effect on a day-to-day basis, responsible for trying to put the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy into practice on this programme.

Individuals interviewed included the following:

- Midlands Today Output Editor (i.e. News Editor).
- Midlands Today Input Editor (i.e. Head of News Gathering).
- Midlands Today Producers.
- The Senior Broadcast Journalist in the newsroom, responsible for implementing diversity initiatives.
- Community Affairs Researcher.

SECTION A and SECTION B:

To avoid repetition, it should be noted that the aim of Section A and Section B of interview schedule No.2, was similar to that of interview schedule No.1 (as detailed above).

SECTION C: Cultural Ethnic Diversity in relation to the
Midlands Today programme:

This section aimed to elicit information on how the pan-BBC diversity policy is applied to the Midlands Today regional television news programme. It also sought to understand the informants' role in the implementation of this policy within this programme.

SECTION D: News-gathering process

The purpose of section D of interview schedule no.2 was to gain an insight into the newsgathering process employed within the Midlands Today programme. Such as, how stories are generally found and selected for inclusion on this programme.

SECTION E: Finding stories from within the Minority
Ethnic Communities:

Section E builds upon the previous section, and tries to establish how stories are found, specifically from within the minority ethnic communities.

5.4 Participant Observations

The purpose of using participant observations as a research method in this study was to gain a first-hand insight into the production domain, i.e. the day-to-day workings of the

Midlands Today newsroom. It was felt that this approach would help to shed light upon any internal factors that may influence the final programme's output (Cottle 1993). This part of the study was conducted in the following manner.

As I worked part-time (based within the Regional Current Affairs and Features department at BBC Birmingham), I would spend the other days in the newsroom attending their regular meetings, such as the morning or forward planning meetings where 'prospects' (i.e. potential news stories for this programme) was discussed.

On various days, I also shadowed key personnel in the newsroom including the News Editor (i.e. Output Editor), the Input Editor (i.e. Head of Newsgathering) and Producers of the main 18:30 news programme.

In general, as well as observing all of the usual newsroom activities, I was also given the opportunity to partake in various activities, as and when newsroom personnel required my assistance.

To further facilitate the collection of data required for this study, the Head of Newsgathering (Input Editor) on Midlands Today, kindly offered me a four-week attachment to work on this programme, from my substantive position in the

Current Affairs and Features department. During the attachment, I worked on the news desk in the capacity of the Assistant News Organiser (ANO).

A point to note is that as I was very 'familiar' with how the newsroom operated, and obviously very 'familiar' with the job of being a broadcast journalist, much of what was being observed and studied (via the participant observations conducted) was to a very large extent 'taken for granted' activities for myself. However, I realised that if I took 'activities' for granted vis-à-vis the collection of the required data for this current research study, then this could potentially lead to 'gaps' in my study in relation to the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, in order to try to counter this, every endeavour was made to 'empty' my head from whatever I already knew, and so I approached the participant observations as if I were studying an environment that was 'alien' and 'unfamiliar' to myself. To try to accomplish this, notes were made at the end of each participation observation session of all of the activities that were observed on that particular day, irrespective of whether it was just a usual, regular newsroom day.

5.5 The Questionnaire Survey

The overall aim of the questionnaire survey that was devised (*Appendix B*) and disseminated to the study group (i.e. Midlands Today journalists'), was to gain an understanding of their views and opinions on the areas under investigation in this study.

More specifically then, the questionnaire survey aimed to:

- Examine aspects of the news production process.
- Understand what factors may affect/influence the journalists' choice of news stories.
- Find out from the journalists' how much/what they knew about the pan-BBC diversity policy, with specific reference to the minority ethnic communities.
- Examine how the pan-BBC diversity policy is applied specifically to the Midlands Today regional television news programme.
- Gain an insight into the journalists' attitude/viewpoint towards the pan-BBC diversity policy.

It was decided to use a questionnaire survey in this study because the information obtained could then be quantified and analysed systematically - thus allowing for a higher degree of analytical precision about the study group/subject matter being investigated, that may not be afforded by qualitative research methods. In addition, the questionnaire survey also helped to reveal any patterns in behaviour about the population being studied (Berger 1991).

However, this study also acknowledges the problems that can be encountered with this research method, such as:

- People may often not tell the truth when completing the questionnaire survey.
- Obtaining a representative sample may be difficult because a relatively small percentage of people answer and return questionnaires.

(Berger 1991).

In an attempt to address the above potential problems, the following strategies were implemented within the undertaking of this study:

- i) The Broadcast Assistant (BA) working on the Midlands Today programme was able to provide me with a rota sheet. This contained a list of the names of all personnel working on the programme for that week,

and in what capacity/role they would be undertaking. Therefore, it was possible to identify which individual would be taking on which role - such as: 'Early BJ', 'Late producer', 'News Organiser', 'Late digital', 'Features digital', 'Planning', 'Editor of newsgathering', 'Assistant news organiser', 'Presenter', 'Worcester reporter', 'Weekend producer', 'Forward planning' and so forth. This made it possible to identify from the rota sheet and from the participant observations undertaken, to whom the questionnaires should be disseminated to. Therefore, it would be fair to assert that the list of names on the rota sheet would be a general representative sample of the number of journalists/personnel working on the programme in any given week.

- ii) To try to counter the problem of not receiving back a representative sample of completed questionnaires, I was in the very fortunate position of being able to approach individuals directly in an informal manner, (i.e. if I saw them in the corridor, canteen etc.), and thus be able to 'gently' remind them to complete the questionnaire, if they had not already done so.

iii) To encourage as high a return-rate as possible of completed questionnaires, it was decided to make this an unsupervised, self-administered questionnaire. The benefits of this were two-fold:

- It allows those working in the environment of a high-pressured newsroom to complete the questionnaire at a time convenient to themselves.
- Respondents were asked to return the completed questionnaire to a designated pigeon-hole in the Midlands Today newsroom - as opposed to handing it directly back to myself. This ensured that their anonymity was preserved, and so it was hoped that this approach would help to encourage respondents to be honest in their response (Berger 1991).

5.5.1 Questionnaire Format

The questionnaire survey devised, essentially relied upon three styles of questioning formats:

- i) A statement was presented and a variety of responses based upon the Likert-scale was given to respondents' to choose from. The response options were:

- a) Strongly Agree
- b) Tend to Agree
- c) Neither Agree nor Disagree
- d) Tend to Disagree
- e) Strongly Disagree
- f) Don't Know

The above options replicated the type of responses used in the BBC Staff Survey - devised by MORI (Market Opinion Research Organisation) on behalf of the BBC. This Staff Survey is disseminated annually to all BBC staff. The benefits of using this tried and tested and proven formula was that the respondents' participating in this current study would already be accustomed and familiar with this questionnaire format.

Another benefit of adopting the Likert scale in this study was that it enables the quantifying of opinions and beliefs, and thus provides a more precise indication of the respondents' views, than can be gained from many other research methods.

- ii) A second style of questioning incorporated within the questionnaire survey was to ask the respondents'

to answer either "Yes", "No" or "Don't Know" to a question.

iii) And finally, a few open-ended questions were included within the questionnaire survey. By refraining from providing a limited number of pre-defined responses, the respondents' were afforded the opportunity of expressing their views and opinions in an unrestricted manner.

It should be noted that not all of the data from the questionnaire survey is presented because some questions were purposefully structured so that the same question was being asked twice - just written in a different format. For example, a question may be asked using the Likert scale method and then the same question is written again in a different format - for example, where the respondent just selects a 'yes', 'no' or 'don't know' response. Therefore, if for example a respondent selected a 'strongly disagree' response to a statement, but then later on selects a 'yes' to the same question - indicating that they were in agreement of the question, then it would suggest that there may be some degree of discrepancy within their response. However, such a scenario did not occur and so it was not considered necessary to present the results to a question, twice.

Below is a summary of the objectives and aims of each of the sections in the questionnaire survey:

SECTION A: NEWS VALUES

The aim of this section was to try to establish how journalists apply the concept of 'news values' when deciding upon potential 'news-worthy' stories for Midlands Today. Much research and theorising has been conducted on the matter of what is meant by news values (discussed in Chapter 2 of this study), and much has been written about how difficult it is for journalists to define the apparently 'indefinable' (Hall 1981a).

Therefore, respondents were provided with a list of 'qualities' to choose from, which in their opinion would give a story news values. The list provided was influenced and informed by the study conducted by Galtung and Ruge (1965). The Informal conversations with the journalists working on the Midlands Today programme, as well as the participant observations conducted for this study also helped to inform the devising of this section of the questionnaire.

SECTION B: NEWS SOURCES

The aim of this section was to:

- i) Gain an insight into the news sources used by journalists to identify stories for Midlands Today.
- ii) Examine if there is a pattern amongst journalists' in terms of their views on the types of news sources consulted.

The categories in this section were informed by the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom, comments made by interviewees who took part in the one-to-one in-depth interviews, as well as the comments made by the three BBC journalists who took part in the pilot study of the questionnaire survey.

SECTION C: BBC'S DIVERSITY POLICY:

The primary aims of this section were to:

- i) Find out if/or how the respondents' heard about the pan-BBC diversity policy, and
- ii) Try to gauge the effectiveness of how well the information on the pan-BBC diversity policy had been disseminated to journalists.

SECTION D: BBC'S DIVERSITY POLICY AND ETHNIC MINORITIES:

The aim of this section was two-fold:

- i) To gain an insight into the respondents' personal views and opinions on the pan-BBC diversity policy in relation to the minority ethnic communities.
- ii) To find out how well the respondents' understood the pan-BBC diversity policy in relation to the minority ethnic communities.

The purpose of the open-ended question in this section was to try to understand what the respondents' interpretation was, of the BBC's 'mantra' - to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000).

SECTION E: MIDLANDS TODAY AND ETHNIC MINORITIES:

The overall aim of this section is to seek information specifically on the respondents' views on Midlands Today and the minority ethnic communities.

Essentially then, this section of the questionnaire survey aimed to find out what the respondents' views were on the following:

- i) The representation and portrayal of minority ethnic communities on Midlands Today.

- ii) Whether or not the pan-BBC diversity policy had influenced the way in which they carried out their duties.
- iii) The respondents' views on how ethnic minorities perceive the Midlands Today programme.
- iv) How the respondents' find stories/contacts from within the minority ethnic communities.
- v) How well the respondents' felt the output of the Midlands Today programme reflected the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.
- vi) To gain an insight into the respondents' understanding of how the pan-BBC diversity policy, re. the minority ethnic communities, related to the Midlands Today programme.

SECTION F: YOU

This section aimed to elicit information on the respondents - such as their background in terms of training and education, position in the newsroom and so forth.

5.5.2 Dissemination of Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaires were disseminated to those working in the following capacities within the Midlands Today newsroom:

- Output Editor (i.e. News Editor).
- Input Editor (i.e. Head of Newsgathering).
- Presenters.
- Producers of the main news programme (broadcast daily at 18:30), as well as Producers of the shorter bulletins.
- News desk.
- Forward Planners.
- Correspondents.
- Journalists/reporters.

All of the above personnel are fundamentally qualified broadcast journalists - either through formal training or from experience gained on-the-job over the years. It was decided not to hand the questionnaires out to those working in the newsroom in a technical capacity, (i.e. cameramen, studio directors, graphics, editors etc.) because although there is obviously scope for them to put forward story ideas, this is not their primary role in the newsroom, and so many of the questions included in the questionnaire survey would not be applicable to such individuals.

A total of 42 questionnaires were disseminated. This figure was based upon the number of names appearing on the Midlands Today rota sheet for the week in which the questionnaires were initially disseminated. Therefore, it would be fair to assert that those given a questionnaire would be representative of a typical staffing week on the Midlands Today programme.

The number of questionnaires fully completed and returned was 31.

The questionnaires were initially handed out directly to the respondents. They were asked to return the completed questionnaire to a designated pigeonhole (as outlined above).

Two months later, the questionnaires were placed directly in the pigeonholes of each of the potential respondents with a covering letter asking them to complete and return the questionnaire. As there was no way of knowing who had already completed the questionnaire, all potential respondents received this second copy of the questionnaire.

One month later, an email (containing an attachment of the questionnaire) was sent directly to each of the potential respondents' internal BBC email address, reminding them to

complete and return the questionnaire to the designated pigeonhole - if they had not already done so.

5.6 Development of Content Analysis Tools

A content analysis of the main Midlands Today news programme broadcast daily, Monday to Friday from 18:30-19:00 was conducted. This was considered to be a most effective way of systematically analysing the data required for this current research study (Berelson 1971; Krippendorff 2004). Therefore, this research method enabled a thorough and quantifiable analysis to be conducted into the over-arching research objectives of this study as outlined in Chapter One. Namely: to what extent, has the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy enabled the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere on its regional television news programme - Midlands Today?

Although it is acknowledged that in some quarters, content analysis can be deemed as being 'superficial', it is nevertheless contended that a content analysis of the Midlands Today news programme would complement the other research methods employed within this current study.

5.6.1 Number of programmes analysed

Although it has been argued that a one week sample of a news programme can be demonstrated to be as generalisable to a year's programming (Canino and Huston 1986), it was decided that the analysis of a one week sample of the Midlands Today regional television news programme, would be inadequate for this current study.

This decision was based upon the following:

- i) Although the ultimate aim of the pan-BBC diversity policy to *reflect the nation that it serves*, has remained a constant since the implementation of this policy in 2000, it was considered that the BBC may still be working towards achieving this overall objective. Therefore, a one-week 'snapshot' of the output of the Midlands Today programme would make it very difficult to chart any significant progress that may have been made by this programme, in its bid to achieve the goal of: *reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region* in its output.
- ii) In many respects, the subject-matter/topic of some stories featured on news programmes can be regarded as being 'seasonal', insofar as certain types of

stories being 'guaranteed' coverage at certain times of the year. For example:

- Cultural/seasonal events such as:

Ramadan, Navrati, Christmas, Easter.

iii) Summertime: this time of the year is often regarded within newsrooms as being the 'silly season' insofar as 'news'. This is because during this time of the year, 'news' is regarded as being 'thin on the ground', and also parliament is in recess. Therefore, there is less competition for 'airtime' and so stories that may otherwise not 'make' it onto news programmes, will have a greater propensity of access during this period.

Therefore, taking all of the above factors into account, it was decided that a content analysis would initially be conducted of 13 months of the Midlands Today programme, over a time span from November 2002 to March 2004. In appreciation of the fact that the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy was likely to take time for any notable changes in the output of the Midlands Today programme to be detected (in terms of its output reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midland region), the first week of March 2008 was also analysed.

Therefore, 253 programmes were initially analysed and then a further 5 programmes (re. one week in March) was also analysed - giving an overall total of 258 programmes:

- November and December 2002 (2 months).
- January, February and March 2003 (3 months).
- June, July and August 2003 (3 months).
- November and December 2003 (2 months).
- January, February and March 2004 (3 months).
- March 2008 (1 week).

(Appendix E - List of programmes analysed).

5.6.2 Indicators for Content Analysis conducted of the Midlands Today regional television news programme

The indicators used for the undertaking of the content analysis, fall into two categories for the data collection methods employed within this current study:

- i) **Television News Codebook:** This provides a comprehensive list of the different subject-matter/topics that a news story featured on the Midlands Today programme may be coded under. Story sub-categories were also devised for each of the main story subject categories.

- ii) Television News Coding Frame: This enables the undertaking of the content analysis conducted of the Midlands Today programme, and lists all of the variables that were identified for analysis.

5.6.3 Development of the Television News Codebook

A major concern when analysing television news, is deciding upon the subject-matter of each news story broadcast (Harrison 2000). In addition, because this current study focuses upon the output of the Midlands Today regional television news programme, it was also essential that the story subjects contained in the television news codebook were relevant to this programme.

Therefore, a number of methods were employed to assist in deciding upon the main story subjects and story sub-categories incorporated within the television news codebook:

- i) Viewing of the Midlands Today Programme:

Prior to devising the Television News Codebook, which lists the entire story subject categories used for this study, the Midlands Today programme was viewed extensively to acquire a deep awareness/understanding of the different types of

story subjects featured in the news stories broadcast on this programme.

ii) BBC Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD):

An aspect of the BBC's diversity policy involves the monitoring of its programming output, to assist in the gauging of how diversity is being reflected on its programmes. The data is inputted on-line, into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD).

Whilst conducting the participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom and whilst going on attachment to this newsroom (i.e. from my substantive position in the Current Affairs and Features department at BBC Birmingham), I was afforded the opportunity of inputting some of the data for the Midlands Today programme into the DMD. As well as having sections on age, gender, ethnicity and disability in terms of the contributors to the programme, there is also a section on the DMD to input the subject-matter of the news story.

On perusing the BBC's DMD, it became apparent that the list of story subject categories that news items could be coded under were essentially limited to the subject areas to which the Midlands Today programme had assigned Correspondents to cover - such as Health, Transport, Environment, Home

Affairs, Politics and Business. Other subject-categories included in the DMD are: Accidents/Disasters, Crime/Courts, Sports, Education, Race/Religion. Any other story subjects that did not fit under any of the above subject areas were assigned to the category of 'other' in the DMD. In addition, each of the story subject categories used in the BBC's DMD did not have any story-subject, sub-categories. Therefore, it was felt that by only using such broad heading/subject-categories for stories featured on the programmes analysed, would not be sufficient, or yield the type of intricate detail and information required for this current research study.

However, although there were only a limited number of subject categories to select from the BBC's DMD, it nevertheless helped to assist this study insofar as my ensuring that those subject categories were included and expanded upon within this current study.

iii) Academic Studies:

Other research studies that involved a content analysis, where the story subject of the news item was a part of the analysis were consulted. These are listed in the Television News Codebook devised for

this study (Appendix C), and include studies such as those conducted by the Glasgow University Media Group 1976; Bell et al 1982; Langer 1987; Hartley 1989; Stempel 1989; Wallis and Baran 1990; Ericson et al 1991; Cottle 1990.

Story subject categories were then decided upon - guided by the subject categories included in the BBC's DMD and the various academic literature consulted, to ensure as best possible that the final story subject categories used in this current study would be relevant to the regional television news genre.

Each news story broadcast on the Midlands Today programme was analysed and classified under the main story subject category and the most relevant story sub-category. The story sub-category was based upon the dominant/central theme of the news story item.

Whilst the story subject categories used in the Television News Codebook (*Appendix C*) does not purport to be definitive or exhaustive, it was felt that the list produced was well-informed by all of the factors mentioned above.

5.6.4 Development of the Television News Coding Frame

Similar to the devising of the Television News Codebook, the starting point in developing/devising the Television News Coding Frame was by making reference to the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD). However once again, the items used in this database were not considered to be extensive enough to facilitate the collection of the type of data required for this current study.

Therefore, the devising of the variables included in the television news coding frame (*Appendix D*), was assisted and developed via the extensive viewing of three months of the Midlands Today programme

5.7 Piloting of research tools

Prior to the dissemination of the questionnaire survey and the undertaking of the content analysis of the Midlands Today regional television news programmes, it was essential to pilot each of the research tools devised:

a) Questionnaire survey:

To assess whether the questions were properly framed and would elicit the required information.

b) Content analysis of the Midlands Today programme:

To assess that the main story subject and story sub-categories used in the Television News Codebook, were relevant to the genre of regional television news programmes (Cottle 1993), and to ensure that each news story could be classified correctly.

In relation to the Television News Coding Frame, it was important to ensure that the coding frame devised would yield the type of information required.

Each of the above tools were rigorously tested to address any flaws revealed through the piloting, and were then subsequently modified accordingly.

5.7.1 Questionnaire: Pilot

There were a number of factors to take into consideration when devising a questionnaire survey, and it was acknowledged that the writing of good survey questions is difficult to achieve (Berger 1991). Therefore, once the first draft of the questionnaire was completed, three BBC journalists were enlisted to take part in the piloting of this research tool. These journalists were not part of the eventual study group nor were they based at BBC Birmingham.

They were however, working at another BBC centre on the equivalent regional television news programme to Midlands Today. As the application and implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy relates to all of its operations around the country, it was felt that those enlisted to take part in the piloting of the questionnaire survey, would prove to be highly appropriate.

The piloting of the questionnaire essentially allowed for the following checks to be undertaken:

- a) That the questions would be easily understandable by the respondents.
- b) That the questions elicited the type of information required for this current study.
- c) Whether any important questions had been omitted.
- d) Whether there were any inappropriate questions.
- e) That the method of data collection adopted was the most appropriate method.

The feed-back received from the three BBC journalists who took part in the pilot and completed the questionnaire was taken onboard. The questionnaire was revised until there was a general consensus amongst those involved in the pilot that the questions were all relevant, easily understandable and fulfilled the stated aims and objectives of this research study.

5.7.2 Content Analysis: Pilot

There were primarily two central factors to take into consideration when piloting the content analysis tools:

- a) That there was consistency in relation to each news item being coded under the correct subject category, based upon the list provided in the Television News Codebook. This assisted in ensuring that there was reliability in being able to code each news story item under the appropriate main story subject and story sub-categories.
- b) That the interpretation of all other data (i.e. variables) to be entered into the Television News Coding Frame was understandable and consistent amongst those involved in the pilot.

In addressing the above concerns, one Midlands Today programme broadcast at 18:30 was randomly selected, and the three journalists (who took part in the piloting of the questionnaire) along with myself, completed the Television News Coding Frame.

Issues/concerns that were raised following the pilot were addressed and amendments were accordingly made to the Television News Codebook and Television News Coding Frame. Another Midlands Today programme was randomly selected and again piloted. This process continued until there was very little inconsistency in the way in which the Television Coding Frame was completed by those involved in the pilot.

Overall, the pilot conducted for the Television News Codebook and the Television News Coding Frame helped to improve and clarify these data collection research tools.

5.8 Data preparation and analysis

The data collected from the one-to-one in-depth interviews and participant observations were used to shed qualitative in-sight, understanding and nuances to the phenomenon under investigation. Therefore, this information was not analysed in the systematic manner in which the data gathered from the quantitative research methods employed in this study were analysed, i.e. the questionnaire survey and content analysis

of the Midlands Today programme. Rather, the one-to-one in-depth interviews and participant observations was used to provide texture and layers to the area under study.

Information gathered from the questionnaire survey was first checked to ensure that all of the questions had been fully completed/answered. A coding frame was devised for each of the structured questions. The unstructured (open-ended) questions proved difficult to classify and code. Therefore, it was decided to collate and analyse these separately.

Data collected on the Midlands Today programme via the content analysis conducted, was entered into the Television News Coding Frame that was devised for this study.

Coded data for both the questionnaire survey and content analysis of the Midlands Today programme was entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS: v.16 for windows) - an established and proven statistical analysis package. This allowed for the data to be analysed in a systematic manner.

In terms of the content analysis conducted of the Midlands Today programme, three datasets needed to be created in order to eliminate duplication of data, which would then have led to invalid results/findings:

i) Dataset 1: Contributor(s) level of analysis

The details of every contributor who was featured in a news story/item broadcast on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, was inputted into SPSS, using the Television News Coding Frame as the guide (Appendix D). Analysis of this data indicates that there were a total of 5044 contributors featured in the programmes analysed. (Note, this total does not include the contributors who were featured in the one week of programmes analysed in the month of March 2008, which amounted to an additional 59 contributors).

ii) Dataset 2: Story level of analysis

To retrieve data on only the story level (that is, each individual news story featured on each of the Midlands Today programmes analysed), the data used in dataset 1 was aggregated by the date of the programme broadcast and the story placement, i.e. story no.1, story no. 2, story no. 3 and so forth, of the stories included in a programme. This ensured that each story would only be analysed once, as opposed to the number of times data was inputted into SPSS because of the number of contributors featured in a particular news story. A total of 2708 news stories were analysed. (Note, this total does not include the one week of news stories analysed in the month of March 2008 - which amounted to an additional 48 news stories.

iii) Dataset 3: Programme level of analysis

To retrieve data on just each individual Midlands Today programme that was analysed, the data used in dataset 1 was aggregated by the date of the programme broadcast. This ensured that the details of each Midlands Today programme would only be analysed once. A total of 253 programmes were analysed. (Note, this total does not include the one week of news programmes analysed in the month of March 2008, which amounted to an additional 5 programmes).

5.9 Summary

The research methodology and research tools designed for this current study were carefully thought through. The use of triangulation proved to be very useful and effective in terms of the data yielded from one research method, helping to inform another research method throughout the undertaking of the empirical fieldwork conducted.

Overall, the eclectic methodological approach of combining both quantitative and qualitative research methods within one composite study, proved to be very effective in assembling the type and quality of data required, to achieve the aims and objectives of this study (as outlined in Chapter 1).

CHAPTER SIX

ANALYSIS OF THE PAN-BBC DIVERSITY POLICY

6.0 Introduction

After consulting the various academic literature on managing diversity policies (such as Kandola and Fullerton (2004); Maxwell (2004), it was possible to identify the various constituent elements that a managing diversity policy it is thought, *should* 'possess', in order for it to be successfully implemented within an organisation. This enabled the devising of a managing diversity implementation model to use as a framework within this current study.

Therefore the purpose of this chapter is to analyse the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy by situating it within the managing diversity implementation model, which consists of the various constituent elements identified, as listed below:

- Clarity of the Organisation's vision.
- Extent of top management commitment.
- Setting of clear objectives.
- Degree of accountability.
- Extent of co-ordination.

- Extent of co-ordination.
- Auditing and Assessment of needs.
- Degree of communication with the organisation.
- Degree of communication outside of the organisation.
- Degree to which actions and strategies are evaluated.
- Change in organisational culture.

The analysis of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy was achieved by referring to the information gleaned from the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with Senior BBC personnel (who are listed in Chapter 5 of this study).

6.1 Clarity of the Organisation's Vision

I want a BBC where diversity is seen as an asset not an issue or a problem; a BBC which is open to talent from all communities and all cultures; a BBC which reflects the world in which we live today not the world of yesterday... We must recognise diversity as a central business objective - not just an HR component... We need a new vision, and central to that vision is that the BBC must serve Britain's broad and diverse population... I believe we must change and embrace multi-culturalism - because this is Britain in the 21st century, and 21st Century Britain is diverse" (Dyke, 2000).

Within his first week in post as the new Director General (DG) of the BBC, Greg Dyke (now former DG), seized the

opportunity in his first public address to make the above declaration at the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE): Race in the Media Awards (RIMA) in 2000. In so doing, Dyke (2000) explicitly and clearly spelt out the overall vision of the organisation in terms of diversity:

- a) Workforce: when he says that he wants 'an organisation open to talent from all communities'.
- b) Output: when he speaks of the BBC serving 'Britain's broad and diverse population'.

Furthermore, when Dyke (2000) speaks of wanting a BBC "...where diversity is seen as an asset", and then moves on to say that "We must recognise diversity as a central business objective - not just an HR component", he is clearly supporting and advocating the 'business-case' argument for diversity, as extolled by many proponents of managing diversity (Cox and Blake 1991; McEnrue 1993; Gardenswartz and Rowe 1998; Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004).

With reference to the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with key BBC personnel, it becomes very apparent that they are all very much 'singing from the same hymn sheet', insofar as explaining the purpose and vision of the

pan-BBC diversity policy. Therefore, it would be a fair assertion to make that the vision of the BBC, as expressed during the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with BBC personnel such as the Governor for English Regions, Controller for English Regions, Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands and the BBC Head of Diversity, was very consistent - with re-occurring words and phrases being used.

It was evident from the interviews conducted that the vision of the BBC is not solely just to reflect the nation that it serves because of 'moral' reasons, (although that would obviously play a part, if for no other reason than because of the Licence Fee), but that a driving force pushing forward its diversity policy is the 'business case' argument.

In a BBC document entitled: *'New Audiences Start Here: Diversity strategy - BBC English Regions'* (Soros and Jones 2001), the business case was central to many of the reasons put forth as to why it was considered important and necessary for the BBC to implement a diversity policy:

"There is evidence from within English Regions that the business case for diversity works. Providing programming which appeals to diverse communities, increases audience figures. For example, in 2000 BBC Nottingham produced *The journey*, a Midlands Report documentary featuring a local family and their journey to the Gambia for the Roots homecoming Festival... Viewing figures for *The Journey* were 106,000." (Soros and Jones, 2001:5)

In addition, it could be noted from the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted that one of the reasons why the BBC is trying to increase the number of people it employs from the minority ethnic communities (MECs), is because this corporation believes that by having a diverse workforce, it will also be able to produce programmes that will appeal to a growing diverse 'potential' audience.

"The strategy makes it very clear, that there's a linkage between portrayal and recruitment. So if you don't get the programmes right, and if they don't appeal to the widest audience, you won't get people believing that they can be a part of the BBC. If you don't get people in the BBC who are from the wider communities, you don't get the quality of programmes made because like, I'm not saying that only Black people can make Black programmes, but others may not have that knowledge, that understanding, that creativity, that comes from direct experience." (Diversity Adviser for English Regions. Source one-to-one in-depth interview, 2004)

6.2 Extent of Top Management Commitment

Everyone in the BBC must own the need for change and squeeze out indifference or obstruction, ease in openness and accessibly - and make the BBC a welcoming home for people of varied cultures and backgrounds. But change must start from the top and this will be one of the priorities I've set for myself and the new management team. (Greg Dyke, 2000:3)

Another constituent element that is considered to be important in order for a managing diversity policy to be successfully implemented within an organisation, is the need for top management from within the organisation to be seen to be leading the way in terms of driving forward the policy.

In the case of the BBC, those interviewed for this study felt that the former Director General, Greg Dyke had taken full ownership of this policy, and he was recognised by all those interviewed as being the person who was leading the way on this initiative:

"Awareness now, compared to what it was is just quantum leaps, compared to what it was before Greg started. There was a thing before that maybe we paid a bit of lip service, but he has really given it teeth."
(Acting HRLP-WM - Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2003).

Another example of the BBC leading from the top was provided during the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the

Controller of English Regions, who spoke of how the BBC had appointed a very Senior member of staff to be the 'Race Champion'.

The above would suggest that the BBC is very much leading from the top in terms of driving forward the aims/objectives of its diversity policy. However, research conducted (Campion 2005), which involved the interviewing of over 100 programme-makers (both in television and radio), indicates that many interviewees taking part in this study, believed that the progress being made in terms of programmes being representative and inclusive of the 'diversity' that exists within society, was being impeded because...

"It starts from the top... then stops.

"One of the recurring criticisms from all programme-makers was how the fine words of their organisation's top brass didn't translate into enough action on the ground. This was particularly true of the BBC, where staff painted a picture of waves of diversity initiatives washing over the masses who were just getting on with their day to day jobs regardless.

"Diversity is seen as a bolt-on." (Campion 2005:13).

Comments made to Campion (2005) by some of the programme-makers interviewed also included the following:

'I see these articles in Ariel (staff newspaper) about diversity or yet another "vision thing" and I just turn the page'. - Producer.

'Meetings happen, fine things are spoken, but action doesn't follow'. - Producer.

This is an area that is examined in terms of gauging the opinions of the journalists working on Midlands Today, and their views on the introduction of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

6.3 Setting of Clear Objectives

When it comes to the objectives that I'm set year by year there are only 2 hard measures that by which I'm measured. One is audience size by radio or online or television operations. The other hard measure that is used is the proportion of my staff that are working for me and are from the ethnic minorities. So that gives you an idea of the signals that I'm being sent about the importance of this. There are lots of other objectives that I'm set but in terms of hard statistics there are only 2 things that are measured. (HRLP-WM. Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

The purpose of setting clear objectives within a diversity policy, is so that all those working within the organisation will be fully aware of what they are aiming to achieve and aware of how it feeds into the overall aims and objectives of the organisation.

Information gleaned from the one-to-one in-depth interviews highlighted that the BBC has set clear objectives in

relation to the meeting of the aims of its diversity policy. For example, each of the BBC English Regions are set employment targets in relation to how much of its workforce should be made up of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs), and by what date these targets should be achieved by. The targets set for each region is based upon the MEC population in that particular region.

When the BBC's diversity policy was introduced in 2000, targets were set for the employment of people from the MECs to be increased overall by 10 percent (10.0%) of all staff, and 4 percent (4.0%) of Senior management by the end of 2003. These targets were met and new higher targets were set to be achieved by the end of 2007, and since the implementation of its diversity policy in 2000, targets have been set and re-set on a regular basis.

6.4 Degree of Accountability

Diversity... must be as much a part of core managerial accountability and competence as financial responsibility and creative leadership. And performance in this area will be judged through appraisal targets, which will be linked to financial bonuses to mark real achievements... This will apply to me, to my senior colleagues and to managers throughout the organisation. (Dyke 2000:3).

The need for the element of 'accountability' to be included within a managing diversity policy is considered to be important and necessary, so that those who are held

accountable will do their best to ensure that they meet the aims and objectives of the diversity policy.

In relation to the BBC, those who are directly held accountable for meeting the diversity objectives as outlined by Dyke (2000) are the Senior Managers. As the Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the WM (HRLP - WM) explained during the one-to-one interview conducted, there are a number of reasons why a Senior Manager would not wish to find themselves in the position of having not met the targets set for them:

"You're regarded less well by your manager. Your performance against objectives is one of the ways that you're measured in terms of anything extra that's added to your salary or bonuses, so it can be a financial issue. It can be career-limiting if you're not regarded as somebody who is trying to meet your objectives in terms of developing your own personal career. And so y'know, it's like any objective it heavily reflects on you. And the other thing is, it makes you set objectives further down the line because obviously if I'm told as a HRLP, that I need to do this with my workforce in a years time, I need my editors to help me to do that. I can't do that on my own. So it sorts of acts as a stimulus to make me achieve them." (HRLP-WM, 2004. Source: One-to-one interview).

As the HRLP-WM went on to say, the benefits of the BBC penalising Senior Managers if they do not meet their targets is that to try to avoid this, Senior Managers will also set targets for those beneath them, who will in turn set targets for those beneath them and so forth. He was also very much

of the view that adopting such a strategy ensures as best as possible, that everyone in the organisation will end up taking responsibility and ownership for the successful achievement of the aims/objectives of the policy.

6.5 Extent of Co-ordination

One strategical approach isn't gonna fit everybody. You need people who can translate that on the ground, cause one approach isn't necessarily gonna be the right approach on diversity in the West Midlands for instance, where there's a kinda different immediate business case and so therefore, a different immediate kind of action that needs to help deliver our diversity objectives.

So, as part of designing the diversity strategy, I consult and have conversations with English Regions about 'what do you think, 'what works strategically', 'what should we do more of', what should we stop doing strategically', and then try to weave that into the overall approach, because there are things we can learn from English Regions. Y'know, about the bits of good practices that we have going on. (Head of Diversity at the BBC, Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

It is considered important for the implementation of a managing diversity policy into an organisation to be co-ordinated, for the reasons as discussed in Chapter 4 of this current study.

The information gleaned from the one-to-one in-depth interviews indicate that the BBC has a central Diversity

Centre based in London, led by the Head of Diversity who oversees and develops the overall BBC diversity strategy.

During the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with the English Regions (ER) Diversity Editor and the ER Diversity Adviser, they each both indicated that they use the overall diversity strategy devised by the Head of Diversity, to develop specific diversity strategies for each of the BBC's 11 English Regions.

On 'paper', one may be forgiven into thinking that by having a dedicated Diversity unit, the BBC is well-placed to effectively move forward and steer the BBC towards achieving the aims/objectives of its diversity policy.

However, a BBC Producer described the aforementioned Unit in the following manner:

"The Diversity Unit is seen as the police of the BBC and everyone hates them. - Producer (Campion 2005: 13).

Furthermore, Campion's (2005) study highlights an area that is investigated within this current study, in terms of analysing how the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice', particularly when one takes into account the following:

"The fact of being located in Human Resources, rather than programme production, was seen as a major handicap with diversity specialist often lacking the necessary editorial experience to be able to influence programme-makers' behaviour." (Campion, 2005:14).

Although Channel 4 has tried to address the matter of those working in diversity not having any practical programme-making 'power' to bring about change (Campion 2005), this current study also examines what measures/strategies have been incorporated on the Midlands Today programme to try to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy - *to reflect the nation that it serves.*

6.6 Auditing and Assessment of Needs

The auditing and assessment of the needs of any organisation choosing to implement an managing diversity policy, is considered to be an important constituent element of a policy, because it is essential for an organisation to be fully aware of its needs - prior to introducing its diversity policy.

In relation to the BBC, an extensive amount of research was conducted with members of the MECs, to enable the corporation to identify any areas that it may need to address.

For example, the BBC's intranet site *Gateway* holds a wealth of information on the various minority ethnic communities in Britain. This includes information on research conducted by the BBC into what those from the MECs think of BBC news, and other BBC programmes, as well as the viewing/listening habits of those from the MECs.

Information gleaned from the one-to-one in-depth interviews indicate that research such as that as discussed above, was used to help the BBC decide upon how best to try to address issues that were revealed from the findings of the research conducted (Source: One-to-one in-depth interview with the BBC Head of Diversity, 2004).

6.7 Degree of Communication within the Organisation

It has been driven from above, we had a document called *Connecting England*, which every member of staff was given and one of the key objectives that English Regions has to reach was diversity, representation and also within the workforce. And the BBC even employed diversity coordinators and managers to come in and look at how we were going about recruiting and also our portrayal and there's been a whole team of people working on that specifically. (Head of BBC Birmingham's Diversity Implementation Group, Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

In order for those working within an organisation to take ownership of the diversity policy, it is essential that they are kept up-to-date and well informed of the policy. The BBC adopts a number of methods and strategies to assist in this endeavour. Such as:

- Disseminating information on its intranet site - 'Gateway'.
- Documentation such as the internal booklet disseminated to all members of staff, entitled: *Connecting England*.

Also once a month, the Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM) holds a 'team briefing' meeting. The purpose of these meetings is to enable the HRLP (WM) to keep staff up-to-date with any matters/information relating to the BBC in the West Midlands region, and any other matters relating to the BBC in general which is deemed to be of interest/relevance to staff in the West Midlands. During the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the HRLP (WM), they stated that they will sometimes impart information regarding the BBC's diversity policy at the team briefing. This was noted during the participant observations conducted which included my attendance at the team briefing meetings.

6.8 Degree of Communication outside of the Organisation

It is considered necessary for an organisation that has implemented a managing diversity policy to communicate details of this policy outside of the organisation. This constituent element of the managing diversity implementation model devised for this current study is considered to be of *particular* importance for organisations that traditionally, may have not been renowned for having a diverse workforce.

In the case of the BBC, the one-to-one in-depth interviews revealed that a number of initiatives have been put into place, to enable the communicating of the details of its diversity policy to members of the public.

During the interview conducted with the BBC's Governor for English Regions, they stated that they were part of a panel with other Senior BBC personnel at an event entitled: *The BBC Listens: Cultural Diversity*. This event took place in Bradford. Members of the public were invited to attend so that they could put their questions directly to the BBC panellists. This event was also used as an opportunity for the BBC to discuss and explain details of its diversity policy.

On a more local level (in terms of this current study), during the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with a Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ) working on the Midlands

Today programme, they outlined details of the role they had also taken on: *Head of BBC Birmingham's Diversity Outreach group*. As well as going out into the community to let members of the public know about the BBC's diversity policy, they also spoke of an initiative they had implemented to try to encourage members of the MECs to realise that the BBC welcomes them as employees within this corporation:

"Initially it started as an open day for ethnic minorities who worked in other industries, but may be interested in working in the media. It was a really successful day, and it was really hands-on. They got to try out reading a bit off the autocue, saw how sound effects were created for the Archers radio programme, had a tour around the building and Senior members of staff spoke to them about the different types of opportunities available at the BBC.

"From there, it developed to where we had four open days aimed specifically at teachers, lecturers, career advisers and community representatives. Then they went back to their groups and recommended four people from their organisation who were from the ethnic minority community to come along to an open day." (Head of BBC Birmingham's Diversity Outreach Group, Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

Although one could cynically consider the above activity as being a 'tokenistic' gesture on the part of the BBC, the viewpoint taken within this current study is that it should be considered as being 'laudable'. This initiative keeps in line with one of the key component elements of the managing diversity implementation model devised in Chapter 4 of this current study.

To briefly re-cap...

It is regarded as being essential for an organisation that has implemented a managing diversity policy, to let those outside of the organisation know about its policy. The undertaking of such an activity is particularly imperative for organisations such as the BBC; an organisation that 'historically' has not often been regarded as an organisation that has a diverse workforce. This statement can assertively be substantiated by the mere fact that in recognition of the low number of people from the MECs employed by the corporation, the BBC has made the increased employment of those from the MECs, a central feature of its diversity policy.

6.9 Degree to which actions and strategies are evaluated

During the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with the BBC's Head of Diversity, the Diversity Editor for English Regions and the Diversity Adviser for English Regions, they each stated that they are constantly reviewing their diversity policy and that on a more formal level, the strategies are reviewed every 3 months.

6.10 Change in Organisational Culture

Stories are legion of the BBC's glass ceiling and obstructive bureaucratic practices, but I'm not convinced that that, is the biggest problem. If it is then it would be relatively easy to change...

No, my concern is that it's more about the culture of the organisation - a culture that many from ethnic minorities do not find inviting, attractive or relevant. A culture that has still to recognise and fully understand multi-cultural Britain. A culture that is still rooted in another, earlier Britain.

Everyone in the BBC must own the need for change and squeeze out indifference or obstruction. Ease in openness and accessibility, and make the BBC a welcoming home for people of varied cultures and backgrounds." (Dyke 2000:3).

The managing diversity implementation model discussed in Chapter 4 of this current study indicates that for a diversity policy to be successfully implemented within an organisation, it is considered to be imperative that a change in the culture of the organisation is undertaken so that it can become receptive and welcoming to a diverse workforce.

In February of 2002, Greg Dyke (the then Director General of the BBC) made a very long address to all BBC members of staff (heard simultaneously throughout all BBC sites). In his address, Dyke spoke of the need for the culture of the organisation to change and he gave this initiative the title of: 'One BBC - Making It Happen'.

In his address, Dyke (2002b) stated that:

"We've identified seven areas where we think change will make a difference and we're asking experienced people from different parts of the BBC to lead a BBC-wide programme of change based around these seven changes." (Dyke, 2002b¹¹).

Dyke (2002b) then goes on to list these areas and at the end of stating the first two, he says that: "These two are the main ones" (Dyke 2002b). Within the second area mentioned by Dyke under the heading of: 'Connect with all audiences', was the sub-heading of: 'problems with some audiences' and under that sub-heading was 'ethnic minorities'.

Therefore, Dyke's (2002b) address to BBC staff about changing the culture of the organisation, would indeed suggest that this component element of the managing diversity implementation model devised in Chapter 4 of this study, is being addressed by the BBC's 'paper' diversity policy.

However, one area which needs to be explored when speaking of a change in organisational culture, is whether or not this change also refers to a change in the infrastructure of the organisation to allow, enable and facilitate a culture that has the capacity to facilitate a multi-ethnic public

¹¹ http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/pressoffice/speeches/stories/dyke_makingithappen.shtml
[BBC Website page: Accessed 3/4/2002].

sphere and as such, enable the BBC to reflect the nation that it serves.

6.11 Conclusion

If we fail to keep up with the changes happening in our society we will become increasingly irrelevant and there is no greater danger for any broadcaster than that... One of the great dangers for any broadcaster is not to notice as your audience grows away from you in ideas and attitudes. (Dyke, 2002a¹²).

By situating the pan-BBC diversity policy within the managing diversity implementation model (discussed in Chapter 4), this chapter has analysed various constituent elements of this policy via the information obtained from the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with Senior BBC personnel.

The findings disclosed thus far, would suggest that the manner in which the BBC has implemented its diversity policy within this corporation meets all of the required elements of the managing diversity implementation model, to enable this policy to successfully achieve the aims/objectives of its main objectives - which is to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000).

¹² http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/speeches/stories/dyke_cba.shtml
[BBC Website page: Accessed 10th May 2002].

In terms of the overall aims/objectives of this current study it is of interest and of importance to examine to what extent, the BBC's 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice' on Midlands Today, in such a way that it 'enables' this programme to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

Therefore, after analysing in the following chapter (Ch.7), how well the regional news genre as depicted by Midlands Today *lends* itself to being a site that could possibly facilitate and *house* a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000), Chapter 8 of this current study specifically examines how the BBC's 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice' - in 'real terms' - insofar as examining to what extent, those from the MECs are afforded access to participate in the public sphere of the BBC's regional television news programme - Midlands Today.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE REGIONAL TELEVISION NEWS GENRE: AS ARTICULATED ON MIDLANDS TODAY

7.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to examine the *landscape* that the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today *inhabits*. The reason for undertaking this analysis is to gain an insight into the foundations upon which this programme is structured. This in turn will assist in providing a thorough understanding of how well this programme *lends* itself to being a space/site that could possibly *house* a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 1996; 2000).

Therefore, this chapter undertakes an in-depth exploration of this *landscape* by identifying and examining the various elements that make-up this programme and as such, typifies the regional television news genre as depicted by Midlands Today. The constituent elements examined include the following:

- Geographical locations of the stories featured on this programme.
- Number of news stories included within a programme.
- Subject-matter/topics of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.
- Primary definer(s) of news stories.
- News presentational formats and presentational styles.

To assist in the above investigation, a content analysis of 253 Midlands Today main news programme was conducted, alongside an analysis of the 2708 news stories/items that were featured within these programmes (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1
Midlands Today: Number of programmes and news stories analysed¹³.

Number of programmes analysed	253
Number of news stories analysed	2708

Source: Content Analysis.

7.1 Background: Midlands Today - regional television news programme

Midlands Today is the BBC's regional television news 'flagship' programme which is broadcast to the West Midlands region. This programme commenced broadcasting in 1964 and up until 2004 broadcast from BBC Birmingham's regional television site - 'Pebble Mill'. Pebble Mill was 'home' to all BBC Birmingham's regional television and radio programmes. In addition, Pebble Mill also had a long history of being 'home' to many BBC 'network' television and radio programmes such as: 'Pebble Mill at One', 'Ebony', 'Dalziel and Pascoe' and the radio programme - the 'Archers'.

¹³ It should be noted that the findings imparted in this chapter do not include the 5 programmes that were analysed for the month of March 2008, or the news stories that were featured within these programmes. Rather, the findings of the analysis of the programmes and news stories broadcast in March 2008 is referred to in Chapter 8, and serves the purpose of identifying/charting any changes that may have occurred in terms of the Midlands Today programme's efforts to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

However, Pebble Mill became 'no more' when BBC Birmingham relocated to the Mailbox - situated in the heart of Birmingham city centre. The Midlands Today team were the last BBC department to move from Pebble Mill to the Mailbox and since the 25th October 2004, Midlands Today has broadcast from this location. Its first broadcast from the 'Mailbox' went out on that very same day at 13:30.

The main Midlands Today programme is broadcast at 18:30 from Monday to Friday and is half hour in duration. In addition throughout the day there are other bulletins broadcast. Two bulletins an hour between 06:00 and 09:00 during BBC1's network programme: 'Breakfast' in the mornings. Over the period of time that this research study was undertaken there was also a news bulletin in the afternoon at 13:30, and the final bulletin for the day was broadcast at 22:25. Apart from the bulletins broadcast in the mornings (during the 'Breakfast' programme), each of the Midlands Today bulletins follow the national BBC network news programme. In terms of the weekend there was also a 10 minute bulletin on Saturday afternoon from 17:30 to 17:40 and on Sunday, a 15 minute bulletin from 19:45 to 20:00 (Table 7.2, p.195).

Table 7.2
Midlands Today News bulletin schedule.

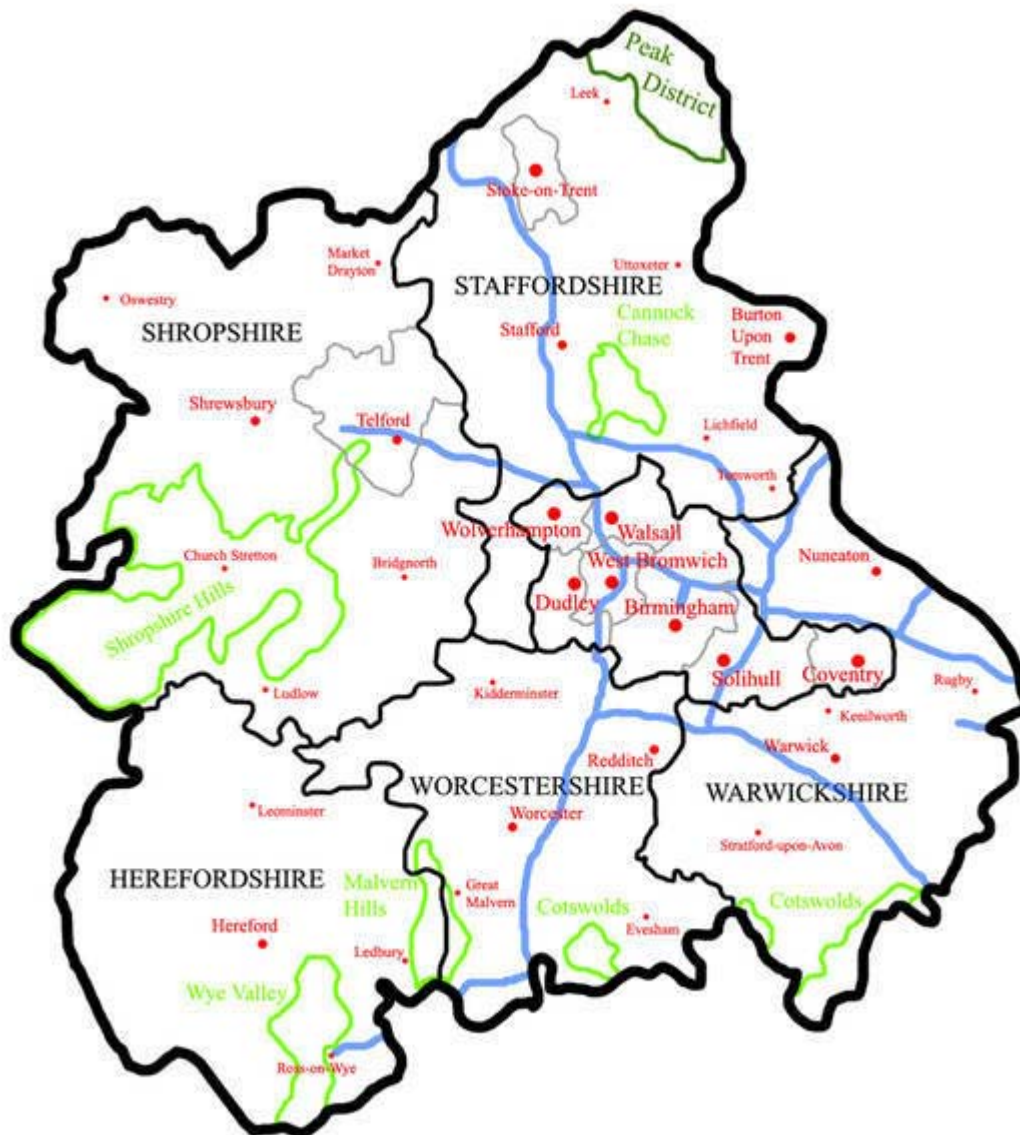
	Bulletin Times	Duration
WEEKDAY		
Morning	6.25; 6.55; 7.25; 7.55; 8.25; 8.55	3 minutes
Lunchtime	13:30	12 minuets
Evening	18:30	30 minutes
Late Night	22:25	10 minutes
SATURDAY	17:30	10 minutes
SUNDAY	19:45	15 minutes

Source: Participant Observations.

The Midlands Today programme broadcasts to the West Midlands region; a region that is very vast and geographically diverse covering both urban areas such as Birmingham, and rural areas such as Shropshire (Figure 7.1, p.196).

The population of the West Midlands region was just under 5.3 million (5,267,308) in 2003 (ONS 2009), and during one of the programmes broadcast in March 2008, the news presenter stated that this programme attracts 2 million viewers a night.

Figure 7.1
Map of the West Midlands region.



The Independent Television sector's 'equivalent' programme to Midlands Today is *Central Tonight*. This programme is produced by ITV Central West and similar to Midlands Today, *Central Tonight* is broadcast 'live' to the West Midlands region on a daily basis, from Monday to Friday. The duration

of this programme is also 30 minutes and its broadcast commences at 18:00.

Although the BBC is primarily funded by the Licence Fee¹⁴ and so does not need (and indeed is not legally permitted) to compete with the Independent Television sector for advertising revenue, Midlands Today like any other BBC programme is very much aware of its competitors in the independent sector. For example, during the participant observations conducted for this current study it was noted that the Broadcast Assistant or Assistant News Organiser (ANO) working on Midlands Today will watch all of the Central news bulletins at lunchtime and the main programme at 18:00. They will make a note of all of the news stories featured on this programme and will then immediately forward this information onto key personnel in the newsroom - such as the Output Editor (News Editor), Input Editor (Head of Newsgathering) and the Producers of the programmes for that day. Whilst conducting the participant observations for this study I was afforded the opportunity of carrying out this task. Therefore, it can be confirmed that the purpose of viewing Central's bulletins is to ensure that all relevant personnel in the newsroom are aware of what news stories the 'competition' had included in their bulletins.

¹⁴In addition to the Licence Fee the BBC also receives revenue from BBC Worldwide – its commercial arm.

During the carrying out of the participant observations it was also noted that on occasions, the News Editor of Midlands Today would make reference to 'beating' Central Tonight in terms of audience viewing figures. Conversely, if Central Tonight covered a news story that Midlands Today had 'missed' then this would also be 'flagged up'. Therefore it would be fair to assert that although these two programmes are not in competition with each other on a 'fighting for advertising revenue level', they are in direct competition with each other on a professional - 'pride' level, particularly when putting forth their programme for 'Midlands' awards. For example, at the prestigious Royal Television Society (RTS) Midlands Centre Awards in 2008, there was a category for the 'Terry Lloyd Award for Best News Programme'. Both Midlands Today and Central Tonight were nominees and the award was given to Midlands Today.

7.2 Features of a 'typical' Midlands Today programme

As well as obviously containing news stories, the Midlands Today programme also broadcasts regular and identifiable fixed features.

Approximately two-thirds of the way into this programme the presenters of Midlands Today will hand over to the sports presenter to deliver a round-up of the sporting news

pertaining to the West Midlands region. In the latter stages of the programme the presenters will hand over to the weather presenter.

7.2.1 Series and Special Reports

In addition to the regular 'fixed' elements in the programme (i.e. sports and the weather), Midlands Today will sometimes run a series on a particular topic/subject-matter. A series will run daily over a period of one week and then there tends to be a period of time before another series commences. An example of a past topic featured as a series was on the work of the emergency services.

Another feature that is sometimes included within the Midlands Today programme are news stories/items referred to as: 'Special Reports'. Special reports tend to be of a serious nature, or focus upon an aspect of society that viewers would not ordinarily have an insight into. Unlike a Series however, Special reports tend to be one-offs and also tend to be longer in duration than a usual news item featured on Midlands Today.

The participant observations conducted highlighted that a lot of research prior to the broadcast of the Special Report needs to be undertaken during the preparation stages.

Therefore journalists working on a Special Report are often taken off the newsroom rota to allow them time to conduct extensive research into the Special Report.

7.2.2 Viewer Interactivity

The BBC like any other media organisation operating in the 21st century is very much aware of the promotional value and benefits to the programme of encouraging viewers to get involved with the programme. Indeed, participant observations conducted for this study highlighted that a white-board was situated in the newsroom, with a list of different matters that journalists should bear in mind in relation to story ideas. The word 'interactivity' was listed on this board to remind journalists to think about viewer interactivity in terms of any story ideas that they may come up with. Also, journalists were regularly encouraged and reminded at the daily morning meetings to forward on any story ideas that would/could necessitate viewer 'interactivity' and participation on the programme.

Analysis of the output of the Midlands Today programmes indicate that requests for viewer interaction is also encouraged in a more direct and 'traditional' manner. For example, the presenters of the programme will use various

'devices' to facilitate and achieve the programme's desire for viewer interaction:

i) Competitions:

This tried and tested method is part of the 'staple' diet used within this programme, to encourage viewer participation. Of the 253 programmes analysed, over 25 percent (26.5%), representing 67 programmes included a competition. On such occasions viewers are encouraged to telephone in, text or email their answer, or to log onto the Midlands Today website pages to enter (Table 7.3, p.204).

ii) Phone Polls:

This style of viewer interactivity that is used by Midlands Today enables the programme to gain a very direct and immediate gauge of viewers' opinions on a particular topic/issue that may engender split-opinions. For example, it was noted that when the firemen went out on strike in November 2002, viewers were encouraged to log their opinion as to whether or not they were in agreement or disagreement of this action. Viewers' could log their opinion either via a telephone call or text, and the presenters were then able to reveal the results of the poll at the end of the programme. 73 programmes, amounting

to slightly under 30 percent (28.9%) of all programmes analysed included a phone poll (Table 7.3, p.204).

iii) On-line Discussion:

This method of viewer interaction allows viewers to get involved in an on-line discussion about a news story/item featured on the programme. The on-line discussion would take place after the programme has finished. A total of 18 programmes, representing just over 7 percent (7.1%) of all programmes analysed included such an interactive device. Such a low figure indicates that this method is hardly ever used on this programme (Table 7.3, p.204).

iv) Viewers' opinions/comments on a news story:

Viewers' opinions/comments on a news story broadcast on the programme is often solicited by Midlands Today. An example of such a news item was when viewers were invited to express their opinions upon the 'contentious' opening of the M6 toll road. This was because prior to its opening, it was 'promised' that this toll road would shorten and ease journeys, but for some commuters this was not the actual case. Therefore, viewers of the Midlands Today programme were invited to comment upon the toll road and then

the presenters read out some of the comments during the programme.

Viewers' opinions/comments on a news story were the most-used 'interactive' method of including viewers within the programme. Of the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, 104 programmes contained this method of viewer interaction, which represented just over 40 percent (41.1%) of all programmes analysed (Table 7.3, p.204).

v) 'Your Story':

Viewers are sometimes encouraged to contact the Midlands Today programme with 'Your Story', i.e. 'their' story. An example of a 'Your story' item was when viewers were invited to get in touch with the programme to tell their 'romantic' story, in the lead-up to Valentines Day. A selection of stories were then read out by the presenters throughout the programme broadcast on Valentines Day in 2002.

The 'Your Story' feature on Midlands Today can also be considered to be another way of sourcing story items for the programme and in so-doing, 'fill' a story slot on the programme.

Of the programmes analysed, 40 included a 'Your Story' item which represented slightly under 16 percent (15.8%) of all programmes analysed (Table 7.3).

Table 7.3
Viewer Interactivity on the Midlands Today Programme.

Type of Interaction with viewer	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%) of all programmes
Viewer comments/opinions	104	41.1
Phone Polls	73	28.9
Competitions	67	26.5
Your Story	40	15.8
On-line Discussion	18	7.1
TOTAL	302(n)	119.4%

(n)=number; %=percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Adding together all of the different ways in which viewers are able to participate in the Midlands Today programme provides a total figure of 302. However, as the total number of programmes analysed was 253, these results indicate that some of the programmes analysed had invited viewers to participate in a programme for more than one reason. For example, maybe to participate in a 'competition' and a 'phone poll'.

Therefore, this finding is a strong indicator of how important viewer participation/interaction in the programme, is to Midlands Today. Furthermore, it is also illustrative

of the BBC's overall desire to connect with its viewers/listeners and likewise, for viewers/listeners to connect with the BBC. For example, this desire is overtly illustrated and articulated in the architectural design of the BBC Birmingham site at the Mailbox in Birmingham. On entering the building members of the public can watch - through the glass 'walls/windows' - BBC personnel busy at work. In addition, the location of the Midlands Today studio from where the programme (and all of its bulletins) is presented 'live', is situated in such a way that it is within the full viewing spectrum of anyone choosing to look through the 'glass walls/windows'.

Therefore, although there is a 'glass wall' separating BBC personnel from the public, it can nevertheless still be argued that this is a very 'creative', 'clever' and 'effective' way of the BBC - in this instance, the Midlands Today programme 'connecting' with its audience and at least appear to be 'physically' getting 'closer' and as such, appear 'accessible' to its audience and likewise, for members of the public to get 'closer' to the programme and its presenters.

The above observations also relate to the architectural design of the BBC Radio Leicester building, whereby members of the public can enter into the building and watch the

radio presenters through the 'glass walls/windows', as they present their radio programme.

These two examples of BBC Birmingham and BBC Radio Leicester 'appearing' to be accessible to the public can also be regarded as a literal and overall strategic approach of the BBC attempting to 'connect' with its audiences. The above interpretative observations of the BBC's desire to 'connect' with its audience falls in line with the general *thinking* as espoused within a BBC internal document entitled: *Connecting with England*, which was disseminated to all BBC staff.

7.2.3 Midlands Today: as 'Advocate' and 'Notice board'

A feature which is *peculiar* to the regional television news genre is that it can almost act as an 'advocate' or 'notice board' for its viewers. The reason such an occurrence can take place within this medium (as opposed to network news programmes), is because viewers of a regional television news programme are within 'close' geographical proximity to where the programme is being broadcast from. In addition, all of the story items featured on a regional news programme, are regionally based or have a regional connection.

For example, Midlands Today will often refer its viewers to its website pages to find out more information about an organisation that has been featured in a news story on the programme, and that is geographically local to its West Midlands viewers.

Similarly, in relation to a police investigation (of a crime committed/related to the West Midlands region) that has been reported on the programme, viewers who think that they may have information to assist in the investigation are often given a telephone number to call the police in the West Midlands.

Whilst the above features may not be exclusive to the genre of regional television news, the main difference between this type of programme and a network news programme is that all of the above would relate to - in this instance directly to the West Midlands region - as opposed to a national news story where the story would not necessarily be of 'regional' significance to the majority of viewers.

There is therefore a sense that unlike network television news programmes, the regional news genre almost engenders a sense that the programme is a *part* of the community, and is there to provide a service to the community to whom it broadcasts.

7.3 Over-arching structure of a 'typical' Midlands Today Programme

The Midlands Today running order template (Figure 7.2, p.212) is used as a guide by all Producers of the programme to assist in the structuring of the programme. This running order template highlights a number of factors that are central and key to the overall structure of this programme. As such, this template assists in the continued reproduction of 'identifiable' and 'familiar-looking' characteristics of the programme, delivered on a day-by-day basis in a very smooth manner.

Although the template is set-up for the inclusion of 10 news stories in a programme, the finding of the content analysis conducted of this programme indicate that the number of stories featured within a programme can vary from day to day; there may be more than 10 or less than 10 stories in a programme.

The running order template has rows listed from no.1 to no.39. Each line specifically outlines what type of 'activity' should be taking place at that particular moment in the ½ hour programme. Therefore, this template can be considered as illustrating 'on paper' the over-arching structure of this programme:

- Line 1: "WELCOME" - The presenters are 'in-vision' and say "welcome to the programme". Then one of the two presenters reads the 'cue' into the news story designated as 'Headline 1'.
- Line 3, 4, 5, 6: "HEADLINES" - clips from each of the news headlines is played out whilst the presenters voice is heard, but they are now 'out-of-vision' (OOV) as they guide the viewer on what the 'clip' is about (i.e. the news item).
- Line 7: "TITLES" - the titles, i.e. introduction to the programme is played out. This could be regarded as the 'signature tune' (albeit with visuals of the programme), and it is the same 'signature tune' every day. The 'titles' help the viewer to identify what programme they are watching.
- Line 8: "INTRO": Presenter reads the 'cue' (i.e. introduction) into the first story item and then...
- Line 9: The story item is played out.
This style of the presenters reading out a cue and then the news item/story being played out is the style that is adopted throughout the programme.
- Line 14: 'NIB BLOCK'. NIB - i.e. 'news in brief'. At this point in the programme the presenter will deliver details of two or three stories 'in brief'.

Line 15, 16, 17: 'OOV' - Again the presenters are out-of-vision, and 'visuals' are used to tell/present details of the news story to viewers.

Line 18: 'STING' - a clip is played out, reminding the viewer of the name of the programme that they are watching. This can take the form of a Midlands Today logo appearing on-screen whilst simultaneously being over-laid with music.

Line 37: 'HAND BACK TO LOND' - Pres5enters say their goodbyes.

Line 38: 'CLOSING ANIMATION'.

Line 39: 'TRAIL' - A trail of a forthcoming BBC programme is played out.

The BBC1 channel then goes back to the BBC's national network news programme (broadcast from London). This programme fed into all BBC regional television news programmes at 18:30.

Apart from the fixed features of the 'Weather' and 'Sports' segments, items on the Midlands Today running order template may be moved around by Producers. That said, in certain circumstances these two segments may also be subject to slight 'movement' in the running order. The only item that

is totally unmovable and fixed on the running order template is the 'hand back to London' at the end of the Midlands Today programme. To go beyond that point would mean that Midlands Today has 'run' into another programme, i.e. the main BBC network television news programme. This would never occur and if it did, it would be considered to be totally unacceptable and unprofessional!

To avoid 'over-spill' into the BBC's network news programme, all items that are going to be broadcast on the Midlands Today programme are timed. Furthermore, all scripts/cues are also timed. Journalists will type their cues (for the presenters of the programme to read) into a computer software application called 'ENPS' - Electronic News Production System, and this software application has the ability to time how long it will take to read out the words in the cue and as such, will automatically insert the timings at the end of the cue. Therefore, Producers of the Midlands Today programme will also know exactly how much time each news item will take up in the programme.

Figure 7.2
Midlands Today: Running Order Template.

Pag	Story Slug	Segment	
1	WELCOME		
3	HEADLINES	ONE	
4		TWO	
5		THREE	
6		FOUR	
8	FIRST STORY	INTRO	
9		XXX	
10	SECOND STORY	INTRO	
11		XXX	
12	THIRD STORY	INTRO	
13		XXX	
14	NIB BLOCK		
15	OOV1	OOV	
16	OOV2	OOV	
17	OOV3	OOV	
18	STING		TITLES_STING_WEB
19	FOURTH STORY	INTRO	
20		XXX	
21	FIFTH STORY	INTRO	
22		XXX	
23	SPECIAL REPORT	INTRO	
24		XXX	
25	HAND TO SPORT	HAND	
26	SPORT HANDBACK	HAND	
27	SEVENTH STORY	INTRO	
28		XXX	
29	EIGHTH STORY	INTRO	
30		XXX	
31	NINTH STORY	INTRO	
32		XXX	
33	TENTH STORY	INTRO	
34		XXX	
35	WEATHER	HAND	
36		FOREC	
37	HAND BACK TO LONDON	READ	
38	CLOSING ANIMATION	CENTRE	CLOSE_COPYRIGHT_2005
39	TRAIL		

SOURCE: Midlands Today Running Order (Revised by author of this study).

The participant observations conducted for this current study indicate that the Producer will have the above running order template in front of them on their computer screen - all of the time - as they insert the details of stories or as they move stories around the template. Everyone working

in the newsroom is able to access the running order template on their own computer screen, so that they too can keep up-to-date with any changes, by just glancing at their screen.

7.4 Number of stories per programme

2708 news stories were featured within the 253 Midlands Today programmes that were analysed for this current study. To further help understand the regional television news genre, and to help determine how 'accessible' and 'accommodating' the Midlands Today programme may be to being a space that could possibly 'house' a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000), it was considered useful to establish how many news stories are included in each programme.

The number of news stories included in a Midlands Today programme can, and does vary from day to day.

The lowest number of news stories included in the programmes analysed was 6, with just two of the 253 programmes analysed featuring 6 stories.

The highest number of news stories included in a programme was 23, which was the number of news stories featured in 1 of the 253 programmes analysed.

Whilst 23 is a very high number of stories to be included within a half-hour programme, the explanation for this can be found in the following comment made at the top of this particular programme¹⁵, by one of the Midlands Today co-presenters:

"As part of our 40th anniversary celebrations, we're bringing you a snapshot of 24 hours of the life of the Midlands, using more cameras, more reporters than ever before." (Suzanne Virdee, 2004).

As such, each news item on that particular programme was much shorter in duration than usual and generally speaking, the average number of stories featured in the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed was 10 (Table 7.4).

Table 7.4
Number of news stories featured per programme.

Number of news stories in a programme	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
6	2	0.8
7	4	1.6
8	15	5.9
9	46	18.2
10	67	26.5
11	44	17.4
12	34	13.4
13	24	9.5
14	7	2.8
15	6	2.4
16	2	0.8
17	1	0.4
23	1	0.4
TOTAL	253(n)	100.0%
Average number of news stories in a programme = Total no. of news stories (2708) Total number of programmes (253) = 10.7		

(n)=number; %=percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

¹⁵ [This programme was broadcast on 25/2/2004.](#)

7.5 Geographical location of news stories

As mentioned previously, the geographical catchment area of the West Midlands region is very vast. Therefore, to try to ensure that all of the locations are featured as much as possible on the programme, the Midlands Today newsroom have district reporters deployed at 'key' areas of its catchment area, as opposed to all journalists on the programme being situated in the newsroom at the Mailbox in Birmingham, where the majority of reporters are based.

Midlands Today district reporters are situated in the following locations of the West Midlands region:

- Coventry & Warwickshire (C&W).
- Wolverhampton and the Black Country.
- Shropshire and South Staffordshire.
- Worcestershire.

The district offices are self-contained sites and have the facilities to allow reporters to edit their own interviews, and then send their stories straight down the 'line' to the main news hub situated at the Mailbox.

Prior to relocating to the Mailbox, all Midlands Today journalists would need an Editor to edit their news stories/interviews, which would have been recorded onto tape. Therefore, unless those situated at the district

offices came back to the main 'hub' in Birmingham to get their interviews edited, they would need to have an Editor at their site away from Birmingham, to assist in the editing of the news story.

However, since the move to the Mailbox, the way in which all journalists edit their interviews has now moved onto a system called 'Quantel'. This allows journalists to sit in front of a computer (any computer that has the 'Quantel' software loaded onto it), and download and edit their interviews themselves, as opposed to sitting alongside an Editor in an edit suite and giving instructions to the Editor as to what they required them to do. Of course, anything more 'sophisticated' and 'complicated' than just editing a straightforward interview may require the assistance of an Editor; this service is still available to Midlands Today journalists.

The geographical locations listed in the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD), as to where a news story broadcast on the programme may possibly be located, was also used as a guide within this current study to inform the geographical locations of the news stories analysed (Table 7.5, p.217). These locations are: Birmingham and Solihull, Black Country, Coventry, Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.

Although geographically, Derbyshire and Leicestershire are situated in the East Midlands region, these two counties are also listed in the BBC's DMD as possible locations of the news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programme. This is because parts of these counties (such as Rugby and Hinckley), border onto the West Midlands region. The DMD also includes a story location classification of: 'pan-regional' to enable the coding of news stories situated in more than one location in the West Midlands region. The categories of: 'outside of the region', 'outside of the country' and 'location not known' were also included in the DMD, with the latter classification being used for stories where the location cannot be identified.

Table 7.5
Geographical locations of 'potential' news stories featured on Midlands Today.

Birmingham and Solihull
Black Country
Coventry
Gloucestershire
Herefordshire
Shropshire
Staffordshire
Warwickshire
Worcestershire
Derbyshire
Leicestershire
Pan-regional
Outside of the region
Different country
Location no known

Source: BBC Diversity Monitoring Database.

Of the 2708 news stories included in the programmes analysed, the most frequently featured story location was Birmingham. This represented slightly over 40 percent (40.3%), and amounted to 1092 of the news stories analysed being located in Birmingham.

The least-featured location of the news stories analysed (not including locations situated in the East Midlands but bordering onto the West Midlands) was 'Shrewsbury', with just 33 news stories, representing slightly over 1 percent (1.2%) of news stories analysed being located in this part of the West Midlands region (Table 7.6).

Table 7.6
Geographical location of news stories 'actually' featured on Midlands Today.

Location	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Birmingham	1092	40.3
Staffordshire	300	11.1
Worcestershire	203	7.5
Black Country	170	6.3
Warwickshire	159	5.9
Pan Regional	150	5.5
Coventry	127	4.7
Wolverhampton	127	4.7
Shropshire	116	4.3
Herefordshire	110	4.1
Gloucestershire	62	2.3
Different Country	36	1.3
Shrewsbury	33	1.2
Outside of Region	13	0.5
Leicestershire	10	0.4
Derbyshire	0	0.0
Location not known	0	0.0
TOTAL	2708 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

7.6 Story subject/topic of news items featured on Midlands Today

To gain an insight and understanding into the subject-matter/topics of the news stories featured on the Midlands Today programme, 19 main story subject categories were defined for this current study. Each main story subject category (apart from 'Sports'), was also assigned story sub-categories to enable a deeper delineation of the specific focus of each story subject featured on the programmes analysed.

Overall, 129 story sub-categories were devised for this current study (Appendix C: Television News Codebook). Each main story subject category included the sub-category of 'Other', to accommodate for any news story items featured on the programmes analysed that could not be classified under any of the specified story subject sub-categories (Grundy 1980; Langer 1987; Cottle 1990).

The 19 main story subject categories used in this current study were as follows:

- 1) Disasters/accidents/tragedy.
- 2) Crime.
- 3) Terrorism/'war' in Iraq.
- 4) Military.
- 5) Demonstrations/Protests.
- 6) Political Administration.
- 7) Local Government Services.

- 8) Transport.
- 9) Education.
- 10) Health.
- 11) Economy/business/(un)/employment.
- 12) Science/environment.
- 13) Immigration/asylum seekers/refugees.
- 14) MEC/race-related/cultural.
- 15) Religion.
- 16) Sports.
- 17) Consumer/leisure interests.
- 18) Serious: human interest.
- 19) Light: human interest.

Analysis of the Midlands Today programmes indicate that to varying degrees, all main story subject categories received coverage on this regional news programme.

The most-featured main story subject category was 'crime'. This amounted to 601 news stories, representing slightly over 20 percent (22.2%) of all news stories analysed. This finding is not surprising because the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom indicate that throughout the day, an hourly telephone call is made to the emergency services (which obviously includes the Police), to obtain an update on any crime-related stories that may have occurred.

The least-featured main story subject category was: 'MEC/race-related/cultural' stories. Stories classified

under this main story subject category were featured on just 13 occasions, which represented 0.5 percent (0.5%) of all news stories analysed. This finding will be discussed in greater detail later on in this chapter (Table 7.7).

Table 7.7
News stories: Main story subject categories featured on Midlands Today.

	Main Story Subject Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Crime	601	22.2
2	Consumer/leisure interests	422	15.6
3	Light: Human interest	368	13.6
4	Disasters/accidents/tragedy	243	9.0
5	Economy/business/(un)/employment	233	8.6
6	Serious: Human interest	163	6.0
7	Transport	115	4.2
8	Health	114	4.2
9	Terrorism/'war' in Iraq	114	4.2
10	Science/environment	102	3.8
11	Local Government Services	55	2.0
12	Demonstrations/protests	47	1.7
13	Education	24	0.9
14	Sports	22	0.8
15	Military	21	0.8
16	Immigration/asylum seekers/refugees	20	0.7
17	Religion	17	0.7
18	Political administration	14	0.5
19	MEC/race-related/Cultural	13	0.5
20	Other	0	0,0
	TOTAL	2708 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Whilst the above finding provides a general, broad overview of the main story-subjects featured on the Midlands Today programme, it is considered useful for this current study to ascertain in greater detail, the story subject sub-categories of each of the 2708 news stories analysed. This will assist in providing an even clearer 'picture' of the breadth and range of the specific types of story-subjects featured on this regional news programme.

7.6.1 Story sub-categories featured on Midlands Today

i) Crime:

The BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD) uses the broad general category of 'emergency services/crimes/courts' to categorise crime-related stories featured on the Midlands Today programme. This category was considered to be too broad for this current study, because it encompassed so many other different subject areas, such as: emergency services and courts). Therefore, this main story subject category of 'crime' was refined.

Ericson *et al* (1991) examined aspects of crime in television news under the heading of 'Law and Order', and Harrison (2000) used the main subject category of 'Law, order and crime stories'. Similar to Cottle (1990) who devised sub-categories under the main story subject category of 'crime', this current study developed 11 sub-categories to cover the scope and range of 'crime-related' stories, which included 'new' types of crime, such as 'anti-social behaviour orders' (ASBOs).

Of the 601 crime-related news stories that were included in the Midlands Today programmes analysed, the most-featured sub-category from within this main story subject was 'violent crime'. Violent crime in this study would be defined as acts of: murder, stabbings, rape, violent robberies with weapons,

hit and run and abduction. This story sub-category represented slightly less than 38 percent (37.8%) of all 'crime' stories featured on the Midlands Today programme, and amounted to a total of 227 news stories.

In light of the Aston shootings in Birmingham in 2003, and the subsequent media attention on 'gun crime', it was decided to designate gun crime as a separate sub-category to 'violent crime' - although obviously 'gun crime' is a violent crime.

Therefore, news stories that focused upon 'gun crime/shootings (general)', but not specifically upon gun crime relating to the MECs, represented slightly over 4 percent (4.3%) of all story sub-categories falling under the main story-subject of 'crime'. This was the seventh most featured type of crime story and was the focus of 26 news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Gun crime stories involving those from the MECs, but were unrelated to the Aston shootings represented slightly over 2 percent (2.2%) of all crime stories analysed, and amounted to 13 news stories of this nature being included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

However, 52 news stories relating to the Aston shootings were featured on Midlands Today. This was the fifth most featured

type of crime story on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and represented under 9 percent (8.7%) of all crime-related stories. The types of news stories classified under this story sub-category of: 'Aston shootings (specifically)' would include the police investigations/enquiries, coroner's report, funerals of the two murdered teenage girls and memorials in tribute of the girls.

84 news stories were classified under the story sub-category of 'non-violent crime', which was the second most-featured type of crime-related story. Such acts of crime would include vandalism, hoaxes, robbery/theft (without weapons), drug-dealing, hooliganism and fraud. This story sub-category represented 14 percent (14.0%) of all crime stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

The sub-category of 'courts/criminal proceedings' was the third most-featured type of crime story included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed and amounted to a total of 72 news stories, which represented 12 percent (12.0%) of all crime-related stories.

The story sub-categories of: 'general police inquiry/investigations' and 'police operations' were the fourth and sixth most-featured type of crime-related news

stories, respectively. 'General police inquiry/investigations' totalled 55 news stories which amounted to just over 9 percent (9.2%) of all crime-related stories. Stories classified under this sub-category did not include Police enquiries into the Aston shootings. 'Police Operations' was the story subject-matter of 44 news stories analysed, representing slightly over 7 percent (7.3%) of all crime-related stories.

For the period of programmes analysed, the Midlands Today programme featured 11 stories on 'football violence (including allegations of such crimes)'. This was the ninth most featured type of crime story on the programmes analysed and represented slightly less than 2 percent (1.8%) of crime stories.

Stories relating to 'Police crime/malpractice' amounted to 11 stories, and similar to news stories on 'football violence' represented 1.8 percent of all crime stories.

The eleventh, and as such the least type of crime-related stories featured on Midlands Today were those focusing upon 'Anti-Social Behaviour Orders' (ASBOs). This amounted to just 6 news stories, which represented 1 percent (1.0%) of all crime stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed (Table 7.8, p.226).

Table 7.8
CRIME: Story Subject sub-categories.

(1) CRIME				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Violent crime. % within main story subject category	227	8.4	37.8
2	Non-violent crime (for example, vandalism, hoaxes, robbery etc.). % within main story subject category	84	3.1	14.0
3	Court/criminal proceedings (for example, appeals/trials/verdicts). % within main story subject category	72	2.7	12.0
4	General police inquiry/investigation. % within main story subject category	55	2.0	9.2
5	Aston Shootings (specifically). % within main story subject category	52	1.9	8.7
6	Police Operation. % within main story subject category	44	1.6	7.3
7	Gun crime/shootings (general). % within main story subject category	26	1.0	4.3
8	Gun crime/shootings (involving ethnic minorities, but not specifically related to the 'Aston' shootings). % within main story subject category	13	0.5	2.2
9	Football violence (including allegations of such violence). % within main story subject category	11	0.4	1.8
10	Police crime/malpractice. % within main story subject category	11	0.4	1.8
11	ASBOs (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders). % within main story subject category	6	0.2	1.0
12	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	601(n)	22.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

ii) Consumer/leisure interests:

The story subject category of: 'consumer/leisure interests' was the second most-featured main story subject category on the Midlands Today programmes analysed. This main story

subject category represented slightly over 15.5 percent (15.6%) of all news stories analysed, which amounted to a total of 422 news stories being classified under this story subject category. 8 story sub-categories were assigned to this story subject category.

The most widely-featured sub-category classified under the above main story subject was: 'BBC in-house promotions'. News stories assigned to this sub-category would for example, include the promotion of 'Comic Relief' or the 'BBC Sports Personality of the Year', by which (in the case of the latter) a 'trail' is played out on the Midlands Today programme to encourage viewers to vote for their favourite sporting personality. A total of 125 news stories were classified under this sub-category, which represented over 29 percent (29.6%) of all 'consumer/leisure interests' stories.

News stories on the arts, film, theatre and opera were classified under the story sub-category of: 'entertainment', which represented 14 percent (14.0%) of all 'consumer/leisure interests' and amounted to 59 news stories.

52 of the 2708 news stories analysed were categorised under the story sub-category of: 'leisure/

activities/exhibitions/lifestyle', which represented slightly over 12 percent (12.3%) of all news stories falling within the main story subject category of 'consumer/leisure interests'.

'Heritage' type stories were the focus of 51 news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and represented just over 12 percent (12.1%) of all sub-categories from within the main story subject category.

Stories that focused upon: 'historic sites, monuments, buildings' in the West Midlands region were the fifth most featured type of news story from within the main story subject category of: 'consumer/leisure interests'. News stories of this nature were featured on 42 occasions, amounting to 10 percent (10.0%) of stories from within this main story subject of 'consumer/leisure interests'.

The sub-category of: 'seasonal festivities', which would include stories focusing upon Christmas, New Year and Easter, but would exclude stories that pertained to MEC festivities such as Ramadan, Navrati, Diwali and the Caribbean Carnival, were the sixth most-featured type of stories from within the above main story subject category. News stories classified under this sub-category totalled 30

and represented just over 7 percent (7.1%) of all stories featured from within the main story subject category.

Stories which were classified under the sub-category of: 'community/group as celebration: seasonal festivities' would include news stories focusing upon MEC festivities such as the Chinese New Year, Diwali and Ramadan. Stories classified under this story sub-category - which was 11 in total (2.6%), were the least type of news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed - that were classified under the main story subject category of: 'consumer/leisure interests'.

The story sub-category of 'rural/past' includes news stories that focus upon past traditions, pursuits or crafts. 28 news stories of this type, representing just over 6.5 percent (6.6%) of all 'consumer/leisure interests' stories were classified under this category.

'Consumer safety' stories that were featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, amounted to 24, which represented 5.7 percent (5.7%) of all story sub-categories from within the main story subject category of 'consumer/lifestyle interests' (Table 7.9, p.230).

Table 7.9
CONSUMER/LEISURE INTERESTS: Story Subject sub-categories.

(2) CONSUMER/LEISURE INTERESTS				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	BBC in-house promotions. % within main story subject category	125	4.6	29.6
2	Entertainment. % within main story subject category	59	2.2	14.0
3	Leisure/activities/exhibitions/lifestyle % within main story subject category	52	1.9	12.3
4	Heritage type stories. % within main story subject category	51	1.9	12.1
5	Historic sites, monuments, buildings. % within main story subject category	42	1.6	10.0
6	Seasonal Festivities. % within main story subject category	30	1.1	7.1
7	Rural/past. % within main story subject category	28	1.0	6.6
8	Consumer/safety. % within main story subject category	24	0.9	5.7
9	Community/group as celebration: seasonal festivities. % within main story subject category	11	0.4	2.6
10	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	422(n)	15.6%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

iii) Light: Human Interest:

The main story subject category of 'light: human interest' was defined by Langer (1987) as 'soft' news on television. In the study by Cottle (1990) a generic 'human interest' category with different sub-categories was used, but this study did not divide human interest stories into the separate categories of 'light' and 'serious'. The

information gleaned from conducting the participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom highlighted that the Producers of this programme will invariably try to end this programme with a human interest type of story that is a 'light' or 'soft' news item. Therefore, this current study has taken the option of dividing 'human interest' stories into the two distinct categories of 'light' and 'serious'.

'Light: human interest' stories were the third most-featured main story subject category of news items broadcast on Midlands Today. 368 news stories were classified under this main story subject category which represented slightly over 13.5 percent (13.6%) of all stories analysed.

Accumulatively, the top two most-featured 'light: human interest' stories represented over 54 percent (54.7%) of all stories categorised under this main story subject category of 'light: human interest'. News stories classified under the story sub-category of: 'eccentric/bizarre individuals/events' amounted to 118 stories (32.1%), whilst the second most-featured sub-category of: 'unusual talents/events' amounted to 83 news stories (22.6%).

Individually, none of the remaining 8 story sub-categories represented more than 10 percent (10.0%) of the 'light: human interest' stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

News stories classified under the story sub-category of: 'Day in the life of...' were the subject-matter of 34 news items, and represented just over 9 percent (9.2%) of all 'light: human interest' stories broadcast on Midlands Today. Stories that would be classified under this sub-category focused upon a 'day in the life of...' an individual who for example, may spend each day doing an activity/occupation that most people are likely to consider as unusual.

Stories classified under the sub-category of 'celebrities/famous people/stars' were the focal point of 30 news stories (8.2%).

27 news stories were classified under the story sub-category of 'enthusiasts/hobbies', which represented slightly over 7 percent (7.3%). The types of news stories classified under this sub-category were those where the 'enthusiast' is totally consumed/absorbed by their hobby or where the 'hobby' is not common-place and as such, would be considered to be unusual.

The sub-category of 'animals' was the subject-matter of 25 news stories analysed, and represented slightly less than 7 percent (6.8%) of all stories classified within the 'light: human interest' category. News stories coded under this sub-category would for example, be those focusing upon animals that are unusual, cute or fluffy.

The story sub-category of 'children/babies' would include news items featuring children who are unusual or are talented. Stories of this nature were featured on 19 occasions, representing slightly over 5 percent (5.2%) of the main story subject category of: 'light: human interest'.

Slightly under 4 percent (3.8%) of all 'light: human interest' stories were news items that focused upon 'brave/adventurous deeds'. This amounted to a total of 14 news stories.

The sub-category of 'royalty' was the subject-matter of 10 news stories included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and totalled 2.7 percent (2.7%) of all 'light: human interest' stories.

News stories categorised under the sub-category of: 'charity and charitable pursuits' amounted to only 8 news

items which represented slightly over 2 percent (2.2%) (Table 7.10).

Table 7.10
LIGHT: HUMAN INTEREST: Story Subject sub-categories.

(3) LIGHT: HUMAN INTEREST				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Eccentric/bizarre individuals/events. % within main story subject category	118	4.4	32.1
2	Unusual talents/events. % within main story subject category	83	3.1	22.6
3	Day in the life of... % within main story subject category	34	1.3	9.2
4	Celebrities/famous people/stars. % within main story subject category	30	1.1	8.2
5	Enthusiasts/hobbies. % within main story subject category	27	1.0	7.3
6	Animals. % within main story subject category	25	0.9	6.8
7	Children/babies. % within main story subject category	19	0.7	5.2
8	Brave/adventurous deeds. % within main story subject category	14	0.5	3.8
9	Royalty % within main story subject category	10	0.4	2.7
10	Charity and charitable pursuits. % within main story subject category	8	0.3	2.2
11	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	368(n)	13.6%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

iv) Disasters/accidents/tragedies: Story sub-categories:

The story subject category of: 'accidents/disasters' was used in the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD), and a similar category of 'disasters and accidents' was also used

by studies that involved the categorisation of news stories (Glasgow University Media Group 1976; Gerdes 1980; Langer 1987; Stempel 1989; Wallis and Baran 1990; Cottle 1990; Harrison 2000).

There were variations amongst the afore-mentioned studies as to what types of news stories would be included within this story category. For example, as well as air crashes and car/rail crashes, Harrison (2000) also placed natural disasters such as floods and storms within this category. Therefore, in light of the above stated factors, this current study devised 5 story sub-categories that were classified under the main story subject category of: 'disasters/accidents/tragedies'.

243 news stories were coded under the above main story subject category, which represented 9 percent (9.0%) of the 2708 Midlands Today news stories analysed.

101 news stories were classified under the sub-category of: 'accidents', which represented just over 40 percent (41.6%) of all stories categorised under the main story subject category of 'disasters/accidents/tragedy'. News items placed under this sub-category would include: fires, car/rail/air crashes, explosions and leaks - such as gas/chemicals.

News stories classified under the sub-category of 'disasters (natural disasters)', were the second most-featured type of stories coded under the main story subject category of: 'disasters/accidents/tragedies'. Stories assigned to this story sub-category included: floods, storms and heat waves. 54 news items of this nature, representing over 20 percent (22.2%) were classified under this sub-category. It is of no surprise that this sub-category of news stories was frequently featured because during the period of programmes analysed, extremely bad flooding occurred in the West Midlands, particularly in the Bewdley area of this region.

Stories categorised under the sub-category of 'tragedy' totalled 44 news items, and amounted to just over 18 percent (18.1%) of all stories from within the main story subject category of: 'disasters/accidents/tragedies'.

The fourth most-featured type of news story classified under the main story subject category of 'disasters/accidents/tragedies' was 'inquests/coroner's verdict'. This story sub-category accounted to 25 news stories and represented over 10 percent (10.3%) of all stories coded under the main story subject category. Inquests conducted when criminal activity was suspected/proven, would not be classified under this story sub-category, but under the sub-category of: 'court/criminal

proceedings: trials/appeals/coroner's verdict' - which is assigned to the main story subject category of: 'crime'.

19 news stories were classified under the sub-category of 'compensation awards/fight for compensation', representing 7.8 percent (7.8%) of all news stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'disasters/accidents/tragedies'. Stories that would be classified under this story sub-category would for example, be where an individual is 'fighting' for compensation due to a tragedy/accident, or where the news story focuses upon compensation 'awarded' to an individual due to a tragedy/accident (Table 7.11).

Table 7.11
DISASTERS/ACCIDENTS/TRAGEDIES: Story Subject sub-categories.

(4) DISASTERS/ACCIDENTS/TRAGEDIES				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Accidents. % within main story subject category	101	3.7	41.6
2	Disasters (natural disasters), i.e. floods, storms, heat waves. % within main story subject category	54	2.0	22.2
3	Tragedy. % within main story subject category	44	1.6	18.1
4	Inquests/Coroner's Verdict. % within main story subject category	25	0.9	10.3
5	Compensation awards/fight for compensation. % within main story subject category	19	0.7	7.8
6	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	243(n)	9.0%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

v) Economy/Business/(Un)/employment: Story sub-categories.

The BBC's DMD includes the story subject category of 'economy/business/industry'. A generic story subject category of 'economics' was used in studies by: Carroll (1989); Hartley (1989); Stempel (1989); Harrison (2000). A general category of 'economy/employment' was also used by Cottle (1990). A similar approach was adopted by this current study when devising the 7 story sub-categories for the main story subject category of: 'economy/business/(un)/employment'.

Of the 233 news items classified under the above main story subject category, the most featured type of news story was 'industrial action'. Stories that would be classified under this sub-category would be those where strike action is taking place, or where there is a 'threat' of strike action. Stories of this nature were featured on 74 occasions and represented slightly under 32 percent (31.8%) of all stories falling within this main story subject category. One reason for this story sub-category being featured so highly on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, could be found in the fact that during this period, the firemen went out on strike and so this action received a lot of media coverage on the Midlands Today programme.

The next most featured type of story was 'businesses closing down/redundancies'. 69 news stories were classified under this story sub-category, representing slightly less than 30 percent (29.6%) of all sub-categories.

News stories classified under the story sub-category of 'business/industry (specific)' were featured on the Midlands Today programme on 49 occasions and represented 21 percent (21.0%) of all stories from within the main story subject category. News items placed under this story sub-category were stories that focused upon a specific business or a specific industry in the West Midlands region.

This was followed by stories classified under the sub-category of 'business/industry (general)'. News stories designated to this category would be stories about businesses or industries in general, without any particular focus upon any specific business or industry. Such news stories were featured on 21 occasions on Midlands Today, representing 9 percent (9.0%).

News items that focused upon the creation of jobs were placed under the story sub-category of 'employment'. The number of stories of this nature amounted to 11, representing slightly under 5 percent (4.7%).

9 news stories, representing slightly under 4 percent (3.9%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'economy/business/(un)/employment', were coded under the story sub-category of: 'industrial conditions'. News stories that would be classified under this sub-category would be those where employees are unhappy with their working conditions but are not taking/threatening industrial/strike action.

The one story sub-category which was not featured at all on any of the Midlands Today programmes analysed, was that of: 'economics and government'. This was a category also used by Harrison (2000) and relates to the direct impact of government policies or government action - such as increases/decreases in tax (Table 7.12, p.241).

vi) Serious: Human interest:

'Serious: human interest' stories are a distinct category to 'light: human interest' stories. Whilst the latter focuses upon the trivia (Harrison 2000), the former reflects the more serious side of stories that may be deemed to be 'of human interest'. Similar to 'light' human interest' stories, there is also a tendency for 'serious' human interest stories to focus upon the 'individual'.

Table 7.12
ECONOMY/BUSINESS/(UN)/EMPLOYMENT: Story Subject sub-categories.

(5) ECONOMY/BUSINESS/(UN)/EMPLOYMENT				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Industrial action. % within main story subject category	74	2.7	31.8
2	Business closing/redundancies. % within main story subject category	69	2.5	29.6
3	Business/Industry (specific). % within main story subject category	49	1.8	21.0
4	Business(es)/Industry (general). % within main story subject category	21	0.8	9.0
5	Employment. % within main story subject category	11	0.4	4.7
6	Industrial conditions. % within main story subject category	9	0.3	3.9
7	Economics and Government. % within main story subject category	0	0.0	0.0
8	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	233(n)	8.6%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Of the 2708 news stories analysed, 163 were categorised as: 'serious: human interest' stories, which represented 6 percent (6.0%) of all stories featured on the programmes analysed.

The story sub-category of: 'ordinary people overcoming adversity or showing great strength of character' was the most-featured type of 'serious: human interest' stories on

the Midlands Today programmes analysed. 60 news stories, representing 36.8 percent (36.8%) of all 'serious: human interest' stories were included on Midlands Today.

The next most-featured 'serious: human interest' stories were those that were classified within the sub-category of 'children/babies'. An example of a story that would be coded under this sub-category was the news item broadcast on Midlands Today about a baby girl who contracted meningitis, and then subsequently needed to have all of her limbs (arms and legs) amputated. The 32 news stories classified under this story sub-category amounted to just over 19.5 percent (19.6%).

A total of 31 news stories were classified under the sub-category of: 'ordinary people showing great deeds of kindness', which represented 19 percent (19.0%) of all 'serious: human interest' stories.

The fourth most-featured type of 'serious: human interest' stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, were those that were classified under the sub-category of: 'individuals/community action'. Harrison (2000) used such a sub-category in their study. Examples of stories classified under this sub-category would be where members of a community/group of individuals are campaigning

for their rights or petitioning/lobbying parliament. 21 news stories, representing just under 13 percent (12.9%) were classified under this story sub-category.

The least-featured type of 'serious: human interest' stories were those classified under the sub-category of: 'animals'. Such news items would for example include stories that focus upon animals that have been mistreated/neglected or abandoned. 19 news stories were coded under this sub-category, which represented 11.7 percent (11.7%) of all 'serious: human interest' stories (Table 7.13).

Table 7.13
SERIOUS: HUMAN INTEREST: Story Subject Sub-categories.

(6) SERIOUS: HUMAN INTEREST				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Ordinary people overcoming adversity or showing great strength of character. % within main story subject category	60	2.2	36.8
2	Children/babies. % within main story subject category	32	1.2	19.6
3	Ordinary people showing great deeds of kindness. % within main story subject category	31	1.1	19.0
4	Individuals/community action (for example, community getting together to improve their estate). % within main story subject category	21	0.8	12.9
5	Animals. % within main story subject category	19	0.7	11.7
6	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	163(n)	6.0%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

vii) Transport:

The main story subject category of 'transport', represented slightly over 4 percent (4.2%) of all news stories analysed, with 115 news stories being classified under this story subject. 3 story sub-categories were devised for this main story subject category.

News stories classified under the story sub-category of 'roads/cars/traffic problems' were the most-featured types of transport stories included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and represented just over 59 percent (59.1%) of all transport stories.

This high frequency - compared to the other transport story sub-categories can be attributed to the opening of the M6 toll road which occurred during the period of data collection for this current study. This subject-matter/topic received an immense amount of coverage on the Midlands Today programme. This included a week-long Series featuring different members of the public trying out the new toll road and sharing their opinions/views on this road.

News items that were classified under the story sub-category of 'rail tracks/trains' were the focus of 31 stories, representing 27 percent (27.0%) of all stories

coded under the main story subject category of:
'transport'.

The least-featured type of transport stories were those classified under the sub-category of 'aeroplanes/airports' - representing just under 14 percent (13.9%), which amounted to a total of 16 news stories (Table 7.14).

Table 7.14
TRANSPORT: Story Subject sub-categories.

(7) TRANSPORT				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Roads/cars/traffic problems. % within main story subject category	68	2.5	59.1
2	Rails tracks/trains. % within main story subject category	31	1.1	27.0
3	Aeroplanes/airports. % within main story subject category	16	0.6	13.9
4	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	115(n)	4.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

viii) Health:

Stempel (1989) classified news stories focusing upon the subject-matter of health as 'health and welfare', whilst Harrison (2000) gave such news stories the generic label of 'health'. Therefore, similar to Harrison (2000) and similar to the category assigned by the BBC's DMD to health-related

stories which is simply coded as: 'health', this current study follows suit by using the main story subject heading of: 'health' but in addition, 6 story sub-categories were also devised for this main story subject category.

Of the 2708 news items analysed for this study, 114 were classified under the main story subject category of: 'health', which represented slightly over 4 percent (4.2%) of all news stories analysed.

The most-featured type of health stories were those classified under the story sub-category of: 'general health stories'. Although this only represented just over 2 percent (2.1%) of all story subjects featured on the programmes analysed, it represented almost 50 percent (49.1%) of all health-related stories, which amounted to a total of 56 stories of this nature being featured.

News items focusing upon: 'medical mal-practices' were the second most-featured type of health-related stories - amounting to 21 stories and representing over 18 percent (18.4%).

Stories on 'health outbreaks/scares' totalled 20, and represented 17.5 percent (17.5%) of all health stories.

Of the remaining 3 story sub-categories assigned to the main subject category of 'health', each represented less than 10 percent of stories assigned to this main story subject category.

The story sub-category of: 'medical discoveries/medical firsts' accounted for 8 of the health stories featured, representing 7 percent (7.0%).

News stories categorised under the sub-category of 'private health organisations' was also a story subject category used by Harrison (2000). This category was extended for this current study to also include stories that focused upon the privatisation of hospitals, in terms of NHS hospitals choosing to opt-out of government control to become a foundation trust. 5 news stories were assigned to this sub-category which represented just under 4.5 percent (4.4%) of all health stories.

The least type of health stories featured on the programmes analysed were news items that focused upon 'official reports/statistics on health (but non-government reports)'. Stories of this nature amounted to 4, representing 3.5 percent (3.5%) of all health-related stories (Table: 7.15, p. 248).

Table 7.15
HEALTH: Story Subject sub-categories.

(8) HEALTH				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	General health stories. % within main story subject category	56	2.1	49.1
2	Medical malpractices. % within main subject category	21	0.8	18.4
3	Health outbreaks/'scares'. % within main story subject category	20	0.7	17.5
4	Medical discoveries/medical 'firsts'. % within main story subject category	8	0.3	7.0
5	Private health organisations, including matters to do with the privatisation of hospitals/opting out of government control. % within main story subject category	5	0.2	4.4
6	Official reports/statistics on health (but non-government reports). % within main story subject category	4	0.1	3.5
7	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	114(n)	4.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

ix) Terrorism/'War' in Iraq:

It was decided to include a main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq' within the television news codebook devised for this current study (Appendix C). This decision was taken in light of the terrorist attacks of '9/11' in New York and in London on '7/7', and the subsequent events that have transpired in the world. Namely, the declared 'war on terrorism', the 'war' in Iraq and the growing public attention and reaction to these

events. Therefore, 6 story sub-categories were developed, in order to take into account any news stories that may be featured on the Midlands Today programme in relation to the factors, as stated above.

The finding of the 2708 Midlands Today news stories analysed, revealed that a total of 114 stories were featured under the main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq'. This represented just over 4 percent (4.2%) of all news stories analysed.

The story sub-category of: 'acts/attempted/alleged acts of terrorism' was the most featured type of news story classified under the main subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq'. A total of 44 news items were featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, which represented just over 38.5 percent (38.6%) of all stories from within this main story subject category.

News stories that focused upon 'demonstrations for peace/against the war' was joint second with the story sub-category of 'war in Iraq', in terms of the news stories categorised under the main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq'. 20 news stories from each of the afore-mentioned story sub-categories were featured on

Midlands Today, with each representing 17.5 percent (17.5%).

News stories classified under the sub-category of: 'demonstrations for peace/against the war', would include news items that focused upon anti-war demonstrations on the 'war' in Iraq, whilst news items placed under the story sub-category of: 'war in Iraq' would be stories that focus specifically upon the 'war in Iraq'.

Given the attention that was placed upon people from the MECs - particularly those of the 'Muslim' faith - the sub-category of: 'terrorism and ethnic minorities' was included under the main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq'. 15 news items included on the Midlands Today programmes were classified under the above story sub-category, which represented slightly over 13 percent (13.2%) of all stories featured under the main story subject category.

Stories classified under the story sub-category of: 'soldiers killed/injured in Iraq/soldiers receiving medical care in the West Midlands' would for example, include news items that focused upon soldiers from the West Midlands who had been killed or injured in Iraq. This category would also include news stories that focused upon injured

soldiers who had been brought to the West Midlands region for medical treatment. 13 news items were classified under this story sub-category, representing over 11 percent (11.4%).

The least type of news stories featured under the main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq' were those that were classified under the sub-category of: 'war on terrorism'. Examples of stories that would be coded under this sub-category would be those where the focus of the news item is on the British and American initiatives/approaches on the 'war on terrorism'. A total of 2 such news items, representing slightly under 2 percent (1.8%) were included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed (Table 7.16, p.252).

Table 7.16
TERRORISM/'WAR' IN IRAQ: Story Subject Sub-categories.

(9) TERRORISM/'WAR' IN IRAQ				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Acts/attempted/alleged acts of terrorism. % within main story subject category	44	1.6	38.6
2	Demonstrations for peace/against the war in Iraq. % within main story subject category	20	0.7	17.5
3	War in Iraq. % within main story subject category	20	0.7	17.5
4	Terrorism and ethnic minorities. % within main story subject category	15	0.6	13.2
5	Soldiers killed/injured in Iraq/soldiers receiving medical care in the West Midlands. % within main story subject category	13	0.5	11.4
6	War on terrorism. % within main story subject category	2	0.1	1.8
7	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	114(n)	4.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

x) Science/Environment:

Of the 2708 news stories analysed, 102 were classified under the main story subject category of: 'science/environment', which represented 3.8 percent (3.8%) of all news stories analysed. 5 sub-categories were devised for this main story subject category.

The most-featured sub-category was 'science', which totalled 42 news stories, representing over 40 percent

(41.2%) of all stories classified under the above main story subject category.

Stories classified under the story subject-category of 'environment' were the second most-featured types of news stories classified under the main story subject category of 'science/environment'. This consisted of 26 news stories, which represented over 25 percent (25.5%) of all stories coded under the main story subject category. The types of news items that would be classified under this sub-category would for example include stories that focus upon topics such as pollution or global warming.

The story sub-category of: 'agriculture/farming' was featured in 17 of the 2708 Midlands Today news stories analysed, and represented over 16.5 percent (16.7%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'science/environment'.

News reports focusing upon: 'conservation issues' were included on the Midlands Today programme on 14 occasions. This represented slightly over 13.5 percent (13.7%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'science/environment'.

The least-featured story sub-category was: 'animal-related issues' which represented slightly under 3 percent (2.9%) of news stories categorised under the main story subject category of: 'science/environment', and amounted to a total of 3 news stories (Table 7.17).

Table 7.17
SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENT: Story Subject Sub-categories.

(10) SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENT				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTALS: WITHIN MAIN SUBJECT CATEGORY
1	Science. % within main story subject category	42	1.6	41.2
2	Environment. % within main story subject category	26	1.0	25.5
3	Agriculture/farming. % within main story subject category	17	0.6	16.7
4	Conservation issues. % within main story subject category	14	0.5	13.7
5	Animal-related issues. % within main story subject category	3	0.1	2.9
6	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	102(n)	3.8%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xi) Local Government Services:

55 news stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'local government services' were featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed. This only

represented 2 percent (2.0%) of all main story subject categories featured on the programmes analysed.

The 10 story sub-categories that were devised for this main subject category relate to the various services provided by local government to the West Midlands region. The main subject category and sub-categories were adapted and revised from the categories used in the study conducted by Cottle (1990).

The most-featured news stories were those that were classified under the story sub-category of: 'roads/transport/planning'. This represented over 45 percent (45.5%) of all stories from within the main story subject category of 'local government services', and amounted to a total of 25 news stories. One possible reason for this story sub-category dominating the other sub-categories within the main story subject, could be because of the speculation surrounding whether or not the M6 would have a toll road and the ensuing debates that followed.

Representing 20 percent (20.0%) of all news stories classified under the above main story subject category, were news items that focused upon local government services in terms of housing. Therefore, the story sub-category of

'housing' amounted to a total of 11 news items being featured on Midlands Today.

9 news stories were classified under the sub-category of 'environment/pollution', which amounted to just under 16.5 percent (16.4%) of all stories falling within the main story subject category.

News stories classified under the sub-category of: 'social services/welfare provisions', were included in the Midlands Today programmes analysed on 6 occasions, and amounted to just under 11 percent (10.9%) of all 'local government services' stories.

The least-featured type of local government services news stories were those classified under the story sub-category of: 'general local government services'. 4 news items were classified under this sub-category, which represented slightly over 7 percent (7.3%) of all stories from within the main story subject category.

Five story sub-categories within the main subject category of: 'local government services', were never featured in any of the programmes analysed. These were: education, emergency services, health, prisons and probation services (Table 7.18, p.257).

Table 7.18
LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES: Story Subject sub-categories.

(11) LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Roads/transport/planning. % within main story subject category	25	0.9	45.5
2	Housing. % within main story subject category	11	0.4	20.0
3	Environment/pollution. % within main story subject category	9	0.3	16.4
4	Social Services/Welfare provisions % within main story subject category	6	0.2	10.9
5	General local Government Services. % within main story subject category	4	0.1	7.3
6	Education. % within main story subject category	0	0	0.0
7	Emergency Services. % within main story subject category	0	0	0.0
8	Health. % within main story subject category	0	0	0.0
9	Prisons. % within main story subject category	0	0	0.0
10	Probation Services. % within main story subject category	0	0.0	0.0
11	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	55(n)	2.0%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xii) Demonstrations/protests:

Overall, 47 news stories were classified under the main story subject category of: 'demonstrations/protests'. This represented slightly over 1.5 percent (1.7%) of all stories analysed. 2 sub-categories were devised for this main story subject-category.

News stories/items assigned to the sub-category of: 'demonstrations (peaceful)' represented over 90 percent (91.5%) of all stories that were classified under the main story subject category of: 'demonstrations/protests'. This amounted to a total of 43 news stories of this nature being featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

4 news items were classified under the sub-category of: 'demonstrations (violent)', which represented 8.5 percent (8.5%) of all stories coded under the main story subject category of: 'demonstrations/protests' (Table 7.19).

Table 7.19
DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS: Story Subject sub-categories.

(12) DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Demonstrations (peaceful). % within main story subject category	43	1.6	91.5
2	Demonstrations (violent). % within main story subject category	4	0.1	8.5
3	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	47(n)	1.7	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xiii) Education:

The BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD) includes the story subject category of 'education' as part of its analysis of the subject-matter of the news stories included on the Midlands Today programme. Taking this into account, as well as the generic subject category of 'education' which was also included in Harrison's (2000) study, this main story subject category of 'education' was also included within this current study.

A total of 24 news stories focusing upon the subject-matter of education were included in the 2708 Midlands Today Stories analysed, which represented less than 1 percent (0.9%) of all news stories.

Of the 3 sub-categories devised for this main story subject category of 'education', the most-featured news items on education were those that were classified under the story sub-category of: 'general stories on education'. Stories that would be classified under this sub-category would be those that focussed upon educational establishments such as schools, colleges or universities. 14 stories of this nature were included on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, which amounted to almost 60 percent (58.3%) of all news stories classified under the main story subject category of 'education'.

Stories coded under the story sub-category of: 'exam results' were featured on the programme on 6 occasions, representing 25 percent (25.0%) of all stories from within the main story subject category of 'education'.

The story sub-category of 'official reports and statistics' was defined by Harrison (2000) as stories on education that focused upon official reports and statistics, but were non-governmental reports on education. This definition was also adopted within this current study and 4 news stories of this nature were featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed. This represented over 16 percent (16.7%) of all stories from within the main story subject category of 'education'. (Table 7.20).

Table 7.20
EDUCATION: Story Subject sub-categories.

(13) EDUCATION				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	General stories on education. % within main story subject category	14	0.5	58.3
2	Exam results. % within main story subject category	6	0.2	25.0
3	Official reports and statistics. % within main story subject category	4	0.1	16.7
4	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	Total	24(n)	0.9%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xiv) Sports:

'Sports' was the only story subject category where sub-categories were deemed to be unnecessary for this current study. Suffice to say, 22 news items focused upon the subject-matter of sports, which represented less than 1 percent (0.8%) of all news items featured on the news stories analysed. (Table 7.21).

Table 7.21
SPORTS.

(14) SPORTS				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Sports.	22	0.8	
	% within main story subject category			100.0
	TOTAL	22(n)	0.8%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xv) Military:

As defined within this current study, the main story subject category of: 'military' does not include government policies enacted in relation to the military, but focuses upon 'informational' types of stories about soldiers at 'home' and 'abroad'.

Of the 2708 news stories analysed, this main subject category of 'military' represented less than 1 percent

(0.8%) of all news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, which amounted to 21 news stories. 3 story sub-categories were devised for this main story subject category.

The majority of 'military' stories were classified under the story sub-category of: 'local soldiers serving abroad'. One reason as to why this story sub-category was the most-featured from within the main story subject category of 'military', is likely to be because of the 'war' in Iraq, where many British soldiers are serving. This sub-category represented over 50 percent (52.4%) of all stories classified under the main story subject, and amounted to a total of 11 stories of this nature, being featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

6 news stories were classified under the story sub-category of 'general military stories', which represented just over 28.5 percent (28.6%) of all military stories.

The least-featured type of 'military' news story were those classified under the sub-category of 'commemorations'. News items that would be classified under this sub-category would for example be those that focus upon commemorations such as 'poppy day'. 4 news items of this nature were

featured on the programmes analysed, representing 19 percent (19.0%) of all 'military' stories. (Table 7.22).

Table 7.22
MILITARY: Story Subject sub-categories.

(15) MILITARY				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Local soldiers serving abroad. % within main story subject category	11	0.4	52.4
2	General military stories. % within main story subject category	6	0.2	28.6
3	Commemorations. % within main story subject category	4	0.1	19.0
4	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	21(n)	0.8%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xvi) Immigration/Asylum Seekers/Refugees:

Given the British public's concern/attention on the growing number of asylum seekers/refugees entering into the UK (prior to, and during the collection of data for this current study), the decision was taken to include this as a story subject category - alongside the subject area of immigration, to form the main story subject category of: 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees'. The overall number of news stories classified under this main story subject category was 20, which represented less than 1 percent (0.7%) of all news stories analysed.

Of the 6 story sub-categories devised for this main story subject category, 6 of the news items featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed were classified under the story sub-category of: 'asylum seekers/refugees (negative)'. This represented 30 percent (30.0%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees'.

Examples of the types of news stories that would be classified under the above sub-category would for example, be stories such as the news item featured on Midlands Today about the GP who refused to see/treat asylum seekers because he claimed that they were a drain on his resources. Similarly, the news item about Toyah Wilcox (pop star of the 80s) and residents in the West Midlands protesting against plans to build an asylum seekers centre in their area, would also be classified under this sub-category.

4 news stories were classified under the story sub-category of: 'asylum seekers/refugees (general)', which represented 20 percent (20.0%) of all news stories categorised under the main story subject category of: 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees'. The types of news stories that would be classified under this sub-category would be those that focused upon asylum seekers and where the focus was neither positive nor negative - just general. 3 of the 2708 news

stories analysed were classified under this sub-category, representing 15 percent (15.0%) of all stories coded under the main story subject category of: 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees'.

A similar number of news stories (i.e. 3), were also classified under the story sub-category of: 'immigration (positive)', which again represented 15 percent (15.0%) of all 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees' stories.

News stories classified under the sub-categories of: 'immigration (negative)' and 'asylum seekers/refugees (positive)' were each represented by 2 news stories that were broadcast on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and so each represented 10 percent (10.0%) of all news stories coded under the main story subject of 'immigration/asylum seekers/refugees'. Stories that would be classified under the former sub-category would be news items that focus upon the negative aspects of immigration to this country, whilst news items classified under the latter sub-category would be those that focused upon the positive aspects of asylum seekers. (Table 7.23, p.266).

Table 7.23
IMMIGRATION/ASYLUM SEEKERS/REFUGEES: Story Subject sub-categories.

(16) IMMIGRATION/ASYLUM SEEKERS/REFUGEES				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Asylum Seekers/refugees (Negative). % within main story subject category	6	0.2	30.0
2	Asylum Seekers/refugees (General). % within main story subject category	4	0.1	20.0
3	Immigration (General). % within main story subject category	3	0.1	15.0
4	Immigration (Positive). % within main story subject category	3	0.1	15.0
5	Immigration (Negative). % within main story subject category	2	0.1	10.0
6	Asylum Seekers/refugees (Positive). % within main story subject category	2	0.1	10.0
7	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	20(n)	0.7%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xvii) Religion:

Although the subject categories of 'race and religion' were treated as one story subject category within the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD), it was decided to separate these two subject categories for this current study. This decision was taken because it was considered that these two subject-matters of 'race' and 'religion' were two very distinct subject-areas - although at times it is acknowledged that they may become inter-related within one news story. However, to acknowledge the distinctions between

the two, these two story subjects were each assigned a main story subject category within their own right. Therefore, this study takes the same stance as Harrison (2000) who also had a main subject category of 'religion'.

Stories categorised under the main story subject category of 'religion' represented less than 1 percent (0.7%) of the 2708 news stories analysed, and so amounted to 13 news items.

Of the 2 sub-categories devised for this main story subject category of 'religion', news stories classified under the story sub-category of 'general religious stories' were the most-featured, with 10 news items of this nature being included in the programmes analysed. This amounted to almost 59 percent (58.8%) of all religious stories featured under the main subject category of 'religion'. News items that would be classified under this story sub-category would be those where the main focus of the story is on some aspect of religion (other than the Muslim faith). The reason for making this distinction was because of the media's attention on the Muslim faith (since the events of 9/11 and 7/7), and so the decision was taken to delineate such stories by defining a separate sub-category.

News items which focused upon the Muslim faith were classified under the story sub-category of: 'general religious stories focusing primarily upon the Muslim faith'. This story sub-category was represented on 7 of the 2708 news stories analysed, which amounted to almost 42 percent (41.2%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'religion' (Table 7.24).

Table 7.24
RELIGION: Story Subject sub-categories.

(17) RELIGION				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	General religious stories. % within main story subject category	10	0.4	58.8
2	General religious stories focusing primarily upon the Muslim faith. % within main story subject category	7	0.3	41.2
3	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	17(n)	0.7%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xviii) Political Administration:

The main story subject category of 'political administration' was a main story subject category used by Cottle (1990). Harrison (2000) defined a similar main story subject category as: 'Parliamentary Politics', whilst Hartley (1989) used the generic category of 'Politics'.

Therefore, the 10 sub-categories devised for this main subject category were informed by consulting studies such as the above, and by consulting the following: Glasgow University Media Group 1976; Gans 1985; Wallis and Baran 1990.

Of the 2708 news items analysed, this main story subject category of 'political administration' was the focus of 14 news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, and represented less than 1 percent (0.5%) of all stories featured on this programme.

The 2 story sub-categories that received the most coverage were news stories coded under the sub-category of: 'regional party politics' and 'politicians' personal lives'. 4 news items were classified under each of these two sub-categories, with each representing under 29 percent (28.6%) of all news stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'political administration'.

The types of news stories that would be classified under the sub-category of 'politicians' personal lives' would include stories such as the following:

- David Mellor (MP) and his *alleged* affair with Antonia de Sanchez.

- Clare Short (MP) and revelations of her 'love-child'.
- The Hamilton's *alleged* involvement with Mohamed Al-Fahid.
- Accusations of George Galloway (MP) receiving money from Saddam Hussein's government.

3 news items were assigned to the story sub-category of: 'political elite visiting', which represented over 20 percent (21.4%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'political administration'.

Just over 14 percent (14.3%) of news items analysed were classified under the story sub-category of: 'everyday local government activities', which amounted to 2 news items. News stories assigned to this story sub-category would be those where the focus of the story is specifically upon local government activities and not upon central government's actions relating to local government.

Only 1 of the news stories analysed was classified under the story sub-category of: 'personnel changes in parliament', and so represented just over 7 percent (7.1%) of all news stories falling under the main story subject category of: 'political administration'.

Of the 10 story sub-categories devised for the main story subject category of 'political administration', 5 did not receive any coverage on the Midlands Today programmes analysed:

- Parliamentary legislative.
- Parliamentary party politics.
- General governmental conflicts and disagreements: inter-party/between government and other parties.
- Party conflicts: specifically about the 'war' in Iraq.
- Government official reports/statistics.

(Table 7.25, p.272).

One likely reason for the above story sub-categories not receiving any coverage on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, could be because some of the afore-mentioned story sub-categories may not be as relevant to the regional news genre - which focuses upon regional news stories, as opposed to network news programmes that would cover national news stories.

Table 7.25
POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION: Story Subject sub-categories.

(18) POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION				
	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	Regional Party Politics. % within main subject category	4	0.1	28.6
2	Politicians' personal lives. % within main subject category	4	0.1	28.6
3	Political elite visiting. % within main subject category	3	0.1	21.4
4	Everyday local government activities. % within main subject category	2	0.1	14.3
5	Personnel changes in parliament. % within main subject category	1	0.1	7.1
6	Parliamentary legislative % within main subject category	0	0	0.0
7	Parliamentary party politics. % within main subject category	0	0	0.0
8	General governmental conflicts and disagreements: inter-party/between government and other parties. % within main subject category	0	0.0	0.0
9	Party conflicts: specifically about the 'War' in Iraq. % within main subject category	0	0	0.0
10	Government official reports/statistics. % within main subject category	0	0.0	0.0
11	Other	0	0.0	0.0
		14(n)	0.5%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

xix) MEC/race-related/cultural:

Overall, 13 news items were coded under the main story subject category of 'MEC/race-related/cultural', which

represented less than 1 percent (0.5%) of all news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

7 story sub-categories were assigned to this main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural'. The purpose of each of the 7 sub-categories and indeed, of this main story subject category is to try to gauge the focus of the types of stories featured on Midlands Today that pertain specifically to the minority ethnic communities (MECs).

5 news items, representing 38.5 percent (38.5%) of all stories classified under the above main story subject category were classified under the sub-category of: 'MEC: race-related/cultural - specifically 'Muslims' (negative)'.

This story sub-category was included within this current study, in light of the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7, and the subsequent feelings of 'negativity' and 'mistrust' that seemed to be directed towards people of the Muslim faith. Therefore, it was considered important and necessary to include such a story sub-category. It is notable that news stories/items classified under the story sub-category of: 'MEC: race-related/cultural - specifically 'Muslims' (negative)', were the most-featured type of news stories that fell under the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural'; notable because in a study

conducted by Gillespie (2002) entitled: *After September 11: TV News and Transnational Audiences*, it was found that trust in British broadcast news was the lowest amongst Muslims.

An example of a news item that was coded under the above sub-category was a story featured on the Midlands Today programme about the controversy surrounding a local authority's decision to ban an art gallery from showing images of two world famous landmarks that had been given a 'Muslim make-over'. These landmarks were the *Statue of Liberty* and the *Houses of Parliament*.

The story sub-category of: 'MEC: race-related/cultural: (positive)', represented over 15 percent (15.4%) of all stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural', and amounted to 2 news stories. News items which would be classified under this sub-category would be those where the main focus of the story is upon some aspect of racial/cultural matters, which could be deemed as being 'positive' in relation to MECs.

The inverse to the above would be coded under the sub-category of: 'MEC: race/cultural: (negative)', where the news story broadcast on the Midlands Today programme is 'negative' in relation to the focus of the story. 2 news

stories of this nature were coded under the above sub-category.

2 of the 2708 news stories analysed were classified under the sub-category of: 'MEC: race-related/cultural - specifically Muslims: (positive)', which represented over 15 percent (15.4%) of all stories falling within the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural'.

The types of stories that would be assigned to the above sub-category would be those where the main focus of the news item is on Muslims and where the contents of the news item could be deemed as being 'positive'.

Stories which were classified under the sub-category of: 'MECs: racism/discrimination' were those where the main focus of the news item is upon some aspect of racism/discrimination in relation to those from the MECs. 2 news items of this nature were classified under this story sub-category, and so represented 15.4 percent (15.4%) of all stories falling under the main story subject category.

Of the 7 sub-categories devised for the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural', two categories did not receive any news coverage on the Midlands Today programmes analysed: 'MEC: race/cultural: (General)' and

'MEC: race/cultural - specifically 'Muslims' (General)'. .

(Table 7.26).

Table 7.26
MEC/RACE-RELATED/CULTURAL: Story Subject sub-categories.
(19) MEC/RACE-RELATED/CULTURAL

	STORY SUBJECT SUB-CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of the 2708 news items analysed) (%)	Percentage (of <u>main</u> story subject category) (%)
1	MEC: Race-related/cultural - specifically 'Muslims': (Negative). % within main subject category	5	0.2	38.5
2	MEC: Race-related/cultural: (Positive). % within main subject category	2	0.1	15.4
3	MEC: Race-related/cultural: (Negative). % within main subject category	2	0.1	15.4
4	MEC: Race-related/cultural - specifically 'Muslims': (Positive). % within main subject category	2	0.1	15.4
5	MECs: Racism/discrimination. % within main subject category	2	0.1	15.4
6	MEC: Race-related/cultural: (General). % within main subject category	0	0.0	0.0
7	MEC: Race-related/cultural - specifically 'Muslims': (General). % within main subject category	0	0.0	0.0
8	Other	0	0.0	0.0
	TOTAL	13(n)	0.5%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

One reason proffered as to why the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural' may possibly have been so poorly represented on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, is informed by the participant observations and the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the Head of

Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM).

In the process of undertaking the participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom, it was noted that this programme employs the following Correspondents:

- Transport.
- Health.
- Science/Environment.
- Home Affairs.

During the collection of data for this current research study, the Midlands Today programme also employed the following Correspondents:

- Business.
- Community Affairs.

However, during the collection of data for this current study, the Community Affairs Correspondent departed from their role in the newsroom. This Correspondents' remit was to try to increase the diversity¹⁶ of stories and contributors across the Midlands Today programme; essentially, to try to 'engage' with, and include under-

¹⁶ Diversity of stories and contributors to news stories, would include race, age, gender, disability and sexuality.

represented groups that are targeted by the pan-BBC diversity policy.

The position of Community Affairs Correspondent was never replaced and similarly, when the Business Correspondent left the BBC this position was also never replaced.

However, the finding of the analysis into the main story subject categories featured on Midlands Today would strongly suggest that the non-replacement of the Business Correspondent did not impact/impede upon the number of 'business-related' stories featured on this programme.

This assertion is borne out of the fact that comparatively, (apart from the Home Affairs Correspondent whose affiliated news stories of interest would include the coverage of crime-related stories, which represented 22.2% of all news stories analysed), the type of news stories covered by the Business Correspondent (classified under the main story subject category of: 'economy/business/(un)/employment'), represented more news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, than any other main story subject category that (throughout the period of data collection for this study), had a designated Correspondent attached to the subject-area.

- Transport Correspondent - main story subject category of: 'Transport' - 4.2% of all news stories analysed.
- Health Correspondent - main story subject category of: 'Health' - 4.2%.
- Science/Environment Correspondent - main story subject category of: 'Science/environment' - 3.8%.

Conversely, the types of stories that would have fallen under the jurisdiction of the Community Affairs Correspondent, which would include the types of stories coded under the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural', represented only 0.5 percent (0.5%) of all news stories analysed, which amounted to just 13 news items of this nature being featured on the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed.

Therefore, the finding of this current study would strongly suggest that the non-replacement and as such, the lack of a Community Affairs Correspondent working on the Midlands Today programme was highly likely to have had a detrimental effect and bearing upon why there were so few news stories pertaining to MECs featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed. This assertion is further reinforced by the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the Head of

Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM).

In light of the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke, 2000), the question was posed to the HRLP-WM during the interview, as to why the Community Affairs Correspondent position was never replaced. The response to the question was as follows:

"I regret losing the Community Affairs brief. I've got a human difficulty and I've got 5 correspondents. Can't afford anymore than 5.

"I don't think I've got a Correspondent in my current group who would be entirely successful in that kind of role and y'know to be honest, unless there's some movement in that group my manoeuvring room is a bit limited.

"I'd like to have a Correspondent that focused on general social affairs to encourage community affairs.

"I think it's a weakness - yes!" (HRLP - WM: Source: one-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

The HRLP (WM) clearly expresses their disappointment in their inability to replace the Community Affairs Correspondent, and acknowledges the weakness that this shortcoming creates.

However, the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom highlighted that the departure of

the Business Correspondent was *after* the departure of the Community Affairs Correspondent. In theory then, this could have created the 'movement' that the HRLP (WM) alludes to (in the above citation) and as such, allow for the re-appointment of a Community Affairs Correspondent. However, one can only speculate and wonder as to why this opportunity was *missed*.

A 'missed opportunity' because as studies have shown, Correspondents in a newsroom are more likely to get their stories taken up by the medium they are working for, than 'generalists' (Golding and Elliott 1979). However, as there was no longer a Community Affairs Correspondent working in the Midlands Today newsroom, who like all other Correspondents is likely to have accumulated established contacts on their subject-area - contacts that could provide a regular stream/supply of potential news stories (Tunstall 1971; Negrine 1989), then this could possibly be a contributory factor as to why there were so few news stories (0.5%) featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, that could be classified/coded under the main story subject category of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural'.

Furthermore, the non-replacement of a Community Affairs Correspondent may have also sent out a subliminal message to those working in the Midlands Today newsroom that

'diversity' is of no longer an interest/concern for the newsroom. As pointed out by Hall *et al* (1978), the subject-areas that Correspondents are assigned to is usually a strong indicator of the importance that the newsroom places upon particular story-subjects/topics.

Therefore, informed by the above factors and findings, attention is given in Chapter 9 of this current study into exploring the mechanisms that may have been put into place/employed by the Midlands Today programme to assist in the sourcing of stories with subject-matters/topics that are reflective of the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

Going back now to the overall finding of the content analysis conducted into the main story subject categories featured on the Midlands Today programmes (Table 7.7, p.222). This elongated examination into the different subject-matter/topics of the news stories featured on this programme has provided a very comprehensive understanding of the overall eclectic range of story topics that are included, and as such broadcast to viewers of this regional television news programme.

Similar to the study undertaken by Cottle (1993), the findings of this current study also indicate that unlike

network television news programmes that have a pre-disposition to focus upon 'heavy'/'hard' news story items, the subject-matter/topics featured on the regional television news genre as depicted by Midlands Today, has more of an inclination towards producing a programme that enable it to move from the 'hard' to the 'soft' type of news story items - with everything else in-between - with the ambition of trying to ensure and maintain a populist appeal to its viewers.

Therefore, based upon the finding (displayed in Table 7.7, p.221) it is possible to assert that the purpose of the Midlands Today programme is not necessarily to stick religiously to the old Reithian adage - to 'educate', 'inform' and 'entertain', which covers a variety and multitude of different topics/subject-matters in the news stories featured on this programme, because it could be argued that the purpose of a regional television news programme such as Midlands Today, is not only to inform the viewing public of events that have occurred in or around the West Midlands region, but to also 'entertain' its viewers. This point is made in light of the main story subject categories that are included in the programme. Therefore, to coin a 21st century term, it is contended that this programme's output could be described as infotainment; a programme which consists of the delivery of a mixture of

'information' and 'entertainment' types of story subject-matter to its viewers.

The majority of the 129 story sub-categories devised for this current study received coverage/attention on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

That said, it is notable from the above analysis of story sub-categories ascribed to each of the main story subject categories (Table 7.8 through to Table 7.26, pp. 226-276), that many of the main story subject categories tended to have a story sub-category which dominated the other sub-categories insofar as it being the most-selected, or one might say *preferred* type of story topic from within a *particular* main story subject category. Therefore, further analysis of this finding will help to provide a deeper understanding of the regional television news genre as typified by Midlands Today, in terms of the subject-matter of the *preferred* news stories that are selected for inclusion on this programme.

Of the 19 main story subject categories devised for this study, 4 had a story sub-category which represented more than 50 percent (50.0%) of all sub-categories contained within that particular main subject category. These were:

- i) Transport: sub-category: 'roads/cars/traffic problems', which represented almost 60 percent (59.1%).
- ii) Religion: sub-category: 'general religious stories', representing almost 59 percent (58.8%).
- iii) Education: sub-category: 'general stories on education - representing over 58 percent (58.3%).
- iv) Military: sub-category: 'local soldiers serving abroad' - representing over 52 percent (52.4%).

Four main story subject categories contained a sub-category which represented more than 40 percent (40.0%) of all story sub-categories from within that particular main subject category:

- i) Health: sub-category: 'general health stories', which represented just over 49 percent (49.1%).
- ii) Local government services: sub-category: 'roads/transport/planning' represented over 45 percent (45.5%).

iii) Disasters/accidents/tragedies: sub-category:
'accidents' - represented over 41 percent (41.6%).

iv) Science/Environment: sub-category: 'science' -
representing slightly over 41 percent (41.2%) of all
stories from within this main subject category.

Seven main story subject categories contained a sub-category
which represented more than 30 percent of all sub-categories
featured from within the main subject category:

i) Terrorism/'war' in Iraq: sub-category:
'Acts/attempted/alleged acts of terrorism', which
amounted to over 38 percent (38.6%).

ii) MEC:race-related/cultural: sub-category: 'MEC:
race/culture - specifically Muslims: (Negative)',
represented 38.5 percent (38.5%).

iii) Crime: sub-category: 'violent crime', represented
almost 40 percent (37.8%) of all stories
classified under the main story subject category
of 'crime'.

- iv) Serious: Human Interest: sub-category: 'ordinary people overcoming adversity/showing strength of character', represented almost 37 percent (36.8%).
- v) Light: Human interest: sub-category: 'eccentric/bizarre/individuals/events', represented just over 32 percent (32.1%).
- vi) Economy/business/(un)/employment: sub-category: 'industrial action', representing almost 32 percent (31.8%).
- vii) Immigration/asylum seekers/refugees: sub-category: 'Asylum seekers/refugees (negative)', represented 30 percent (30.0%).

Two main story subject categories contained sub-categories that represented more than 20 percent (20.0%) of all sub-categories from within a main subject category:

- i) Consumer/leisure interests: sub-category: 'BBC in-house promotions', representing just over 29.5 percent (29.6%).

- ii) Political administration: sub-category: 'Regional party politics', represented 28.6 percent (28.6%).

The main story subject category of 'demonstrations/protests' consisted of only 2 sub-categories - which may go some way for accounting why the sub-category of 'demonstrations (Peaceful)' represented over 91 percent (91.5%). And as discussed previously, no sub-categories were assigned to the story subject category of 'Sports', which represented 0.8 percent (0.8%) of all news stories analysed.

When the most-featured story sub-category from within each of the main story subject categories are added together, it amounts to a total of: 1055 news items. This represents 39 percent (39.0%) of all stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed (Table 7.27, p.289).

Table 7.27
Most-featured story sub-category on Midlands Today:
From within each of the main story subject categories.

	MOST-FEATURED SUB-CATEGORY FROM WITHIN IN EACH OF THE MAIN STORY SUBJECT CATEGORIES	Frequency (n)	Percentage (of all stories [i.e.2708] analysed (%)	Percentage (of main story subject category) (%)
1	Main category: Crime Sub-category: Violent crime	227	8.4	37.8
2	Main category: Consumer/leisure interest Sub-category: BBC in-house promotions	125	4.6	29.6
3	Main category: Light: Human Interest. Sub-category: Eccentric/bizarre individuals/events.	118	4.4	32.1
4	Main category: Disaster/accidents/tragedy. Sub-category: Accidents.	101	3.7	41.6
5	Main category: Economy/business/(un)/employment. Sub-category: Industrial action.	74	2.7	31.8
6	Main category: 'Serious': Human Interest Sub-category: Ordinary people overcoming adversity/showing strength of character.	60	2.2	36.8
7	Main category: Transport. Sub-category: Roads/cars/traffic problems.	68	2.5	59.1
8	Main category: Health. Sub-category: General health stories.	56	2.1	49.1
9	Main category: Terrorism/'war' in Iraq Sub-category: Act/attempted/alleged acts of terrorism.	44	1.6	38.6
10	Main category: Science/Environment. Sub-category: Science.	42	1.6	41.2
11	Main category: Local government services. Sub-category: Roads/transport/planning.	25	0.9	45.5
12	Main category: Demonstrations/protests. Sub-category: Demonstrations (Peaceful).	43	1.6	91.5
13	Main category: Education. Sub-category: Schools/college/university.	14	0.5	58.3
14	Main category: Sports. Sub-category: Sports.	22	0.8	100.0
15	Main category: Military. Sub-category: Local soldiers serving abroad.	11	0.4	52.4
16	Main category: Immigration/Asylum seekers/refugees. Sub-category: Asylum seekers/refugees (negative).	6	0.2	30.0
17	Main category: Religion. Sub-category: General religious stories.	10	0.4	58.8
18	Main category: Political administration. Sub-category: Regional Party Politics.	4	0.1	28.6
19	Main category: MEC/race-related/cultural. Sub-category: Race/culture - specifically 'Muslim' (negative).	5	0.2	38.5
	TOTAL	1055(n)	39.0%	

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

As a total of 2708 news stories/items were analysed, this
still left 'space' for the other 1653 story subjects to be

featured and have a 'presence' on the programme which amounted to slightly over 60 percent (61.0%) of all news stories analysed.

Therefore, the above finding illustrates, and indeed indicates that Midlands Today covers a wide range and breadth of different subjects/topics in the 'mix' of news stories broadcast on this programme. Therefore, it will now be of interest to move onto analysing 'why' and 'how' such a scenario exists, by examining the degree of autonomy that is afforded to the regional television news genre in terms of its selection of news stories; a degree of autonomy which it is contended within this current study, is much greater than that which is afforded to network television news programmes.

The above point vis-à-vis the 'autonomy' that can be exercised by regional television news programmes when choosing the subject-matter/topic of which news stories to include in the programme is made in light of the fact that news stories contained on network news programmes are generally dictated by what is considered to be the 'main' news or the 'big' news of the day. In fact, it is highly likely that all network news programmes on a daily basis, will include somewhere in their programme the same main 'big' news story of the day. However, with regional

television news programmes, unless the 'big' news story of the day has occurred on their 'patch', i.e. in their region, then it is unlikely to be covered on their programme, unless a regional angle to the story can be found.

A clear indicator that news stories included on network news programmes fundamentally differ from those included on regional news programmes, can be substantiated by the fact that all BBC regional television news programmes immediately follow the BBC network news programme. One could therefore argue that this is testament/indicative of the fact that there is likely to be a difference in the contents of these programmes.

Therefore, as the news stories selected for inclusion on Midlands Today is not necessarily dictated by the 'big' news stories of the day, it could be argued that to a very large extent, this allows this programme the autonomy to decide upon what news stories to feature on the programme. In such a scenario, it could therefore be argued that a degree of flexibility is also afforded to a medium such as Midlands Today to have the capacity to *lean* towards being a space that could depict, i.e. *house* the elements of a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000), whereby the stories that it *chooses to select for inclusion* on the programme enables it to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West

Midlands region in its output and in doing, meet the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy: "to reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000).

Another area warranting consideration in terms of understanding factors that may have an influence upon the stories that are selected for inclusion on the Midlands Today programme, can be summed up by a term that 'sprung' to mind whilst undertaking the participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom - that of: *Producer-preference*.

Whilst shadowing one of the Midlands Today Producers as he was looking through the 'prospects' (i.e. the list of potential news stories available for consideration for inclusion on the programme), when he got to a particular news story he said:

"No! I'm not having that one! I hate animal stories. Now if xxx was producing she'd probably go for that." (Source: Participant observations).

He then pushed that story to one side and continued to go through the other prospects. Needless to say, that 'animal' story was not included in any of the programmes that he was producing.

Such a scenario of 'Producer-preference', i.e. in the above example of one Producer willing to include an 'animal'

story in the programme whilst another would not include such a story, also indicates that whilst the application of news values to 'potential' news stories to help determine whether or not a story is newsworthy (Galtung and Ruge 1965) is a standard journalistic practice, the factor of *subjectivity* amongst journalists also needs to be taken into account when trying to understand why some stories are selected and others are dismissed.

Also, when responding to the following open-ended question in the questionnaire survey disseminated to journalists' working in the Midlands Today newsroom: *'what is meant by the term newsworthy - when applied to potential stories for Midlands Today'*, one respondent stated the following:

"News is news. It's as simple as that. But beyond the "hard" top of the show, what is considered newsworthy is down to the tastes of the Producer." (Respondent M: Source: Questionnaire Survey).

The above point of 'Producer-preference' also falls squarely in line with the theory on 'gatekeepers' (Lewin 1947; White, 1950). In this instance, individual Producers' of the Midlands Today programme deciding upon what stories to admit through the 'gates' and as such, gain entry onto this programme, and what stories to *block* from entering through the gates.

The participant observations conducted for this current study also revealed that whilst the application of news values plays a role in terms of understanding why stories are selected for inclusion on the programme, another aspect that Midlands Today Producers will also take into consideration, is on how a particular news story/item will fit into the overall 'feel' of the programme for *that* particular day. If the Producer considers that a news item would not sit comfortably amongst the general 'feel' and 'tone' of the programme, then it will not be included on that particular programme.

Another factor that plays a role in terms of why stories are selected/not selected for inclusion on the programme, is whether or not there were already other news items in the programme that were of a similar ilk. If there was, then as long as the story would not become 'dated', it would often be held back for another day.

Overall then, the above finding of this study indicates that the selection of news stories for inclusion on the Midlands Today programme is much more complex and involved, than just considering if the story possesses news values in order for it to then be considered as 'newsworthy'.

7.7 **Headlines**

A key/central feature relevant and integral to both regional and network television news programmes is the use of headlines. Headlines are used at the top of the programme as a way of 'teasing' the audience into the programme - to 'capture' their interest, in the hope that they will continue to watch the programme to find out more about the particular news item(s) featured in the headlines.

As can be noted from the Midlands Today running order template (Figure 7.2, p.213), the delivery of the headlines by the news presenter is situated/undertaken at the top of the programme. The participant observations conducted for this study indicate that the Producer of the programme pays a great deal of attention to the designating of a news story to a 'headline'.

The use of the device of 'Headlines' in a news programme can be considered to be very effective strategic planning on the part of news programmes, insofar as the programme trying as best as possible to ensure that viewers will watch the programme from the beginning through to the end - in its entirety.

Headline 1: The 'role' of the news story assigned to Headline 1, is to capture the viewers' immediate attention

and to 'engage' their interest and encourage them to tune in and watch the programme.

Headline 2: The 'role' of the news story designated to this headline is to encourage the viewer, to at the very least, continue to watch the programme through to the news story designated as Headline 2, to find out more about the story. News stories assigned to Headline 2 are usually broadcast half-way (or thereabouts) through the programme.

Headline 3: This news story is usually the last news item to be broadcast on Midlands Today. The 'role' of the news story assigned to 'Headline 3' is to entice and encourage the viewer to 'stick' with the programme all the way through to the end - to find out more about the 'Headline 3' news story.

Get the above right... then the programme has achieved its aim of 'ensnaring' the audience for the duration of the programme - from start to end. As such, the designating of news stories to a 'headline' is considered to be a very important aspect for the Producers to consider, when putting together the programme 'on paper'.

Therefore when the decision has been made at the daily early morning meeting, upon which stories to include in the

programme for that evening (18:30 - 19:00), the Producer immediately sets to work in deciding upon which news stories will be the top headline (headline 1), which will be the 'and finally...' story at the end of the programme (headline 3), and which story item will be assigned to 'Headline 2'. Of course, the 'headline stories' can change throughout the day and in the lead-up to the commencement of the programme, according to any unfolding or unexpected/unforeseen news stories.

The analysis of the story subjects/topics featured on Midlands Today as headline 1, 2 or 3, concur with all expectations. Headline 1 tends to be a 'hard-hitting', 'serious' type of news story and Headline 3 tends to be a 'light human interest' type of story. The subject-matter/topic of Headline 2 types of stories proved to be the most flexible and variable, offering more variety in terms of the types of story subject-matter/topics that might be designated as a 'headline 2' news story.

News stories that were classified under the main story subject category of 'crime' had a higher propensity than other story subjects/topics of being selected as Headline 1. Of the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, 116 selected a 'crime-related' type of news story as Headline 1. This represented slightly under 46 percent (45.8%) of all

programmes analysed, and was selected almost 3x as many times as news items classified under the story subject category of: 'disasters/accidents/tragedies'. News stories of the latter nature were the second most type of stories selected as Headline 1, with 40 of the programmes analysed selecting stories of this nature as 'Headline 1', which represented almost 16 percent (15.8%) of all programmes analysed.

News stories categorised under the main story subject category of: 'economy/business/(un)/employment' were the third-most type of news story to be selected as Headline 1. Stories of this nature were selected as Headline 1 on 21 of the programmes analysed, and represented slightly over 8 percent (8.3%).

Of the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, 20 featured news stories that were classified under the main story subject category of: 'terrorism/'war' in Iraq'. This story subject represented slightly under 8 percent (7.9%).

Not surprisingly, only 1 of the 253 programmes analysed, selected a news story that was classified under the main story subject category of: 'Light: human interest' as 'Headline '. This represented 0.4 percent (0.4%).

(Table 7.28, p.299).

Table 7.28
Headline 1: Main Story Subject categories selected.

	Main story subject category used for: Headline 1	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Crime.	116	45.8
2	Disasters/accidents/tragedy.	40	15.8
3	Economy/business/(un)/employment.	21	8.3
4	Terrorism/'war' in Iraq.	20	7.9
5	Health.	13	5.1
6	Serious: Human interest.	10	4.0
7	Transport.	7	2.8
8	Demonstrations/Protests.	5	2.0
9	Education.	4	1.6
10	Local government services.	4	1.6
11	MEC/race-related/cultural.	3	1.2
12	Consumer/leisure interests.	2	0.8
13	Immigration/asylum seekers/refugees.	2	0.8
14	Political administration.	2	0.8
15	Sports.	2	0.8
16	Light: Human interest.	1	0.4
17	Religion.	1	0.4
18	Military.	0	0.0
19	Science/Environment.	0	0.0
	TOTAL	253(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Similar to Headline 1, the types of news stories selected the most as Headline 2 were those classified under the main story subject category of 'crime'. 70 of the 253 programmes analysed, representing 27.7% percent (27.7%) selected a crime-related news story as Headline 2.

Stories classified under the main story subject categories of: 'consumer/leisure interests' and 'Serious: human interest', were the second-most types of news stories selected as a Headline 2, which amounted to 27 of the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, and represented slightly over 10.5 percent (10.7%).

News stories classified under the story subject categories of: 'MEC/race-related/cultural' and 'religion' were the least types of news stories selected as Headline 2 (Table 7.29).

Table 7.29
Headline 2: Main story subject categories selected.

	Main story subject category used for: Headline 2	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Crime.	70	27.7
2	Consumer/leisure Interests.	27	10.7
3	'Serious': Human interest.	27	10.7
4	Disasters/accidents/tragedy.	24	9.5
5	Economy/Business/(Un)/employment.	18	7.1
6	Health.	17	6.7
7	'Light': Human interest.	14	5.5
8	Transport.	13	5.1
9	Science/Environment.	8	3.2
10	Terrorism/'War' in Iraq.	8	3.2
11	Sports.	7	2.8
12	Local Government Services.	5	2.0
13	Immigration/asylum Seekers/refugees.	4	1.6
14	Education.	3	1.2
15	Demonstrations/Protests.	3	1.2
16	Military.	3	1.2
17	MEC/race-related/Cultural.	1	0.4
18	Religion.	1	0.4
19	Political Administration.	0	0.0
	TOTAL	253 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Moving on to the subjects/topics of the news stories that were selected as 'Headline 3'...

Not surprisingly, the most-featured types of news stories selected to be a 'Headline 3', were those that were classified under the main story subject category of: 'Light:

human-interest'. This amounted to 146 programmes which represented over 57 percent (57.7%).

News stories classified under the main story subject category of: 'consumer/leisure interests' were selected as Headline 3 on 74 of the programmes analysed, representing slightly over 29 percent (29.2%).

Surprisingly, news stories/items classified under the main story subject category of: 'Serious: human interest' were the third-most selected types of news stories chosen as Headline 3. However, only 9 of the 253 programmes analysed selected news stories classified under this main story subject category of 'Serious: human interest' as Headline 3, which represented less than 4 percent (3.6%) of all programmes analysed.

News stories classified under the following 9 main story subject categories were never featured as Headline 3 in any of the Midlands Today programmes analysed:

- i) Education.
- ii) Demonstrations/protests.
- iii) Health.
- iv) Immigration/Asylum Seekers/Refugees.
- v) Local Government Services.
- vi) Political Administration.
- vii) MEC/race-related/cultural.
- viii) Religion.
- ix) Terrorism/'war' in Iraq.

The above findings are *telling* and true-to-form in terms of the expectations of a 'headline 3' type of news story, which as mentioned previously tends to be a news story that could be classified as being a 'soft' news item. However, each of the above 9 main story subject categories that were never used as Headline 3, could be regarded as being the types of story subject categories that would ordinarily encompass news stories of a somewhat 'serious' nature (Table 7.30).

Table 7.30
Headline 3: Main Story Subject categories selected.

	Main story subject category used for: Headline 3	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
'1	'Light': Human interest.	146	57.7
2	Consumer/leisure interests.	74	29.2
3	'Serious': Human Interest.	9	3.6
4	Sports.	8	3.2
f5	Economy/Business/(Un)/employment.	5	2.0
6	Crime.	4	1.6
7	Disasters/accidents/tragedy.	3	1.2
8	Transport.	2	0.8
9	Science/Environment.	1	0.4
10	Military.	1	0.4
11	Education.	0	0.0
12	Demonstrations/Protests.	0	0.0
13	Health.	0	0.0
14	Immigration/asylum seekers/refugees.	0	0.0
15	Local Government Services.	0	0.0
16	Political Administration.	0	0.0
17	MEC/race-related/cultural.	0	0.0
18	Religion.	0	0.0
19	Terrorism/'War' in Iraq.	0	0.0
	TOTAL	253(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

7.8 Primary Definers of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today

A multi-ethnic public sphere as conceived within this current study, would not only enable those from the MECs to gain more access to the news media, but would also afford MECs the opportunity to express their views/opinions on a variety of different subjects/topics and as such, gain the *right to be understood* (Husband 1996). Therefore, as in the case of 'traditional' primary definers, those from the MECs (as well as all other groups of people) would also be given the opportunity to sometimes set the 'news agenda' of news stories included in television news programmes, as opposed to just responding to a news agenda that has already been set by primary definers, i.e. 'official' and 'non-official' news sources (Hall et al 1978).

As 'traditional' primary definers are afforded 'habitual access' to the news media (Molotch and Lester 1982), and as such are regularly *sought out* as news sources by the news media, the purpose of this current section of this chapter is three-fold:

- i) To identify and 'detect' the primary definers of the news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programme.

- ii) To establish to what extent this programme relies upon 'traditional' primary definers (as described by Hall et al 1978) to set the news agenda of the news stories it broadcasts.
- iii) In light of the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, with its aim/objective of *reflecting the nation that it serves* (Dyke 2000), this section of this chapter also examines to what extent, an 'ordinary' person is afforded the opportunity of being the 'primary definer' of news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programme. In so doing, this section also aims to try to find answers to a question raised by Campion (2005) about the role of public service broadcasters in terms of the National Conversation. In this instance, in terms of this current study, the focus is upon the Regional Conversation:

If the mission now is to build social capital and connect people to each other, important questions arise about the nature of the National Conversation that public service broadcasters are mediating through their programmes. Who is setting the agenda for this Conversation and how? What topics get discussed? Whose voices are heard and whose remain silent? Is there an onus on broadcasters to ensure everyone gets an equal chance to participate? (Campion 2005:3).

The way in which the primary definer of a news story broadcast on the Midlands Today programme was 'detected' within this current study was by adopting the following method:

- The main/primary focus of the news story, i.e. the starting point/'angle' taken on the news item, and the contributor 'detected' as putting forth that news angle would be classified as being the 'primary definer' of the news story. It is acknowledged that this approach/method may be challenged as being very 'subjective' to the researcher. However, given that it was not always possible to be 'privy' to where the initial source/impetus of the news item came from (during the period of time that participant observations were conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom), the above approach was considered to be the most apt way of approaching this exercise.

In the pursuit of trying to 'detect' the primary definer of each news story analysed, a list of 21 different social groups was devised and the contributor, i.e. the individual 'detected' as being the primary definer of the news story was assigned to one of these social groups, according to the 'position' that the individual occupied in the news story. For example, an individual, i.e. contributor who is a police

officer would be classified under the social group category of: 'police'; an individual who is a campaigner/protestor would be classified under the social group category of: 'campaigner/protester'; a witness to a crime for example, would be categorised under the social group of: 'witness' and so forth.

The 21 social group classifications included both 'traditional' primary definers (Hall *et al* 1978) and 'non-traditional' primary definers of news stories (as defined by this current study) which encompass the social group categories that relate to the 'ordinary' person.

The devising of the social group classifications (i.e. possible primary definers of a news story) was developed and informed by the following:

- The extensive viewing of the Midlands Today programmes.
- The undertaking of the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom.
- The taking up of an attachment from my substantive staff position in BBC Birmingham's Current Affairs and Features department, to work

in the Midlands Today newsroom. Duties included working on the forward planning desk, which involved the screening/assessment of a substantial amount of press releases that were sent into the programme for consideration to be included on the programme as a news story.

In addition to the 21 specific 'types' of possible primary definers (as classified by their social group), 3 other classifications were also included: 'more than 1 primary definer', 'none of the above' and 'not possible to specify the primary definer of the news story' (Table 7.31 p.308).

Most of the social group classifications devised are self-explanatory - particularly those that are considered to be 'traditional' primary definers of news stories - 'official' and 'non-official' news sources (Hall *et al* 1978). However, it is considered useful to provide a brief description of the social group classifications that may not be so self-explanatory in terms of the 'types' of individuals (i.e. contributors to a news story), that would be classified under a particular social group:

- 'Involved group member': this social group category would be attributed to a contributor

who is an 'ordinary' person involved in an event, or is a member of a group activity.

- 'Individual in focus': refers to an 'ordinary' person who has caught the media's attention.

Table 7.31
Social Group of 'potential' Primary Definers of news stories.

	Social Group of potential Primary Definers of news stories
1	Government/Politician
2	Local Authority representative
3	Police
4	Other emergency services
5	Military
6	Courts.
7	Coroner's Office
8	Trade Union representative
9	Expert
10	Business Spokesperson
11	Representative of an official/recognised body/organisation (other than any identified specifically)
12	Campaigner(s)/protester(s)
13	Community group worker
14	Involved group member
15	Individual in Focus (i.e. 'ordinary' person who has caught the media's attention)
16	MEC Church leader/representative
17	Muslim representative of an organisation/mosque
18	Celebrity
19	Witness
20	Victim
21	Midlands Today defining the story (often used to conduct a poll vote with viewer interaction or to get viewers' comments on a news story)
22	More than 1 Primary Definer
23	None of the above
24	Not possible to define Primary Definer of the story

Source: Television News Coding Frame (Appendix D).

Of the 2708 news stories featured within the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, the social group that was 'detected' the most as being the primary definer of news

stories was the 'Police'. The Police are considered to be 'traditional' primary definers of news stories (Hall et al 1978). This social group was 'detected' as setting the news agenda on 509 news stories, which represented slightly under 19 percent (18.8%) of all stories analysed. This finding is to be expected because the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom highlighted that hourly calls are made to all of the emergency services, to check upon any events that may have occurred. Therefore in this instance, the Police can be regarded as having 'habitual access' to the news media (Molotch and Lester (1974) and as such, any 'Police-related' news stories that may be of interest to the Midlands Today programme will *make* the programme, on the very same day that the story came to light - even if it results in the 'dropping' of another story for another day.

However, the social group which was the second most 'detected' primary definer of a news story, did not fall under the classification of a 'traditional' primary definer of news stories, but was classified under the social group category of an 'individual in focus' - that is, an individual who has caught the news media's attention. Within this current study, this classification of social group would be an 'ordinary' person, and so is regarded as being a 'non-traditional' primary definer of a news story. This

social group was 'detected' as setting the news agenda on 462 news stories, which represented just over 17 percent (17.1%) of all news stories analysed.

The 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th most 'detected' primary definers of news stories could be described as being 'traditional' primary definers, and so would fall within the classifications as defined by Hall *et al* (1978) - of 'official' or 'non-official' primary definers.

The third most-detected primary definer of a news story was: 'Representative of an official/recognised body/organisation (other than any identified specifically)'. This social group was 'detected' as being the primary definer of 374 news stories, which represented slightly under 14 percent (13.8%) of all stories analysed.

The primary definers of 288 news stories, which represented over 10 percent (10.6%) of all news stories analysed were 'detected' as being individuals classified under the social group category of: 'business spokesperson'. Within this current study this social group is considered to be a 'traditional' primary definer (i.e. non-official) because of the 'power' and 'status' that such individuals are likely to hold within society and as such, are likely to be afforded greater and easier access to the news media than an 'ordinary' person.

The 'first definition' (Hall et al 1978) of 184 news stories analysed was 'detected' as being provided by the 'Courts', and represented slightly under 7 percent (6.8%) of all news stories analysed.

Local Authority representatives were the 6th most 'detected' primary definers of news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed. This amounted to 184 stories, which represented just under 7 percent (6.8%) of all news stories.

Therefore, adding together the top 6 most 'detected' primary definers of the news stories analysed, 'traditional' primary definers were 'detected' as being the primary definers of 1488 news stories, whilst the 'ordinary' person (classified under the social group category of: 'individual in focus'), was 'detected' as being the primary definer of 462 of the news stories analysed (Table 7.32).

Table 7.32
Top 6 - most 'detected' primary definers of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

	Primary Definer	Frequency (n)
1	Police	509
2	Individual in Focus (i.e. someone who has caught the medias attention)	462
3	Representative of an official/ recognised body/organisation (other than any identified specifically)	374
4	Business Spokesperson	288
5	Courts	184
6	Local Authority representative	133
	TOTAL	1950(n)

(n) = number

Source: Content Analysis.

Overall, the finding of this current study indicates that of the 2708 news stories featured in the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, the first definition of the majority of news stories was provided by 'traditional' primary definers of news stories.

'Traditional' primary definers ('official' and 'non-official') were 'detected' as setting the news agenda on 1848 news stories, which represented slightly over 68 percent (68.2%) of all news stories analysed.

The social group of the primary definers classified within this current study as being 'traditional' primary definers were as follows:

- Police: 'detected' as being the primary definers of 509 news stories analysed (18.8%).
- Representative of an official/recognised body/organisation (other than any identified specifically): 374 news stories (13.8%).
- Business spokesperson: 288 news stories (10.6%).
- Courts: 184 news stories (6.8%).
- Local Authority representative: 133 news stories (4.9%).

- Other emergency services: 85 news stories (3.1%).
- Government/politician: 82 news stories (3.0%).
- Campaigner/protester: 79 news stories (2.9%).
- Trade Union representative: 42 news stories (1.6%).
- Expert: 32 news stories (1.2%).
- Military: 30 news stories (1.1%).
- Coroner's Office: 10 news stories (0.4%).

(Table 7.33, p.315).

'Non-traditional' primary definers of news stories were 'detected' as being the primary definers of 602 news stories, which represented slightly over 22 percent (22.2%) of all stories analysed. The social groups that were classified as being 'non-traditional' primary definers, encompassed individuals who would be considered as being an 'ordinary' person. As such, the following social groups were classified as 'non-traditional' primary definers:

- Individual in focus: 462 news stories (17.1%).
- Involved group member: 106 news stories (3.9%).
- MEC church leader/representative: 12 news stories (0.4%).
- Muslim representative of an organisation/mosque: 11 news stories (0.4%).
- Community group worker: 11 news stories (0.4%).

(Table 7.33, p. 315).

In addition, the extensive viewing of the Midlands Today programmes assisted in the detection of 'Other' primary definers of news stories which could not be classified as being 'traditional' primary definers in the classical sense and meaning of the term (Hall et al 1978), or as 'non-traditional' primary definers, as conceived and defined within this current study. Therefore, such social groups were classified under the category of: 'Other' primary definers of news stories, and were 'detected' as being the primary definers of 258 of the 2708 news stories analysed, which represented 9.6 percent (9.6%) of all stories (Table 7.33, p. 315).

Although the overall finding of the use of 'primary definers' on the Midlands Today programme indicates that the news agenda on the majority of news stories analysed was set by 'traditional' primary definers (68.2%), it does also indicate that the social groups that the 'ordinary' person is classified under, are at times afforded the opportunity of setting the news agenda of some of the stories broadcast and as such, are the primary definers of such news stories (22.2%). Therefore, in light of the aims/objectives of this current study which essentially is an examination into the Midlands Today programme being a site that could possibly house and articulate a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 1996, 2000), these findings are very encouraging.

Table 7.33

Primary Definer of news stories:
 'Traditional' primary definers, 'Non-traditional' primary definers and
 'Other' primary definers of news stories.

Primary Definer	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
'TRADITIONAL' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES.		
Police.	509	18.8
Representative of a recognised official organisation (other than any identified specifically)	374	13.8
Business spokesperson	288	10.6
Courts	184	6.8
Local Authority representative	133	4.9
Other emergency services	85	3.1
Government/Politician	82	3.0
Campaigner/protester	79	2.9
Trade Union representative	42	1.6
Expert	32	1.2
Military	30	1.1
Coroner's Office	10	0.4
SUB-TOTAL	1848(n)	68.2(%)
'NON-TRADITIONAL' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES (i.e. 'Ordinary' people)		
Individual in Focus (i.e. someone who has caught the medias attention)	462	17.1
Involved group member	106	3.9
MEC Church leader/representative	12	0.4
Muslim representative of an organisation/mosque	11	0.4
Community Group worker	11	0.4
SUB-TOTAL	602(n)	22.2(%)
'OTHER' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES.		
Midlands Today defining the story (often used to conduct a poll vote with viewer interaction or to get viewers' comments on a news story)	204	7.5
Celebrity	42	1.6
Victim	10	0.4
Witness	2	0.1
SUB-TOTAL	258(n)	9.6(%)
TOTAL	2708(n)	100.0%

(n= number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

In terms of the question posed by Campion (2005) in the citation used at the beginning of this chapter's section on 'primary definers', re: *who is setting the agenda of the National Conversation*, the above finding indicates that the 'ordinary' person is afforded the opportunity of participating in the setting of the Regional Conversation. In relation to the specific question of: 'whose voices are

heard and whose remain silent?' (Campion, 2005), this is an area that is explored and examined in the following chapter (Chapter 8).

The above finding of the 'ordinary' person being afforded the opportunity as a 'non-traditional' primary definer - to at times set the news agenda on some of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today - is very understandable.

Understandable - when one understands the aims/objectives of the regional television news genre as typified by the Midlands Today programme. For example, much of the findings presented thus far, indicate that this programme aims to achieve a 'professional closeness/attachment' to its viewers', as opposed to a 'professional distance/detachment' that one could argue exists within the presentation and contents of network news programmes (Cottle 1993). Therefore, it is hardly surprising then that this programme actively engenders and affords the 'ordinary' person the opportunity to set the news agenda on some of the news stories that it broadcasts.

If one refers back to the types of news stories broadcast on this programme (Table 7.7, p.221), then we are reminded that the following main story subject categories of: 'Light: human interest', 'Serious: human interest' and

'Consumer/leisure interest stories (particularly the former two), encompass the types of news story sub-categories that rely upon, and features the 'ordinary' person as the main focal point of the story. As such, this necessitates for the 'ordinary' person to be the primary definer of some of these news stories, and in the case of the afore-mentioned 3 main story subject categories, this amounted to over one-third (35.3%) of all news stories analysed for this current study, with the 'ordinary' person being the primary definer of *some* of these news stories.

Also, given regional television's desire and pursuit to enshrine the 'populist appeal' of its programmes - even when a news story is not one that may on the 'surface' appear to be of a human interest type of news story in the classical sense of the term (for example, 'light' or 'serious' human interest types of stories), similar to the finding of the study conducted by Cottle (1993), the finding of this current study also indicates that there is always an active pursuit on the part of the news programme to find a 'human-interest' angle to the story.

It was also notable during the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom that on many occasions, when potential news stories for inclusion on the programme were 'pitched' and discussed in the early daily

morning meetings, the Producer of the programme would often say: 'no suits... we want a *human side* to the story'. In other words, the 'ordinary' person to participate in the delivery of the details of the story by giving their 'personal take' and 'perspective' on the details of the news story; someone who it is considered viewers could relate to, i.e. 'not suits'!

For example, following the opening of the M6 toll road which was surrounded by a great deal of discontentment and controversy, Midlands Today did a week-long series on this toll road (discussed earlier), whereby a different viewer was followed each day on their travels, as they recounted their experiences of using this toll road.

One of the most overt examples of Midlands Today going to great lengths to produce a programme that would have the hallmarks of a populist regional television news programme was in the production of a programme that was broadcast in 2004 to celebrate this programme's 40th anniversary (discussed previously). Therefore, to cite the news presenter once again:

"As part of our 40th anniversary celebrations, we're bringing you a snapshot of 24 hours of the life of the Midlands, using more cameras, more reporters than ever before." (Suzanne Virdee, 2004).

This programme consisted of an extraordinarily high number of news stories on that day (23 in total), with each news story focusing upon some aspect of the life of an 'ordinary' person living in the West Midlands region. As such, an 'ordinary' person was the primary definer of each of those 23 news stories.

In summary then, the overall finding of the types of 'primary definers' that are afforded the opportunity to set the news agenda on the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, is very encouraging. This assertion is made in light of the fact that as discussed previously (in Chapter 3 of this current study), the news media "reflect the society within which they operate" (Halloran 1977:15). Therefore, given that many of those from the MECs do not occupy positions in society that would possibly deem them to be classified as 'traditional' primary definers of news stories, i.e. 'official' or 'non-official' news sources, the above finding would also suggest that *in theory*, the Midlands Today programme could facilitate the inclusion of people from the MECs as primary definers (i.e. under the umbrella of an 'ordinary' person') and as such, allow such individuals to be able to provide the first definition of some of the news stories that it broadcasts.

7.9 News Presentational Formats

A final area warranting attention and investigation in terms of understanding the structural components that make-up the Midlands Today regional television news programme is the presentational formats/styles, adopted by this programme to deliver the news stories/items that it broadcasts.

The extensive viewing of the Midlands Today programmes identified a variety of different presentational formats and styles that may be employed by this programme to deliver the details of a news story/item. Therefore, building and extending upon the news presentational formats discussed by Cottle (1990), four very distinct presentational formats of delivering a news story/item were identified on the Midlands Today programme:

- i) Totally Restricted.
- ii) Partly Restricted.
- iii) Limited.
- iv) Expansive.

Below is a description of each of the above presentational formats, along with the specific presentational styles that are classified under each format. A total of 18 different presentational styles were identified, and the sub-category of 'other' was also included to accommodate for any news

stories presented in a format/style that could not be assigned to any of the prescribed classifications.

7.9.1 Totally Restricted

News stories presented in a 'totally restricted' format do not contain any outside influences such as: contributors (i.e. interviewees), visuals, graphics or music to assist in the delivery of the details of the news story. Rather, a 'direct verbal account' of a story is delivered by the news presenter/reporter and as such, this presentational format does not allow for alternative voices or opinions to be heard in the delivery of the details of the news story but remains "...sealed from challenge or alternative points of view" (Cottle 1993:155).

Three presentational styles were identified on the Midlands Today programme as falling under the 'totally-restricted' presentational format:

- i) A direct verbal account of the news story delivered by the news presenter - directly to camera. The only other image on-screen during the delivery of the news story is the *Midlands Today* logo in the backdrop of the shot.

- ii) The reporter is 'live' in the studio doing a 2-way with the news presenter.
- iii) The reporter is 'live' on location doing a 2-way with the news presenter.

7.9.2 Partly Restricted

News stories presented under the 'partly restricted' format are delivered as a verbal account of the story by the news presenter/reporter, and visual references such as film footage, graphics or music may be used to accompany the delivery of the story details. However, similar to news stories delivered in a 'totally restricted' manner, this presentational format does not include any 'outside voices' or alternative viewpoints on the details of the story.

Specific presentational styles that would be classified under the 'partly restricted' presentational format are as follows:

- i) A direct verbal account of the story delivered by the news presenter, with 'stills' or graphics in the backdrop of the shot.

- ii) The news presenter is out-of-vision (OOV) as they deliver details of the news story whilst film footage is 'played out' simultaneously on-screen, to accompany the 'verbal' details of the story. This style of presentation is known in the industry as an 'OOV', i.e. 'out-of-vision'. As such, the news presenter is out-of-vision for the duration of the delivery of the details of the news story/item.
- iii) The reporter is 'live' in the studio doing a 2-way with the news presenter. This style of presenting a news story would also include film footage and/or graphics.
- iv) The reporter is 'live' on location doing a 2-way with the news presenter. This presentational style also includes film footage and/or graphics.
- v) The reporter is out-of-vision as they verbally deliver details of the news story, whilst film footage and/or graphics relating to the news story is 'played out' on-screen.

- vi) The reporter is in-vision as they deliver details of a news story. Film footage and/or graphics is interspersed during their delivery of the story.

7.9.3 Limited

News stories presented in a 'limited' presentational format include 'outside voices' (i.e. interviewees/contributors) to allow for participation in the delivery of the details of the story. This presentational format is regarded as being 'limited' because contributors/interviewees to the news item do not have any control over what parts of their contribution will be included/omitted in the final news story/item broadcast. Rather, stories presented under the 'limited' presentational format are pre-recorded and as such, all 'outside voices' recorded are subject to editing and are 'packaged' accordingly by the reporter.

In addition to the inclusion of interviews with contributors, news items presented in a 'limited' presentational format can also include other elements such as: voxpops, film footage, archive material, graphics or music. 4 different 'limited' presentational styles were identified on the Midlands Today programmes analysed.

- i) The reporter is in-vision and a package is 'played out' during the delivery of the news story/item.
- ii) The reporter is 'out-of-vision' throughout the delivery of the news story/item and a package is 'played out' to assist in the delivery of the details of the story.
- iii) The reporter is 'live' in the studio or 'live' on location and pre-recorded interview(s) and/or a package is 'played-out', as part of the delivery of the news story/item.
- iv) The reporter and a film package of a pre-recorded group interview/discussion.

7.9.4 Expansive

The 'expansive' presentational format allows for 'outside voices' to participate 'live' to a news story that is being broadcast on the Midlands Today programme. This presentational format enables contributors to have more control over what parts of their contribution is actually included in the news story/item broadcast than the 'limited' presentational format. This is because contributors to a news story delivered under the 'expansive' presentational

format are afforded the opportunity of being heard 'live' and 'unedited'. This type of presentational format is classified within this current study as 'expansive' because contributors (i.e. interviewees) to news stories delivered under this presentational format are afforded the opportunity of expanding upon their comments by entering into discussions/debate to develop their point-of-view.

Contributors are also usually afforded more 'airtime' to participate in the delivery of the details of the news story, than contributors to news stories delivered under a 'limited' presentational format. Therefore, this presentational format affords contributors the most 'unrestricted' means of participating in the delivery of the details of a news story, than any other presentational formats identified on the Midlands Today programme.

Below are the five presentational styles that are classified under the 'expansive' presentational format:

- i) The news presenter with the contributor(s) 'live' in the studio/location. News stories assigned to this sub-category do not include a package in the delivery of the news story.

- ii) The news presenter is with the Contributor(s) 'live' in the studio/location. News items classified under this presentational sub-category would also include a package in the delivery of the news story.
- iii) The reporter is with Contributor(s) 'live' in the studio/location. News items classified under this sub-category do not include a package in the delivery of the news story.
- iv) The reporter is with Contributor(s) 'live' in the studio/location. News items classified under this sub-category would also include a package in the delivery of the news story.
- v) The news presenter/reporter is conducting interviews in a group discussion with contributors participating 'live' in the discussion.

7.9.5 Analysis of the Presentational Formats used on Midlands Today

Having delineated and identified the types of presentational formats that may be used on the Midlands Today programme to deliver a news story, this following section examines the

degree to which each presentational format was used in the news stories analysed.

Of the 2708 news stories analysed, just under two-thirds (64.4%) of all news stories, which represented a total of 1743 stories, were presented in a 'limited' presentational format. This represented the highest frequency of presentational formats used on the programmes analysed.

The next most-used presentational format on the news stories analysed was 'partly restricted'. 669 news stories, which represented slightly under 25 percent (24.7%), were delivered in this manner.

News stories/items delivered under the 'totally restricted' presentational format amounted to 110, which represented just over 4 percent (4.1%) of all news stories analysed.

The least-used presentational format on the news stories analysed was the 'expansive' presentational format. This presentational format was used in the delivery of 186 news stories, which amounted to just under 7 percent (6.9%) of all news stories analysed being presented in this manner (Table 7.34, p. 329).

Table 7.34
Presentational Formats used to deliver news stories on Midlands Today.

	Presentational Format of News Story	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Limited	1743	64.4
2	Partly Restricted	669	24.7
3	Expansive	186	6.9
4	Totally Restricted	110	4.1
	TOTAL	2708(n)	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

The finding as presented above, can best be considered as being an indication of the extent to which the Midlands Today programme employs good *tele-visual practices*, in its quest to produce a populist *infotainment* regional television news programme.

For example, if the majority of news stories were delivered in a presentational style classified under the 'totally restricted' presentational format, then the omission of contributors and/or visual references such as film footage, graphics or music etc., would result in an overwhelmingly high usage of 'talking heads' to deliver the details of the news stories broadcast. In this instance, the talking heads would either be the 'talking head' of the news presenter or the 'talking head' of the reporter. Therefore, the regular and over-use of the 'totally-restricted' presentational format to deliver the details of news stories broadcast on a television news programme such as Midlands Today, would be tantamount to making a 'television' *faux pas*, by producing a

programme in a style that would be better-suited for radio! This is because adopting such an approach to making a 'television' news programme would not make for a very good 'tele-visual' experience for the viewers, and may possibly run the risk of losing viewers.

Similarly, even if the majority of stories broadcast on a regional television news programme were presented in a 'partly restricted' manner, this too could run the risk of possibly losing viewers. Although the 'partly restricted' presentational format allows for the inclusion of film footage, graphics and/or music (but no contributor involvement), a constant stream of news stories presented in such a manner could make the programme appear to be 'visually static', and disengaging for viewers. As such, this would fail to fulfil the populist appeal that the regional television news genre strives to achieve.

Therefore, staying in line with the populist 'infotainment' approach of regional television news programmes, the above finding (Table 7.34, p.329) indicate that the majority of news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programme were delivered under the 'limited' presentational format (64.4%). This finding is illustrative of the fact that the delivery of the news stories included on a regional television news programme, is not solely concerned with the imparting of the

details of the news stories broadcast, but is also about trying to ensure that the style in which the news story is presented is visually interesting and appealing - to assist in achieving the engagement of the viewer.

This finding is very encouraging in terms of the overall aims and objectives of this current study, because it indicates that to a large extent, the Midlands Today programme *does* allow for the 'voice', 'views' and 'opinions' of contributors to be 'aired' and included in the delivery of the details, on the majority of news stories that it broadcasts.

When the total of the number of news stories presented in a 'limited' presentational format (1743) is added to the total number of news stories presented in an 'expansive' presentational format (186), the overall total figure amounts to 1929, thus indicating that over 70 percent (71.2%) of all news stories analysed, allowed for the inclusion of the views/comments of the 'contributors'.

Therefore, given the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, and given the high degree of access afforded to 'contributors' to participate in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today (71.2%), the basic foundations of an effective public sphere and as such, a *possible* multi-

ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000) may also be in existence, in terms of the inclusion of contributor(s) to the news stories broadcast. This will be further discussed and examined in the following chapter (Chapter 8), whereby the focus of analysis shifts to the contributors who are afforded 'access' to participate in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

7.9.6 Analysis of the Presentational Styles used on Midlands Today

The findings presented thus far, have provided details of the presentational formats employed by the Midlands Today programme to deliver the news stories that it broadcasts. However, the following analysis of the specific presentational styles that are used by this programme will assist in providing an understanding as to why there is a *preferred* presentational style, from within each of the four presentational formats.

Of the 3 presentational styles classified under the 'totally restricted' presentational format, the most frequently used style was 'reporter - 'live' on location - doing a 2-way with the news presenter'. This presentational style was used in the delivery of 47 of the 110 news stories classified

under the 'totally restricted' presentational format, and represented slightly under 43 percent (42.7%).

It is quite understandable why this presentational style is the most frequently used from within this presentational format, because of the presentational styles classified under the 'totally restricted' presentational format, this is the most aesthetically-pleasing style to use in the delivery of the details of a news story - as it offers so much more to the viewer.

For example, as the reporter is out 'on location' in the afore-mentioned presentational style, the location will in some way or another be related to the news story. In some respects then, the viewer 'sitting at home' can almost be regarded as being metaphorically 'transported' to some 'visual' aspect of the news story. Therefore, not only will the verbal articulation of the details of the story be relayed by the reporter to inform the viewer, but the location will also assist in creating a visual ambience.

Therefore, delivering the details of a news story from a location (i.e. outside of the studio), will have a much greater appeal to the Producers of the Midlands Today programme, than the least-used presentational style of 'reporter 'live' in the studio - doing a 2-way with the news

presenter'. Although the way in which the details of the news story may be similar in its delivery to the most used presentational style, i.e. a 2-way with the news presenter, the least-used presentational style may be considered as being conducted within a 'sterile' environment of a news studio, as opposed to the environment of a 'location' (Table 7.35, pp.343-4).

Of the six presentational styles classified under the 'partly restricted' presentational format, the style that was way out in front as being the most frequently used style was 'news presenter - out-of-vision (OOV) and film footage'. This presentational style was used in the delivery of 471 of the 669 news stories delivered under the 'partly restricted' format, which represented over 70 percent (70.4%) of all news stories classified under this presentational format.

This style of presenting a news story allows the news presenter to deliver the details of the story in brief i.e. NIB - 'news-in-brief'. Referring back to the Midlands Today running order template which was discussed previously (Figure 7.2, p.212), a 'NIB BLOCK' is included in this template which indicates that the 'NIB BLOCK' is a regular and 'expected' feature in this programme, and as such is incorporated within each Midlands Today programme. Therefore, as this is a pre-requisite feature of this

programme, the above finding should be regarded as 'expected'.

The presentational style of 'reporter out-of-vision (OOV) and film footage' was the least-used, of the presentational styles classified under the 'partly restricted' format, and amounted to just 15 news stories (2.2%) being delivered in this manner.

A strong indicator as to why this is the least-used presentational style amongst the other 'partly restricted' presentational styles, is likely to be because it replicates one of the presentational styles adopted by the news presenter when presenting the news-in-brief block (a pre-requisite feature identified in the programme's running order template (Figure 7.2, p.212). As the presentational style of: 'news presenter - out-of-vision (OOV) and film footage' was the most-used partly-restricted style to deliver news stories, there is less call/need for the least-used style of: 'reporter out-of-vision (OOV) and film footage'.

In addition, the 4 other presentational styles that fall beneath the most-used presentational style of 'news presenter - out-of-vision (OOV) and film footage' have much more to offer than the least-used style.

For example, the second most-used presentational style of 'news presenter and stills/graphics in backdrop of shot', not only involves the use of the above-mentioned visuals, but more importantly, this style of delivering a news story allows the news presenter to present 'news-in-brief'. Therefore, this presentational style also enables the programme to mix-up the way in which the constant fixed feature of 'news-in-brief' is presented. This presentational style was used to deliver the details of 94 news stories, representing just over 14 percent (14.1%) of 'partly restricted' news stories.

The only difference between the third most-used presentational style of: 'reporter in-vision and film footage' and the least-used presentational style is that in the case of the former, this way of delivering the details of a news story includes the reporter in-vision. Therefore, in terms of this programme's desire to build close 'connections' with its viewers, this style of presenting a news story allows the viewer to not only 'hear', but to also 'see' the reporter, who is... a 'familiar' face.

A clear obvious advantage of the fourth most-used presentational style of 'reporter - live in the studio, doing a 2-way with the news presenter', over the least-used presentational style classified under the 'partly

restricted' presentational format, is that this style has the added advantage of the reporter delivering details of the news story 'live'. Also, as this presentational style involves a 2-way with the news presenter, it also allows for the exchange of dialogue between the two and in addition, affords the news presenter the opportunity to ask questions of the reporter on 'behalf' of the viewers. In other words, act as a 'pseudo' advocate for the viewer by asking the types of questions viewers may be thinking of. This presentational style was used to deliver 24 news stories, which represented 3.6 percent (3.6%) of all stories presented under the 'partly restricted' format.

The fifth most-used presentational style classified under the 'partly restricted' presentational format, offers similar benefits (to the above), as to why these two styles were used more than the least-used 'partly restricted' presentational style. As such, the only difference between the fourth and fifth most-used 'partly restricted' presentational styles is that the fifth: 'reporter - 'live' on location, doing a 2-way with the news presenter', is that the reporter is out on location as opposed to being in the studio. Whilst this presentational style has the added aesthetic benefit of being on location as opposed to the fourth most-used presentational style, a point to consider is that the delivery of a news story 'on location', involves

logistical planning (i.e. the use of the SATVAN - Satellite van, and so limited resources can impact upon the number of news stories that are delivered 'live' on location. This presentational style was used in the delivery of 20 news stories, which represented 3 percent (3.0%) of all news stories presented in a 'partly restricted' presentational manner (Table 7.35, pp.343-4).

Of the 4 presentational styles classified under the 'limited' presentational format, the most-used presentational style to deliver the details of a news story was 'reporter (in-vision) and package'. This presentational style was used 3x as many times as the second most-used style of 'reporter (out-of-vision) and package'. The most-used style was adopted in the presentation of 1257 news stories, representing slightly over 72 percent (72.1%) of all styles classified under the 'limited' presentational format, whilst the 2nd-most used presentational style accounted for 408 news stories, which represented 23.4 percent (23.4%).

Once again, if one dissects all that the most-used presentational style of 'reporter in-vision and package' has to offer, then it is very clear to understand why this style is so popular. This presentational style is the most

eclectic style available within the limited presentational format.

Aesthetically, this presentational style offers so much 'visually' to the viewer. As the reporter is in-vision, viewers are likely to recognise a familiar-looking face delivering the news story/item. A package (which will include 'outside' voices') allows the reporter to be at their most creative in terms of how they decide to construct the news item. The contents of the package also allows for the inclusion of contributors to participate in the information/details provided on the news story.

The least-used presentational style classified under the 'limited' presentational format was 'reporter 'live' in the studio/location with pre-recorded interviews'. This amounted to 78 news stories being presented in this manner, which represented 4.5 percent (4.5%) of all presentational styles classified under the 'limited' format.

Although the least-used presentational style of 'reporter 'live' in the studio/location with pre-recorded interviews' includes 'outside voices' (i.e. contributors) in the delivery of the details of the news story, the segments of the news story that involves contributors would simply be straightforward 'clips', as the pre-recorded interview

excerpts included in the delivery of the news story do not afford for the creativity that can be employed in the compiling of a package. As such, this presentational style was only used in the delivery of 78 news stories, which represented 4.5 percent (4.5%) of all presentational styles classified under the 'limited' presentational format (Table 7.35, pp.343-4).

Of the 5 presentational styles classified under the presentational format of 'expansive', there were no surprises in terms of the presentational style that was the most frequently used to deliver the details of a news story. The presentational style of 'reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - package(s) included', was used to deliver the details of 72 news stories, which represented 38.7 percent (38.7%) of all stories classified under this presentational format.

This presentational style encompasses many main elements that can be included in the production of a news story, to help bring 'alive' the details of the story:

- Contributors participating 'live' in the delivery of the news story.

- A 'package' and so is afforded the opportunity of being creative and captivating in the elements used in the package.
- The package includes contributors, so viewers are afforded the opportunity of hearing other voices, as well as contributors participating 'live' in the delivery of the news story.
- The news story is delivered 'on location' - which helps to create an ambience.

The least featured 'expansive' presentational style was 'news presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in the studio/location - no packages included'. Just 6 news stories were delivered in this manner, which represented 3.2 percent (3.2%) of all stories classified under the 'expansive' format (Table 7.35, p.343-4).

The two presentational styles that were never used on any of the Midlands Today news stories analysed, were those that involved group discussions with contributors. The presentational style of 'reporter and film package (pre-recorded) of group discussion' was classified under the 'limited' presentational format, and the presentational style of 'news presenter/reporter 'live', conducting

interviews in a group discussion with contributors participating 'live' in the discussion' was classified under the 'expansive' presentational format. This is a strong indicator that the regional television news genre, as typified by the Midlands Today programme is not built/equipped to accommodate group discussions - whether that be 'live' or pre-recorded.

As illustrated above, a determining factor as to why some presentational styles become the *preferred* style to use from within each of the presentational formats, is often based upon what *that* particular presentational style can offer, by assisting this programme's constant desire to make a populist/*popular* regional television news programme.

Overall then, the above analysis assists in providing a pivotal understanding of how the Midlands Today programme is able to constantly churn out an identifiable and familiar-looking regional television news programme in an aesthetically pleasing-manner to its viewers.

Table 7.35

Sub-categories of each Presentational Format used on Midlands Today.

PRESENTATIONAL FORMATS GENERAL	PRESENTATIONAL STYLES SPECIFIC	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
TOTALLY RESTRICTED	TOTALLY RESTRICTED: Reporter - 'live' on location - doing a 2-way with the news presenter.	47	1.7
	% within Presentational Format		42.7
	Direct verbal account of story by news presenter.	42	1.6
	% within Presentational Format		38.2
	Reporter 'live' in studio - doing a 2-way with the news presenter.	21	0.8
	% within Presentational Format		19.1
SUB-TOTAL:		110	4.1
PARTLY RESTRICTED	PARTLY RESTRICTED: News presenter - out-of-vision (OOV) & film footage.	471	17.4
	% within Presentational Format		70.4
	News presenter & stills/graphics in backdrop of shot.	94	3.5
	% within Presentational Format		14.1
	Reporter in-vision & film footage.	45	1.7
	% within Presentational Format		6.7
	Reporter - 'live' in studio, doing a 2-way with the news presenter.	24	0.9
	% within Presentational Format		3.6
	Reporter - 'live' on location, doing a 2-way with the news presenter.	20	0.7
	% within Presentational Format		3.0
	Reporter out-of-vision (OOV) & film footage.	15	0.6
	% within Presentational Format		2.2
SUB-TOTAL:		669	24.7
LIMITED	LIMITED: Reporter in-vision & package	1257	46...4
	% within Presentational Format		72.1
	Reporter out-of-vision & package	408	15.1
	% within Presentational Format		23.4
	Reporter 'live' in studio/location with pre-recorded interviews	78	2.9
	% within Presentational Format		4.5
	Reporter & film package (pre-recorded) of group interviews/discussion.	0	0.0
	% within Presentational Format		0.0
SUB-TOTAL:		1743	64.4

EXPANSIVE	<u>EXPANSIVE:</u> Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - package(s) included. % within Presentational Format	72	2.7 38.7
	Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - no package included. % within Presentational Format	57	2.1 30.6
	News presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location - Includes package. % within Presentational Format	51	1.9 27.4
	News presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location - No package(s) included. % within Presentational Format	6	0.2 3.2
	News presenter/reporter 'live', conducting interviews in a group discussion with contributors 'live' in the discussion. % within Presentational Format	0	0.0 0.0
	SUB-TOTAL:	186	6.9
	TOTAL	2708(n)	100.0%

(n) = frequency; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

7.9.7 The visual articulation of the regional television news genre via the presentational styles of the news stories broadcast

The previous discussion on the finding (Table 7.35, pp.343-4) illustrate why *particular* presentational styles are preferred the most from *within each* presentational format. However, whilst it is accepted that the 'overt' purpose of the use of the different presentational styles is to assist in the creative delivery of the details of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, these presentational styles can also be regarded as helping to depict the visual articulation of the Midlands Today programme, and so can

also be viewed through the 'aspirational lenses' of the Midlands Today programme.

As such, it can also be argued that the most-used presentational styles (whether that be of a 'totally restricted', 'partly restricted', 'limited' or 'expansive' presentational format), *collectively* assist in illustrating the visual articulation of the aims/objectives of the regional television news genre, to be populist in its approach, as depicted and typified by the Midlands Today programme.

Therefore, this following analysis of the most-used presentational styles can be perceived in terms of providing an illustrative understanding of how these presentational styles assist this programme's desire to achieve a central thematic positioning of the regional television news genre, which is: *The engendering of a professional closeness/attachment with its viewers'.*

As noted previously, the Midlands Today programme proactively solicits and encourages the involvement of its viewers through a segment within the programme entitled 'Your story', and also by engaging its viewers' participation in other features that form a part of this programme's structure (Table 7.3, p.204).

In addition, a clear indication that the Midlands Today programme is very receptive to including 'outside' voices in the delivery of the details of the news stories/items broadcast on this programme, can be illustrated via the high degree of access afforded to 'outside voices'. Just to briefly re-cap, analysis of the different presentational formats employed by this programme in the delivery of the news story/items that it broadcasts, indicate that the majority of news stories were presented via presentational formats that allowed the participation of contributors in the delivery of the details of the news story (Table 7.34, p. 329), which amounted to 1929 of the 2708 news stories analysed and represented slightly over 71 percent (71.2%) of all news stories analysed.

Therefore, upon examining the different presentational styles 'collectively' (as opposed to the presentational styles listed under its corresponding presentational format), it is notable that of the 18 presentational styles identified, the presentational styles that included contributors in the delivery of a news story, were placed higher up in the 'pecking-order' of 'most-used' presentational styles (Table 7.36, p.347).

Table 7.36

Most-used presentational styles of news stories on Midlands Today.

(Key: TR = Totally Restricted; PR = Partly Restricted; L = Limited; E = Expansive)

	Specific: Presentational style of News Story	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Reporter (in-vision) & package [L]	1257	46.4
2	News presenter (OOV) & film footage. [PR]	471	17.4
3	Reporter (OOV) & package [L]	408	15.1
4	News presenter & stills/graphics in background of shot [PR]	94	3.5
5	Reporter 'live' on location with pre-recorded interview(s)/package(s) [L]	78	2.9
6	Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - includes package [E]	72	2.7
7	Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - no package included [E]	57	2.1
8	News presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location - includes package [E]	51	1.9
9	Reporter - 'live' on location' - 2-way with news presenter [PR]	47	1.7
10	Reporter (in-vision) & film footage [PR]	45	1.7
11	Direct verbal account of news story by news presenter (i.e. to camera) [TR]	42	1.6
12	Reporter 'live' in studio (2-way with news presenter) - includes graphics & footage in background of shot [PR]	24	0.9
13	Reporter 'live' in studio (2-way with news presenter [TR]	21	0.8
14	Reporter 'live' on location (2-way with news presenter (includes graphics & footage in backdrop [PR]	20	0.7
15	Reporter (OOV) & film footage [PR]	15	0.6
16	News presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location - no package included [E]	6	0.2
17	Reporter & film package (pre-recorded) of group interviews or discussion [L]	0	0.0
18	News presenter/reporter in group discussion with contributors - 'live' [E]	0	0.0
19	Other - to any of the above	0	0.0
TOTAL		2708 (n)	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

In addition, upon further perusal of the above finding (Table 7.36, p.347), it is notable that 6 of the top 10 most-used presentational styles were styles that allowed access for individuals to contribute in the delivery of the details of the news story. However, what is most illuminating is that of the 4 presentational styles categorised under the 'expansive' presentational format (which only had 4 presentational styles listed¹⁷), 3 of the 4 were within the top-ten most-used presentational styles on the Midlands Today programmes analysed (Table 7.37, p.349). This finding indicates that contributors to the news stories analysed, were afforded the most 'expansive' type of contribution to news stories that is available on the Midlands Today programme (a description of each of the three expansive presentational styles can be found on pp. 325-7).

As Midlands Today is a regional television news programme, this is good 'collateral'. It would be a fair assertion to make that contributors to this programme are predominantly from the region to where it broadcasts. Therefore, this finding can be considered as being an example of how this programme engenders a 'closeness' to its viewers' by engaging some in the direct 'articulation' of the details of the news stories broadcast. As such, there is every

¹⁷ There were 5 presentational styles but 1 presentational style involving group discussions was never featured on this programme.

likelihood that 'viewers' at home, will at times recognise some of the contributors to the news stories broadcast, thus making this programme even more engaging and 'relevant' to such viewers.

Accumulatively then, as this programme is broadcast daily, half-hour in duration, the above finding is a perfect example of how this programme can effectively achieve one of the aims of a regional television news programme - the engendering of a professional: 'closeness' and 'attachment' with its viewers'.

Table 7.37

Top Ten: Most-used presentational styles of news stories on Midlands Today.
(Key: TR = Totally Restricted; PR = Partly Restricted; L = Limited; E = Expansive)

	<u>Specific:</u> Presentational style of News Story	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Reporter (in-vision) & package [L]	1257	46.4
2	News presenter (OOV) & film footage. [PR]	471	17.4
3	Reporter (OOV) & package [L]	408	15.1
4	News presenter & stills/graphics in background of shot [PR]	94	3.5
5	Reporter 'live' on location with pre-recorded interview(s)/package(s) [L]	78	2.9
6	Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - includes package [E]	72	2.7
7	Reporter 'live' on location with contributor(s) 'live' - no package included [E]	57	2.1
8	News presenter with contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location - includes package [E]	51	1.9
9	Reporter - 'live' on location' - 2-way with news presenter [PR]	47	1.7
10	Reporter (in-vision) & film footage [PR]	45	1.7
	TOP 10: SUB-TOTAL	2580	95.4
	REMAINING PRESENTATIONAL STYLES	128	4.7
	TOTAL	2708(n)	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

7.10 Conclusion

This chapter embarked upon an analytical journey into and around the landscape of the regional television news genre - as articulated and typified by the BBC's Midlands Today programme. The purpose of traversing this terrain was to examine to what extent, the structural component elements that make-up this programme lends itself to being a 'space/site' that could possibly house and facilitate a multi-ethnic public sphere. To assist in this analysis, a content analysis was conducted of 253 Midlands Today programmes and of the 2708 news stories/items that were featured within these programmes.

A key feature identified as being central to Midlands Today is that this programme fully encapsulates the 'spirit' of the regional television news genre, in its bid to create a 'populist' programme with 'popular' appeal. This is illustrated via this programme's strong desire to proactively engender a sense of 'professional: closeness/attachment' with its viewers'.

As such, Midlands Today actively encourages viewers to get in touch with the programme and will often solicit their views and opinions on the news items featured. In some instances, viewers are allowed to set the news agenda, in

for example the 'Your Story' slot which allows viewers to share something that pertains specifically to them.

Although classically, the primary definers of news stories are classified as being 'official' and 'non-official news sources' (Hall *et al* 1978), who set the news agenda of the news stories broadcast, it was noted that Midlands Today's desire for the 'ordinary' person to have a 'stake' in the programme is further reinforced by the fact that this programme does not rely solely upon 'traditional' primary definers to set the news agenda of the stories that it broadcasts. Rather, the analysis conducted of the 'primary definers' of the news items featured on this programme indicate that the 'ordinary' person is at times afforded the opportunity of being the 'primary definer' of news stories and as such, are able to set the news agenda of stories broadcast on this programme.

Another key feature identified is that Midlands Today is highly structured insofar as the production/contents of this programme being guided by a running order template that shapes the over-arching structure of this programme, detailing all of the features/elements that need to be included in each programme produced. That said, the finding of the content analysis indicates that the Producers of this

programme are allowed some degree of flexibility within its structure.

The elongated analysis conducted into the different subject-matter/topics of the news stories featured on Midlands Today, indicate that this programme covers a wide range of different story subjects/topics in the stories that it broadcasts. However, despite the eclectic range of story topics and the autonomy that is afforded to this programme to select the types of stories that it wishes to cover (as opposed to being dictated by the 'big news' of the day), the finding of this study indicates that there is a significant dearth of news stories included in the programmes analysed, that focus upon the types of subject-matter/topics that pertain specifically to, or are about the minority ethnic communities - which amounted to just 0.5% of all stories analysed. Therefore, the following chapter (Chapter 8) conducts an analysis into the extent to which those from the MECs are afforded the opportunity of participating in the *Regional Conversation* as contributors to the general news story subject-matter/topics broadcast on Midlands Today.

As an established programme broadcasting to the West Midlands region since 1964, this programme has gained a loyal audience over this period of time, that has become

very familiar with its structure and many of the features contained within this programme.

Therefore, based upon the overall finding relayed in this chapter, and based upon the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region (ONS 2001), it is considered that essentially the Midlands Today programme has a strong firm foundation/platform upon which to launch and depict, a multi-ethnic public sphere on this programme.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BBC MIDLANDS TODAY: *REFLECTION* OF THE CULTURAL ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF THE WEST MIDLANDS REGION

8.0 Introduction

The primary aim of this chapter is to examine to what extent, the BBC's regional television news programme Midlands Today, can be deemed to be a depiction/articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere - as conceived within this current study (Husband 2000). This assessment will be based upon the extent to which the output of this programme reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region via its inclusion of those from the MECs and as such, achieves the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000).

The aims of this chapter were achieved by referring to the findings of the content analysis conducted of the Midlands Today programme.

8.1 Context/reasons for the Midlands Today programmes selected for analysis

In the early hours of the 1st January 2003, two innocent teenage females (Letitia Shakespeare and Charlene Ellis) were tragically killed in a drive-by shooting as they stood outside of the building where they had attended a New Years-eve party. This incident occurred in the Aston area of Birmingham. A high percentage of people of Caribbean descent/heritage live in Aston and when the British media from all around the country descended upon this area, BBC Birmingham realised that even though this atrocity had occurred on their 'patch', their contacts within the Black community was no stronger than other media organisations travelling from far-flung cities to Birmingham.

When conducting the one-to-one in-depth interview with the Community Affairs researcher based at BBC Birmingham (and who is also a member of the minority ethnic community - of Caribbean heritage), they put forth the following viewpoint as to how BBC Birmingham dealt with the coverage of the Aston shootings:

"I mean, some people in the community said, 'it's now the BBC is coming to Aston'. This whole descending upon an area that had largely been ignored before. Well, I think that hurt a lot of people and that was often been conveyed to me. It had nothing to do with me! I wasn't driving anything, but I was put out there as the community person. But in reality I was just an underling. I wasn't able to affect any real changes in the place." (BBC Community Affairs Researcher. Source: One-to-one in-depth interview. 2004).

Also, during the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the BBC's Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM), he acknowledged that the BBC's lack of contacts within the Black community in Birmingham became evident after the Aston shootings:

"Where I think we're lacking is when we're wishing to deal with a knotty problem within a community. Links are not perhaps as strong as they could always be and the Aston shootings was a classic example where I felt we were exposed really to be less than perfect, in terms of our community links when that happened." (HRLP WM, Source: One-to-One in-depth interview, 2004).

Therefore, in light of the information imparted during the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted and the information gleaned from the participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, it was decided to commence the analysis of the Midlands Today programme from the two months prior to the Aston shootings (i.e. November and December 2002). It was considered that to some extent, these months could be used as a benchmark by which to compare future Midlands Today programmes analysed, in terms of charting any changes that may have occurred since the Aston shootings in 2003 - vis-à-vis the inclusion of those from the MECs in this programme's output.

8.2 Definition of a 'Contributor' to a news story

In terms of this current study, a 'contributor' is deemed to be an individual who contributes to a news story that is broadcast on the Midlands Today programme, but who is not a journalist working on the programme. Examples of an individual who would be classified as a contributor would be someone who participates in the programme as an 'interviewee' or someone who contributes to a news story via a 'voxpath'.

For an 'individual' to be classified as a *contributor*, they must have 'participated' in the delivery of the details of a news story broadcast - either 'verbally' or 'non-verbally'. For example, participating/communicating could be in the spoken form (verbal), in sign language (non-verbal) with the assistance of a third-party (i.e. an interpreter), or in any other form or manner of communicating. The 'key' and 'operative' word here being 'communicating'. Therefore, individuals who may be 'in-vision' in the background or foreground of a 'shot', but who do not 'communicate' anything to the viewer vis-à-vis the news story broadcast would not in this current study, be classified/coded as a 'contributor'.

Of the 2708 news stories featured in the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, 1929 of these news stories included

contributors to the story. This represented over 70 percent (71.2%) of all news stories analysed. As previously discussed in Chapter 7, individuals are afforded the opportunity of contributing/participating to news stories that are delivered in either a 'limited' or 'expansive' presentational format. As such, the remaining 779 news stories analysed, were presented in either a 'totally restricted' or 'partly restricted' presentation format - i.e. in a style that does not 'allow' for contributor involvement (refer to Table 7.34, p. 329).

Based upon the analysis of the 1929 news stories that did allow for 'contributor' involvement, the overall total number of contributors participating in the news stories analysed amounted to 5044 (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1
Overall number of contributors included in the news stories analysed.

Presentational format of news stories analysed.	Contributor participation in news stories.		
	Frequency (n) (Number of news stories.	Frequency (n) (Total number of contributors in news stories analysed).	Percentage (%)
Limited and Expansive Presentational formats.	1929	5044	71.2 100.0
Totally restricted and Partly Restricted Presentational formats.	779	0	28.8 0.0
TOTAL	2708(n)	5044(n)	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

8.3 Average number of Contributors included in a news story

The finding of the content analysis conducted of the 1929 news stories analysed, that *did* include Contributors in the news stories broadcast, indicate that the total number of contributors featured within one news story could range from 1 to 10, with one programme featuring 23 contributors.

However, the most frequent number of Contributors included in a news story was 2, with 614 of the news stories analysed, featuring 2 contributors in the delivery of the details of the story. This represented almost 32 percent (31.8%) of all news stories featuring contributors (Table 8.2).³⁸⁷

Table 8.2
Number of contributors included in a news story.

Number of contributors per news story/item	Frequency (n) (number of news stories)	Frequency (n) (Total number of contributors)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
1	460	(1x460) = 460	23.8	9.1
2	614	(2x614) = 1228	31.8	24.3
3	408	(3x408) = 1224	21.2	24.3
4	240	(4x240) = 960	12.4	19.0
5	117	(5x117) = 585	6.1	11.6
6	60	(6x60) = 360	3.1	7.1
7	20	(7x20) = 140	1.0	2.8
8	6	(8x6) = 48	0.3	1.0
9	1	(9x1) = 9	0.1	0.2
10	3	(10x3) = 30	0.2	0.6
TOTAL	1929(n)	5044(n)	100.0%	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

It is notable that the most frequent number of contributors included in a news story was 2. Notable because the benefits of including 2 contributors in a news story allows for the dissemination of two potentially different viewpoints on a story to be relayed to the viewers and so at the very least, enable a 'variation' of views on a news story/item broadcast on the programme. In so doing, the inclusion of 2 contributors to a news story also assists in the distillation of a central journalistic practice by adhering to the tenets of 'balance', 'impartiality' and 'objectivity' in the delivery of the details of a news story to be achieved.

8.4 Type of Contribution

Analysis of the 'type' of contribution made by individuals to a news story/item was classified under the following four categories:

Clip.

Interview.

Voxpop.

Live.

The first two types of contributions (i.e. 'clip' and 'interview'), involves the Midlands Today journalist conducting an interview with the contributor to a news story. As these two classifications are pre-recorded interviews they are subject to editing by the journalist who will make decisions as to what aspects of the interview to include in the news story broadcast.

The distinguishing factor between a contribution to a news story being classified as a 'clip' or 'interview', is based upon how much of the interview with the contributor is included in the final news story broadcast on the Midlands Today programme.

- i) Clip: This 'type' of contribution is classified to an individual whose contribution to a news story is based upon the inclusion of just one 'clip' that has been extracted from the interview (conducted by the journalist). Therefore, once a 'clip' from the interviewee has been included in the news story, we do not 'see' or 'hear' the contributor participating again in the delivery of the details of that particular news story.
- ii) Interview: This 'type' of contribution consists of the journalist using more than one 'clip'

extracted from the interview conducted with the contributor. Therefore, the various comments made by the contributor in the pre-recorded interview may be interspersed throughout the delivery of the news story broadcast. As such, we will 'see' and/or 'hear' the contributor on more than one occasion in the delivery of the news story broadcast.

- iii) Voxpop: A voxpop, i.e. 'voice of the people' is a method employed by journalists to obtain a cross-section of views/opinions from the 'ordinary' person, upon a particular subject-matter/topic. The journalist will often go out into the streets and randomly approach members of the public and ask each person the same open-ended question. For example, the question could be as light-hearted as: 'why do you like to eat chocolate?' Or maybe upon a more serious subject-matter such as: 'what are your views on the NHS'?

The journalist will then go back to the newsroom, edit out their question and 'string' together a selection of responses made by members of the public, to the question posed.

Therefore, any contributors participating in the delivery of news stories in the above manner is classified under the category of a 'voxpath'.

- iv) 'Live': This type of contribution is assigned to individuals who are afforded the opportunity of contributing 'live' to a news story broadcast on the Midlands Today programme. Therefore, unlike pre-recorded interviews the comment(s) made by contributors classified under this 'type' of contribution to a news story is not subject to editing.

Of the 5044 contributors featured in the news stories analysed, the majority - which amounted to 3000 were afforded the opportunity of participating via a 'clip'. This type of contribution represented over 59 percent (59.5%) of all types of contributor involvement to a news story.

The next most-featured type of contribution to news stories was in the form of a voxpop. This amounted to a total of 1188 contributors, and represented over 23 percent (23.6%) of all types of contributor involvement to news stories.

598 contributors participated in news stories via the means of an interview, which represented almost 12 percent (11.9%) of all 'contributor' involvement to a news story.

The least-featured 'type' of contributor involvement to news stories was in the form of a 'live' contribution. Just 258 contributors out of a possible 5044, participated to a news story in the above manner, which represented slightly over 5 percent (5.1%) of all 'types' of contributor involvement to the news stories analysed (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3
Contributors: Types of contributions to news stories.

Type of contribution	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Clip	3000	59.5
Voxpop	1188	23.6
Interview	598	11.9
Live	258	5.1
TOTAL	5044(n)	100.0%

(n = number; % = percentage) Source: Content Analysis.

Knowledge of the production regimes of programme-making vis-à-vis television news programmes, coupled with the Midlands Today programme's populist approach in its delivery of a regional television news programme, assists in the understanding of the above finding.

Working backwards from the least 'type' of contribution i.e. 'live', classified to individuals participating in the

delivery of the details of a news story broadcast on Midlands Today. Individuals contributing 'live' to a news story *escape* being at the mercy of the journalist in terms of what parts of their comments will be edited out of the news story featured on the programme. Therefore, the only 'real' control afforded to the programme-maker is the length of time that is allocated to a news story involving 'live' participation by contributors. Also, although there is an element of 'excitement' and an 'upping of the ante' in terms of the inclusion of 'live' contributors to a news story, it would be very unusual for the news presenters of the Midlands Today programme to conduct a variety of different interviews involving 'live' contributors to the story - in one programme. In which case then, the majority of news stories involving 'live' contributors to a story will often take place 'out on location' with a reporter and with this comes a high degree of logistical planning to ensure the successful execution of the delivery of the news story.

Another factor that has a bearing upon the number of news stories including 'live' contributors in the delivery of the details of a news story is the issue of limited resources, in terms of the use of the SATVAN (Satellite van) that is needed to pick up the transmitter signals of the 'live' excerpts to send back to the main hub in the Midlands Today newsroom.

A further factor influencing the number of contributors participating 'live' in the delivery of the details of a news story, is that such contributors are afforded more 'airtime' (under the 'expansive' presentational format), than individuals participating under the 'limited' presentational format. Therefore, this is also a consideration for the Producers of the Midlands Today programme, in terms of deciding upon whether or not a news story warrants such an approach in its delivery.

All of the above factors assist in the understanding of why, of the four different 'types' of possible ways in which contributors may participate in the delivery of the details of a news story, 'live' contributions is the least type of contributor involvement included in the news stories analysed.

Although usually afforded less 'airtime' than contributors participating to a news story under the 'expansive presentational format', i.e. 'live', individuals participating in the delivery of the details of a news story via an 'interview', are afforded more 'air time' than contributors participating via the inclusion of a 'clip'. Therefore, unless the interviewee is the main subject of the news story or is maybe considered to be an 'elite' person, reporters are more likely to prefer the option of using

'clips' in a package, which allows for the inclusion of more 'voices' in the news story. In addition, the use of 'clips' in a package to deliver the details of a news story also enables the reporter to be creative in the 'packaging' of the news story by using, if so desired, other devices in the package - such as music, film footage and graphics.

Overall then, the use of 'clips' in a package offers more aesthetic benefits/value to the way in which a news story may be delivered on the Midlands Today programme. Therefore, it is quite understandable why this type of contribution i.e. a 'clip', was the most favoured way by which 'contributors' were afforded the opportunity of participating in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

The benefits to the Midlands Today programme of involving contributors in a news story via a 'voxpop' (which was the second most-featured 'type of contribution' afforded to contributors), enables this programme to maintain its 'professional closeness/attachment' with its viewers. This is achieved by demonstrating via the inclusion of a 'voxpop' in a news story that the views/opinions of the 'ordinary' person... its viewers... is of importance to the programme - and as such, stays true to a fundamental aim/objective of the regional television news genre as identified in chapter

7 of this current study; this programme's desire to engender a professional 'closeness/attachment' with its viewers.

That said, it is hardly surprising that contributions to news stories via a 'voxpath' came second to the involvement of contributors via a 'clip' because the former would not be 'weighty' enough on its own to 'carry' the details of most news stories broadcast. However, the use of 'clips' to deliver the main details of a news story is considered to be a more substantive and creative way of delivering the details of a news story.

8.5 Social Group of Contributors

In terms of the overall aims/objectives of this current study, it was considered of importance to try to gain an insight into the 'social group' of the individuals who are afforded the opportunity to partake in the *Regional Conversation*, via the access granted to individuals to participate as 'contributors' to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Therefore, a list of 23 different social group classifications was devised for this current study. The option of 'Other' was also added to this list to accommodate for individuals, i.e. contributors who could not be assigned

to any of the prescribed social groups devised for this current study (Table 8.4, p.371).

Similar to the social group classifications devised to 'detect' the Primary Definer of news stories broadcasts on Midlands Today (Chapter 7, p.308-9), it is considered useful at this juncture to provide clarification on some of the social group classifications that may be somewhat ambiguous, and not as self-explanatory as others.

- 'Involved group member': This social group category is attributed to an individual who is involved in an event, or is a member of a group activity.
- 'Individual in focus': Refers to an individual who has caught the media's attention.
- 'Random Voxpop': This social group category was devised to enable the classification of individuals who are 'randomly' approached by a Midlands Today reporter to participate in a voxpop.
- 'Pre-arranged Voxpop': A voxpop of this nature would be where for example, the reporter has

gone along to a location knowing before-hand exactly who they will be 'vox-popping'. An example of such a scenario occurred during the reporting of the strike action taken by firemen. The reporter went along to the outside of a fire depot, with the full knowledge of which strikers they would be 'vox-popping'.

- 'Representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically listed)': This classification would be assigned to an individual who is a representative of a recognised body/organisation such as a hospital, school, solicitors and basically any other official/recognised body/organisation that has not been specifically included in the specified social group classifications.

Similar to the way in which the social group of an individual was applied to individuals in the defining of the social group of a 'primary definer' of a news story, the classification of the social group of an individual contributing to a news story was also based upon the role/position that the individual occupied in their contribution to a news story. For example, a police officer would be classified under the social group category of

'Police', a teacher under the social group category of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically listed)', and so forth...

Table 8.4
Defined classifications of different Social Groups:
Assigned to Contributors.

	Social Group
1	Government/Politician/Councillor.
2	Local Authority Representative.
3	Police.
4	Other emergency services (e.g. ambulance, fire etc.).
5	Trade Union Representative.
6	Military.
7	Business Spokesperson (of business being discussed in the news story).
8	Representative (of an official body/organisation other than any specifically listed).
9	Campaigner/Protester.
10	Expert/Professional (excluding those working in the race/relations industry).
11	Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry.
12	Involved Group Member.
13	Individual(s) in focus/participant of community event.
14	Community Organisation Representative (general).
15	(MEC): Community Organisation Representative.
16	(MEC): Community leader/group worker.
17	Witness.
18	Victim.
19	Relative/family friend.
20	'Pre-arranged' voxpop.
21	'Random' voxpop.
22	Celebrity.
23	Royalty.
24	Other.

Source: Television news coding frame.

To varying degrees, all of the social group classifications devised for this current study, received a representation of contributors to news stories being coded under the relevant social group category.

Of the 5044 contributors participating in the 1929 news stories that allowed for 'contributor' involvement, the social group that received the most access to the news stories analysed were individuals classified under the social group category of 'random voxpop'. 1079 individuals were coded under this social group category, representing slightly over 20 percent (21.4%) of all social groups identified. This category amounted to almost twice as many contributors who were assigned to the social group category of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically listed)'. This social group was assigned to 575 contributors participating in the delivery of the details of a news story broadcast on Midlands Today, and represented over 11 percent (11.4%) of all contributor involvement to news stories.

This finding of 'random voxpop' being the most-featured type of 'social group' of contributors participating in the news stories broadcast, can be considered as being yet another indication of the Midlands Today programme's desire to engender a 'professional closeness/attachment' to its viewers', by actively seeking out the 'ordinary' persons' opinions/views upon news stories that are broadcast on this programme.

It is also notable that of the top 5 most-featured social group classifications assigned to contributors to news stories, 4 of the 5 were social group classifications that would be attributed to the 'ordinary' person:

- No.1: 'Random voxpop' - 1079 contributors (21.4%).
- No.3: 'Individual in focus' - 558 contributors (11.1%).
- No.4: 'Involved group member' - 444 contributors (8.8%).
-
- No.5: 'Relative/family friend' - 430 contributors (8.5%).

(Table 8.5, p.374).

Also, as a populist regional television news programme, Midlands Today will have a predisposition to gravitate towards including 'light: human interest' types of stories in the programme, and so will be drawn towards Contributors classified under the Social Group categories of: Individual in focus' and 'Involved group member' who would satisfy and deliver news stories of that ilk.

Table 8.5
Social Group of Contributors featured on Midlands Today.

	Social Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	'Random' voxpop	1079	21.4
2	Representative (of an official body/organisation other than any specifically listed)	575	11.4
3	Individual in Focus	558	11.1
4	Involved Group Member	444	8.8
5	Relative/family friend	430	8.5
6	Business Spokesperson (of business being discussed in the news story)	350	6.9
7	Expert/Professional (excl. those working in the race/relations industry)	301	6.0
8	Police	268	5.3
9	Campaigner/Protester	153	3.0
10	Local Authority Representative	147	2.9
11	Representatives from emergency services other than the police	141	2.8
12	'Pre-arranged' voxpop	109	2.2
13	Celebrity	87	1.7
14	Politician	86	1.7
15	Victim	81	1.6
16	Witness	69	1.4
17	Military	47	0.9
18	Trade Union Representative	46	0.9
19	Community Organisation Representative (general)	42	0.8
20	MEC Community leader/group worker	17	0.3
21	Community Organisation Representative (MEC)	8	0.2
22	Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry	5	0.1
23	Royalty	1	0.01
24	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		5044(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

Further analysis and delineation of the above finding assists in illustrating how there is a very clear predominance of the 'ordinary' person 'theme' *running*

throughout the Midlands Today programme in its articulation of the regional television news genre.

This point can clearly be demonstrated when one goes a step further by separating (for the purposes of the point being made), the social group categories into the social group classifications that *could* be deemed as being 'traditional' primary definers of news stories and into the social group classifications that could be deemed to be 'non-traditional' primary definers of news stories - which encompasses the 'ordinary' person.

This finding is very revealing because in this instance, it is interesting to note that the social group classifications categorised under the 'non-traditional' primary definers of news stories, i.e. the 'ordinary' person, were the social group classifications that were afforded the most opportunity to contribute to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today. The overall total number of contributors assigned to these social groups amounted to 2837, which represented over 56 percent (56.2%) of all contributor involvement to news stories. Conversely, the social group classifications placed under the category of 'traditional' primary definers of news stories amounted to 2119 contributors, which represented 42 percent (42.0%) of all

contributor participation in the news stories analysed.
(Table 8.6).

Table 8.6
Social Group of Contributor(s) correlated with the classifications of:
'Traditional' & 'Non-traditional' Primary Definer(s) of news stories.

Social Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
SOCIAL GROUPS:		
'NON-TRADITIONAL' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES		
Social Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
'Random' voxpop	1079	21.4
Individual in Focus	558	11.1
Involved Group Member	444	8.8
Relative/family friend	430	8.5
'Pre-arranged' voxpop	109	2.2
Victim	81	1.6
Witness	69	1.4
Community Organisation Representative (general)	42	0.8
MEC Community leader/group worker	17	0.3
Community Organisation Representative (MEC)	8	0.2
SUB-TOTAL	2837(n)	56.2%
SOCIAL GROUPS:		
'TRADITIONAL' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES		
Social Group	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Representative (of an official body/organisation other than any specifically listed)	575	11.4
Business Spokesperson (of business being discussed in the news story)	350	6.9
Expert/Professional (excl. those working in the race/relations industry)	301	6.0
Police	268	5.3
Campaigner/Protester	153	3.0
Local Authority Representative	147	2.9
Representatives from emergency services (other than the police)	141	2.8
Politician	86	1.7
Military	47	0.9
Trade Union Representative	46	0.9
Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry	5	0.1
SUB-TOTAL	2119(n)	42.0%
SOCIAL GROUPS:		
'OTHER' PRIMARY DEFINER(S) OF NEWS STORIES		
Celebrity	87	1.7
Royalty	1	0.01
SUB-TOTAL	88(n)	1.7%
TOTAL	5044(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

In addition to the above finding presented, what is also of particular interest to this current study is that (outside of the social group classification of 'royalty' which was assigned to just 1 contributor), the 3 social group classifications relating to minority ethnic communities (MECs) were the least type of social groups assigned to individuals contributing to news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

- 'MEC Community leader/group worker': This social group classification was assigned to 17 contributors (0.3%).
- 'Community organisation representative (MEC)' - assigned to 8 contributors (0.2%).
- 'Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry' - assigned to 5 contributors (0.1%).

Given that the Midlands Today programmes selected for analysis included the aftermath of the Aston shootings (on the 1st January, 2003), these results were initially somewhat surprising because one would have expected the Midlands Today programme to have 'courted' more contributors from the afore-mentioned social groups. However, given that

the Midlands Today programme has predisposition to seek out the 'ordinary' person as opposed to the 'suits' or the 'officials', this finding, to some extent, falls squarely in line with the ethos of the regional television news genre as typified by the Midlands Today programme.

8.6 Profile of Contributors

The findings presented thus far in this chapter, provide details of the overall amount of access, and type of access afforded to contributors to enable participation in the 'public sphere' via individuals' contribution to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today. Details of the social group of the Contributors was also analysed.

The following sections of this chapter will now focus upon the 'profile' of the contributors included in the news stories analysed.

8.6.1 Gender breakdown of Contributors

Of the 5044 contributors participating in the news stories analysed, 3412 were classified as 'male', which represented over 67 percent (67.6%), whilst the remaining 1642 were 'female', representing slightly over 30 percent (32.4%) of

all contributors included in the news stories analysed (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7
Gender of Contributors who are featured on news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	3412	67.6
Female	1632	32.4
TOTAL	5044(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage) Source: Content Analysis.

8.6.2 Age of Contributors

The age of each contributor involved in the news stories analysed was classified from between the age ranges of 'under 16' to '70+'. Excluding the youngest and eldest age ranges, the specific age ranges defined for this current study gradated in increments of 10 - from 17 to 69 (Table 8.8).

Table 8.8
Age range(s) to classify to a Contributor.

AGE RANGES
16 and under
17 -29
30-39
40-9
50-59
60-69
70+

Source: Television news coding frame.

Unless the contributor's age was mentioned or suggested in the delivery/presentation of a news story, the classifying of a contributor's age was based solely upon how old they

'looked' unless 'keys' to unlocking their age was deciphered via the contents/subject-matter of the news story. For example, a news story filmed at a secondary school which included contributions to the news story from students would be a very good indicator of the age range of the contributors. Similarly, a news story featuring individuals who fought in World War II would also be a good indicator of the interviewee's age range. However, without any specific details or clues of the age range of the contributor then the classifying of their age was very subjective as it was solely dependent upon how old the contributor looked.

The age ranges of 40-49 and 50-59 were the ranges most frequently assigned to contributors to the news stories analysed. The number of contributors categorised within the age range of 50-59 totalled 1484 and represented over 29 percent (29.4%) of all contributor involvement in news stories. Contributors classified to the age range of 40-49 was assigned to 1249 Contributors and represented almost 25 percent (24.8%) of all contributors. Accumulatively then, the above two age ranges of: 50-59 and 40-49 represented more than 50 percent (54.2%) of all age ranges assigned to contributors.

Whilst conducting the participant observations in the Midlands Today newsroom, and whilst just in general

conversation with journalists working on Midlands Today it was often relayed that the age range of the programme's target audience were those who could be regarded as being 'middle-age'. Therefore, the above finding would suggest that this target audience is also represented by the age range(s) of the majority of contributors to news stories broadcast on this programme.

Individually, none of the other age ranges represented over 20 percent (20.0%). The least-featured age ranges on the programme were those classified within the youngest age range of: '16 and under' (5.7%) and individuals who would be classified under the eldest age range of '70+', which represented 2.7 percent (2.7%). (Table 8.9).

Table 8.9
Age range(s) of contributors to news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

AGE RANGE(S)	FREQUENCY (N)	PERCENTAGE (%)
16 and under	290	5.7
17-29	609	12.1
30-39	865	17.1
40-49	1249	24.8
50-59	1484	29.4
60-69	409	8.1
70+	138	2.7
TOTAL	5044(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

8.6.3 Ethnicity of Contributors

The classification of the ethnicity of a contributor to a Midlands Today news story was based upon the appearance of the individual and in some instances, upon their accent.

As one would expect, the finding of the content analysis conducted indicates that the majority of contributors were from the indigenous population: 'White British', representing just over 88 percent (88.1%) of all contributors with the total number of contributors from this ethnic group being 4445.

Contributors classified as 'White European' represented 49 contributors - amounting to just 1 percent (1.0%) of all contributors. Those classified as 'White non-European' represented less than 1 percent (0.7%) of all contributors, whilst contributors classified as: 'Mediterranean' totalled 5, representing 0.1 percent (0.1%) of all contributors.

In terms of contributors to news stories classified as being a member of the minority ethnic community (MEC) 259, representing just over 5 percent (5.1%) of all contributors were classified as 'South Asian'. This was the second largest ethnic group of contributors after 'White British' to news stories. This finding is in keeping with the 2001

census which indicates that 'South Asians' are the largest minority ethnic group of people residing in Birmingham.

Contributors classified as being 'Caribbean' were the third largest ethnic group contributing to the news stories/items analysed, totalling 162 contributors and representing slightly over 3 percent (3.2%) of all contributors.

None of the other ethnic groups: Mixed (0.6%), African (0.5%), Middle Eastern (0.4%) and South Eastern Asian (0.3%) had a 'contributor' representation of more than 30 from their ethnic group. Therefore accumulatively, the aforementioned groups represented a total of 87 contributors which was less than 2 percent (1.8%) of all contributors to the news stories analysed.

When all of the contributors classified under the broad ethnic category of 'White' are added together (i.e. White British, White European, White Non-European and Mediterranean) it amounts to a total of 4536 contributors, representing just under 90 percent (89.9%) of all contributors.

When all non-white contributors to news stories is added together under the broad ethnic category of MECs, (i.e. South Asian, African, Caribbean, Mixed, South East Asian and

Middle Eastern) the overall total of contributors from these ethnic groups is 508, representing just over 10 percent (10.1%) of all contributions to the news stories analysed (Table 8.10).

Table 8.10
Ethnicity of Contributors to news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
White British	4445	88.1
White European	49	1.0
White Non-European	37	0.7
Mediterranean	5	0.1
Other- White	0	0.0
WHITE TOTAL =	4536(n)	89.9%
South Asian	259	5.1
Caribbean	162	3.2
Mixed	29	0.6
African	25	0.5
Middle Eastern	19	0.4
South East Asian	14	0.3
Other - Black	0	0.0
MEC TOTAL =	508(n)	10.1%
TOTAL	5044(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage)

Source: Content Analysis.

Returning once again to the MEC population for the West Midlands region which was 13 percent (13.0%) at the time of the last census in 2001 (ONS 2001), the above finding is very encouraging because it reveals that the Midlands Today output is just 2.9 percent (2.9%) below 'visually' reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

However, further analysis of this finding 'dampens' this initial optimism. This is because just over 40 percent (40.3%) of all of the stories analysed for this current study were situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region (Table 7.6, p. 218). Therefore given that at the time of the most recent census in 2001, the MEC population for Birmingham was slightly under 30 percent (29.6%) (ONS 2001), one would be justified in expecting that the MEC contribution and inclusion in the Midlands Today programmes would have been greater than it is - standing at just over 10 percent (10.1%).

Therefore, the following section presents the finding of the content analysis conducted into the extent to which those from the MECs were included/featured in the news stories located in the geographical location of 'Birmingham'.

8.8 MEC: Inclusion on news stories situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region

Of the 2708 news stories analysed for this current study, 1092 were situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region, which represented just over 40 percent (40.3%) of all news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed (see Table 7.6, p.218). Analysis of the news stories situated in this geographical location reveals

that a total of 2008 contributors were included in the news stories featured. When the ethnicity of the contributors to stories situated in the Birmingham area is analysed, it reveals that the number of 'contributors' from the MECs who were featured in these news stories was below the MEC population of this particular geographical location of the West Midlands region.

The Office for National Statistics indicate that the MEC population for Birmingham was just under 30 percent (29.6%) (ONS 2001). However, analysis of the data obtained from the content analysis conducted of the news stories analysed, indicate that of the 2008 contributors included in the 'Birmingham-located' news stories, 1674 of 'contributors' to these news stories were classified under the broad ethnic category of: 'White', which represented over 80 percent (83.4%) of all contributors. 334 contributors were classified under the broad ethnic heading of: 'MECs', amounting to just over 16.5 percent (16.6%) of all contributors featured in news stories situated in the Birmingham location. Therefore, this finding indicates that the Midlands Today programme fell short of reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the Birmingham location by 13 percent (13.0%).

In terms of the specific 'ethnic' groups featured in the Birmingham-located news stories analysed, the number of contributors classified as 'White British' were featured on 1635 occasions in stories situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region, which represented just over 80 percent (81.4%) of all contributors featured in these news stories. Contributors classified as 'White Non-European' were featured on 20 occasions, representing 1 percent (1.0%). Those described as 'White European' were featured on 17 occasions, which amounted to less than 1 percent (0.8%), whilst those described as 'Mediterranean' were featured on 2 occasions, representing just 0.1 percent (0.1%) of all contributors to stories situated in Birmingham.

Contributors to news stories classified as 'South Asian', represented the largest MEC contribution to stories situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region, with 171 contributors, amounting to 8.5 percent (8.5%) of all contributors to news stories located in Birmingham.

The next largest contribution from the MECs to news stories located in Birmingham was by those classified as 'Caribbean', which amounted to 119 individuals and represented just under 6 percent (5.9%). All of the other MEC ethnic groups each individually represented less than 1 percent of all contributors included in news stories located

in Birmingham. Contributors classified as 'Mixed' were featured on 16 occasions (0.8%), 'African' contributors totalled 14 (0.7%), and those who were classified as being of 'South East Asian' and 'Middle Eastern' descent were each represented by just 7 contributors (0.3%) of all stories located in Birmingham.

Therefore, based upon the MEC population for the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region which was 29.6 percent (ONS 2001), the finding of this current study indicates that the output of the Midlands Today programme falls short by 13 percent (13.0%) of representing/reflecting the MEC population of the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region (Table 8.11, p.389).

Table 8.11
Ethnicity of Contributors featured in news stories located from around the West Midlands Region.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	White British	White European	White Non-European	Mediterranean	South Asian	Caribbean	Mixed	African	Middle Eastern	South East Asian	TOTALS	
											Fre-quency	Percent-age
Birmingham	1635 (81.4%)	17 (0.8%)	20 (1.0%)	2 (0.1%)	171 (8.5%)	119 (5.9%)	16 (0.8%)	14 (0.7%)	7 (0.3%)	7 (0.3%)	2008	39.8
	WHITE TOTAL (Birmingham) = 1674 (83.4%)				MEC TOTAL (Birmingham)= 334 (16.6%)							
Black Country	277	1	1	0	39	8	4	1	1	0	332	6.6
Coventry	208	5	1	0	9	2	2	0	4	0	231	4.6
Gloucestershire	116	0	0	0	2	1	0	5	0	0	124	2.5
Herefordshire	200	2	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	206	4.1
Leicestershire	18	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	20	0.4
Shropshire	220	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	224	4.4
Shrewsbury	68	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70	1.4
Staffordshire	648	8	1	0	9	6	4	2	4	5	687	13.6
Warwickshire	313	2	2	0	3	1	2	1	1	1	326	6.5
Wolverhampton	195	1	0	0	13	7	0	0	2	0	218	4.3
Worcestershire	360	5	0	0	3	2	0	2	0	1	373	7.4
Pan Regional	111	2	0	0	1	5	0	0	0	0	119	2.4
Outside of Region	14	0	0	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	19	0.4
Different Country	62	3	10	1	3	8	0	0	0	0	87	1.7
TOTAL	4445(n)	49(n)	37(n)	5(n)	259(n)	162(n)	29(n)	25(n)	19(n)	14(n)	5044(n)	100.0%

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

8.7.1 MEC: Monthly and Yearly changes in contributor participation on the Midlands Today programme

As stated previously in the methodology chapter of this study (Chapter 5), it was decided to analyse the Midlands Today programmes over an extensive period of time because as the pan-BBC diversity policy had only been introduced in 2000, this elongated analysis was considered to be necessary in order to give this programme time to adapt and put measures into place to assist in it achieving the aims/objectives of the policy to 'reflect the nation it serves'. The extensive number of programmes analysed was also considered to be necessary, to enable the charting of any changes that may have occurred in terms of the inclusion of MECs being featured as 'contributors' on this programme.

For the period of programmes selected for analysis, the finding of the content analysis indicate that there were variations in the number of 'contributors' from the MECs who were included in the programmes.

In the months of November and December 2002 (prior to the two young girls being tragically shot and killed in Aston, Birmingham on 1st January 2003), there is a significant difference between the following three months of January, February and March 2003 in terms of the number of people

from the MECs being featured as contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

In November and December 2002, the overall number of contributors from the MECs that were featured on programmes, was 7.4 percent (7.4%) of all contributors to news stories. However, in the following months of January, February and March (2003), the figure had increased to slightly under 15 percent (14.8%). Apart from the fact that this block of months includes three months (as opposed to two), this increased representation could also possibly be attributed to the Midlands Today programme's coverage and increased inclusion of those from the MECs in relation to the atrocity that took place in Aston, Birmingham at the start of the New Year in 2003.

Another possible reason for the higher number of MEC contributors being featured in the news stories analysed, could lay in the fact that the 'Aston shootings' highlighted the lack of 'contacts' that this programme had with the Black community in Birmingham (HRLP-WM. Source: one-to-one in-depth interview, 2004), and so based upon the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom, it is possible to assert that following the 'shootings', there was more of a concerted effort on the part of BBC Birmingham in

general, to try to bridge that gap by proactively trying to make more contact with those from the MECs.

It is also notable that the block of months of: January, February and March 2004 that can be used to make a direct comparison with January, February and March 2003 indicate that such a high percentage of MEC contributors being featured in those months in 2003 was not repeated or built upon. Whilst the percentage of MEC contributors for those months in 2003 was 14.8 percent (14.8%), MEC contributors in those same months in 2004 had significantly decreased to 8 percent (8.0%).

A likely reason for this could be because following the 'Aston shootings' there was a 'surge of activity' by the Midlands Today programme to proactively try to include more contributors from the minority ethnic communities in the news stories broadcast. However, this 'surge of activity' may have waned over time because when compared with the months of January, February and March 2004) these latter three months only featured 8 percent (8.0%) of MEC contributors in news stories, even though overall there were more contributors in these three months in 2004, than in the three months (January, February, March) in 2003.

The months of: June, July and August 2003 reveal that the number of MECs included in the programmes analysed had reduced (when compared to the previous block of months of January, February and March, 2003), to slightly under 10 percent (9.7%). This finding is quite surprising because this period of months include months that are often regarded by journalists/the news media as being the 'silly season'. This is because news is often 'thin' on the ground and so there is less competition amongst organisations/individuals for 'airtime'. Therefore, potential news stories that would struggle to *make* the news have an increased chance of *making* the news.

When comparing the months of November and December 2003 with the same months in the previous year of 2002, the percentage of contributors from the MECs is higher than it was in 2002, amounting to just over 9 percent (9.1%).

(Table 8.12, p.394).

Table 8.12
MEC: Monthly changes in contributions to the programme.

	Nov, Dec 2002	Jan, Feb, March 2003	June, July, Aug 2003	Nov, Dec 2003	Jan, Feb, March 2004	TOTAL CONTRIBUTORS FOR EACH ETHNIC GROUP
White British	610 (90.8)	972 (83.6)	1156 (88.4)	522 (88.3)	1185 (90.5)	4445
White European	4 (0.6)	9 (0.8)	13 (1.0)	8 (1.4)	15 (1.1)	49
White Non-European	6 (0.9)	10 (0.9)	10 (0.8)	7 (1.2)	4 (0.3)	37
Mediterranean	2 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.1)	5
Other- White	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0
WHITE TOTAL	622 (92.6%)	991 (85.2%)	1181 (90.3)	537 (90.9)	1205 (92.0)	4536
South Asian	20 (3.0)	77 (6.6)	68 (5.2)	30 (5.1)	64 (4.9)	259
Caribbean	24 (3.6)	63 (5.4)	31 (2.4)	19 (3.2)	25 (1.9)	162
Mixed	5 (0.7)	9 (0.8)	7 (0.5)	2 (0.3)	6 (0.5)	29
African	0 (0.0)	9 (0.8)	10 (0.8)	3 (0.5)	3 (0.2)	25
Middle Eastern	0 (0.0)	11 (0.9)	8 (0.6)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	19
South East Asian	1 (0.1)	3 (0.3)	3 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	7 (0.5)	14
Other - Black	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0
MEC TOTAL	50 (7.4%)	172 (14.8%)	127 (9.7%)	54 (9.1%)	105 (8.0%)	508
TOTAL	672	1163	1308	591	1310	5044

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

As stated previously in the methodology Chapter (Chapter 5) of this study, it was decided to analyse the Midlands Today programme over an elongated period of time because as the pan-BBC diversity policy had only been introduced in 2000, it was considered to be necessary in order for this programme to adapt to the policy, in its bid to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000). It was also considered to be necessary to return to analysing this programme years

later, to chart any changes that may have occurred, in terms of the inclusion of MECs being featured on the programme.

Therefore, one week in the month of March 2008 was selected for analysis, to allow a direct comparison to be made with one week in March 2003 and one week in March 2004.

Analysis of the one week in March 2003 indicates that of a total of 86 contributors featured on the programmes that week, only 8 - representing slightly over 9 percent (9.3%) of all contributors were from the MECs. 4 were of 'South Asian' heritage (4.7%), 3 were 'Caribbean' (3.5%) and 1 was described as 'Mixed' (1.2%). (Table 8.13).

Table 8.13
Analysis of 1 week of programmes broadcast in March 2003: Ethnicity of Contributors.

ETHNICITY	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
White British	77	89.5
White Non-European	1	1.2
South Asian	4	4.7
Caribbean	3	3.5
Mixed	1	1.2
TOTAL	86 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = Percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Even fewer members of the MECs were featured in the week of programmes that were analysed in March 2004. Of a total of 109 contributors participating in the news stories analysed, just 6 were from the MECs, representing 5.5 percent (5.5%) of all contributors for that week. 4 contributors were

'South Asian' (3.7%) and 2 were 'Caribbean' (1.8%). (Table 8.14).

Table 8.14
Analysis of 1 week of programmes broadcast in March 2004: Ethnicity of Contributors.

ETHNICITY	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
White British	103	94.5
South Asian	4	3.7
Caribbean	2	1.8
TOTAL	109(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = Percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

For the one week of programmes analysed in March 2008, there were a total of 110 contributors participating in these programmes. However, unlike the previous two years discussed (i.e. 2003&2004), the inclusion of MECs on these programmes was significantly higher. Contributors from the MECs totalled 20, representing over 18 percent (18.2%) of all contributors who participated in the programmes for that week. 8 were 'South Asian' (7.3%), 5 'Caribbean' (4.5%), 4 'African' (3.6%), 2 'Mixed' (1.8%) and 1 was 'Middle Eastern' (0.9%). (Table 8.15).

Table 8.15
Analysis of 1 week of programmes broadcast in March 2008: Ethnicity of Contributors.

ETHNICITY	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
White British	88	80.0
White European	2	1.8
South Asian	8	7.3
Caribbean	5	4.5
African	4	3.6
Mixed-race	2	1.8
Middle Eastern	1	0.9
TOTAL	110(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = Percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

The finding of the week in March 2003 and the week in March 2004 indicate that overall, the output of the Midlands Today programmes analysed did not reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region. At the time of the last census in 2001, the MEC population in the West Midlands was 13 percent (13.0%).

However on face value, it would appear that in the week of programmes analysed in March 2008, the Midlands Today programmes *over-represented* MECs in the programmes broadcast for that particular week by 5.2 percent (5.2%), and so more than met the requirements of the pan-BBC diversity policy - 'to 'reflect the nation that it serves'. However, upon analysing where the majority of news stories were located for the week of programmes analysed in March 2008, this finding paints a very different picture.

Of the news stories featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed in the week of March 2008, 27 of the 48 news stories, representing slightly over 56 percent (56.3%) of all stories were located in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region (Table 8.16, p.398).

Table 8.16
Geographical location of news stories/items in the one week analysed in:
March 2008

Geographical location of News Item	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Birmingham	27	56.3
Herefordshire	5	10.4
Coventry	4	8.3
Staffordshire	4	8.3
Black Country	3	6.3
Warwickshire	3	6.3
Wolverhampton	1	2.1
Worcestershire	1	2.1
TOTAL	48(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = Percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

In terms of the ethnicity of contributors to news stories situated in Birmingham for the week in March 2008, analysis reveals that of the 59 contributors featured, 49 were classified under the broad ethnic category of 'White', with 48, representing 81.4 percent (81.4%) being classified as 'White British' and 1 contributor classified as 'White European' (1.7%). The second largest contribution was by those classified as 'South Asian', which totalled 4 contributors and amounted to slightly under 7 percent (6.8%) of all contributors to news items situated in Birmingham for the week in March 2008. Those of Caribbean heritage were featured on 3 occasions in news stories located in Birmingham, representing just over 5 percent (5.1%). 2 contributors of African heritage were featured in the news stories analysed, representing 3.4 percent (3.4%) and 1 contributor was classified as 'Mixed' (1.7%). (Table 8.17, p.399).

Table 8.17
Ethnicity of Contributors to news stories located in
Birmingham for the week in March 2008 analysed

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
White British	48	81.4
White European	1	1.7
White Non-European	0	0.0
Mediterranean	0	0.0
Other- White	0	0.0
WHITE TOTAL =	49(n)	83.1.%
South Asian	4	6.8
Caribbean	3	5.1
African	2	3.4
Mixed-race	1	1.7
South East Asian	0	0.0
Middle Eastern	0	0.0
Other - Black	0	0.0
MEC TOTAL =	(n)10(n)	16.9%
TOTAL	59(n)	100.0%

(n= number; %=percentage) Source: Content Analysis.

Therefore, although the finding of the content analysis conducted indicate that there has been an increase in the number of people from the MECs being afforded the opportunity to participate as contributors to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today since the analysis of this programme's output commenced (for this current study), this programme still fails to fully reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

Similar to the point raised previously in this chapter, the most frequently featured story location was Birmingham. Therefore, given that the MEC population in Birmingham was at the time of the last census almost 30 percent (29.6%) (ONS, 2001), the finding of the analysis of the one week in March 2008 reveals that the proportion of MEC contributors

featured in this programme's output is still 12.7 percent (12.7%) below the MEC population for Birmingham. This is in spite of it being 8+ years on since the introduction of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Although there is a fundamental lack of MECs featured in the output of the Midlands Today programme's analysed, it is still of interest and of importance for this current study to gain an insight into the following:

- a) The 'type of contribution' (i.e. 'clip', 'interview', 'live', 'voxpath') that is afforded to those from MECs who have gained access to the Midlands Today programme to enable participation in this very important public sphere, and as such allow MECs to participate in the *Regional Conversation* via this programme.
- b) The 'social group' of those from the MECs who are afforded the opportunity to 'contribute' in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

8.7.2 MEC: Type of contribution to news stories

In analysing the specific 'type of contributions' (i.e. 'clip', 'interview', 'voxpop' or 'live') that MECs made to the Midlands Today news stories analysed, the finding indicates that this was very comparable with 'contributors' classified as 'White', in terms of the percentage (from within each ethnic group), that represented how much was given over to each 'type of contribution'.

Overall, the largest 'type of contribution' made by individuals classified as 'White' (i.e. White British, White European, White Non-European and Mediterranean) was a 'clip'. This represented slightly under 60 percent (59.7%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

Similarly, the largest 'type of contribution' made collectively by those from the MECs (i.e. South Asian, African, Caribbean, Mixed, South East Asian, Middle Eastern), was also in the form of a 'clip', representing almost 60 percent (57.7%) of all contributions made accumulatively by those from the MECs to the Midlands Today programme.

Similar to individuals classified as 'White', the next frequent type of way in which MEC Contributors participated

in the Midlands Today programme was by partaking in a news story via a 'voxpath'. Over 20 percent (23.1%) of all 'White' contributions to news stories was in the form of a 'voxpath', and just under 30 percent (27.6%) of all contributions made by the MECs was also in the form of a 'voxpath'.

The third most featured type of contribution made by individuals classified as 'White' was via an 'interview', representing 12 percent of all contributions to the programme. This was also the third most popular way in which MECs contributed to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, representing 10.6 percent (10.6%) of all contributions made by MEC contributors.

The fourth, and as such the least type of way in which contributors were afforded the opportunity to participate in the Midlands Today news stories analysed was in the form of a 'live' contribution.

Slightly over 5 percent (5.2%) and slightly over 4 percent (4.1%) of contributions to the programme was made by those who were classified as 'White' and those who were classified as being a member of the MECs, respectively.

These results highlight that although there is an under-representation of MECs being included in the output of the

Midlands Today programmes analysed, when MECs are included, they are afforded the same type of repertoire as their 'White' counterparts in terms of the 'type of contribution' that they make to news stories (i.e. 'clip', 'interview', 'live' or 'voxpath'). (Table 8.18).

Table 8.18
Type of contributions on Midlands Today programme
[Correlated with the ethnicity of the contributor].

ETHNICITY	Type of Contribution				
	Clip	Voxpop	Interview	'Live'	TOTAL
White British	2653 (59.7)	1023 (23.0)	538 (12.1)	231 (5.2)	4445 (100.0%)
White European	26 (53.1)	15 (30.6)	5 (10.2)	3 (6.1)	49 (100.0%)
White Non-European	27 (73.0)	6 (16.2)	1 (2.7)	3 (8.1)	37 (100.0%)
Mediterranean	1 (20.0)	4 (80.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (100.0%)
Other- White	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0%)
WHITE TOTAL	2707 (59.7%)	1048 (23.1%)	544 (12.0%)	237 (5.2%)	4536 (100.0%)
South Asian	151 58.3	68 (26.3)	26 (10.0)	14 (5.4)	259 (100.0%)
African	11 (44.0%)	9 (36.0)	5 (20.0)	0 (0.0)	25 (100.0%)
Caribbean	99 (61.1)	46 (28.4)	13 (8.0)	4 (2.5)	162 (100.0)
Mixed-	13 (44.8)	11 (38.0)	5 (17.2)	0 (0.0)	29 (100.0%)
South East Asian	8 (57.1)	2 (14.3)	1 (7.1)	3 (21.4)	14 (100.0%)
Middle Eastern	11 (57.9)	4 (21.1)	4 (21.1)	0 (0.0)	19 (100.0%)
Other - Black	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0%)
MEC TOTAL	293 (57.7%)	140 (27.6%)	54 (10.6%)	21 (4.1%)	508 (100.0%)
TOTAL	3000(n)	1188(n)	598(n)	258(n)	5044(n)

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

The above finding is very interesting because it would strongly suggest that although MECs are under-represented in

terms of their inclusion in the Midlands Today programme, when they are afforded access to participate, there does not seem to be any 'differential' or 'unfavourable' treatment in terms of the 'type of contribution' afforded to MECs when compared to the 'type of contribution' afforded to their 'White' counterparts.

Rather, the issue here seems to stem from the overall lack of access afforded to MECs to participate in the *Regional Conversation* via the public sphere of this regional television news programme. Therefore, it is contended within this current study that the 'root' of this problem stems from the Midlands Today programme's lack of 'Contacts' from within the MECs to enable the sourcing of 'stories' and 'contributors' to the news stories that it broadcasts. This assertion is further reinforced by the comments made by the Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands (HRLP-WM) who acknowledged (during the one-to-one in-depth interview) that the lack of contacts that this programme has from within the MECs was a 'weakness'.

Therefore, Chapter 9 of this current study examines what if any measures, may have been put into place by the Midlands Today programme to assist in its building up of contacts from within the MECs of the West Midlands region.

8.7.3 MEC: Social Group of Contributors

To gain an insight into the 'types' of individuals from the MECs who were afforded 'access' to contribute to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, it was considered useful to examine the social groups from which MEC contributors were drawn from.

South Asian: This was the only ethnic minority group that had a representation from within all of the social groups assigned/designated to individuals contributing to news stories (apart from the social group category of 'royalty').

Of the 259 contributors classified as 'South Asian', the social group classification that was assigned the most to this ethnic group was participation to news stories via a 'random voxpop'. This amounted to 61 contributors, representing 23.6 percent (23.6%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

Contributing to news stories as a 'relative/family friend of victim' was the second most assigned social group classified to this ethnic group. This represented over 19 percent (19.7%) of all contributions made by individuals whose ethnicity was classified as 'South Asian' and amounted to 51 contributors.

31 South Asian contributors who were included in the news stories analysed were classified under the social group category of 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)'. This represented 12 percent (12.0%) of all contributions to news stories made by individuals who were classified as South Asian.

17 South Asian contributors, representing 6.6 percent (6.6%) of all contributions to news stories analysed were featured under the social group of: 'individual in focus'.

The social group of: 'Involved group member' was the fifth most featured type of social group classified to those of South Asian heritage. This amounted to 15 contributors, which represented 5.8 percent (5.8%) of all South Asian contributions to the news stories analysed.

Just over 4 percent (4.2%) of South Asian contributors were afforded the opportunity of contributing to news stories under the social group classification of: 'expert/professional (excluding those working in the race-relations industry)', which amounted to a total of 11 contributors.

10 South Asian contributors were featured on the news stories analysed as a 'witness', which represented just under 4 percent (3.9%) of all contributions from this minority ethnic group.

9 South Asian contributors, representing 3.5 percent (3.5%) of all contributors from this ethnic group participated in the news stories analysed under the social group of: 'business spokesperson (from business being discussed)'.

Of the 268 contributors classified under the social group category of the: 'Police', 7 were of South Asian heritage which represented under 3 percent (2.7%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group. A similar number of South Asian contributors (i.e. 7) were also featured under the social group classification of: 'pre-arranged voxpop'.

6 South Asian contributors were classified under the social group of: 'victim', which represented slightly over 2 percent (2.3%) of all social group classifications assigned this ethnic group

The social group of: 'Representative(s) from the emergency services (other than the Police)', included 5

South Asian contributors, which amounted to just under 2 percent (1.9%) of all South Asian contributions to the news stories analysed.

The social groups of: 'Politician', 'Community organisation representative (General)', 'MEC Community leader/group worker' and 'Community organisation representative (MEC)' each included the representation of 4 South Asian contributors, with each representing 1.5 percent (1.5%) of all social group classifications assigned to South Asian contributions to the news stories analysed.

3 South Asian contributors, representing just over 1 percent (1.2%) were featured within the news stories analysed under each of the following social groups: 'Campaigner/protester', 'Local authority representative' and 'Expert/professional working in the race-relations industry'. Accumulatively, these 3 social group classifications represented 3.6 percent (3.6%) of all social group classifications assigned to South Asian contributions to news stories.

Individually, each of the following social group classifications devised for this current study represented less than 1 percent (1.0%) of all social

group classifications assigned to South Asian contributors to the news stories analysed:

'Celebrity' - 2 contributors (0.8%).

'Military' - 1 contributor (0.4%).

'Trade Union representative' - 1 contributor (0.4%).

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

Caribbean

Contributors to news stories classified under the ethnic group of 'Caribbean' were included in the news stories analysed on 162 occasions.

Similar to those classified as 'South Asian', the social group that was assigned the most to contributors of 'Caribbean' heritage was 'random voxpop', which represented slightly under 23 percent (22.8%) of all social group classifications assigned to this ethnic group, which amounted to 37 'Caribbean' contributors.

The social group of: 'relative/family friend of victim' was the second most attributed social group to those of Caribbean heritage. This amounted to 34 contributors, and represented 21 percent (21.0%) of all social group classifications assigned to this ethnic group. One

reason for this social group being so highly represented could be because of the Aston shootings, and the news items featured on Midlands Today involving family members and friends of the two murdered girls.

A similar explanation as posited above (re. the Aston shootings), could maybe also account for why the third most featured social group amongst Contributors of Caribbean heritage was: 'witness'. 15 Caribbean contributors to the news stories analysed, representing slightly over 9 percent (9.3%) of all contributions from this ethnic group were classified to this social group category.

14 contributors to news stories who were of Caribbean heritage were assigned to the social group category of: 'MEC Community leader/group worker', which represented 8.6 percent (8.6%) of all contributors made by this ethnic group.

12 Caribbean contributors participated in the news stories analysed, under the social group classification of: 'involved group member', which amounted to 7.4 percent (7.4%) of all social groups assigned to contributors of Caribbean heritage.

The social group category of: 'individual in focus', was designated to 10 'Caribbean' contributors, which accounted for 6.2 percent (6.2%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

9 contributors of Caribbean heritage were featured under the social group category of: 'pre-arranged voxpop', which represented 5.6 percent (5.6%) of all Caribbean contributions to the news stories analysed. 8 contributors from within this ethnic group, representing slightly under 5 percent (4.9%) participated in the delivery of the details of news stories broadcast, under the social group of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)'.

The social group classification of: 'celebrity' was assigned to 6 Caribbean contributors to news stories analysed, and represented 3.7 percent (3.7%) of all social group classifications assigned to this ethnic group.

The social group categories of: 'Police' and 'community organisation representation (MECs)' were each assigned to 4 Caribbean contributors to the news stories analysed, with each representing 2.5 percent (2.5%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

The social group classification of: 'Business spokesperson (from the business being discussed)' was assigned to 3 Caribbean contributors to news stories, representing just under 2 percent (1.9%) of all contributions made to news stories by individuals classified under this ethnic group.

The following 3 social group classifications of: 'expert/professional (excluding those working in the race-relations industry)', 'victim' and the 'military', were each assigned to 2 'Caribbean' contributors to the news stories analysed, with each representing just over 1 percent (1.2%).

The 7 social group classifications that were never assigned to any contributors to news stories who were of Caribbean heritage were as follows:

- Campaigner/protester.
- Local authority representative.
- Representative from the emergency services (other than the Police).
- Politician.
- Trade Union representatives.
- Community organisation representative (General).
- Expert/professional working in the race-relations industry.

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

Mixed:

The number of individuals of 'Mixed' heritage who were featured as contributors on the Midlands Today news stories analysed amounted to 29, which represented 0.6 percent (0.6%) of all contributors featured on this programme. This ethnic group occupied 10 of the 23 social groups devised for this current study.

The social group most attributed to individuals of 'Mixed' heritage was under the category of: 'random voxpop'. This was designated to 10 contributors and represented 34.5 percent (34.5%) of all contributions from this ethnic group.

The social group category of: 'relative/family friend of victim' was assigned to 4 contributors, representing slightly under 14 percent (13.8%) of all contributions made to the news analysed by those classified as 'Mixed'.

Each of the social group classifications of: 'individual in focus' and 'victim' were assigned to 3 contributors to news stories - who were of: 'Mixed' heritage, with each representing 10.3 percent (10.3%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

2 contributors of 'Mixed' heritage were assigned to each of the following social group classifications, with each representing slightly under 7 percent (6.9%) of all contributions to news stories made by this ethnic group:

- 'Involved group member'.
- 'Expert/professional (excluding those working in the race relations industry)'.
- 'Celebrity'.

The following social group classifications of: 'representative (of an official body/organisation, (other than any specifically mentioned)', 'Campaigner/protester' and 'pre-arranged voxpop' were each assigned to 1 contributor of 'Mixed' heritage, with each representing 3.4 percent (3.4%) of all contributions to news stories made by those of 'Mixed' heritage.

No contributors of 'Mixed' heritage were assigned to the following social group classifications:

- Business Spokesperson (from the business being discussed).
- Police.
- Local authority representative.
- Representative from the emergency services (other than the Police.
- Politician.

- Witness.
- Military.
- Trade Union representative.
- Community organisation representative (General).
- MEC Community leader/group worker.
- Community organisation representative (MEC).
- Expert/professional working in the race relations. Industry.

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

African:

Contributors of 'African' descent to the Midlands Today news stories analysed totalled 25, which represented 0.5 percent (0.5%) of all contributors featured on the news stories broadcast.

The social group category that was assigned the most to 'African' contributors to the news stories analysed was: 'random voxpop'. 7 contributors were classified under this social group, which represented 28 percent (28.0%) of all contributions made to news stories by those of African heritage.

The social group classification of 'individual in focus' was assigned to 5 individuals of 'African' descent, representing 20 percent (20.0%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

4 'African' contributors were classified under the social group category of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)', which amounted to 16 percent (16.0%) of all African contributions to the news stories analysed.

The social group classification of: 'MEC Community leader/group worker' was assigned to 3 contributors of African descent, which represented 12 percent (12.0%) of all contributions made to news stories by individuals of 'African' heritage.

The social group classifications of: 'Involved group member', 'Expert/professional (excluding those working in the race relations industry)' and 'pre-arranged voxpop' were each assigned to 2 African contributors to the news stories analysed, with each representing 8 percent (8.0%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group.

Contributors to news stories of 'African' heritage did not have a representation under the following social group classifications:

- Relative/family friend of victim.
- Business Spokesperson (from the business being discussed).

- Police.
- Campaigner/protester.
- Local authority representative.
- Representative from the emergency services (other than the Police).
- Celebrity.
- Politician.
- Victim.
- Witness.
- Military.
- Trade Union representative.
- Community organisation representative (General).
- Community organisation representative (MEC).
- Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry.

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

Middle Eastern:

Contributors to news stories who were of Middle Eastern heritage were the second least featured ethnic group on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, totalling just 19 contributors to news stories, which represented 0.4% of all contributors.

As such, the majority of social group classifications devised for this current study did not feature any representation from this ethnic group, with Middle

Easter contributors being assigned to only 6 of the social group classifications devised.

The social group classifications of: 'representation of an Official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)' and 'individual in focus' were each assigned to 4 Middle Eastern contributors, with each representing 21.4 percent (21.4%) of all contributions made by this ethnic group to news stories.

3 Middle Eastern contributors were assigned to each of the following social group classifications: 'random voxpop', 'campaigner/protester'. 'relative/family friend of victim'. Therefore, each amounted to slightly under 16 percent (15.8%) of all social group classifications assigned to this ethnic group

1 Middle Eastern contributor was assigned to each of the following social groups of: 'involved group member' and 'pre-arranged voxpop', with each representing slightly over 5 percent (5.3%) of all contributions made to news stories by this ethnic group.

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

South East Asian:

The total number of contributions made to news stories by those of South East Asian heritage was 14, which represented 0.3 percent (0.3%) of all contributions made to the Midlands Today news stories analysed.

Similar to those of 'Middle Eastern' heritage, this ethnic group did not have a representation on the majority of social group classifications devised for this current study and as such, there were only 5 social group categories that featured a representation from a South East Asian contributor.

The social groups of 'individual in focus' and 'involved group member' were the predominant classifications assigned to contributors of 'South East Asian' heritage participating in the Midland Today news stores analysed. Each of these two social groups represented 28.6 percent (28.6%) of all contributions made by those of South East Asian heritage, with 4 contributors being assigned to the above social groups.

3 South East Asian contributors were classified under the social group category of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)'. This represented 21.4 percent (21.4%) of

all contributions to news stories made by this ethnic group.

2 South East Asian contributors were classified under the social group of: 'random voxpop' which represented 14.3 percent (14.3%) of all social groups assigned to this ethnic group, whilst 1 contributor, representing 7.1 percent (7.1%) was classified under the social group of: 'Business spokesperson (from the business being discussed)'.

(Table 8.19, pp. 421-4).

Table 8.19
Social Group of Contributors correlated by Ethnicity

SOCIAL GROUP OF CONTRIBUTOR	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTORS										
	White British	White European	White Non-European	Mediterranean	South Asian	Caribbean	Mixed	African	South East Asian	Middle Eastern	TOTAL
'Random' voxpop	937 (86.8)	12 (1.1)	6 (0.6)	4 (0.4)	61 (5.7)	37 (3.4)	10 (0.9)	7 (0.6)	2 (0.2)	3 (0.3)	1079 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(21.1)	(24.5)	(16.2)	(80.0)	(23.6)	(22.8)	(34.5)	(28.0)	(14.3)	(15.8)	
Representative of an Official body/org. (other than any specifically mentioned)	518 (90.1)	4 (0.7)	2 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	31 (5.4)	8 (1.4)	1 (0.2)	4 (0.7)	3 (0.5)	4 (0.7)	575 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(11.7)	(8.2)	(5.4)	(0.0)	(12.0)	(4.9)	(3.4)	(16.0)	(21.4)	(21.1)	
Individual in focus	501 (89.8)	10 (1.8)	4 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	17 (3.0)	10 (1.8)	3 (0.5)	5 (0.9)	4 (0.7)	4 (0.7)	558 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(11.3)	(20.4)	(10.8)	(0.0)	(6.6)	(6.2)	(10.3)	(20.0)	(28.6)	(21.1)	
Involved Group member	397 (89.4)	9 (2.0)	2 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	15 (3.4)	12 (2.7)	2 (0.5)	2 (0.5)	4 (0.9)	1 (0.2)	444 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(8.9)	(18.4)	(5.4)	(0.0)	(5.8)	(7.4)	(6.9)	(8.0)	(28.6)	(5.3)	
Relative/family friend of victim	334 (77.7)	1 (0.2)	3 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	51 (11.9)	34 (7.9)	4 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.7)	430 (100.0%)
% of ethnicity	(7.5)	(2.0)	(8.1)	(0.0)	(19.7)	(21.0)	(13.8)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(15.8)	
Business Spokesperson (from business being discussed)	332 (94.9)	2 (0.6)	2 (0.6)	1 (0.3)	9 (2.6)	3 (0.9)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	350 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(7.5)	(4.1)	(5.4)	(20.0)	(3.5)	(1.9)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(7.1)	(0.0)	
Expert/Professional (excl those working in race relations industry)	276 (91.7)	4 (1.3)	4 (1.3)	0 (0.0)	11 (3.7)	2 (0.7)	2 (0.7)	2 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	301 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(6.2)	(8.2)	(10.8)	(0.0)	(4.2)	(1.2)	(6.9)	(8.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	

Source: Content Analysis, contd/...

Table 8.19 (contd.)
Social Group of Contributors correlated by Ethnicity

SOCIAL GROUP OF CONTRIBUTOR	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTORS										
	White British	White European	White Non-European	Mediterranean	South Asian	Caribbean	Mixed	African	South East Asian	Middle Eastern	TOTAL
Police	250 (93.3)	0 (0.0)	7 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	7 (2.6)	4 (1.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	268 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(5.6)	(0.0)	(18.9)	(0.0)	(2.7)	(2.5)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Campaigner/Protester	144 (94.1)	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)	153 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(3.2)	(2.0)	(2.7)	(0.0)	(1.2)	(0.0)	(3.4)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(15.8)	
Local Authority Representative	142 (96.6)	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	0 (0.0)	3 (2.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	147 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(3.2)	(2.0)	(2.7)	(0.0)	(1.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Representative(s) from the emergency services (other than the Police)	136 (96.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (3.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	141 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(3.1)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.9)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
'Pre-arranged' voxpop	86 (78.9)	3 (2.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	7 (6.4)	9 (8.3)	1 (0.9)	2 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.9)	109 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.9)	(6.1)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(2.7)	(5.6)	(3.4)	(8.0)	(0.0)	(5.3)	
Celebrity	76 (87.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.1)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.3)	6 (6.9)	2 (2.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	87 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.7)	(0.0)	(2.7)	(0.0)	(0.8)	(3.7)	(6.9)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	

Source: Content Analysis, contd./...

Table 8.19 (contd.)
Social Group of Contributors correlated by Ethnicity

SOCIAL GROUP OF CONTRIBUTOR	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTORS										
	White British	White European	White Non-European	Mediterranean	South Asian	Caribbean	Mixed	African	South East Asian	Middle Eastern	TOTAL
Politician	81 (94.2)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.2)	0 (0.0)	4 (4.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	86 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.8)	(0.0)	(2.7)	(0.0)	(1.5)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Victim	68 (84.0)	2 (2.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (7.4)	2 (2.5)	3 (3.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	81 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.5)	(4.1)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(2.3)	(1.2)	(10.3)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Witness	42 (60.9)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.9)	0 (0.0)	10 (14.5)	15 (21.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	69 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.9)	(0.0)	(5.4)	(0.0)	(3.9)	(9.3)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Military	43 (91.5)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.1)	2 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	47 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.0)	(0.0)	(2.7)	(0.0)	(0.4)	(1.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Trade Union representative	45 (97.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (2.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	46 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(1.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.4)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Community Organisation representative (General)	34 (89.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (10.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	38 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.8)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.5)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
MEC Community leader/group worker	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (19.0)	14 (66.7)	0 (0.0)	3 (14.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	21 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.5)	(8.6)	(0.0)	(12.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	

Source: Content Analysis, contd./...

Table 8.19
Social Group of Contributors correlated by Ethnicity

SOCIAL GROUP OF CONTRIBUTOR	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTORS										
	White British	White European	White Non-European	Mediterranean	South Asian	Caribbean	Mixed	African	South East Asian	Middle Eastern	TOTAL
Community Organisation representative (MEC)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (50.0)	4 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	8 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.5)	(2.5)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Expert/Professional working in the race-relations industry	2 (40.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (60.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.04)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(1.2)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Royalty	1 (100)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (100.0%)
% within ethnicity	(0.02)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	
Other	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
% within ethnicity	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)	(0.0)
TOTAL	4445(n) (88.1%)	49(n) (1.0%)	37(n) (0.7%)	5(n) (0.1%)	259(n) (5.1%)	162(n) (3.2%)	29(n) (0.6%)	25(n) (0.5%)	14(n) (0.3%)	19(n) (0.4%)	5044(n) (100.0%)

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: Content Analysis.

Upon assessing the finding of the content analysis conducted into the social group classifications assigned to MEC contributors, it is notable that in the one area where Midlands Today journalists can exert control over *who* contributes to a news story... irrespective of the main subject-matter/topic of the story and irrespective of the 'occupation' and/or 'status' of the individual(s) contributing to a news story - is via the inclusion of a 'random voxpop' in the delivery of the details of the news story. Therefore, it is interesting to note that this was the only social group classification that had a representation within all of the ethnic minority groups.

A reason for this finding can possibly be attributed to there being a concerted effort being made on the part of Midlands Today journalists to *consciously* attempt to include members of the MECs in the news stories broadcast. In addition to this assertion being informed by the finding imparted above, this supposition is also made in light of the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the 'Head of BBC Birmingham's Diversity Outreach Group' (2004), who stated that a 'voxpop' was one of the easiest ways of trying to include members of the MECs within the programme.

Notably there was a high propensity of contributors from the MECs assigned to the social group classification of 'random

voxpath'. Whilst 21.1% of all 'White British' contributors to news stories were assigned to this social group, 23.6% of all 'South Asian' contributors were also assigned to this social group, 22.8% of all 'Caribbean' contributors, 28.0% of 'African' contributors and 34.5% of all 'Mixed' heritage contributors were also assigned to this social group.

In many instances, the 'percentage' of contributors from within the largest minority ethnic group - i.e. South Asian that were assigned to a particular social group classification, was similar to the 'percentage' of 'White British' contributors who were also assigned to that very same social group.

For example, 12 percent (12.0%) of all 'South Asian' contributors to news stories were classified under the social group category of: 'representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)' - 11.7 percent (11.7%) of all 'White British' contributors were also assigned to this social group.

- The Social Group classification of: 'Politician' was assigned to 1.5 percent (1.5%) of all 'South Asian' Contributors to news stories; very similar to the percentage of all 'White British' Contributors, which amounted to 1.8 percent (1.8%), who were also assigned to this social group.

The social group classification of: 'Involved group member' was assigned to 5.8 percent (5.8%) of 'South Asian' contributors - quite comparable to the percentage of 'White British' contributors (8.9%) who were also assigned to this social group.

So once again, similar to the finding that the 'type of contribution' afforded to MEC contributors to enable participation to the news stories broadcast being comparable to the 'type of contribution' afforded to 'White' contributions to news stories, this finding would suggest that the *problem* identified is not one of contributors from the MECs being subjected to differential treatment, but more of a case of there being an under-representation of those from the MECs being included within this programme's output.

8.8 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to examine to what extent, the output of the BBC's regional television news programme Midlands Today, could be regarded as being a depiction and articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000).

Based upon the analysis of the 5044 contributors included in the news stories broadcast on this programme, the overall finding of this current study indicates that this programmes

output cannot be considered to be a depiction of a multi-ethnic public sphere as conceived within this current study, because this programme's output consistently fails to representatively reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region. A region, which based upon the last census conducted in 2001 by the Office for National Statistics (ONS 2001), has the largest ethnic minority population in the UK outside of London. As a result of this finding, it is also contended within this study that the Midlands Today programme consistently fails in its attempt to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy which is to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000); in this instance, the West Midlands region - to where this programme broadcasts.

The findings imparted within this chapter were enabled via the analysis of 253 Midlands Today programmes - stemming from November 2002 to April 2004. These programmes featured a total of 2708 news stories and of the 1929 stories that allowed for contributor involvement (i.e. stories that were delivered in the form of a 'limited' or 'expansive' presentational format), a total of 5044 contributors were featured in the delivery of the details of the news stories broadcast.

The reason for conducting such an elongated analysis of the Midlands Today programme was two-fold:

- i) During the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the Head of Regional and Local Programmes for the West Midlands region (HRLP-WM), he stated that the 'Aston shootings' in Birmingham highlighted the fact that BBC Birmingham was lacking in the 'Contacts' that it had from within the Black community. Therefore it was decided to commence the analysis of this programme in the 2 months prior to the Aston shootings (which occurred on the 1st January 2003), to enable an assessment to be made of any changes that may have occurred in terms of the inclusion of the MECs in the output of the Midlands Today programme.
- ii) As the pan-BBC diversity policy was implemented in 2000, it was considered that it would take a period of time for the Midlands Today programme to achieve the aims/objectives of the BBC's diversity policy.

As one would expect, the majority of contributors to the news stories analysed were from the 'White' ethnic population. Therefore, of the 5044 contributors featured in

these stories, 4536 were classified as 'White', which represented 89.9 percent (89.9%) of all contributors to news stories. Contributors classified as being a member of the minority ethnic communities (MECs) totalled 508, which represented slightly over 10 percent (10.1%).

Based upon the statistics available from the last census (ONS 2001), the MEC population in the West Midlands region was 13 percent (13.0%). Therefore the above finding reveals that the Midlands Today programme only fell short by 2.9 percent (2.9%) of reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

However, whilst on the surface this finding initially appeared to be very encouraging, further analysis of the data revealed that over 40 percent (40.3%) of the news stories analysed, were situated in the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region. As the last census indicates, Birmingham has a MEC population of slightly under 30 percent (29.6%), one would have expected this population to have been better represented in the output of the programmes analysed. Therefore further analysis was conducted to assist in determining how representative a sample of MECs were included in the Birmingham-located news stories.

Of the 2008 contributors who were featured in the 1092 Birmingham-located news stories, 1674 contributors were classified under the ethnic category of 'White', which represented over 83 percent (83.4%) of all contributors. 334 contributors were classified as being a member of the minority ethnic community (MEC), which represented 16.6 percent (16.6%) of all contributors featured in the Birmingham-located news stories. This finding indicates that based upon the MEC population in Birmingham, there was a short-fall of 13.1 percent (13.1%) in terms of the output of the Midlands Today programme representatively reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the Birmingham area of the West Midlands region.

In the 2 months prior to the Aston shootings (i.e. November and December 2002), the MEC represented 7.4 percent of all contributors included in the Midlands Today programmes analysed, for those months. In the comparative months in the following year (i.e. November and December 2003), although the percentage of MEC contributors to news stories had increased to 8.0 percent (8.0%), the Midlands Today programme still failed to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output by 5.0 percent (5.0%).

In further acknowledgement that the meeting of the pan-BBC diversity policy may take a period of time to achieve, one week of programmes broadcast in March 2008 was also analysed, to enable direct comparisons to be made with a week of programmes broadcast in March 2003 and a week of programmes broadcast in March 2004. Analysis of the week of programmes in March 2003 revealed that contributors from the MECs represented 9.3 percent (9.3%) of all contributors to news stories for that week. For the week in March 2004, the percentage of MEC contributors to news stories had decreased from the previous year, to 5.5 percent (5.5%). However, in the week of programmes analysed in March 2008 there was a significant increase, with slightly over 18 percent (18.2%) of all contributors to news stories in that week being from the MECs. However once again, when this week in March 2008 is examined in terms of the news stories located in Birmingham, a different picture emerges - illustrating that although the percentage of MEC contributors to Birmingham-located news stories amounted to 17 percent (17.0%) of all contributors, it still falls short of the MEC population of Birmingham by 12.6 percent (12.6%).

A very interesting finding of this current study is that although there was consistently an overall under-representation of MEC contributors included in the news stories broadcast on the Midlands Today programme, when MEC

contributors were included in the news stories broadcast, they were afforded the same type of repertoire as their 'White' counterpart's who also contributed to news stories. Both in terms of the 'type of contribution' made to news stories (i.e. via a 'clip', 'interview', 'voxpop' or a 'live' contribution), and in terms of the 'social groups' of the MEC contributors who were afforded access to participate in the news stories broadcast being very comparable with the social groups that 'White' contributors were also drawn from. The above finding would suggest that there was no demonstrable evidence of 'differential' treatment between 'White' and 'MEC' contributors to the news stories broadcast.

In summary, despite the introduction of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000 with the aim to *reflect the nation that it serves*, this 'paper' policy has not translated into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme - evident by the output of this programme consistently failing to representatively reflect the nation that *it serves* in the West Midlands region.

CHAPTER NINE

BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE MIDLANDS TODAY PROGRAMME: *MAKING IT HAPPEN...!*

9.0 Introduction

Content analysis can document what news media have covered in what manner but cannot reach to the behind the scenes forces, relationships, judgements and decisions that produce detected patterns. On the spot observation can shed much light on how media personnel interpret their roles and the kinds of reports they should provide. (Semetko *et al* 1991:183-184).

The purpose of this chapter is to undertake a critical analysis of an area that academic researchers are often not afforded access to - namely, the *production process and the corporate nexus of media industries* (Downing and Husband 2005). Therefore, given the focus of this current study, this point specifically relates to the production process and corporate nexus of the BBC's regional television news programme, Midlands Today.

As the finding of the content analysis of Midlands Today indicate, the output of this programme consistently fails to representatively reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of

the West Midlands region and as a consequence, cannot be considered to be an example of a multi-ethnic public sphere, as conceived within this current study.

Therefore, the *thinking* behind this chapter is similar in thought to the sentiments as espoused above by Semetko *et al* (1991).

In a bid to try to identify any key microscopic/internal factors that may possibly have influenced/impacted upon the eventual output of the Midlands Today programme, the analysis conducted in this current chapter is situated within the theoretical frameworks of the 'managing diversity implementation model' (discussed in Chapter 4), and within the 'social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media' (discussed in Chapter 2).

Overall, to coin the phrase: '*...Making It Happen*' - the name that Greg Dyke (former Director General of the BBC) gave to an initiative implemented within this corporation which encompassed the BBC's desire to *change* the 'culture' of this organisation (Dyke 2002b), it is considered that the findings imparted within this chapter may contribute to *Making It Happen!* Making it happen insofar as providing a deeper understanding of how a regional television news programme such as Midlands Today, could possibly move closer

to meeting the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to *reflect the nation that it serves* (in this instance the West Midlands region) and as a consequence, in terms of the academic concerns of this current study - move closer to the eventual formation and articulation of a 'multi-ethnic public sphere' (Husband 1996, 2000).

The first part of this chapter provides a general profile/overview of the study group (i.e. Midlands Today journalists). The next section sheds light upon the journalists' views upon the role *they* believe the Midlands Today programme can play in the discourse on race-relations in the West Midlands region.

The third section of this chapter situates the Midlands Today programme within the managing diversity implementation model (discussed in Chapter 4 of this study), and within which the pan-BBC diversity 'paper' policy was also situated for analysis (Chapter 6). The purpose of undertaking this analysis is to examine to what extent, the constituent elements of the managing diversity implementation model (which were evident and identifiable in the pan-BBC diversity 'paper' policy), is also evident in the 'practical' translation of this policy on the Midlands Today programme. This section also attempts to identify areas that could possibly assist in *Making It Happen! Making it happen*

in terms of facilitating the translation of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme.

The final section of this chapter examines the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme.

The aims/objectives of this chapter were achieved by drawing upon the data gleaned from three of the four research methods employed within this study:

- i) The questionnaire survey disseminated to journalists working on Midlands Today.
- ii) The participant observations conducted in this newsroom.
- iii) The information imparted in the one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with BBC personnel working on this programme.

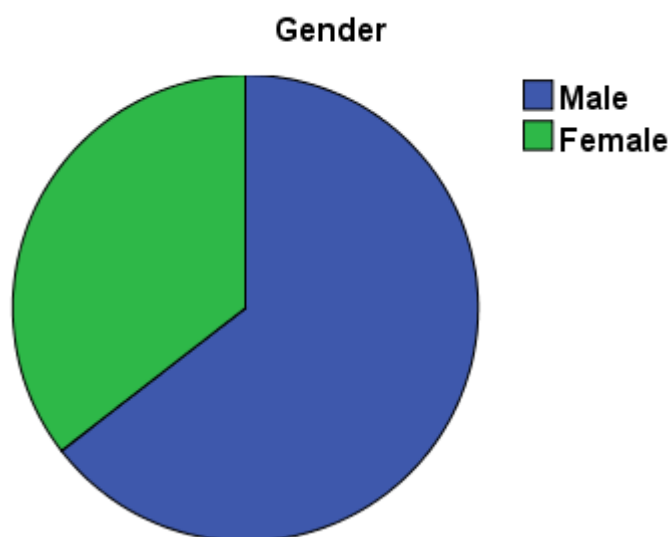
9.1 Profile of the Study Group: Midlands Today Journalists

The questionnaire survey which was devised for this current study, was disseminated to 42 Midlands Today journalists. 31 journalists fully completed and returned the questionnaire, which represents a return-rate of almost 75 percent (73.8%) of all questionnaires disseminated.

A nationwide survey entitled: *Journalists at Work* was conducted by Skillset in 2002. Skillset is the Sector Skills Council for the Audio Visual Industries for broadcast, film, video, interactive media and photo imaging. This survey revealed that journalism is one of the few professions to have an almost even split between the sexes, with 51 percent (51.0%) being male and 49 percent (49.0%) female. The finding of this nationwide survey also indicates that men oftentimes hold higher editorial positions in newsrooms than their female counterparts (NTO/Skillset 2002).

In terms of this current study, the gender breakdown of those working in the Midlands Today newsroom (based upon the questionnaires completed and returned), revealed that of those surveyed, 64.5 percent (64.5%) were 'male', representing 20 respondents. Therefore 11 respondents were 'female', which represented 35.5 percent (35.5%) of all those surveyed (Figure 9.1 & Table 9.1, p.439).

Figure 9.1
Gender breakdown of the Study Group.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.1
Gender breakdown of the Study Group.

GENDER	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	20	64.5
Female	11	35.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

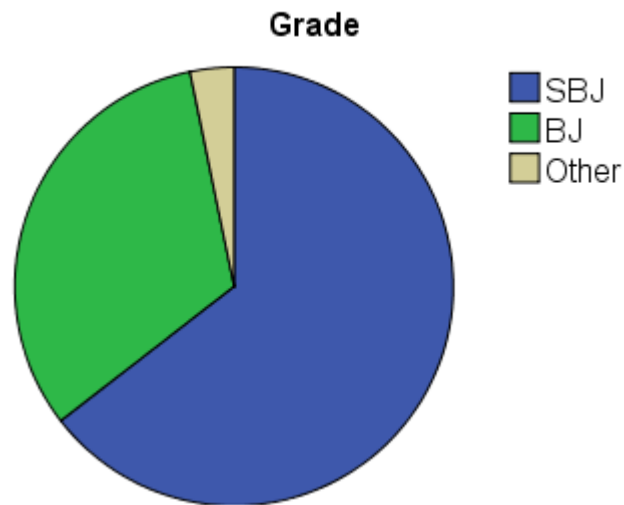
(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The two BBC employment 'Grades' that are predominantly held amongst the Personnel working in the Midlands Today newsroom are either that of a Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ) or a Broadcast Journalist (BJ), with the former being the higher of the two Grades. Another Grade which is also held by

newsroom personnel (but amongst less people who are graded as a SBJ or BJ) is that of a Senior Manager. The Senior Manager grade is higher than that of a SBJ.

Of the 31 journalists participating in this study only 1 respondent described their grade as being that of a Senior Manager (classified under 'Other'), which represented 3.2 percent (3.2%) of all those surveyed. 20 respondents were Senior Broadcast Journalists (SBJs), representing 64.5 percent (64.5%), and the remaining 10 respondents were graded as a Broadcast Journalist (BJ), representing 32.3 percent (32.3%) of all those surveyed. (Figure 9.2 & Table 9.2, p.441).

Figure 9.2
Distribution of Grades amongst the Study Group.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.2
Distribution of Grades amongst the Study Group.

GRADE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
SBJ	20	64.5
BJ	10	32.3
Other	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

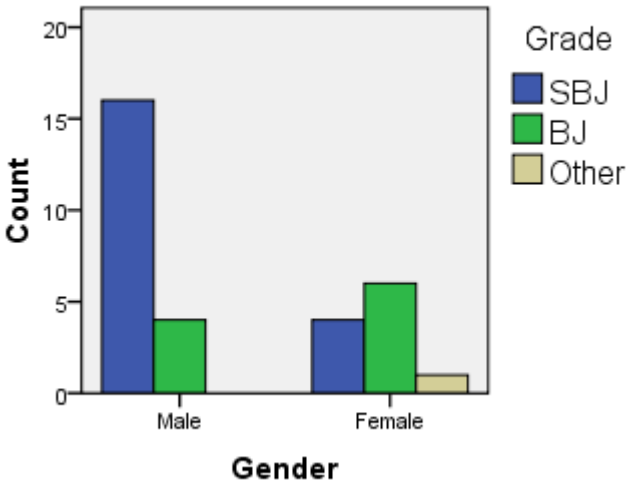
(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Whilst only 4 of the 20 men surveyed were graded at the lower Grade of BJ, which represented 20 percent (20.0%) of all men, the majority of females, amounting to 6 of the 11 surveyed were graded as a BJ, which represented 54.5 percent (54.5%) of all females. Therefore the majority of men, 16 of the 20 males surveyed were graded at the higher Grade of a SBJ, representing 80 percent (80.0%) of all males, whilst

only 4 females were SBJs, which represented 36.4 percent (36.4%) of all females.

Therefore this finding is similar to the results of the Skillset survey which indicates that men hold more senior positions than women in the newsroom. That said, it should be noted that the 1 respondent who stated that they were a Senior Manager (classified as 'Other') was a female and represented 3.2 percent (3.2%) of all those surveyed (Figure 9.2a & Table 9.2a, p.442-3).

Figure 9.2a
STUDY GROUP: Distribution of grades correlated by Gender of respondents.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.2a
STUDY GROUP: Distribution of grades correlated by Gender of respondents.

GRADE		GENDER		TOTAL
		MALE	FEMALE	
SBJ	Frequency(n)	16	4	20
	% within Grade	80.0	20.0	
	%within Gender	80.0	36.4	
	% of Total	51.6	12.9	64.5%
BJ	Frequency(n)	4	6	10
	% within Grade	40.0	60.0	
	%within Gender	20.0	54.5	
	% of Total	12.9	19.4	32.3
OTHER	Frequency(n)	0	1	1
	% within Grade	0.0	100.0	
	%within Gender	0.0	9.1	
	% of Total	0.0	3.2	3.2
TOTAL	Frequency(n)	20	11	31(n)
	% of TOTAL	64.5%	35.5%	100.0%

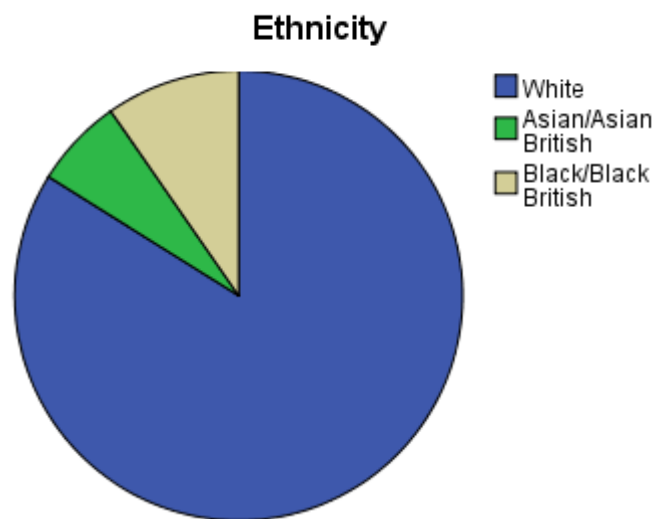
(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

In terms of the ethnic breakdown of the study group, over 80 percent (83.9%), representing 26 respondents described their ethnicity as 'White'. 2 respondents, which represented 6.5

percent (6.5%) of the study group described their ethnicity as 'Asian/Asian British' and 3 respondents, representing 9.7 percent (9.7%) of those surveyed described their ethnicity as 'Black/Black British'. No respondent described their ethnicity as being part of any other ethnic group. (Figure 9.3 and Table 9.3).

Figure 9.3
Ethnic breakdown of Study Group.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.3
Ethnic breakdown of Study Group.

ETHNICITY	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
White	26	83.9
Black/Black British	3	9.7
Asian/Asian British	2	6.5
TOTALS	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

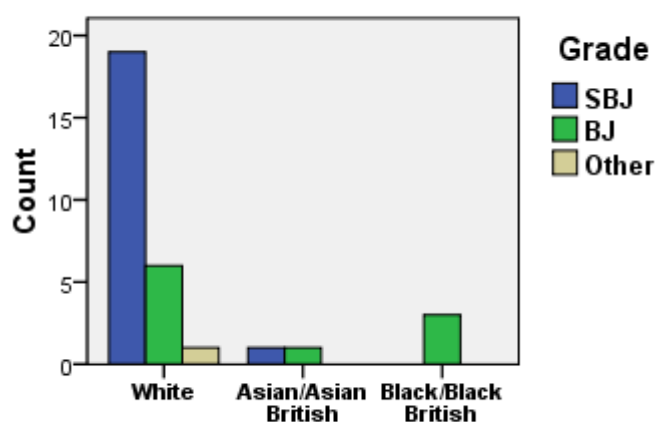
Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The participant observations conducted can confirm that at the time of the undertaking of this current study, the only other identifiable 'ethnicity' of journalists working in the Midlands Today newsroom was a male of 'Mixed' heritage.

Journalists' who classified their ethnicity as 'White' occupied higher positions within the Midlands Today newsroom. Of the 20 respondents who were graded as a Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ), 19 described their ethnicity as 'White', which represented 95 percent (95.0%) of all respondents graded as a SBJ. The 1 respondent who stated that they were a Senior Manager, also stated their ethnicity to be 'White'.

1 of the two respondents who stated their ethnicity to be 'Asian/Asian British' indicated that their Grade was that of a SBJ, which represented 5 percent (5.0%) of all respondents holding this Grade. No respondents describing their ethnicity as 'Black/Black British' were graded as a SBJ. (Figure 9.3a and Table 9.3a, p.446-7).

Figure 9.3a
STUDY GROUP: Grades correlated with ethnicity.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Referring once again to the finding of the Skillset survey which revealed that journalism can now be considered to be a 'graduate profession' - with 98 percent (98.0%) of all journalists in the industry being graduates (NTO/Skillset, 2002)...

To a large extent, the finding of this current study also concurs with the Skillset finding.

Table 9.3a

STUDY GROUP: Grades correlated with ethnicity.

GRADE		Ethnicity			TOTAL
		White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	
SBJ	Frequency (n)	19	1	0	20
	% within grade	95.0	5.0	0.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	73.1	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	61.3	3.2	0.0	64.5%
BJ	Frequency (n)	6	1	3	10
	% within grade	60.0	10.0	30.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	23.1	50.0	100.0	
	% of total	19.4	3.2	9.7	32.3
OTHER	Frequency (n)	1	0	0	1
	% within grade	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	3.8	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	26(n)	2(n)	3(n)	31(n)
	% of total	83.9%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

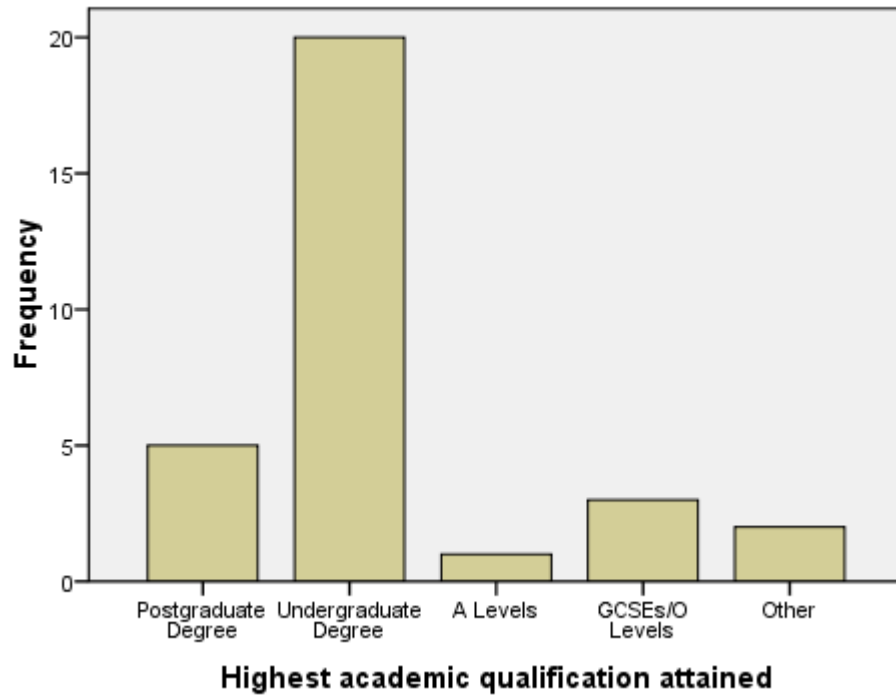
Of the 31 Midlands Today journalists surveyed for this current study, 27 respondents, representing 87.1 percent (87.1%) indicated that they were graduates. This figure of 87.1% was made up of the following:

- 20 respondents who stated that their highest academic qualification was an undergraduate degree - representing 64.5 percent (64.5%) of those surveyed.
- 5 respondents indicated that their highest academic qualification was a postgraduate degree, representing 16.1 percent (16.1%).
- 1 respondent stated that their highest academic qualification was a PhD and 1 respondent stated that their highest academic qualification was a MBA. These two qualifications were coded under the classification of 'Other', and represented 6.5 percent (6.5%) of all those surveyed.

Therefore, although the total number of Midlands Today journalists surveyed, who stated they were graduates amounted to 87.1 percent (87.1%) and so was slightly below the national average of 98 percent (98.0), (NTO/Skillset, 2002), this shortfall of less than 11 percent (10.9%) can be regarded as being negligible (Figure 9.4 & Table 9.4, p.449).

Figure 9.4

Highest academic qualifications attained by the Study Group.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.4

Highest academic qualifications attained by the Study Group.

Qualification(s)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Postgraduate Degree	5	16.1
Undergraduate Degree	20	64.5
A Levels	1	3.2
GCSEs/O Levels	3	9.7
Other	2	6.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = frequency; (%) = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Based upon the finding of the questionnaire survey conducted for this study, it is also possible to identify the highest academic qualifications attained by each of the ethnic groups.

Of the 26 respondents who classified their ethnicity as 'White', 3 respondents' which represented 11.5 percent (11.5%) of this ethnic group stated that their highest academic qualification was a postgraduate degree.

In addition, the 1 respondent who specified their highest academic qualification as being a PhD, and the 1 respondent who stated their highest academic qualification to be a MBA, both indicated their ethnicity to be 'White'. Therefore collectively, the academic achievements of these two respondents represented 7.7 percent (7.7%) of all academic qualifications attained by this ethnic group. In addition, 17 respondents, representing 65.4 percent (65.4%) of those classified as 'White', stated that their highest academic qualification was an undergraduate degree.

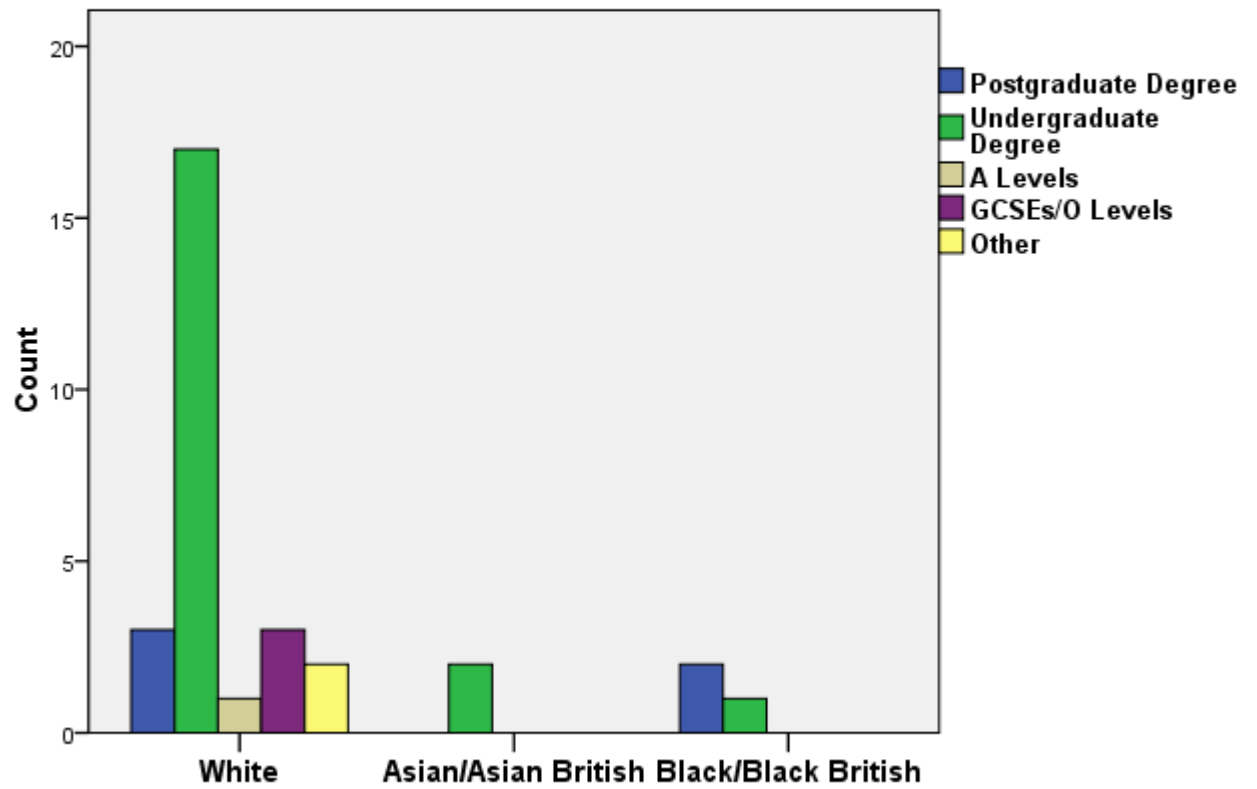
Therefore, 84.6 percent (84.6%) of respondents classified as 'White' were graduates. Of the 4 remaining respondents who classified their ethnicity as 'White', 1 stated that their highest academic qualifications were 'A Levels',

representing 3.8 percent (3.8%), and 3 stated their highest academic qualifications to be 'GCSEs/O Levels', representing 11.5 percent (11.5%) of all academic qualifications attained by those classifying their ethnicity as 'White'.

Of the 3 respondents classifying their ethnicity as 'Black/Black British', 2 - representing two-thirds of this ethnic group (66.7%) stated that their highest academic qualification was a postgraduate degree, whilst 1 respondent, representing one-third (33.3%) of this ethnic group stated that their highest educational attainment was an undergraduate degree. Therefore, 100 percent (100.0%) of this ethnic group were graduates. The 2 respondents classified as 'Asian/Asian British', indicated that their highest academic qualification was an undergraduate degree. Therefore, similar to those classifying their ethnicity as 'Black/Black British', 100 percent (100.0%) of 'Asian/Asian British' respondents were also graduates (Figure 9.4a & Table 9.4a, p.452-3).

Figure 9.4a

Highest academic qualification attained by the different ethnic groups.



Source: Questionnaire survey.

Table 9.4a

Highest academic qualification attained by the different ethnic groups.

QUALIFICATION		Ethnicity			TOTAL
		White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	
Postgraduate Degree	Frequency (n)	3	0	2	5
	% within qualification	60.0	0.0	40.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	11.5	0.0	66.7	
	% of total	9.7	0.0	6.5	16.1%
Undergraduate Degree	Frequency (n)	17	2	1	20
	% within qualification	85.0	10.0	5.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	65.4	100.0	33.3	
	% of total	54.8	6.5	3.2	64.5%
A Levels	Frequency (n)	1	0	0	1
	% within qualification	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	3.8	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2%
GCSEs/ O Levels	Frequency (n)	3	0	0	3
	% within qualification	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	11.5	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	9.7	0.0	0.0	9.7%
Other	Frequency (n)	2	0	0	2
	% within qualification	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0)
	% within ethnicity	7.7	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	6.5	0.0	0.0	6.5%
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	26	2	3	31(n)
	% of total	83.9%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

(n) = frequency; % = percentage

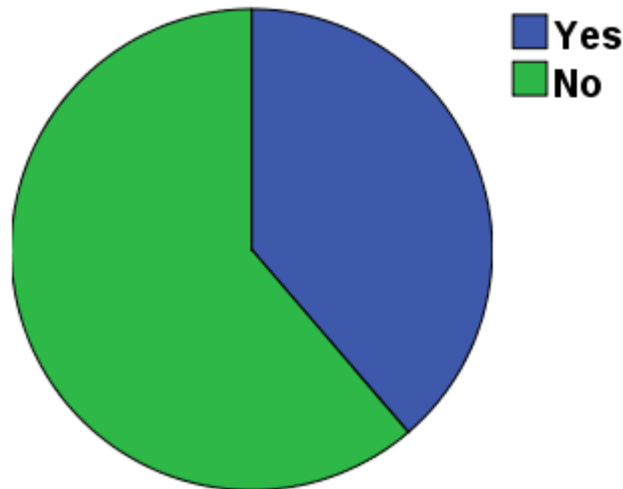
Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The finding of the research conducted by Skillset also revealed that 58 percent (58.0%) of all journalists nationwide had completed a postgraduate course in journalism (NTO/Skillset 2002). This postgraduate course is the industry-standard qualification that is generally recognised by the profession as being the necessary requirement for an individual to be deemed to be a 'qualified' journalist. That said, individuals can and do enter this profession through other means, such as gaining experience 'on-the-job', without having completed a postgraduate course in journalism.

In terms of this current study... whilst 12 respondents, representing 38.7 percent (38.7%) were able to respond 'Yes' to the following question of: 'Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?', 19 respondents' selected the option of 'No', which represented 61.3 percent (61.3%) of all those surveyed. Therefore 'collectively', those surveyed from the Midlands Today newsroom are almost 20 percent (19.3%) below the national average of 58 percent (58.0%) of all journalists nationwide, having completed a postgraduate course in journalism. (Figure 9.5 & Table 9.5, p. 455).

Figure 9.5

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.5

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?

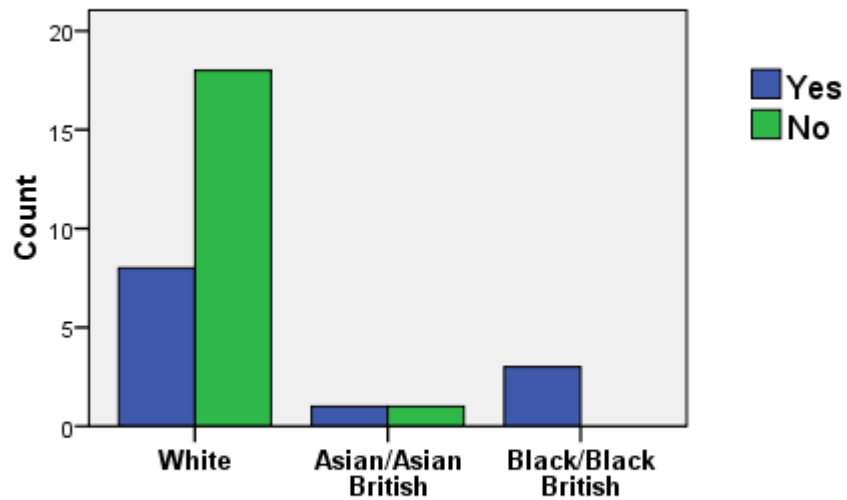
RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Per cent (%)
Yes	12	38.7
No	19	61.3
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = frequency; (%) = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Once again, there were disparities between the ethnic groups working on the Midlands Today regional television news programme, in terms of the attainment of this qualification. 100 percent (100.0%) of those classifying themselves as 'Black/Black British' stated that they had completed a postgraduate course in journalism. This figure reduces to 50 percent (50.0%) in relation to all those describing their ethnicity as 'Asian/Asian British', and decreases even further to just under 31 percent (30.8%) of those classifying their ethnicity as 'White' (Figure 9.5a and Table 9.5a, p. 456).

Figure 9.5a

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?
 [Response: correlated with the ethnicity of the respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.5a

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?]
 [Response: correlated with the ethnicity of the respondent]

		ETHNICITY OF JOURNALISTS			
RESPONSE		White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	TOTAL
YES	Frequency (n)	8	1	3	12
	% within ethnicity	30.8	50.0	100.0	
	% of total	25.8	3.2	9.7	38.7%
NO	Frequency (n)	18	1	0	19
	% within ethnicity	69.2	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	58.1	3.2	0.0	61.3%
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	26	2	3	31
	% of total	83.9%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

To determine how representative a sample the study group were in terms of the personnel working in the Midlands Today newsroom, it was considered important to gain an understanding of the roles each respondent undertook in the newsroom.

The participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom assisted in the identification of the specific types of jobs/roles that journalists working in the Midlands Today newsroom may be employed to undertake.

From the observations undertaken, a list of different jobs/roles were identified and included in the questionnaire survey (*Appendix B*). Respondents were asked to select the job/role that best described their job in the newsroom. The participant observations also highlighted that those working in the Midlands Today newsroom will oftentimes undertake different duties/roles. Therefore, respondents were instructed in the questionnaire survey to select the role that best describes their 'substantive' position in the newsroom. The jobs/roles listed in the questionnaire survey were as follows:

- Producer
- Correspondent

- Reporter
- Presenter
- News Organiser
- News Desk
- Forward Planning
- Researcher
- Broadcast Assistant
- Other (please specify).
[The category of 'Other' was included to enable respondents to state job positions/roles that were not listed in the above].

(Table 9.6).

Table 9.6
Key roles/jobs in the Midlands Today newsroom.

Roles/jobs in the Midlands Today newsroom
Producer
Correspondent
Reporter
Presenter
News desk (i.e. News Organiser or Assistant News Organiser)
Forward Planning
Researcher
Broadcast Assistant
Other

Source: Participant observations.

Of the 31 respondents surveyed, 15 which represented 48.4 percent (48.4%) selected 'reporter' (generalist) as being their substantive position in the newsroom. 2 respondents

specified their substantive position in the newsroom to be a 'Correspondent' (specialist), which represented 6.5 percent (6.5%) of all those surveyed.

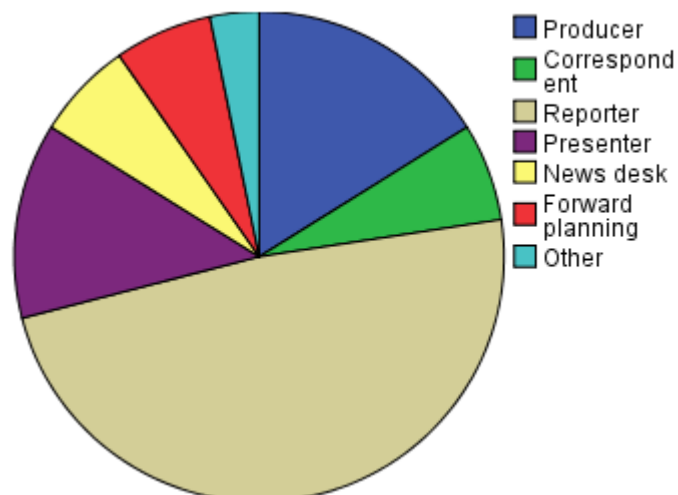
The role/position of 'Producer' was selected by 5 respondents, representing 16.1 percent (16.1%), whilst 4 respondents indicated that their substantive position in the newsroom was that of a 'Presenter', representing almost 13 percent (12.9%) of all respondents.

The positions of: 'working on Forward Planning' and 'working on the News desk', were each selected by 2 respondents. Therefore, each of these roles/positions represented 6.5 percent (6.5%) and so accumulatively, represented 13 percent (13.0%) of all jobs undertaken by the respondents working in the Midlands Today newsroom.

1 respondent selected the option of 'Other' and stated in their completed questionnaire that their role in the newsroom was that of the: 'Input Editor: Head of Newsgathering', which represented 3.2 percent (3.2%) of all roles undertaken by the study group (Figure 9.6 & Table 9.7, p.460).

Figure 9.6

Substantive Job/role undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom by the Study Group.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.7

Substantive Job/role undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, by the Study Group.

Job in the Midlands Today newsroom	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Reporter	15	48.4
Producer	5	16.1
Presenter	4	12.9
Correspondent	2	6.5
News Desk	2	6.5
Forward Planning	2	6.5
Other	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = frequency; (%) = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

On perusal of the role(s) that respondents stated to be their 'substantive' position in the newsroom, it would be a fair assertion to state that based upon the participant observations conducted, the jobs/roles undertaken by the study group is a fair representative sample of the various roles that are central to the 'smooth-running' and 'functioning' of this newsroom.

Below are details of the duties of some of the roles undertaken by the study group and Table 9.8 (p.463) lists the core/key roles in the Midlands Today newsroom:

- i) Producer: Duties involve deciding upon what stories to include in the news programme - main 18:30 - 19:00 programme, which follows on through to the late Producer of the Midlands Today programme.
- ii) Correspondent: As detailed in Ch.2 of this study, Correspondents (i.e. 'specialists') occupy a higher 'pecking-order' in the newsroom over 'generalist' journalists.
- iii) Reporter: Reporters in the Midlands Today newsroom could be regarded as 'generalists' (see Ch.2 for details of a 'generalist'), and so will cover a wide variety of different types of stories - in terms of the subject-matter.

- iv) **Presenter:** The Presenter(s) of Midlands Today can be regarded as being the 'face' of the programme. This programme has 2 main presenters who co-present the main news programme (from 18.30 - 19.00). As well as being the 'face' of the programme, the participant observations undertaken also highlighted that the Presenters of the programme also have the opportunity to fine-tune parts of the cues prior to 'going on-air'.

- v) **News Desk:** Led by the News Organiser. Duties involve overseeing the news desk by ensuring that everything that is needed for the daily programme is on schedule, making sure that nothing is missed. Liaises with the radio stations in a morning conference-call 'hook-up', to check on any stories that they may be covering, keeps across the 'wires'. Works with the programme producers. The News Organiser ensures that network news and the radio stations get whatever material they require from Midlands Today, and is assisted by the Assistant News Organiser (ANO).

- vi) **Forward Planning:** The personnel working on 'Forward Planning' is a SBJ and a BJ. They work on stories planned for a future day, and the SBJ arranges the newsrooms weekly planning meeting.

Table 9.8
Core/key Personnel working in the Midlands Today newsroom.

Job Title	Overall Responsibility	Day-to-day Duties
Output Editor (i.e. News Editor)	Has overall responsibility/control over the programmes output. Includes the overseeing Ceefax and Birmingham Online.	Keeping an eye on the programme, liaising with the Producers of the programme, and dealing with all matters pertaining to Midlands Today.
Input Editor - i.e. Head of Newsgathering	Overall responsibility of newsgathering, and leads the newsgathering team	Keeps an eye on all of daily programme, but essentially heads up newsgathering.
Producer (main, morning, late)	In charge of producing the programme.	Deciding upon what news items to include in the programme, the running order of the programme.
News Organiser	In charge of ensuring that items needed by the producers and material needed by journalists for their news items is obtained and made available for them. Generally keeps an eye over each daily programme.	Does the 9.15am conference call 'hook-up' with all of the radio stations. Makes sure that nothing is missed on the day. Ensures that Network receives whatever they need from Midlands Today, and does the same for the radio stations. Checks the 'wires' for any potential stories.
Assistant News Organiser	Works to the News Organiser	Emergency services checks; Checks wires; Checks local radio bulletins; assists Producers and journalists.
Presenter (1)	To co-present the programme	Go over the scripts, re-write parts to suit their style of presentation.
Presenter (2)	To co-present the programme	Go over the scripts, re-write parts to suit their style of presentation.
Camera Diary	Oversees the camera crews, ensuring that camera crews know where to go, and journalists have a camera crew available.	Person doing this job is in constant contact with the camera crew, letting them know where they need to go, i.e. location and what time and the nature of the story. Will also book 'lines' for any tape transfers
Forward Planning (SBJ)	Working on stories planned for future days. Arranges the weekly planning meeting.	Always working ahead of programmes, and working on stories for the future.
Forward Planning (BJ)	Works to the SBJ Forward Planner	Works on looking into potential stories for future programmes.
Newsgathering Broadcast Assistant	Works to the Head of Newsgathering.	Co-ordinates leave, the rotas, court checks, logging of Central Television's output, logging of Midlands Today diversity into the DMD.
Camera Diary	Co-ordinates the camera crews. Works with the Producer, SBJ planning and News Organiser.	Juggling the conflicting demands and making best use of resources. Also co-ordinates line booking and despatch rider.

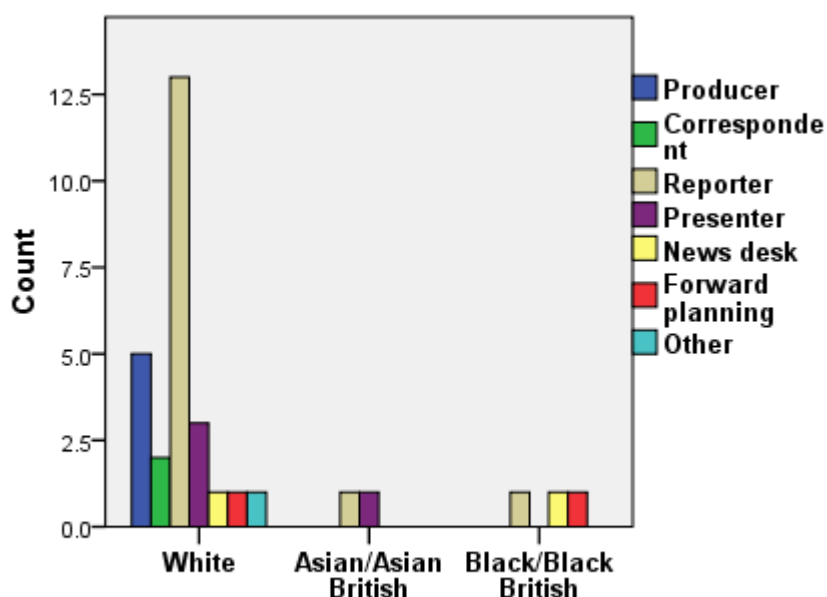
Source: Participant Observations.

Although the Skillset survey highlights that journalism can now be considered to be a 'graduate' profession, the finding of this current study also indicates that being in 'possession' of a degree (i.e. undergraduate/postgraduate), does not necessarily correlate with the journalist in possession of a degree, occupying a more Senior position in the newsroom than a journalist who does not hold a degree.

For example, although 100 percent (100.0%) of journalists describing their ethnicity as: 'Asian/Asian British' and 100 percent (100.0%) of 'Black/Black British' respondents' indicated that they had completed an undergraduate degree (Table 9.4a, p.452), the participant observations and the finding of the questionnaire survey reveal that no respondent from the MECs held any of the Senior decision-making positions in the newsroom. For example, the more Senior position of the 'SBJ working on the news desk' is held by a 'White' male who indicated that their highest academic qualifications were: 'GCSEs/O Levels', whilst the lower position of 'BJ working on the news desk' was undertaken by a 'Black/Black British' female respondent who indicated that they had completed an undergraduate degree course (Figure 9.7 & Table 9.9, p.465).

Figure 9.7

STUDY GROUP: Role/job in the Midlands Today newsroom
[correlated with respondents' ethnicity].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.9

STUDY GROUP: Role/job in the Midlands Today newsroom
[correlated with respondents' ethnicity].

ROLE/POSITION IN THE NEWSROOM	ETHNICITY OF STUDY GROUP			TOTAL
	White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	
Producer	5	0	0	5
Correspondent	2	0	0	2
Reporter	13	1	1	15
News desk	1	0	1	2
Forward planning	1	0	1	2
Presenter	3	1	0	4
Other	1	0	0	1
TOTAL	26(n)	2(n)	3(n)	31(n)

(n) = number

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Similarly (as mentioned previously), although the completion of a 'postgraduate course in journalism' is considered to be the 'industry-standard' qualification in order for an individual to be deemed to be a 'qualified' journalist, the

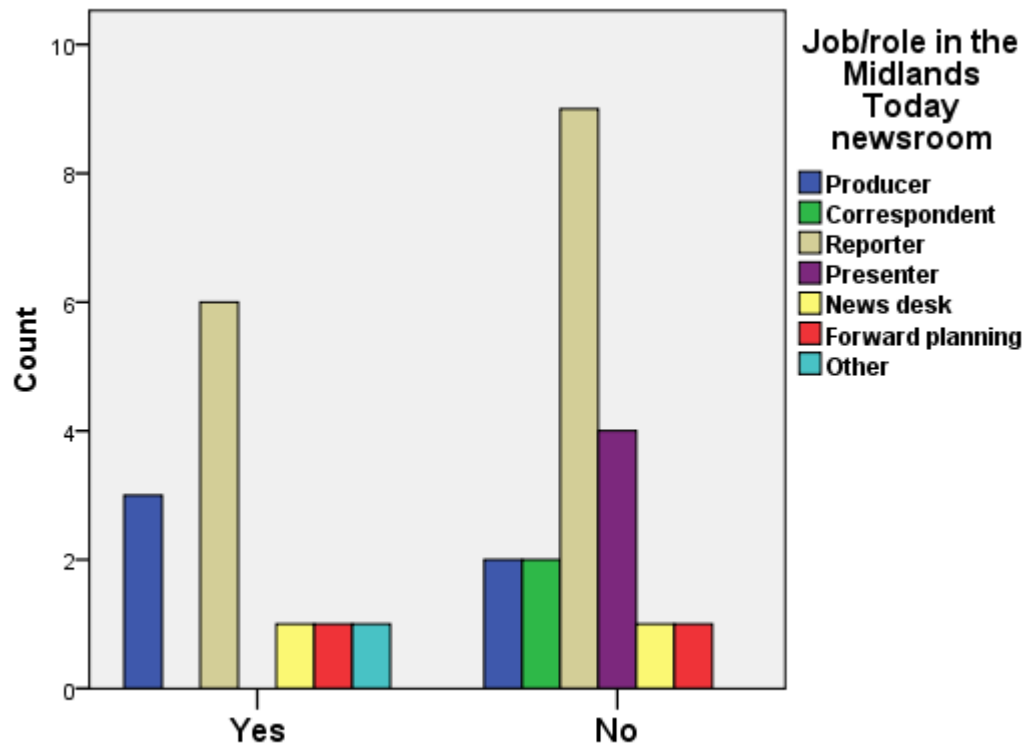
participant observations and finding of the questionnaire survey indicate that journalists *not* in possession of this qualification may still occupy Senior positions in the Midlands Today newsroom.

For example, although 2 of the 3 respondents classifying their ethnicity as: 'Black/Black British' stated that they had completed the postgraduate course in journalism, neither of these two respondents held a Senior position in the Midlands Today newsroom.

Conversely, the 2 respondents who stated that their substantive position in the newsroom was that of a 'Correspondent' - both 'White males', also indicated that they had not completed the postgraduate course in journalism. Similarly, 2 of the 5 respondents who stated that their substantive position in the newsroom was that of a 'Producer', also indicated that they had not completed the postgraduate course in journalism (Figure 9.8 & Table 9.10, p.467).

Figure 9.8

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?
[Response correlated with the job/role of the respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.10

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?
[Response correlated with the job/role of the respondent].

Job/role in the Midlands Today newsroom	YES	NO	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Producer	3	2	5	16.1
Correspondent	0	2	2	6.5
Reporter	6	9	15	48.4
Presenter	0	4	4	12.9
News Desk	1	1	2	6.5
Forward Planning	1	1	2	6.5
Other	1	0	1	3.2
TOTAL	12(n)	19(n)	31(n)	100.0%

(n)=frequency; (%)=percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

However, although 2 of the 3 respondents classifying their ethnicity to be 'Black/Black British' stated that they had completed the postgraduate course in journalism, neither of

these two respondents' held a Senior position in the Midlands Today newsroom (Table 9.11).

Table 9.11

QUESTION: Did you complete a postgraduate course in journalism?
[Response correlated with the job/role of the respondent and the ethnicity of the respondent].

Job on Midlands Today		ETHNICITY						TOTAL	
		WHITE		ASIAN/ASIAN BRITISH		BLACK/BLACK BRITISH			
		YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Producer	Frequency (n)	3	2	0	0	0	0	3	2
	% of total	60.0	40.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	60.0	40.0
News Desk	Frequency (n)	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
	% of total	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	50.0
Forward Planning	Frequency (n)	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1
	% of total	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	50.0
Corres-pondent	Frequency (n)	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
	% of total	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Reporter	Frequency (n)	4	9	1	0	1	0	6	9
	% of total	26.7	60.0	6.7	0.0	6.7	0.0	40.0	60.0
Presenter	Frequency (n)	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	4
	% of total	0.0	75.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Other	Frequency (n)	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	% of total	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	8	18	1	1	3	0	12	19
	% of total	25.8%	58.0%	3.2%	0.2%	9.7%	0.0%	38.7%	61.2%

(n) = frequency; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

A key to understanding the above finding which may at first appear to be somewhat of an anomaly, is that some individuals can and do, enter this profession through other means such as gaining experience 'on-the-job', without having completed this postgraduate course. Therefore, such individuals 'earn their stripes', and can build up a mass

of legitimate experience, which then deems the individual to be regarded as a 'qualified journalist'.

Such a scenario has most likely occurred amongst some of the journalists working on the Midlands Today programme, because the finding of this current study also indicates that this programme employs a very experienced team of journalists.

Age-wise, none of the respondents taking part in this study were under the age of 25. Over half (54.8%), amounting to 17 respondents, fall within the age ranges of 35 to 44 and within that age range, almost one-third (32.3%) of these respondents have worked on the Midlands Today programme for over 4 years. The next largest age range of respondents working on this programme were those falling between the ages of 25 to 34, which amounted to 8 respondents and represented over one quarter (25.8%) of all those surveyed.

10 respondents stated that they had worked on the Midlands Today programme for over 4 years but under 11 years, whilst 5 indicated that they had worked on this programme for no less than 11 year, and 1 respondent stated that they had

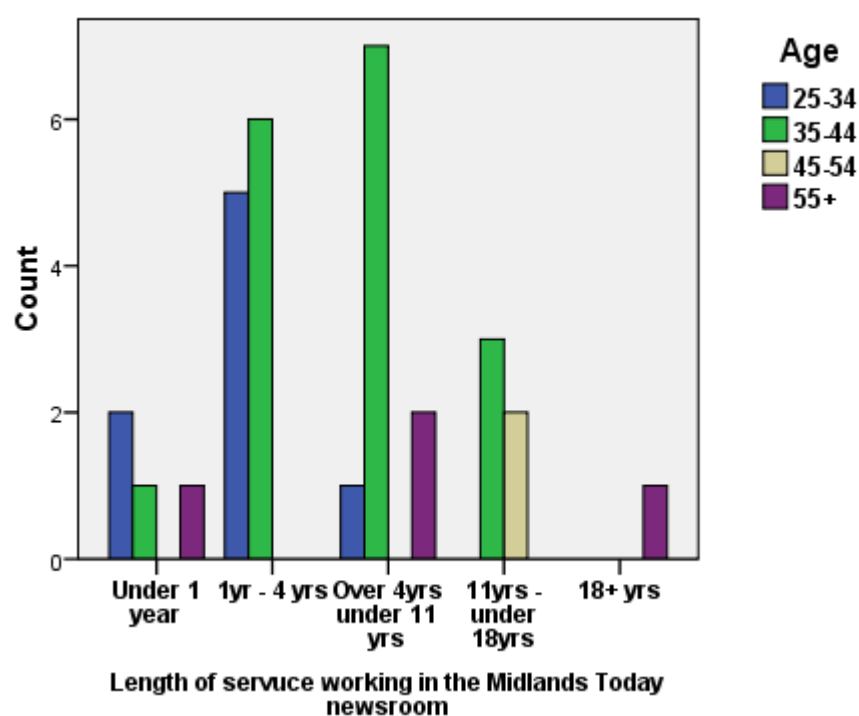
worked on the Midlands Today programme for over 18 years (Figure 9.9 & Table 9.12, p.471).

Overall then, Midlands Today has a very experienced and qualified team of journalists working on this programme - either in terms of academic qualifications or through the length of time individuals have worked as a journalist.

Prior to joining this programme, just over 90 percent (90.3%), representing 28 of all those surveyed, stated that they had previously worked in a newsroom - television, radio and/or newspapers (Figure 9.10 & Table 9.13, p.472).

Figure 9.9

Respondents' age: correlated with their length of service working on the Midlands Today programme.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.12

Respondents' ages: correlated with their length of service working on the Midlands Today programme.

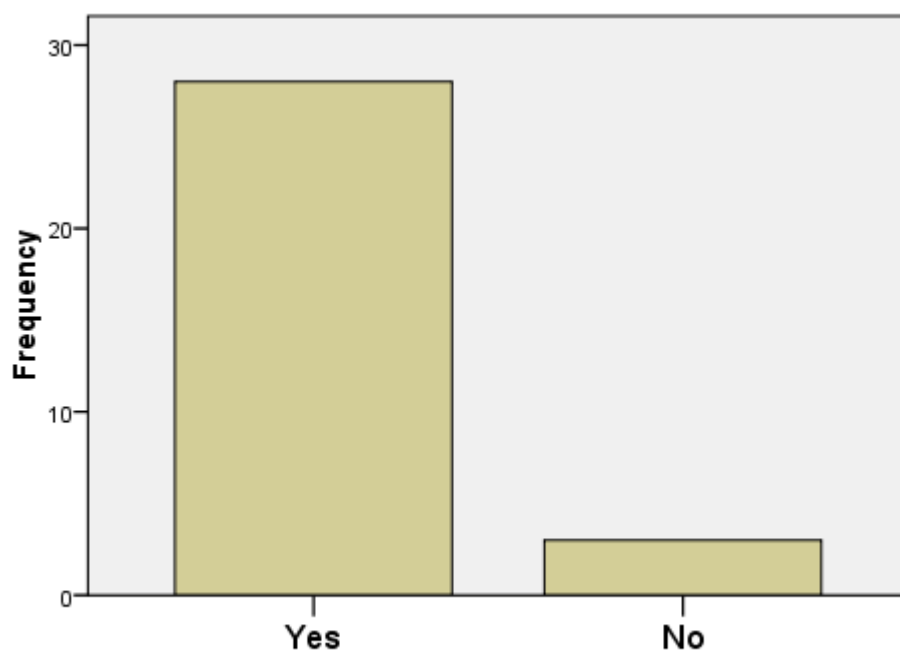
LENGTH OF SERVICE WORKING ON MIDLANDS TODAY		AGE				TOTAL
		25-34	35-44	45-54	55+	
Under 1 year	Frequency(n)	2	1	0	1	4
	% of total	6.5	3.2	0.0	3.2	12.9%
1 year - 4 years	Frequency(n)	5	6	0	0	11
	% of total	16.1	19.4	0.0	0.0	35.5%
Over 4 years - under 11 years	Frequency(n)	1	7	0	2	10
	% of total	3.2	22.6	0.0	6.5	32.3%
11 years - under 18 years	Frequency(n)	0	3	2	0	5
	% of total	0.0	9.7	6.5	0.0	16.1%
18+ years	Frequency(n)	0	0	0	1	1
	% of total	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	3.2%
TOTAL	Frequency(n)	8	17	2	4	31
	% of total	25.8%	54.8%	6.5%	12.9%	100.0%

(n) = frequency; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Figure 9.10

QUESTION: Prior to joining Midlands Today, had you ever worked in a newsroom before (i.e. TV, radio and/or newspapers)?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.13

QUESTION: Prior to joining Midlands Today, had you ever worked in a newsroom before (i.e. tv, radio and/or newspapers)?

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
YES	28	90.3
NO	3	9.7
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

9.2 The mediation of the *Regional Conversation* on race-relations in the West Midlands region: From the perspective of Midlands Today Journalists

It is often recognised that the media is one of the most powerful and primary public spheres and as such, has the potential to (mis)/inform and (mis)/educate public beliefs and attitudes on race relations. For example, in a study conducted by Hartmann and Husband (1974) in the 1970's, into the views as held by the indigenous population on the minority ethnic communities, the finding of this study indicated that the news media *had* to an extent, played a role in informing the held-views.

Indeed, high-profile individuals working in public life have also expressed the view that the media *does* have the power to influence/have an impact upon the way in which race relations is perceived to be - in Britain.

For example in 2002, Alistair Campbell (the then director of communications for the former Prime Minister of the UK - Tony Blair) said on the announcement that he would be giving the keynote speech at the Commission for Racial Equality's (CRE), Race in the Media Awards (RIMA) that:

"From my time in government and as a former journalist myself, I know how influential the media can be in informing and influencing public opinion.

"The UK's newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television networks, advertisers, and websites can play an important role in helping to build a society that values the rich diversity our country boasts."
(Campbell, CRE Newsletter 2002).

Similar sentiments were also echoed by Beverley Bernard, who at the time was the acting Chair for the CRE:

"Reporting of race relations has never been more important. The media is a powerful ally and tool in promoting a modern multicultural society where all feel they belong equally.
(Bernard, CRE Newsletter 2002).

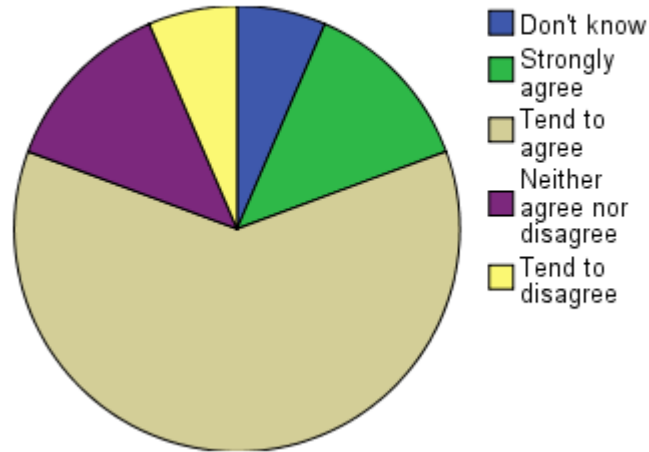
Therefore, in light of the above statements and academic studies (such as Hartmann and Husband, 1974), it was considered important to try to gain an insight into the views as held by the study group (i.e. journalists working on Midlands Today) on the role *they* believed the Midlands Today programme could/does play in the discourse on the *Regional Conversation* - vis-à-vis race relations in the West Midlands region. This was considered to be an important factor to establish because as has been contended throughout this current study, an off-shoot of the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere (Husband 2000) on Midlands Today, could possibly assist in the development/expression of a more cohesive society (Kelly

2006) and enable fractioned, disparate communities of all races, the opportunity to gain a deeper and clearer understanding of each others culture.

When presented with the statement that: 'The way 'race-related' issues is covered on Midlands Today is likely to influence our 'White' viewers' opinions on minority ethnic communities', there was a high consensus amongst the study group. Over 74 percent (74.2%) of all those surveyed, which represented 23 respondents agreed with this statement (12.9% - Strongly Agree; 61.3% - Tend to Agree), whilst only 2 respondents, 6.5 percent (6.5%) selected the option of 'Tend to Disagree'. 4 respondents, representing slightly under 13 percent (12.9%) selected 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' and the option of 'Don't Know', which represented 6.5 percent (6.5%) was selected by 2 respondents' (Figure 9.11 & Table 9.14, p.476).

Figure 9.11

STATEMENT: The way 'race-related' issues is covered on Midlands Today is likely to influence our 'White' viewers' opinions on minority ethnic communities.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.14

STATEMENT: The way 'race related' issues is covered on Midlands Today is likely to influence our 'White' viewers' opinions on Minority Ethnic Communities.

Response(s)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	19	61.3
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	12.9
Tend to Disagree	2	6.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	2	6.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n)=number; (%)=percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding indicates that the study group (i.e. journalists working on Midlands Today) are very much aware of the potential *influence* that this programme possesses in terms of being perceived by its viewers' as the vanguard... the stalwart.. the trusted disseminator of information. As

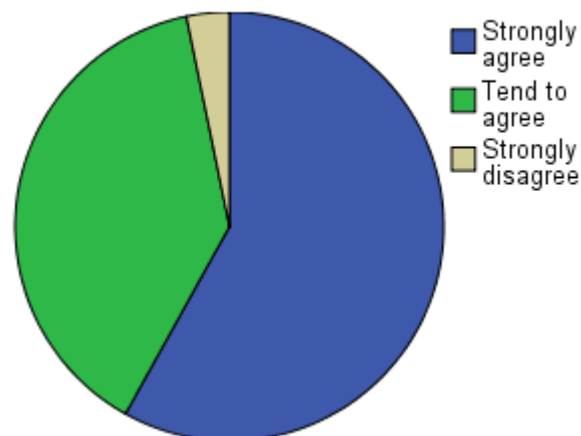
highlighted in Chapter 7 of this current study, Midlands Today proactively engenders a sense of 'professional closeness/attachment' with its viewers'. Therefore, it is of no surprise that the above statement elicited such a high 'agree-rate'. As a regional television news programme - populist in its approach/appeal and populist in its use of the production values enshrined throughout the making of this programme (such as the presentational formats/styles employed in the delivery of the news stories it broadcasts), one could argue that this programme... *knows its audience... its friends... i.e. 'the audience'...* hence the reason why there can be such a heightened level of confidence amongst the respondents (i.e. journalists), in terms of the impact this programme may have upon its audience.

It is interesting to note that there was even greater agreement amongst the respondents when presented with the statement: 'Midlands Today has the potential to help all viewers in the West Midlands region learn about each others cultures'. Almost 97 percent (96.8%) of all those surveyed, representing 30 of the 31 respondents agreed with this statement (58.1% - Strongly Agree; 38.7% - Tend to Agree). Only 1 respondent, representing 3.2 percent (3.2%) of all those surveyed selected the option of 'Strongly Disagree'. It is of interest to note that the above

statement received one of the highest responses of 'Strongly Agree' amongst the respondents surveyed. Once again, this finding would strongly suggest that the study group are very much aware of the role that the Midlands Today programme can potentially play in terms of contributing to the forging of community cohesion amongst the citizens of the West Midlands region (Figure 9.12 & Table 9.15).

Figure 9.12

STATEMENT: Midlands Today has the potential to help all viewers in the West Midlands region, learn about each others cultures.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.15

STATEMENT: Midlands Today has the potential to help all viewers in the West Midlands region learn about each others cultures.

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	18	58.1
Tend to Agree	12	38.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0.0
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	1	3.2
Don't Know	0	.0
TOTALS	31(n)	100.0%

(n=Number; %=percent)

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

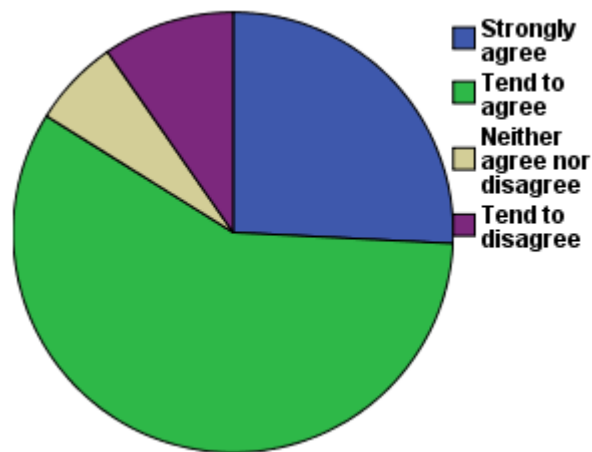
Given that the primary aim and focus of this study was to examine to what extent, the output of the Midlands Today programme reflected the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, it was considered of great importance to try to gauge the respondents' views upon whether or not they believed a programme such as Midlands Today was capable of reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region. Clearly if those surveyed, who on a daily basis via the carrying out of their duties are the ones who are essentially *charged* with practically delivering and meeting the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, i.e. to *reflect the nation that it serves*, did not regard this as being an ambition that could realistically be achieved, then this could prove to be a significant reason as to why this programme fails to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region (see Chapter 8).

In response to the statement: 'It is realistic to expect a programme like Midlands Today to be able to fully reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region', 26 respondents, representing almost 84 percent (83.9%) agreed with this statement (25.8% - Strongly Agree; 58.1% - Tend to Agree). Only 3 respondents, which represented 9.7 percent (9.7%) of all those surveyed disagreed with the statement (9.7% - 'Tend to Disagree'), whilst 2

respondents, representing 6.5 percent (6.5%) selected the option of: 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' (Figure 9.13 & Table 9.16).

Figure 9.13

STATEMENT: It is realistic to expect a programme like Midlands Today, to be able to fully reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.16

STATEMENT: It is realistic to expect a programme like Midlands Today, to be able to fully reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands Region.

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY (n)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Strongly Agree	8	25.8
Tend to Agree	18	58.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6.5
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Don't Know	0	0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n=Number; %=percent)

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given that the majority of those surveyed, almost 84 percent (83.9%) believed that it was a realistic ambition for the Midlands Today programme to 'reflect the cultural

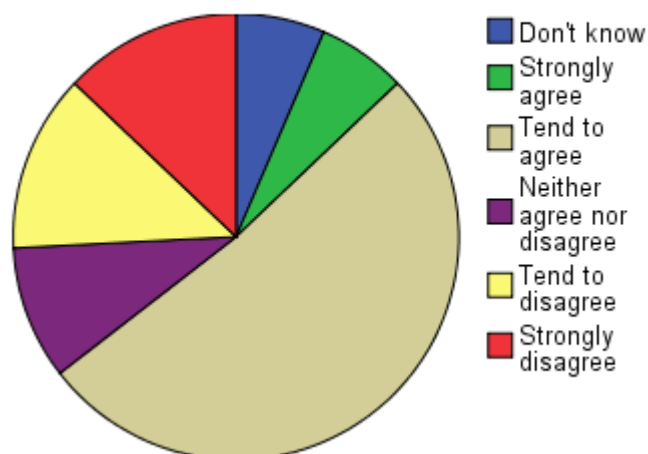
ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region', and overall from their responses' were very much aware of the role that the Midlands Today programme can play in the discourse on race relations, it would suggest that there are other factors at work - other than individual journalists' preferences, which could possibly have had a bearing and impact upon this programme's inability to *reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region* in its output.

Achieving the overall aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000), would invariably lead to a greater presence of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) on BBC programmes and so in turn, an increased presence of MECs on the Midlands Today programme. Therefore it was considered important to gauge the respondents' views upon the following: 'There is a concern that an increased representation of stories featuring ethnic minorities on Midlands Today could lead to 'White' viewers' feeling alienated'. This statement elicited responses ranging from 'Strongly Agree' through to 'Don't Know'. Just over 58 percent (58.1%), amounting to 18 respondents' agreed with this statement (6.5% - Strongly Agree; 51.6% - Tend to Agree). Over a quarter of respondents (25.8%) disagreed with the statement (12.9% - Strongly Disagree; 12.9% - Tend

to Disagree). Slightly under 10 percent (9.7%) selected 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' and another 6.5 percent (6.5%), representing 2 respondents chose the option of 'Don't Know' (Figure 9.14 & Table 9.17).

Figure 9.14

STATEMENT: There is a concern that an increased representation of stories featuring ethnic minorities on Midlands Today, could lead to 'White' viewers feeling alienated.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.17

STATEMENT: There is a concern that an increased representation of stories featuring ethnic minorities on Midlands Today, could lead to 'White' viewers feeling alienated.

Responses	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	2	6.5
Tend to Agree	16	51.6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	9.7
Tend to Disagree	4	12.9
Strongly Disagree	4	12.9
Don't Know	2	6.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given that the predominant option selected by respondents was in agreement with the above statement, all one can do at this stage is to speculate as to whether or not this 'concern' amongst the journalists surveyed may have influenced the output of the Midlands Today programme, in terms of the types of stories covered, and the minimal inclusion of those from the MECs in this programme's output.

9.3 From Policy to Practice: The Implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy on the Midlands Today Regional Television News Programme

I don't like policies particularly. In my experience, policy and practice, there is often a gulf between the two. Policy can be fine words said at a certain level of the organisation, but practice is something else that goes on in the real world.

It's no good to just take it, and to say, right that's it, and we'll stand still on it. In order to bring about change, you kind of got to make sure that it's in the bloodstream of the organisation. (Acting HRLP WM: Source one-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

Analysis of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy (Chapter 6) indicated that based upon the managing diversity implementation model devised for this current study (Chapter 4), this 'paper' policy contained all of the

constituent elements identified in the managing diversity implementation model, to assist in the successful implementation of the diversity policy within the BBC. However, the 'theoretical' expectations of the pan-BBC diversity policy: *to reflect the nation that we serve* (Dyke 2000), struggles to translate into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme (Chapter 8).

Therefore, in a bid to try to identify any factors that may have impacted upon the finding as detailed in Chapter 8, and in a bid to try to understand the 'gulf' that appears to exist between 'policy' and 'practice' vis-à-vis the Midlands Today programme, the following sections of this chapter situate for analysis, the Midlands Today programme *within* the managing diversity implementation model.

9.3.1 Midlands Today and Diversity: Clarity of the Organisation's Vision

As discussed in Chapter 4 of this current study, one of the essential constituent elements identified by the managing diversity implementation model, to assist in the successful implementation of a diversity policy within an organisation, is that there should be clarity of the organisation's vision. Therefore, it was considered important to try to gauge the clarity of the BBC's 'vision' amongst the study

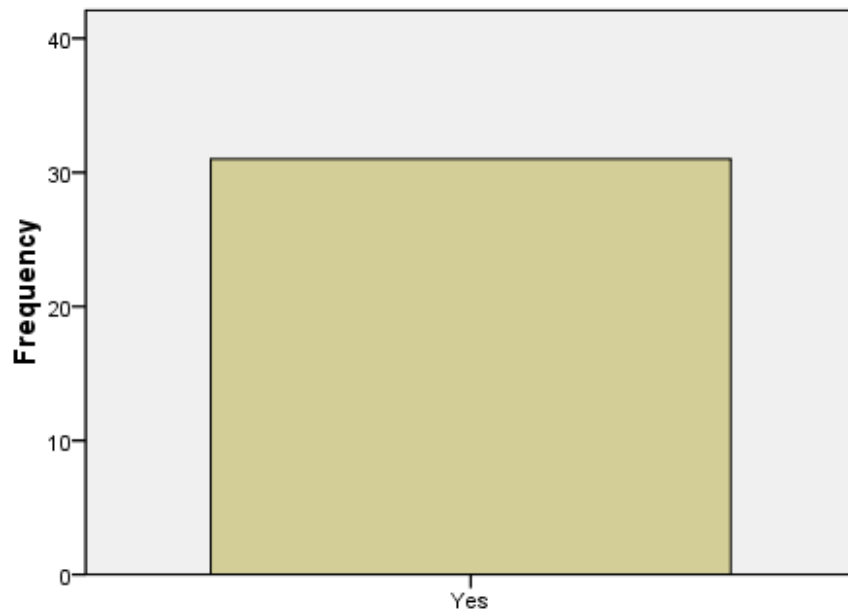
group insofar as:

- i) Their awareness that a diversity policy had been implemented within the BBC, and
- ii) Their understanding as to why the policy was introduced, and the purpose and aims of this policy.

On the level of 'knowing' that the pan-BBC diversity policy had been implemented there was an unanimous response to the question of: 'Have you ever heard about the BBC's diversity policy'? - with 100 percent (100.0%) of respondents indicating that they had heard about the policy (Figure 9.15, p.486). Similarly, the question of: 'Are you aware that a part of the BBC's diversity policy focuses upon the portrayal/representation and employment of ethnic minorities?' received a 100 percent (100.0%) response-rate of 'Yes' (Figure 9.16, p.486).

Figure 9.15

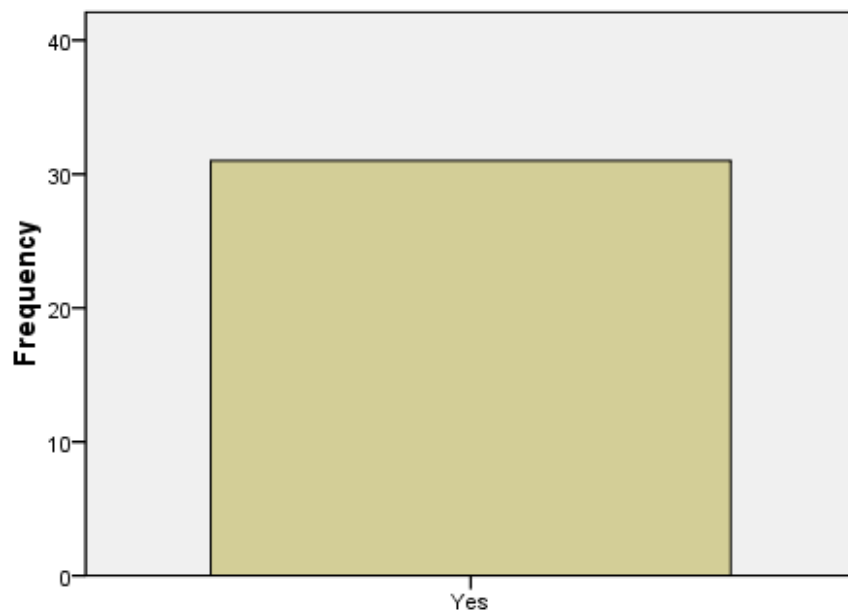
QUESTION: Have you ever heard about the BBC's diversity policy?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Figure 9.16

QUESTION: Are you aware that a part of the BBC's diversity policy focuses upon the portrayal/representation and employment of ethnic minorities?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

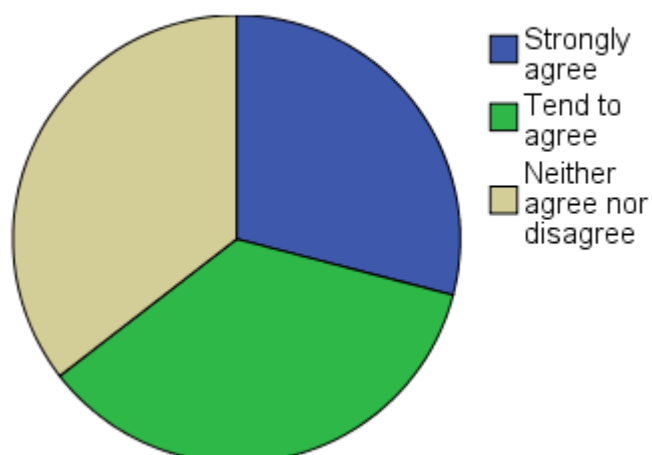
Being aware that a pan-BBC diversity policy has been implemented within the corporation, and being aware of the fact that a part of the policy has a focus upon MECs, can be considered to be a very good starting point of 'knowledge', as held amongst the study group. However, this finding does not necessarily indicate that there is 'agreement' with the introduction of the policy - which one could argue has been 'imposed' upon the workforce of the BBC. This point is made in light of the fact that unlike equal opportunity policies that are 'externally' enforced upon organisations to try to ensure the legal compliance of equality for *all*, diversity policies are internally-driven by the organisation implementing such a policy (McDougall 1996; Wilson 1996; Wilson and Iles 1999). However, the following finding is a strong indicator that the majority of the study group (i.e. Midlands Today journalists) are in full support of the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

When presented with the statement: 'The BBC should be highly commended for implementing a diversity policy', 64.5 percent (64.5%) agreed with this statement (29.0% - Strongly Agree; 35.5% - Tend to Agree. The remaining 11 respondents, representing 35.5 percent (35.5%) of all those surveyed, selected the option of: 'Neither Agree nor Disagree'. What is very insightful about the above finding is that none of

the 31 respondents' disagreed with the above statement - indicated by the non-selection of the options of: 'Strongly Disagree' or 'Tend to Disagree'. Also, no respondent selected the option of: Don't Know' which would suggest that the study group supports the BBC in its decision to implement a diversity policy (Figure 9.17, Table 9.18, p.489).

Figure 9.17

STATEMENT: The BBC should be highly commended for implementing a diversity policy.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.18

STATEMENT: The BBC should be highly commended for implementing a diversity policy.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Strongly Agree	9	29.0
Tend to Agree	11	35.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	35.5
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31	100.0%

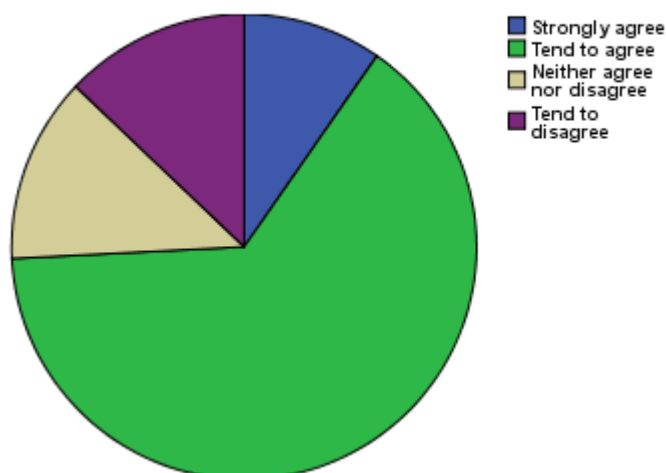
(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

In addition, 23 of the 31 respondents, which represented slightly over 74 percent (74.2%) of all those surveyed agreed with the statement that: 'The BBC is right to set targets in relation to the employment of more people from the minority ethnic communities', (9.7% - Strongly Agree; 64.5% - Tend to Agree). Only 4 respondents, representing

almost 13 percent (12.9%) disagreed with this statement by choosing the 'Tend to Disagree' option and the same number of respondents, again representing 12.9 percent (12.9%), selected the 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' option (Figure 9.18 & Table 9.19).

Figure 9.18

STATEMENT: The BBC is right to set targets in relation to the employment of more people from the minority ethnic communities.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.19

STATEMENT: The BBC is right to set targets, in relation to the employment of people from the ethnic minority communities.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	3	9.7
Tend to Agree	20	64.5
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	12.8
Tend to Disagree	4	12.9
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

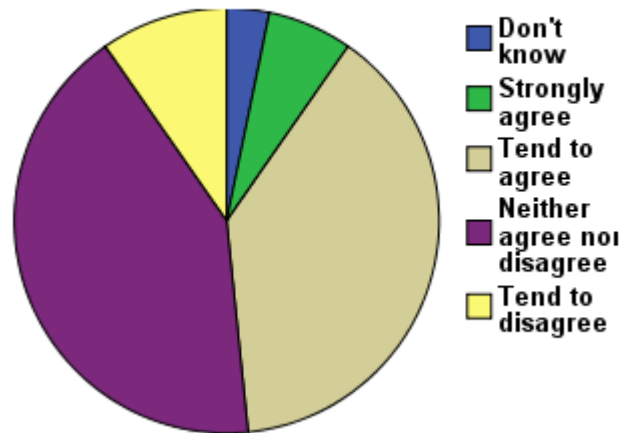
Given the high levels of awareness amongst the study group of the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy, and given the high levels of support for this policy - and as the above finding illustrates, support in favour of the BBC setting employment targets in relation to increasing the number of people from the minority ethnic communities that this corporation employs, the finding of the next two statements is somewhat surprising.

Although 14 respondents, representing 45.2 percent (45.2%) of all respondents surveyed agreed with the following statement: 'The aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (in relation to ethnic minorities) is very clear, (6.5% - Strongly Agree'; 38.7% - Tend to Agree), there was a clear discord in terms of the next most-selected response to the above statement.

Whilst only 3 respondents disagreed with the above statement, representing 9.7 percent (9.7%) of respondents (9.7% - Tend to Disagree), 13 respondents, representing almost 42 percent (41.9%) of the study group selected the option of 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' (Figure 9.19 and Table 9.20, p.492).

Figure 9.19

STATEMENT: The aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (in relation to ethnic minorities) is very clear.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.20

STATEMENT: The aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (in relation to ethnic minorities) is very clear.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	2	6.5
Tend to Agree	12	38.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	13	41.9
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

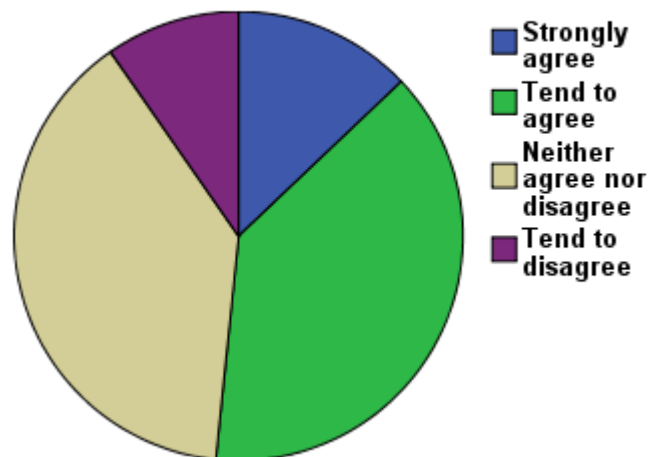
Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The finding of the statement that: 'The purpose of the BBC's diversity policy on ethnic minorities is very clear', received similar responses to the above. Whilst 16 respondents, representing 51.6 percent (51.6%) agreed with the statement (12.9% - Strongly Agree; 38.7% - Tend to Agree), 12 respondents, representing 38.7 percent (38.7%)

selected the option of: 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' (Figure 9.20 and Table 9.21).

Figure 9.20

STATEMENT: The purpose of the BBC's diversity policy on ethnic minorities is very clear.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.21

STATEMENT: The purpose of the BBC's diversity policy on ethnic minorities is very clear.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	12	38.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	12	38.7
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Taking the above two findings into consideration, particularly the 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' responses - throws up the following concerns.

Essentially, the pan-BBC diversity policy in relation to MECs can be considered to be two-fold:

- a) To increase the number of people from the MECs that this corporation employs.
- b) To ensure that all of its programming output "reflects the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000).

The selection of the: 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' option suggests that the respondents' choosing this option, do not have an opinion on either side of the 'statement(s)'. However, given that the majority of respondents are clearly aware of, and in fact are in support of the BBC setting employment targets for the increased employment of those from the minority ethnic communities (Table 9.19, p.490), then the only other area left to consider in terms of how the BBC's diversity policy relates to MECs, is in terms of the BBC trying to ensure that its programming output *reflects the nation that it serves*.

Therefore, if it is a case of over one-third of respondents' having a lack of understanding of the link between the BBC's diversity policy, vis-à-vis the BBC's programming output and

MECs, then such a scenario may be a contributory factor as to why the Midlands Today programme 'struggles' to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output, particularly if some journalists working on this programme are not aware that this is a goal to try to achieve in the daily pursuit of carrying out their duties.

At this point, it would be apt to present the findings on how respondents became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Respondents were presented with a list of 10 different ways in which they may have become aware of the BBC's diversity policy. The option of: 'Other' was also included in the list to enable the coding of any ways in which the policy may have been communicated to the respondent which is not included in the prescribed list. Respondents were instructed to select as many options as may be applicable (Table 9.22).

Table 9.22
Different ways in which respondents may have heard about the pan-BBC diversity policy.

	Options to choose from
1	Read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC.
2	Read about the policy on Gateway (BBC Intranet site).
3	Completed on-line module(s) on Gateway (BBC intranet site).
4	Attended a training session specifically about the policy.
5	Attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy.
6	Heard about the policy, informally through colleagues.
7	Cannot remember how I heard about the policy.
8	Not sure if I know about the policy.
9	I do not know anything about the policy.
10	Other.

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Between the 31 respondents participating in the questionnaire survey, an accumulative total of 55 different ways in which individuals became aware of the diversity policy were selected,

25 respondents' indicated that they had '*read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC*'. 21 of those surveyed cited that they had '*heard about the policy informally through colleagues*'. 14 selected the option of: '*attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy*'. 11 '*read about the policy on 'Gateway', the BBC's intranet site*' and 8 respondents' indicated that they had '*attended a training session specifically about the BBC's diversity policy*'. 2 respondents' indicated that they had '*completed on-line module(s) on 'Gateway' (BBC intranet site)*', whilst 4 respondents selected the option of: '*I cannot remember how I heard about the policy*'. No respondents selected the options of: '*Not sure if I know about the policy*', '*I do not know anything about the policy*' or the option of: '*Other*' (Table 9.23, p.497).

Table 9.23

Respondents: Options selected as to how they became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Ways in which respondents became aware o the pan-BBC diversity policy	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC.	25	29.4
Heard about the policy, informally through colleagues.	21	24.7
Attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy.	14	16.5
Read about the policy on Gateway (BBC Intranet site).	11	12.9
Attended a training session specifically about the policy.	8	9.4
Cannot remember how I heard about the policy.	4	4.7
Completed on-line module(s) on Gateway (BBC intranet site).	2	2.4
Not sure if I know about the policy.	0	0.0
I do not know anything about the policy.	0	0.0
Other.	0	0.0
TOTAL	85(n)	100.0

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding indicates that the BBC has gone to great lengths to ensure that details of its diversity policy can be accessed in a multitude of different ways.

Apart from the 4 respondents who could not remember how they had become aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy, analysis of the remaining 27 respondents indicates that they had become aware of this policy in more than one different way.

Over 40 percent (40.7%), representing 11 respondents indicated that they had become aware of the policy in two different ways. Over 29 percent (29.6%), amounting to 8 respondents became aware of the policy in three different

ways and 6 respondents, representing over 20 percent (22.2%) of all those surveyed stated that they had become aware of the policy in four different ways. 1 respondent, representing 3.7 percent (3.7%) of all those surveyed, became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy in five different ways, whilst 1 respondent, again representing 3.7 percent (3.7%) indicated that they had become aware of the policy in as many as six different ways (Table 9.24).

Table 9.24
Number of different ways in which each respondent became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

No. of ways respondents became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
2 different ways	11	40.7
3 different ways	8	29.6
4 different ways	6	22.2
5 different ways	1	3.7
6 different ways	1	3.7
TOTAL	27(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given that information on the pan-BBC diversity policy is mentioned in most, if not all of its official literature/documents, irrespective of the main focus of that particular document (such as the 'Connecting England' document¹⁸ and the BBC's Annual Report and Accounts), it is worth noting that 18 respondents, representing just over two-thirds (66.7%) of the 27 respondents (4 could not

¹⁸ Connecting England is a BBC document disseminated to all members of staff, outlining its vision in terms of how it intends to 'connect' with its audience.

remember how they had heard about the BBC's diversity policy), cited that: *'read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC'* as being the least effective way of learning about this policy.

3 respondents, representing just over 11 percent (11.1%) of the study group chose the option of: *'read about the policy on Gateway (BBC intranet site)'* as being the least effective way of learning about the policy. The BBC's intranet site 'Gateway' could be considered as being the 'one-stop shop' for all BBC staff to access *'at their fingertips'*, any and all information pertaining to the BBC. Therefore, this finding is somewhat surprising.

Interestingly, even when there was 'human contact' (as opposed to having to read a document), 2 respondents, representing 7.4 percent (7.4%) of the study group, chose the option of: *'attended a training session specifically about the diversity policy'* as being the least effective way of finding out about this policy.

Another 2 respondents, representing 7.4 percent (7.4%), chose the option of: *'attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy'* as being the least effective way of learning about the BBC's diversity policy, and another 2 respondents (7.4%) selected the option of:

'heard about the policy informally through colleagues'

(Table 9.25).

Table 9.25
Least effective ways of respondents learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Least Effective	Different ways in which respondents learnt about the BBC's diversity policy	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Read about policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC.	18	66.7
2	Read about the policy on Gateway (BBC Intranet site).	3	11.1
3	Attended a training session specifically about the policy.	2	7.4
4	Attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy.	2	7.4
5	Heard about the policy, informally through colleagues.	2	7.4
TOTAL		*27 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

[* 4 respondents could not remember how they had become aware of the BBC's diversity policy, and so are not included in the total number of respondents analysed].

Turning now to the most effective ways in which respondents' stated they had learnt about the BBC's diversity policy...

Interestingly the majority, amounting to 16 of the 27 respondents' cited the most effective way of learning about the BBC's diversity policy was: '*informally, via colleagues*', which represented almost 60 percent (59.3%).

This finding is somewhat perplexing, whilst at the same time quite understandable.

Perplexing because there is obviously a possible danger that information imparted by 'colleagues informally', may be incorrect, and may also be based upon *that colleagues'* personal interpretation of the pan-BBC diversity policy. Therefore, learning about the policy in this manner could lead to discrepancies between *that* colleague's interpretation and what the BBC is *actually* trying to communicate to its workforce in terms of its diversity policy. This could also lead to some members of the study group 'unwittingly' being unclear about the policy and as such, could possibly impact adversely upon the output of the Midlands Today programme.

'Understandable' because given the high-octane, fast-moving environment of a newsroom, it is much less time-consuming to find out about the BBC's diversity policy, just in passing whilst 'chatting' to a colleague in the undertaking of the carrying out work duties.

4 respondents', representing just under 15 percent (14.8%), selected the option of: '*attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy*', as being the most effective way of learning about the BBC's diversity policy.

3 respondents' selected the option of: '*attended a training session specifically about the policy*', as being the most

effective way of learning about the policy, which represented slightly over 11 percent (11.1%).

2 respondents' cited the option of: '*read about the policy on Gateway*', as being the most effective way of learning about the policy, representing just under 7.5 percent (7.4%).

The options of: '*read about the policy on Gateway*' and '*completed on-line module(s) on the Gateway site*', were each selected by 1 respondent, with each representing slightly under 4 percent (3.7%) (Table 9.26).

Table 9.26
STUDY GROUP: Most effective ways of respondents learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Most Effective	Different ways in which respondents learnt about the BBC's diversity policy	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Heard about the policy informally through colleagues.	16	59.3
2	Attended a general BBC event which included details on the policy.	4	14.8
3	Attended a training session specifically about the policy.	3	11.1
4	Read about policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC.	2	7.4
5	Read about policy on Gateway (BBC Intranet site).	1	3.7
5	Completed on-line module(s) on the Gateway site.	1	3.7
TOTAL		*27(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

[* 4 respondents could not remember how they had become aware of the BBC's diversity policy, and so are not included in the total number of respondents analysed]

The finding of the options selected by respondents as being the 'most effective' and the 'least effective' ways of learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy are not so clear cut because some of the options selected as being the 'least effective', were also selected as being the 'most effective'. However, with further analysis, some conclusions can be drawn from this finding.

Although 2 respondents' (7.4%) chose the option of: *'heard about the policy informally through colleagues'* as being the least effective way of learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy, the majority of respondents - 16 out of 27, representing slightly over 59 percent (59.3%) of all those surveyed selected the same option as being the 'most effective'. Therefore it could be argued that the latter, i.e. 'most effective' cancels out the former.

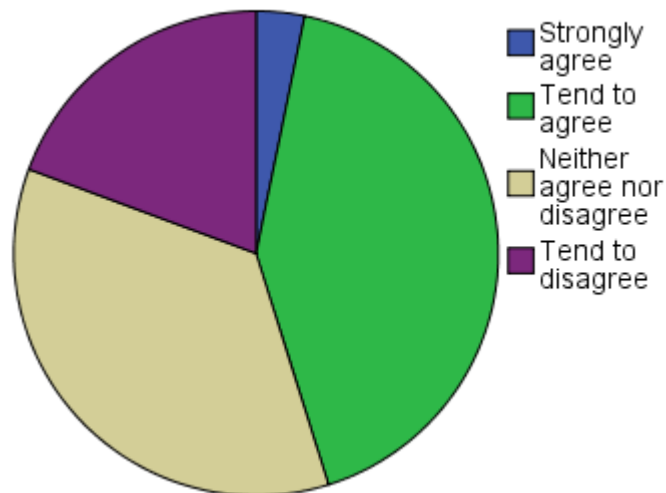
Similarly, whilst 2 respondents' (7.4%) selected the option of: *'read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC'* as being the most effective way of learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy, the majority of respondents, 18 out of the 27 surveyed (66.7%), chose the same option as being the least effective way of learning about the policy. Therefore, the latter can be regarded as superseding the former.

When presented with the statement: 'The dissemination of information to staff about the BBC's diversity policy has not been very good', slightly over 45 percent (45.1%) of those surveyed agreed with this statement (3.2% - Strongly Agree; 41.9% - Tend to Agree), with the next largest response being 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', amounting to 35.5 percent (35.5%) and representing 11 respondents. 6 respondents selected the option of: 'Tend to Disagree', which represented 19.4 percent (19.4%). (Figure 9.21 & Table 9.27, p.505).

However, despite some respondents' disapproval of the way in which information about the pan-BBC diversity policy has been disseminated, and despite the respondents' selection of the option of: 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' in response to some of the statements presented in the questionnaire survey (i.e. Table 9.20 and 9.21, pp.492-3), it is notable that in their response to the open-ended question of: 'The BBC says it wants to 'reflect the nation that it serves... in your opinion, what does this mean in relation to ethnic minorities?', their responses would suggest that overall they do have a clear understanding of the ethos behind the ultimate aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy. Below (p.506-7) is a sample of some of their responses.

Figure 9.21

STATEMENT: The dissemination of information to staff, about the pan-BBC diversity policy has not been very good.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.27

STATEMENT: The dissemination of information to staff about the BBC's diversity policy has not been very good.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	1	3.2
Tend to Agree	13	41.9
Neither Agree nor Disagree	11	35.5
Tend to Disagree	6	19.4
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Don't Know	0	0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Study groups' response to the open-ended question of:

The BBC says it wants to 'reflect the nation that it serves... in your opinion, what does this mean in relation to ethnic minorities?'

"At its simplest, it means anyone who pays the licence fee has a right to see someone like them on screen or hear them on the radio." (Respondent A).

"As an increasingly multi-cultural society, the BBC as the Public Service Broadcaster must reflect that balance and represent proportionally all sections of society." (Respondent B).

"Its programmes should interest and reflect people from all backgrounds and of all interests." (Respondent C).

"Ethnic minorities should be represented by presenters/reporters and also as subjects/contributors to news and overall output." (Respondent D).

"That the BBC will try to employ more people from ethnic minorities and ensure they are represented more in all of their output." (Respondent E).

"Ethnic minorities are a part of the nation. The BBC wants to show that part of the nation that they are part of the BBC." (Respondent F).

"The cultural diversity of the nation should be reflected in our programming and staffing." (Respondent G).

"BBC's staff should comprise a broad cross section of people originating from all the ethnic groups, minority or otherwise, that make up 21st century UK society." (Respondent H).

"Make programmes relevant to all people (respondent's emphasis). (Respondent I).

"Not using tokenism - when there are more department heads/managers/producers from ethnic minorities who have got there on their own merit. The organisation is still mostly run by white middle class men." (Respondent J).

"Programming should reflect the rich cultural mix of modern day Britain." (Respondent K).

"That both stories covered and staff make-up reflects ethnic minorities." (Respondent L).

"It means programming that's relevant, and of interest to that section of society. It also means reflection in terms of the workforce." (Respondent M).

"The cultural diversity of the nation should be reflected in our programming and staffing." (Respondent N).

"Its output should reflect the make-up of the population (with a wide range of ages, races, sexuality etc.). Making it relevant and accessible to all the population." (Respondent O).

9.3.2 Midlands Today and Diversity: Degree of Communication within the Organisation

As identified by the managing diversity implementation model (discussed in Chapter 4 of this current study), a component element identified as being essential for a diversity policy to be successfully implemented within an organisation is the need to keep the diversity momentum 'ticking along' and at the top of the organisation's agenda (Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004). A primary way of achieving this is by keeping the workforce informed and up-to-date on developments within the organisation in relation to its diversity policy. This assists in reminding employees of their role in ensuring the successful implementation of the

policy, which empowers and motivates them into taking 'ownership' of trying to achieve the aims and objectives of the policy (Kandola and Fullerton (2004), Maxwell (2004).

As discussed in Chapter 6 of this study, since the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, the BBC has set targets in relation to the number of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) that it is aiming to employ by set dates. Different targets are set for each region based upon the MEC population in that particular region.

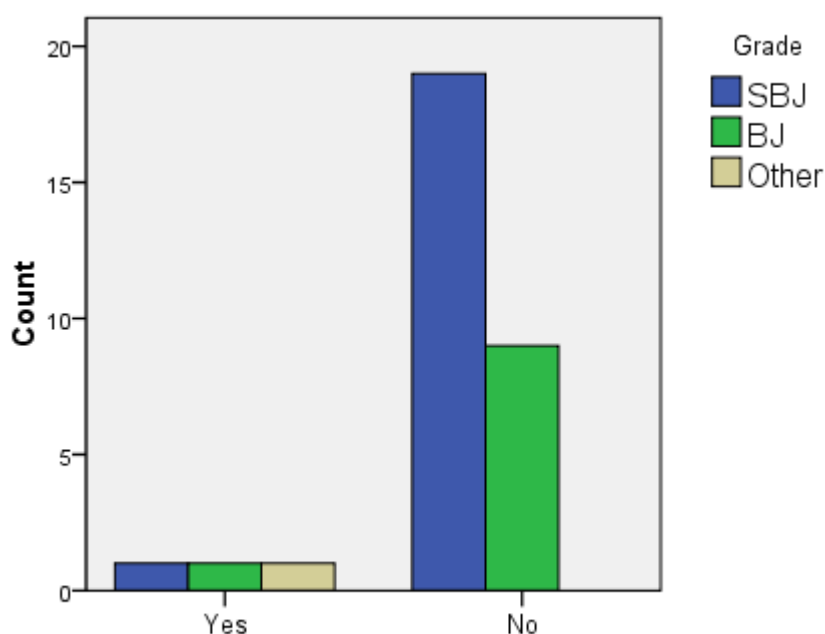
However, on analysing the response to the question: 'The BBC has set targets for the number of ethnic minorities it wants to employ. Are you aware of the target set for the West Midlands region?', only 3 respondents, representing 9.7 percent (9.7%) of the study group were able to respond with a 'Yes'. Conversely, an overwhelming 28 of the 31 respondents, which represented slightly over 90 percent (90.3%) of those surveyed, responded with a 'No'.

Further analysis of this finding reveals that of those who were able to respond with a 'Yes', 1 respondent was a Senior Manager (coded under 'Other'), another was a Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ) and the third respondent was a Broadcast Journalist (BJ). This finding would strongly

suggest that such details are not being disseminated to the majority of journalists working on the Midlands Today programme (Figure 9.22 & Table 9.28).

Figure 9.22

QUESTION: The BBC has set targets for the number of people from the minority ethnic communities that it wants to employ. Are you aware of the target set for the West Midlands region? [Response(s) correlated with the 'Grade' of respondents].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.28

QUESTION: The BBC has set targets for the number of people from the minority ethnic communities that it wants to employ. Are you aware of the target set for the West Midlands region? [Response(s) correlated with the 'Grade' of respondents].

RESPONSE		GRADE			TOTAL
		SBJ	BJ	Other	
YES	Frequency (n)	1	1	1	3
	% within grade	(5.0)	(10.0)	(100.0)	9.7%
NO	Frequency (n)	19	9	0	28
	% within grade	(95.0)	(90.0)	(0.0)	90.3%
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	% of total	64.5%	32.3%	3.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

A similar finding was also generated when respondents were asked: 'Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how the West Midlands region is doing in relation to meeting the targets set for the employment of ethnic minorities?'. Only 1 respondent, representing 3.2 percent (3.2%) of the study group was able to respond with a 'Yes', whilst over 93 percent (93.6%), amounting to 29 respondents selected 'No' to the above question. 1 respondent (3.2%) selected the option of: 'Don't Know'. The 1 respondent who was able to answer with a 'Yes' to the above question was the Senior Manager (coded under 'Other'). (Figure 9.23 & Table 9.29, p.511).

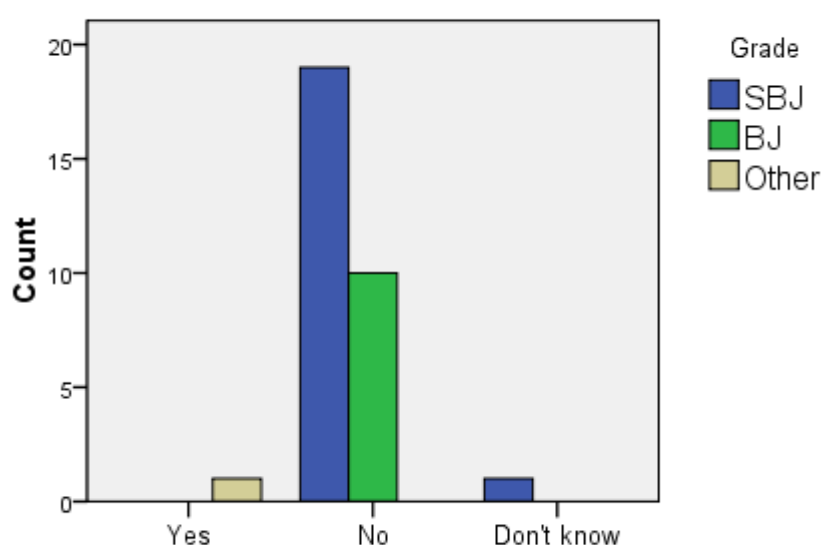
The participant observations conducted in the newsroom indicate that Senior Managers on Midlands Today regularly attend meetings with other Senior Managers of different departments. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss various policy and operational matters/issues. As the 1 respondent who was able to respond with a 'Yes' to the above question is a Senior Manager, it is quite possible that they are kept up-to-date on the BBC's diversity policy at the various meetings they attend. However, as the majority of respondents' selected the option of 'No' to the above question, it is quite possible that Senior Managers in the Midlands Today newsroom may not be effectively passing on information in relation to the BBC's diversity policy to

those of a lower Grade who are not in attendance at the afore-mentioned 'meetings'.

Figure 9.23

QUESTION: Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how the West Midlands region is doing in relation to meeting the targets set for the employment of ethnic minorities?

[Response(s) correlated with 'Grade' of respondents].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.29

QUESTION: Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how the West Midlands region is doing in relation to meeting the targets set for the employment of ethnic minorities?

[Response(s) correlated with 'Grade' of respondent].

RESPONSE		GRADE			TOTAL
		SBJ	BJ	Other	
YES	Frequency (n)	0	0	1	1
	% of total	0.0	0.0	3.2	3.2
NO	Frequency (n)	19	10	0	29
	% of total	61.3	32.3	0.0	93.6
DON'T KNOW	Frequency (n)	1	0	0	1
	% of total	3.2	0.0	0.0	3.2
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	% of total	64.5%	32.3%	3.2%	100.0%

(n)=number; %=percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

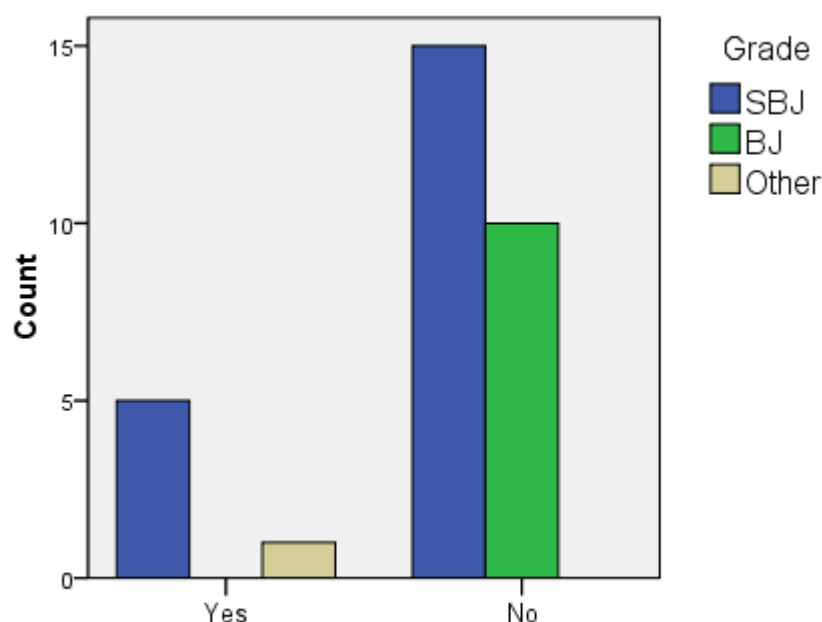
The response(s) to the following question: 'Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how Midlands Today is doing in relation to the portrayal/representation of ethnic minorities on the programme?' yielded similar results, indicating once again that the majority of those surveyed were not being kept up-to-date on matters pertaining to the BBC's diversity policy vis-à-vis the West Midlands region and in this instance, the Midlands Today programme.

6 respondents', representing 19.4 percent (19.4%) were able to state: 'Yes' but 25 respondents', representing 80.6 percent (80.6%) of the study group selected the option of: 'No' to the above question.

Further analysis of this finding highlights that of the 6 respondents' replying with a 'Yes', 1 was a Senior Manager (coded under 'Other') and the remaining 5 respondents were Senior Broadcast Journalists (SBJs). No respondents' graded as a Broadcast Journalist (BJ) selected the option of 'Yes'. (Figure 9.24 & Table 9.30, p.513).

Figure 9.24

QUESTION: Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how Midlands Today is doing in relation to the portrayal/representation of ethnic minorities on the programme?
[Response(s) correlated with the 'Grade' of respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.30

QUESTION: Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how Midlands Today is doing in relation to the portrayal/representation of ethnic minorities on the programme?
[Response(s) correlated with the 'Grade' of respondent].

RESPONSE	GRADE				TOTAL
		SBJ	BJ	OTHER	
YES	Frequency (n)	5	0	1	6
	% of total	16.1	0.0	3.2	19.4%
NO	Frequency (n)	15	10	0	25
	% of total	48.4%	32.3	0.0	80.6%
DON'T KNOW	Frequency (n)	0	0	0	0
	% of total	0.0%	0.0	0.0	0.0%
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	% of total	64.5%	32.3%	3.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

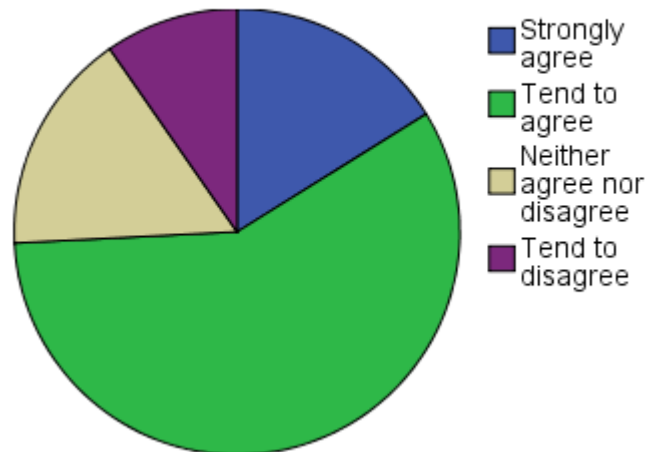
Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding highlights a re-occurring theme which has presented itself throughout this section of this chapter. Namely, that information which could possibly aid journalists' in their bid to help achieve and meet the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy: 'to reflect the nation that we serve', is not being disseminated to the majority of respondents participating in the questionnaire survey.

However, the desire of the Midlands Today journalists' to find out more about the pan-BBC diversity policy is evident in their response to the following statement: 'More effort should be made to ensure that research findings from studies conducted by the BBC's Diversity Centre is passed directly onto staff. 23 respondents', representing just over 74 percent (74.2%) agreed (16.1% - Strongly Agree; 58.1% - Tend to Agree). 5 respondents, amounting to just over 16 percent (16.1%) of all those surveyed selected 'Neither Agree nor Disagree', whilst 3 respondents' (9.7%) chose the: 'Tend to Disagree' option (Figure 9.25 & Table 9.31, p.515).

Figure: 9.25

STATEMENT: More effort should be made to ensure that research findings from studies conducted by the BBC's Diversity Centre is passed directly onto staff.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.31

STATEMENT: More effort should be made to ensure that research findings from studies conducted by the BBC's Diversity Centre is passed directly onto staff.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	5	16.1
Tend to Agree	18	58.1
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	16.1
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

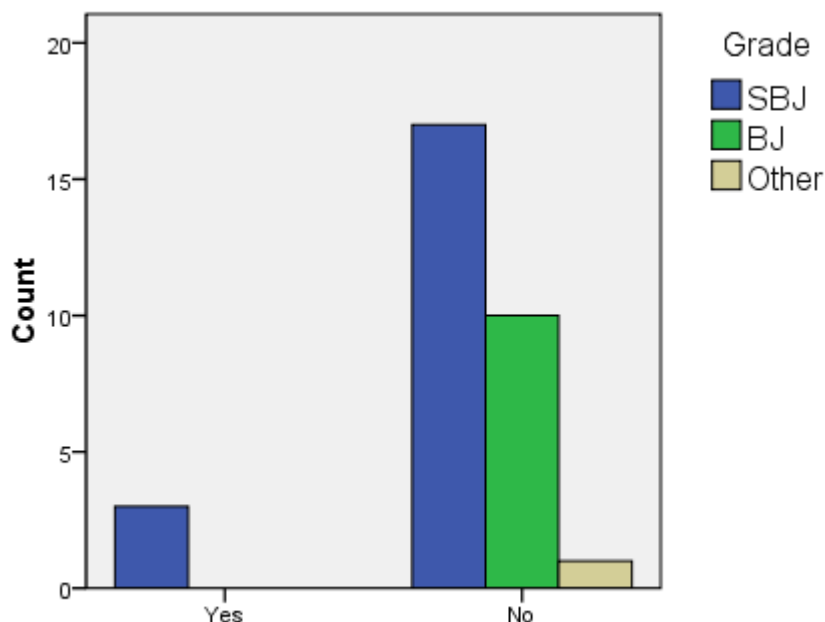
The above finding would suggest that the majority of respondents are not averse to receiving more information on the BBC's diversity policy and in fact, this finding stays

in line with the majority of respondents' supporting the implementation of this diversity policy. However it is interesting to note from the following finding, that the majority of respondents have also not taken the initiative of trying to proactively and independently access further information on the pan-BBC diversity policy.

For example, in response to the question: 'Have you ever referred to the BBC's Diversity Centre's website page (on the intranet site - Gateway) to keep up-to-date with the latest research conducted on minority ethnic communities?', only 3 respondents' (9.7%) stated 'Yes', whilst the remaining 28 respondents' selected the option of 'No', representing slightly over 90 percent (90.3%) of all those surveyed (Figure 9.26 & Table 9.32, p.517).

Figure 9.26

QUESTION: Have you ever referred to the BBC's Diversity Centre's website page (on the intranet site - Gateway) to keep up-to-date with the latest research conducted on minority ethnic communities?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.32

QUESTION: Have you ever referred to the BBC's Diversity Centre's website page (on the intranet site - Gateway) to keep up-to-date with the latest research conducted on minority ethnic communities?

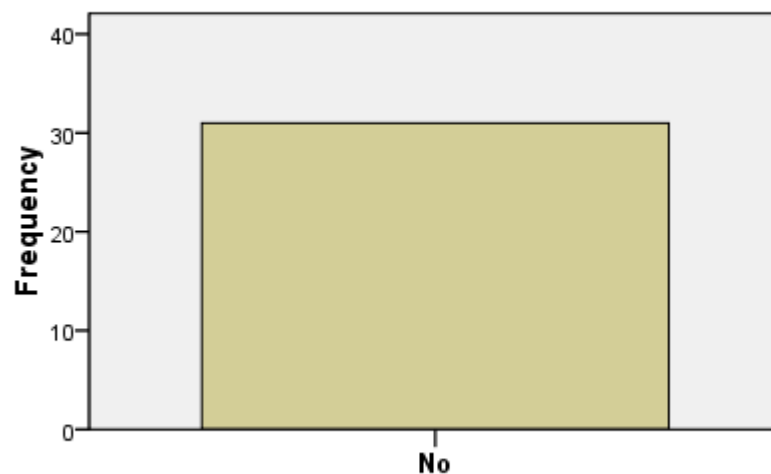
RESPONSE	GRADE				TOTAL
		SBJ	BJ	OTHER	
YES	Frequency (n)	3	0	0	3
	% of total	9.7	0.0	0.0	9.7%
NO	Frequency (n)	17	10	1	28
	% of total	54.8	32.3	3.2	90.3%
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	% of total	64.5%	32.3%	3.2%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Similarly, when respondents were presented with the question: 'Have you ever contacted the Diversity Centre Team (based in London) or the English Regions Diversity Team (based in Birmingham), for advice or information on matters concerning the minority ethnic communities?', an overwhelming response... in fact the only response that was a resounding 'No' response of 100.0% (100.0%). (Figure 9.27).

Figure 9.27
QUESTION: Have you ever contacted the Diversity Centre (based in London) or the English Regions Diversity Team (based in Birmingham), for advice or information on matters concerning the minority ethnic communities?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

On the surface the above finding is somewhat in conflict with some of the findings presented thus far. For example, whilst the majority of respondents (74.3%) agreed with the

statement that: *More effort should be made to ensure that research findings from studies conducted by the BBC's Diversity Centre is passed directly onto staff* (Table 9.31, p.515), no respondent has actually made the effort to contact the Diversity Centre directly to obtain any of the available information. An understanding of this apparent 'conflict' or 'anomaly' can be located by referring to a constituent element of a managing diversity policy, as identified by the managing diversity implementation model devised for this current study (discussed in Chapter 4). This is the need for there to be regular communication to employees about the developments and achievements/shortcomings of the policy. This is considered to be an essential element to assist in the achievement of the aims/objectives of the policy. It is considered that this encourages all employees to take 'ownership' of the policy by realising that *they* have a role to play in the successful achievement of the policies aims/objectives.

However, as has been indicated by some of the findings presented above (Table 9.29 and 9.30), the majority of respondents' have stated that they are not regularly kept up-to-date on the BBC's diversity policy. As such, the finding that 'no' respondents have made the effort to contact the BBC's Diversity Centre could be an

'indicator/sign' of respondents not taking 'ownership' of this policy.

9.4 *Making It Happen!* Translating the pan-BBC diversity 'paper' policy into practice

The finding of the questionnaire survey and the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom have facilitated the identification of areas that could possibly have enabled this programme of *Making It Happen!* *Making It Happen* insofar as this programme moving closer to achieving the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy - to reflect the nation that it serves - in this instance, the West Midlands region.

Therefore the following two sections of this chapter focus upon the application of initiatives, i.e. 'tools' that were instigated and devised as part of the pan-BBC diversity policy to assist its programme-makers in the translation of the 'paper' policy into 'practice'. However, the following illustrates the short-comings of how the translation became *lost* in 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme.

9.4.1 ***Making It Happen! BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database***

As discussed previously, the majority of respondents - over 80 percent (80.6%) indicated that they were not regularly kept up-to-date on how the Midlands Today programme is doing in relation to the portrayal/representation of the MECs on this programme (Table 9.30, p.513).

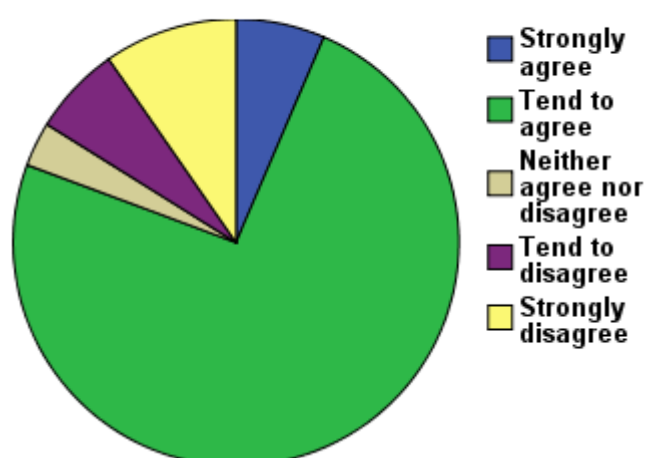
A knock-on effect of the lack of information being disseminated to the journalists working on this programme is that it is likely to make it much more difficult for these journalists to become aware of the areas that they may need to address in terms of trying to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region. Such a scenario may therefore go some way into explaining why the perceptions as held amongst the majority of the study group (i.e. Midlands Today journalists) in relation to the representation of MECs on this programme is far removed from the 'reality' of the situation.

For example, when respondents were presented with the statement that: 'Over a weeks output, Midlands Today generally does a very good job at reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the region', the majority, totalling 25 of the 31 respondents and representing over 80 percent (80.7%) agreed with this statement (6.5% - Strongly Agree;

74.2% - Tend to Agree). Only 5 respondents' disagreed with the above statement (9.7% - Strongly Disagree; 6.5% - Tend to Disagree), whilst 1 respondent (3.2%) selected the option of 'Neither Agree nor Disagree'. (Figure 9.28 & Table 9.33).

Figure 9.28

STATEMENT: Over a weeks output, Midlands Today generally does a very good job at reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the region.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.33

STATEMENT: Over a weeks output, Midlands Today generally does a very good job at reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the region

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	2	6.5
Tend to Agree	23	74.2
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.2
Tend to Disagree	2	6.5
Strongly Disagree	3	9.7
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

As discussed in Chapter 8 of this current study, the systematic analysis of the Midlands Today programme indicates that this programme consistently fails to representatively reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of

the West Midlands region in its output and as such, this finding (Table 8.17, p.399) paints a very different picture to the views and perceptions as held by the majority of the study group (Table 9.33, p.522). A way identified by this current study as possibly helping to alleviate such misconceived views as held amongst the study group, is by Senior Managers or those in possession of what will now be discussed, communicating on a regular basis information that can be obtained from the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD).

To re-cap briefly upon information already imparted in the research methodology chapter of this study (Chapter 5). A Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD) form is completed online by the Broadcast Assistant working on the Midlands Today programme. Data inputted into the database relates to the main Midlands Today programme broadcast in the evenings from 18:30-19:00, Monday to Friday. The primary purpose of the DMD is to document details of the news stories featured on this programme such as the geographical location and subject-matter of the news story/item. Details of the contributors featured in the stories is also logged, such as their gender, ethnicity and whether or not they have a disability. This data is then accessed by the English Regions Diversity Editor for analysis.

Whilst the information that can be obtained from the analysis of the data inputted into the DMD has already been discussed in Chapter 5 as being very elementary in terms of the data required for this current study, the available information that can be accessed would nevertheless still serve some purpose for those working on the Midlands Today programme.

This point can best be illustrated by presenting some of the information that was obtained by this current study, upon analysis of the data contained in the BBC's DMD. Therefore the following analysis is based upon the 'raw' data that was entered into the DMD for the months of: Jan 03, Feb 03, March 03, July 03, Aug 03, Sept 03, Nov 03, Dec 03, Jan 04, Feb 04, March 04.

Analysis of this data indicates that there were a total of 3561 contributors featured in the programmes broadcast in the above months. The BBC's DMD delineates the 'race' of contributors into the following categories:

- White European (includes White British)
- White: Non-European
- Mediterranean
- Asian
- African
- Caribbean
- Mixed
- South East Asian
- Middle Easter

Of the 3561 contributor details entered into the DMD, analysis reveals that almost 90 percent (88.4%) of all contributors were classified as being 'White European' - which as one would expect, represented the largest 'ethnic' contribution to the programme. 30 contributors (0.8%) were classified as 'White Non-European' and 3 (0.1%) were classified as 'Mediterranean'.

The second largest 'ethnic' contribution to news stories broadcast on Midlands Today over the period of months analysed were individuals classified as 'Asian', which amounted to 181 contributors and represented just over 5 percent (5.1%). Other contributors to news stories who were classified as being members of the minority ethnic communities (MECs) were: 'Caribbean' (3.5%), 'Mixed' (0.7%), 'South East Asian' (0.6%), 'African' (0.4%) and 'Middle Eastern' (0.3%).

Accumulatively, 'White' contributors to news stories represented slightly under 90 percent (89.3%) of all contributors, whilst 'Black' contributors represented slightly under 11 percent (10.7%). (Table 9.34, p.526).

Table 9.34

DMD data: Ethnic breakdown of contributors featured on Midlands Today for the periods of: January 2003 to March 2004.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	3147	88.4	'WHITE' 3180 (n) 89.3 (%)
White: Non-European	30	0.8	
Mediterranean	3	0.1	
Asian	181	5.1	'BLACK' 381 (n) 10.7 (%)
Caribbean	124	3.5	
Mixed	26	0.7	
South East Asian	23	0.6	
African	16	0.4	
Middle Eastern	11	0.3	
TOTAL	3561(n)	100.0(%)	3561(n)

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the Diversity Monitoring Database.

Whilst MECs represent 13 percent (13.0%) of the West Midlands population (ONS 2001), MEC contributors featured on the Midlands Today programme for the periods analysed using the data entered into the DMD was 10.7 percent (10.7%). This is therefore a very clear indication to the BBC, from its very own data/statistics that this programme is not achieving on a regional level, the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000), as this programme falls short by 2.3 percent (2.3%).

Also, when the data (in Table 9.34) is analysed month by month, it reveals that the total percentage of MEC contributors included in nine of the eleven months, was below the MEC population of the West Midlands region. These months were:

- January 2003: 12.2%
- February 2003: 12.0%
- March 2003 - 10.9%

- August 2003 - 12.9%
- November 2003 - 10.2%
- December 2003 - 8.0%
- January 2004 - 8.3%
- February 2004 - 9.3%
- March 2004 at 9.6%

(Table 9.35, p.528).

The above indicates that the overall under-representation of MECs included in the Midlands Today programme (Table 9.34, p.526) was not due to a very low representation in one or two months which may invariably have created an overall low percentage of MECs for the period of months analysed. Rather, this finding (Table 9.35, p.528) indicates that the under-representation of MECs on the Midlands Today programme is a regular occurrence.

It is therefore contended within this study that had the respondents been made aware of the above finding, then it is possibly unlikely that the statement: 'Over a weeks' output, Midlands Today generally does a very good job at reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the region', would have received such a high 'agreement' rate of over 80 percent (80.7%). Being aware of the above finding may have inspired the study group to have 'pushed harder' at trying to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Table 9.35

DMD 'raw' data: Month by month analysis of the ethnicity of contributors featured on Midlands Today: Period: November 2002 to March 2004.

MONTH	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTORS: ON MIDLANDS TODAY PROGRAMME		TOTAL
	WHITE (Accumulative total to include White European, White Non-European and Mediterranean)	MEC (Accumulative total to include all MECs: Asian, African, Caribbean, Mixed, South East Asian, and Middle Eastern)	
November 2002	No data entered into the BBC's DMD for this month		0(n)
December 2002	No data entered into the BBC's DMD for this month		0 0.0%
January 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	324 88.8	45 12.2	369(n) 100.0%
February 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	405 88.0	55 12.0	460(n) 100.0%
March 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	335 89.1	41 10.9	376(n) 100.0%
June 2003	No data entered into the BBC's DMD for this month		n/a
July 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	186 83.4	37 16.6	223(n) 100.0%
August 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	61 85.7	9 12.9	70(n) 100.0%
September 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	71 86.6	11 13.4	82(n) 100.0%
November 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	292 89.8	33 10.2	325(n) 100.0%
December 2003 Frequency (n): % within month:	126 92.0	11 8.0	137(n) 100.0%
January 2004 Frequency (n): % within month:	430 91.7	39 8.3	469(n) 100.0%
February 2004 Frequency (n): % within month:	460 90.7	47 9.3	507(n) 100.0%
March 2004 Frequency (n): % within month:	491 90.4	52 9.6	543(n) 100.0%
TOTAL Frequency (n) Percentage (%)	3180 (n) 89.3%	381(n) 10.7%	3561(n) 100.0%

(n) = number; (%) = percent

Source: Analysis using the 'raw' data contained in the Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD).

[Note: Details for the months of January 2003, February 2003 & March 2003 with a breakdown down of the contribution from each specific ethnic group is contained in Appendix H].

Continuing on now with another example of how the lack of communication, vis-à-vis the non-passing on of information available from the BBC's DMD to the majority of journalists working on Midlands Today, may to some extent have impacted upon their perceptions' of how well *they think* this programme is reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

When presented with the statement: The areas (i.e. subject-matter/topics) in which ethnic minority people are featured on in Midlands Today needs to be more wide and varied: 10 respondents, amounting to slightly over 32 percent (32.3%) agreed with this statement (12.9% - Strongly Agree; 19.4% - Tend to Agree). The majority of respondents, amounting to 17, disagreed with the above statement (16.1% - Strongly Disagree; 38.7% - Tend to Disagree), whilst 4 respondents, amounting to just under 13 percent (12.9%) selected the option of 'Don't Know' (Table 9.36).

Table 9.36

STATEMENT: The areas (i.e. subject-matter/topic), in which ethnic minority people are featured on in Midlands Today, needs to be more wide and varied.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	6	19.4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0.0
Tend to Disagree	12	38.7
Strongly Disagree	5	16.1
Don't Know	4	12.9
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

However, analysis of the data inputted into the BBC's DMD indicates that once again, the perception as held by the journalists' surveyed is out-of-step and misconceived. Ill-conceived perceptions which could quite easily have been dispelled had journalists been made aware of the data contained within the BBC's DMD.

For example, the BBC's DMD defines 15 different subject-areas that contributors may possibly be interviewed upon. In addition, there is also another two subject categories that contributors to stories may be coded under - 'Other' (used when the subject-matter/topic being discussed does not fit any of the defined subject categories) and 'multiple subjects' - assigned when the news story focuses upon more than one subject (Table 9.37).

Table 9.37
Story subject topics used on the BBC's DMD.

STORY SUBJECT CATEGORIES
Party Politics
Local Politics
Social Affairs
International Affairs
Economy/Business/Industry
Emergency Services/Crime/Courts
Accidents/Disasters
Environment/Agriculture
Arts/Entertainment
Health/Disability
Race/Religion
Sports
Education
Transport
Military
Other
Multiple Subjects

Source: BBC DMD.

Based upon the analysis conducted for this current study, no stories for the periods analysed for this current exercise were inputted under the story subject categories of Local Politics, Social Affairs, International Affairs and Military - hence the reason why there were no contributors for those categories from any of the 'ethnic' groups. A cursory glance at Table 9.38 (p.532-3) which details the total number of contributors by ethnicity to each of the different subject categories featured on Midlands Today, highlights that MEC contributors do not gain access to participate on 'wide and varied' subject-matters on this programme. Instead, they are featured within a limited spectrum of story subject categories.

Table 9.38
Ethnicity of Contributors to each subject area covered on Midlands Today
Analysis using the 'raw' data in the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database

(For the Months of Jan, 03; Feb. 03; March, 03; July 03; Aug, 03; Sept 03; Nov 03; Dec 03; Jan 04; Feb 04; March 04).

SUBJECT	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTOR										TOTAL
		White European	White (Non- European)	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	South East Asian	Mediterranean	Middle Eastern	
Party Politics	Frequency (n)	69	0	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	79(n)
	%within subject	87.3	0.0	8.9	1.3	2.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	2.2	0.0	3.9	6.3	1.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Economy/Business/ Industry	Frequency (n)	226	0	20	0	5	1	0	0	0	252(n)
	%within subject	89.7	0.0	8.0	0.0	2.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	7.2	0.0	11.0	0.0	4.0	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Emergency Services/ Crime/Courts	Frequency (n)	351	5	35	3	39	4	1	1	0	439(n)
	%within subject	80.0	1.1	8.0	0.7	8.9	0.9	0.2	0.2	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	11.2	16.7	19.3	18.8	31.5	15.4	4.3	33.3	0.0	
Accidents/ Disasters	Frequency (n)	117	1	6	0	4	1	0	0	0	129(n)
	%within subject	90.7	0.8	4.7	0.0	3.1	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	3.7	3.3	3.3	0.0	3.2	3.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Environment/ Agriculture	Frequency (n)	183	0	4	0	1	2	2	0	0	192(n)
	%within subject	95.3	0.0	2.1	0.0	0.5	1.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	5.8	0.0	2.2	0.0	0.8	7.7	8.7	0.0	0.0	
Arts/ Entertainment	Frequency (n)	201	3	15	0	6	1	3	0	0	229(n)
	%within subject	87.8	1.3	6.6	0.0	2.6	0.4	1.3	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	6.4%	10.0	8.3	0.0	4.8	3.8	13.0	0.0	0.0	
Health/Disability	Frequency (n)	265	1	12	0	3	2	3	1	1	288(n)
	%within subject	92.0	0.3	4.2	0.0	1.0	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.3	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	8.4	3.3	6.6	0.0	2.4	7.7	13.0	33.3	9.1	

Source: Raw data entered in the DMD.

Table 9.38 (contd.)
Ethnicity of Contributors to each subject area covered on Midlands Today
Analysis using the 'raw' data in the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database

(For the Months of Jan, 03; Feb. 03; March, 03; July 03; Aug, 03; Sept 03; Nov 03; Dec 03; Jan 04; Feb 04; March 04)

SUBJECT	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTOR										TOTAL
		White European	White (Non-European)	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	South East Asian	Mediterranean	Middle Eastern	
Race/Religion	Frequency (n)	42	0	14	3	0	0	0	0	0	59(n)
	%within subject	71.2	0.0	23.7	5.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	1.3	0.0	7.7	18.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Sports	Frequency (n)	565	15	11	5	42	9	2	0	0	649(n)
	%within subject	87.1	2.3	1.7	0.8	6.5%	1.4	0.3	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	18.0	50.0	6.1	31.3	33.9	34.6	8.7	0.0	0.0	
Education	Frequency (n)	122	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	2	131(n)
	%within subject	93.1	0.0	3.1	0.0	2.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5%	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	3.9	0.0	2.2	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	18.2	
Transport	Frequency (n)	150	0	4	0	3	0	0	0	0	157(n)
	%within subject	95.5	0.0	2.5	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	4.8	0.0	2.2	0.0	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Other	Frequency (n)	833	5	43	3	16	6	10	1	5	922(n)
	%within subject	90.3	0.5	4.7	0.3	1.7	0.7	1.1%	0.1	0.5	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	26.5	16.7	23.8	18.8	12.9	23.1	43.5%	33.3	45.5	
Multiple Subjects	Frequency (n)	23	0	6	1	0	0	2	0	3	35(n)
	%within subject	65.7	0.0	17.1	2.9	0.0	0.0	5.7%	0.0	8.6	100.0%
	% within ethnic group	0.7	0.0	3.3	6.3	0.0	0.0	8.7	0.0	27.3	
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	3147	30	181	16	124	26	23	3	11	3561(n)
	% of ethnic group	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Raw data entered by BBC into its DMD

Throughout the eleven months analysed from the BBC's DMD, there were no contributors for the following subject categories listed on the DMD form: Local Politics, Social Affairs, International Affairs and Military - so these categories have been omitted from the above.

The only group from the MECs that had a representation in all subject categories were those classified by the BBC as 'Asian'. Those classified as 'Caribbean' featured in 11 of the 13 subject categories, 'Mixed' in 8, 'South East Asian' in 7, 'African' in 6 and 'Middle Eastern' in 4.

Further analysis of this data which was inputted into the DMD reveals that the subject-matter/topics in which MECs were given the most 'access' to on the Midlands Today programme were story subject/topics such as sports, crime, race-related issues and religion - which are often stereotypically associated with MECs (Hartmann and Husband 1970; Critcher *et al* 1977; Hall *et al* 1978; Barry 1988; Hall 1990).

For example, referring once again to Table 9.38 (p.532-3), the data contained alongside the '% within ethnic group', highlights that the largest contribution made by 'Caribbean' contributors to the Midlands Today programme over the periods analysed using the DMD data was in the subject-area of Sports - representing just over one-third (33.9%) of this ethnic groups contributions to the programme. It should be noted that unlike this current study, the 'sports slot' on the Midlands Today programme is included within the data

entered into the DMD. The next largest contribution to the programme by this ethnic group was in the subject category of: 'Emergency Services/Crime/Courts', representing slightly less than one-third (31.5%) of all of their contributions to Midlands Today. Similarly, the largest contribution made by those described as 'Mixed' was to the subject category of Sports - representing 34.6 percent (34.6%) of all their contributions' to the programme. Those described as 'African' also made their largest contribution to the programme within the subject-area of Sports - representing 31.3 percent (31.3%) of their total contributions. In terms of those classified as 'Asian', the largest contribution to this programme, at just over 19 percent (19.3%) was in the area of 'Emergency Services/Crime/Courts'. Overall then, this would suggest that in real terms, MECs are restricted to a very limited repertoire of subject categories/topics in which their 'voices' will be heard on the Midlands Today programme. This finding is in complete contrast to the 'majority' view held by the study group who believed that MECs were featured on the Midlands Today programme on 'wide and varied' different subject-matters/topics. (Appendix I provides a month by month breakdown of the data contained in Table 9.34 for the months of January, February and March 2003.

The sole purpose of carrying out the above analysis was not to conduct a comprehensive in-depth analysis of the data contained in the BBC's DMD, but to illustrate the type of information that can be accessed from this database, that could have been communicated to the journalists working on Midlands Today, to equip them with a better and clearer understanding of how this programme is doing in terms of trying to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

During the periods in which participant observations were undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, it is possible to assert that I was never made aware of (and was never aware of anyone else in the newsroom being made aware of) any findings gleaned from the BBC's DMD. This information, literally at the 'fingertips' of the BBC could have been of immense benefit and invaluable to the journalists *charged* with the task of trying to ensure that the Midlands Today programme reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

9.4.2 *Making It Happen!:* BBC's News Diversity Database

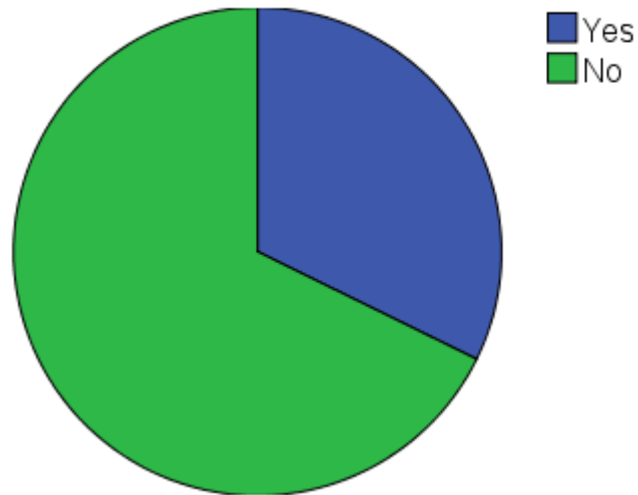
The BBC's News Diversity Database (NDD) is a resource accessible to all BBC staff. This database contains a list

of names and details of individuals who are from the groups targeted by the BBC's diversity policy - such as people with disabilities, minority ethnic communities, women and so forth. The purpose of this database is to assist programme-makers - whether that be for radio or television, to find potential guests/contributors/experts that are from the afore-mentioned groups/communities. The details contained on individuals would for example, include information such as their area of speciality - the subject-matter/topic they are experts on, or have views upon, as well as their contact details.

However, the finding of this current study indicates that the 'theory' behind this very useful resource which was devised for the purposes of assisting BBC journalists/programme-makers in finding contributors to include in programmes that would assist the BBC in its bid to reflect the nation that it serves in its programming output, can almost be regarded as null and void. An almost redundant resource because when those surveyed were presented with the question: 'Do you know about the News Diversity Database?' almost 70 percent (67.7%), representing 21 of the 31 respondents stated 'No'. Therefore, only 10 respondents (32.3%) were aware of this database (Figure 9.29 & Table 9.39, p.538).

Figure 9.29

QUESTION: Do you know about the News Diversity Database?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.39

QUESTION: Do you know about the News Diversity Database?

RESPONSE	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	32.3
No	21	67.7
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

As 21 respondents did not know about the News Diversity Database (NDD), the following finding is based upon the responses of the 10 respondents' who were aware of this database.

Of the 10 respondents' who did know about the News Diversity Database, 5 (50.0%) were able to respond with a 'Yes' to the following question: 'Have you ever used the News Diversity Database to find ethnic minority contributors?' Therefore, the other 5 respondents who were aware of the NDD selected the option of 'No'. (Table 9.40).

Table 9.40

QUESTION: Have you ever used the News Diversity Database to find ethnic minority contributors?

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	5	50.0
No	5	50.0
TOTAL	10(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Initially, the above finding is somewhat surprising (given the 'expected' benefits of this database for journalists), but becomes less surprising in light of the responses to the following statement: 'The News Diversity Database is excellent for finding appropriate contributors from the minority ethnic communities for Midlands Today'. An overwhelming 90 percent (90.0%), amounting to 9 of the 10 respondents who were aware of the NDD disagreed with this statement (60.0% - Strongly Disagree; 30.0% - Tend to Disagree) and 1 respondent, representing 10 percent (10.0%) of this total selected the option of 'Neither Agree nor

Disagree'. Therefore no respondents agreed 'outright' with the above statement (Table 9.41).

Table 9.41

STATEMENT: The news diversity database is excellent for finding appropriate contributors from the minority ethnic communities for Midlands Today.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	0	0.0
Tend to Agree	0	0.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	10.0
Tend to Disagree	3	30.0
Strongly Disagree	6	60.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	10(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding would strongly suggest that 'word has got around' amongst journalists as to the 'failings' of the NDD - hence journalists' under-usage, or in some instances a total 'non-usage' of this resource. This assertion is strengthened and confirmed by the responses to the statement that: 'The News Diversity Database is a resource hardly ever referred to when looking for ethnic minority contributors for Midlands Today'. 9 of the 10 respondents who were aware of the News Diversity Database, representing 90 percent agreed (60.0% - Strongly Agree; 30.0% - Tend to Agree), with 1 respondent representing 10 percent (10.0%), selecting the option of 'Tend to Disagree' (Table 9.42, p.541).

Table 9.42

STATEMENT: The News Diversity Database is a resource hardly ever referred to when looking for MEC contributors for Midlands Today.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	60.0
Tend to Agree	3	30.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0.0
Tend to Disagree	1	10.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
TOTAL	10(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

A strong reason for respondents hardly ever referring to the News Diversity Database to find potential contributors from the MECs to include in the Midlands Today programme, was revealed in a 'telling' remark made by a journalist during the participant observations conducted:

"It's a waste of time. You make the effort to access this database, only to find that when you call the number listed, either it's no longer a working number, or the number has been inputted into the database incorrectly, so the wrong person answers the phone. And then, even if you do get in touch with the individual you're trying to contact, more times than not, the information contained on them on the database, isn't even correct. So now I don't even bother with it." (Source: Participant observations).

The finding of the questionnaire survey, alongside the participant observations conducted would suggest that others working in the Midlands Today newsroom concur with the view

as expressed above. 90 percent (90.0%), which represented 9 of the 10 respondents who were aware of the NDD agreed with the statement that: 'The News Diversity Database needs to be updated more regularly' (70.0% - Strongly Agree; 20.0% - Tend to Agree), whilst 1 respondent, representing 10.0%, selected the option of 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' (Table 9.43).

Table 9.43

STATEMENT: The News Diversity Database needs to be updated more regularly.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (
Strongly Agree	7	70.0
Tend to Agree	2	20.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	10.0
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	10(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding identifies a 'key' central short-coming of the News Diversity Database as perceived by the study group, which it could be argued, highlights why so few of the respondents use this database to try to source contributors from the MECs to include in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Therefore, it could be argued that if acted upon, the above finding (Table 9.43) could bestow upon the NDD credibility amongst the study group. As a result, the aims of this database may then become effective and live up to all that it

promised and as such, possibly assist the Midlands Today programme in *Making It Happen! Making It Happen* by this programme moving closer to 'representatively' reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

9.4.3 *Making it Happen!* Midlands Today and Diversity: Auditing and Assessment of the Needs of the journalists

To help facilitate the implementation of its diversity policy, the BBC (as discussed in Chapter 6) conducted an extensive amount of research, auditing and assessment into the needs of the organisation, vis-à-vis assisting the implementation of its diversity policy. The reason this process is undertaken by an organisation implementing a diversity policy is to assist in the identification of any measures that may need to be addressed in order to facilitate and meet, the overall aims and objectives of the policy. As outlined in the managing diversity implementation model devised for this current study, this is regarded as a pre-requisite for the successful implementation of a managing diversity policy introduced into any organisation (Kandola and Fullerton 2004; Maxwell 2004). Therefore, it was considered useful to examine to what extent, such undertakings have also been carried out on a local level,

i.e. the West Midlands region to help identify the needs of the Midlands Today programme in its endeavours to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of this region.

Therefore the study group, i.e. journalists working on the Midlands Today programme were presented with the following question: 'Have you received any specific BBC training on how to incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (re. ethnic minorities) into your day-to-day duties?' 5 respondents, representing slightly over 16 percent (16.1%) of those surveyed, indicated that they had received specific training. The majority, representing almost 84 percent (83.9%), and amounting to 26 respondents, indicated that they had not received any training of this nature. Of the 5 respondents who had received training, 1 was a Senior Manager (as indicated by 'Other'), 3 were Senior Broadcast Journalists (SBJs) and 1 was a Broadcast Journalist (BJ) (Table 9.44, p.545).

Table 9.44

QUESTION: Have you received any specific BBC training on how to incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (re. ethnic minorities) into your day-to-day duties?

RESPONSE		GRADE			TOTAL
		SBJ	BJ	OTHER	
YES	Frequency (n)	3	1	1	5
	% within Grade	15.0	10.0	100.0	
	% of total	9.7	3.2	3.2	16.1
NO	Frequency (n)	17	9	0	26
	% within Grade	85.0	90.0	0.0	
	% of total	54.8	29.0	0.0	83.9
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	% of total	64.5	32.3	3.2	100.0

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

One can only speculate as to why such training as described above was not undertaken by all those working in the Midlands Today newsroom. However, the finding of the following question presented to respondents indicates that the majority of those surveyed would have welcomed such training.

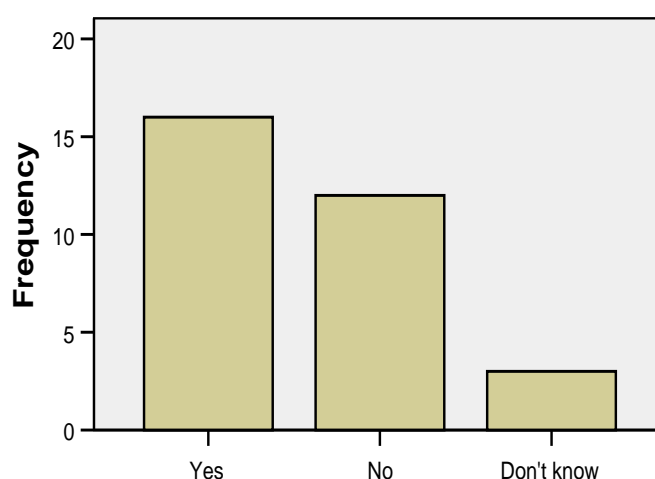
Respondents were asked to select either 'Yes', 'No' or 'Don't Know' to the following question: 'Do you think it would be beneficial for you to receive training on how to

incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (re: ethnic minorities) into your day to day duties?'

Almost 52 percent (51.6%), representing 16 respondents selected the option of 'Yes'. 12 respondents, representing 38.7 percent (38.7%) of all respondents selected 'No', whilst the remaining 3 respondents (9.7%) selected the option of 'Don't Know' (Figure 9.30 & Table 9.45).

Figure 9.30

QUESTION: Do you think it would be beneficial for you to receive training on how to incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (re. ethnic minorities) into your day-to-day duties?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.45

QUESTION: Do you think it would be beneficial for you to receive training on how to incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy (re. ethnic minorities) into your day-to-day duties?

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	16	51.6
No	12	38.7
Don't Know	3	9.7
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given that the majority of those surveyed *did* think it would be beneficial for them to receive the type of training as described above, it does call into question whether or not the BBC did indeed carry out any assessment/auditing in terms of the specific needs of journalists' working on Midlands Today in relation to the matter of training. If it did, then the next question is - to what extent, and did it involve the direct canvassing of the views of the journalists working on this programme? Lack of training amongst respondents could be yet another contributory factor as to why the Midlands Today programme fails to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

It is somewhat perplexing that even though the BBC's diversity policy was introduced in 2000, the majority of those surveyed for this current study had not received any specific training even though the Midlands Today programme, like all other BBC programmes have been 'charged' with the task of trying to implement the aims and objectives of this policy.

The possible need for training is further underlined by the responses to the following question: 'How useful would you say the training you undertook to become a journalist has

prepared you for life as a journalist working in a multi-ethnic society?'

5 respondents, representing 16.1 percent (16.1%) of the study group chose the 'Very Useful' option and 10 respondents (32.3%) selected 'Fairly Useful'. However, the option most frequently selected by those surveyed was 'Not at all useful', which represented slightly over 45 percent (45.2%) of all respondents (Figure 9.31 & Table 9.46, p.549). This, as well as the findings thus far disclosed, could all be contributory factors as to why the content analysis of the Midlands Today programme yielded the results as discussed in Chapter 8 of this current study.

Figure 9.31

QUESTION: How useful would you say the training you undertook to become a journalist, has prepared you for life as a journalist working in a multi-ethnic society?

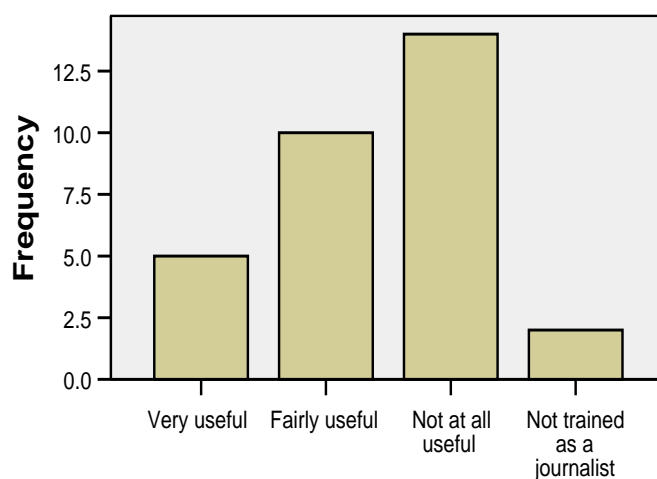


Table 9.46

QUESTION: How useful would you say the training you undertook to become a journalist, has prepared you for life as a journalist working in a multi-ethnic society?

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very Useful	5	16.1
Fairly Useful	10	32.3
Not at all Useful	14	45.2
Don't Know	0	0.0
Not trained as a journalist	2	6.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The auditing and assessment of needs is supposed to be a continuous endeavour. Therefore, it is contended within this current study that once it became apparent, via the data contained in the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database that the output of the Midlands Today programme) does not reflect the

cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, then measures could have been taken - such as the re-emergence of the post of Community Affairs Correspondent to try to address this matter.

Indeed when journalists were presented with the open-ended question of: What more, if anything do you think can be done to forge good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities, it provoked the following responses:

"Employ a specialist diversity correspondent in the newsroom, to develop contacts and stories."
(Respondent F).

"The best way would be to have someone on staff with a specific job forging such contacts, so that we can get more stories from these diverse communities." (Respondent P).

"Take the money we spend on the 'diversity unit' and put it into employing a journalist instead, with a brief to find xxx groups and stor4ies as well as general reporting." (Respondent B).

"The programme could do with a specific individual to cover ethnic community issues. That would be ideal, and would be a constant reminder of how we shape up to targets." (Respondent R).

"Don't know." (Respondent T).

"Contacts come from going news-worthy items and meeting people at key events." (Respondent N).

"We have seen a good mix of people from different backgrounds. I would have thought there was a constant flow of good information." (Respondent Q).

"Actively seek out groups, organisations from within these communities." (Respondent E).

"More" should visit the Mailbox for tours." (Respondent L).

"Go out and meet with them and not to see their stories as just 'black' stories." (Respondent H).

"To understand "diversity" as meaning a great deal more than Asian or Black. The BBC operates a very narrow definition of diversity. What about the Irish community, the Catholic and Jewish communities? (Respondent A).

"A specific individual to cover ethnic community issues would be ideal. Constant reminders of how we shape up to targets." (Respondent J).

"Encourage journalists to spend more time developing contacts and understanding issues." (Respondent W).

"We must cover stories affecting ethnic minorities and their communities and reflect their views in all stories we cover." (Respondent G).

"The best way would be to have someone on staff with a specific job of forging such contacts." (Respondent U).

"We must ensure that we do not portray ethnic minorities in a way which is always negative. Coverage should be fair, balanced and accurate." (Respondent D)

"Nothing more required. It is already well-handled." (Respondent I).

"Employ specialist diversity researcher in newsroom to develop contacts." (Respondent K).

"Improve contacts with members and representatives of ethnic minorities. Keep a closer eye on Asian/Black press, se diversity database more pro-actively." (Respondent C).

"More time off rota to go out into all communities to get stories." (Respondent Y).

"Encourage more viewers as a whole to contact us, which will also bring in more community contacts." (Respondent M).

"Reporters allowed to spend more time off rota." (Respondent Z).

"Take the money we spend on the "diversity unit" and put it into employing a journalist instead, with a brief to focus on minority groups well as general reporting." (Respondent O).

"More outreach work into the communities so that direct contact can be made with the ethnic communities." (Respondent S).

As discussed previously the topics/subject-matter that newsrooms attach to Correspondents is usually a good indicator of how important *that* subject-matter is to *that* particular newsroom. For example, some of the subjects/topics that Midlands Today have Correspondents attached to are in the areas of health, transport and home affairs. As such,

there is always a regular staple diet of stories falling under these topics. Therefore, having a Correspondent attached to the subject-matter of 'diversity', would also suggest that it would be a good indicator that the Midlands Today programme would have a staple diet of 'diversity' stories being aired on this programme. It could also be argued that the non-replacement of the Community Affairs Correspondent is sending out a subliminal message to those working on the Midlands Today programme that the achievement of 'diversity' in its programming output is no longer of importance to the BBC.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the BBC has conducted a vast amount of research into the views and opinions as held by MECs upon the BBC, which included research into what MECs thought of BBC news. However, the finding of this current study would suggest that no such research or assessment/auditing of MECs views has been conducted on a regional level in relation to the Midlands Today programme. If such assessment has been conducted then the following findings, along with the participant observations conducted would suggest that the study group have not been made privy to the finding of any such assessments. As such, the following would suggest that there is a lack of understanding amongst the respondents as to what a section

of their potential audience (i.e. MECs) think of the programme. This assertion is made in light of the finding of the following statement that was presented to respondents. 'Ethnic minorities generally tend to believe there are insufficient ethnic minority people featured on the Midlands Today programme'. The respondents' views were split down the middle between those who agreed with this statement and those who chose the option of 'Don't Know'. Just under 42 percent (41.9%) of respondents agreed with the above statement (12.9% - Strongly Agree; 29.0% - Tend to Agree), whilst 13 respondents chose the 'Don't Know' option, representing as above, just under 42 percent (41.9%). (Table 9.47).

Table 9.47

STATEMENT: Ethnic minorities generally tend to believe, there are insufficient ethnic minority people featured on the Midlands Today programme.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	9	29.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6.5
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	13	41.9
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Respondents were also presented with the following statement: 'Generally speaking, the minority ethnic

communities in the West Midlands do not regard the Midlands Today programme as being 'relevant' to them'. In response to this statement, 10 respondents', representing slightly over 32 percent (32.3%) agreed with this statement (12.9% - Strongly Agree; 19.4% - Tend to Agree), whilst 5 respondents, representing just over 16 percent (16.0%) disagreed (3.2% - Strongly Disagree; 12.9% - Tend to Disagree). However, 35.5 percent (35.5%) chose the option of Don't Know, which amounted to 11 respondents (Table 9.48).

Table 9.48

STATEMENT: Generally speaking, the minority ethnic communities in the West Midlands do not regard the Midlands Today programme as being 'relevant' to them.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	6	19.4
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	16.1
Tend to Disagree	4	12.9
Strongly Disagree	1	3.2
Don't Know	11	35.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The questionnaire survey devised for this current study included 42 Likert scale statements. The above two statements (Table 9.47 & 9.48) received the highest response of 'Don't know' from respondents. Therefore, it is suggested within this current study that the auditing and assessment of journalists working on the Midlands Today programme would

assist in identifying any areas of concern that could then be remedied, to assist in *Making It Happen*, in terms of Midlands Today reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

9.4.4 *Making It Happen!:* Midlands Today: Extent of Co-ordination outside of the Organisation

As well as keeping staff informed of the implementation of a managing diversity policy, it is also essential to ensure as best as possible that customers (in this instance, potential viewers) are aware of the fact that the BBC has implemented a diversity policy.

Therefore it was useful to find out from the respondents, their views on whether or not MECs were aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy. However, from the finding of the following two statements that were presented to respondents, it would suggest that even if viewers were aware of the changes occurring on Midlands Today, there was a lack of awareness amongst the respondents as to what MECs think about the programme.

When presented with the statement that: 'Ethnic Minority viewers are not aware that Midlands Today is making great

efforts to ensure that stories covered on the programme reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the region', the finding reveals that of those surveyed, almost 39 percent (38.7%) agreed with this statement (12.9%- 'Strongly Agree'; 25.8% - Tend to Agree'). However, 14 respondents, representing slightly over 45 percent (45.2%) of all those surveyed, selected the 'Don't Know' option (Table 9.49).

Table 9.49

STATEMENT: Ethnic Minority viewers are not aware that Midlands Today is making great efforts to ensure stories covered on the programme, reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the region.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	12.9
Tend to Agree	8	25.8
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0.0
Tend to Disagree	5	16.1
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	14	45.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Similarly, when respondents were presented with the statement: 'Ethnic minority viewers are not aware that Midlands Today wants them to come forward with potential story ideas', almost 40 percent (38.7%), representing 12 respondents' agreed with this statement (9.7% - Strongly Agree; 29.0% - Tend to Agree). 3 respondents, chose the option of 'Tend to Disagree', which represented slightly under 10 percent (9.7%), whilst 14 respondents selected the

'Don't know' option, representing slightly over 45 percent (45.2%) of all those surveyed (Table 9.50).

Table 9.50

STATEMENT: Ethnic Minority viewers are not aware that Midlands Today wants them to come forward with potential story ideas.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	3	9.7
Tend to Agree	9	29.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6.5
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	14	45.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

A factor identified within the managing diversity implementation model is the need for the organisation to promote externally what the company is doing in relation to its diversity policy. However, the above finding would again suggest that the majority of those surveyed are not aware of the degree to which MECs have/have not been kept up-to-date by the BBC in its drive to be inclusive of MECs in its programming.

9.4.5 *Making It Happen!* Midlands Today: Capitalising upon its Ethnic Minority staff

I think people haven't seen any progression or they've seen people leaving. The 13 of us who got the jobs with the BBC - Community Affairs Researchers - worked in the community beforehand, so they knew people in the community. And this impressed a whole load of people in the community who would say, 'hey, I know this person, that person is now with the BBC'. So the BBC gained a lot of 'street-cred' in that way because of doing that. But that 'cred.' has now gone away. The community is not given equal footing like the other areas of expertise, such as Science, Environment whatever, and that's where the problem is. If it's really taken on board, you'd see a senior community person who understands community. (Community Affairs Researcher: Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

This section of this chapter examines to what extent, the Midlands Today programme 'capitalises' upon its ethnic minority staff in its endeavours of *Making It Happen!* Insofar as moving closer to meeting the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

It is often cited that the benefits to organisations of having a diverse workforce is the 'diversity' of views that are brought into the work-place (Kandola and Fullerton 2004).

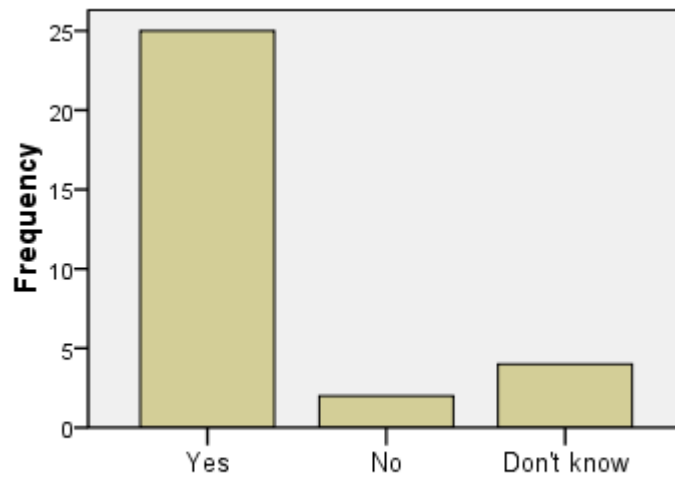
This current study also contends that for an organisation such as the BBC - in this instance Midlands today, this programme also has the added benefit of being able to overtly display its 'diverse workforce' directly to its external customers' (i.e. viewers), via its MEC journalists appearing on-screen in the carrying out of their duties as a reporter/presenter on the programme. And as highlighted in Chapter 8 of this current study, the presentational style of a reporter being on-screen in the delivery of the details of a news story is a preferential 'presentational style' adopted by this programme.

Therefore, to establish the study groups' opinions on the above, they were presented with the following question: 'Do you think the 'on-air' representation of ethnic minority staff and contributors on Midlands Today is likely to encourage more ethnic minorities to watch the programme?' 25 respondents, representing 80.6 percent (80.6%) selected the option of: 'Yes', whilst 4 respondents, representing just 12.9 percent (12.9%) chose the option of 'Don't Know'. The remaining 2 respondents selected the option of: 'No'.

This finding illustrates that the study group is very much aware of the benefits to the Midlands Today programme of having ethnic minority journalists on-screen (Figure 9.32 and Table 9.51, p.561).

Figure 9.32

QUESTION: Do you think the 'on-air' representation of ethnic minority staff and contributors on Midlands Today is likely to encourage more ethnic minorities to watch the programme?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.51

QUESTION: Do you think the 'on-air' representation of ethnic minority staff and contributors on Midlands Today is likely to encourage more ethnic minorities to watch the programme?

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	25	80.6
No	2	6.5
Don't Know	4	12.9
Total	31(n)	100.0%

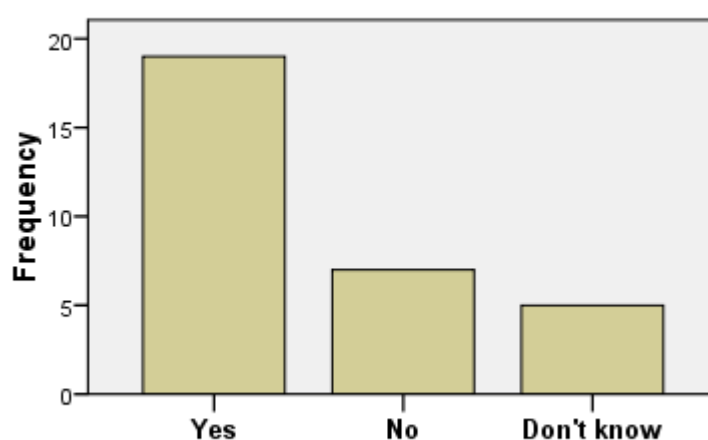
(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Based upon the above finding one would therefore expect the Midlands Today programme to capitalise upon its minority ethnic staff, and so when journalists were asked: 'Does the Midlands Today programme fully capitalise upon its ethnic minority staff with regards to helping the programme reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands?', the majority, amounting to a total of 19 respondents, which represented slightly over 60 percent (61.3%) selected the option of 'Yes' (Figure 9.33 and Table 9.52).

Figure 9.33

QUESTION: Does the Midlands Today programme fully capitalise upon its ethnic minority staff, with regards to helping the programme reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.52

QUESTION: Does the Midlands Today programme fully capitalise upon its ethnic minority staff, with regards to helping the programme reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands?

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	19	61.3
No	7	22.6
Don't Know	5	16.1
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

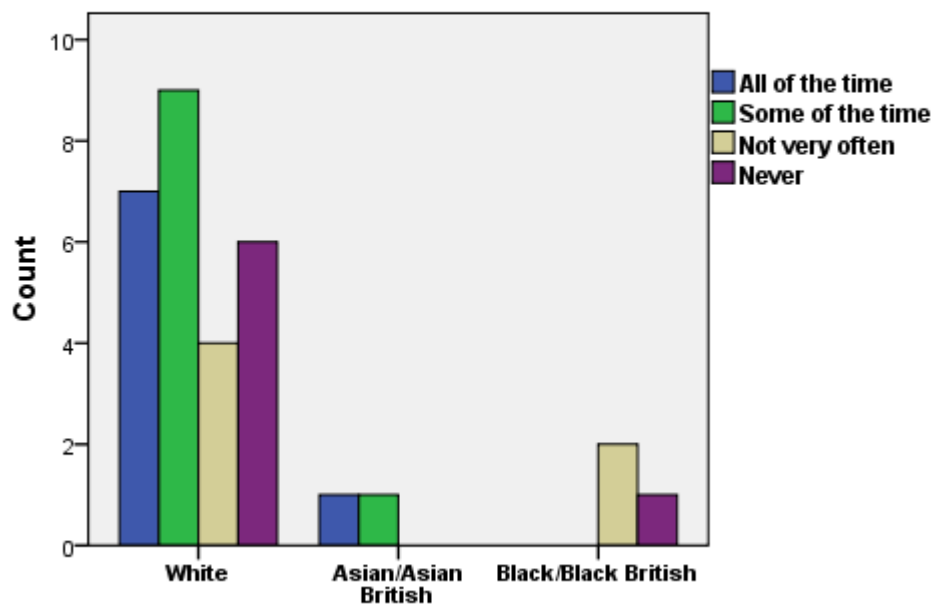
If the above finding was not subjected to further scrutiny and analysis, then this would be very encouraging. One would be forgiven into 'thinking' that given the correlation made by the BBC of how the increased employment of MECs/a diverse workforce making programmes can lead to increased viewers from amongst a diverse audience (Soros and Jones 2001), coupled with the views held by the majority of Midlands Today journalists' surveyed (Table 9.51, p.561), that this programme would be making the most of its ethnic minority staff 'on-screen'. However, when respondents were asked to indicate: 'How often does your job involves you appearing on-screen'?, the only ethnic group that did not have a representation in terms of appearing on-screen 'All of the time' or even 'Some of the time' were those classified as 'Black/Black British'. Instead, two-thirds of this ethnic group (66.7%), representing 2 respondents, selected the 'Not Very Often' option, whilst the 1 remaining respondent, representing 33.3% of this ethnic group indicated that they are 'Never' on-screen.

Of the 2 respondents who described their ethnicity as 'Asian/Asian British', 1 respondent, representing 50.0% of this ethnic group was able to state that they were 'on-screen', 'All of the time', whilst the other 'Asian/Asian British' respondent, selected the option of: 'Some of the time'.

As those classified under the ethnic group of 'White' represented almost 84 percent (83.9%) of all respondents surveyed, it is of no surprise that over one quarter of this 'ethnic' group (26.9%) stated that they were on-screen 'All of the time', and just over a third (34.6%) selected the option of: 'Some of the time' (Figure 9.34 & Table 9.53, p.564-5).

Figure 9.34

QUESTION: How often does your job involve you appearing on-screen?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.53

QUESTION: How often does your job involve you appearing on-screen?

RESPONSE		ETHNICITY			TOTAL
		White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	
All of the time	Frequency (n)	7	1	0	8
	% within ethnicity	26.9	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	22.6	3.2	0.0	25.8
Some of the time	Frequency (n)	9	1	0	10
	% within ethnicity	34.6	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	29.0	3.2	0.0	32.3
Not very often	Frequency (n)	4	0	2	6
	% within ethnicity	15.4	0.0	66.7	
	% of total	12.9	0.0	6.5	19.4
Never	Frequency (n)	6	0	1	7
	% within ethnicity	23.1	0.0	33.3	
	% of total	19.4	0.0	3.2	22.6
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	26(n)	2(n)	3(n)	31(n)
	% within ethnicity	100.0%	100.0%	100.0	
	% of total	83.9%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

As discussed previously in this chapter (Table 9.5a, p.456), the 3 respondents classified as 'Black/Black British' have completed a postgraduate course in journalism and as such, have been trained to industry-standard. Therefore given the perceived direct link made by over 80 percent (80.6%) of the study group (Table 9.51, p.561), between the on-screen presence of MEC journalists potentially encouraging more members of the MECs to tune in to watch the Midlands Today programme, it does seem that this programme is missing a golden opportunity to capitalise upon its ethnic minority staff. This could suggest a misalignment between the 'actions' of this programme and the 'stated' aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

For example, a most *extraordinary* sight witnessed on-screen in terms of the Midlands Today programme 'capitalising' upon its ethnic minority staff, was in a news story that was broadcast on this programme...

A young 7-year old girl, Toni-Anne Byfield of Caribbean descent was shot at close-range in her back. At the trial of her now convicted murderer, it was revealed that Toni-Anne had gone along to London (from Birmingham) to visit the person that she regarded as being her father. He too was

shot and murdered on that very same day by the man who also murdered Toni-Anne Byfield.

As Toni-Anne was in the care of Birmingham Social Services and so lived in Birmingham, this was a story that was of interest to the Midlands Today programme.

At some point after the above murders, Midlands Today decided to do a follow-up on this story. During a conversation with one of the programme's Correspondents, he mentioned that he had been given the assignment of 'door-stepping' (i.e. turning up to a house unannounced and uninvited) a family member of Toni-Anne's to conduct an interview. He stated that he did not feel comfortable 'door-stepping', because he had not previously been in contact with the family.

However, the coverage of the news item did go ahead but with a different journalist. In addition the decision was taken to also use a Black female Midlands Today journalist, with many years of experience behind them, to enter the home of Toni-Anne Byfield's family member to do the interview with them.

However, when this news story was broadcast, all of the 'Black' journalists' questions had been edited out and so we just saw this journalist sitting on a settee with the interviewee as they responded to her now edited out questions, and the journalist just doing 'noddy' shots in response to the interviewee's comments.

At the end of the interview, the shot cut to the outside of the house, and then a 'White male' Midlands Today journalist did the piece-to-camera, re. the news item, and signs off the report with: 'this is "xxx" (his name) for Midlands Today'. So essentially this means that he was accredited with this news report.

This was extraordinary to watch because ordinarily, unless archive footage/library shots are being used in the news item, the journalist doing the interview would be 'heard' and would also sign off by doing the piece-to-camera at the end of the report.

Viewing the unusual way in which this particular news item was edited and packaged, could almost be likened to the way in which Alex Pascal, a former BBC presenter and journalist, described the way in which he was treated as a Black

journalist working for the BBC. Pascall states that it is only when there is a 'problem' that Black people are 'used' by the mainstream. He goes on to say that:

"On such occasions our people are thrust to the forefront of news reporting and used as a front to gain access to the black community." (Pascall 1982: 9).

Therefore, going back now to the Midlands Today news report referred to above, the way in which this programme *capitalised* upon its staff member from the MEC in that particular instance, was some might argue, not a 'positive' example of capitalising upon the diversity of staff working within this newsroom!

Another area warranting consideration in terms of how the Midlands Today programme could possibly move closer towards *Making It Happen! Making It Happen* in terms of meeting the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy is on its employment and retention of staff from the MECs. As has been previously discussed, one aspect of the pan-BBC diversity policy is to increase the number of people from the MECs that this corporation employs.

During the undertaking of the participant observations conducted in the Midlands Today newsroom, it was noted that there were 4 different types of employment contracts to which an individual working on this programme may be employed under. A 'staff contract' which is a 'permanent' contract, 'fixed-term contract of 1 year or more', 'fixed term contract of less than 1 year' or as a 'freelancer' (Table 9.54).

Table 9.54
Types of employment contracts:
Available in the Midlands Today newsroom.

Staff: permanent contract
Fixed Term: 1 year or more
Fixed Term: Less than 1 year
Freelancer

Source: Participant Observations.

To ascertain the type of contract that MEC employees working on the Midlands Today programme were employed under, the study group was asked to state the type of contract that they were employed under.

Of the 26 respondents who classified their ethnicity as 'White', 20 stated that their type of employment contract was 'staff' (i.e. permanent), which represented over 95 percent (95.2%) of all respondents holding a staff contract. 1 of the 2 Asian respondents also held a 'staff' contract,

whilst the other was employed under a 'fixed term contract of less than 1 year'. None of the 3 respondents classified as 'Black/Black British' held a 'staff' contract and were all employed under a 'fixed term contract of less than 1 year' (Table 9.55, p. 572).

These results concur with the national picture, as revealed in the 'journalists at work' survey conducted by NTO/Skillset (2002), which states that "journalists from the white ethnic groups are more likely to be on permanent contracts" (NT0/Skillset, 2002: 30).

The Skillset survey taken into account, the finding of this current research study in relation to 4 of the 5 MEC respondents (1 Asian/Asian British and 3 Black/Black British) being on 'fixed term contracts of less than 1 year', warrants further attention vis-à-vis the primary focus of this research study.

Table 9.55

Type of employment contracts held by the Study Group.

TYPE OF CONTRACT		Ethnicity			TOTAL
		White	Asian/Asian British	Black/Black British	
Staff Contract	Frequency	20	1	0	21
	% within type of contract	95.2	4.8	0.0	(100.0%)
	% within ethnicity	76.9	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	64.5	3.2	0.0	67.7%
Fixed Term contract of 1 year or more	Frequency	2	0	0	2
	% within type of contract	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0%)
	% within ethnicity	7.7	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	6.5	0.0	0.0	6.5%
Fixed Term contract of less than 1 year	Frequency	1	1	3	5
	% within type of contract	20.0	20.0	60.0	(100.0%)
	% within ethnicity	3.8	50.0	0.0	
	% of total	3.2	3.2	9.7	16.1%
Freelancer	Frequency	3	0	0	3
	% within type of contract	100.0	0.0	0.0	(100.0%)
	% within ethnicity	11.5	0.0	0.0	
	% of total	9.7	0.0	0.0	9.7
TOTAL	Frequency (n)	26(n)	2(n)	3(n)	31(n)
	Percentage (%)	83.9%	6.5%	9.7%	100.0%

(n)=number; %=Percent

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given the overall stated aims of the pan-BBC diversity policy which includes a focus upon increasing the employment of people from the MECs, it is notable that as well as not being employed under a 'staff contract' (i.e. permanent contract), 4 of the 5 MEC respondents are also on the shortest length of contract available. Therefore in terms of the primary focus of this current study which is an examination into the extent to which the Midlands Today programme reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output, this finding of the majority, i.e 80 percent (80.0%) of all Midlands Today MEC journalists being on short-term contracts could possibly have a bearing upon this programme failing to *Making It Happen! Making it happen* insofar as such short-term contracts impeding upon journalists ability to build up long-standing 'contacts' from within the West Midlands region who could result in being good news sources in terms of finding stories/contributors from within the MECs. Therefore it is contended within this study that this is an area that should be of concern for the Midlands Today programme, which warrants attention.

Although the number of MEC respondents participating in this current study may be considered to be small in numbers to justify any spur of action on the part of the BBC re. the above finding, the following should be noted...

The study group consists of an overall total of 31 journalists working on the Midlands Today programme, with 5 of these journalists being members of the MECs - representing slightly over 16 percent (16.1%) of all those surveyed. Therefore, as the MEC population for the West Midlands region is 13 percent (13.0%), the MEC representation of the study group is considered to be very representative of this region to warrant the engendering of informed 'action'.

9.5 Midlands Today: News Production Process

News production process means that journalists are embedded in a way/style of working. Embedded in a complex relationship in relation to the news production process."
(van Dijk 1991).

A further area warranting investigation is the news production process - as employed on the Midlands Today programme. This endeavour will assist this current study in understanding why, *in spite of* the introduction of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, and why *in spite of* the majority of respondents (64.5%) commending the BBC for introducing this policy, this programme's output consistently fails to representatively reflect the cultural

ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

The need for this current area of investigation (i.e. the news production process as employed on this programme) was further heightened and reinforced, following the viewing of a Channel 4 documentary entitled: *Tony Benn interviewing the interviewers*. This programme was broadcast on Channel 4 on the 12th August 2006 at 19:10¹⁹.

Essentially, this documentary featured Tony Benn, the veteran former Labour MP and Cabinet Minister, as the Presenter of this programme, in which he interviewed four of Britain's most high-profile political journalists/presenters on television or radio:

- Jeremy Paxman: Presenter of BBC2 Newsnight programme.
- John Humphrys: Presenter of the Radio 4 daily morning show: The Today programme.
- Jon Snow: Presenter of Channel 4 news.
- Nick Robinson: BBC Political Editor.

In the course of 'quizzing' these four interviewees, Tony Benn asked about their work as a journalist, and the

¹⁹ The audio for this programme can be accessed via the following website link:
<http://www.bennites.com/INTERVIEWINGTHEINTERVIEWERSAUDIO.html>

approach/methods that is adopted by the media in terms of deciding upon who is afforded access to the news media.

John Humphrys' response was as follows:

"Radio and television is a hugely powerful medium. We have to be of broadly, broadly of the consensus.

"To appear on a programme like this you have to have a certain amount of authority in one way or another. Other people have authority because they run important and powerful institutions. Ordinary person cannot command a public platform with an idea... No, no... and why should they be able to? Why should every Tom, Dick and Harry be able to come onto the programme?" (John Humphrys, 2006).

It could be argued that John Humphrys' response confirms the assertions made by Hall et al (1978), about 'Primary Definers' (Official and non-official representatives) setting the news agenda, and being the types of individuals who are afforded access to the public sphere, via the news media. As such, Humphrys' comments do not bode well for the likelihood of a multi-ethnic sphere being formulated, particularly as he is speaking in the capacity of a journalist employed by the BBC - an organisation which since 2000 has implemented a diversity policy.

However, before moving on it is worth citing an extract from Tony Benn's response to Humphrys' comments:

"John Humphrys seemed to be too interested in the powerful and even suggested that ordinary people cannot expect to get access to the media." (Tony Benn, 2006).

In terms of summarising the views and comments of all of the interviewees, Tony Benn makes the following comments, which in terms of this current study are considered to be very pertinent.

"Corridors of real power, media power... trying to form our opinions everyday.

"True that those who cause trouble make headlines, but how often are we allowed to hear what they're really saying?

"Better idea or good idea, if we could have a wider range of opinions. People, who are maybe seen as maverick now, could be representing the conventional wisdom of tomorrow!

"I think the media have a critical role in making it possible for us to hear the widest ranges of opinions to help us to understand the complexities of the world in which we live and the choices we have to make." (Benn 2000).

In particular, it is that final comment made by Tony Benn in the last paragraph above that is pertinent and of immense importance to this current study. Benn's 'hopes' encapsulate

what the BBC says it wants to achieve via its diversity policy which aims to 'reflect the nation that it serves'. However, via the under-representation of MECs in its output, the Midlands Today programme fails to provide viewers with a wide range of views and opinions on the stories that are broadcast on this programme.

Therefore this section of this chapter seeks to undertake an examination of the news production process as employed by the Midlands Today programme in a bid to:

- Understand the different factors that underpin the workings of this newsroom which may have bearings/influence upon this programme's eventual output.
- Identify any aspects of this production process that with changes may make it "possible for us to hear the widest ranges of opinions to help us to understand the complexities of the world in which we live and the choices we have to make." (Benn 2006).

The unprecedented and unhindered access granted to the research site facilitated the undertaking of the above and

bore fruits of knowledge that engendered a deeper understanding of the news production process, as employed on the Midlands Today programme.

The examination to follow primarily draws upon the finding of the questionnaire survey disseminated to Midlands Today journalists, and the participant observations conducted in this newsroom. As such, these research methods facilitated an examination of the deep-rooted intricate workings of this newsroom, in a further bid to try to understand why this programme generates the output that it does.

9.6 Midlands Today: Highly-routinised Newsroom

One of the most striking features that immediately becomes apparent whilst observing the workings of the Midlands Today newsroom, is just how highly-routinised it is. That said, understandably so because although the main daily news programme is broadcast from 18.30-19.00, there are shorter bulletins broadcast throughout the day. Therefore, it is essential that the Midlands Today newsroom operates in an efficient and smooth manner in order to meet all of these unmovable deadlines.

Even as far as where 'key' individuals working on the programme sit within the newsroom is structured. For

example, the Producer of the 18.30 programme will sit at a particular desk, in a particular seat. As too will the Lunch Producer and the Late Producer, who will sit at the same desk as the main Producer of the 18.30 programme, but with each sitting in a particular seat at that particular desk.

Similarly, the Output Editor (commonly known as the News Editor) and the Input Editor (i.e. Head of Newsgathering), will also sit at a particular desk, in a particular seat. Essentially this system applies to anyone who has a particular role to undertake in the newsroom and this all stems from the need to maintain the smooth running of the newsroom to ensure that this programme goes out on time. Other such personnel who would fall into this category of being 'key' to the smooth-running of the newsroom would include for example, the two Presenters of the main news programme (broadcast at 18:30-19:30), the News Organiser, Assistant News Organiser, the Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ) working on Forward Planning and the individual responsible for the Camera Diary. Table 9.8 (p. 463) provides a brief description of the duties of each of these key individuals.

As *pedantic* as this may all at first seem to be on the surface, the participant observations conducted reveal why this 'seating structure' is essential. Anyone working on the

programme, walking into the newsroom and wishing to speak to any of the key individuals (who can vary at times from day to day, from week to week or from month to month) will know immediately what role/responsibility an individual is undertaking simply by where they are sitting in the newsroom.

9.7 Midlands Today: Newsgathering Process

As discussed in Chapter 2 of this current study, journalists will often like to give the impression that they 'react' to news, as and when it occurs. However, research studies have shown that journalists, through their newsgathering process, 'plan' as much as possible the news items that they wish to include in their medium (Cohen and Young 1973; Tuchman 1976; Fishman 1980; Schudson 2000).

This finding of this current study concurs with the authors as cited above, because the participation observations conducted highlighted that central to the daily delivery of the Midlands Today programme is the effectiveness of its newsgathering process. This is at its core and central to the way in which stories are gathered and selected, and will ultimately determine what the news output will be.

As mentioned previously, the Midlands Today programme has to produce a certain number of bulletins each day and so therefore needs to prepare before the day of broadcast for news items. This is achieved by this programme constantly trying to plan and gather stories. Journalists can always at any time, put forward potential story ideas to key individuals in the newsroom who are significant to the decision-making process, as to what will or will not 'make' the programme.

The participant observations conducted enabled the noting of a variety of structures that have been put into place within this newsroom, to ensure that there is always a constant flow of potential stories available to choose from, to fill the news bulletins.

The meetings discussed below are open to any journalist to attend, or indeed to anyone based at BBC Birmingham, should they choose to do so. However, more times than not, these meetings are generally attended by individuals who are directly connected to this programme.

9.7.1 Midlands Today: Weekly Planning Meeting

Each week, the Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ) working on the Forward Planning desk will arrange a meeting so that

journalists can attend and try to 'sell' any potential story ideas they have come up with, for inclusion within the programme. Key individuals from the newsroom who will also be in attendance at these meetings will be the Head of Newsgathering (Input Editor), Producers of the programme and the News Editor (Output Editor). If the idea gets past these key individuals, then it will be pencilled in to the forward planning diary.

9.7.2 Midlands Today: Monday Morning Ideas Meeting

Each Monday morning a meeting will be held to give journalists the opportunity to put forward any ideas that they may have for inclusion in the programme. A similar set-up to the above is applied, where ideas are put forth and if they get past the initial key individuals, the idea will be pencilled into the forward planning diary for further consideration or further research.

9.7.3 Midlands Today: Daily Early Morning Meeting

Another example of the routinisation of the Midlands Today newsroom is the early morning meetings that take place daily from Monday to Friday, shortly after the BBC's 'Breakfast' programme has finished at 9.15am. This meeting is led by the Producer of the main Midlands Today programme for that day.

At the meeting, the early morning BJ will provide everyone with a newspaper review which highlights any stories that they think may possibly be of interest (this list would also have been previously emailed to everyone in the newsroom). The early morning BJ will also have watched the Central TV news programme broadcast earlier that morning and so will verbally outline the stories that were covered in Central's bulletin. Prior to this meeting, the BJ would also have checked the bulletins of all of the BBC local radio stations in order to identify any stories that may be of interest to the Midlands Today programme.

These meetings are open to all. For example, those working on the Politics Show or in the Current Affairs and Features Department, but are generally attended by those working directly on the Midlands Today programme, who are available to attend the meeting.

From the participant observations undertaken, the number of people attending can range from 7 to 20+ but more times than not, the numbers tend to fall somewhere in-between this range. Always present though will be the News Editor, Editor of Newsgathering, Producers of the programmes (broadcast at 13.30 and 18.30), News Organiser, Assistant News Organiser, Early morning BJ, reporters and Correspondents. The HRLP-WM

and the Broadcast Journalist working on Network news may also at times choose to attend these meetings.

Potential news stories (referred to as 'prospects') for that day are listed on a newsgathering grid sheet, which is handed out to all those present at the meeting. The newsgathering sheet handed out will contain brief details outlining the essence of each story.

These early morning meetings are usually led by the Producer of the 18:30 bulletin for that day, who at some point on the previous day, would have gone through the list of stories to be included in this newsgathering sheet, with the Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ), in charge of forward planning.

The purpose of the daily early morning meeting is three-fold:

- (i) To go through the list of potential stories for that day - not all stories on the newsgathering grid sheet will 'make' the programme for that day. For example, a story may be 'knocked off' the list, which often happens once it has been discussed by all those present at the early morning meeting.

(ii) To let everyone present know before the end of the meeting, the agreed list of stories to be included in the 18.30 Midlands Today programme.

(iii) To give those present at this meeting the opportunity to put forth any story ideas they may have for that day, which may not already be included on the grid sheet.

The morning meeting is also a forum in which those present can enter into discussions about how some of the stories selected from the newsgathering grid sheet, should be treated, i.e. filmed and packaged. Oftentimes though, it is simply a case of the Producer briefly explaining the stories to be included in the 18:30 programme. However on some occasions, lengthy discussions can ensue about particular stories.

All present at these meetings are encouraged to throw in their ideas, with the Producer of the programme often stating at the start of the meeting that all ideas and suggestions are welcome.

After the meeting the Producer of the 18.30 programme will go away, type up an updated grid sheet outlining all of the stories that have been commissioned for that day, with the

name of the journalist alongside the story they will be covering. All those working in the newsroom will have access to this list of selected stories via an email that is sent out by the Producer of the 18:30 programme.

9.8 Midlands Today: 'Gatekeeper' Process

The sections outlined above are what can be regarded as being the 'gatekeeper' process in operation on the Midlands Today programme vis-à-vis the various meetings that take place in this newsroom. The participant observations conducted, coupled with the research finding highlighted that no members of the MEC occupied a position, which would allow them to make decisions as to what stories would ultimately make it onto this programme. Individuals with this 'power' would include the Output Editor (News Editor), Input Editor (Head of Newsgathering), Producer of the main 18.30 programme, and the Forward Planning Senior Broadcast Journalist (SBJ). This finding could be a possible contributory factor as to why this programme fails to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands, in terms of the stories that are commissioned to be included in this programme.

9.9 *Making It Happen: Midlands Today: Hierarchical Structure of the Newsroom*

Given the hierarchical structure and nature of newsrooms (which was observed during the course of the undertaking of this study), it was noticeable that those occupying a 'higher' position/status in the newsroom (such as Correspondents/SBJs), seemed to get their story ideas through the 'gates' easier than those occupying a lower position in the newsroom (such as BJs).

For example, the following was noted during a Midlands Today early morning meeting. Following the Police announcement that the 'suicide bombers' of the 7th July 2005 were 'home-grown', i.e. born and bred in Britain, a discussion ensued around this story during the early morning meeting. Various individuals contributing to this discussion put forth different ideas as to how this story could be covered on the programme. One participant at this meeting, who is a member of the MEC and is also a BJ, put forth the angle that maybe these 'suicide bombers' felt disenfranchised from the British society. This angle was not taken up and quickly dismissed. However, it was interesting to note that the same evening, the BBC television programme: 'Newsnight', approached this story from the very same angle put forth during the Midlands Today early morning meeting.

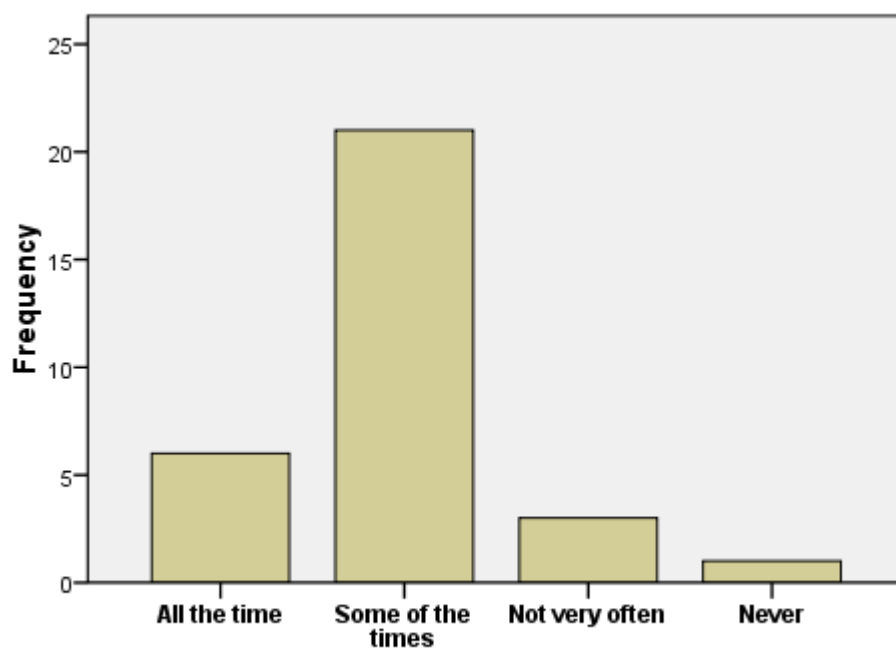
Therefore in order to gauge the 'success-rate' amongst the study group in terms of getting their story ideas included in the programme, respondents were presented with the following question: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme?

6 respondents, representing over 19 percent (19.4%), indicated that their story ideas were commissioned 'all of the time' but the majority of respondents, amounting to 21 and representing almost 68 percent (67.7%) of all those surveyed indicated that on average, their story ideas were commissioned for inclusion on the programme 'some of the times'. (Figure 9.35 & Table 9.56, p.590).

When the above finding is correlated with the Grade of the respondent it reveals that the majority of those stating that their story ideas were commissioned 'all of the time' were SBJs, which amounted to 5 of the 6 respondents and represented over 83 percent (83.3%) of all respondents' indicating that their story ideas were commissioned 'all of the time' (Figure 9.35a & Table 9.56a, p.591).

Figure 9.35

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.56

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme?

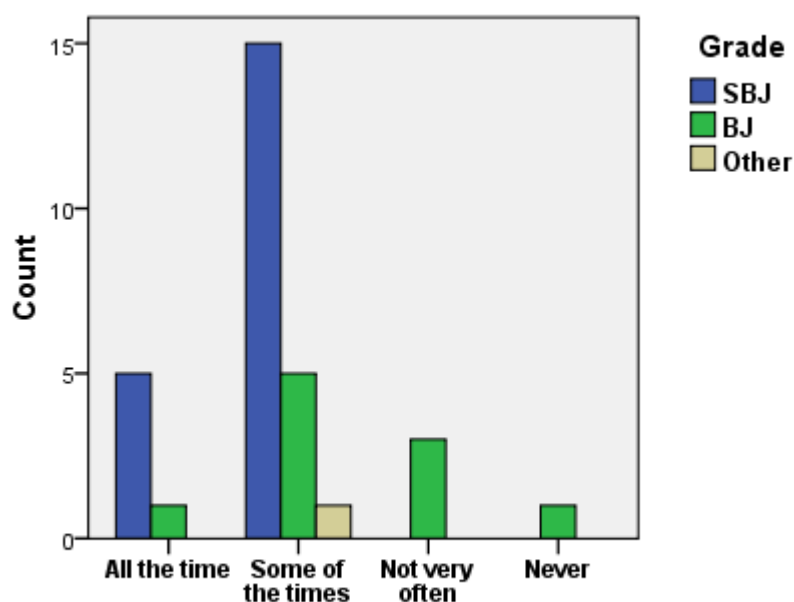
RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
All of the time	6	19.4
Some of the times	21	67.7
Not very often	3	9.7
Never	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Figure 9.35a

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme?
[Correlated with the Grade of the respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.56a

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme?
[Correlated with the Grade of the respondent].

How often story ideas are commissioned	Frequency			
	SBJ	BJ	Other	TOTAL
All of the time	5	1	0	6
(% within response)	(83.3)	(16.7)	(0.0)	(100.0%)
(% of overall total)				19.4%
Some of the time	15	5	1	21
(% within response)	(71.4)	(23.8)	(4.8)	(100.0%)
(% of overall total)				(67.7%)
Not very often	0	3	0	3
(% within response)	(0.0)	(30.0)	(0.0)	(100.0%)
(% of overall total)				(9.7%)
Never	0	1	0	1
(% within response)	(0.0)	(10.0)	(0.0)	(100.0%)
(% of overall total)				(3.2%)
TOTAL	20(n)	10(n)	1(n)	31(n)
	64.5%	32.3%	3.2%	100.0%

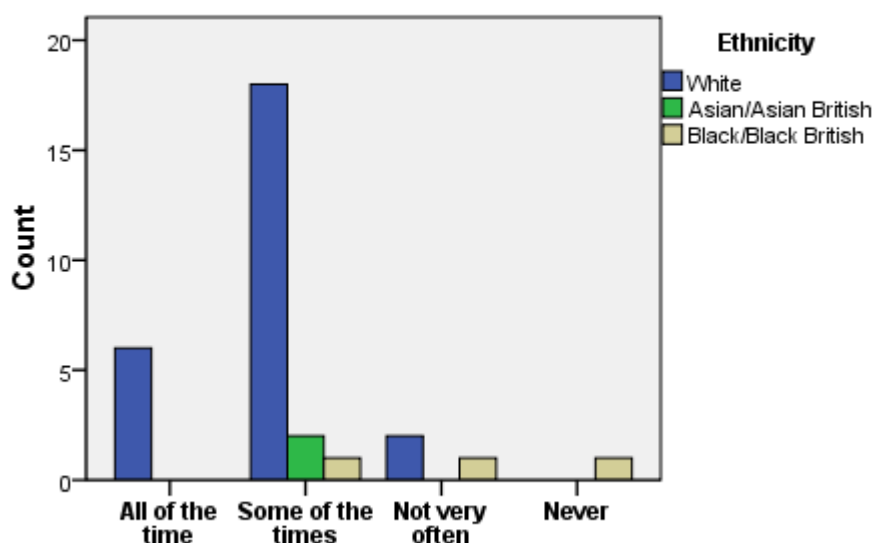
(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

As only 1 of the 5 MEC respondents participating in the questionnaire survey were Graded as a SBJ (Table 9.35a, p.448), the following finding presented is hardly surprising. No MEC respondent selected the 'all of the time' option in relation to how often their story ideas were commissioned. 3 MEC respondents were able to select 'some of the time' as their response, whilst 1 MEC respondent indicated that their story ideas were 'never' commissioned (Figure 9.35b & Table 9.56b).

9.35b

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme? [Correlated with the ethnicity of the respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.56b

QUESTION: On average, how often would you say your story ideas are commissioned for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme? [Correlated with the ethnicity of the respondent].

How often story ideas are commissioned	Frequency(n)			
	White	Asian	Black	TOTAL
All of the time	6	0	0	6
Some of the time	18	2	1	21
Not very often	2	0	1	3
Never	0	0	1	1
TOTAL	26	2	3	31(n)

(n) = number

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above findings could possibly be a contributory factor as to why the Midlands Today programme fails to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, because clearly the MEC respondents on average are not as successful as their 'White' counterparts who hold higher Grades in the newsroom, in terms of getting their story ideas commissioned.

This assertion is further reinforced by the comments made during the one-to-one in-depth interview conducted with the Midlands Today Community Affairs Researcher. Their remit is to try to find 'diverse' news stories for inclusion in the programme. However, he raised the point that because of the Grade that he occupies in the newsroom (i.e. BJ-Researcher), he found it very difficult to get his story ideas commissioned for inclusion in the programme:

"I think you need a new and improved Community Affairs Researcher. Maybe you need to change the job title of Researcher. I don't know what it is, but there is just something about that that just makes people think that what you're doing is not important or that they'll fit you in if we've got a couple of minutes to spare or if something else falls out of the schedule.

"So many of the stories that I actually put together were sitting on the shelf for a couple of weeks, 3 weeks. Now I understand news values, and the fact that the main stories have to go first, but when it's constantly happening every time, winter, summer, spring - yours are just left on the shelf, you have to think what's going on here? (Community Affairs Researcher, Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004).

Given the above factor, this may also be one of the reasons as to why the types of story subjects/topics that pertain to/are about MEC affairs/matters - classified in this current study under the main story subject category of 'MEC: race-related/cultural', were the least type of story subjects featured on the Midlands Today programme and only amounted to just 0.5% of all news stories included on the programmes analysed (see Table 7.7, p.221).

Therefore, in terms of *Making It Happen!*... it is contended within this study that the hierarchical structure of the Midlands Today programme may to some extent, be compromising this programme in terms of achieving the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy. In the same way that the pan-BBC diversity policy sets out the aim of trying to proactively employ more MECs at Senior Levels in the corporation, this may possibly be a consideration for the Midlands Today newsroom to explore - to proactively aim to employ more MECs at the Grade of SBJ and above.

9.10 Midlands Today: News Values

As discussed in Chapter 3 of this current study, the news values employed by the news media, can at times permeate in a negative manner insofar as the way in which those from the

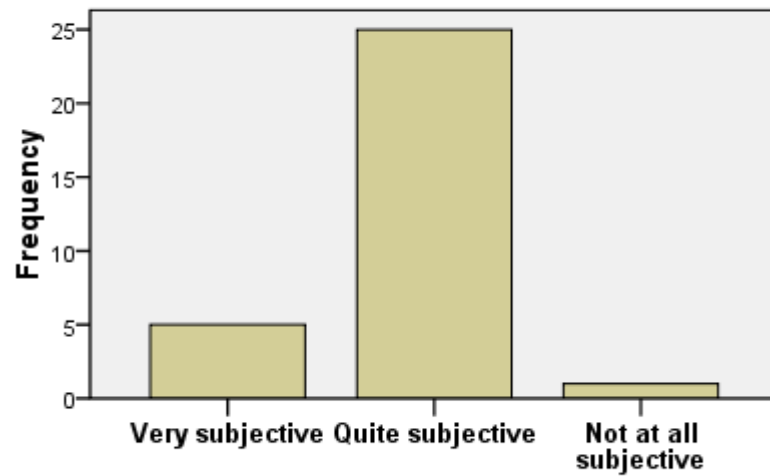
MECs are portrayed/represented and indeed, excluded from this medium.

Therefore, the news values as employed on the Midlands Today programme were examined to try to establish to what extent, if any, the news values that are employed on this programme may have contributed to this programme failing to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

In response to the question of: How subjective is the 'interpretation' of news values?, the majority of respondents, amounting to 25 and representing over 80 percent (80.7%), selected the response of 'quite subjective'. 5 respondents indicated that the interpretation of news values was: 'very subjective' and only 1 respondent (3.2%) indicated that the interpretation of news values was 'not at all subjective' (Figure 9.36 & Table 9.57, p.596).

Figure 9.36

QUESTION: How subjective is the 'interpretation' of news values?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.57

QUESTION: How subjective is the 'interpretation' of news values?

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very subjective	5	16.1
Quite subjective	25	80.6
Not at all subjective	1	3.2
Don't know		
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The 'concept' of 'news values' is what Hall (1981a) once descried as being "one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All 'true journalists' are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it." (Hall 1981a:234). In light of this, respondents were presented with a selection of 17 different

'qualities', i.e. 'news values' that a story may need to possess in order for it to be deemed to be 'news-worthy' enough for inclusion in the Midlands Today programme (Table 9.58). The development of these news values were informed by the study conducted by Galtung and Ruge (1965) and by the pilot study conducted for the questionnaire survey used within this current research study.

Table 9.58
List of news values that a potential story
for the Midlands Today programme should possess.

	News Values
1	Human interest
2	Relevance to the West Midlands region
3	Exclusivity
4	Is unusual
5	Dramatic
6	Unique
7	Unexpected/rare
8	Topical
9	Geographical proximity, in relation to the WMs
10	Informative
11	Interesting
12	Has the 'wow' - didn't know that factor
13	Concerns 'elite'/important people/celebrities
14	Lends itself to good pictures
15	Is of good timing
16	Cultural proximity, i.e. easily understandable
17	Negative event in terms of its consequence
18	Other - please specify

Source: Questionnaire survey.

The study group were invited to select five from the above list, indicating which they considered to be the most important news value by placing a 1 alongside the most important, a 2 alongside what they considered to be the second most important news value and to continue through to

what they consider to be the fifth most important news value.

Overall (not necessarily in terms of being the 'most' important news value selected), the most-selected news value by respondents was 'human interest', which was selected on 25 occasions (16.1%). 'Relevance to the West Midlands' and 'lends itself to good pictures' were the second most-selected news values, with each representing slightly over 14 percent (14.2%). The news value of 'has the 'wow'- didn't know that factor' was selected on 16 occasions, representing slightly over 10 percent (10.3%).

The following five news values selected, each represented less than 10 percent (10.0%):

- Informative: 9.0%
- Interesting: 7.1%
- Exclusivity: 6.5%
- Topical: 5.8%
- Unexpected/rare: 5.2%

The news values which each represented less than 4 percent (4.0%) were:

- Dramatic: 3.9%

- Unusual: 2.6%
- Cultural proximity (i.e. easily understandable): 2.6%
- Geographical proximity to the West Midlands: 1.9%
- Unique: 0.6%

The news values of: 'good timing', 'concerns elite/important people/celebrities' and 'negative events, in terms of its consequence' were never selected (Table 9.59).

Table 9.59
Overall most selected news value by respondents.

	News Values	Frequency	Percentage
1	Human interest	25	16.1
2	Relevance to the West Midlands	22	14.2
3	Lends itself to good pictures	22	14.2
	Has the 'wow' - didn't know that factor	16	10.3
5	Informative	14	9.0
6	Interesting	11	7.1
7	Exclusivity	10	6.5
8	Topical	9	5.8
9	Unexpected/rare	8	5.2
10	Dramatic	6	3.9
11	Unusual	4	2.6
12	Cultural proximity, i.e. easily understandable	4	2.6
13	Geographical proximity to the WMs	3	1.9
14	Unique	1	0.6
15	Good timing	0	0.0
16	Concerns 'elite'/important people/celebrities	0	0.0
17	Negative event in terms of its consequence	0	0.0
	TOTAL	155(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire survey.

In terms of examining what respondents *specifically* felt were the first, second, third, fourth and fifth most

important news values applied to stories that make it onto Midlands Today were as follows.

Not surprisingly, given that Midlands Today is a regional television news programme, the most selected news value by respondents was that for a story to be considered to be newsworthy it should be of 'relevance to the West Midlands region'. 15 respondents, representing over 48 percent (48.4%) of those surveyed selected this news value.

8 respondents' selected the news value of: 'human interest' as being the most important news value that a potential story for the Midlands Today programme should possess, which represented almost 26 percent (25.8%).

3 respondents believed that the most important news value was that a story should 'lend itself to good pictures' in order for it to be considered to be 'newsworthy', which represented just under 10 percent (9.7%).

The news values of 'exclusivity' and 'has the 'wow' - didn't know that factor', were each selected by 2 respondents (6.5%) as being the most important news value that a story should possess.

A story having the news value of being 'topical' was selected by 1 respondent (3.2%) as being the most important feature that potential stories for the Midlands Today programme should possess (Table 9.60).

Table 9.60
Most important news value selected by respondents.

News Values	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Relevance to the West Midlands region	15	48.4
Human Interest	8	25.8
Lends itself to good pictures	3	9.7
Exclusivity	2	6.5
'wow' factor	2	6.5
Topical	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The news values selected the most as being the second most important for a story to make it onto the Midlands Today programme were: 'human interest', (35.5%), 'wow' - didn't know that factor' (16.1%, 'exclusivity' (9.7%) and 'interesting' (9.7%). Each of the remaining news values were each selected by 1 respondent: 'relevance to the West Midlands', 'unusual', 'unique', 'geographical proximity' and 'lends itself to good pictures' (Table 9.61, p.602).

Table 9.61
Second most important news value selected by respondents.

News Values	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Human interest	11	35.5
'wow' factor	5	16.1
Exclusivity	3	9.7
Interesting	3	9.7
Unexpected/rare	2	6.5
Informative	2	6.5
Relevance to the WMs	1	3.2
Unusual	1	3.2
Unique	1	3.2
Geographical proximity	1	3.2
Lends itself to good pictures	1	3.2
	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The news value selected by respondents as being the third most important was that a story should 'lend itself to good pictures'. 7 respondents chose this news value, which represented over 22 percent (22.6%) of all selections by respondents. The second most selected news value as being the third most important was that a story should be 'informative', representing just over 16 percent (16.1%). This was followed by the news values of 'human interest' and 'relevance to the West Midlands' and each of these news values were selected by just under 13 percent (12.9%) of all respondents as being the third most important. The following news values each represented less than 10 percent:

- Exclusivity: 9.7%
- Interesting: 6.5%
- 'wow' factor: 6.5%

- Unusual: 3.2%
- Dramatic: 3.2%
- Geographical proximity: 3.2%
- Cultural proximity: 3.2%

(Table 9.62).

Table 9.62
Third most important news value selected by respondents.

News Values	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Lends itself to good pictures	7	22.6
Informative	5	16.1
Human interest	4	12.9
Relevance to the WMs	4	12.9
Exclusivity	3	9.7
Interesting	2	6.5
'wow' factor	2	6.5
Unusual	1	3.2
Dramatic	1	3.2
Geographical proximity	1	3.2
Cultural proximity	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

6 respondents selected the news value of 'lends itself to good pictures' as being the fourth most important news value (19.4%) that a story should possess in order for it to make it onto the Midlands Today programme. This was followed by the news value of: 'interesting' (16.1%). The news values of: 'unexpected/rare' and 'wow factor' were each selected by 4 respondents (12.9%). Each of the following news values were selected by 2 respondents as being the fourth most

important news value that a story for Midlands Today should possess:

- Cultural proximity: 6.5%
- Dramatic: 6.5%
- Topical: 6.5%
- Informative: 6.5%

The remaining news values that were selected as being the fourth most important were each selected by 1 respondent, with each representing 3.2 percent (3.2%): Exclusivity, Human Interest, Unusual, Geographical proximity (Table 9.63).

Table 9.63
Fourth most important news value selected by respondents.

News Values	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Lends itself to good pictures	6	19.4
Interesting	5	16.1
Unexpected/rare	4	12.9
'wow' factor	4	12.9
Cultural proximity	2	6.5
Dramatic	2	6.5
Topical	2	6.5
Informative	2	6.5
Exclusivity	1	3.2
Human interest	1	3.2
Unusual	1	3.2
Geographical proximity	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The news value selected the most as being the fifth most important was that a story should be 'topical'. 6

respondents' chose this news value, which represented over 19 percent (19.4%). The news values of: 'informative' and 'lends itself to good pictures' were each selected by 5 respondents, amounting to just over 16 percent (16.1%). The news values of: 'wow factor' and 'dramatic' were each selected by 3 respondents with each representing 9.7 percent (9.7%).

Many of the remaining news values that were selected as being the fifth most important, had previously been selected by some respondents as being the first, second, third or fourth most important news value. These were as follows:

- Relevance to the West Midlands: 6.5%
 - Unexpected/rare: 6.5%
 - Human interest: 6.2%
 - Exclusivity: 3.2%
 - Unusual/rare: 3.2%
 - Interesting: 3.2%
 - Cultural proximity: 3.2%
- (Table 9.64, p.606).

Table 9.64
Fifth most important news value selected by respondents.

NEWS VALUE	FREQUENCY (n)	PERCENTAGE (%)
Is topical	6	19.4
Is informative	5	16.1
Lends itself to good pictures	5	16.1
Has the 'wow'... didn't know that factor	3	9.7
Dramatic	3	9.7
Relevance to the West Midlands region	2	6.5
Is unexpected/rare	2	6.5
Is of human interest	1	3.2
Exclusivity	1	3.2
Is unusual/rare	1	3.2
Is interesting	1	3.2
Cultural proximity: i.e. easily understandable	1	3.2
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

By analysing respondents' views on what they personally believe to be the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th most important news values that a story should 'posses' in order for it to be deemed as newsworthy and make it onto the Midlands Today programme, it is possible to identify factors that may have had some impact upon the output of the Midlands Today programme. The analysis to follow is assisted by referring to some of the 'counter news values', as defined by Galtung and Ruge (1965), and which are listed in Table 9.65, p.609.

A 'traditional' news value identified by Galtung and Ruge (1965) as being in use by the news media is 'unambiguity'. This news value was classified in the questionnaire survey devised for this current study as 'cultural proximity, i.e. easily understandable'. The counter news value of 'unambiguity' (F₃) - as defined by Galtung and Ruge (1965) is that 'more emphasis should be placed on stories that are complex and ambiguous' (Table 9.65, p.609).

However, it was interesting to note that this 'traditional' news value of 'cultural proximity' was not a news value that respondents felt was significantly important for a story to be deemed as newsworthy. For example, no respondent selected this as being the most important news value, and just 1 respondent (3.2%) selected 'cultural proximity' as being the third most important. 2 respondents (6.5%) selected it as being the fourth most important, whilst 1 respondent (3.2%) selected 'cultural proximity' as being the fifth most important news value employed by Midlands Today when deciding upon 'news-worthy' stories to include in this programme.

Despite the above finding, the participant observations conducted for this study would suggest that this programme does, on a day-to-day basis, maybe 'unconsciously', place this news value high up on its agenda, to the point where it is just a 'taken for granted' news value that a story is *expected* to possess. Therefore, given that the content analysis of the output of this programme reveals that it does not reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, there is a possibility that a contributory factor for this could be because some of the concerns/interests of the MECs may be regarded as being too complex to explain in news stories that are on average, 90 seconds in duration. Therefore, this may go some way of

accounting for that finding. This assertion is further reinforced by the comments made by the HRLP (WM) during the one-to-one interview in which he stated that there was no-one in the Midlands Today newsroom who was knowledgeable enough to take on the role/duties of the Community Affairs Correspondent. The HRLP (WM) also stated that the programme has difficulties in dealing with: 'knotty problems.' (HRLP-WM. Source: One-to-one in-depth interview, 2004). Therefore, it could be argued that the counter news value of 'unambiguity' (Galtung and Ruge 1965) is not employed on this programme.

Galtung and Ruge (1965) also devised a counter news value for the 'traditional' news value of 'meaningfulness' F_4 . The counter news value is that 'more reports from culturally distant zones - even if the content has no immediate relevance for oneself'. Whilst the study conducted by Galtung and Ruge (1965) focused upon foreign news, it could be argued that in terms of this current study and the lack of MECs/stories pertaining to MECs being included on this programmes, could be because 'their', i.e. MECs interests/concerns are of 'no immediate concern' to the Midlands Today programme.

Table 9.65

Counter News Values identified by Galtung and Ruge, 1965.

	News Values identified as being in use by the news media.	'Counter' News Value
F ₁	Frequency	More emphasis on build-up and background material in the total media output. Journalists should be better trained to capture and report on long-term development, and concentrate less on 'events'.
F ₂	Threshold	Occasional reports on the trivial even if it does not make 'news' to counterbalance the image of the world as composed of strings of dramatic events.
F ₃	Unambiguity	More emphasis on complex and ambiguous events, not necessarily with any effort to interpret them.
F ₄	Meaningfulness	More reports from culturally distant zones even if the content has no immediate relevance for oneself. Experiments with newspapers in different countries exchanging local columns might prove even more interesting than reprinting what was said in the newspaper fifty or a hundred years ago.
F ₅	Consonance	More emphasis on the dissonant, on that which does not fit stereotypes. Training of journalists to increase their insights into their own stereotypes so as to facilitate their awareness of the consonance factor.
F ₆	Unexpectedness	More emphasis given to the predictable and frequent.
F ₇	Continuity	More awareness of the continuity factor - and at the same time more emphasis on follow-ups even if the chain of events has been interrupted for some time.
F ₈	Composition	More awareness of the composition factor in order not to create news artefacts.
F ₉	Reference to elite nations	More coverage of non-elite nations.
F ₁₀	Reference to elite people	More coverage of non-elite people.
F ₁₁	Reference to persons	More reference to non-personal causes of events.
F ₁₂	Reference to something negative	More reference to positive events.

Source: Reproduced from Galtung & Ruge (1965) - Paraphrased by Author.

In terms of trying to gain an insight into the respondents' personal interpretation of the term 'newsworthy', they were presented with the following open-ended question: 'What is meant by the term 'newsworthy', when applied to potential stories for Midlands Today?'

Overall, the responses indicate that there is a high degree of uniformity amongst respondents' views, as to what is meant by 'newsworthy' - with many re-occurring words being used in the definitions provided. Such as: 'topical', 'interesting', 'informative', 'relevance to the West Midlands'. Below is a sample of the responses:

"Stories should meet at least 3 of the following criteria: 1) Is it about where I live? 2) Do I have an emotional attachment to it? 3) Does it have a recognisable setting? 4) Does it promote regional pride? 5) Is it a call to action?" (Respondent E).

"'Unusual', 'informative', 'relevant to the West Midlands'." (Respondent P).

"Topical, interesting, headline grabbing." (Respondent J).

"Good story/well told/suitable treatment/of regional and human interest/usually engaging/timely/engaging." (Respondent Z).

"Two simple criteria - does it inform or entertain. If so, it is newsworthy." (Respondent V).

"An event or piece of information (i.e. New law), which directly affects the lives of people living in the West Midlands Region." (Respondent Q).

"New information which is of interest and relevant to the audience." (Respondent F).

"Topical and relevant to the West Midlands." (Respondent M).

"Something that is either informative or interesting." (Respondent H).

An extraordinary personal story, with a 'local' angle, picture rich, action." (Respondent D).

"A story of regional interest (e.g. Jaguar closing Coventry factory)." (Respondent O).

"Interesting, happening and informative." (Respondent R).

"Something that will inform, educate and entertain - but not necessarily all three. Something that is relevant to peoples' lives." (Respondent C).

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Furthermore, when examining some of the other responses to the above open-ended question, it would indicate that many respondents' also put the audience, i.e. their potential viewers, as being a key aspect as to what would deem a potential story for Midlands Today as being 'newsworthy'. This finding is yet another clear indication of this programme's desire to engender a 'professional closeness/attachment' to its viewers. Such responses included the following:

"Stories that will be of interest to our viewers that will be relevant to them." (Respondent K)

"A recent event of interest to a wide range of people." (Respondent G)

"News-worthy means anything that is interesting and/or relevant to our audience." (Respondent R).

"Something that affects peoples day to day life." (Respondent I).

"Stories that are important and/or interesting to the audience within the region." (Respondent B).

"An event or some incident that affects us and is relevant to viewers from our patch, bearing in mind the demographics and target audience." (Respondent N).

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Analysis of some of the other responses (to the above open-ended question), also highlight the importance for a story to be 'new', 'unusual' and 'original'.

"The story needs to catch people's attention. Be unusual. Possibly astonishing, but primarily needs to be of great human interest affecting peoples emotions. And of course, relevant to the region." (Respondent S).

"A new/untold story or a development on a previously reported story, relevant to our editorial area and to our viewers." (Respondent A)

"Story of interest to the audience. New/exclusive - about people - their issues - drama - emotions." (Respondent L)

"A story of originality and interest to the whole of the Midlands Today audience. Where possible it should have the highest level of human interest." (Respondent W)

"A report on something which has happened which is unusual, thought-provoking or challenging." (Respondent T).

"An item that is interesting, unusual or informative." (Respondent X).

"Essentially stories that get people's attention for good or bad. Something unusual, something that could affect a community or wider." (Respondent U).

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

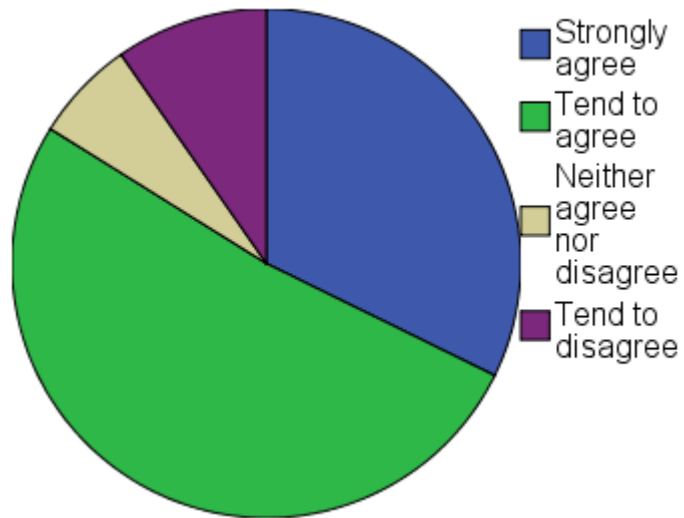
9.11 Midlands Today: News Sources

Central to the newsgathering process on Midlands Today (and in fact, in any news media organisation), is the need to have an excellent repertoire of news sources from where potential stories may be acquired/accessed for the programme. Therefore, before moving onto the specific sources used by the Midlands Today programme, it is useful to first outline the study groups' use of news sources.

26 of the 31 respondents surveyed, representing just under 84 percent (83.9%) of all those surveyed agreed with the statement that: 'Good sources are primary to finding stories for Midlands Today', with 10 (32.3%) choosing the 'Strongly Agree' option and a further 16 (51.6%) selecting the 'Tend to Agree' response. 3 respondents (9.7%) disagreed with the statement, whilst 2 (6.5%) selected the option of 'Neither Agree nor Disagree'. (Figure 9.37 & Table 9.66, p.614).

Figure 9.37

STATEMENT: Good sources are primary to finding stories for Midlands Today.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.66

STATEMENT: Good sources are primary to finding stories for Midlands Today.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	10	32.3
Tend to Agree	16	51.6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	6.5
Tend to Disagree	3	9.7
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

n = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Respondents were also presented with a list of 13 different News Sources and asked to select from the list, the top 5 News Sources that they *believed* were used the most overall by the Midlands Today programme – indicating a 1 next to the most used source, 2 next to the second most used source and so forth, up to the number 5 being placed alongside the news

source that they thought was the overall 5th most-used on this programme. Therefore, the overall number of news sources selected by the respondents totalled 155 (i.e. 5 x 31 respondents = 155).

The 'wires' was selected on 27 occasions (17.45%) - resulting in this news source being the overall most-selected source that respondents thought was used on the Midlands Today programme to find news stories. The second most-selected news source was 'Other media' - selected on 22 occasions (14.2%). 'Personal contacts' was the third most selected source chosen on 18 occasions (11.6%) by respondents. The 'Police' and the 'Public passing on stories' were both jointly selected as the 4th overall most-used news source on the programme (11.0%). 'Established newsroom contacts' was selected on 15 occasions - 9.7%, placing this news source into the 5th most-used news source that the respondents felt was used by the programme. The News Source that was never selected by any respondent was: 'Local Politician'. (Table 9.67, p.616).

Table 9.67
Most-selected news sources used on Midlands Today.

Most popular selected	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Wires	27	17.4
2	Other media	22	14.2
3	Personal contacts	18	11.6
4	Police	17	11.0
5	Public passing on stories	17	11.0
6	Established newsroom contacts	15	9.7
7	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	14	9.0
8	Personally originated	10	6.5
9	Press releases (campaigning groups)	8	5.2
10	Press releases (local campaigning groups)	4	2.6
11	Press releases (govt agencies)	2	1.3
12	Press releases (research findings)	1	0.6
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		155(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Although the News Source of the 'wires' was the source selected on the most occasions overall by respondents, when the above finding is further analysed, the source that was selected as being the No.1 news source that respondents felt was used the most overall on the Midlands Today programme, was that of 'Other media'. This News Source was placed in the number 1 position by 13 respondents, which represented slightly under 42 percent (41.9%) of all news sources selected.

The 'wires' was selected by 5 respondents as being the source that they considered to be the overall most-used News

Source on Midlands Today, representing just over 16 percent (16.1%).

4 respondents selected the News Source of: 'Established newsroom contacts' as being the overall No.1 most-used source by this programme, which representing just under 13 percent (12.9%).

The news sources of: 'Personal Contacts', 'Press releases (official/recognised organisations)' and 'Press releases (local community organisations' were each selected on 1 occasion as being the No.1 News Source used on Midlands Today, with each of these news sources representing 3.2%.

The following News Sources were never selected by any respondent as being the overall No.1, most used News Source on Midlands Today:

- Personally originated.
- Press releases (campaign groups).
- Press releases (Government Agencies).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Local Politician.

(Table 9.68, p.618).

Table 9.68
Respondents' view on what they think is the overall most-used news source on Midlands Today.

Most used news Source	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Other media	13	41.9
2	Wires	5	16.1
3	Established newsroom contacts	4	12.9
4	Police	3	9.7
5	Public passing on stories	3	9.7
6	Personal contacts	1	3.2
7	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	1	3.2
8	Press releases (local community organisations)	1	3.2
9	Personally originated	0	0.0
10	Press releases (campaigning groups)	0	0.0
11	Press releases (govt agencies)	0	0.0
12	Press releases (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The News Source that respondents thought was the second most-used overall on the Midlands Today programme was the 'wires'. This News Source was selected by 13 respondents as being the second most-used source, and represented just under 42 percent (41.9%).

The News Sources of: 'Other media', 'Press releases (official/recognised organisations)' and 'Personally originated', were each selected by 4 respondents and represented just under 13 percent (12.9%).

The News Source of: 'Established newsroom contacts' and the 'Police' were selected by 2 respondents (6.5%) and 1 respondent (3.2%) respectively, as being the overall second most-used News Source by the Midlands Today programme.

None of the following News Sources were selected:

- Public passing on stories.
- Press releases (campaigning groups).
- Press releases (local community organisations).
- Press releases (Government agencies).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Local Politician.

(Table 9.69).

Table 9.69
Respondents' view on what *they think* is the SECOND most-used news source on Midlands Today.

2nd Most used news Source	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Wires	13	41.9
2	Other media	4	12.9
3	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	4	12.9
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Personal contacts	3	9.7
6	Established newsroom contacts	2	6.5
7	Police	1	3.2
8	Public passing on stories	0	0.0
9	Press releases (campaigning groups)	0	0.0
10	Press releases (local community organisations)	0	0.0
11	Press releases (govt agencies)	0	0.0
12	Press releases (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The News Source that respondents thought was the third most-used overall by the Midlands Today programme was the 'Police'. 7 of the study group selected this News Source, which represented over 22 percent (22.6%).

The 'wires' were selected by 6 respondents' as being the third most-used news source overall on the Midlands Today programme, amounting to a total of 6 respondents, which represented over 19 percent (19.4%). This was followed by the News Source of: 'Established newsroom contacts', which was selected by 5 respondents (16.1%).

'Personally originated' news sources was selected by 4 respondents (12.9%) as being the third most-used News Source, and 3 respondents (9.7%) believed that the overall third most-used News Source on Midlands Today was: 'Press releases (official/recognised organisations)'.

The News Sources of: the 'Public passing on stories' and 'Press releases (campaigning groups)' were each selected by 2 respondents (6.5%). 'Other media' and 'Personal contacts' were each selected by 1 respondent (3.2%).

The following News Sources were never selected as being the third most-used on Midlands Today:

- Press releases (local community organisation).

- Press releases (government agencies).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Local Politician.

(Table 9.70).

Table 9.70
Respondents' view on what *they think* is the THIRD most-used news source on Midlands Today.

3rd Most used news Source	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Police	7	22.6
2	Wires	6	19.4
3	Established newsroom contacts	5	16.1
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	3	9.7
6	Public passing on stories	2	6.5
7	Press releases (campaigning groups)	2	6.5
8	Other media	1	3.2
9	Personal contacts	1	3.2
10	Press releases (local community organisations)	0	0.0
11	Press releases (govt agencies)	0	0.0
12	Press releases (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The News Source of 'Personal contacts' was selected the most by respondents as being the overall, fourth most-used source by Midlands Today. This source was selected by 9 respondents (29.0%).

The News Sources of: 'Other media', 'Public passing on stories' and 'Press releases (official/recognised organisations' were each selected by 3 respondents (6.5%), as being what they considered to be the fourth most-used source on Midlands Today.

The following 6 News Sources were each selected by 2 respondents, with each representing 6.5 percent (6.5%) of all News Sources selected as being the fourth most-used News Source overall, on the Midlands Today programme:

- Wires
- Police
- Established newsroom contacts
- Personally originated
- Press releases (local community organisations)
- Press releases (government agencies)

'Press releases (campaigning groups)' was selected by 1 respondent (3.2%) as being the overall, fourth most-used News Source.

The News Sources of: 'Press releases (research findings)' and 'Local Politician' were not selected by any respondents surveyed, as being the fourth most-used news source on Midlands Today. (Table 9.71, p.623).

Table 9.71
Respondents' view on what *they think* is the FOURTH most-used news source on Midlands Today.

4th Most used news Source	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Personal contacts	9	29.0
2	Other media	3	9.7
3	Public passing on stories	3	9.7
4	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	3	9.7
5	Wires	2	6.5
6	Police	2	6.5
7	Established newsroom contacts	2	6.5
8	Personally originated	2	6.5
9	Press releases (local community organisations)	2	6.5
10	Press releases (govt agencies)	2	6.5
11	Press releases (campaigning groups)	1	3.2
12	Press releases (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The News Source that respondents believed to be the fifth most used overall by Midlands Today was the: 'Public passing on stories', which was opted for by 9 respondents, representing 29 percent (29.0%).

5 respondents, representing just over 16 percent (16.1%), felt that the overall, fifth most-used News Source by the programme was: 'Press releases (campaigning groups)', whilst the News Sources of: the 'Police' and 'Personal contacts' were each selected by 4 respondents (12.9%).

The News Source of: 'Press releases (official/recognised organisations)' was chosen by 3 respondents (9.7%) as being the fifth most-used News Source, and 2 respondents (6.5%) selected: 'Established newsroom contacts'.

The following News Sources were each selected by 1 respondent (3.2%) as being the overall fifth most-used News Source by the Midlands Today programme:

- Other media.
- Wires.
- Press releases (local community organisations.
- Press releases (research findings).

The News Sources of: 'Personally originated', 'Press releases (government agencies)' and 'Local Politician' were not selected by any respondent as being the overall 5th most-used news source on the Midlands Today programme. (Table 9.72, p.625).

Table 9.72
Respondents' view on what *they think* is the FIFTH most-used news source on Midlands Today.

5th Most used News Source	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Public passing on stories	9	29.0
2	Press releases (campaigning groups)	5	16.1
3	Police	4	12.9
4	Personal contacts	4	12.9
5	Press releases (official/recognised organisations)	3	9.7
6	Established newsroom contacts	2	6.5
7	Other media	1	3.2
8	Wires	1	3.2
9	Press releases (local community organisations)	1	3.2
10	Press releases (research findings)	1	3.2
11	Personally originated	0	0.0
12	Press releases (govt agencies)	0	0.0
13	Local Politician	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Based upon the above findings, it is possible to summarise that of the top two News Sources that respondents thought were the most-used overall on Midlands Today to find stories for inclusion on the programme, 'Other media' was selected by just under 42 percent (41.9%) as being the No.1 most-used News Source used, and the 'wires' was selected by a similar number of respondents (41.9%) as being the number two most used News Source by this programme.

The heavy reliance upon these two News Sources could be contributory factors in terms of trying to understand why

the stories covered on this programme did not reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

Focusing attention firstly upon the regular use of the 'wires' as a News Source to find stories for inclusion on the Midlands Today programme...

The wires supply stories that can be accessed world-wide, and stories that may be of interest worldwide or to a specific country. Therefore, unless the news agencies such as Reuters and AP - who supply stories via the wires have also decided to focus specifically upon reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the UK, and more specifically the West Midlands region, then it is highly unlikely that such news agencies would have a 'brief' to specifically fulfil the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy - "to reflect the nation we serve" (Dyke 2000).

Whilst it was useful to find out what respondents believed to be the overall most-used News Sources by the Midlands Today programme, it was also considered useful to establish the news sources that each of the study group personally used the most. Therefore, similar to the above, respondents were invited to place a 1 alongside the news source that they personally used the most, a 2 alongside the news source

they used the second most, and through to the news source that they personally used the fifth most to find stories for the Midlands Today programme.

The news source selected the most by respondents as being the source they personally used to find stories was the 'wires'. This was selected on 27 occasions, representing over 17 percent (17.4%) of all respondents indicating their no.1 most-used source. The next most selected news source was 'personal contacts', representing just over 14 percent (14.2%). 'Other media' was selected on 21 occasions, amounting to 13.5 percent (13.5%).

The following News Sources were each selected on less than 20 occasions:

- Public passing on stories: 11.6%.
- Personally originated: 11.0%.
- Police: 9.7%.
- Press releases (campaigning groups): 7.1%.

The remaining news sources were each selected on less than 10 occasions:

- Press releases (official or recognised organisations): 5.8%.
- Established newsroom contacts: 4.5%.
- Press releases (local community organisations): 2.6%.
- Press releases (research findings): 2.6%.

The news sources of: 'Press releases (government agencies)' and 'local politicians' were never selected by respondents as being their 'personal' most-used news source (Table 9.73).

Table 9.73
Respondents 'Personal': Most selected News Sources.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Wires	27	17.4
2	Personal contacts	22	14.2
3	Other media	21	13.5
4	Public passing on stories	18	11.6
5	Personally originated	17	11.0
6	Police	15	9.7
7	Press releases (campaigning groups)	11	7.1
8	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	9	5.8
9	Established newsroom contacts	7	4.5
10	Press releases (local community organisation)	4	2.6
11	Press release (research findings)	4	2.6
12	Press releases (govt. agencies)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		155(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The news source that respondents selected the most as being specifically the number one news source that they personally use was: 'Personal contacts'. This was selected by 9 respondents and represented 29 percent (29.0%) of all respondents stating their 'personal' no.1 most-used news source. Representing less than 20 percent (19.4%), and selected by 6 respondents was 'other media'. The news sources of: 'public passing on stories' and 'personally originated' were each selected by 4 respondents, amounting to just under 13 percent (12.9%). The 'wires' and 'established newsroom contacts' were each selected by 3 respondents (9.8%) as being the news source that they use the most to find stories for the programme. 'Press releases (local community organisations)' and the 'Police' were each selected by just 1 respondent (3.2%).

The following news sources were never selected by any respondent as being their personal no.1 most-used news source:

- Press releases (government agencies).
- Press releases (official or recognised organisations).
- Press releases (campaign groups).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Local politicians.

(Table 9.74, p.630).

Table 9.74

Respondents: Personal No.1 most-used News Source by each individual respondent.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Personal contacts	9	29.0
2	Other media	6	19.4
3	Public passing on stories	4	12.9
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Wires	3	9.7
6	Established newsroom contacts	3	9.7
7	Press releases (local community organisation)	1	3.2
8	Police	1	3.2
9	Press release (govt. agency)	0	0.0
10	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	0	0.0
11	Press releases (campaigning groups)	0	0.0
12	Press release (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

12 respondents indicated that the news source they individually used the second-most was the 'wires', which represented almost 39 percent (38.7%). 'Personal contacts', 'public passing on stories' and 'personally originated' were each selected by 4 respondents, with each representing just under 13 percent (12.9%). The news source of 'other media' was selected by 3 respondents (9.7%) as being their second most-used news source. 2 respondents selected: 'established newsroom contacts' (6.5%), whilst 1 respondent selected the 'Police' (3.2%), and another 1 chose 'Press releases (local community organisations)' (3.2%).

The following news sources were never selected by respondents as being the respondents' personal second most-used news source:

- Press releases (campaign groups).
- Press releases (official or recognised organisations).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Press releases (government agencies).
- Local politicians.

(Table 9.75).

Table 9.75
Respondents: Personal No.2 most-used News Source by each individual respondent.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Wires	12	38.7
2	Personal contacts	4	12.9
3	Public passing on stories	4	12.9
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Other media	3	9.7
6	Established newsroom contacts	2	6.5
7	Police	1	3.2
8	Press releases (local community organisation)	1	3.2
9	Press releases (campaigning groups)	0	0.0
10	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	0	0.0
11	Press release (research findings)	0	0.0
12	Press release (govt. agency)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

9 respondents, representing 29 percent (29.0%) indicated that the news source they relied upon the third-most was: 'personal contacts'. Another 6 indicated that their third most-used source to find stories was 'other media', representing 19.4 percent (19.4%). 4 respondents each selected the news sources of: 'public passing on stories' and 'personally originated', with each representing 12.9 percent (12.9%). The news sources of the 'wires' and 'established newsroom contacts' were each selected by 3 respondents (9.7%). The 'Police' and 'Press releases (local community organisations)' were each selected by 1 respondent (3.2%).

The following news sources were never selected as being the third most-used news source:

- Press releases (campaigning groups).
- Press releases (official or recognised organisations).
- Press releases (government agencies).
- Press releases (research findings).
- Local politicians.

(Table 9.76, p.633).

Table 9.76

Respondents: Personal No.3 most-used News Source by each individual respondent.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Personal contacts	9	29.0
2	Other media	6	19.4
3	Public passing on stories	4	12.9
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Wires	3	9.7
6	Established newsroom contacts	3	9.7
7	Police	1	3.2
8	Press releases (local community organisation)	1	3.2
9	Press releases (campaigning groups)	0	0.0
10	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	0	0.0
11	Press release (govt. agency)	0	
12	Press release (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

When moving onto the personal 4th and 5th most-used news sources by respondents, other than the sources of the 'wires' and 'other media' which were significantly selected as being the first, second or third most-used 'personal' News Source, many of the other sources that appear in these latter categories were hardly selected previously.

The most selected, as being the fourth most-used News Source was: 'press releases (campaigning groups)', with 9 respondents, 29 percent (29.0%) selecting this source as being their 'personal' 4th most-used news source. 6

respondents (19.4%) indicated the use of 'other media' as being their 4th most-used news source. 5 respondents, representing just over 16 percent (16.1%) selected the 'wires'. 'Personally originated' and the 'Police' were each selected by 4 respondents, amounting to just under 13 percent (12.9%). The news sources of: 'press release (government agency)', 'established newsroom contacts', 'press release (local community organisation', 'press releases (research findings)' and 'local Politician' were never selected by respondents as being their 'personal' 4th most-used news source. (Table 9.77).

Table 9.77
Respondents: Personal No.4 most-used News source by each individual respondent.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Press releases (campaigning groups)	9	29.0
2	Other media	6	19.4
3	Wires	5	16.1
4	Personally originated	4	12.9
5	Police	4	12.9
6	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	1	3.2
7	Personal contacts	1	3.2
8	Public passing on stories	1	3.2
9	Press release (govt. agency)	0	0.0
10	Established newsroom contacts	0	0.0
11	Press releases (local community organisation)	0	0.0
12	Press release (research findings)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The spread of news sources selected by respondents' as being their 'personal' fifth most-used source was more varied and spread out than the previously discussed.

'Personal contacts' was selected by 5 respondents' as being their 'personal' fifth most-used news source, which represented just over 16 percent (16.1%). The news sources of: 'press releases (official or recognised organisations)', 'press releases (research findings)' and 'other media' were each selected by 4 respondents, with each amounting to just under 13 percent (12.9%). The 'wires', 'public passing on stories' and the 'Police' were each selected by 3 respondents (9.7%). 2 respondents' selected 'personally originated' (6.5%). The news sources of 'press releases (local community organisations', 'press releases (campaign groups)' and 'established newsroom contacts' were each selected by 1 respondent as being their 'personal' 5th most-used news source, with each representing 3.2 percent (3.2%). 'Press releases (government agencies)' and 'local Politicians' were never selected by any respondent as being their 'personal' 5th most-used news source (Table 9.78, p.636).

Table 9.78

Respondents: Personal No.5 most-used News source by each individual respondent.

Personally Most used News Source by respondents	News Sources	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Personal contacts	5	16.1
2	Press releases (official or recognised organisation)	4	12.9
3	Press release (research findings)	4	12.9
4	Other media	4	12.9
5	Wires	3	9.7
6	Public passing on stories	3	9.7
7	Police	3	9.7
8	Personally originated	2	6.5
9	Press releases (local community organisation)	1	3.2
10	Press releases (campaigning groups)	1	3.2
11	Established newsroom contacts	1	3.2
12	Press release (govt. agency)	0	0.0
13	Local politicians	0	0.0
14	Other	0	0.0
TOTAL		31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey

From the findings presented, it can be noted that the News Sources respondents stated that *they believed* to be the most-used overall by the Midlands Today programme, are very similar to the News Sources that they also indicated to be their 'personal' most-used News Sources - such as 'the wires' and 'other media'.

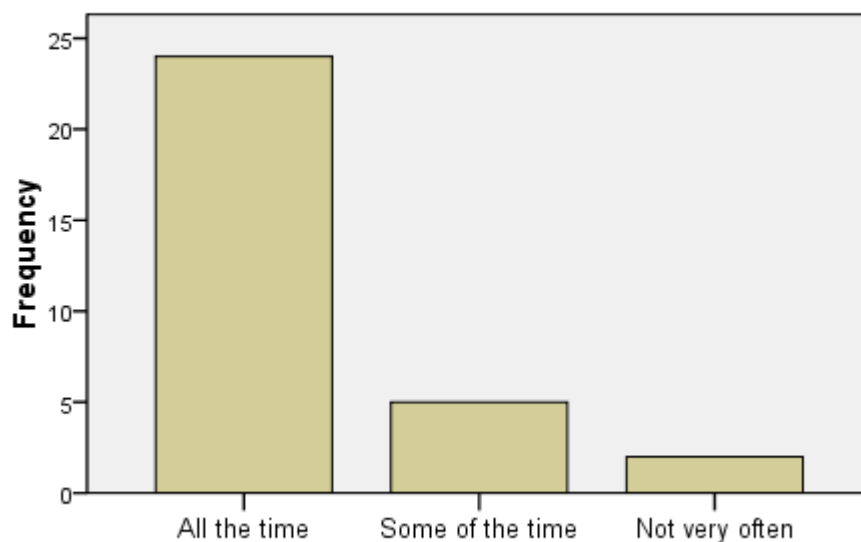
What is of particular interest to this current study is the news source of 'personal contacts' being selected on more occasions than any other news source by respondents (29.0%),

as being their 'personal' No.1 most-used news source (Table 9.74, p.630). This is of great interest because as has been discussed in Chapter 4 of this current study, one of the benefits of an organisation having a diverse workforce is the 'diversity' that this is 'expected' to bring to the workplace - the working environment. Therefore, having a diverse group of journalists working in a newsroom who rely upon 'personal contacts' as news sources to access stories, is that such 'personal contacts' can/may for example have been cultivated from where each journalist may live or from amongst those that they interact/socialise with when off-duty.

Indeed, when journalists were presented with the following statement: 'That even when off duty you still keep a look out for potential stories'. 24 of the 31 respondents' stated that they do this: 'All of the time', which represented 77.4 percent (77.4%) of all those surveyed. 5 respondents indicated that they do this 'some of the times', amounting to just over 16 percent (16.1%), whilst 2 respondents (6.5%) selected the option of 'not very often' to the above question. (Figure 9.38 & Table 9.79, p.638).

Figure 9.38

STATEMENT: Even when off-duty, do you still keep a look-out for potential news stories?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.79

STATEMENT: Even when off-duty, do you still keep a look-out for potential news stories?

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
All of the time	24	77.4
Some of the time	5	16.1
Not very often	2	6.5
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Based upon the finding that journalists holding lower Grades in the Midlands Today newsroom having to 'work harder' (than those holding higher Grades/positions) to get their story ideas past the 'gatekeepers' of the newsroom, the following scenario is contended as a way of assisting this programme

in *Making It Happen!* Making it happen insofar as Midlands Today moving closer to better reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output:

- The need for this programme to have a diverse workforce in order to benefit from the variety of potentially *diverse* 'personal contacts' that may be acquired from a diverse group of journalists.
- Ensuring that amongst the Midlands Today MEC journalists, there is an improved representation of such journalists holding higher Grades/positions in the newsroom than they currently do amongst the study group.

9.12 *Making It Happen!* Alternative 'Other media' News Sources

Referring back to Midlands Today journalists' reliance upon 'Other media' as news sources which was the second most-selected news source as being the No.1 most-used 'personal' source (19.4%) amongst the study group (Table 9.74, p.630). This finding brings to the fore-front and highlights another factor in terms of a 'missed opportunity' that could possibly have assisted this programme in *Making It Happen!*

Vis-à-vis reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

As discussed previously, the BJ undertaking the early morning shift in the Midlands Today newsroom will review the daily newspapers (listed below), identify any stories that they think may be of interest/of relevance to the Midlands Today programme, and at the early morning meeting will provide brief details of the stories reviewed. This BJ will also send the newspaper review (via a group email address) to all personnel working on the Midlands Today programme.

The newspapers reviewed daily, include the follows:

- Birmingham Post
- Sun
- Times
- Financial Times
- Guardian
- Telegraph
- Mirror
- Daily Mail
- The Express

The participant observations conducted, along with the constant viewing of the newspaper review emails sent out by the 'early morning BJ', indicate that none of the weekly ethnic minority newspapers, such as the Asian Times,

Caribbean Times, The New Nation or The Voice are included, as a matter of course in the newspapers review.

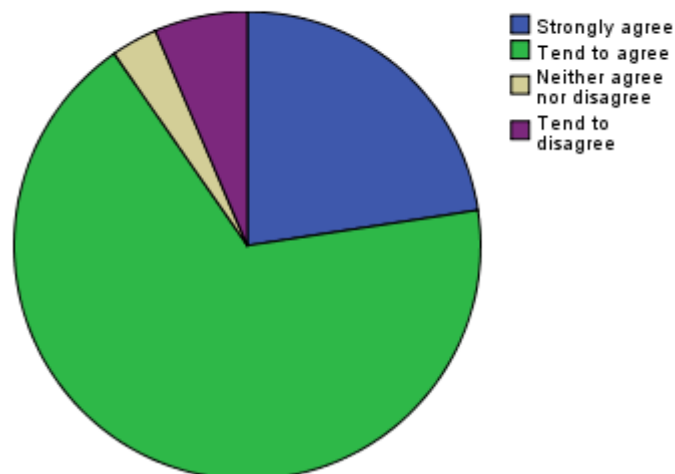
Clearly, newspaper reviews are conducted on Midlands Today to enable the identifying of any stories that may be of interest or of relevance to this programme, for possible inclusion in the programme. However, by literally ignoring, and not including any of the minority ethnic press in the paper reviews conducted, this programme could at times be missing out on potential stories of interest/relevance to the programme and as such, missing out on stories focusing upon 'Black issues', that provide a 'Black' perspective in the delivery of the details of the news story. For example, in the aftermath of the two young girls being shot in Aston, Birmingham in 2003, the minority press would have provided a 'Black' perspective/angle on this story. Therefore, the reviewing of the Black press by the Midlands Today programme at that particular time, would almost certainly have presented a 'Black' perspective or 'take' on this story. As such, Midlands Today may have also 'stumbled' across different angles/insights on this news story.

Interestingly though, despite the above short-comings in terms of the non-reviewing of ethnic minority press/publications, when respondents were presented with the following statement: 'It is important to scan ethnic minority

press/magazines for potential stories', 28 respondents agreed with this statement, which represented over 90 percent (90.3%) of all those surveyed (22.6% - Strongly Agree; 67.7% - Tend to Agree). Only 2 respondents disagreed with the above statement by choosing the 'Tend to Disagree' response (6.5%), and 1 respondent (3.2%) selected the 'Neither Agree nor Disagree' response. (Figure 9.39 & Table 9.80).

Figure 9.39

STATEMENT: It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential stories.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.80

STATEMENT: It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential stories.

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	22.6
Tend to Agree	21	67.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.2
Tend to Disagree	2	6.5
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

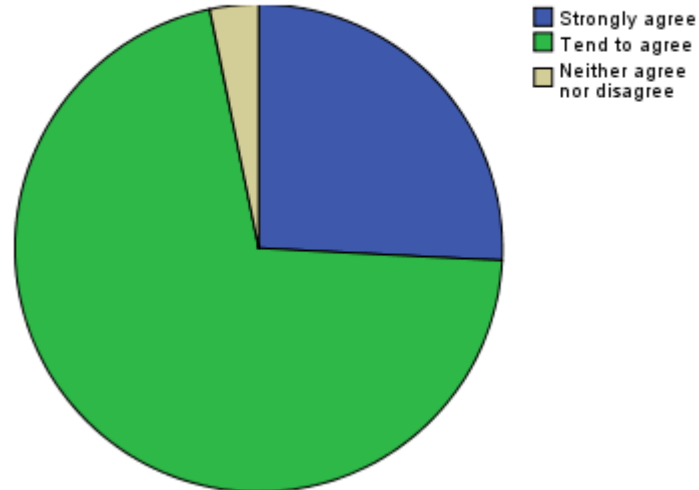
As a matter of routine, the News Organiser working on the Midlands Today programme will check the bulletins (accessed on-line) of all of the BBC local radio stations in the West Midlands region. This activity is undertaken prior to the daily early morning meeting, and then throughout the day the Assistant News Organiser (ANO) will carry out this duty, on an hourly basis.

The radio stations checked by Midlands Today include amongst others: Radio WM, Coventry and Warwickshire (C&W), Hereford and Worcestershire (H&W) and Gloucester.

Therefore, respondents were presented with the following statement: 'It would be beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential stories'. Almost 97 percent (96.8%) agreed with this statement (25.8% - Strongly Agree; 71.0% - Tend to Agree), which amounted to an overwhelming 30 of the 31 respondents. No respondents disagreed with the above statement and 1 respondent (3.2%) selected the option of: 'Neither agree nor Disagree'. (Figure 9.40 & Table 9.81, p.644).

Figure 9.40

STATEMENT: It would be beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today, to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential stories.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.81

STATEMENT: It would be beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today, to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential stories.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	8	25.8
Tend to Agree	22	71.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.2
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The BBC in many respects can be regarded as 'leading the way' when compared to the Independent radio sector, in terms of what is often regarded/described as specialist programmes. In other words - programmes that are primarily targeted at the MECs.

Therefore in the same way in which the Midlands Today programme has the facilities/capabilities to access the news bulletins of all BBC local radio stations in the West Midlands, then it follows that it would also have this capability in relation to the BBC's Asian Network bulletins.

In addition, as BBC Birmingham is one of the two sites that houses the Asian Network radio station (Leicester being the other site), there is really no understandable reason as to why the Midlands Today programme does not include the hourly checking of the Asian network news bulletins as part of its newsgathering process.

This is not to say that communication does not occur between the two (i.e. Midlands Today and the Asian Network), but from the participant observations undertaken there was nothing to indicate that such an occurrence is integrated within the regular newsgathering process employed on this programme.

In relation to BBC radio programmes targeted at the African/Caribbean communities, these programmes tend to be broadcast once a week - usually at the weekend with many of these programmes being broadcast on a Sunday afternoon/evening. Therefore, the incorporation of the reviewing of such programmes within the Midlands Today

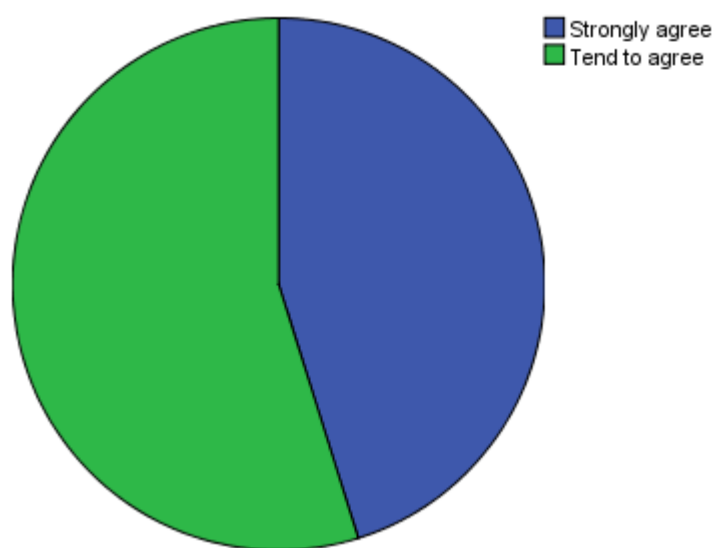
newsgathering process would not add too much additional work to an already established newsgathering process.

Therefore, in terms of trying to find 'Contacts' from within the MECs, all respondents (100.0%) agreed with the statement that: 'The better our contacts within the minority ethnic communities, the more likely we are to find more relevant stories/Contributors which reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region' 14 respondents, representing 45.2 percent (45.2%) of the study group selected 'Strongly Agree', whilst the remaining 17 respondents selected 'Tend to Agree', which amounted to 54.8 percent (54.8%). (Figure 9.41 & Table 9.82, p. 647).

Good contacts/news sources are central to the newsgathering process and so not surprisingly, the majority of respondents were in agreement with the statement that: 'It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential contacts'. 8 respondents, representing 25.8 percent (25.8%) of all those surveyed selected the 'Strongly agree' response whilst 21 respondents (67.7%) selected 'Tend to Agree'. Only 1 respondent (3.2%) disagreed with the above statement by selecting the option of: 'Tend to Disagree', and 1 respondent (3.2%) selected 'Neither agree nor Disagree' (Figure 9.42 & Table 9.83, p.648).

Figure 9.41

STATEMENT: The better our contacts within the MECS, the more likely we are to find more relevant stories/Contributors which reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.82

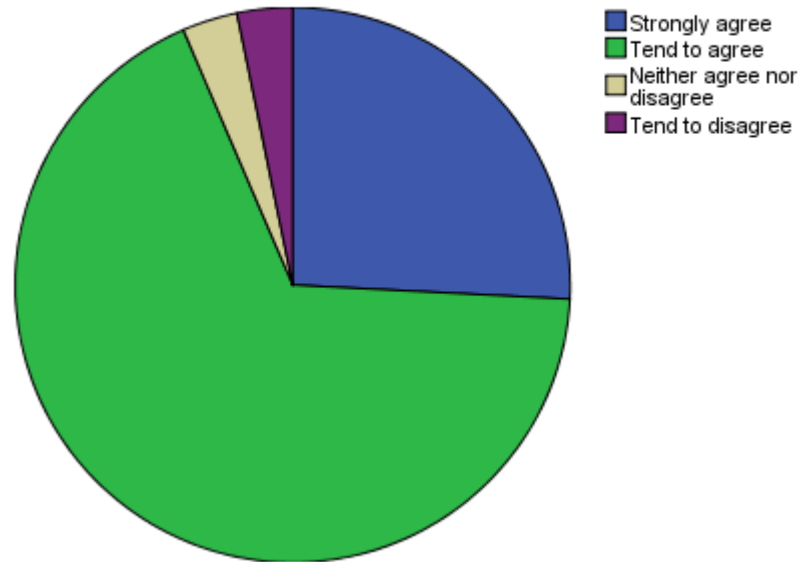
STATEMENT: The better our contacts within the MECS, the more likely we are to find more relevant stories/Contributors which reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	14	45.2
Tend to Agree	17	54.8
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	0.0
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey
100.0% agreed with the statement

Figure 9.42

STATEMENT: It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential contacts.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.83

STATEMENT: It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential contacts.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	8	25.8
Tend to Agree	21	67.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.2
Tend to Disagree	1	3.2
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

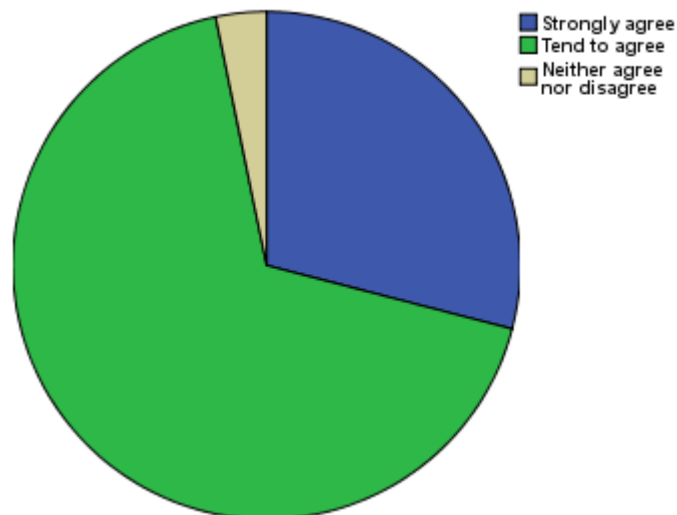
(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Similarly, when respondents were presented with the statement that it would be 'beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential contacts', there was even higher consensus amongst the study group, with 30 of the 31 respondents agreeing with this statement (29.0% -

'Strongly Agree'; 67.7% - 'Tend to Agree'). No respondents disagreed with the above statement and 1 respondent (3.2%) chose the 'Neither agree nor disagree' option (Figure 9.43 & Table 9.84).

Figure 9.43

STATEMENT: It would be beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential contacts.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.84

STATEMENT: It would be beneficial for a programme like Midlands Today to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio programmes for potential stories.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	8	25.8
Tend to Agree	22	71.0
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	3.2
Tend to Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0
Don't Know	0	0.0
TOTAL	31(n)	100.0%

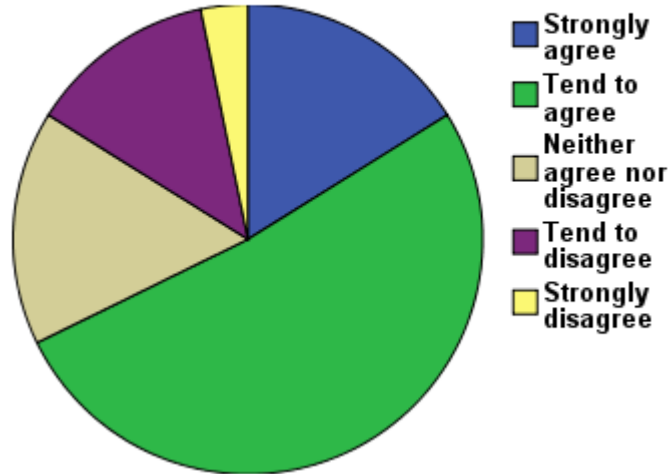
(n) = number; % = percentage Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Given that the majority of respondents *did* think that it would be beneficial for the Midlands Today programme to regularly consult the ethnic minority press and radio programmes for potential stories/contacts that may help this programme to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, it does call into question once again, to what extent the auditing and assessment of the needs of those working on this programme was conducted?

This question is further reinforced with reference to the finding of the following statement: 'The carrying out of day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities'. 21 of the 31 respondents, which represented almost 68 percent (67.7%) agreed with this statement (16.1% - Strongly Agree; 51.6% - Tend to Agree). 5 respondents (16.1%) disagreed with the above statement, with 1 respondent selecting 'Strongly Disagree' (3.2%) and 4 opting for the 'Tend to Disagree' (12.9%) option. 5 respondents selected the 'Neither agree nor Disagree' response, which represented just over 16 percent (16.1%) of all respondents. (Figure 9.44 & Table 9.85, p.651).

Figure 9.44

STATEMENT: The carrying out of day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities.



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.85

STATEMENT: The carrying out of day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities.

Response	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	5	16.1
Tend to agree	16	51.6
Neither agree nor disagree	5	16.1
Tend to disagree	4	12.9
Strongly disagree	1	3.2
TOTAL	31 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The above finding is very illuminating insofar as trying to understand possible contributory factors as to why the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000),

does not translate into practice on its regional television news programme, Midlands Today - insofar as this programme failing to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output.

By dissecting the above question presented to respondents (Table 9.85, p.651), it becomes evident and apparent where a possible fundamental part of the 'problem' may lie. Therefore, working backwards in the sentence: *'... does not leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities'*.

It could be argued that as the majority of respondents (i.e. Midlands Today journalists) were classified under the ethnic group of 'White', which represented almost 84 percent (83.9%) of the study group, then it may be considered to be problematic for such journalists, as opposed to journalists from the MECs to build up contacts from within the MECs. However, if one were to look beyond 'race'/culture and consider for example, a Foreign Correspondent based in a country that is obviously 'foreign' to such a journalist, then the undertaking of the duties of the job/role in that particular country affords such journalists over time, the opportunity to build up contacts with groups/individuals of a different 'race'/culture. Therefore, it is contended within this current study that it would be too 'simplistic' to attribute the predominant responses to the above question

(Table 9.85, p.651), to the 'ethnicity' of the majority of Midlands Today journalists surveyed.

Rather, it is suggested that a more insightful and apt way of interpreting the above finding can be more suitably located within the first part of the statement: '*The carrying out of day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to...*'. As such, an understanding of the 'day-to-day' duties can be located within the theoretical framework of the 'social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media', which focuses upon the microscopic factors, i.e. internal workings of a newsroom (Gans 1979); specifically in terms of the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme - a process which is similar in practice to the news production process employed by many television news programmes.

For example, the participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom highlighted that on a typical 'day-to-day' basis, a journalist arrives in the newsroom, is assigned to a news story, but more times than not is aware of the news story that they will be covering on that day, prior to arriving in the newsroom. They will go out, conduct the interview(s), go back to the newsroom to edit the interview(s), will often edit a shorter version of the story for the lunchtime bulletin at 13:30, and then continue to 'package' the news story in time for the main programme at

18:30. After the programme has finished at 19:00, a 'post-mortem' of the programme will take place - usually led by the News Editor discussing the programme of that night - the good points, the bad and the indifferent aspects of the programme's content etc.. It is now the end of the 'working day' (for most journalists), and then it is more of the same, the next day, and the next day and the next day and so forth.

Therefore, as there is no longer a Community Affairs Correspondent whose brief included building contacts with the MECs, the above responses to the statement (Table 9.85, p.651) is an understandable and expected finding. When would the 'generalist' reporter find the time to make contacts from within the minority ethnic communities... whilst they carry out their 'day-to-day' duties? So essentially, the above question can be deemed to have provoked the response that it did because quite simply put, there is no time available for journalists - Black/White. That said, it could be argued that MEC journalists may possibly have more opportunity to make contacts as a matter of course, simply by 'chance', if the circles that they socialise within enables the 'incidental' meeting of other people who are members of the MECs.

It is therefore contended that here lies one of the central reasons as to why the pan-BBC diversity policy fails to translate into practice on the Midlands Today programme.

The implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, came with many 'hopes', in terms of the research concerns of this current study. Hopes, insofar as the successful translation of this 'paper' policy into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme not only leading to this programme reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output and as such, achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, which as a consequence could lead to the possible formation, depiction and articulation of a vibrant multi-ethnic public sphere - as conceived within this current study (Husband 2000).

However, it is contended within this current study that what the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy 'brought' to the Midlands Today programme vis-à-vis the journalists working on this programme, was an 'additional' element to have to contend with - to fit into the daily news production process as employed on this programme.

Whilst the primary aim of the pan-BBC diversity policy is to 'reflect the nation that we serve' (Dyke 2000), the primary aim of journalists' working on the Midlands Today programme, in the carrying out of their day-to-day duties, is to ensure the 'successful' broadcast of the Midlands Today programme. This is *their* first and foremost priority.

Therefore, in the theoretical conceptualisation of the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere via the articulation of the output of the Midlands Today programme - what now needs to be considered is the following:

1 Composite model

i.e. A **PUBLIC SPHERE** (via Midlands Today)

Consisting of 2 separate forces:

- (i) Force no.1: The news production process - with a primary aim/objective to:

'Facilitate the production of a daily regional television news programme'.

- (ii) Force no. 2: The pan-BBC diversity policy - with a primary aim/objective to:

'Reflect the nation that we serve' (Dyke 2000).

In essence then, 2 separate forces... both 'vying' and 'competing' for the 'air space' within the now contested public sphere of the Midlands Today programme.

However, based upon the findings as imparted within this current study... it would be a fair assertion to state that the news production process - situated within the theoretical framework of the social organisation of newswork approach to the study of the news media... is WINNING!

A fundamental reason identified for this occurrence, is because of the lack of a significant cultural change in the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme; a cultural change that could facilitate and encompass the meeting of the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, alongside and hand-in-hand with the aims/objectives of the news production process as employed on a regional television news programme, such as Midlands Today. This oversight and shortcoming of the viable implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy, can be aptly summed up by the fact that those formulating the pan-BBC diversity policy are 'policy-makers' as opposed to 'programme-makers' - a conclusion also arrived at by Campion (2005) - based upon the 100+ programme-makers who took part as interviewees in their study entitled: *Look Who's Talking*. Cultural Diversity, Public Service Broadcasting and the National Conversation (Campion 2005).

The lack of change in the culture of the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme will now be analysed.

9.13 Midlands Today: Lack of a cultural change in the News Production Process

As identified by the managing diversity implementation model devised for this current study (discussed in Chapter 4), in order to successfully achieve the aims/objectives of a diversity policy it is imperative that a 'cultural change' in the organisation is undertaken. This is considered to be the most important constituent feature of a managing diversity policy - without which it is contended that an organisation/business is likely to fail in its attempts to achieve the aims/objectives of the policy.

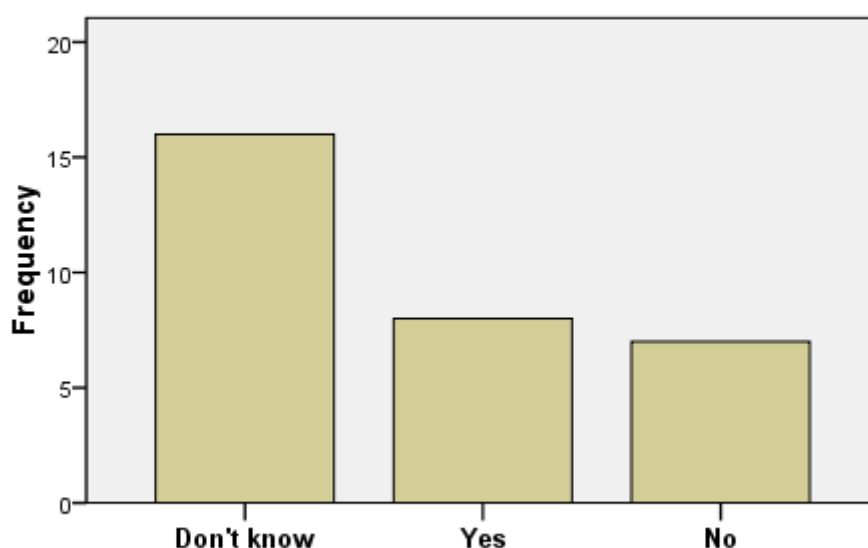
In a bid to change the overall 'culture' of the BBC, the former Director General of the BBC Greg Dyke, implemented an initiative within the corporation entitled: 'One BBC - Making It Happen'. The aim of this initiative was to bring about an overall cultural change within the BBC. In fact, so important was this initiative to the BBC, that upon its launch in 2001, Dyke delivered a staff address to the entire BBC workforce, in which he outlined the aims and objectives of 'One BBC - Making It Happen'.

Therefore it was of interest and of great importance for this current study to gauge the respondents' views on the following question: 'Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative which aims to bring about a 'cultural change', within the corporation... do you think

the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?' Of the 31 respondents participating in the questionnaire survey, only 8 were able to respond with a 'Yes' to the above question which represented slightly under 26 percent (25.8%) of the study group. 7 respondents, representing 22.6 percent (22.6%) selected the 'No' option, whilst the majority of respondents, totalling 16 and representing 51.6 percent (51.6%) of all those surveyed, selected the 'Don't know' option. (Figure 9.45 & Table 9.86, p.660).

Figure 9.45

QUESTION: Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative, which aims to bring about a 'cultural change' within the corporation... do you think the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.86

QUESTION: Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative, which aims to bring about a 'cultural change' within the corporation... do you think the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?

RESPONSE	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Yes	8	25.8
No	7	22.6
Don't know	16	51.6
TOTAL	31 (n)	100.0%

(n) = number; % = percentage

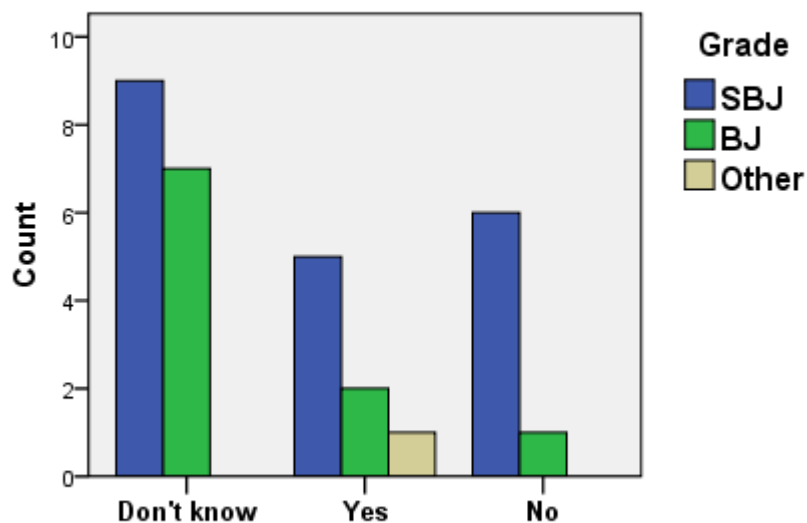
Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Of the 8 respondents who were able to link the 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative to the pan-BBC diversity policy, 1 was a Senior Manager (classified under 'Other'), 5 were SBJs and 2 were BJ. Therefore, amongst the two different Grades of SBJ and BJ, the disparity between the percentage of SBJs (i.e. 25.0%) and the percentage of BJs (i.e. 20.0%) who could make the 'link' between 'One BBC -

Making It Happen' and the BBC's diversity policy can be considered to be negligible (Figure 9.46 & Table 9.87).

Figure 9.46

QUESTION: Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative, which aims to bring about a 'cultural change' within the corporation... do you think the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?
[Correlated with the Grade of the respondent].



Source: Questionnaire Survey.

Table 9.87

QUESTION: Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative, which aims to bring about a 'cultural change' within the corporation... do you think the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?
[Correlated with the Grade of the respondent].

RESPONSE	GRADE			TOTAL
	SBJ	BJ	OTHER	
Yes	5	2	1	8
% within grade=	25.0%	20.0	100.0	
No	6	1	0	7
% within grade=	30.0	10.0	0.0	
Don't Know	9	7	0	16
% within grade=	45.0	70.0	0.0	
TOTAL	20	10	1	31(n)
	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

(n) = number; % = percentage

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

The 8 respondents who were able to respond with a 'Yes' to the above question (Table 9.86, p.660) were asked via an

open-ended question to explain in what way *they* believed, the 'One BBC - Making It Happen' initiative was linked to the pan-BBC diversity policy. 5 of the 8 respondents who were able to answer 'Yes' to the initial question posed (Table 9.86), took the opportunity to explain the 'link':

"Changing the BBC culture internally to make it more aware of the diversity of audience and to encourage the recruitment and development of more staff from different ethnic backgrounds." (Respondent E)

"It is part of a drive across the BBC to increase accessibility - portrayal of different diverse groups and encourage job applicants from diverse groups." (Respondent I)

"Because 'Making It Happen' is accessible to everyone, regardless of their background/culture etc." (Respondent P).

"It gives people the opportunity to come up with ideas and to work in a more flexible and welcoming environment." (Respondent T)

"It should help people reach their potential irrespective of sex/race/ age etc." (Respondent X)

Source: Questionnaire Survey.

It is interesting to note that only one of the above five comments (i.e. Respondent (I) makes explicit reference to the aims of the BBC's diversity policy in terms of the 'portrayal of different diverse groups', although it is acknowledged that respondent (E) does slightly touch upon this in their response to the open-ended question.

On reflection, given the minimal number of respondents who were able to respond with a 'Yes' to the question posed: re. '*Making It Happen linked to the BBC'S diversity policy*', the above finding (Table 9.86, p.660) should be of no surprise, and in fact is an 'expected' finding because during the period of time in which participant observations were undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, there were no 'detectable' changes in the organisational culture of the 'workings' of this newsroom. More specifically, there were no noticeable changes in the news production process as employed within this newsroom insofar as operating/functioning in a *different* manner; a manner that may possibly have enabled the output of this programme to better achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC BBC diversity policy: 'to reflect the nation that it serves'; in this instance, the West Midlands region.

For example, it was noted that on various occasions, journalists would be canvassed by Senior Managers working on Midlands Today (for example, the Head of Newsgathering), to try to come up with different ideas on how to find stories to cover on the programme. One idea put forward was along the lines of 'throw the dart'. Essentially, this simply meant closing one's eyes and sticking a pin into a map of the West Midlands region, and wherever that pin landed, would be the location that a journalist would go along to, with the challenge of trying to find a story in that

geographical area of the region. Notably however, no such innovative ideas were put forth specifically in terms of trying to find more culturally ethnic diverse stories/contributors to include in the programme. In fact, over the years that participant observations were undertaken, there were no occasions when Senior Managers raised the specific issue of journalists needing to try to find more culturally diverse stories or contributors.

Therefore, based upon the findings imparted within this current chapter, it is possible to identify a major 'obstacle' and contributory factor which can be considered as being the crux reason as to why the Midlands Today programme consistently fails to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output. This 'obstacle' can be best attributed to a fundamental lack of change in the organisational culture of the Midlands Today newsroom; specifically, a lack of change in the 'workings of this newsroom'. Therefore, this current study contends that a cultural change in the news production process as employed in this newsroom is necessary. This is considered to be a prerequisite to assist in the addressing of some of the key issues that have been identified as being problematic in terms of this programme translating the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy into practice.

It is therefore contended that this cultural change in the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme *must* subliminally encompass the pursuit of reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output, to the extent where the quest to achieve diversity becomes an integral and *natural* part of the news production process, as opposed to diversity being seen as a 'bolted on extra' (Campion 2005), to the day-to-day ritualistic duties carried out by journalists.

For example, as stated previously almost 68 percent (67.7%) of respondents' indicated that: '*the carrying out of day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities*' (Table 9.85, p.651). However, a cultural change in the news production process would need to integrate the above activity within the 'regular' news production process. In the same way that journalists working on news items classified as 'Special Reports' are taken off the newsroom rota to enable the carrying out of the research needed for the 'special report' (see p.200-1), a similar 'working practice' could also be built into the Midlands Today news production process, to allow for journalists to be intermittently taken off the rota to enable them the time and the opportunity to build up contacts from within the MECs. As a result, this could assist in the Midlands Today programme moving closer to: *Making It Happen! Making it*

happen insofar as journalists accessing more diverse stories and contributors to the news stories broadcast on this programme.

In addition, it is also contended by the finding of this current study that a cultural change in the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme *must* start from the 'Top', by being a directive from the 'Top', in the same way that the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy was a directive from the top of the hierarchical chain/structure of the BBC such as the Director General, the BBC's Executive Committee and Trustees (formerly known as 'BBC Governors'), as opposed to the change in the organisational structure of the news production process being left down to 'individuals' (i.e. "White knights" (Campion 2005:14), as opposed to a fundamental change in the 'infrastructure' of the news production process which would facilitate the inclusion of MECs in the output of the Midlands Today programme. This, it is put forth within this current study, may assist in avoiding the following assertion made by Champion (2005), vis-à-vis the 'successes of the past' relating to the inclusion of MECs in television programmes:

"Looking back, it seems that many of the successes of the past have often been due to the personal commitment of individuals rather than any infrastructural changes. The broadcasting organisations have not learned

from their experience, so once those individuals left or changed roles there was no-one to keep up the momentum." (Campion 2005:14).

9.14 Conclusion

One of the most important things that research can do for those working in the media is to make the implicit explicit and to make people aware of the nature and the implications of those basic assumptions which underlie their day-to-day activities. Such critical analysis is often the first step in producing constructive change. (Halloran 1974:12).

Going behind the scenes of the Midlands Today programme, facilitated in the examination of different aspects of the intricate 'workings' of this programme. This enabled the identification of factors that may have contributed to this programme consistently failing to representatively reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, in terms of the inclusion of people from the MECs in this programme's output.

Analysis of two initiatives that have been implemented by the BBC (i.e. the News Diversity Database and Diversity Monitoring Database) to assist programme-makers in their bid to achieve the aims/objectives of this Corporation's diversity policy, were identified as falling short of all that they may have promised on 'paper'.

However, a major and fundamental factor identified as being central to the finding of this current research study, is that the news production process as employed on a regional television news programme such as Midlands Today, struggles to facilitate the achievement of the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy - *to reflect the nation that we serve* (Dyke 2000). This is because the day-to-day workings of the news production process as employed on this programme, takes priority over the journalists' pursuit to meet the aims/objectives of the diversity policy.

The finding of this chapter also indicates that such a situation exists because of the lack of a significant cultural change, in the news production process as employed by the Midlands Today programme, to facilitate the inclusion of the meeting of the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy.

Fundamentally then, in terms of the academic concerns of this current research study, re. the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere via Midlands Today, what we can now think of in terms of the conceptualisation of a multi-ethnic public sphere on this programme, is 1 composite model in the form of the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, consisting of 2 separate 'forces', with each *force* competing and vying for the attention of journalists to meet the aims and objectives of each of these 2 forces.

Force no.1: being the meeting of the aims/objectives of the news production process and the other *force* being the meeting of the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy. However, without a cultural change in the news production process to facilitate the meeting of the aims of the pan-BBC diversity policy, it is contended within this current study, that the news production process will always take priority, supersede and inadvertently *negate*, the drive to meet the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to: *reflect the nation that we serve* (Dyke 2000).

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

10.0 Introduction

Diversity is central to the changing face of British Society. If BBC English Regions fails to keep abreast of these changes, our integrity as news-gatherers will diminish and we will not have relevance and appeal to the 'New Audiences' that we need to sustain our strengthened position within the Corporation and as a broadcaster. (Soros and Jones 2001:3).

This study has contributed to an understanding of the problematics associated with the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, via a BBC regional television news programme - Midlands Today.

In light of the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000 - with the aims/objectives of the BBC to "reflect the nation that we serve" (Dyke 2000) both on-screen and off-screen, this study undertook a methodical analysis of the output of the Midlands Today programme. This enabled an assessment to be made upon whether the BBC's 'paper' diversity policy translates into 'practice', in terms of this programme's output *representatively* reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region - to where it broadcasts. The finding of this assessment was

then used to determine to what extent, the output of this programme could be deemed to be a reflection/depiction/articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

The conceptualisation of a multi-ethnic public sphere not only reflects the diversity present in society, but also allows for the "autonomous expression of ethnic identity of both minority and majority ethnic groups" (Husband 2000:209); thus assisting in their *right* to 'communicate' and their *right* to be 'understood'.

The necessity for the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere in terms of the primary academic concerns of this current study, was initially borne out of, and inspired by the research findings of academic studies of the past; studies that raised concern over the way in which minority ethnic communities (MECs) were portrayed/(mis)represented by the news media, and by studies that highlighted the unequivocal lack of access afforded to MECs to participate in the *National Conversation* on race-related issues in Britain, via the public sphere of the news media.

The study by Critcher *et al* (1977) into the coverage of 'race' in the provincial press, found that the principle issues on 'race' was being defined by 'White authority', and

that the inclusion of the views of MECs received minimal coverage. Critcher *et al* (1977:176) concluded that: "this is a massive failure in the provincial press to communicate any sense of what it is like to be black and British." As such, the finding of Critcher *et als* (1977) study, highlights the limited opportunity that was afforded to MECs to impart an autonomous expression of their ethnic identity, via the news media.

Furthermore, the way in which MECs were portrayed/(mis)/represented by the news media, was exemplified via a seminal finding of a study conducted by Hartmann *et al* (1974) into the handling of 'race' in the British national press from 1963 to 1970. This study 'spotted' an emerging news framework whereby news stories focusing upon race-related matters/issues in Britain, portrayed MECs as being some sort of 'aberration', an 'oddity', a 'problem', a 'threat' and of 'not belonging' to the British society. As such, a study conducted by Troyna (1981:80) which examined the media's coverage of 'race', found that the British news media "continue to project a limited and ethnocentric picture of the world."

The non-utilisation/inclusion of MECs via the news media's coverage of stories focusing upon 'race', was evident on perusal of the study by van Dijk (1993) which examined

selected sources from the British Press in the 1980s. This study found that in only 3.8 percent (3.8%) of items on minority ethnic affairs, were those from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) allowed to speak for themselves.

The non-existence of a public sphere that held the tenets of a *multi-ethnic public sphere* was also evident from the finding of Downing's (1975) study entitled: *The (Balanced) White View*. This study involved an examination of the coverage of British racism in 4½ hours of news bulletins and 9¾ hours in current affairs and documentary programmes. The finding of this study revealed that the 'ordinary' Black person only spoke/were quoted in 21 percent (21.0%) of the news stories analysed.

And although the study by Hartmann *et al* (1974:161) found that there was "little to suggest the mass media are an important direct influence on white attitudes as such, if 'attitude' is taken to mean feelings of hostility or friendship, liking or disliking towards coloured people", the study by Troyna (1981:83) into the role that the media played in the formation of the attitudes of the indigenous British population towards race relations and MECs, stated that: "we established that many of the media's conceptions of 'race relations' were being reproduced in public opinion... and that 'coloured' people were a problem, were

characterisations of 'race relations' which figured largely both in media coverage and public opinions."

Therefore, the posture taken within this current study was that the existence of a multi-ethnic public sphere, may possibly have gone some way towards alleviating or even extinguishing such findings, as outlined in the studies cited above.

So building upon the past, and winding forwards onto the present-day of the 21st century - particularly since the terrorist attacks on 9/11 in New York (2001) and on 7/7 in London (2005), the academic concerns of this current study regarding the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere was further reinforced and heightened in light of the launch of the *Commission on Integration and Cohesion* in 2006. Launched by the then Government's Communities Secretary Ruth Kelly MP, the purpose of the taskforce assigned to this Commission, was to encourage better integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain. At the launch, Ruth Kelly MP spoke of how life in Britain had started to feel *markedly different since the attacks*, and of how we face the *clear possibility that we are experiencing diversity no longer as a country, but as a set of local communities*.

Therefore, in terms of a lack of integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain, the thought-process adopted within this current study was that an aspect of this perceived concern, could possibly be because of a lack of knowledge and understanding amongst the different citizens of Britain about each other - resulting in disparate groups and communities living in Britain, but doing so outside of each other's sphere. As such, a point made by Troyna (1981) - over 25 years ago, may possibly still be prevalent and of relevance to 21st century Britain:

"Indeed, even when white people live (and work) in close proximity to blacks, interaction between them may be limited; in these situations the media may once again be regarded as an important source of information and interpretation about 'race relations'."
(Troyna 1981:79).

It was therefore contended within this present study, that the formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere - in this instance via the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today, could possibly facilitate the discourse between and amongst the different 'races' that make-up the West Midlands region, thus enabling these citizens the opportunity to gain knowledge and an understanding of each other, which could possibly lead to better integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of this region. As such, the

means for interpreting and framing events/occurrences in the West Midlands region would not solely be from a 'White' perspective, but from a 'multi-ethnic perspective' that encompasses views and opinions from all 'races', ethnicities and classes. Such a scenario it was considered within this study, would therefore afford MECs the opportunity to participate in the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands - a region that has the largest ethnic minority population in the UK outside of London (ONS 2001).

10.1 Summary of findings

Analysis of the landscape that the Midlands Today programme inhabits, and the fundamental structural components that make-up this programme (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7), suggests that to a large extent, this programme could 'in theory', lend itself well to being a space/site that could possibly 'house' the tenets of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

Therefore, in light of the main concerns of this present study, it was of importance to gain an insight into the primary definers of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today. This enabled an assessment to be made upon the extent to which, this programme relies upon 'traditional' primary definers (i.e. 'official' and 'non-official' news sources) to set the news agenda of the stories that it broadcasts.

The need for this analysis *beckoned*... in light of the findings of previous academic studies conducted, such as Critcher *et al* (1977) which noted the high degree of access granted by the news media to exponents of racially-inflammatory view-points on immigration, such as Enoch Powell MP who as an MP, was deemed to be an 'official' primary definer of news stories. Thus, Powell MP was able to regularly set the news agenda of news stories because "the press automatically believes the utterances of the powerful to be newsworthy" (Critcher *et al* 1977:176).

Therefore, questions posed within this current study were:

- i) What of individuals who are not accredited with the 'hierarchy of credibility' to be deemed to be 'traditional' primary definers of news stories?
- ii) And are such individuals (i.e. 'non-traditional' primary definers), sometimes afforded the opportunity of setting the news agenda, and of providing the first definition of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today?

Analysis of the primary definers of the 2708 news stories featured in the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed, indicate that the majority of primary definers were 'traditional' primary definers (i.e. official and non-

official news sources), and amounted to 68.2 percent (68.2%) of all primary definers. However, whilst 'other' primary definers were 'detected', such as 'celebrities', 'victims' and 'witnesses' and amounted to a total of 9.6 percent (9.6%) of all primary definers, this study also found that the 'ordinary' person was the primary definer of 22.2 percent (22.2%) of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

This finding of the 'ordinary' person as primary definers is very encouraging in terms of the main concerns of this current research study. This is because given the dearth of Black people holding positions within the British society that would deem them to be 'traditional' primary definers of news stories (such as for example MPs), the finding of this current study would suggest that *in theory*, the Midlands Today programme could possibly facilitate the inclusion of the 'ordinary Black person' as primary definers of news stories. Thus, members of the MECs may not only gain the *right* to 'communicate and to be understood' via the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere on Midlands Today, but may also be afforded the opportunity - as the primary definers of some of the news stories - of giving the first definition of news stories broadcast on this programme and as such, participate in the setting of the news agenda of the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands, as

articulated via the Midlands Today programme; this, as opposed to simply responding to news agendas that have already been set by 'traditional' primary definers of news stories.

A fundamental thread identified by this study as running throughout Midlands Today, is this programme's *desire* to engender a 'professional closeness/attachment' to its viewers', as opposed to a 'professional distance/detachment' - which one could argue exists within the presentational style and contents of network television news programmes. Therefore, the finding that the 'ordinary' person is on occasions afforded the opportunity of being the primary definers of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today is an understandable finding, as this programme has a predisposition to whenever possible, seek out the 'voice' of the 'ordinary' person to give the first definition of some of the news stories that it broadcasts.

For example, during the participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, it was noted that when journalists' pitched their story ideas in the daily early morning meetings, they would often be told by the Producer of the programme 'no suits'; in other words: *let's get the viewpoint of the 'ordinary' person*. This approach was symptomatic of this programme proactively seeking out the

'ordinary' person to provide the 'human-touch' to news stories.

The quest for the 'ordinary' person to sometimes be the primary definers of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, was overtly illustrated in the production of its '40th anniversary' programme. Whilst the analysis of the average number of news stories featured in a Midlands Today programme reveals this to be 10, on the 40th anniversary programme, not only were 23 news stories featured, but every single news story focused upon an aspect of the life of an 'ordinary' person from the West Midlands region who by definition, was also then the 'primary definer' of that particular news item.

The production/contents of the 40th anniversary programme can therefore be considered as encapsulating the spirit of the regional television news genre - as typified by Midlands Today, as it had the hallmarks of a populist *infotainment* news programme which featured many human-interest types of stories. As such, this 40th anniversary programme can also be considered as being demonstrative of Midlands Today achieving its desire for the 'ordinary' person to have a 'stake' in the programme, which as a consequence, could possibly prove to be of good collateral for this programme,

insofar as maintaining and increasing its 'audience' viewing figures.

Therefore, although this current study's undertaking of the review of the critiques on primary definers highlighted flaws in the broad characterisations put forth by Hall *et al* (1978), such as the conceptualisation of primary definers not being able to take account of contention between 'official' news sources, and of not being able to take account of some primary definers gaining more access to the news media than others (Schlesinger 1990), the concept of primary definers still held relevance and some utility for this current study. This is because the concerns of this study was not upon the access granted to/between 'traditional' primary definers (i.e. official and non-official news sources), but upon whether 'non-traditional' primary definers such as the 'ordinary' person, were on occasions afforded the opportunity of being the primary definers of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today and as such, were therefore able to set the news agenda by providing the first definition/angle taken on some of the news stories broadcast on this programme.

A central feature in the configuration of a viable and effective multi-ethnic public sphere (as conceived within this current study), is that the 'host site' - in this

instance the Midlands Today programme, *must* have the capability of being able to include 'outside voices' i.e. the views/comments of Contributors - interviewees, to some of the news stories that it broadcasts, to enable their participation in the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands, as articulated via the news stories broadcast on this programme.

Therefore an analysis of the 4 presentational formats (i.e. 'limited', 'expansive', 'totally restricted' and 'partly restricted') that are used by Midlands Today to 'frame' the way in which the details of a news story may be imparted, was undertaken to enable an assessment to be made upon the extent to which, the news stories broadcast on this programme allow for the inclusion of Contributors.

The finding of this study indicates that of the 2708 news stories analysed, 1929 of these stories, which represented 71.2 percent (71.2%) of all stories, were delivered either under the presentational formats of 'limited' or 'expansive'; formats that *do* allow for the inclusion of the views/opinions of Contributors to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today. This finding is therefore very conducive to the requirements of a multi-ethnic public sphere, as it indicates that there is space and scope for 'outside voices', i.e. Contributors to be 'heard', and for different

views/perspectives on a news story to be included in the delivery of the details of the majority of stories broadcast on this programme.

In terms of the primary academic concerns of this current study, this finding can be considered as being a beneficial *by-product* of the tele-visual practices employed by Midlands Today to produce a populist *infotainment* regional television news programme with popular appeal. As a consequence of this programme's aim, this study found that the most aesthetically-pleasing presentational formats also proved to be the *preferred* and most-used formats, by which this programme chooses to impart the details of a news story.

That said, this current study also found that although a news story delivered under the 'expansive' presentational format can be considered to be the most aesthetically-pleasing and fluid format, as it includes Contributors participating 'live' to a story and can also make use of a 'package', film footage, graphics and/or music to assist in the creative delivery of the verbal details of the story, only 186 of the 2708 news stories analysed, which represented 6.9 percent (6.9%) of all news stories, were delivered under this format. Conversely, although news stories delivered under the presentational format of 'partly-restricted' - which can be considered to be

'visually-static', offering less aesthetic-value to the programme when compared to news stories delivered under the 'expansive' format, a total of 669 news stories, amounting to 24.7 percent (24.7%) were delivered under the 'partly restricted' presentational format.

This finding can be attributed to the *needs* of the programme vis-à-vis its overall construction, having a bearing upon why the details of more news stories may be delivered under a presentational format that has less aesthetic-value to offer to the programme.

As this study found, a constituent feature and *need* of Midlands Today - exemplified in this programme's running order template by which all Producers adhere to when putting together the programme, is the pre-requisite element of some of the stories that it broadcasts, being delivered as news-in-brief (NIB). This is listed as a 'NIB block' in the programme's running order template, and news-in-brief stories are always delivered under the 'partly restricted' or 'totally restricted' presentational formats.

However, staying in line with Midlands Today's desire to deliver news stories in the most aesthetically-pleasing manner available, this study found that the details of more news-in-brief stories were delivered via the 'partly

restricted' presentational format (24.7%), than the 'totally restricted' format, which amounted to 4.1 percent (4.1%) of all news stories analysed. This is because although a news story delivered under either of these 2 presentational formats is imparted via the news presenter/reporter in a 'sealed' manner - 'sealed' because the only perspective presented on the news story is that, as imparted by the presenter/reporter and so do not allow for the inclusion of 'outside voices', i.e. Contributors, the 'partly restricted' format does offer more aesthetically to the programme than the 'totally restricted' format. Whilst news stories delivered under the 'partly restricted' presentational format involves the verbal relaying of the details of the story by the newsreader/reporter, accompanied by visual references such as film footage, graphics and/or music, news stories delivered under the 'totally restricted' format do not include any visual influences but rely solely upon the 'direct verbal account' of the story, as imparted by the news presenter/reporter.

Besides the *needs* of the programme being a determining factor as to why the details of some news stories are delivered under a particular presentational format, this study also found that although news stories delivered under the presentational formats of 'limited' and 'expansive' offer and bring similar aesthetic qualities to the

programme, it is notable from the finding of this study that the number of news stories delivered under the 'expansive' presentational format (6.9%), is significantly lower than news stories presented under the 'limited' format, which amounted to 64.4 percent (64.4%). In-fact, it can be argued that the 'expansive' presentational format adds an additional feature to a news story because the details of the story is presented 'live', as opposed to the details of a story that is presented under the 'limited' presentational format which is pre-recorded and inserted into the programme accordingly. This finding of less news stories being delivered under the 'expansive' presentational format than the 'limited' format, can be attributed to the fact that the inclusion of a 'live' news story in a programme involves a certain amount of logistical planning, particularly if the Contributor or indeed the reporter (who may be doing a 2-way with the news presenter) is not in the studio but out-on-location. The delivery of 'live' news stories in the programme will involve the booking of the SATVAN i.e. satellite van to enable the relaying of the interview back to the studio, and as the SATVAN is a limited resource, this factor has a bearing upon how many 'live' news stories will be included in a programme. Also, as a news story delivered under the 'limited' presentational format is pre-recorded and so can be easily moved around the running order, even after the programme has commenced, this offers the programme

more flexibility, but no such luxury is afforded to stories delivered 'live' via the 'expansive' presentational format, as the 'timing' of stories delivered under this format is critical, and so needs to be as spot-on as possible.

Not surprisingly, the finding of the analysis of the most-used presentational styles classified under the presentational format pertaining to that particular style, indicates that the most aesthetically-pleasing presentational style from within each of the 4 presentational formats (i.e. 'totally restricted', 'partly restricted', 'limited' and 'expansive'), was also the most-used and as such, the *preferred* style from within that particular format.

Although the 'overt' purpose/function of the presentational formats/styles used on Midlands Today is to assist in the creative delivery of the details of the news stories that it broadcasts, this study also found upon analysis of the 16²⁰ presentational styles categorised under the presentational formats ('totally restricted' = 3 styles; 'partly restricted' = 6 styles; 'limited' = 3 styles; 'expansive' = 4 styles), that *collectively*, the most frequently-used presentational

²⁰ The presentational formats of 'limited' and 'expansive' included a presentational style that related to group discussions. However, as a finding of this study indicates that group discussions did not take place on Midlands Today – either under the 'limited' or 'expansive' presentational format, these 2 presentational styles were omitted from this analysis.

styles and as such, the *preferred* styles adopted by this programme to impart the details of a news story, can be considered as providing a visual articulation and understanding of the aims/objectives of the regional television news genre, as depicted and typified by Midlands Today - which is to achieve a central thematic positioning of a programme that will engender popular appeal amongst viewers.

Given the infrastructural framework that has been identified as already existing within the setting and landscape of the Midlands Today programme, a finding of this study is that such an environment - *populist*: 'friendly' and 'non-threatening' in its approach, could potentially prove to be very conducive in the facilitation of the exchange of dialogue between and amongst the citizens of the West Midlands, thus enabling the different citizens of this region, the opportunity to gain knowledge and an understanding of each other's culture, and gain an insight into the different viewpoints that may possibly exist on aspects of the *Regional Conversation* - as articulated via the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Therefore, given that a primary characteristic of a multi-ethnic public sphere is its ability to allow for the 'autonomous expression of both minority and majority ethnic

groups', thus facilitating their *right* to be 'heard' and to be 'understood', it was of importance for this present study to examine the type of access afforded to Contributors to participate in news stories, either 'live', via a 'clip', an 'interview' or a 'voxpath', to enable their views/opinions to be included in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Of the 5044 Contributors who participated in the 1929 news stories that *did* allow for the inclusion of Contributors, the finding of this study indicates that only a minimal number of Contributors to news stories, amounting to 258 and representing 5.1 percent (5.1%) of all Contributors, were afforded the opportunity of imparting an unedited, and therefore 'live' autonomous expression of their views/opinions on the news story that they are contributing to. However, as only 186 news stories, which amounted to 6.9 percent (6.9%) of all stories analysed were delivered under the 'expansive' presentational format, i.e. 'live', this finding of just 5.1 percent (5.1%) of all Contributors participating 'live' to news stories is understandable.

Therefore, the majority of Contributors totalling 4786 and amounting to 95 percent (95.0%) of all Contributors analysed, participated to news stories either via a 'clip' (59.5%), 'voxpath' (23.6%) or 'interview' (11.9%). Therefore, each of these different types of ways of contributing to a

news story is at the *mercy* of the journalist, insofar as what aspects of a Contributors' comments will be included/edited out of the news story featured on the programme. This finding can be considered as being demonstrative of the production regimes employed by Midlands Today, which is to produce a programme that will engender populist appeal amongst its viewers.

For example, this study found that the use of a 'package' to impart the details of a news story broadcast on Midlands Today, affords the reporter the opportunity to be at their most creative, and will often include 'clips' of interviews conducted with Contributors. This therefore offers aesthetic benefits/value to the way in which the details of a news story may be imparted on the Midlands Today programme. As such, the finding of this study indicates that the greatest type of access afforded to Contributors to participate in the news stories broadcast, is via the inclusion of a 'clip' and amounted to a total of 3000 Contributors, which represented 59.5 percent (59.5%) of all Contributors analysed. Therefore, in terms of the primary academic concerns of this current study vis-à-vis the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, the inclusion of 'clips' in a package indicates that as different viewpoints/perspectives from amongst the different Contributors who make-up the West Midlands region may be

imparted within the delivery of the details of a news story, there is scope for different viewpoints and 'voices' to be heard from amongst members of the 'minority' and 'majority' ethnic groups, who may be included in a news story.

An interesting finding of this study is that the inclusion of a 'voxpath', which was the 2nd most-popular way by which Contributors were afforded the opportunity of imparting their views/opinions on a news story, is that this continues a 'theme' which has been identified; this is Midlands Today's desire to engender a sense of 'professional closeness/attachment' to its viewers. By allowing the 'ordinary' person, who may randomly be stopped and approached in the street by a reporter for their comment on a topic/subject-matter of a news story broadcast on Midlands Today, sends out an unequivocal message that the viewpoint/opinion of the 'ordinary' person is valid, valued and important to this programme.

However, although Midlands Today is clearly not averse to including the viewpoints/opinions of Contributors in the imparting of the details of the news stories that it broadcasts, the finding of this study is that there is limited opportunity for Contributors to do so in a manner that will allow them the opportunity to develop their point-of-view on a news story. This is because only 11.9 percent

(11.9%) of Contributors, participated to news stories via an interview, which allows for the inclusion of more than 1 clip from their interview, as opposed to a 'clip' which indicates that just 1 clip from a Contributors' interview is included in the news story. This finding can be attributed to the production regimes as employed on Midlands Today, which enables this programme to produce a programme that involves the inclusion of 'clips' from different Contributors 'i.e. voices', in the delivery of the details of a news story that it may broadcast.

In terms of the overall academic concerns of this current study, it was also considered necessary to gain an insight into the Social Group of the Contributors who are afforded the opportunity to partake in the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands, via the access granted to individuals selected to participate in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today.

Of the 5044 Contributors analysed, the finding of this study is that Midlands Today selects Contributors from an eclectic range of Social Groups. Also, a very interesting finding is that of the 23 different Social Group classifications under which Contributors may be assigned to, the majority, amounting to 2837 and representing 56.2 percent (56.2%) of all Contributors, were classified under a Social Group that

is assigned to an 'ordinary' person who may be granted the opportunity of participating to a news story. This includes Social Group classifications such as an 'individual in focus', which amounted to 558 Contributors, representing 11.1 percent (11.1%), and the Social Group classification of: 'involved group member', amounting to 8.8 percent (8.8%) of all Contributors. This finding further illustrates the clear predominance of the 'ordinary' person 'theme' that has been identified by this study as *running throughout* the Midlands Today programme, in its articulation of the regional television news genre, which is to produce a populist television programme that engenders popular appeal. Therefore, it is notable from the finding of this study, that the most-frequent Social Group classification under which Contributors to news stories were assigned to was 'random voxpop', amounting to 1079 Contributors and representing 21.4 percent (21.4%) of all Contributors to news stories.

In light of the fact that the pan-BBC diversity policy was implemented in 2000 and that it may take Midlands Today a period of time to achieve the aims/objectives of this policy which is to *reflect the nation that it serves*, a concerted decision was taken within this present study, to conduct an elongated analysis of the output of this programme. This involved the analysis of programmes broadcast from 2002

through to 2004, and 1 week of programmes broadcast in the month of March 2008.

Although the findings as presented thus far on the structural constituents that make-up Midlands Today, suggests that this programme would be well-suited to 'housing' the viable formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere (as conceived within this current study), analysis of the ethnicity of the Contributors featured on this programme paints a very different picture.

As one would expect, of the 5044 Contributors participating in the 1929 news stories that *did* allow for the inclusion of Contributors' views/opinions in the delivery of the details of a story featured on the Midlands Today programmes analysed, which were broadcast over the periods of 2002 through to 2004, the majority of Contributors featured, amounting to a total of 4536 and representing 89.9 percent (89.9%) of all Contributors analysed, were 'White' [i.e. White British (88.1%), White European (1.0%), White Non-European (0.7%), Mediterranean 0.1%)]. Therefore, the number of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) who were afforded the opportunity of participating as Contributors to the news stories analysed, was 508 and represented 10.1 percent (10.1%) of all Contributors [i.e.

South Asian (5.1%), Caribbean (3.2%), Mixed (0.6%), African (0.5%), Middle Eastern (0.4%), South East Asian (0.3%)].

This finding initially appeared to be very encouraging in terms of this programme moving close towards meeting the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy to *reflect the nation that it serves*. As the last census of 2001 indicates that the MEC population of the West Midlands region is 13 percent (13.0%), the output of the Midlands Today programme appeared to be just 2.9 percent (2.9%) below *representatively* reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region, via its inclusion of Contributors from the minority ethnic communities (MECs), in the news stories that it broadcasts.

However, upon further analysis of the above finding, this study found that 1092 of the 2708 news stories, which represented 40.3 percent (40.3%) of all stories analysed, were situated in the geographical location of the Birmingham-area of the West Midlands region. Analysis of the ethnicity of the 2008 Contributors featured in these news stories, indicate that members of the minority ethnic communities (MECs) totalled 334 and so represented 16.6 percent (16.6%) of all Contributors. However, as MECs make-up 29.6% of the Birmingham population (ONS 2001), this finding therefore reveals that the output of the Midlands

Today programme fell short by 13 percent (13.0%) of *representatively* reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the Birmingham-area, which is the most-featured location of the news stories that this programme broadcasts. And although there were fluctuations in the number of people from the MECs who were featured as Contributors in the news stories broadcast during the periods of 2002-2004 (i.e. Nov. & Dec. 2002 = 7.4%; June, July & Aug. 2003 = 9.7%; Nov. & Dec. 2003 = 9.1%; Jan., Feb. & March 2004 = 8.0%), a repetitive finding of this study is that the output of the Midlands Today programme consistently fails to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region.

The only exception to this overall finding, was in the months of Jan., Feb. & March 2003 where accumulatively, members of the minority ethnic communities (MECs) represented 14.8 percent (14.8%) of all Contributors featured in the news stories broadcast in these months. Therefore Midlands Today was in fact, 1.8 percent (1.8%) above *representatively* reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output. However, this finding can be attributed to the fact that the above 3-months analysed, followed the drive-by shootings which took place in the early hours of New-Years day on the 1st January 2003, in the Aston area of Birmingham, and

resulted in 2 innocent teenage girls of African-Caribbean heritage (Letitia Shakespeare and Charlene Ellis), being shot dead. This atrocity received an immense amount of media-coverage - both locally and nationally, and as a high-percentage of people from the minority ethnic communities (MECs) reside in the Aston-area of Birmingham, a greater number than usual, of members of the MECs were 'sought' out for comment - hence the over-representation of MECs in the above-mentioned months.

8 years on after the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy in 2000, the analysis of 1-week of Midlands Today programmes broadcast in March 2008, also indicates that this programme still fails to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output. Similar to the finding as imparted previously, the most-frequent location of the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today was Birmingham. As such, of the 48 news stories featured in the 1 week of programmes broadcast in March 2008, 27 were situated in the Birmingham-area of the West Midlands region, which represented 56.3 percent (56.3%) of all stories broadcast in that week.

However, as only 10 of the 59 Contributors featured in these news stories were from the MECs and so represented 16.9 percent (16.9%) of all Contributors, this finding indicates

that the output of the Midlands Today programme during the 1 week of programmes analysed in March 2008, was 12.7 percent (12.7%) below *representatively* reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the Birmingham-area, which has a MEC population of 29.6 percent (29.6%).

Therefore, the overall finding of this current study is that the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy to '*reflect the nation that it serves*', consistently fails to successfully translate into 'practice' on Midlands Today, by this programme failing to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output - illustrative via its under-representation/inclusion of people from the MECs in the news stories that it broadcasts.

However, via the use of the eclectic methodological framework²¹ that was employed within this present study, it is possible to identify a number of factors that can be considered as being contributory as to why, the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy fails to translate into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme.

²¹ An analysis of 253 Midlands Today programmes, 2708 news stories and the 5044 contributors featured in these stories. A questionnaire survey disseminated to Midlands Today journalists, participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, and one-to-one in-depth interviews conducted with Senior BBC personnel.

A factor identified as contributing to the under-representation of MECs in the news stories broadcast on this programme, is the non-replacement of the Community Affairs Correspondent who moved on from this programme to work in a different BBC department. This Correspondent's job remit was to try to accumulate Contacts from amongst diverse individuals/groups who could participate as Contributors in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, and to source stories that embody the emblems of diversity.

The lack of such a Correspondent working on Midlands Today can be considered as being a salient reason as to why the analysis of the different story subjects/topics of the news stories broadcast on this programme, yielded the following finding. Of the 2708 news stories analysed (broadcast from 2002-2004), only 13, which represented just 0.5 percent (0.5%) of all stories, could be classified under the main story subject category of: 'MECs/race-related/Cultural'. Such stories would focus upon subject-matters/topics that pertain specifically to minority ethnic communities (MECs), and of the 19 main story subject-categories that news stories broadcast on Midlands Today were classified under, 'MECs/race-related/Cultural' was the category that the least amount of news stories analysed, were classified under.

As the story subject-areas/topics that Correspondents are assigned to, is usually a strong indicator of the importance that a newsroom places upon particular story-subjects (discussed in Chapter 2), the non-replacement of the Community Affairs Correspondent could possibly have indirectly sent out an unwittingly subliminal message to journalists working on the Midlands Today programme, that the achievement of reflecting 'diversity' in the output of this programme, vis-à-vis the pan-BBC diversity policy, is no longer of importance to this programme.

Also, although the BBC has devised various resource tools, such as the News Diversity Database (NDD) and the Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD) to assist programmes (either television or radio), in their endeavours to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, the finding of this study is that these tools have proved to be highly ineffectual on the Midlands Today programme, in terms of realising their specific aims/objectives.

The aim of the NDD which contains a list of names and the details of individuals who are from the groups targeted by the BBC's diversity policy - such as members of the minority ethnic communities (MECs), women and people with disabilities, is to assist programme-makers in their bid to find potential guests/Contributors/experts who are from the

afore-mentioned groups. However, this study found that amongst the study group, i.e. the 31 Midlands Today journalists participating in the questionnaire survey devised for this current study, only 10 of the 31 respondents, which represented one-third of all respondents, i.e. 32.3% percent (32.3%) were aware of the existence of the NDD. This study also found that 9 of these 10 respondents, amounting to 90 percent (90.0%), indicated that the NDD was hardly ever referred to when seeking MEC Contributors to participate in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today. This finding is attributed to the fact that the information contained within the NDD is often out-of-date in terms of the details of the individuals contained in this database, illustrative by 90 percent (90.0%) of these 10 respondents also indicating that the details contained within this database needed to be more regularly up-dated.

Similar to the findings of the 253 Midlands Today programmes analysed (broadcast from 2002-2004), the finding of the additional analysis that was undertaken by this current study, of the data inputted by the BBC into its Diversity Monitoring Database (DMD) - which includes data on the ethnicity of the Contributors featured in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, also unequivocally reveals that the output of this programme consistently fails to representatively reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of

the West Midlands region. However, although the imparting of this information that can be gleaned from the BBC's very own DMD could possibly have helped to inspire Midlands Today journalists to focus upon trying to better-achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, the finding of this study reveals that the majority of the journalists surveyed, which amounted to over 80 percent (80.6%), indicated that they did not receive regular updates/feedback upon how the Midlands Today programme is doing in relation to its representation/inclusion of minority ethnic communities (MECs). This finding can therefore be considered as being indicative of why 80.7 percent (80.7%) of the journalists surveyed, held the misconceived perception and view that: *'over a week, Midlands Today generally did a very good job of reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output'*. Incorrect!

It is notable however, that although there is a consistent under-representation of MECs being featured in the output of the Midlands Today programmes analysed, this study found that when members of the MECs are included as Contributors in the news stories broadcast, they are afforded the same type of repertoire as their 'White' counterparts. This is in terms of the 'type of contribution' that they make to news stories (i.e. 'clip', 'interview', 'live' or 'voxpath'), and

in terms of the Social Groups from which Contributors to news stories are drawn from.

For example, the 'percentage' of Contributors from within the largest minority ethnic group featured in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today - i.e. 'South Asian', that were drawn from a particular Social Group, was similar to the 'percentage' of 'White British' Contributors (i.e. the most-featured 'White' ethnic group), who were also drawn from the very same Social Groups. This included the Social Groups of:

- 'Politician': 1.5 percent (1.5%) of all 'South Asian' Contributors to news stories, and 1.8 percent (1.8%) of all 'White British' Contributors.
- 'Involved group member': 5.8 percent (5.8%) of 'South Asian' Contributors, and 8.9 percent (8.9%) of 'White British' Contributors.
- 'Representative of an official body/organisation (other than any specifically mentioned)': 12 percent (12.0%) of 'South Asian' Contributors and 11.7 percent (11.7%) of 'White British' Contributors.
- 'Random voxpop': 23.6 percent (23.6%) of all 'South Asian' Contributors and 21.1 percent (21.1%) of all 'White British' Contributors to news stories.

Similarly, the 'type of contribution' (i.e. 'clip', 'interview', 'voxpop' or 'live'), that MECs made to the news stories analysed, was very comparable to Contributors classified as 'White':

- 'Clip': 57.7% of all MEC Contributors to news stories did so via a 'clip' and 59.7% of all 'White'

Contributors also participated to news stories via the inclusion of a 'clip'.

- 'Voxpop': 27.6 percent (27.6%) of all MEC Contributors and 23.1 percent (23.1%) of all 'White' Contributors.
- 'Interview': 10.6 percent (10.6%) of all MEC Contributors and 12.0 percent (12.0%) of all 'White' Contributors.
- 'Live': 4.1 percent (4.1%) of all MEC Contributors and 5.2 percent (5.2%) of all 'White' Contributors.

The above findings therefore illustrate and indicate that when members of the MECs participated as 'Contributors' to the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today, their *right* to partake in the *Regional Conversation* of the West Midlands region via the public sphere of the Midlands Today programme was very equitable to their 'White' counterparts, who were also featured as 'Contributors' in the news stories broadcast on this programme. This finding therefore indicates that MEC Contributors to the news stories broadcast on this programme, are not subjected to 'differential' or 'unfavourable' treatment to their 'White' counterparts. Rather, the main problem identified by this study is the overall under-representation and inclusion of MECs in the news stories broadcast. As such, it could be argued that *if* the number of MEC Contributors featured in the news stories broadcast on Midlands Today was more representative of the MEC population of the West Midlands region, then the output of this programme could possibly

have been deemed as possessing the *tenets* of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

However, such a proposition as stated above cannot be validated. As only 13 of the 2708 news stories analysed, which represented just 0.5 percent (0.5%) of all stories could be classified under the main story subject-category of: 'MECs/race-related/Cultural' (as discussed previously), this finding indicates that even if the output of the Midlands Today programme's analysed, included a representative number of Contributors from the MECs (*vis-à-vis* the MEC population of the West Midlands region) in the news stories that it broadcasts, there would still be minimal opportunity for MECs to express an *autonomous expression of their ethnic identity*, because of the minimal number of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today that would be able to facilitate and accommodate such an occurrence. This finding therefore indicates the limited opportunity afforded to MECs to attain the *right* to 'communicate' and the *right* to be 'understood' on subject-matters/topics that pertain specifically to them and that may be of interest/of concern to MECs.

Therefore, in terms of the primary academic concerns of this present study - that the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere via the Midlands Today programme could

facilitate the exchange of discourse between and amongst the different citizens of the West Midlands region by allowing for the *'exchange of information and cultural products'* amongst these citizens, this finding indicates that there is also limited scope/opportunity, via the Midlands Today programme, for the *majority ethnic group* of the West Midlands who are 'White', to gain a better understanding and knowledge of MECs, which could then possibly assist in the formulation of better integration and cohesion amongst *all citizens* of the West Midlands region, via the gaining of 'knowledge' and 'understanding' about *all* citizens of different 'races' and cultures.

The overall pivotal and salient finding of this study which identifies why the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy consistently fails to translate into 'practice' on the Midlands Today programme, which as a consequence, is indicative of why this programme's output consistently fails to be a reflection/depiction/articulation of a multi-ethnic public sphere (as conceived within this current study), is because of the lack of a cultural change in the news production process as employed on the Midlands Today programme; a cultural change that would facilitate and encompass the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy hand-in-hand, and alongside the aims/objectives of the news production process, as employed by this programme.

The findings of this study, as imparted below, strongly substantiate this assertion.

Although 100 percent (100.0%) of the Midlands Today journalists surveyed, agreed with the statement that: *'the better our contacts within the minority ethnic communities, the more likely we are to find more relevant stories/Contributors which reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region'*, almost 68 percent (67.7%) of those surveyed also indicated that *'the carrying out of their day-to-day duties does not leave enough time to try to build-up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities (MECs)'*. This finding therefore indicates that the sourcing of potential MEC Contacts is not an integral 'activity' that is built into the news production process, as employed by the Midlands Today programme.

Furthermore, the participant observations that were undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom indicate that although this programme's news production process involves the daily 'checking' of national and local newspapers to source potential stories/ideas that may possibly be included in this programme, this study found that this ritualistic checking of newspapers, does not include the 'checking' of the minority ethnic press in a bid to assist this programme to successfully achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC

diversity policy. That said, over 90 percent (90.3%) of the Midlands Today journalists surveyed, agreed with the statement that it was *'important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential stories'*, and the majority of respondents amounting to 93.5 percent (93.5%), also agreed that it was *'important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential contacts'*. Therefore these findings indicate that although journalists working on Midlands Today are aware of the rudiments that could be incorporated within the news production process to assist this programme in its pursuit to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output, these findings also indicate that the culture of the news production process as employed on this programme, has not changed significantly enough, to incorporate such activities.

Also, in light of the findings as imparted above, and in light of the finding that 64.5 percent (64.5%) of the Midlands Today journalists surveyed for this present study, believed that *'the BBC should be highly commended for implementing a diversity policy'*, and 74.2 percent (74.2%) of respondents *agreeing* with the statement that *'the BBC is right to set targets in relation to the employment of more people from the minority ethnic communities'*, it would be a fair assertion that this current study did not 'detect' any

notable objections to the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy from amongst the journalists surveyed, that may possibly have contributed to Midlands Today consistently failing to *representatively* reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region in its output. Rather, via the findings of the questionnaire survey and the participant observations undertaken in the Midlands Today newsroom, this study found that there is a high-level of approval and support for the implementation of the pan-BBC diversity policy amongst the journalists; a finding which one could argue is highly unlikely to have occurred in other parts of Europe.

However, similar to a finding of the study conducted by Campion (2005), this study also found that a significant and influential factor contributing to why the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy fails to successfully translate into 'practice', can be attributed to the fact that 'policy-makers' as opposed to 'programme-makers', formulated this policy'; 'policy-makers who unlike 'programme-makers', are not as conversant with the production regimes of programme-making, and so are unlikely to foresee the problematics that inadvertently may ensue (as summarised in this Chapter), *if* a fundamental cultural change in the production process employed by programmes, is not undertaken and as such, is not factored into the requirements of programme-making, to

equip a programme such as *Midlands Today*, with the ability/space to incorporate/implement its pursuit of trying to successfully achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy - within, alongside and hand-in-hand with the aims/objectives of the requirements of this programme's news production process.

Therefore, in terms of the primary academic concern of this current study, which was essentially an examination into the extent to which, the output of the BBC's regional television news programme: *Midlands Today*, could be deemed to be a 'reflection/depiction/articulation' of a multi-ethnic public sphere, the non-formation/establishment of a multi-ethnic public sphere via this programme, can be considered and understood in terms of *Midlands Today* being '1 Composite model', i.e. a *public sphere*, which now has at least 2 separate 'forces' - both *vying* and *competing* for the 'air space' within the now contested public sphere of this programme...

'Force no. 1': the news production process as employed by *Midlands Today*, with the primary aims/objectives of facilitating the production of a daily regional television news programme.

'Force no. 2': the pan-BBC diversity policy, with the primary aims/objectives of reflecting the nation that it serves, in this instance - the West Midlands region.

However, based upon the findings as imparted within this current study, it can be asserted that the *news production process...* is WINNING!

And without a significant cultural change in the news production process as employed by Midlands Today, this current study strongly contends that 'Force No.1': the news production process, will always take priority, supersede and inadvertently *negate* 'Force No.2', i.e. the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC 'paper' diversity policy to *reflect the nation that we serve* (Dyke 2000).

10.2 Further research

Via the analysis of the BBC's regional television news programme: Midlands Today, this present study has provided a much greater understanding of the problematics associated with the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere.

Research of the nature, as conducted by this study should continue as a means of charting the BBC's endeavours to successfully achieve the aims/objectives of its pan-BBC diversity policy - particularly in terms of *reflecting the nation that it serves* 'on-screen'. Such research is necessary, because although the BBC has regularly met the

targets that it has set in relation to increasing its employment of more people from the MECs - up until this current study, there has been no empirical research undertaken to assess this Corporation's endeavours to reflect the nation that it serves 'on-screen'.

It would also be of interest for further research to conduct a study which employs the research methodology of discourse analysis, to enable an examination to be made upon the extent to which, diverse views and opinions are included in the news stories that Contributors to a BBC regional television news programme, such as Midlands Today, are afforded the opportunity of participating to.

10.3 Policy considerations for the BBC

Via the implementation of its pan-BBC diversity policy, the BBC has arguably done more than any other media organisation in the UK, to fully engage with the legal possibilities available to challenge marginalisation. However, as the overall finding of the present study indicates, the lack of a significant cultural change in the news production process as employed by its regional television news programme: Midlands Today, results in this programme consistently failing to achieve the aims/objectives of the policy to *reflect the nation that it serves 'on-screen'*.

Therefore, this present study contends that it is of paramount importance for the BBC to undertake an internal

analysis of how it can ensure that its policy-makers are fully conversant with the production regimes that its programme-makers adhere to and observe. This internal analysis should also be accompanied with the issuing of directives to programme-makers to facilitate their pursuit of trying to achieve the aims/objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy, hand-in-hand and alongside, the news production process as employed by a regional television news programme, thus helping to avoid the pursuit of trying to achieve 'diversity' as being seen as a 'bolted-on extra'!

And although the concerns of this present study specifically focuses upon the analysis of the output of the Midlands Today programme, this study contends that a similar finding is highly-likely to be replicated in the analysis of other BBC regional television news programmes. Therefore, the BBC's successful undertaking of the above-stated policy-considerations, could possibly have positive, far-reaching implications upon minority ethnic communities (MECs) country-wide, being afforded the *right* to 'communicate' and the *right* to be 'understood' on subject-matters/topics that pertain to them, with such a scenario contributing to the development of greater knowledge and understanding amongst the different citizens of the British society; thus possibly contributing to better integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain.

10.4 Conclusions

The present study has provided an understanding of the problematics associated with the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere, via the BBC's regional television news programme - Midlands Today.

The finding of this research study is relevant to both academics and BBC policy-makers/programme-makers. Academics: by providing a greater understanding of the problematics associated with the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere via a BBC regional television news programme, further 'thinking' can be developed upon the conceptualisation of a multi-ethnic public sphere. In terms of the BBC: by providing this Corporation with an understanding of the factors that are deemed to be necessarily implemented, to assist its pursuit of achieving the aims/objectives of its pan-BBC diversity policy to *reflect the nation that it serves 'on-screen'*.

It is therefore hoped that the building upon the findings of this study - by both academics and the BBC, that the possible formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere may move on from being a *notion...* to becoming a *reality*, with the actual formation of a multi-ethnic public sphere assisting in the development of better integration and cohesion amongst the citizens of Britain, via the acquisition of greater knowledge and understanding amongst the different *races/cultures* that make-up the British society - thus leading to a *just and peaceful stimulating society*.

APPENDIX A

BBC Internal Newsletter: Informing staff of the Research Study



MILL MUTTERINGS - 17 AUGUST 2001

Thanks for all the encouraging comments following my appointment as the acting editor of our weekly programmes.

I'm very excited about the prospect of working with the Current Affairs and Parliamentary teams for the next nine months.

Most of this week I've been chasing ambulances for Midlands Today, so I'm still piecing together the "big picture" as far as the future of the programmes is concerned.

One thing's for sure: there'll be substantial changes to the programme that we now know as Midlands Report.

Preparing the programme for the big switch to BBC1 will be my main priority. It's still not clear when that will happen, but the smoke signals say "sooner rather than later".

Also, one of my aims will be to involve more people from the newsroom in the making of our weekly programmes.

I expect to start the job in early September, but I'm open for business now if you have any top ideas. In the meantime I've got a few sick babies to attend to.

Prospective Acting Editor of Weekly Programmes.

FAO Midlands Today Journalists: **"BIG SISTER IS WATCHING YOU!!"**

As part of her PhD thesis at the University of Leicester, Shirley Burgess (of Midlands Report) will be using the Midlands Today 1830 programme as the case study to examine how news stories are selected.

Therefore, as from September, she'll be attending some of the newsroom morning meetings to observe this process. Absolute anonymity will be guaranteed...so please feel free to speak up...

Anyone interested in finding out more can contact Shirley on Ext: 28513

MAILBOX PLANS ON VIEW FOR ANYONE TO SEE IN EMMA/CHAS'S OFFICE...ON THE WALL BEHIND THE DOOR.....

---end---

(A) News Values

- 1** What is meant by the term 'news-worthy' - when applied to potential stories for Midlands Today? *COULD YOU PLEASE PROVIDE A DEFINITION BELOW*

.....

.....

.....

- 2** Which of the following would you consider to be the most important qualities that would give a potential story for Midlands Today 'news-values'?

*PLEASE SELECT YOUR **TOP 5 ONLY**: BY PLACING: 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 ALONGSIDE THOSE CHOSEN.*

(e.g. 1 = MOST IMPORTANT; 2 = NEXT MOST IMPORTANT, and so forth...)

- | | | | |
|--|-------|---|-------|
| a) is of human interest | _____ | j) is informative | _____ |
| b) relevance to the West Midlands region | _____ | k) is interesting | _____ |
| c) exclusivity | _____ | l) has the 'wow... didn't know that!' factor | _____ |
| d) is unusual | _____ | m) concerns 'elite'/important people/celebrities | _____ |
| e) is dramatic | _____ | n) lends itself to good pictures | _____ |
| f) is unique | _____ | o) is of good timing | _____ |
| g) is unexpected/rare | _____ | p) cultural proximity: i.e. easily understandable | _____ |
| h) is topical | _____ | q) negative event in terms of its consequences | _____ |
| i) geographical proximity in relation to the West Midlands region. | _____ | r) Other | _____ |

- 3** How subjective is the 'interpretation' of 'news values'? *PLEASE WRITE IN ONE SCORE ONLY*

1 = Very subjective; 2 = Quite subjective; 3 = Not at all subjective; 4 = Don't know _____

(B) News Sources

- 4** Turning your attentions now to how you find stories for Midlands Today. *Please select from the list below...*

i) the **Top 5 Sources** that are generally used by you,

ii) the **Top 5 Sources** that you think are generally used overall by the Midlands Today

programme. *PLEASE WRITE IN ONE SCORE ONLY FOR EACH SOURCE CHOSEN:*

(1 = most-used source; 2 = 2nd most-used source; 3 = 3rd most-used source; 4 = 4th most-used source; 5 = 5th most-used source).

PLEASE ONLY SELECT THE TOP 5 SOURCES that are...

**i) generally used
by YOU.**

**ii) you think are
used overall by
MIDLANDS TODAY.**

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| a) Press releases from government agencies | _____ | _____ |
| b) Press releases from official/recognised organisations | _____ | _____ |
| c) Press releases from campaigning/interest groups | _____ | _____ |
| d) Press releases from local community groups/organisations | _____ | _____ |
| e) Press releases on research findings of studies conducted | _____ | _____ |
| f) Local Politicians | _____ | _____ |
| g) Police | _____ | _____ |
| h) News Agencies (i.e. the 'Wires') | _____ | _____ |
| i) Other media (i.e. TV, radio, newspapers, magazines etc) | _____ | _____ |
| j) Established newsroom contacts | _____ | _____ |
| k) Personal contacts | _____ | _____ |
| l) Members of the public passing on story ideas..... | _____ | _____ |
| m) 'Personally' originated news stories | _____ | _____ |
| n) OTHER | _____ | _____ |

If 'OTHER' please specify source _____

5 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<i>PLEASE TICK <u>ONE</u> BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT</i>						
a) I use a wide variety of news sources to find stories for Midlands Today.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Good news sources are <u>primary</u> to finding stories for Midlands Today.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <u>More time</u> is needed to search out new news sources for potential stories.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6 Please write in **ONE SCORE ONLY** for each of the following questions:
1 = All of the time; 2 = Some of the times; 3 = Not very often; 4 = Never
 On average, how often would you say...

- a) your job involves you coming up with story ideas for Midlands Today? _____
- b) you put forward story ideas at the 'Monday Morning Ideas Meeting'? _____
- c) your story ideas are commissioned for the main Midlands Today programme at 18:30? _____
- d) that even when 'off duty' you still keep a look-out for potential stories? _____

(C) The BBC's Diversity Policy

7 Have you ever heard about the BBC's diversity policy? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

YES ☐ NO ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐

(if 'No', please go to question 9)

7a) Are you aware, that a part of the pan-BBC diversity policy focuses upon the portrayal/representation and employment of ethnic minorities? PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

YES ☐ NO ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐

8 Please indicate below, how you became aware of the pan-BBC diversity policy in relation to the ethnic minority communities.

PLEASE TICK AS MANY AS APPLY

- i) Read about the policy via documents (hard copies) disseminated by the BBC ☐
- ii) Read about the policy on Gateway (BBC intranet site) ☐
- iii) Completed on-line module(s) on the Gateway site ☐
- iv) Attended a training session **specifically** about the policy ☐
- v) Attended **general** BBC event which included information on the policy ☐
- vi) Heard about the policy informally through colleagues ☐
- vii) Cannot remember how I heard about the policy ☐
- viii) Not sure if I know about the policy ☐
- viii) I do not know anything about the policy *(if you tick this box please go to question9)* ☐
- x) Other (please specify) _____ ☐

8a) Of those you have ticked above, which was the 'Most Effective' and 'Least Effective' way of learning about the pan-BBC diversity policy in relation to ethnic minorities?

Most Effective Least Effective

9 Turning now to the BBC's 'One BBC - Making it Happen' initiative, which aims to bring about a 'cultural change' within the corporation... do you think the BBC's diversity policy is in any way linked to this initiative?

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY YES ☐ NO ☐ DON'T KNOW ☐

(if 'Yes', please explain in what way).

.....

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(D) YOUR VIEWS ON: BBC'S diversity policy and ethnic minorities

10 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PLEASE TICK <u>ONE BOX ONLY</u> FOR EACH STATEMENT						
a) The BBC should be <u>highly commended</u> for implementing a diversity policy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) The <u>purpose</u> of the BBC's diversity policy on ethnic minorities is very clear.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) The dissemination of information to staff, about the pan-BBC diversity policy <u>has not</u> been very good	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The BBC is <u>right</u> to set targets in relation to the employment of more people from the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) The <u>aims and objectives</u> of the BBC's diversity policy (in relation to ethnic minorities) is very clear	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) More effort should be made to ensure that research findings from studies conducted by the BBC's Diversity Centre is passed directly onto staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11 The BBC says that it wants to 'reflect the nation that it serves... in your opinion, what does this mean in

Relation to ethnic minorities? PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW

.....

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.....

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(E) Midlands Today and tthnic minorities

12 PLEASE WRITE IN THE NUMBER 1, 2 or 3 FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1 = YES 2 = NO 3 = DON'T KNOW

a) Do you understand how the BBC's diversity policy on ethnic minorities relates to Midlands Today?	_____
b) Have you ever received any <u>SPECIFIC</u> BBC training on how you could incorporate the aims and objectives of the pan-BBC diversity policy (re. ethnic minorities) into your day-to-day duties?	_____
c) Do you think it would be beneficial for you to receive training on how to incorporate the aims and objectives of the BBC's diversity policy, re: ethnic minorities, into your day to day duties?	_____
d) The BBC has set targets for the number of people from the minority ethnic communities that it wants to employ. Are you aware of the target set for the West Midlands region?	_____
e) Do you think the setting of targets, re: the employment of ethnic minorities is a good idea?	_____
f) Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how the West Midlands region is doing in relation to meeting the targets set for the employment of ethnic minorities?	_____
g) Do you receive regular updates/feedback on how Midlands Today is doing in relation to the representation/inclusion of ethnic minorities on the programme?	_____
h) Overall, do you think Midlands Today has good contacts within the ethnic minority communities?	_____
i) Do you think 'on-air' representation of ethnic minority staff and contributors on Midlands Today is likely to encourage more ethnic minorities to watch the programme?	_____
j) Does the Midlands Today programme fully capitalise on its ethnic minority staff, with regards to helping the programme reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region?	_____
k) Does the employment of ethnic minorities working on Midlands Today:	
i) influence the <u>types</u> of stories covered?	_____
ii) influence the <u>way in which</u> stories involving minority ethnic communities are covered on the programme?	_____
l) Have you ever referred to the BBC's Diversity Centre's website page(s) (on the intranet site - Gateway) to keep up-to-date with the latest research conducted on minority ethnic communities?	_____
m) Have you ever contacted the Diversity Centre Team (based in London) or the English Regions Diversity Team (based in Birmingham), for advice or information on matters concerning the minority ethnic communities?	_____

13 To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
<i>PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT</i>						
a) Midlands Today has <u>very good</u> contacts within the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) The Midlands Today programme is <u>hardly ever</u> contacted by members of the minority ethnic communities with potential story ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) <u>Extra effort</u> needs to be made to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) It would be <u>beneficial</u> for a programme like Midlands Today to generally checkout ethnic minority specialist radio progs. for potential...						
i) stories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) contacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) The better our contacts within the minority ethnic communities,, the more likely we are to find more relevant stories/Contributors which reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) The Midlands Today programme would <u>benefit greatly</u> by having a Correspondent whose main job is to forge good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities, and find relevant stories that reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Generally, it is <u>very difficult</u> to find relevant stories for Midlands Today that reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) It is important to scan ethnic minority press/magazines for potential:						
i) stories	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) contacts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) It is the <u>responsibility of everyone</u> working on Midlands Today to ensure stories reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) The carrying out of day-to-day duties, <u>does not</u> leave enough time to try to build up good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k) Overall, Midlands Today is <u>very proactive</u> in trying to find stories from within the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14 What, more, if anything, do you think can be done to forge good contacts from within the minority ethnic communities?

.....

.....

.....

15 The following questions relate to the News Diversity Database

*PLEASE WRITE IN **ONE SCORE ONLY** FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:*

1 = YES 2 = NO 3 = DON'T KNOW

- i) Do you know about the News Diversity Database? _____ (if 'NO', please go to **question 17**).
- iii) Do you know how to access information from the News Diversity Database? _____ (if 'NO', please go to **question 17**).
- iii) Have you ever used the News Diversity Database to find ethnic minority contributors for Midlands Today? _____

16 To what extent would you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<i>PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT</i>						
The News Diversity Database ...						
i) is an excellent resource for finding appropriate Contributors from the minority ethnic communities for the Midlands Today programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) is a resource hardly ever referred to when looking for people from the MECs to be contributors on the Midlands Today programme	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) needs to be updated more regularly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT						
a) Midlands Today has the potential to help <u>all</u> viewers in the West Midlands region, learn about each others cultures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) The introduction of the BBC's diversity policy, has <u>encouraged</u> people to try to make a <u>greater effort</u> to reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Ethnic minority viewers <u>are not</u> aware that Midlands Today...						
i) wants them to come forward with potential story ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) is making great efforts to ensure stories covered on the programme, reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The more ethnically diverse the workforce on Midlands Today, the more likely ethnically diverse stories will be covered	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) There is a concern that an increased representation of stories featuring ethnic minorities on Midlands Today, could lead to 'White' viewers feeling alienated	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Generally speaking, the minority ethnic communities in the West Midlands <u>do not</u> regard the Midlands Today programme as being 'relevant' to them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) It is <u>realistic</u> to expect a programme like Midlands Today, to be able to <u>fully</u> reflect the cultural ethnic diversity of the West Midlands region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) The way 'race-related' issues are covered on Midlands Today, is <u>likely</u> to influence our 'White' viewers opinions on minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i) I <u>do not</u> believe I am able to have a direct impact on how Midlands Today reflects the cultural ethnic diversity of the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18 Thinking now about the way ethnic minorities are portrayed/represented on Midlands Today... How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Agree	Tend to Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Tend to Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT						
a) Over a weeks output, Midlands Today generally does a <u>very</u> good job at reflecting the cultural ethnic diversity of the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Midlands Today <u>does not</u> feature the minority ethnic communities in a stereotypical manner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) A disproportionate focus is given to problematic and negative issues on Midlands Today, in relation to the minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) The areas (i.e. subject matters), in which ethnic minority people are featured on in Midlands Today, needs to be more wide and varied	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Generally speaking, the portrayal of minority ethnic communities on Midlands Today is <u>fair and balanced</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Since the introduction of the BBC's current diversity policy (in 2000), Midlands Today has <u>improved</u> the way in which minority ethnic communities are portrayed/represented on-screen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Midlands Today needs to <u>improve</u> the way it portrays/ or represents minority ethnic communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Ethnic minorities generally tend to believe there are <u>insufficient</u> ethnic minority people featured on the Midlands Today programme.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19 What, if anything, do you think can/should be done to address the portrayal/representation of minority ethnic communities on the Midlands Today programme? PLEASE EXPLAIN BELOW.

.....

.....

.....

(E) ABOUT YOU

20

Please write the relevant number in the corresponding box for each part.

- a) **Gender** ☐
1 = Male
2 = Female
- b) **Age** ☐
1 = Under 25
2 = 25-34
3 = 35-44
4 = 45-54
5 = 55+
- c) **How would you describe your ethnicity?** ☐
1 = White
2 = Asian/Asian British
3 = Black/Black British
4 = Mixed-race
5 = Other (*please specify*)
- d) **Length of time working on Midlands Today** ☐
1 = Under 1 year
2 = 1 year – 4 years
3 = Over 4 years – under 11 years
4 = 11 years – under 18 years
5 = 18+ years
- e) **Overall length of service with the BBC** ☐
1 = Under 1 year
2 = 1 year – 4 years
3 = Over 4 years – under 11 years
4 = 11 years – under 18 years
5 = 18+ years
2 = No
- f) **Type of Contract** ☐
1 = Staff
2 = Fixed-term – year or more
3 = Fixed-term – less than a year
4 = Freelancer
5 = Casual
6 = Don't know
7 = Other (*please specify*)
- g) **Grade** ☐
1 = SBJ
2 = BJ
3 = BA
4 = Other (*please specify*)

h) **Job on Midlands Today**☐

(if you sometimes perform different roles in the newsroom, then please choose the position which best describes your “substantive” position on Midlands Today)

1 = Producer

2 = Correspondent

3 = Reporter

4 = Presenter

5 = Planning desk

6 = Forward Planning

7 = Researcher

8 = Broadcast Assistant

9 = Other (*please specify*)

i) **How often does your job involve you appearing on-screen?**☐

1 = All of the time

2 = Some of the times

3 = Not very often

4 = Never

j) **What is your highest academic qualification?**☐

1 = Postgraduate Degree

2 = Undergraduate Degree

3 = A Levels

4 = GCSEs/O Levels

5 = Other (*please specify*)

k) **Did you complete a postgraduate course in Journalism?**☐

1 = Yes

2 = No

l) **How useful would you say that the training you undertook to become a journalist, has prepared you for life as a journalist working in a multi-ethnic society?**☐

1 = Very useful

2 = Fairly useful

3 = Not at all useful

4 = Don't know

5 = I have not trained as a Journalist

m) **Prior to joining Midlands Today had you ever worked in a newsroom?**

(tv, radio or newspapers)

PLEASE TICK ONE BOX ONLY

YES ☐

NO ☐

DON'T KNOW ☐

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. It is much appreciated..
Shirley Burgess.

Television News Codebook

723

(02)		The BBC's DMD uses the general category of 'Emergency services/Crime/Courts'. Cottle (1990) had five categories under the main heading of 'crime'. Ericson et al., (1991) looked at aspects of crime in television news, under the heading of 'Law and order'. Harrison (2000) had the category of 'Law, order and crime stories '. This current study takes the above studies into account, as well as developing new categories for specific 'new' types of crimes. For example ASBO's (Anti-Social Behaviour Disorders', 'War on Terrorism'.
07-18	CRIME	
07	Police Operations	Cottle (1990) had a sub-category called 'Specific Crime/Police Operation'. Having studied the Midlands Today programme prior
		to conducting the content analysis, it was decided to have 'Police Operation' as a sub-category in its own right.
08	Non-violent crime	Such as fraud, theft, robberies, vandalism, hoaxes, drug dealing, hooliganism.
09	Violent crime. Such as murder, rape, violent robberies with weapons, hit and run/abductions/arson etc..	Would include murder, stabbings, arson, rape etc.. Acts/attempted acts of terrorism, will not be coded under this category but will be coded as (19). Neither will gun crime/shootings be coded under this category, but will be coded as below, i.e. (10) or (11).
10	Gun Crime/Shootings (General) Story does not focus on MEC	Gun crime stories that are not related to the MEC
11	Gun crime/shootings (involving ethnic minorities, but not specifically related to the 'Aston' shootings)	Stories that involve the MEC, but are not connected to the Aston shootings.
12	Aston shootings (specifically)	News reports would include the police investigations, enquiries, coroners report, inquest, funerals of the murdered teenagers.
13	Football violence	People involved in football hooliganism, police looking for football hooligans.
14	ASBO's (Anti-Social Behaviour Disorders)	
15	General police inquiry/investigation	
16	Police Crime/Malpractice	
17	Court/criminal proceedings: trials, appeals, coroner's verdict.	Stempel (1989) included this category and Gans (1980) included 'Scandals and investigations'.
18	Other	

(03) 19-25	TERRORISM/'WAR' IN IRAQ	This category has been included to take into account events since September 11th, 2001. Harrison (2000), had a category of 'Acts of violence and control of violence', which included 'terrorist' attacks. Category also includes any stories relating to the 'war' in Iraq.
19	Acts/attempted/alleged acts of Terrorism	
20	War on Terrorism	
21	War in Iraq	Where the report is specifically about the war in Iraq.
22	Demonstrations for peace, against the war in Iraq.	For example, anti-war demonstrations on the war in Iraq. All other types of demonstrations will be coded under the general demonstrations category
23	Terrorism and Ethnic Minorities	Where the main focus of the story connects terrorism to ethnic minorities.
24	Soldiers killed/injured in Iraq/soldiers receiving medical care in the West Midlands.	
25	Other	
(04) 26-29	MILITARY	This category does not include government policies enacted, re. the military, but focuses on informational stories about soldiers at home and abroad.
26	Local soldiers serving abroad	
27	General military stories	
28	Commemorations, such as Poppy day etc..	
29	Other	
(05) 30-32	DEMONSTRATIONS/PROTESTS	
30	Demonstrations - peaceful	
31	Demonstrations - violent	
32	Other	
(06) 33-43	POLITICAL ADMINISTRATION	Main category used by Cottle (1990) was called 'Political Administration'. Harrison (2000) had a main category 'Parliamentary Politics', Hartley (1989) used the generic category of 'politics'. As this study is on regional news, it was opted to use the general category used by Cottle (1990), with sub-categories being informed by Cottle's (1990) study, as well as others.
33	Parliamentary legislative	Where the story is on national legislation.
34	Parliamentary party politics	
35	Regional Party Politics	
36	Political Elite visiting.	This sub-category is informed by Cottle (1990).

37	General governmental conflicts and disagreements: between government and other parties/inter-party conflict.	Gans (1980) used the category 'Government conflicts and disagreements'. Harrison (2000) widened this category to include 'all parties'. Glasgow University Media Group (1976) listed each party separately. This study adopts Harrisons (2000) interpretation of this sub-category.
38	Everyday local government activities.	Where the focus is purely on the local government and not on central government's actions relating to local government.
39	Personnel changes in parliament.	Gans (1980) used the category 'Government personnel changes'. Harrison (2000), widened this category to include Parliamentary changes.
40	Government reports of official information and statistics, that impact directly upon the West Midlands	Wallis and Baran (1990) included this category. Would include statistics (See Wallis and Baran.
41	Politicians' personal lives	See the Glasgow University media Group (1976); Harrison (2000). Examples are David Mellor and Antonia de Sanchez; Clare Short and love-child being revealed. Hamiltons alleged involvement with Al Fahid. George Galloway accusations of him receiving money from Saddam Hussein's government. If the story is devoted to the implications for their party, then it would be coded as 35 (i.e. general conflicts and disagreements between govt. and other parties or inter-party conflict).
42	Party conflicts, specifically about 'War' in Iraq.	
43	Other	
(07) 44-54	LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES	Services provided by local government for the West Midlands Region. Category and sub-categories adapted from Cottle (1990).
44	General Local government services (does not include any of the specific services listed below)	
45	Education	Direct impact of government policies on education.
46	Social Services/Welfare Provision	
47	Environment/Pollution	
48	Health	Where government has enacted policies that have a direct impact on the provision of health.
49	Housing	
50	Roads/Transport/Planning	Government policies have a direct impact on these services, such as speculation as to whether the M6 will have a toll road, following the introduction of tolls in London.

51	Emergency services, e.g. Police, Fire etc	
52	Prisons	
53	Probation services	
54	Other	
(08) 55-58	TRANSPORT	General subject category used by the BBC in its DMD, but it has been extended with sub-categories for this current study. This category will include all transport related stories, other than those that relate to transport services provided by local government.
55	Aeroplanes/airports	
56	Railtracks/trains	
57	Roads/cars/traffic problems	
58	Other	
(09) 59-62	EDUCATION	Category used by the BBC for the DMD. This generic category of education was also used by Harrison (2000).
59	Education and schools, colleges and universities	General stories relating to educational establishments, i.e. schools, universities, colleges etc..
60	Exam results	
61	Official reports and statistics	Sub-category used by Harrison (2000). Non-governmental reports on education.
62	Other	
(10) 63-69	HEALTH	Harrison (2000) used the generic category of 'health'. Stempel (1989) labelled this category as 'Health and welfare'.
63	Private health organisations, including matters to do with the privatisation of hospitals/opting out of government control	Sub-category used by Harrison (2000).
64	General health stories focusing on particular conditions, such as obesity, diabetes, skincare.	
65	Health outbreaks/'scares'.	
66	Official reports/statistics on health.	Non-government reports on health.
67	Medical discoveries/medical 'firsts'.	Stempel (1989) included the category of 'Science and invention'. Examples are stories about breakthroughs in health and medical care.
68	Medical malpractices.	
69	Other	

(11) 70-77	ECONOMY/BUSINESS/ (UN)/EMPLOYMENT	BBC uses the category of: Economy/Business/ Industry in its DMD. A generic category of 'economics' has been used in studies such as: Carroll (1989); Hartley (1989); Stempel (1989); Harrison (2000). A general category of Economy/Employment was used by Cottle (1990). A similar approach was adopted for this study, as it was felt that regional news stories will often tie in un/employment with the economy, in terms of job losses or businesses creating new jobs.
70	Business/Industry (general)	General stories about business/industry – not about any one particular business/industry.
71	Business/Industry (specific)	Stories about a specific business/industry
72	Economics and Government	A similar category was used by Harrison (2000). This relates to the direct impact of government policies or government action, and would include for example, increases or decreases in tax.
73	Employment	For example, jobs being created.
74	Industrial Action	For example, strike action/threat of a strike.
75	Industrial Conditions	For example, where employees are unhappy with their working conditions – but are not taking strike action. Or where they are in talks with bosses over pay increases.
76	Businesses closing down/Redundancies.	
77	Other	
(12) 78-83	SCIENCE/ENVIRONMENT/ AGRICULTURE	BBC's DMD uses a general category of Environment/Agriculture. Therefore, decided to have a separate main category for this. Sub-categories in this section have been influenced by other studies, e.g. Cottle (1990); Harrison (2000).
78	Science	
79	Environment	Including pollution
80	Agriculture/farming	
81	Conservation issues	General stories on the state of the environment
82	Animal-related issues.	Such as foxhunting, badgers etc..
83	other	
(13) 84-90	IMMIGRATION/ASYLUM SEEKERS/REFUGEES	This general category, encompasses sub-categories to do with immigration/asylum seekers etc.
84	Asylum Seekers/refugees (general).	Story which features Asylum seekers, but the main focus of the story is neither negative nor positive – just general.

85	Asylum Seekers/refugees (positive)	Where the main focus of the story is on a positive aspect of having asylum seekers or refugees in this country.
86	Asylum Seekers/refugees (negative)	Where the main focus of the story is on negativity to do with Asylum Seekers. For example, a Doctor in the West Midlands refusing to see Asylum Seekers because he felt they were a drain on his resources/services. Or residents protesting against plans to build an Asylum Seekers centre in their area.
87	Immigration (general)	Where it is a general story, not focusing on a 'negative'/positive aspect of immigration, but immigration is the main focus of story
88	Immigration (positive)	Where the story is on a positive aspect of immigrants being in this country.
89	Immigration (negative)	Where the main focus of the story is on 'negative' aspects of immigration. For example, 'too many numbers' coming into the country.
90	Other	
(14) 91-98	MEC/RACE-RELATED/CULTURAL	BBC'S DMD combines the category of race/religion. It was decided to separate these 2 categories for this current study to allow for more intricate analysis.
91	MEC: Race-related/Cultural: (General).	Where the story is neither positive nor negative and the main focus of the story is on some general matter pertaining to this subject/topic area.
92	MEC: Race-related/Cultural: (Positive).	Where the story focuses primarily on racial matters that are 'positive'.
93	MEC: Race-related/Cultural: (Negative).	Where the story focuses primarily on racial matters that are negative/problematic. For example, Midlands Today programme had a report on a story where there was controversy over a local authority banning an art gallery from showing images of 2 world-famous western landmarks, which had both been given a 'Muslim' make-over. Because there were fears that they would upset both Muslims and Christians. (Statue of Liberty, and images of the Houses of Parliament).

94	MEC: Race-related/cultural – specifically Muslims: (General).	
95	MEC: Race-related/cultural – specifically Muslims (Positive).	
96	MEC: Race-related/cultural – specifically ‘Muslims’: (Negative).	
97	MECs: Racism/discrimination.	
98	Other.	
(15) 99-101	RELIGION	Harrison (2000), had a main category of ‘religion’.
99	General Religious stories	Where the main focus of the story is on some aspect of religion (other than the Muslim faith or other MEC’s).
100	Religious stories focusing primarily on the Muslim faith	
101	Other	
(16) 102	SPORTS	Sporting stories other than fixtures or results, and where the story is not part of the sports slot on the programme, but is part of the main news bulletin.
(17) 103-112	CONSUMER/LEISURE INTERESTS	This category was used by Cottle (1990), with sub-categories under this. Cottle’s (1990) study was centred around the Regional News genre, and so this has helped to inform the following categories under this section.
103	Consumer/Safety.	This was a generic category used by Harrison (2000), to code inventions, or new technological breakthroughs. Also used by Cottle (1990).
104	Seasonal Festivities.	Festivities – such as Christmas, New Year, Easter (but does not include MEC festivities such as Carnival, Ramadan, Navarati, Diwali etc.. Such festivities would be classed under (92).
105	Community/group as celebration: Seasonal festivities.	Stories that focus specifically on ‘ethnic minority community’ type festivals, such as Carnival, Diwali, Navrati, Ramadan etc..
106	Historic sites, monuments, buildings.	
107	Rural/past.	i.e. past traditions/pursuits or crafts.
108	Leisure activities/leisure/exhibitions.	
109	Heritage type stories.	
110	Entertainment.	Would feature stories on the Arts, such as film, theatre, opera
111	BBC in-house promotions.	This would include promoting other BBC programmes, such as ‘Comic Relief’; ‘BBC Sports Personality of the Year’; ‘be a weather presenter’ – Midlands Today and competitions.
112	Other	

<p>(18)</p> <p>113-123</p>	<p>LIGHT: HUMAN INTEREST</p>	<p>Langer (1987) referred to this category as ‘soft news on television. Different studies have categorised light human interest type of stories in different ways. For example, Grundy (1980), Brunsdon and Morley (1978), Gerdes (1980). Cottle (1990) had a generic human interest category with 15 different sub-categories but did not divide human interest stories into separate ‘light’ and ‘serious’ categories. This study divides the Human Interest news items into ‘light’ and ‘serious’, and places Cottle’s (1990) sub-categories, as well as the sub-categories specifically devised for this study into the relevant categories.</p>
113	Animals	Unusual, cute, fluffy animals etc..
114	Children/babies	Unusually talented
115	Royalty	Royalty was listed as ‘soft’ news by Langer (1987).
116	Celebrities/famous people/’stars’	
117	Eccentric/Bizarre individuals/events	
118	Brave/Adventurous Deeds	
119	Enthusiasts/Hobbies	This refers to things that are not commonplace
120	Unusual talents/events	
121	Day in the Life of...	Story focuses on a day in the life of an individual, who does something unusual to most people
122	Charity and Charitable Pursuits	
123	Other.	
<p>(19)</p> <p>124-129</p>	<p>SERIOUS: HUMAN INTEREST</p>	<p>This is a distinct category from ‘light’ human interest stories, which tend to focus upon the trivia (Harrison, 2000). This category reflects the more serious side of human-interest stories. However, similar to ‘light’ human interest stories, there tends to be a focus upon the ‘individual’.</p>
124	Children	Unfortunate, brave, children (Cottle 1990). An example of such a story was the baby girl from the West Midlands who contracted meningitis and lost all of her limbs.
125	Animals	Animals who have been badly treated neglected, abandoned etc..
126	Individual or community action	Stories about members of the community or individuals campaigning for their rights, petitioning parliament, lobbying etc. This category was used by Harrison (2000).
127	Ordinary people over-coming adversity/showing strength of character.	
128	Ordinary people showing great deeds of kindness.	
129	Other	

APPENDIX D

Television News Coding Frame

A Programme information:

1.1	Programme number	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(1-3)
1.2	Transmission date	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(4-11)

B Headlines: General main subject category – (refer to TV news codebook for code of main subject):

2.1	Headline no. 1	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(12-13)
2.2	Headline no. 2	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(14-15)
2.3	Headline no.3	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(16-17)
2.4	Headline no.4	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(18-19)

C Story Information:

3.1	Total number of stories in programme (up to 25)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(20-21)
3.2	Order of story in programme: (01) = Top story, 02, 03 and so forth... (up to 25)	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(22-23)
3.3	General topic of news story, i.e. generic code for item: (refer to television news codebook, Appendix C).	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(24-25)
3.4	Sub-group category of news story: (refer to television news codebook, Appendix C).	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(26-28)
3.5	Primary Definer of news story:	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>	(29-30)

- (01) Government/Politician.
- (02) Local Authority Representative.
- (03) Police.
- (04) Other emergency services (ambulance, fire).
- (05) Military.
- (06) Courts.
- (07) Coroner's Office.
- (08) Trade Union Representative.
- (09) Expert.
- (10) Business Spokesperson.
- (11) Representative of an official/recognised body/organisation (other than any identified specifically).
- (12) Campaigner/Protester.
- (13) Community group worker
- (14) Involved Group member.
- (15) Individual in Focus (i.e. 'ordinary' person who has caught the media's attention)..
- (16) MEC Church leader/member/representative.
- (17) Muslim representative of an organisation./mosque.
- (18) Celebrity..
- (19) Witness.
- (20) Victim.
- (21) Midlands Today defining the story (often used to conduct a poll vote with viewer interaction or to get viewers' comments on a news story broadcast on the programme)..
- (22) More than 1 primary definer.
- (23) None of the above.
- (24) Not possible to specify the primary definer of the news story.

- 3.6 **Is the main focus of the story on some aspect of ‘race’ or culture?** ☐ (31)
(1) YES (0) NO
- 3.7 **In what context does the story focus on some aspect of race or culture?** ☐ (32)
(1) Celebratory (i.e. divali, carnival, Ramadan etc).
(2) Positive story.
(3) Problem-orientated story.
(4) Alleged racism..
(5) Other aspects.
(0) N/A: Story does not focus on some aspect of race or culture.
- 3.8 **If story is on a criminal court case – what is the race(s) of the main subject(s) of the story?** ☐ (33)
(1) White
(2) South Asian
(3) African
(4) Caribbean
(5) Mixed
(6) Other
(0) Story is not on a court case
- 3.9 **Is the main ‘subject’ of the criminal court case the...** ☐ (34)
(1) ‘Victim’? (2) ‘Aggressor’ (0) N/A: Story is not about a court case.
- 3.10 **Is the story item part of a ‘Series’?** ☐ (35)
(1) YES (0) NO
- 3.11 **Is the story item part of a ‘Special report’?** ☐ (36)
(1) YES (0) NO
- 3.12 **Total duration of story item, includes presenter/reporter/contributor(s)** ☐☐☐ (37-39)
(starts from 5 seconds, goes up in 1 second increments, with a maximum of 7 mins, i.e. 420 secs)
- 3.13 **Geographical Location of story:** ☐☐ (40-41)
(1) Birmingham & Solihull.
(2) Black Country.
(3) Coventry.
(4) Derbyshire (areas that border onto WM’s).
(5) Gloucestershire.
(6) Herefordshire.
(7) Leicestershire (areas that border onto WM’s such as Hinckley, Rugby).
(8) Shropshire.
(9) Shrewsbury.
(10) Staffordshire.
(11) Warwickshire.
(12) Wolverhampton.
(13) Worcestershire.
(14) Pan-regional.
(15) Outside of region.
(16) Different country.
(0) Location not known.
- D** **Presentational Format of Story (GENERAL):** ☐ (42)
4.1 General categories:
(1) **Totally Restricted:** (i.e. no ‘outside’ voices/images).
(2) **Partly Restricted:** (i.e. no ‘outside’ voices but includes visual references).
(3) **Limited:** (includes outside voices).
(4) **Extended:** (i.e. ‘live’ includes outside voices).
(0) **Other:** news item delivered in a manner different to any of the above.

- E** **Presentational Format of Story (SPECIFIC):** ☐☐ (43-44)
- 4.2 Specific categories:
- a) Totally Restricted (i.e. no 'outside' voices/images):**
- (01) Direct verbal account of story by news presenter, (i.e. to camera).
(read with Midlands Today logo in background).
 - (02) Reporter – 'live' in the studio (2-way with news presenter).
 - (03) Reporter – 'live' on location (2-way with news presenter).
- b) Partly Restricted:**
(i.e. verbal account by news presenter/reporter with visual references such as footage, graphics - but no 'outside voices', i.e. Contributors).
- (04) News presenter & 'stills'/graphics in the backdrop of shot.
 - (05) News presenter: out-of-vision (i.e. OOV) & film footage.
 - (06) Reporter – 'live' in the studio (doing a 2-way with news presenter - includes graphics &/or film footage in the backdrop of shot).
 - (07) Reporter – 'live' on location (2-way with news presenter - includes graphics &/or film footage in the backdrop of shot).
 - (08) Reporter (out-of-vision, i.e. OOV) & film footage.
 - (09) Reporter (in-vision) & film footage.
- c) Limited: (includes outside voices)**
- (10) Reporter (in-vision) & package, i.e. includes 'outside voices', possibly visual refs..., such as graphics/stills.
 - (11) Reporter (out-of-vision, i.e. OOV) & package, i.e. includes 'outside voices', possibly also visual references, such as graphics/stills.
 - (12) Reporter 'live' in studio/location with pre-recorded interview(s)/package(s).
 - (13) Reporter & film package (pre-recorded) of group interviews/discussion.
- d) Extended: (i.e. 'live' outside voices)**
- (14) News presenter with Contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location – no package(s) included.
 - (15) News presenter with Contributor(s) 'live' in studio/location – includes package(s).
 - (16) Reporter 'live' on location with Contributor(s), 'live' - no package(s) included.
 - (17) Reporter 'live' on location with Contributor(s) 'live' - includes package(s).
 - (18) News presenter/reporter 'live', conducting interviews in a group discussion with Contributors participating 'live' in the discussion
- e) (19) Other – news item presented in a different manner to any of the above.**
- 4.3. Is story a part of a 'cluster' (different reporters producing reports about one topic)? ☐ (45)
- E** **Details on the reporter of story:**
- 5.1 **Gender of reporter:** ☐ (46)
- (1) MALE (2) FEMALE (0) N/A: Story delivered by presenter.
- 5.2 **Ethnicity of reporter:** ☐ (47)
- (1) WHITE (2) SOUTH ASIAN (3) AFRICAN (4) CARIBBEAN
(5) MIXED (6) OTHER (0) N/A: Story delivered by presenter.
- F** **Details on each Contributor to news item:**
- 6.1 **Gender of Contributor:** ☐ (48)
- (1) MALE (2) FEMALE (0) N/A: No Contributor involvement in story.
- 6.2 **Ethnicity of Contributor to story:** ☐☐ (49-50)
- (01) White British. (08) South East Asian.
 - (02) White European. (09) Mediterranean.
 - (03) White Non-European. (10) Middle Eastern.
 - (04) South Asian. (11) Other – White.
 - (05) African. (12) Other – Black.
 - (06) Caribbean. (00) No Contributor involvement in story.
 - (07) Mixed.

- 6.3 **Is the race of the Contributor directly relevant to the contribution they're making to the story?** ☐ (51)
- (1) YES (2) NO (0) N/A: No Contributor involvement in news story.
- 6.4 **Social Group of Contributor participating in a news story:** ☐☐ (52-53)
- (01) Government/Politician,/Councillor..
 (02) Local authority representative.
 (03) Police.
 (04) Other emergency services (ambulance, fire/military).
 (05) Military.
 (06) Trade Union representative.
 (07) Business Spokesperson (of business being discussed in news story).
 (08) Expert/Professional (excluding those working in the race relations industry).
 (09) Expert/Professional working in the race relations industry.
 (10) MEC: Community leader/group worker.
 (11) Involved Group Member.
 (12) Campaigner/Protester.
 (13) Representative of an official body/organisation other than any specifically mentioned. This category would include for example, include: teachers, doctors, solicitors, RSPCA.
 (14) Community organisation representative (general).
 (15) Community organisation representative (MEC).
 (16) Celebrity.
 (17) Royalty.
 (18) Individual(s) in focus/participant of community event.
 (19) Witness.
 (20) Victim.
 (21) Relative/family friend.
 (22) Random 'voxpop' (participant).
 (23) Pre-arranged 'voxpop' (participant).
 (24) Other.
 (00) No Contributor involvement in news story.
- 6.5 **Age of Contributor:** ☐ (54)
- (1) 16 and under.
 (2) 17-29
 (3) 30-39
 (4) 40-49
 (5) 50-59
 (6) 60-69
 (7) 70+
 (0) No Contributor involvement in news story.
- 6.6 **Type of contribution made by Contributor to the news story** ☐ (55)
- (1) CLIP (i.e. 1 comment used from interviewee).
 (2) INTERVIEW (i.e. more than 1 comment from interviewee).
 (3) VOXPOP.
 (4) LIVE.
 (0) No Contributor involvement in news story.
- 6.7 **Duration of each individual contribution used in story** (in secs) ☐☐☐ (56-58)
 (starts from 1 second and goes up in 1 second increments up to 4 mins, i.e. total of 240 secs).
 (insert 000 if no contributors used in story).
- 6.8 **Total duration of all Contributors used in a news story** (in secs). ☐☐☐ (59-61)
 (Insert "000" if no contributor involvement).
 (starts from 3 secs and goes up in 1 sec intervals up to 4 mins, i.e. total of 240 secs).
- 6.9 **Total number of Contributors to the news story:** (insert 00 if no contributors to story). ☐☐ (62-63)

G Interactive story item:

Viewers are encouraged to...

- | | | | |
|------|--|--------------------------|------|
| 7.1 | Take part in a phone poll on the reported story?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (64) |
| 7.2 | Write in to Mids Today progr. address with comments on the story?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (65) |
| 7.3 | Text/email in their comments on the story ?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (66) |
| 7.4 | Access BBC website page to get involved in on-line discussion about the topic of the story? <input type="checkbox"/>
(1) YES (0) NO | | (67) |
| 7.5 | Access BBC website page to find out more on aspects of news story? <input type="checkbox"/>
(1) YES (0) NO | | (68) |
| 7.6 | Access BBC website to read fact-sheet relating to story reported?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (69) |
| 7.7 | Telephone no. given out to help in a police investigation?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (70) |
| 7.8 | Telephone no. given out in relation to organisation featured in story?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (71) |
| 7.9 | Get in touch and send in details of 'their' story?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (72) |
| 7.10 | Write in to enter a competition?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (73) |
| 7.11 | Email/text in to enter a competition?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (74) |
| 7.12 | Go to website for more information on competition?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (75) |
| 7.13 | More than one way viewer invited to participate?
(1) YES (0) NO | <input type="checkbox"/> | (76) |
| 7.14 | No invitation for viewer interaction in story? (Enter '2'). | <input type="checkbox"/> | (77) |

APPENDIX E

List of Midlands Today Programmes analysed: (Broadcast weekdays – Monday to Friday, from 18:0:30-19:00).

Tape no.	Month	Date
1	November 02	Mon 04/11/02 – Fri 08/11/02
2		Mon 11/11/02 – Fri 15/11/02
3		Mon 18/11/02 – Fri 22/11/02
4		Mon 25/11/02 – Fri 29/11/02
5	December 02	Mon 02/12/02 – Fri 06/12/02
6		Mon 09/12/02 – Fri 13/12/02 (Fri 13/12/02 – not analysed because tape would not playback).
7		Mon 16/12/02 – Fri 20/12/02
		Mon 23/12/02 – Fri 27/12/02 (all short progs – so not analysed)
8	January 03	Wed 01/01/03 – Fri 03/01/03 (Mon 30/12/02 & Tues 31/12/02 – not analysed because they are short programmes).
9		Mon 06/01/03 – Fri 10/01/03
10		Mon 13/01/03 – Fri 17/01/03
11		Mon 20/01/03 – Fri 24/01/03
12		Mon 27/01/03 – Fri 31/01/03
13	February 03	Mon 03/02/03 – Fri 07/02/03
14		Mon 10/02/03 – Fri 14/02/03
15		Mon 17/02/03 – Fri 21/02/03
16		Mon 24/02/03 – Fri 28/02/03
17	March 03	Mon 03/03/03 – Fri 07/03/03
18		Mon 10/03/03 – Fri 14/03/03
19		Mon 17/03/03 – Fri 21/03/03
20		Mon 24/03/03 – Fri 28/03/03
21	June 03	Mon 02/06/03 – Fri 06/06/03
22		Mon 09/06/03 – Fri 13/06/03
23		Mon 16/06/03 – Fri 20/06/03
24		Mon 23/06/03 – Fri 27/06/03
25	July 03	Mon 30/06/03 – Fri 04/07/03
26		Mon 07/07/03 – Fri 11/07/03
27		Mon 14/07/03 – Fri 18/07/03
28		Mon 21/07/03 – Fri 25/07/03
29		Mon 28/07/03 – Fri 01/08/03
30	August 03	Mon 04/08/03 – Fri 08/08/03
31		Mon 11/08/03 – Fri 15/08/03
32		Mon 18/08/03 – Fri 22/08/03
33		Mon 25/08/03 – Fri 29/08/03

contd./...

APPENDIX E (contd.)
List of Midlands Today Programmes analysed.

Tape no.	Month	Date
34	November 03	Mon 03/11/03 – Fri 07/11/03
35		Mon 10/11/03 – Fri 14/11/03
36		Mon 17/11/03 – Fri 21/11/03
37		Mon 24/11/03 – Fri 28/11/03
38	December 03	Mon 01/12/03 – Fri 05/12/03
39		Mon 08/12/03 – Fri 12/12/03
40		Mon 15/12/03 – Fri 19/12/03
41		Mon 22/12/03 – Fri 26/12/03 (short progs on Wed 24 th , Fri 26 th ; no prog. on 25 th so this week not analysed for study)
42		Mon 29/12/03 – Fri 02/01/04 (short progs – so not analysed for this study)
43	January 04	Mon 05/01/04 – Fri 09/01/04
44		Mon 12/01/04 – Fri 16/01/04
45		Mon 19/01/04 – Fri 23/01/04
46		Mon 26/01/04 – Fri 30/01/04
47	February 04	Mon 02/02/04 – Fri 06/02/04
48		Mon 09/02/04 – Fri 13/02/04
49		Mon 16/02/04 – Fri 20/02/04
50		Mon 23/02/04 – Fri 27/02/04
51	March 04	Mon 01/03/04 – Fri 05/03/04
52		Mon 08/03/04 – Fri 12/03/04
53		Mon 15/03/04 – Fri 19/03/04
54		Mon 22/03/04 – Fri 26/03/04
55		Mon 29/03/04 – Fri 02/04/04
56	March 08	Mon 03/03/08 - Fri 07/03/08

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: No.1

The following questions were used as interview guides for the following managerial personnel, whose job involves: formulating/devising/implementing/monitoring the BBC's policy on 'Cultural implementing Diversity' within this organisation

In addition, any salient points made by the interviewees were picked up on and developed with further questioning.

- Governor for English Regions.
- Controller of English Regions.
- Head of Regional and Local Programmes (West Midlands).
- Head of Diversity.
- Diversity Editor: English Regions.
- Diversity Advisor: English Regions.

SECTION A: Background information on the interviewee:

- 1) Can you begin by giving me your name and job title?
- 2) How long have you been in this current position?
- 3) What does your job entail?
- 4) What role do you play in the implementation of the BBC's diversity policy?

SECTION B: Questions on the BBC's overall 'Diversity Policy':

- 1) Can you explain to me, what the BBC's overall policy is on Diversity?
- 2) When was this current Diversity policy introduced by the BBC?
- 3) Why did the BBC decide to implement this current Diversity policy?
- 4) How confident are you that this policy will work - because the BBC did have a policy during the 'Birt' era saying that "... by the Year 2000 we want to be reflecting the nation that we serve - it didn't happen!? What if anything, is different about this policy?

SECTION C: Questions specifically relating to the BBC's 'Cultural Diversity' policy:

- 1) How would you define the term 'Cultural Diversity'?
- 2) What are the main aims and objectives of the BBC's policy on Cultural Diversity, in relation to the ethnic minority communities?
- 3) How is information about this policy (aims/objectives etc.) disseminated to staff?
- 4) Do you have any way(s) of monitoring or measuring the effectiveness of the message, in terms of how it is received by staff?
- 5) Why is this policy so important to the BBC - because at the end of the day, the minority ethnic communities, are still very much in the minority?

SECTION D: Diversity Policy in relation to BBC Birmingham and ethnic minorities:

- 1) What are the specific targets/objectives set for BBC Birmingham?
- 2) How were these targets arrived at?
- 3) Do you think these targets/objectives are realistic?
(pick up on answer)
- 4) How do you monitor the aims/objectives?
- 5) Overall, how is BBC Birmingham faring in relation to the meeting of those targets/objectives set-down for year end?
- 5a) And, how does Birmingham compare with other BBC English Regions in terms of meeting the targets set for this region?

SECTION E: Cultural Diversity and ethnic minorities in relation to Midlands Today:

- 1) What are the aims/objectives/targets set-down for Midlands Today, in relation to Cultural Diversity?
- 2) How are these aims/objectives monitored?
- 3) Have any new policies/initiatives been put in place to assist the programme in relation to achieving Cultural Diversity?
- 4) And is Midlands Today on schedule to achieving these targets within the time-scale laid down, i.e. by the end of this year?
If **"yes"** - were the targets not ambitious enough?
If **"no"** - were the targets too ambitious?
- 5) The BBC speaks of 'cultural diversity...' of
'representing the nation it serves...', but what does this 'mantra' mean to you, in real tangible ways..., for example, what in your opinion should Midlands Today **"look like"** and **"sound like"**, in order for you to say: "yes", this is a true reflection of the cultural diversity of the West Midlands region?
- 6) Although the BBC, is not a 'slave' to advertisers, it does have to compete for audiences with the Independent sector, so given that, how realistic is it for the BBC to try to cater for minority interests/concerns, to include minority voices, in a programme which quite clearly seeks to attain maximum audience figures in a region where the majority is still 'white'?
- 7) With regards to Cultural Diversity and Midlands Today, is there anything more that you think, could and should be done in relation to...
 - a) its output, and
 - b) its workforce

APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: No.2

Interviewees: Personnel working directly on the Midlands Today regional news programme:

- Editor (Output Editor)
- Head of News Gathering (Input Editor)
- Midlands Today Producers for the 18:30 weekday programme
- Broadcast Assistant in newsroom responsible for completing the Diversity Monitoring Database form

SECTION A: Background information on the interviewee:

- 1) Can you begin by giving me your name and job title?
- 2) How long have you been in this current position?
- 3) What does your job entail?
- 4) What role do you play in the implementation of the BBC's Diversity policy?

SECTION B: Questions on the BBC's overall 'Diversity Policy':

- 1) Can you explain to me, what the BBC's overall policy is on Diversity?
- 2) When was this current Diversity policy introduced by the BBC?
- 3) Why did the BBC decide to implement this current Diversity policy?

SECTION C: Questions relating to Midlands Today and Cultural Diversity:

- 1) What is the policy on Cultural Diversity?
- 2) BBC speaks of Cultural Diversity... of wanting to "reflect the nation it serves", what does that mean to you in terms of your programme?
- 3) So, what role do you play in the implementation of the BBC's Diversity policy on Midlands Today?
- 4) How is Midlands Today faring in relation to the meeting of its targets?

SECTION D: Questions relating to the news-gathering process:

- 1) How do you decide upon which stories to cover/feature in the programme?
- 2) What is meant by the term 'news-worthy'?
- 3) What qualities does a story need to have, in order for it to be deemed as 'news-worthy'?

SECTION E: Questions relating to finding stories within Ethnic minority communities

- 1) Some would say that the bureaucratic nature of news (i.e. tends to go to voices of 'authority' for stories), means that it is geared towards the privileged, i.e. those in positions of authority, viewpoints of the social power holders - would you agree with this?
 - 1a) If '**yes**', how do you go about including the voices of the minority, ethnic minority community, who all too often, are not in positions of authority?
 - 1b) If '**no**' - need to probe further, e.g. maybe ask them to give me examples of when this is not the case.
- 2) A major way in which the success of the Midlands Today programme is judged, is in terms of viewing figures - obviously, the higher the figure the better it is regarded. Given that the MEC population in Birmingham is smaller than the indigenous population, is it possible to serve the interests, and include the concerns of

a minority (i.e. ethnic minority community), whilst at the same time maximising your viewing figures - surely these 2 objectives are contradictory - not compatible?

- 3) News-rooms are highly-pressurised, deadlines always looming over the horizon, so given this, is it realistic to expect journalists to have the time etc., to look for minority-interest stories or people from the minority ethnic communities to be contributors?
- 4) What extra resources, if any, have you provided to aid this?
- 5) Look at any news programme, and I think it would be fair to include Midlands Today in this example, then most of the initial impetus for the story has come from an official source - sources that are known to you, e.g. govt, institutions etc., so given this, how do you go about ensuring that you include the voices, viewpoints of those who may not be regarded as 'official' sources, in the traditional sense of the word?
- 6) So, do you have any strategies in place to find stories from within the ethnic minority communities?
- 7) How can you tell that you are reflecting 'cultural ethnic diversity' of the West Midlands region, what will/should the programme look like?
- 8) More specifically, what does the term 'cultural diversity', mean to you, in relation to your news programme?
- 9) How do journalists, and all those working on Midlands Today, ensure that their stories reflect cultural diversity?
- 10) How do you go about ensuring that Midlands Today reflects the cultural diversity of the West Midlands region?
- 11) How often do you review the progress being made, in terms of diversity - specifically in relation to cultural diversity - ethnic minorities and representation etc..
- 12) Do you think a programme like Midlands Today, can play a role (be that small or large) in helping to improve race relations?
- 13) Should one of the objectives of Midlands Today be to improve race relations or understanding of different culture?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO ASK TO THE INPUT EDITOR (i.e. HEAD of NEWSGATHERING):

- *where do most of Midlands Today news stories come from?*
- *Do journalists filter stories through to you?*
- *How do you organise newsgathering section?*
- *How did you decide upon your list on the whiteboard (n.b. this whiteboard lists the category/type of stories that should be featured within each 18:30 programme?*

APPENDIX H

Month by month analysis conducted by this current study, of the ethnicity of Contributors featured on Midlands Today, using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD for the months of: Jan, 03; Feb. 03; March, 03; July 03; Aug, 03; Sept 03; Nov 03; Dec 03; Jan 04; Feb 04; March 04.

January 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	316	86%	324 (n) 88.8 (%)
White: Non-European	8	2.17%	
Asian	22	6%	45 (n) 12.2(%)
African	0	.0%	
Caribbean	22	6%	
Mixed	1	.3%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	369(n)	100.0%	369 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

February 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	401	87%	405 (n) 88 (%)
White: Non-European	4	.87%	
Asian	23	5%	55 (n) 12 (%)
African	4	.87%	
Caribbean	25	5.4%	
Mixed	1	.2%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	2	.43%	
TOTAL	460(n)	100.0%	460 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

March 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTALS
White European	331	88%	335 (n) 89.1%
White: Non-European	4	1.1%	
Asian	18	4.8%	41 (n) 10.9 (%)
African	2	.5%	
Caribbean	14	3.7%	
Mixed	2	.5%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	5	1.3%	
TOTAL	376(n)	100.0%	376 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

July 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	186	83%	186 (n) 83.4 (%)
White: Non-European	0	.0%	
Asian	18	8%	37 (n) 16.6 (%)
African	3	1.3%	
Caribbean	8	3.6%	
Mixed	4	1.8%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	4	1.8%	
TOTAL	223	100.0%	223 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

APPENDIX H/contd.

Month by month analysis conducted by this current study, of the ethnicity of Contributors featured on Midlands Today, using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD for the months of: Jan, 03; Feb. 03; March, 03; July 03; Aug, 03; Sept 03; Nov 03; Dec 03; Jan 04; Feb 04; March 04.

August 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	60	85.7%	60 (n) 85.7 (%)
White: Non-European	0	.0%	
Asian	6	8.6%	10 (n) 14.3 (%)
African	0	.0%	
Caribbean	2	2.9%	
Mixed	0	.0%	
South East Asian	1	1.4%	
Mediterranean	1	1.4%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	70(n)	100.0%	70 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

September 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	70	85%	71 (n) 86.6 (%)
White: Non-European	1	1.2%	
Asian	4	4.9%	11 (n) 13.4 (%)
African	0	.0%	
Caribbean	4	4.9%	
Mixed	1	1.2%	
South East Asian	1	1.2%	
Mediterranean	1	1.2%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	82(n)	100.0%	82 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

November 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	290	89%	292 (n) 89.8 (%)
White: Non-European	2	.6%	
Asian	8	2.5%	33 (n) 10.2 (%)
African	2	.6%	
Caribbean	7	2.2%	
Mixed	1	.3%	
South East Asian	15	4.6%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	325(n)	100.0%	325 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

December 2003

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	126	92%	126 (n) 92 (%)
White: Non-European	0	.0%	
Asian	4	2.9%	11 (n) 8 (%)
African	0	.0%	
Caribbean	6	4.4%	
Mixed	1	.7%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	137	100.0%	137 (n); 100.0 (%)

(n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

APPENDIX H/contd.

Month by month analysis conducted by this current study, of the ethnicity of Contributors featured on Midlands Today, using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD for the months of: Jan, 03; Feb. 03; March, 03; July 03; Aug, 03; Sept 03; Nov 03; Dec 03; Jan 04; Feb 04; March 04.

January 2004

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	426	90.8%	430 (n) 91.7 (%)
White: Non-European	4	.9%	
Asian	20	4.3%	39 (n) 8.3 (%)
African	0	.0%	
Caribbean	12	2.6%	
Mixed	1	.2%	
South East Asian	5	1.1%	
Mediterranean	1	.2%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	469(n)	100.0%	469 (n); 100.0 (%)

((n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

February 2004

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	454	89.6%	457 (n) 90.1 (%)
White: Non-European	3	.6%	
Asian	29	5.8%	50 (n) 9.9 (%)
African	2	.4%	
Caribbean	11	2.2%	
Mixed	8	1.6%	
South East Asian	0	.0%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	507(n)	100.0%	507 (n); 100.0 (%)

((n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

March 2004

Analysis of BBC DMD: Ethnic breakdown of contributors on the Midlands Today programme.

Ethnicity	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	TOTAL
White European	487	89.7%	491 (n) 90.4 (%)
White: Non-European	4	.7%	
Asian	29	5.3%	52 (n) 9.6 (%)
African	3	.6%	
Caribbean	13	2.4%	
Mixed	6	1.1%	
South East Asian	1	.2%	
Mediterranean	0	.0%	
Middle Eastern	0	.0%	
TOTAL	543	100.0%	543 (n); 100.0 (%)

((n) = number

(%) = percentage

Source: Analysis using raw data entered into the BBC's Diversity Monitoring Database by the BBC.

APPENDIX: I

Month by month analysis of the ethnicity of Contributors, correlated with the subject-area/topics of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today - (using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD).

January 2004

SUBJECT	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTOR									TOTAL
	White European	White (Non-European)	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	South East Asian	Mediterranean	Middle Eastern	
Party Politics	10(n) 2.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	10(n) 2.1(%)
Local Politics	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Social Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
International Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Economy/Business/Industry	33(n) 7.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 15.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	36(n) 7.7(%)
Emergency Services/Crime/Courts	52(n) 12.2(%)	1(n) 25.0(%)	4(n) 20.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 25.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	60(n) 12.8(%)
Accidents/Disasters	14(n) 3.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 5.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	15(n) 3.2(%)
Environment/Agriculture	31(n) 7.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 15.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 100.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	35(n) 7.5(%)
Arts/Entertainment	26(n) 6.1(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 15.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 25.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 20.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	33(n) 7.0(%)
Health/Disability	49(n) 11.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 5.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 8.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	51(n) 10.9(%)
Race/Religion	4(n) 0.9(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	4(n) 0.9(%)
Sports	75(n) 17.6(%)	3(n) 75.0(%)	1(n) 5.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 25.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	82(n) 17.5(%)
Education	12(n) 2.8(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	12(n) 2.6(%)
Transport	19(n) 4.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	19(n) 4.1(%)
Military	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Other	101(n) 23.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	4(n) 20.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	2(n) 16.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	4(n) 80.0(%)	1(n) 100.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	112(n) 23.9(%)
Multiple Subjects	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
TOTAL	426(n) 90.8(%)	4(n) 0.9(%)	20(n) 4.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	12(n) 2.6(%)	1(n) 0.2(%)	5(n) 1.1(%)	1(n) 0.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	469(n) 100.0(%)

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: BBC DMD

APPENDIX I: contd...

Month by month analysis of the ethnicity of Contributors correlated with the subject-area/topics of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today - (using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD).

February 2004

SUBJECT	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTOR									TOTAL
	White European	White (Non-European)	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	South East Asian	Mediterranean	Middle Eastern	
Party Politics	9(n) 2.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	10(n) 2.0(%)
Local Politics	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Social Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
International Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Economy/Business/Industry	23(n) 5.1(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	5(n) 17.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	28(n) 5.5(%)
Emergency Services/Crime/Courts	45(n) 9.9(%)	2(n) 66.7(%)	3(n) 10.3(%)	1(n) 50.0(%)	1(n) 9.1(%)	1(n) 12.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	53(n) 10.5(%)
Accidents/Disasters	6(n) 1.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 12.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	7(n) 1.4(%)
Environment/Agriculture	44(n) 9.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	44(n) 8.7(%)
Arts/Entertainment	27(n) 5.9(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	28(n) 5.5(%)
Health/Disability	30(n) 6.6(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	2(n) 6.9(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 12.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	33(n) 6.5(%)
Race/Religion	17(n) 3.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	5(n) 17.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	22(n) 4.3(%)
Sports	82(n) 18.1(%)	1(n) 33.3(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	1(n) 50.0(%)	5(n) 45.5(%)	5(n) 62.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	95(n) 18.7(%)
Education	17(n) 3.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	17(n) 3.4(%)
Transport	29(n) 6.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	30(n) 5.9(%)
Military	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Other	124(n) 27.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	10(n) 34.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	5(n) 45.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	139(n) 27.4(%)
Multiple Subjects	1(n) 0.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
TOTAL	454(n) 89.5(%)	3(n) 0.6(%)	29(n) 5.7(%)	2(n) 0.4(%)	11(n) 2.2(%)	8(n) 1.6(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	507(n) 100.0(%)

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: BBC DMD

APPENDIX I/contd...

Month by month analysis of the ethnicity of Contributors correlated with the subject-area/topics of news stories broadcast on Midlands Today - (using the 'raw' data inputted by the BBC into its DMD).

March 2004

SUBJECT	ETHNICITY OF CONTRIBUTOR									TOTAL
	White European	White (Non-European)	Asian	African	Caribbean	Mixed	South East Asian	Mediterranean	Middle Eastern	
Party Politics	7(n) 1.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	8(n) 1.5(%)
Local Politics	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Social Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
International Affairs	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Economy/Business/Industry	51(n) 10.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	51(n) 9.4(%)
Emergency Services/Crime/Courts	45(n) 5.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	4(n) 13.8(%)	1(n) 33.3	1(n) 7.7(%)	2(n) 33.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	53(n) 9.8(%)
Accidents/Disasters	42(n) 8.6(%)	1(n) 25.0(%)	4(n) 13.8(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 7.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	48(n) 8.8(%)
Environment/Agriculture	41(n) 8.4(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	41(n) 7.6(%)
Arts/Entertainment	51(n) 10.5(%)	1(n) 25.0(%)	3(n) 10.3	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 7.7(%)	1(n) 16.7(%)	1(n) 100.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	58(n) 10.7(%)
Health/Disability	42(n) 8.6(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 7.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	43(n) 7.9(%)
Race/Religion	6(n) 1.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	7(n) 24.1(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	13(n) 2.4(%)
Sports	98(n) 20.1(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	1(n) 3.4(%)	2(n) 66.7(%)	6(n) 46.2(%)	1(n) 16.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	108(n) 19.9(%)
Education	17(n) 3.5(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	17(n) 3.1(%)
Transport	23(n) 4.7(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	3(n) 23.1(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	26(n) 4.8(%)
Military	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
Other	64(n) 13.1(%)	2(n) 50.0(%)	9(n) 31.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	2(n) 33.3(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	77(n) 14.2(%)
Multiple Subjects	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)
TOTAL	487(n) 89.7(%)	4(n) 0.7(%)	29(n) 5.3(%)	3(n) 0.6(%)	13(n) 2.4(%)	6(n) 1.1(%)	1(n) 0.2(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	0(n) 0.0(%)	543(n) 100.0(%)

(n) = number; (%) = percentage

Source: BBC DMD.

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