The zimbabwean government implemented the economic structural cultural studies es...

Zimbabwe's Economic and Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) supported by the World Bank dismantled many of the controls confining the country's economy. Implemented during a severe recession brought on by Zimbabwe's worst drought in more than a century, the program made impressive strides in trade and domestic regulatory policy, creating the basis for self-sustaining growth. But according to OED's recent audit, 1/ the program did not reduce poverty and unemployment as its architects had hoped. Critical fiscal reforms made slow and uncertain progress, keeping budget deficits high. This created uncertainty and shortages of capital for private producers, which delayed investment in new capacity and job creation." http://lnweb90. worldbank. org/oedPost-ESAP Zimbabwe (from the year 1999 onwards) has been affected by myriad socio-economic problems. The media in Zimbabwe have had to operate in an environment characterized by the economic isolation of Zimbabwe mostly by Western countries. This period in Zimbabwe has seen socio-economic and political upheavals that have led to changes in media regulation; the political landscape; the operating economic environment for media houses and journalists and the Zimbabwean demographic make-up hence adjusting and re-arranging media audiences in Zimbabwe. The study seeks to give a detailed analysis of the media environment since the abandonment of ESAP by the government of Zimbabwe as well as flesh out the operations of the various media stakeholders and investigate how they have operated, related and responded thus far to the changes experienced since the abandonment of ESAP in 2008 up to December 2012. In exploring the concept of plurality the study will rely on Ofcom's definition of plurality offered in its report on measuring media plurality to the United Kingdom Secretary of State for

Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport. The report makes an important observation in section 3. 8 when it affirms that media plurality involves, " Ensuring there is a diversity of viewpoints available and consumed across and within media enterprises...[and] preventing any one media owner or voice having too much influence over public opinion and the political agenda. [My own italics]. Relying on Paragraph 90 of the United Kingdom Court of Appeal judgment section 3. 9 declares, " The word plurality can connote more than just a number exceeding one. It may carry an implication of range and variety as well" In Section 3. 10 the reports notes that, "...a diversity of viewpoints can be formed within an organisation and between organizations [the report's italics]. Both are relevant to the question of plurality". This, the report argues should be termed ' internal' and ' external' plurality. As such external plurality is defined as, " the range and number of persons having control of media enterprises in the context of their ability to influence opinions and control the agenda". Internal plurality is described as, " how far the range of views expressed within media enterprises may ensure sufficient plurality, including the effects of the impartiality rules for broadcast news, the culture of newsrooms and audience expectations." These working definitions will be employed so as guide this studyThe study will critically look at how the media stakeholders sought to influence Zimbabwe's discursive space. The extent of the effectiveness of their policies and strategies will be analyzed so as to understand how the media stakeholders operated and ought to have operated; responded to change, related amongst each other and the world outside of their operations in regards to the attainment of a plurality of ownership and control. It is crucial for the research to expose the extent to which the presence or absence of a

plurality of ownership and control affected development discourse in the media and the implementation of development oriented programs in Zimbabwe. Crucially, the study will explore how going forward, the make-up of a uniquely Zimbabwean media as will be explored in this study ought to affect the coverage and implementation of development issues in Zimbabwe. It is seminal that the study analyses the current shape and structure of the mediascape as it relates to global trends as well as proffer a new mediascape operating template for nations under economic sanctions. A detailed analysis of the operations of the Zimbabwean media players (the government, NGOs, privately owned and publicly owned and controlled media, Internet based Zimbabwean owned and controlled news websites and foreign based broadcasting stations. The focus of the study will be to analyse how the different stakeholders operated, were affected or affected the media environment in Zimbabwe. This is essential in laying the foundation for a theorization of how the mediascape in Zimbabwe or in any situation similar to Zimbabwe's ought to be managed so as to ensure plurality of ownership, control and content as well as ensure the media ' operati' [stakeholders] are development oriented. So a new approach of how media regulators ought to operate as well as how media regulating of ownership and control structure and quality of access of media content ought to be done. The study has to also focus on the way media personnel operate and how the general public and other communities vis-à-vis businesses, interact with the media. Of particular importance will be a thorough appreciation of how socio-economic, political conditions and international relations played out in affecting the shape and form of the Zimbabwean mediascape. The essence of the study is to offer a critical analysis of efforts made by non-state actors and the state in

regards to enabling or disenabling a multiplicity of content owners and a wide range of discourses within the various news sources. The post-ESAP era is not a homogenous continuum of a set of socio-economic political conditions but it is rather punctuated by a series of ' micro and macro periods' were the mediascape shifted at each stage. These periods are concentrated from the year 1999 up to 2012. Some of these ' micro and macro periods' include: farm invasions, election periods, the Government of National Unity (GNU) among others. The study will seek to thoroughly make observations on Zimbabwe's media dynamics during this period and build a theory based on these observations: Theory building is a process in which research begins with observations and uses inductive reasoning to derive a theory from these observations. These theories attempt to make sense of observations. Because the theory is produced after observations are made it is often called post factum theory (Merton, 1968) or ex post facto theorizing. (De Vaus, A. D., 2001: 5-6). Such a study has never been undertaken especially one that aims to distinguish the uniqueness of conditions in Zimbabwe thus offer a new way of thinking that offers a general explanation emanating from the observations made during this period in Zimbabwe.

Research Objectives

To understand how the Zimbabwe's media players in the post ESAP period operated to the detriment or improvement of a plurality of ownership and content as well as creating an enabling environment for development. To proffer ways relevant to a Zimbabwean context as well as other countries in similar circumstances on how the various media stakeholders ought to operate to ensure plurality of ownership and content as well as be

development oriented. To build a theory that seeks to offer a lucid rationalization of observations made from 1999 to 2012.

Hypothesis

The Zimbabwean media players failed to provide a plurality of ownership and content as well as to respond to the media challenges bedeviling Zimbabwe hence un-aiding the socio-economic and political development of Zimbabwe. The period from 1999 to 2012 can only be explained by new theorization as current academic discourse fails to offer a corrigible theory that enables a succinct understanding of how the Zimbabwean mediascape operated thus offering a way of how they ought to operate when faced by similar circumstances.

Research Questions

In what way(s) did the different Zimbabwean media ' operati' fail to ensure the enhancement of plurality of ownership and content as well as ensure an effective development oriented mediascape? In what way(s) does current media theorization fail to offer cogent explanations of the operations of the media players in a Zimbabwean context or a country facing similar conditions as those between 1999 and 2012? To what extent did the different Zimbabwe ' operati' and other external entities and conditions influence or affect each other's operations as well as the mediascape in Zimbabwe? How can the observations of media operations within post ESAP Zimbabwean especially from 1999 to 2012-like conditions be explained within a theoretical framework?

Significance of the research/Justification

There's no single theorization on how a country's mediascape similar to Zimbabwe's situation ought to operate. The continuing economic and political power of Anglophone western countries and the continued internal political and economic upheavals in various countries it is apparent that the world has not seen the last of conditions similar to post ESAP Zimbabwe. There's not even a single theorization on how the media ought to operate in-order to ensure the development of their societies. The study will expose what went on within the mediascape prior to the inception of ESAP from 1980; during ESAP and post ESAP up to 2012. The research will offer descriptive and explanatory explanations as to why the media stakeholders behaved in the manner they did and most importantly how they are currently behaving, and how are they are supposed to behave in the future. In defense of descriptive explanations De Vaus (year?) asserts that "...good description is fundamental to the research enterprise and it has added immeasurably to our knowledge of the shape and nature of our society." (2001: 1). The researcher seeks a departure from the many studies that have been done that have not provided adequate description and explanations. De Vaus (year?) argues that: Of course description can degenerate to mindless fact gathering or what C. W. Mills (1959) called `abstracted empiricism'. There are plenty of examples of unfocused surveys and case studies that report trivial information and fail to provoke any `why' questions or provide any basis for generalization. However, this is a function of inconsequential descriptions rather than an indictment of descriptive research itself. (ibid)The study will move away from the ' abstracted empiricism' of many studies on the state of Zimbabwe's media and its

future. As a corollary the research will come up with a theory to explain the goings on within Zimbabwe's media since the year 2000 up to 2012. The researcher chose this period because it offers unique but common circumstances of a country under international pressure to change. The study seeks to build a theory that will explain this phenomenon. As such, the essence of this study is to assess, "…whether the observation is a particular case of a more general factor, or how the observation fits into a pattern or a story (ibid, 6). The researchseeks to add to existing literature on the enhancement of plurality of ownership, control and content and the general management of a mediascape in a developing nation so as to aid development. seeks to come up with cogent descriptions and explanations on precisely what happened in post ESAP Zimbabwe within the mediascape. Seeks to come up with a media theory that explains the observations that took place and continue to take place since the beginning of farm invasions; the subsequent negative media publicity and the imposition of restrictive measures on Zimbabwe and certain Zimbabweans.

Theoretical Framework

The study will make use of the Habamasian Public Sphere concept; the concept of bureaucracy especially Jonathan Moyo's craft-literacy and craft-competence concepts;" the latest development theory suitable for developing countries", The best theory of ownership and control, Post-modernism and media regulation, cultural studies: Morley; Hegemony and Propaganda, Pan-Africanism, Order and stability, sovereignty

Critical Media Theory

Discourses of ' Critical Media Theory' are traceable to the Frankfurt scholars who include Herbert Marcuse, Theodore Adorno and Leo Lewenthal among others. Jansen illustrates its genesis and avers, " Critical Theory is largely, but not exclusively, a neo- Marxisant approach, the origin of which is normally traced to the Frankfurt School" (Jansen 1989: 64). For the critical theorists the importance of media texts within a capitalist system has become adulterated by the propensity for capital accumulation. Therefore, media texts have become products that can be bought just like any other commodity on the market, for instance, the meat market. Through the Critical Media Theory perspective, the study seeks to understand the extent to which Zimbabwe's media in the post-ESAP period pandered to the whims of capitalism. Because the Frankfurt Scholars believed capitalism was pushing media texts to cater to the needs of capitalists, the Scholars coined the term ' culture industry' to refer to the production of media texts for exclusively monetary benefit. This manipulation of media texts denotes the production of media texts as saleable commodities; to them the media have become an extension of the capitalist system's quest for what the Frankfurt Scholars term manipulative profit hence commodification. McQuail (2000) opines that, within the critical paradigm the, Media are regarded as strategically located at the nexus of social structures, and freedom of expression is articulated in terms of repressive or hegemonic powers (of the state and the media) on the one hand and the oppressed masses on the other. Media have a potential for emancipation, but only in forms that escape from dominant institutional control (McQuail 2000: 161). If contemporary society has commodified art to satiate capital accumulation then the status

of the media in Zimbabwe as an institution for plurality of ownership, control, content and development needs to be interrogated so as to fundamentals of text production in the post-ESAP period in Zimbabwe within the publicly and privately owned media. Most importantly the study will explore how the vagaries of capitalism influenced the different media stakeholders. Jansen (1989) argues that Critical Theory describes approaches, which criticize the capitalist form of society for its supposed repressive and enslaving influence on those members who do not have access to the wielding of power. Critical theory puts emphasis on the need to unshackle those in the low echelons of power from the exploitation of the politically and financially powerful, as a means for facilitating their prosperity. This will prise open the role played by the myriad media stakeholders to ensure plurality of ownership, control, content and development thrive. Fundamentally, the theory will give a blunt analysis of the operation of the capitalist system as it affects ownership and control patterns, access to media texts as well as the shape and form of media texts. Critical Media Theory becomes more relevant to post-ESAP Zimbabwe because of the socio-economic upheavals that bedeviled this period, when Jansen adds: The topic of mass communication occupies a prominent position in critical theory. In capitalist society, mass communication is employed in the interest of the established order and its perpetuation. In the new society envisaged by critical theory, mass communication fulfills a double role. Firstly it may be employed as a means of inciting the ordinary members of society to rise against the established order. That is, it may be used as an instrument of liberation, which articulates the interests of the masses. Secondly, critical theory may also view mass communication as a mode of (popular) cultural expression, which

enables the liberated masses to realize their human potential (Jansen 1989: 66). In the same vein, Critical Media theory will be used to evaluate whether or not the different media stakeholders were and are still a means of propping up the ideas of the prevailing dominant group through the management of political thoughts and images. Did the media texts as well as the stakeholders serve the purpose of naturalizing the inequities of capitalism? Did they pander to the dictates of capital accumulation, mostly the profit motive, upholding it as an ingrained and rational consequence of normal business practices, rather than an exploitative consequence of capitalism? And what is current status quo? Within Marxist philosophy there is a belief that ' control' is a primary mechanism through which the ruling class maintains positions of power and privilege. In essence, ownership, control, cultural performance and class privilege have a symbiotic relationship. Critical Media Theory will make the researcher understand the extent to which capitalism influences ownership and control of media texts producing entities and nuances in media content.

Consumerism and the Political Economy

As a means to understanding the significance of pluralism of ownership and control as a cornerstone for development and democracy there is need to look at the political economy of media houses and the concept of consumerism in audiences of media texts. The Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia (2006) points out that consumerism implies the mindless purchasing and disposing of any product delivered through the market. It also describes the effects of equating personal happiness with purchasing material possessions and consumption. The same website further describes consumerism as a

tendency of people to identify strongly with products or services they consume especially those with commercial brand names and obvious status enhancing appeal, for example an expensive car. What is critical is for the researcher to assess whether the same commercialization that has befallen African art befell or has befallen the mediascape in Zimbabwe. Christopher Steiner captures the commercial relationship between African art and European buyers. He argues, " twentieth-century artists reclassified African art in order to validate, and even heighten, their own modernist enterprise" (Steiner, 1994: 154). Steiner further argues that the commercialization of African art is similar to that of the ' safari look' marketed by fashion designers of the Banana Republic and Ralph Lauren. So the question is to what extent does the ' safari look' manifest itself within the mediascape at the detriment of development oriented issues? Of crucial importance is Boyd-Barrett's (1995) assertion. He opines that political economy, " commonly looks at the process of consolidation, diversification, commercialization, internationalization, the working of the profit motive in the hunt for audiences and/or for advertising and its consequences for media practices and media content" (Boyd-Barrett 1995: 186). The problem then is, does the political economy of media houses affect the way development issues are covered and in general the nature and shape of content they produce? Wolfgang Fritz Hang (1995) a neo-Marxist, maintains the tradition pioneered by the Frankfurt school; he talks about the way aesthetics are integrated into the production, distribution and marketing of commodities. This is whereby commodities are designed to stimulate in the onlooker the desire to possess and buy impulsively. Thus, aesthetics are used to sell products; images, which appeal to human needs and sensuality. These are

emphasized more as a way to lure the potential customer to buy. In this regard, the role played by consumerist attitudes and how the character of media productions in a global community that is increasingly becoming consumerist will be evaluated. Jean Baudrillard's (1995) theory of the sign is vital to elucidate the concept of aesthetics. Hence the researcher will assess the extent to which the value of news has been trivialized to cater to commercial interests at the expense of development issues and media ownership and control structures that aid pluralistic discourses. Baudrillard (1995) argues that the political economy of the ' sign' (the ' sign' generally refers to any product); helps integrate individuals into the consumer society. He points out that, the individual seeks various commodities as signs of social prestige, position and success. It is clear that to Baudrillard (1995) capitalism brings more than aesthetics from products, it moulds the very desires and forms of consumption that motivate people to consume; the individual is assimilated into the global capitalist system not out of choice but because of circumstances enabled by capitalism. In this observation the study will seek to finalise the discussion on the effect conditions spurred by capitalism have on the quantity and quality of development oriented texts as well as the extent to which it enables a multiplicity of ownership, control and content. This is crucial because it will inform the researcher how the situation in Zimbabwe obtained; how it exists now; how it ought to be in futurity. It will be critical to assess whether news in Zimbabwe became or has become a commodity in a capitalist system, thus further assess whether the vagaries of capitalism influenced or continue to influence content and ownership structures. In other words, does the text become a commodity

that is churned out by the capitalist system, and is of little value to a pluralistic media and democracy in general?

Postmodernism

The concept of postmodernism is crucial in understanding pluralism of ownership, control and content and development because it exposes the contemporary conditions of existence in which the media output that's crucial for development reposes. In order to understand the conditions underlying postmodernism it is crucial to start with the modern period. Gergen (1999) recognizes the enlightenment period in Europe as the cradle of modernist beliefs; the enlightenment period is constituted by discourses that emerged from Europe. " The people of Europe had laboured under autocratic rule- the crown and the cross often working in oppressive tandem…" (Gergen, 1999: 7). In essence, these manacles had to be vanquished, as a consequence a single rationale was brewing and this was the philosophy that would uphold the sanctity of the individual as sovereign. The crux was to " grant to each individual those capacities and dignities that would challenge the right of any authority to rule without consent" (ibid). For Gergen (1999), modernist sensibilities encapsulate the capacities for conscious thought, self- determination, and the freedom by humanity to determine its own future. Modernism is littered with industrialization, increasing global capital and the thrust for subjugation to feed the imperial quest for material prosperity and domination in all spheres of life. " Indeed, if the modern ' problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern ' problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open," (Bauman, 1996: 18). The thrust of

the study will be to assess how the transition from the modern to the postmodern affected ownership and control structures hence the quality and quantity of content? Du Plooy opines that in modern states " urban societies are characterized by mass production and capitalist economies" (2002: 24). This is not to say post-modern societies are devoid of capitalist inclinations, for Du Plooy, the difference emanates from the fact that the post-modern has, " a culture that is transient, volatile, illogical, kaleidoscopic and appeals to sense instead of reason" (ibid). Gergen asserts that for a post-modern society, " it is best to view it as pointing to a range of interrelated dialogues on our current condition – a condition particularly characterizing post–industrial, information based globalised economies" (1999: 195). He thus views the post-modern period as a situation where, " all that was solid melts into air" and there is a " groping sense of fragmentation". Baudrillard (1999) puts forward the concepts of ' simulacra', ' counterfeit', ' production' and ' simulation' to try and explain the changes experienced by society under capitalist conditions; this goes on to affect social phenomena found in such conditions thus his theorization has ramifications on any media texts coming out of the mediascape. He observes; Simulacra - the signs which characterize late capitalism - come in three forms: counterfeit (imitation) - when there was still a direct link between signifiers and their signified; production (illusion) - when there was an indirect link between signifier and signified; and simulation (fake) - when signifiers came to stand in relation only to other signifiers and not in relation to any fixed external reality (Stam 2000: 306). [Stam's Italics]Baudrillard's conceptualisation will be used to understand media texts because it gives a breakdown of how objects of art should be viewed under such conditions. Employing these concepts will aid

the researcher in assessing the impact of post-modernism on the current mediascape in Zimbabwe. If " Modernity [is] built in steel and concrete; post modernity, in bio-degradable plastic" (Bauman, 1996: 18). The question is how does this so-called implosion impact contemporary media ownership and control patterns? In Baudrillard's society of simulation, the realms of economics, politics, culture, sexuality, and the social all implode into each other. In this implosive mix, culture, politics, and other spheres fundamentally shape economics, while contemporary media structures operations and s, once a sphere of potential difference and opposition, becomes immersed into the economic and political realms. In this situation, differences between individuals and groups are argued by Baudrillard (1999) to implode in a rapidly mutating dissolution of the social and the previous boundaries and structures upon which social theory had once focused. Baudrillard (1984) construes contemporary ' mediatised' society as a means of obscuring the quotidian everyday through representation. He labeled this obscurity " simulacra", a term, which in this case denotes visual reproductions devoid of the authentic reality. To him texts in the media have become trivia in terms of rationality of content in the manner of presentation and form. He asserts, " It is the reflection of a basic reality; it masks and perverts a basic reality; it masks the absence of a basic reality; it bears no relation to any reality whatever: it is its own pure simulacrum" (Baudrillard 1988: 170). In essence, post-modernism offers newer circumstances in which humanity lives thus there is need to assess the Zimbabwean mediascape under these conditions. The research will expose whether the operations, media ownership structures, the shape and form of content and how it relates to development issues are firmly located within a modernist

discourse; or the media have chrysalised due to the pressures of post-modernism; or we have a hybridization of modernity and post-modernism. In assessing the impact of post-modernity and globalization on the plurality of ownership and control and how they relate to democracy within the Zimbabwean mediascape there is need to be wary of, " the fatality of thinking of ' local' cultures as uncontaminated or self-contained, forces us to conceive of ' global' cultures, which itself remains unimaginable," (Bhabha, 1996: 54). In essence the study will be wary of the autonomy and resilience of local structures and ways of operating within the mediascape to foreign influences. Cultural studiesCultural Studies is attributed to F. R Leavis whose successors are Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, E. P Thompson and Stuart Hall among others. Cultural Studies confronts the economic reductionism of Classical Marxism and neo-Marxist perspectives by the Frankfurt scholars. Cultural Studies will be employed to analyse the interpretations by sampled Zimbabwean media consumers. The reception process of media texts by the general public is not central to this research because the study is not on audience studies, but the study is on the plurality of ownership and control, content in post ESAP Zimbabwe's and how they impacted development and democracy. The study will seek to chart how the mediascape operated in pre-ESAP, during- ESAP and post-ESAP Zimbabwe; and how in future the mediascape ought to look like. The Cultural Studies discourse views humans as responsible for shaping their experiences and are regarded as possessing the power to determine cultural production itself. The approach sees the mass media as having influence in shaping public consciousness whilst being able to contextualize the media within a society, which is seen as " a complex expressive totality" (Curran et al.

1982). An appreciation of the reception process becomes relevant in that it lays bare the extent of the effectiveness of media texts that purported or purport to cover developmental issues and to also expose the extent of the range of discourses within media outlets as seen, read or heard by audiences. News productions are constructions done within a social context whose implication within this context needs to be understood. Cultural Studies will assist the researcher understand not only audience reception but also the conceptualization of texts in a way that is distinct from the Frankfurt school's view. Curan et al. (1982) believe Cultural Studies views the media as responsible for making people aware of their conditions of existence. The belief is that the media industry is centered on changing and influencing peoples' attitudes, behaviour and consciousness hence the media have the potency of formulating identities. In view of this influence attributed to the media industry, the polysemic nature of texts becomes central in understanding the line separating the Birmingham School's conceptualization and the Frankfurt School's, Schroeder points out that; " In analysing a media text, we are not dealing with a fixed structure of meaning, but with a volatile phenomenon resulting from the codes at the disposal of both the producers and the recipients of the text, all of which are steeped in a sea of social meanings and ideologies" (Schroeder et al. 2003: 128). Given the nuances of changes that swept through Zimbabwe society Schroeder (2003) makes us realize the importance of contextualizing reception studies. Morley (1992) believes Cultural Studies is therefore as interested in the ' lived texts' of social rituals and social institutions. He points out that Cultural Studies sets out to uncover the variety and vitality of situated practices and beliefs, and demonstrates their authentic roots in popular experience, an

approach very useful in understanding media audiences. In simple terms, the Birmingham School democratized culture; it has become inclusive of all the experiences of all groups in society. To Zimbabweans Raymond Williams' dictum ' culture is ordinary' is useful in that it captures the crux of what forms their quotidian life; consequently Zimbabwe's mediascape is relevant to be studied under Cultural Studies because to Schroeder (2003) the theory focuses on everyday life and the structures, and practices within and through which modern society constructs and circulates meanings and values. In this regard the Zimbabwean media play a critical role, because they are institutions that ' circulate meanings and values'. Whether or not those values seek to sustain and perpetuate a wide range of discourses as well as variant forms of ownership patterns hence aiding development and democracy will be interrogated. Morley (1992) avers that the concept of culture within Cultural Studies is historicized, socialized and politicized; it no longer consists of the what Lord Reith called the sum of the ' best that has been thought of and said' or as the ' summits of an achieved civilization' and that ' idea of perfection'. Such conceptualization of culture has implications on the conceptualization of the role of the media in Zimbabwean society as a socializing agent, thus this conceptualization will be immersed in the Cultural Studies discourse for a ' thick description'. Crucial to understanding how different audiences may respond to questions on the state of the mediascape is David Morley's theorization of the reception process. Morley (1992) argues that the meaning of a text is constituted in the interaction between the text itself and the codes inhabited by its users. He opines that the audience is viewed as a complicated pattern of overlapping subgroups and sub-cultures within which individuals are situated. Members of given

subcultures tend to share cultural formations and practices, which will in turn be determined by the objective position of the individual in the social structure (Morley, 1992). In this way there are a number of factors, which influence the audience's generation of meaning. For him, " Meaning construction is an ongoing process, which reaches well beyond the moment of reception", (Morley 1992: 207).

Representation

Stuart Hall asserts that ' representation' subsumes a particular way of portraying reality. This he argues is found in " the manner in which meaning is constructed and conveyed through language and objects" (2003: 153). He posits two frames of reference, ' representation in the singular' and ' representations' in the plural. In the former, it is the activity and process and the latter the resultant entities or products (ibid). Hall asserts that there is a linkage between representation and culture and that representation is fundamental in producing culture. So the assumption is that any form of representation produces a certain identity. Hall (2003) defines identity formation as: a struggle for self-definition and against the internalization of hegemonic representations of a collective. In the light of the foregoing, what is the nature of political and socio-economic representation and representations in the media of Zimbabweaness; whose interests are the media serving; what is their view of what constitutes being Zimbabwean?; how do they create their own identities vis-à-vis the encounter with foreign ways of representing Zimbabwean society? In contemporary media discourse the encounter between natives and foreigners has created the concepts of ' Othering' and ' Sameness' these have become enduring, " binaries [that

have] become constitutive differences in which the other is defined by its negativity," (Grossberg, 1996: 94). Othering is a derivative of theories of Otherness, " these assume that difference is itself an historically produced economy, imposed in modern structures of power, on the real difference as much as identity is an effect of power (ibid)." To understand these concepts Grossberg argues, " identities are always relational and incomplete, in process. Any identity depends upon its difference from, its negation of, some other term, even as the identity of the latter term depends upon its difference from, its negation of the former," (Grossberg 1996: 89). The ' Other' is negated as inferior, thus boundaries are created in order to preserve those who constitute the ' Same' group. The relationship between the ' Same' and the ' Other' a matter of identity creation and (Hall 1991: 21) defines identity as: " a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself". Theories of representation will aid the understanding of the interface between local Zimbabwean owned and Foreign owned. This thinking is tackled by Mudimbe (1988) who argues, "[there are] ...many instances of Third and Fourth World Peoples, who have been argued to be quintessentially the Other to the historical Same [my own italics] of Europe (Tomaselli 1999: 185). Tomasselli goes on to argue; " this relationship was predicated upon the differences assumed to define Europeans (the Same) in contradistinction to Africans (the Other Critically if identity creation by the Europeans has been predicated on difference creation which sees the Other (Africans) as inferior." The question then is how do the media counter historical imbalances post-ESAP era and how did it cover the ' othering' of the African during a time of supposed

economic emancipation. Fundamentally, Tomasselli (1999) extricates a contradiction within European intelligentsia in the way they relate to Africans; the first deals with the Europeans' conception of the ' world–view' and ' behaviour' of the Other (in this case the African). ' World-view' refers to, " a picture of the way things in sheer actuality are, their concept of nature, of self, of society. It contains their most comprehensive ideas of order" (1971: 127): The African world–view is oriented by the principles of (1) survival of the tribe and (2) oneness with nature. Values that are consistent with these guiding principles are co-operation, interdependence, and collective responsibility. The African self-concept is, by definition " We" instead of " I". The African philosophic tradition recognizes that it is only in terms of one's own being. It is only through others that one learns one's duties and responsibilities towards oneself and the collective self… It is, in the African Tradition, awareness of self as the awareness of one's historical consciousness (collective spirituality) and the subsequent sense of " we" or being one. (Eysenck and Flanagan, 2001: 703)Tomasselli (1999) argues that this ' world –view' is fundamentally ' priest craft'. By ' priest craft' he cites Richard Rorty who describes the Western academia, In Western thought a very specific kind of dialogue within which valid knowledge claims can be made, and that this debate draws its agenda from the judgment we today pass on to those who, like the Inquisition's Cardinal Bellarmine, sought to refute Galileo's cosmological claims. For our modern culture, claims which fail to conform to a specific mode of justification we tend to dismiss as the equivalent of Bellarmine's " priest-craft". (Richard Rorty, 1980: 328)The rubbishing of Galileo's theorization on cosmology as paranoiac and neurotic by religious leaders back then, shows how Galileo's theorization amounts to '

schizophrenization,' (the view that Africans are barbaric and inferior) of the African ' World-view' by Euro-centric discourse. If as noted earlier Hall (1991) envisages that the media expose representations of reality, it stands to reason that Geertz's definition of ' world-view' which locates media texts as an attempt aimed at presenting ' ideas of order' about society becomes crucial in understanding the media as presenting and representing reality. If media texts help portray a world-view, which Tomasselli (1999) argues, to be constantly undermined by Europeans then it makes the researcher's portrayal of a world-view as a site of contestations. Thus this study seeks to understand if within the variant media forms, patterns of ownership and control and modes of text production such contestations do exist; if they do then the study should explain these contestations. What is clear is that Zimbabwean society and its socializing agents chiefly the media have a history. Hall (2007) notes that cultural identities have histories; and they are " the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves in, the narratives of the past." This history will be interrogated to ensure that ways of representing within the media are put into perspective. In analysing the Zimbabwean media's influence there is need to understand that the Zimbabweans' way of life is not fixed in time and space, but is constantly ' becoming', which Crawford (1992) argues to be a metaphor for participation which can never be complete. Neither is it a natural consequence of presence or insertion in the other " culture". Cited in Tomasselli (1999) Bhabha asserts, " The social articulation of difference… is a complex, ongoing process that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation"(1994: 2). Societies ' give' and ' take' modes of behaving, so it is not only a case of the Zimbabweans

receiving foreign ways of behaving; they also have the capacity to influence other cultures' ways of behaving.

Bureaucracy

Crucial to understanding how various media organisations should have been managed the study will rely on the theory of bureaucracy particularly Moyo's (1992) craft-literacy and craft competence concepts. But before fleshing out Moyo's theorization there is need to understand Weber's bureaucracy concept. Jain asserts: Weber identified three key features of bureaucratic organizations. Firstly, bureaucracies had a formal and unambiguous hierarchical structure of power and authority. Secondly, bureaucracies had an elaborate, rationally derived and systematic division of labor. Thirdly, bureaucracies were governed by a set of general, formal, explicit, exhaustive and largely stable rules that were impersonally applied in decision making; moreover, all decisions and communications were recorded in permanent files and such records were used to refine existing rules and derive new ones. Additionally, Weber also noted that bureaucracies entailed a separation of personal from official property, and that bureaucrats were usually selected on the basis of their qualifications (and not nepotism), were appointed (not elected), and were compensated via a salary. (Jain 2004: 1). The study will proffer the bureaucratic management style as refined by Moyo (1992), as the appropriate way to deal with management challenges as well as to ensure the plurality of ownership, content and control that ensures development effectively. Jain (2004) argues that: Weber posited that bureaucratic action was typically oriented towards solving problems and that bureaucratic decision-making was guided by the objectives of efficiency,

calculability and predictability. Consequently, decisions were more rational because they were made ' without regard to persons', i. e. were immune to personal, irrational, and emotional aspects According to Weber, the goal of bureaucracy – the reason why it had evolved - was to maximize efficiency. He posited that bureaucracies were technically efficient instruments of administration because their institutionalized rules and regulations enabled all employees to learn to perform their duties optimally. (ibid, 1)Inspite of Weber's glowing theorization bureaucracy has been roundly criticized and this is evinced by a number of scholars:...Merton (1957) (1976) [asserts that] a fundamental failure of bureaucracy was its tendency to foster ' goal displacement'. Excessive adherence and conformity to rules and regulations resulted in rules becoming ends in themselves, and sometimes prevented organizations from achieving their real goals. Additionally, organizational members in bureaucracies often tried to apply formal rules and procedures in unsuitable situations - for example in unique situations, treating them as routine - thus resulting in dysfunctional outcomes. Selznick (1949) discovered the phenomenon of ' suboptimization' in bureaucracies; i. e. delegation of authority resulted in organizational sub-units pursuing goals that were different from the stated goals of the organization as a whole. Burns and Stalker (1961) observed that highly bureaucratic organizations were resistant to change. A prevailing atmosphere of hierarchy, control, efficiency and predictability meant that organizational 1members favored self-continuity and felt threatened by change. Such organizations, thus, were poor at innovating or at embracing new ideas. Gouldner (1954) found that the ' govern according to rules' culture in bureaucratic organizations led to the consequence of members following the minimum possible rules in order

to get by. Thus it was problematical to obtain much more than minimally acceptable behavior from members. (Jain, 2004: 2)Bureaucracy thus has its inadequacies hence Moyo's theorization is critical in mitigating its applicability as a functional concept. For the purposes of this research the bit proffered by Moyo (1992) will form part of the core of the theoretical framework of this study.

Craft-literacy

The researcher seeks to offer the concept of bureaucracy as critical to running media organizations. The study will argue that management processes within media organizations or organizations that deal with media organizations need appropriate management systems because the choices, decisions and ways of managing has a bearing on what the media organizations produce. Fundamental to understanding the practical application of bureaucracy is Moyo's (1992) concepts of Craft-literacy and craft competence. To elucidate on the relevance of bureaucracy on the management of media organizations it is crucial to flesh out Moyo's two concepts " Craft-Literacy is the human capacity to conceptualise a successful management process. It is the kind of construction that leads to the construction of blueprints or models that can be applied in different situations. Before a dam is built there must be a formulated model what it should look like and why. The process of arriving at such a model is craft-literacy" (J Moyo, 1992: xxi) He further opines that Craft-literacy implies creative imagination. Such imagination is captured by C. Wright Mills who describes it as the ' concept of the sociological imagination', which Mills in Moyo further defines as " a quality of mind that will help…use information

and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world..." C. W Mills (1995: 5) Mills qualifies this definition by observing that: The first fruit of this imagination and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it- is the idea that the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period that he can know his own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his circumstances. (C. W Mills, 1995: 5) in (Moyo, 1992: 62)Moyo (1992) uses Alaisdair MacIntyre's conceptual context of the word ' craft' to try and expose the appropriateness of his use of ' craft' in his two concepts of craft-literacy and craft-competence. Moyo (1992) cites McIntyre, he asserts that:...any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of that form of activity with the result that human powers to achieve excellence , and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended (Ibid) bricklaying is not a practice , while architecture is; planting maize is not a practice but farming is; So that in essence arts, science, games, politics, the making and sustaining of family life are all examples of practices (ibid p 185) in (Moyo 1992 : 65)To tie it up and further buttress the relevance of his theorization to bureaucracy Moyo (1992) argues that"...management is a practice that presupposes craft-literacy. This presupposition requires that the premise of management should start with the sociological imagination" (ibid). In essence for any organization to execute any management plan there has to

be a conceptual framework, a plan that will be used as the basis for the day to day running of the organization.

Craft Competence

Craft-competence is the second part to Moyo's theorization on the practical application of bureaucracy. Craft competence, " is the ability to understand and apply, with regularity, a model or blueprint that has been developed by someone other than oneself. Craft Competence is the average, to wit, common knowledge that is necessary for the sustenance of bureaucracies or formal organization. In management craft competence is specialized, technical knowledge about and of human behavior; and about and of how to use incentives to influence and control human behavior." (Moyo, 1992: xxi)Moyo's theorization becomes relevant to this study when he argues, " what many authors variously labeled as the ' African Crisis' cannot be substantially resolved without recourse to the imperatives of formal organization… the need for and significance of formal organization in Africa presupposes, and is inextricably intertwined with craft literacy and craft competence" (Moyo 1992: 1) He makes it critical that craft- competence and craft-literacy are ways of management that will extricate Africa from its problems. He declares that "…whereas craft literacy is " know-what" . Craft-competence is " know-how" (Moyo 1992: 69)"…know-how cannot be meaningful for management in Africa without the " know-what' demanded by craft-literacy…Therefore, the sum of craft-literacy and craft-competence make up the definition of the type of knowledge necessary for the establishment and management of formal organizations . On the necessity of such knowledge Moyo (1992) cites Weber who argues that: Bureaucratic

administration means fundamentally domination through knowledge. This is the feature which makes it specifically rational. This consists on the one hand in technical knowledge which by itself is sufficient to ensure it is a position of extraordinary power. But in addition to this, bureaucratic organizations or the holders of power who make use of them have the tendency to increase their power still further by the knowledge growing of experience (ibid)Ali Mazrui in Moyo (1992) divides what he calls " minimum livable conditions" into three kinds. But for the purposes of this study the researcher will stick to the relevant that Moyo focuses on, which is the third he "…argues that the present economic and political conditions in Africa make habitation difficult" (Moyo, 1992: 4)Moyo declares that "…the successful functioning of bureaucracy is impossible without craft-literacy and craft- competence p8… therefore, the researcher will argue that for the successful management of media organizations in Zimbabwe, Moyo's theorization must form the bedrock of both the strategic and day to day management process of such organizations. Moyo is quick to realize the shortcomings of bureaucracy. He asserts, " Bureaucracies can be as good or as bad as those who use it. As such, bureaucracy is not a morally neutral social instrument". (Moyo 1992: 9). Otherwise it would be dangerous form of reification to think that bureaucracy is internally rational and efficient. The popular but mistake association of bureaucracy with red tape and wasteful conduct is more a commentary on the craft-literacy and craft- competence of men and women in a particular society than on the social construct of bureaucracy itself as an instrument of human organization . This is because the concept of rationality is a category of individuals and not of social organization" (ibid)Moyo could not have summed it up any better he puts it

succinctly "…The issue is not simply one of recognizing bureaucracy as a sine qua non of economic development. Rather the study argues that whereas development is not possible without bureaucracy. It should be noted that the latter is equally not possible without craft-literacy and craft-competence, to wit, knowledge." (Moyo, 1992: 10) So if the media are a crucial component in initiating and sustaining development and democracy and craft-competence and craft-literacy are key to understanding and using the concept of bureaucracy as a viable management theory. If bureaucracy is central to development then it stands to reason that craft-literacy and craft-competence are vital in media management because the media are an integral part of development. Public SphereJürgen Habermas published The Structural Transformation an extensive inquiry and scrutiny of the public sphere in civil society, in 1962. Kellner, (1989) argues that Habamus developed his study within the Institute of Social Research's analysis of the stage of liberal capitalism of the 19th centuary to the stage of state and monopoly capitalism of the 20th century developed by the Frankfurt School. He further argues that Habermas (1962) analyzes the social structures, political functions, and concept and ideology of the public sphere. Habermas defines the public sphere as a " network for communicating information and points of view . . . the streams of communication are, in the process, filtered and synthesized in such a way that they coalesce into bundles of topically specified public opinions." (Habermas, J 1992/1997: 360). Kellner unbundles the public sphere and asserts: Habermas's concept of the public sphere thus described a space of institutions and practices between the private interests of everyday life in civil society and the realm of state power. The public sphere thus mediates between the domains of the family and the workplace

-- where private interests prevail -- and the state which often exerts arbitrary forms of power and domination. What Habermas called the " bourgeois public sphere" consisted of social spaces where individuals gathered to discuss their common public affairs and to organize against arbitrary and oppressive forms of social and public power. http://www. gseis. ucla. edu/faculty/kellner/kellner. htmlKellner argues that whereas theories of strong democracy posit individuals organizing, deliberating, making decisions, and actively transforming the institutions of their social life, Habermas (1997) shifts " the sovereignty of the people" It is this sovereignty of the people within the post-Zimbabwean context that the study seeks to assess with reference to plurality of ownership and control. So if within the Zimbabwean context that sovereignty took place, to what extent did the democratization of the discursive space translate into the democratization of development? The significance of the public sphere and its role in society is explained by Kellner who argues that it thrives:... in the power of public discourses that uncover topics of relevance to all of society, interpret values, contribute to the resolution of problems, generate good reasons, and debunk bad ones. Of course, these opinions must be given shape in the form of decisions by democratically constituted decision-making bodies. The responsibility for practically consequential decisions must be based in an institution. Discourses do not govern. They generate a communicative power that cannot take the place of administration but can only influence it. This influence is limited to the procurement and withdrawal of legitimation (Kellner, 1992: 452).

Methodology

Introduction

In the quest to produce a body of knowledge about the extent and implications of plurality of ownership and control on development and democracy the study will use a qualitative research approach. Essentially, the study will employ qualitative tools. The methods of data collection and analysis to be employed will be elucidated together with the sampling techniques. The rationale for espousing qualitative research methodology is to consistently prod media studies discourse, in contemporary society. Marcus and Fischer (1986) identify the importance of generating new knowledge through research of social phenomena. They assert; Thus in every contemporary field whose subject is society, there are either attempts at reorienting the field in distinctly new directions or efforts at synthesizing new challenges to theory… the broadest level, the contemporary debate is about how an emergent postmodern world is to be presented as an object for social thought… (Marcus and Fischer 1986: vii)Qualitative research methodology is well suited in this regard because by ' qualitative', the researcher focuses on " quality", a term referring to the essence or ambience of something (Berg 1989), in this case media texts. Bryman avows, Qualitative research is deemed to be much more fluid and flexible than quantitative research in that it emphasizes discovering novel or unanticipated findings and the possibility of altering research plans in response to such serendipitous occurrences. This is contrasted sharply with the quantitative methodologist's research design with its emphasis upon fixed measurements, hypothesis (or hunch) testing, and much less

protracted form of field involvement (Bryman, 1984: 12)This chapter will focus on the philosophical, ideological and epistemological foundations justifying the use of qualitative methodology in visual media research.

Research Design and Procedure

Qualitative Research: Philosophy and Epistemology

James Anderson and Geoffrey Baym (2004) describe epistemology as the study of the body of knowledge that informs research methodology, namely qualitative and quantitative methodologies. They posit that epistemology is an inquiry into the character of knowledge, the nature of acceptable evidence and the criterion of validity that enable one to distinguish the false from the true, the probable from actual. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies respectively emanate from different sets of knowledge systems. In essence the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative methodology, which is relevant for this study, are in general attributed to phenomenology. Qualitative methodology refers to, " any method of doing research that uses general observation, in-depth or semi-structured interviews, and verbal descriptions in place of numerical measures" (Priest 1996: 250). He further posits, " The goal of qualitative research is to access " insider" perspective characteristic of members of a culture (or subculture) (Priest 1996: 103). Anderson and Baym (2004) put forward philosophies and philosophic concerns in communication, which are important when doing media research. This social world is interrogated from four philosophic premises, which are ontology (existence), epistemology (knowledge), praxeology (knowledge practices) and axiology (issues related to value premises). In qualitative research phenomenology is the most dominant

epistemological base. Bogdan and Taylor (1997) in their description assert, The phenomenology views human behavior...as a product of how people interpret their world. The task in phenomenology and of the quaintly methodologists is to capture this process of interpretation...In order to grasp the meaning of a person's behavior, the phenomenology attempts to see things from a personal point view. (Bogdan and Taylor 1997: 13-4). This is " unlike quantitative research [which] exhibits a tendency for the researcher to view events from the outside and to impose empirical concerns upon social reality" (Bryman 1984: 78). He further argues that people's subjective experience of the world is filled through an unquestioning acceptance of its form and content, he calls this, " natural attitude." He believes that, the observer or researcher needs to analyze dense thickets of prior understandings of a society in order to grasp subjective experience in its pure, uncontaminated form. Instead of simply throwing around patronizing data, then building relationships from it, qualitative research fundamentally views society through the eyes of the subject and builds relationships from a holistic appreciation of the society. This explains why, " In particular, they view the imposition of a pre–ordained theoretical framework as deleterious because it may excessively constrain the researcher and exhibit a poor fit with participant's perspectives," (Bryman, 1988: 68).

Research Universe

Robinson (1995) argues that a research universe refers to the population from which the elements under study will be extricated. The research universe should be as wide as possible to ensure that the phenomena under study is conclusively covered, this means that the artifacts to be studied

should be chosen from as varied a base as possible. The universe of this research is comprised of the locally and internationally based Zimbabwean media organizations and their publications that focus on Zimbabwean issues; this includes both electronic and print media. It also includes the people who are and were in positions of authority within these organizations where editorial policy is determined, and the audiences that accessed these different media forms. Individuals from non-governmental organizations that are media related as well as Zimbabwean government ministries and departments that affect the media. These organizations, their publications, audiences and individuals who are and were in positions of authority will be sampled from all available sources and potential respondents that have been produced, worked continue to work at these organizations.

Unit of Analysis

O'Sullivan and Russell (1995) refer to the unit of analysis as the type of objects whose characteristics we measure and in which we are interested The study will consider the actual publications and their texts in the case of print, some electronic media; the people who are or were part of the dominant coalition; the audiences will also be the area of focus. Consequently there is need to come up with smaller groups representative of the above-mentioned populations. For instance there is need to sample the audiences because there are so many of them that access these media at any given time.

Sampling Methods

Sampling is crucial because it is the tool, which separates the units to be analysed from a population, which contains individuals with similar

characteristics to the extent that a selected few will constitute an accurate representation of the entire inhabitants of the population. Since the motive of this research is to gain knowledge of the extent to which plurality of content and ownership occurred and how it is related to development and democracy. It is not feasible to study each element of the population since it can be unreasonably protracted and expensive to manage. Thus there is need to come up with a small but representative group of the phenomena understudy.(Wallen 1996: 91) defines sampling as a process of selecting individuals who will participate, be observed or questioned or it refers to any group on which information is obtained. According to the Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia (2007) sampling is that part of statistical practice concerned with the selection of individual observations intended to yield some knowledge about a population of concern especially for the purposes of statistical inference. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995) elucidate the crux of sampling they assert; The strategy of selecting a smaller section of the population that will accurately represent the patterns of the target population at large, Economies on the resources required for collecting and managing the data from a smaller sub-group. The strategy is to select units that are judged to be typical of the population under investigation, (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995: 95)Qualitative sampling techniques, which include purposive, convenience and snowball sampling will be used to select the artists to be interviewed and the works of art to be analyzed. This means that the researcher will use non-probability sampling techniques, which critically means that each element to be studied will not have the same chance of being selected as others. The researcher will actively seek out the elements to be focused on.

Systematic Sampling

" Systematic sampling is a probability sampling method in which units are selected from a sampling frame according to fixed intervals, such as a fifth unit" (Bryman, 2001: 508). This sampling technique will be used to separate the audience members to be studied. An attempt will be made to come up with an equal ratio between males and females who are 18 years and above. The 18 years threshold is the legal age of majority in Zimbabwe; the legal age of majority has been taken on board so as to ensure that the researcher interacts with individuals who are regarded as adults, so the assumption is that adults make rational decisions. Access to these audiences will be achieved through interacting with the audience members within Harare's CBD area as well as other people from major cities and towns across Zimbabwe. For these audiences semi-closed questions and open-ended questions will be asked. Accordingly, the responses to questions posed by the researcher will be able to give answers to the goings on within the media industry. Systematically sampled Zimbabwean will be asked to give their interpretation of systematically sampled texts and their construal will be held up against the producers' intentions so as to clarify any similarities or dissimilarities in conceptualization and explain the relationship. The object is to consider whether or not the intentions of the producer are understood by the audience.

Purposive Sampling

The needs of the study especially sampling will be better served through the use of prior knowledge of the population's characteristics to be studied. This knowledge of the population is important in sampling the difficult to reach

participants, thus purposive sampling will be used. In explaining purposive sampling Du Plooy (2002) argues, " previous knowledge of the populations and/or the objective of the study can result in the researcher using his or her judgment to select a sample, (Du Plooy, 2002: 114). Purposive sampling means that a particular sample will be chosen on purpose. Purposive sampling will be used to select the publications to be studied to. The reasons for choosing the sample will be linked to the objective to ensure there is equal representation of all publications and the senior management staff who make and made decisions that influenced editorial policy. Thus there should be a theoretical link between the population under study and the thrust of the study, in this case media regulation, ownership, a bit of audience studies and the relationship of the media to democracy and development. The purposive sampling will be modeled in such a way that it is representative of the diversity of the units to be studied. The advantage of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the core issues being studied, especially when dealing with small groups.

Snowballing

(Lindloff 1995: 127) argues that snowballing makes use of an informant as a source of locating other persons, who in turn will refer the researcher to the next informants. This is crucial because the researcher is not acquainted with all the policy and decision makers; given this challenge it will be crucial to identify the information rich sources. Snowballing is crucial in as far as it ensures that the selected people provide the requisite data needed for the assessment. Snowballing is relevant because " the sample is, of course, in no

sense " random"; it would not be possible to draw a random sample, since no one knows the nature of the universe from which it would have to be drawn" (Becker 1963: 46: Bryman, 2001: 98). This basically means that the researcher does not have access to the " sampling frame for the population from which the sample is to be taken and that the difficulty of creating such a sampling frame means that such an approach is the only feasible one," (ibid: 99). Snowballing will be used to identify relevant texts to be analyzed. " In qualitative research, the orientation to sampling is more likely to be guided by a preference for theoretical sampling…" (Bryman, 2001: 99). By ' theoretical sampling' this is a term used mainly in relation to grounded theory to refer to sampling carried out so that emerging theoretical considerations guide the selection of cases and/or research participants. Theoretical sampling is supposed to continue until a point of theoretical saturation is reached" (ibid: 508) Therefore the main determinant in coming up with a sample is the theoretical needs of the study. However, there is always a risk that the informants may have their own biases, which may affect the external validity and ability to generalize the findings of the research, however this will be countered by using other sampling techniques to cover up for this weakness. The researcher will also be vigilant and scrupulous in countering such problems as is consistent with qualitative research methodology. Snowballing also aids in overcoming the problems associated with sampling the hidden and hard to reach populations because it takes advantage of the social networks of identified respondents to provide a researcher with an ever-expanding set of potential contacts, (Faugier and Sageant, 1997).

Convenience Sampling

Convenience sample " is drawn from units of analysis that are conveniently available" (Du Plooy, 2002: 114). This method will become handy when the researcher through snowballing and purposive sampling fails to identify or make contact with some of the senior executives or managers within media organizations who make policy decisions. This method is regarded as prone to biases because it is solely based on the researcher's discretion. Too much leeway is given to the researcher and this is noted by Bryman who asserts, " a convenience sample is one that is simply available to the researcher by virtue of its accessibility" (2001: 97). The researcher may end up looking for the closest and convenient. Critically incisive qualitative sampling techniques are pertinent to the acceptance of the generated knowledge about media texts as scientifically judicious. Ruddock argues that in, "…qualitative research, scientific validity is obtained through systematic collection and interpretation of data, not by generalizing findings to other groups, nor quantifying into an overall truth" (2001: 133).

Data gathering techniques and Methods of analysis

Individual in-depth Interviews

An interview is "… a purposeful discussion between two or more people," Kahn and Cannell (1957). It is a direct method of obtaining research material relevant to the study. Kahn and Cannell have grouped interviews into structured, semi-structured and un-unstructured interviews. Interviews can also be classified into face-to-face, telephone, group or mail interviews. Gall (1983) described the term interview as, "… unique in that it involves the collection of data through direct verbal interactions between individuals."

These interviews will be used to access information from the artists and the critics. Interviews have the advantage of presenting individual responses, as respondents get no chance to discuss the questions or make them more probing in order to gain more information, However, they can be time consuming and costly as each person has to be interviewed. Because there is need for verbal interventions to understand the texts from the creator[s] point of view; an attempt will be made to ensure that those who are directly involved in the creations are interviewed. The study will get an understanding of how those who construct the texts view their productions. There is an enduring debate on reception of texts in audience studies, so through interviews the researcher will be able to understand the production process and the nuances involved. Data will be collected using semi-structured and unstructured in-depth interviews with key informants of different media houses and the general public. This fundamentally means that each interview session " contains standardized questions and/or a list of topics. However, the interviewer is free to deviate and ask follow up or probing questions based on the respondent's replies- especially if the replies are unclear or incomplete," (Du Plooy 2002: 177). This style of interview is more flexible and better suited for the study because it is not restrictive and neither does it give too much leeway which can distort the findings. The interview will not be entirely standardized in a predetermined order so as to stifle spontaneity, which may illuminate specific areas that may not be clear. The study will benefit from this combination of types of interviews because responses can relatively be documented for easy scrutiny, and at the same time there is easy interaction with the respondents for maximum data gathering. Warhol and Malanga (1969) point out that interviews are an

essential tool needed for detailed information and where the respondents are not too many. Schroder et al. contend that: The individual interview also avoids the ' spiral of silence' effect that may prevent…controversial views and experiences from being expressed in a group context. The individual interview may thus be the best choice for a researcher who wishes to illuminate a sensitive issue, located beyond the discursive range of the socially acceptable or the politically correct – or an issue that is felt by the individual to be too sensitive to talk about in the presence of others, other than a researcher who grants the informant full anonymity (2003: 153). It is however crucial to realize that in interviewing, " we are investigating people's attitudes, feelings, knowledge or views." (Du Plooy 2002: 183). This means that there is always a risk of gathering distorted information. Respondents may become so self-conscious of the interviewer's presence, so there is a likelihood that they will act up. To guard against this problem the researcher will employ an array of research techniques, which should cover the weaknesses of the others.

Ethnography

Anthropology gave rise to ethnography. Du Plooy (2002) asserts that ethnography is a qualitative concept, which deals in " in-depth studies of ways of life, beliefs, formal and informal relationships, communication behaviours, ideologies and many other dimensions of a particular culture or group of people." (2002: 184). He further argues that such a study will have to be done in conditions that depict the ordinary circumstances of the social phenomenon under study. So in this instance to understand the ideas, attitudes, motives and behaviour of audiences there is need to carry out an

ethnographic study. In essence, ethnography is, A particular method or set of methods which in its most characteristic form ... Involves the ethnographer participating overtly or covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on these issues that are the focus of research. (Walsh, 1995: 1)Critically Malinowski (1922) cited in Alasuutari (1998) argues that in ethnography: The purpose is to gain a broad, comprehensive picture of all aspects of the culture in question. To identify the particular context, the basic dimensions and outlook on the world, within which local customs and ways of the thinking can be understood by people coming from a different cultural background... (Malinowski, 1922)This shows that ethnography entails more than just a foreigner studying another society but it is an attempt to understand the totality of a people. Clifford Geertz (1971) argues that ethnography should aim to produce a ' thick description' of society. These are viewed as " succinct generalizations about the nature of human interaction ... they try to explain phenomena that have already happened, (Alusuutari, 1998: 71). He further adds that it makes a strange ' other' look familiar and understandable while making the familiar look strange. Ethnography constitutes a wholesome technique that allows an individual to ' gaze' society differently and be able to objectify myth(s) in certain instances. This is because, " ethnographic writing is determined and conditioned contextually, rhetorically, institutionally, generically, politically and historically" (ibid: 71). It therefore is not an abstract concept but it relies heavily on a multiplicity of variant social aspects for its operationalisation. Fundamentally ethnography is a quest to build a body of knowledge about a

people through practical interactions. The intention is to be part of the group, but not be engulfed so as to lose objectivity, thus the quality of relations with the group members are crucial." Sampling is not an important consideration; rather the intent is to gain a window on a particular worldview" (Priest 1996: 108). But Seale, (1998) argues, Three dimensions of sampling are relevant… Time, attitudes and activity and activity may vary overtime… People vary, so a range of types should be investigated… Context, different things in different contexts (may be) contextually sensitive (Seale, 1998: 224)The application of any sampling technique is not a hard and fast rule in ethnography. Sampling can be instituted depending on the circumstances. At this juncture, it is important to remain objective and avoid bias, " a degree of marginality in the situation is needed, as immersion risks ' going native'. " Marginality is a poise between a strangeness which avoids over rapport and familiarity which grasps the perspectives of people in the situation" (ibid: 226). So there is a danger of becoming too involved with the group to such an extent that the researcher will not be able to carry out what he set out to do in the first place. Berger, asserts, But there are (dangers) liabilities to any effort to maximize one's immersion in a system. Aside from the danger of losing one's identity as a scientist, the researcher may become the captive of the group he is studying (Berger, 1998: 104). The researcher must remain independent and free to make conclusions either from the pressures of the group dynamics or personal character.