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Department of Politics and Public Management

PEACE STUDIES



DISSERTATION TOPIC:

**THE ROLE PLAYED BY MEDIA DURING ELECTION TIMES, CASE OF
ZIMBABWE 2008 & 2013 ELECTIONS.**

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**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS OF THE AWARD OF THE BSC PEACE STUDIES HONOURS
DEGREE**

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I Moyo Given Thabo declare that:

The research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated is my original work. This dissertation has not been submitted of any other degree or examination at any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my mother, Magreth Tsvara. Her advices and utmost love will forever mean a lot in my entire life.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

C.S.O -	Civil Society Organisation
Z.B.C -	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation
R.B.C -	Rhodesian Broadcasting Cooperation
P.E.V -	Post Electoral Violence
ZANU-PF-	Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front
MDC-T -	Movement for Democratic Change-Tsvangirai
AIPPA-	Access to Information & Protection of Privacy Act
B.A.Z -	Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe
Z.P.P -	Zimbabwe Peace Project
B.S.A -	Broadcasting Services Act
P.O.S.A-	Public Order & Security Act
G.N.U -	Government of National Unity
G.P.A -	Global Political Agreement
V.O.A -	Voice of America
M.I.S.A-	Media Institute of Southern Africa

I.C.T -	Information Communication & Technology
U.N.D.P-	United Nations Development Programme
I.S.P.s -	Internet Service Providers
S.A.D.C-	Southern African Development Committee
U.N -	United Nations
Z.L.H.R-	Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights
P.O.T.R.A.Z-	Postal & Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

The research examines role played by media during election periods. It has found out that between the two political parties ZANU PF & MDC-T both received fair coverage though from different sources. Party ZANU PF had its politics covered by the Herald and other state funded media outlets like ZBC. Thus however ZANU PF proved to have more coverage since it had privatized the media at the cost of improved independent/ private media which was being suppressed during this time. The research has explanation and analysis on the different ways in which political parties and political figures were represented the print, broadcast and social media. The paper also observes the importance of media in persuading the masses towards a certain goal during election times especially when campaigning and launching manifestos, in a bid to lure votes. Research also paid attention to the influence of the new technology and its impact towards affecting the election results. The media laws leading to the election period 2008/2013 are also of significance in determining the degree of democracy within media environment hence promoting the peoples' right to information and freedom of expression. The presence of repressive media laws has been attributed to the undermining of independent/private media thus left the people of Zimbabwe during elections to rely on one source of news which was through state media i.e. ZBC or Radio Zimbabwe. The paper also observes that media had great influence during the target period under review as evidenced by how political figures used social media to advertise themselves to the people and even mobilizing people for a particular event like campaign rallies or youth interfaces. Social media was most preferable to the politicians because of its reliability, affordability and time effectiveness of the platform in dissemination of any kind of news. Therefore, both negative and positive effects of media during elections were extracted by the paper. Effectiveness of the media was also traced from its early stages of print media till it had advanced through the use of internet, during 2013 Elections mobile and internet penetration rate were the zenith hence accessible to the masses as they were also affordable. Most of the population were mobile phone owners accessing internet and social media, this was a great wave of technological advancement which later promoted independent media through the channels of new media technology e.g. WhatsApp and Facebook. The roles of played by traditional media as the primary sources of news in the Zimbabwean context were also analysed in the research.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The role played by media in conflicts has been an issue all over the world. Its influence has increased tremendously and researchers are yet to agree on the degree and magnitude of the media influence in conflicts during election times. The aim of this study is analyse the role of media in escalating or deescalating conflict during electoral period and the post electoral era with reference to Zimbabwe 2008 and 2013 elections. The paper will trace the linkage between the variables under study i.e. media, conflict and elections. There are however proposed objectives which try to fill literature gaps, these include establishing the media accessibility level and the various types of media platforms, to establish the extent to which escalated or deescalated violence during the 2008 and 2013 post-election violence(PEV) and to measure the effects of violent conflicts on different human variables (age, gender, residence, religion, culture & ethnicity).Both the libertarian and social responsibility theories of media reporting will be analysed to explain media roles and to develop the conceptual framework. In trying to assess the impact of media the paper proposes to conduct a detailed research on the above area of study

1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Security challenges are becoming diverse and fragmented posing more threat to the world peace and stability than ever. Similarly, the understanding of the root causes of electoral violence and the interrelation between media and conflict management from global perspective they increasingly become dynamite. The media environment in Zimbabwe can best be understood through understanding its primitive stages up to date. The researcher would argue that media environment in Zimbabwe during 2008 & 2013 election periods started as a repressive one which later changed to be partially liberal respectively followed by the coming in of the new media facility (social media). The media tended to be democratic

and liberal due to globalisation which brought about technological advancement within the country.

Media environment was determined by the inherited repressive laws formerly used by the colonial regime, during Ian Douglas Smith he used media as his propaganda tool as some scholars like Chiumbu (2004) would want argue. It was however clear that the media policies and laws that were inherited served the current government hence they were derived from a Westminster document, Lancaster House Agreement. The Mugabe regime continued to use the same repressive laws that guarded government's interest. From the provisions of the Rhodesian Broadcasting Cooperation, the state was responsible for all the broadcasting services thus made it easy for the Mugabe regime to censor information and release that they perceived was necessary for the people.

It was not enough until on the 25th of July 1990 when the Mugabe regime was given legal control of the media through a power transition which shaped the total independence of Zimbabwe from the white colonial government under Smith. The researcher posits that government taking full control of media was a step in the violation of human rights basing on the fact that, the laws were repressive and there was no media freedom since people could not express themselves through democratic journalism practises i.e. criticising the government where necessary.

Previously during the colonial era, the was used to covering news from the metropolis while events occurring in the African continent were rarely covered. Researcher is also of the view that only negative news about Africans was broadcasted so as to give a negative perception towards colonies. It was a measure to guard the interests of the Rhodesian government, through information censorship and gate-keeping of circulating news. With the government having inherited the so called draconian media laws from the colonial government, in 2009

the coming back into government of well-known political figure Professor Jonathan Moyo marked a turning point in the media environment of Zimbabwe.

Professor Jonathan Moyo during his term as he served the Information, Communication & Technology ministry managed to introduce some media policies that had effect to public especially during the electoral times 2008/13. There were amendments made however they tended to favour and amass the government with a lot of powers in media industry as the paper will analyse in the later chapters. For example, the crafted media framework inhibited the activities of journalists as according to Freedom House,(2010). Taking for example the Broadcasting services Act (BSA) practically ostensibly allow for other broadcasting entities. The fact that Supreme Court struck down the monopoly on radio and television broadcasting held by Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation (ZBC), the BSA contains so many restrictive clauses that it is virtually impossible for private investors to establish independent broadcasting companies and so by virtue of this undermined democratic journalism and the human rights of individuals in the country.

Today, ZBC still enjoy a defacto control of the airwaves which the current government has relentlessly exploited to convince the electorate through provision of news they perceive necessary to the public

The need to study influence of media is not a new phenomenon but it can be traced to the era of the Vietnam War whereby media was still in its early stages hence media platforms were limited (only radios and newspapers). The power of media influence in conflict was witnessed in the Vietnam war during the U.S.A involvement in the war due to growth in information technology sector, caused by the discovery of television. Evidence can be drawn from the Vietnam War; the Vietnam War sent the press in two opposite directions. The discovery in that war was that the USA government and military had often disseminated false

information to the public on the concrete details of the progress in conduct of the conflict led the public, through press coverage to accept a possibility that all U.S foreign policies might have been characterised by deception Praeger (1994). Thus the military realised after the Vietnam experience that to be able to wage war it would have to control the media particularly the dominant television and radio platforms, so that the horrible images of war would not make back to the home front. Media as a major area of study has proved to have fuelled conflict during election times. Mutua (2001) the African continent has suffered numerous armed conflicts, some of which the media play a major role. Media has been blamed as one of tools for promoting escalation of conflict as the general populace depend on the available information which is however disseminated by the media houses which release information they feel is suitable for the public. Studies have indicated that mass media could contribute to conflicts by way of inciting violence, failing to highlight emerging conflicts and delaying to report conflicts. For example, the Herald newspaper in Zimbabwe, during the 2008 harmonised elections, the government owned paper instilled violence through agenda setting, hence favouring the government to resist the opposition MDC-T by all means possible. This gave a negative motion to the public as a number of citizens were noticed resorting to violence in an effort to resist opposition, Newsday (2009). Another empirical evidence to show the vitality of media in conflict escalation can be drawn from the case of Zimbabwe during the pre-independence era, the availability of televisions and newspapers had great impact in the sense that most the Rhodesians were in possession of media devices and had access to news. Through these readily available media platforms all the evils and grave human rights violations which were being conducted by the colonialists now circulated to most parts of the country. Pictures and videos of police brutality circulated and this gave the Rhodesians the motive and will to rebels against the unfair regime (imperialists) hence followed by the escalation of conflict as the people were already against imperial tendencies

by the colonialists. From this case of Zimbabwe media proved to be a tool influencing escalation of conflicts which may however end up as violence. However, on the other hand there are also researches which show positive role played by media thus it is a tool for peace for example the case of Zimbabwe post-independence i.e. declaration of independence day and the resignation by the executive president R.G Mugabe after 37years of leadership as president. Matonga (1999) is of the view that, news declaring the national Independence Day on the 18th of April 1980 spread all over the country like no any other news. Since television and newspapers were available by then to most of the population, the news was quickly reached the public followed by the celebrations which are said to have occurred for a period of 7days celebration with the influence of media. Hence media influenced the population in a positive way. More so 98.4Fm Midlands Radio Station, ZBC SABC NEWS and many international news channels reviewed Zimbabweans celebrating in different cities after the media had shared information on the retirement of R.G Mugabe followed by the conviction of certain corrupt political figures whom were said to have undermined development within the country. This kind of transparent news set a positive motion into the country basing on the reaction of the general populace after receiving the news from media platforms which included online social media and broadcastings mediums; hence media can be traced to have influence in promoting peace. The media's transparent nature through disseminating information on all the current political on goings showed democratic tendencies hence increased peoples patriotism and hope for a better nation, to mention but a few of the once positive roles played by media in conflicts. However, the research is proposing to find the effectiveness and the interrelations of media and elections in the contemporary Zimbabwe in an effort to add literature gaps.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The proposed research tries to come up with a solution to fulfil the needs of the objectives under study (influence of media during elections and conflict times), therefore the research will be to quench the needs on finding influences of mass media and the reduction of the effects of media during conflict and election times. However, few scholars and individuals have rarely investigated the indirect and invincible roles of media during conflict and election times. This deviation prompted the researcher to establish what role media could have played or failed to play based on the agenda setting theory.

1.4 Justification of the Study

The study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge and research concerning the relationship between media, conflict and election. The research is to suggest and come up with possible measures to alter the problem at hand i.e. media's influence –electoral violence. The proposed research may be of paramount importance to the policy makers and academics as it is in thirst to contribute possible solutions to the awaiting problems resulting from media's contribution to the escalation/de-escalation of conflict during election times.

1.5 Research Aims & Objectives

1. To measure the accessibility levels of media and media coverage in Zimbabwe during 2008 & 2013 elections.
2. To assess the effectiveness of media towards conflict and elections during election period.
3. To measure the effects of media and conflict on human variables (age, gender, religion etc.) during election times in Zimbabwe.

1.6 Research Questions

1. What is the degree of the media accessibility and the media coverage in Zimbabwe during election 2008 & 2013 elections?

2. To what extent did media escalate and / or de-escalate violence during the targeted election period under study?

3. What influence did media have on human variables i.e. (gender, social status, residence and religion) towards fuelling conflict and managing conflict?

1.7 LITERATURE REVIEW

Mass media effects have continued to dominate discussions among mass communication scholars most importantly theorists during the last to early millennium. The scope of media impact in the coverage of election in Zimbabwe from the pre-independence era to the contemporary times 2008/2013 has received considerable attention from both political scientist and media scholars. Okinoye and Nwokeafar (1989) are of the view that margin between the coverage and media type may be very high however the intent seems to be very similar. The proposed study area tries to find both negative and positive effects of media during and post elections and proffer possible solutions. Chavhunduka, M.G (2002) is of the view that media though unguarded and biased reporting and comments, directly or indirectly instigate political parties and their members in election violence. The research will also pay attention on the role of media towards election violence (during and after elections). Sometimes media houses (newspapers, radios and televisions) and civil society organisations (C.S.O) also suffer attacks during election times. Some scholars like McCombs posits that perpetrators of election violence are parties and their members, who use violence as a means of influencing the electoral process to their advantage and preventing election rigging by other parties. Most of the scholars tend to focus on the public as a main affected ones due to media's influence on electoral violence, but the proposed research will try to shade more light on the media houses and other opposition parties being affected by electoral violence as a result of media hence a stepping stone towards filling literature gaps. Moyse (2008) presupposes that today's media landscape as a civil society in collaboration with the

independent press and particularly the relatively new Daily news, overcame a tidal wave of propaganda in the government controlled media campaigning for acceptance of the draft constitution. Basing on Moyses's view, it is the research's aim to suggest solutions that may reduce media's negative impact during and after elections. In addition, countries like Rwanda, Congo, Somalia, Sudan and Kenya etc. have also experienced the impact of media followed by electoral violence, Jhazbhay (2008). The most recent role of media in conflict escalation is the Arab spring in the North Africa and the Middle East. This saw the overthrow of Libyan, Tunisian and Egyptian governments through mass action engineered by social media. Commenting on the media role in the uprising, for example (Times magazine, 2010) reported that while state controlled media outlets presented a one sided view of the Libyan conflict, their independent counterparts showed similar flows in both reporting and analysis. In order to objectively understand the nature and role of media in peace and conflict during election times, it is important to identify the various ways through which media influence conflict and conflict management. Newbold (1995) points out that majority of scholars and researchers have concentrated on the role of media in economic, social and political issues affecting states with little attention being given to electoral violence. As Sir Michael Howard noted, 'television brings a crisis closer to governors but no new means to resolve it'.

1.8 Theoretical framework

The proposed research will focus on the agenda setting theory in trying to expose the role played by media during conflict and election times. Theory entails the power of the media to set a nation's agenda, to focus public attention on a few key public issues, it is also an immense and well documented influence McComb's (1969). Theory also presumes that not only do people acquire factual information about public affairs from the media, readers and viewers also learn how much importance to attach to a topic on the basis of the emphasis placed on it in by the media. Agenda setting theory comprise of different sub-branches or

factors which include salienting, silencing and framing to mention a few which also try to support agenda setting however in different forms. The research will pay specific attention on each of the agenda setting theory's factors respectively in relation to their contribution to conflict and during election times in the case of 2008 and 2013 Zimbabwe harmonised elections.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

Bauer (2001) defines elections as democratic processes where citizens aged 18 and above elect candidates to represent them and their interest locally, nationally or internationally. The candidate with the majority of votes is elected. Anyone who is enrolled on the Electoral Register is able to vote. There are however different types of elections.

Post Electoral Violence (PEV), "it is a kind of political violence distinguished by its timing, perpetrators and victims, objectives and methods" Bekoe (2012:2). It has been defined as, "an activity motivated by an attempt to affect the results of the elections, either by manipulating the electoral procedures and participation or by contesting the legitimacy of the results" Laakso (2007:227) The causes of electoral violence are multifaceted, and can be divided into two broad categories: first, structural factors related to the underlying power structures prevalent in new and emerging democracies, such as informal patronage systems, poor governance, exclusionary politics, and the socio-economic uncertainties of losing political power in states where almost all power is concentrated at the centre; second, factors related to the electoral process and the electoral contest itself, such as failed or flawed elections, election fraud and weak or manipulated institutions and institutional rules governing the electoral processes.

Conflict comes from a Latin word for striking, but it is not always violent. Conflict can arise from opposing ideas. If you are torn between two different desires, you are conflicted,

Galtung (1958). McCombs and Shaw are of the view that media is a means or channel of general communication in society, as newspapers, radios, television (traditional media) or even social media e.g. Facebook, WhatsApp and YouTube etc. It has the first real mail or postal system which is said to have been developed by the Persian emperor Cyrus the Great (c.500BC) after his conquest of media.

1.10 Methodology

The researcher presumes to use mixed research methods in collecting and gathering data. Mixed methods research is a research design with methodology, it involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 5). Random interviews in different geographical locations, deep group discussions and analysis and issuing of questionnaires will be made use of in a bid to get a better understanding of the impacts of different media platforms towards elections and conflict escalation or de-escalation during the period under study 2008 and 2013

1.11 Delimitations

- Time frame: 21st century.
- Research is going to be conducted within the borders of Zimbabwe.
- Content: examining the role of media during conflict and election times.

1.12 Anticipated limitations

- Collection of false information which may result in biased results.
- Inaccessibility of remote areas.
- Language barrier in different locations.

1.13 Organization of the Structure

Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

Chapter: 2 Analyzing Media Accessibility & Availability

Chapter 3: Role played by Media in influencing Elections

Chapter 4: Conclusion & Recommendations

CHAPTER 2: Analysing media availability during the course of Elections

2.1 MEDIA ENVIRONMENT IN ZIMBABWE LEADING UP TO THE 2008/2013 ELECTIONS:

The independent nature of media in Zimbabwe is debatable, since most of the press and broadcast are state owned hence tend to favour the government in all spheres leaving the opposition in bad light. It all dates back to the colonial era during the Smith regime, whereby the press mirrored the settler colonial ideology of the state and social polarisation along racial lines. A state of emergency imposed in 1965 by the settler's regime did not lapse up until 25 July 1990 when it gave Prime Minister Robert G Mugabe's post-independence government and its organs unlimited power to control the media and the citizens. Such a move clearly proved that initially the Prime Minister wanted influence of media to consolidate his power and authority hence the thirst to control media led to a breach of media's independent nature from the political affiliations. Chuma (2008) posits that Rhodesian Broadcasting Cooperation was part of Smith regime's propaganda machinery. More so, media was never left autonomous as shown by the colonial era period whereby it was used for the benefit of settlers.

The inherited Law and Order (maintenance) Act from the colonialists also gave government unlimited power over media, thus law permitted the police to give permissions of meetings and rallies. In reality ZANU-PF was the only party allowed to conduct such activities. It freely violated human rights since government could if it wanted control what was published or broadcasted, Chari (2010). According to Freedom house (2013) Freedom of the press is restricted in Zimbabwe. The government has not yet aligned media laws with the country's new constitution passed in 2013, and, among other violations, media authorities arbitrarily deny licenses to community radio stations. Journalists face harassment, threats, and arbitrary arrests, and increasingly dire economic conditions continue to cause job losses and financial

strain in the media sector. Therefore, in as much the freedom of media is concerned from the above thesis, it has been difficult for the media in Zimbabwe to be regarded as autonomous since most of the politicians use it as mechanism to consolidate their power hence shade bad light to the opposition parties.

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) introduced a rigorous licensing system for media outlets, restricting foreign ownership of the media and prolonging *The Herald's* monopoly since the other privately-run newspapers were weeklies. Despite their influence, they could not challenge *The Herald's* circulation figures. Intimidation against journalists regardless of their political affiliation has been commonplace in Zimbabwe, but working for the independent press has been more daunting. Examples of state-sanctioned tyranny and bullying of the private media can be seen in the 2007 incident involving veteran journalist Bill Saidi. A soldier, apparently unhappy with an article published in Saidi's *Standard* newspaper, left an envelope with a bullet and a handwritten note reading, "What is this? Watch your step" (Timberg, 2007). This showed that the media was not independent to such an extent that a journalist in the private sector could express his/her opinion towards someone influential, it was unheard of, hence no democracy enhancing media practices in Zimbabwe.

2.2 ANALYSING OF MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY DURING TARGET PERIOD

In this chapter the researcher intends to explore how the media was accessed during the election period under review, in other words the paper trace the average number of people involved in the use of media in influencing elections and also explain the tools used enhance politics with the facilitation of media towards and during election. Finding the number of internet subscribers, mobile phone owners, and also the penetration rate of new technology into the country will help in weighing the effectiveness of media during period under review (2008/2013). Therefore tracing the accessibility nature of media platforms will help predict

the media's influence, since a certain number of people resort to it during election times for however different reasons.

In a bid to find how media was accessible to the masses in Zimbabwe, the paper will explain through document and content analysis, the distribution patterns of newspapers around the country from both private and state media, also analyse the penetration rate of new technology i.e. mobile phones and social media and finding number of internet subscribers

2.2.1 PRINT MEDIA-(Newspapers):

The research under this sub-topic will analyse how media was readily available to the public so that people would make informed decisions during elections. Accessibility levels will be determined by the counting of newspapers that were state owned and those that are privately owned, also counting the number of radio stations that were independent and then measuring the effectiveness of the media platforms that were in existence by that time. In as much relevant information needed to credit or discredit the accessibility levels of media during 2008 and 2013 election period was derived from both the urban and rural areas of Zimbabwe. The most important media in Zimbabwe was traditional media platforms i.e. radio etc. whereas TV plays a role mainly in the cities. Electronic media were all state owned and controlled, Vollan (2008). This was a measure by the British colonial government to restrict the existence of opposing ideas in form of opposition parties, government had the only privileges to control the media through deciding which news they thought was important to the public.

Agenda setting was already being put into practice, candidates were given access to programmes where they are questioned on their political platforms and issues. In addition, there are provisions for paid advertisements. This positive development started already in 2005 and came as a direct result of the SADC Standards having been agreed to in 2004. The state TV and radio were still biased and gave much more time for the coverage of ZANU PF

than of the opposition, and the coverage of the opposition was mostly negative. The programmes that were not directly related to the elections, such as the news and other current affairs programs, were still overly biased in favour of the incumbents. After the Daily News was closed in 2002, there was no daily newspaper in Zimbabwe supporting the opposition, but the opposition had the support of some independent weeklies.

Above thesis reveal that though there were private owned newspapers, they were suppressed by the, then government through abduction of critical journalists like Jestina Mukoko whom was said to be anti-government through her publications, a former broadcaster at the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) then privately-owned Voice of the People (VOP), was snatched from her home in Norton, 40 kilometres from the capital, by 15 men in plain clothes, Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) said. Another empirical evidence to prove that the government during 2008 elections tried by all means to prevent media to be accessible just people as wanted is when On 31 March 2007, freelance cameraman Edward Chikomba was found dead after being abducted in similar circumstances. Despite an absence of proof, suspicion has been directed at intelligence service agents, Reporters Without- borders (2008).

From such moves of killing and abducting journalists, one would argue that it was a stepping stone towards ousting manifestation of opposing ideas by the private media houses for example Daily News and anti-government journalists, hence a limitation towards promoting media to be accessible especially during elections.

This however was a disadvantage to the opposition parties who were partially covered in a negative way by the then pro-government newspapers, thus information from the opposition parties was disregarded hence not accessible. It meant that the public had no option but to rely on the news by the state owned newspapers. Therefore, this did not favour equality in the

dispensation of news from all the contesting political parties. The author would want to posit that media accessibility was biased towards favouring the government of R.G Mugabe.

2.3 Determinants of Media accessibility among: (print, radio, television & internet)

- Frequency of distributing newspapers
- Quantity/number of newspapers dispensed per given time, per given area
- Affordability of the newspapers
- Internet and Social media penetration/usage rate during 2008/2013
- Number of satellite subscribers-satellite penetration rate
- Average price of gadgets i.e (computers, phones, televisions & radios
- Number of mobile phones owned per given geographical area during target period.

2.3.1 Distribution patterns of Newspapers from different publishers around Zimbabwe (Zim-Papers & Alpha Holdings)

(i)Urban areas:

Basing from the analysis posed by author, urban areas are the best market places for the newspapers in Zimbabwe since they quickly reach the market. Unlike in rural areas where deliveries are rarely made because of the remoteness and bad transport networks of some areas. The most sold newspaper during the 2008/2013 election period was the Herald, which is however a state-owned paper.

It is of importance to note that, the state owned papers (the *Herald & Sunday Mail*) had more coverage in terms of distribution during elections, this can be attributed to the fact that government was tyranny towards issuing licenses for the opening of new media houses. Government through its slow rate of issuing licences to aspiring media houses contributed to limit media accessibility as the government was only organ to disseminate news through Zimbabwe Broadcasting Cooperation and other Radio stations like Radio Zimbabwe. Therefore, the information distributed was clearly in favour of the, then ruling party. Other

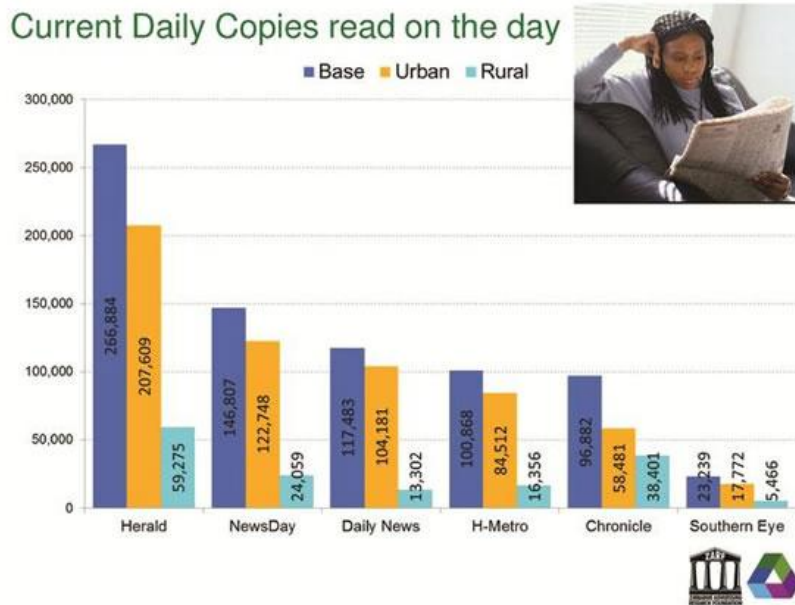
opposing ideas by the opposition parties were silenced for the benefit of R.G Mugabe's administration. Government's control of the media and unwillingness to issue operating licences reduced levels of media accessibility as the already existing newspapers and radio stations were adhering to one side (government).

(ii)Rural Areas:

The rural areas in most parts of the country were at a disadvantage in terms of accessing the print media, distance and remoteness are some of the problems discouraging adequate supply of news through print newspapers. From most of the content analysed reason behind the lack of newspapers in rural areas can best be attributed to the general perception of illiteracy among people living in the rural areas. In as much some of the newspapers are printed daily hence makes it difficult for the suppliers to reach remote areas on daily basis however some developed growth points where there is high population realise the exposure to the print media.

Generally, print media has less market in the rural area setup hence anyone willing to sell the will have less returns in terms of profit, it has however disadvantaged a number of people who prefer print media compared to other platforms like radio.

2.3.2 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS & COMPARISON OF DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS (Herald, Newsday, Southern Eye, Chronicle and Daily News)



2.3.3 Explanation:

The Zamps survey, published by the Zimbabwe Advertising Research Foundation, found The Herald has 266 884 daily readers, just over three quarters of them urban and just under a quarter rural. In second place, leading a tight pack of four newspapers, comes News Day with 146 807 readers. This tight pack has Daily News in third place, H-Metro in fourth place and Chronicle in fifth place. Another step down in sixth place is News Day’s western stablemate, Southern Eye. Three of the six dailies — The Herald, H-Metro and Chronicle — are owned by Zimbabwe Newspapers, with a combined readership of around 465 000.

From the above graph which shows the distribution patterns of newspapers from both state and private media. The graph clearly shows that most of newspapers which had high distribution are state owned, the researcher would like to attribute this to the financial stability of government funded media like Herald compared to Newsday

which had fewer number of newspapers in circulation which may be attributed to lack of strong financial backup to boost their number of prints.

CHAPTER 3: ROLE PLAYED BY MEDIA DURING 2008/2013 ELECTIONS

3.1 METHODS USED BY MEDIA TO INFLUENCE ELECTIONS:

Agenda setting theory explaining the role of media during election times:

- Representation
- Saliencing & Silencing
- Framing and Gate-Keeping

Hate Speech, Threats

- Political Advertisements
- Photos and Cartoon images
- Political Songs

3.1.1 REPRESENTATION OF NEWS:

Propaganda, for right or wrong reasons, is often associated with negative connotations. It is often perceived that propaganda techniques can only be employed by autocratic and despotic regimes. However, it has been argued that practically all governments, including the ones that affirm to democratic values, use some form of propaganda to bolster their support from other nations and citizenry (Pratkanis & Aronson, 1991). In its quest to discredit and disavow President Mugabe's rule in Zimbabwe, the British government has also used propaganda techniques, one may argue. Continuously labelling President Mugabe a dictator, with a distasteful "human rights" record is an established propaganda technique associated with glittering generalities and name-calling especially when one considers the fact that it was Mugabe, who introduced basic "human rights" when he took over in 1980.

While *The Herald* does not hide its allegiance to ZANU-PF, it offers an alternative to the coverage of Zimbabwean politics, which since the launch of the land reform program in 2000

has largely been biased against the government of Zimbabwe. While the foreign and independent media outlets have sought to delegitimize Mugabe's rule because of perceived land reform injustices and allegations of elections rigging, *The Herald* has maintained its strong nationalistic stance. It carefully echoes the government's stance in blaming Zimbabwe's miseries on a coalition of local and international antagonists including white farmers, the British government, and the then opposition MDC party.

3.1.2 IMPACT OF THE REPRESENTATION MECHANISM:

By choosing to abandon neutral and objective reporting, instead maintaining a constant nationalistic pro-ZANU-PF agenda, the newspaper has ignored a fundamental ethic of journalism. Zimbabweans who have left the country because of the fledging economic crisis are considered traitors and allies of the West in a strongly generalized perspective, which normally ignores the fact that pro-Mugabe supporters may have also left the country. One could also argue that the pervasive barrage of disapproval levelled against the MDC for supporting the European Union's "targeted" sanctions ignores ZANU-PF's actions that allegedly prompted the sanctions, including allegations of gross human rights violations brought by independent actors such as the United Nations. Interestingly, ZANU-PF politicians, even those born after independence from Britain in 1980, are addressed as "Comrade", to reflect their supposed credentials as veteran bush war fighters. MDC officials, by contrast, are referred to as "Mr.", including those who fought in the 1970s guerrilla wars. *The Herald* thus measures patriotism by party allegiance hence hindering the prevalence of democracy, peace and justice paving way for conflict through the establishment of social classes basing on political affiliation (stratification).

The Herald's relationship with the government is mutual. While faithfully spreading the ruling party's political, social, and economic agenda, it has been guaranteed exclusivity to news, ensuring that it secures "stories" away from independent journalists and maintains its

journalistic edge against competitors, hence determining the information to be available to the public. President Mugabe historically travels with a reporter from *The Herald* on most of his foreign trips. This favour is not extended to journalists from the private media. Accordingly, the newspaper has always had an unchallenged access to the President. Thus, the reports may be dismissed as manipulative propaganda though its coverage may actually be informative, despite the fact that the main objective, like most forms of propaganda, is to create a favourable public response.

Though its content is one-sided, the paper has long been a vital and occasionally dependable source of Zimbabwean news. For instance, while various foreign media incorrectly reported that President Mugabe had left the country in the aftermath of his first-round defeat to Tsvangirai in the 2008 elections, *The Herald* had it right, the president had not left the country. In 2012, Western media outlets including *The Sydney Morning Herald* incorrectly speculated that President Mugabe may have died during a trip to Singapore (Levy, 2012). As it turned out, *The Herald*, which had a reporter traveling with Mugabe, rejected these reports, suggesting as what later turned out to be the case that Mugabe was alive. Basically the print's allegiance to the ruling party clearly entail that the news published by Herald was biased, thus it struggled by all means to segregate news from the private media.

In summation of the above thesis media in form print managed to influence public opinion by of providing information the government perceived was necessary to the general populace. Empirical evidence can be drawn from the cases whereby the Herald disseminated information with an intension of supporting one political party i.e ZANU-PF hence downsizing the opposition party MDC-T in all spheres through negative picturing e.g. '*naming and shaming*'. The then editorial policies of Herald favoured ruling party during the period (2008 harmonised elections). One would want to argue that, the authotarian policies governing the use of media were actually inherited from the colonial regime thus clearly

proves that government wanted control over the media so as to consolidate power. Therefore, with the despotic nature of ZANU-PF, it managed to control the media through imposing high tariffs for one to own a newspaper company or even radio station, thus it was a measure to oust any emanation of opposing ideas through private media.

3.1.3 SALIENCING & SILENCING OF NEWS

Melkote (2009:549) defines framing as ‘the ways in which news media organize, treat and present issues, events and news objects as news makers’. Framing may involve ignoring or downplaying certain aspects of an issue, creating an artificial balance in coverage, media and journalists, speaking with the voice of the government, exaggeration and lack of analysis of events and use of a narrow selection of experts. Framing influence show audiences think about issues by raising certain understanding of information. Framing is therefore regarded a tool for enhancing or promoting saliencing of issues, thus magnifying minor issues to make them seem more complex and important.

As Foucault (1978:27) points out, silence is very much part of any discourse: Silence itself- the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers-is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within overall strategies.

Although the March 29, 2008 election was a harmonized one, encompassing presidential, parliamentary and local government elections both The Sunday Mail and The Zimbabwe Independent gave more prominence to presidential candidates while ignoring the other levels of contest. Only presidential candidates of the big political parties, namely President Mugabe of Zanu PF, Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Independent candidate Dr Simba Makoni received the lion’s share of press coverage while

another independent candidate, Langton Towungana was scarcely mentioned in the two newspapers, often described as little known' Langton Towungana' if at all he was mentioned. Thus, in the prevailing two horse race discourse of the time Towungana's bid for the presidency was made to appear like a sick joke supposedly because he did not have a national stature. The fact that stakes were too high in the election therefore meant that candidates who were perceived of having a remote possibility of upsetting the applecart and bring political change such as Towungana were viewed as a source of inconvenience or potential peddlers of confusion rather than enhancing democratic culture. Predictably news coverage narrowed down to three candidates in order to maximize exposure to candidates who had the potential to bring change. In both newspapers the municipal elections were hardly mentioned and both the senatorial and parliamentary elections were completely obscured by the presidential contest.

The press therefore became a terrain on which hegemonic and counter hegemonic ideas and instruments of wrestling power. Consequently, both newspapers accentuated 'negative' attributes of some presidential candidates while obscuring the 'positive' attributes depending on who they were rooting for, Chari (2010). This demonstrates that contrary to the view that the media are public spheres accessible to all and different, ideological, institutional and technical and professional considerations such as news values determine who gets exposure in the media. The press's internal logic is unfavourable to complex or uncertain positions favouring simplicity. As a consequence, the media do not play what would be an important part in informing the citizenry about the diverse political choices available.

They build reality by selecting 'relevant news', highlighting certain issues while suppressing or downplaying others hence agenda setting at the expense of the public. It is argued here that, framing of the 2008 harmonized elections demonstrates how elections and conflicts impose technical boundaries on the press forcing it to operate at the service of authority and

counter-hegemony while professional detachment is pushed to the margins as the press become participants in an asymmetrical war. Therefore, media can be regarded as an instrument used to bolster authority during conflict or election period.

Broadcasting licenses have been consistently denied to independent and community radio stations but granted to government-affiliated organizations. Moreover, independent outlets that campaign for licenses face harassment and persecution from the authorities. Critics allege that the board of the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ), which is responsible for granting radio and television licenses, was illegally appointed in 2009 by the information minister and stacked with loyalists of Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) party. Government's refusal to grant licences can be regarded as a measure to safeguard its interests against any other opposition hence silencing information that others feel is relevant to make informed decisions especially when voting.

(i) EXAMPLE:

In The Zimbabwe Independent of 28 March, 2008, an opinion columnist argued that because of his advanced age Mugabe no longer had anything to offer. He writes:

There is nothing more that Mugabe can offer. He might boast of stamina that men of his age can, at best, vaguely remember. But listening to him, even the voice is slow, tired, and betrays a tortured soul. Not even the memories of a glorious past can put a veil on the disaster around him.

From the case above, silencing of the President was in motion since he was being down played by the media as they named and shamed his weaknesses including the old age which gave the public a negative perception towards the old leader.

Moreover, another state owned paper the Herald also played a pivotal role in crafting and manufacturing of public opinion in support of ZANU-PF when it wanted to consolidate its power during the 2008 harmonised elections through manipulation of media. Hence most of

the party's campaigns and manifesto were the only ones to be released to the public through the print newspapers and radios whilst the opposition was not even given a platform to air their views to the public. Below is the example of propaganda used by the Herald:

Interestingly, ZANU-PF politicians, even those born after independence from Britain in 1980, are addressed as "Comrade", to reflect their supposed credentials as veteran bush war fighters. MDC-T officials, by contrast, are referred to as "Mr", including those who fought in the 1970s guerrilla wars, The Herald (2008).

3.1.4 ROLE OF HATE SPEECH DURING ELECTIONS:

ZPP believes that hate speech that intends to degrade, intimidate or incite violence against someone based on political affiliation, race and ethnicity is harmful. "We are also aware that hateful words can all too easily lead to physical attacks on citizens and set off a cycle of violence", ZPP (2014). Campaign messages have often spawned violence, which worsened in the period leading to the ill-fated June 27 2008 presidential runoff election.

In Rwanda, it is widely believed that hate speech had a significant part to play in the genocide, during which some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus died. Propaganda campaigns filled with hate speech were unleashed, through the radio and print media and made direct exhortations to communities urging them to take part in the violence before and during the genocide. The perpetrators called for a "final war" to "eradicate the cockroaches". This has a disturbing similarity with what is currently happening within ZANU PF where opponents are calling for the "massacre of weevils" using a banned pesticide, "Gamatox". This kind of hate speech managed to spearhead violence in the sense that ZANU pf supporters were made to see themselves as more superior than their counterparts MDC-T. By the way of referring to opponents as weevils it was however the mandate of ZANU PF supporters to eradicate them as saw themselves as Gamatox in dealing with the differences. Therefore, the game of political parties calling each other names was a contribution towards

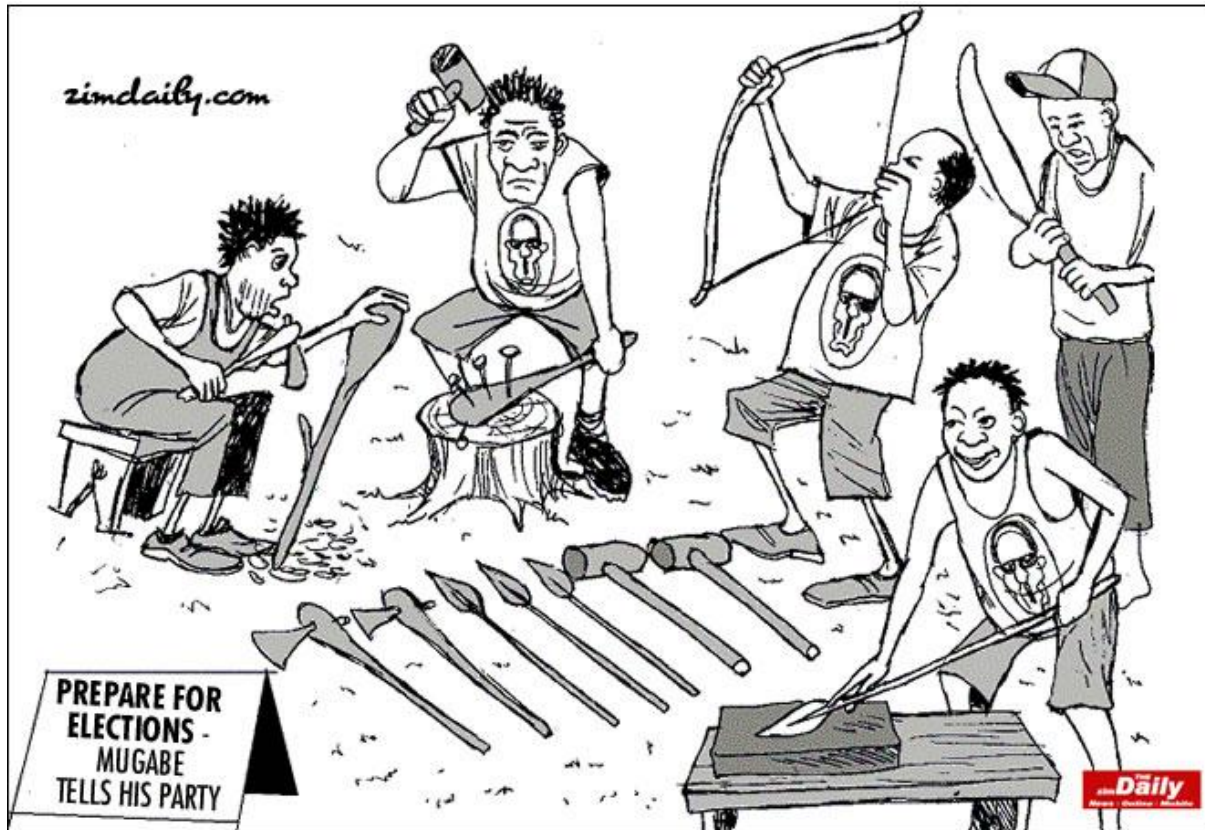
promoting violence amongst the supporters of the parties. No party wanted to portray a weak picture to its audience by not responding to the insults of hate speech, hence opted to resort to violence.

Zaba (2012), a Harare-based political analyst, said Zanu PF had in the past used hate speech to its advantage and would try to repeat the feat to stay relevant. The use of hate speech must be construed in the sense that Zanu PF is the biggest beneficiary of a polarised society, he said. It is only through a polarised and hate-filled community that the party is able to create enmity among neighbours and relatives. In fact, the party has exploited such hostilities in deploying merchants of violence that are seen harassing innocent civilians.

Hate speech was identified as a major impediment to restoration of peace in the country by parties that formed the inclusive government in 2009. Political parties were however referring to each other with insulting names for example ZANU PF referred MDC-T as “*sell outs*”. Thus promoted escalation of the tensions that already existed between the two belligerents. The manner in which political advertisements are packaged usually attracts the electorate. This is supported by Austin and Pinkleton (2002) who state that the packaging of a campaign Advertisement determines the impact of the advertisement. As a result, most campaign advocates put lies in their advertisements in order to appeal to the voters for more votes.

3.1.5 ROLE & IMPACT OF PHOTOGRAPHY DURING THE COURSE OF ELECTIONS

Fig (1) below was used to portray ZANU PF's preparation for elections



3.1.6 Analysis & Comments on the impact of photography towards/during course of Elections:

One would want to argue that the above picture shows the violent nature of ZANU PF in preparation for the elections. The display of violent tools portrays a way in which ZANU PF was going to encounter its opposition MDC-T. This might have been a way to give alarming alert to its supporters that they were ready to even resort to war for them to win the elections. The author is of the view that the animated picture had psychological effects to the public as it in sighted violence upon ZANU PF supporters towards defeating its opposition hence the party influenced the use of force to determine the outcome of the election processes.

Pictures have managed to convey messages especially in newspapers where they are used to portray a certain story. This has been the influence of art in the media sphere, the above

picture was used to portray the nature of preparedness of ZANU PF during 2008 elections. Pictures have however been used for constructive and destructive purposes that is, they have been used to motivate and also mock political parties by the media.

In addition not only cartoon images had impact but also posters were used as a campaigning strategy aspiring political parties would stick posters with their faces and campaign manifesto written. This has enabled unknown political figures to be discovered by passer-by people with advantage of using photographed posters in a target area an individual is willing assume office for. Posters simply enhanced the popularity of political figures during campaigning periods.

In spite of advertising political figures, photos were also used to convince the masses of probably promised upcoming projects. Like the promised irrigation equipment by the government which were said to be coming from China in towards 2013 elections. Photos showing equipment circulated on social media and also newspapers which was in transit managed to lure votes through convincing people of things that the politicians promise to give as they into power or voted for.

3.1.7 INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL SONGS DURING THE COURSE OF ELECTIONS:

During the 2008 Election period there was the prominence of election songs from party ZANU PF supporters. Elliot Manyika played a fundamental role in putting the party's on spotlight during campaign periods with his well-known played, song 'Nhora'. The song from its lyrical content advocated that there were now sell-outs (opposition parties) in the country hence he advocated that they should be taught the principles of the ruling party ZANU PF. Part of the lyrics entailed "*Kune vamwe vakapanduka nepamusana pekuda mari (mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhurururu)*" *Toraika vanhu vakadai dzidzisai gwara reZANU*. Any individual by this period who opposed ZANU PF was regarded as a traitor to the western, thus Elliot

advocated for people to remain loyal to the party since it was the one responsible for bring independence to the country. By virtue that the song composer was a ZANU PF member and once served the duties of the party, it already meant that his songs were targeted at propagating party ZANU PF's campaigning stance. The song was continuously played on airwaves in order to instil and enhance their ideology among the people.

In trying to lure a number of votes he mentioned the background history of the party insisting that the party was born out of blood. *Viva ZANU, ZANU ndeyeropa (mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhurururu).* These lyrics however tend to promote the audience to resort to the use of force so as to guard the party's interests. In as much the song also portrayed R.G Mugabe as someone with superiority hence people were supposed to vote for him towards the harmonised elections, with the aid of lyrics saying" *Zvinoda vakashinga moyo savaMugabe (mhururu kuenda nekudzoka mhurururu)*" The song can be regarded as a campaigning tool which was used by party ZANU PF so as to reach a bigger audience through the use of radio which was almost available in every household within the country.

Therefore in as much as political songs were concerned the history and legacy of Cde Elliot Manyika cannot be left unmentioned. Though he passed away the same year when Nhora his hit song was on hit. The song managed to reach majority of the people because of the technological advancement in the country like mobile phone which allowed there convenience sending of information from one person to another within a short period with the facilitation of social media platform where vast numbers of people are able receive information. Manyika made use of the compactable disks in distributing his songs around the country, the diaspora people could also access this song using internet, hence it was to the advantage of ZANU PF and the artist as the people purchased the songs.

The frequent playing of such songs was maybe a way to make ZANU PF more noticeable during the campaigning era. Some scholars argue that continued repetition of hearing the

same news tend to convince the audience that information is necessary however the researcher is of the perception that repetition of hearing the same information end up being monotonous. In spite of the afore mentioned effects of repetition, with reference to ZANU PF the song was used at almost every campaign rally as signal or to show the relevance of the political party,(ZANU PF).

In an effort to counter the above mentioned song ,the opposition MDC-T had also a famous song nationwide, the “*Famba Tsvangirai*” the song intent was calm the party supporters of MDC-T no matter what struggles they faced from their opposition ZANU PF. It was a motivating song which was destined to encourage some of the electorate to remain loyal to the political party. More so the 2008 elections were followed by post electoral violence which media also played a role for example the broadcasting and publishing of violence related news alleged to either of the main political parties(ZANU PF &MDC-T) depending on the source of information published.

Basically it has turned out to become a norm in Zimbabwe that majority of the media is covered by state media thus the independent media or opposition parties are at a disadvantage since the state has major control over the media. Government domination of media has undermined the voices of other private or independent journalism. Independent media has been least enhanced by the technological advancement in Zimbabwe during the years followed the introduction of social media and internet. The paper is going to clarify and articulate the effectiveness of new technology during elections in the following chapters

3.1.8 POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENTS

3.1.9 Comparative analysis of News coverage by both State Media & Private Media

(i) Example: Hon. Morgan Tsvangirai's portrayal image in the State Media-(Herald, Chronicle, ZBC)

This subject is going to look at how Tsvangirai was characterized in the publicly owned media. As the president of the opposition party in Zimbabwe, Tsvangirai has been negatively represented in the publicly owned media which are controlled by the ruling party Zanu PF. Chiumbu (2004:29) claims that "Since 2000, the state media in Zimbabwe have been 'contested terrain' with Zanu-PF as the ruling party taking firm control." With the ruling Party taking control since 2000 when MDC had spoiled the to be constitution, negative Representation of the MDC leader followed.

Williams (2003:121) contends that the "media are the focus in representation because they occupy the space between viewers, listeners and readers and the outside world." The media play a role in setting the agenda of its audiences through representation. According to Tiung and Hasim (2009:409) "The realities that we access through the media might be the realities that are created by the media and do not really represent the actual situation". The media can frame issues into what they want the people to consume.

The public media in Zimbabwe have framed Tsvangirai in a negative manner to instil doubt in the minds of voters. *The Herald* is infamous in portraying Tsvangirai in a negative way. It has exposed Tsvangirai as a puppet and a sell-out (Gatsheni 2009; Chuma 2008; Diane 2006 Chitando 2005; Mazango 2005; Dumisani Moyo 2005; Waldahl 2005; Kamete 2003; Alexander and McGregor 2001). This newspaper brings out explicitly that Tsvangirai is paid by the British to preserve British interest. The Herald published a cartoon of Tsvangirai receiving money from a white man thus implying that Tsvangirai is a stooge of his funders, the whites or the British. Moreover, the public media portrays Tsvangirai as a puppet.

Mazango (2005) argues that during the 2002 presidential elections, the war veterans refused to vote for Tsvangirai saying that they would not salute a person who does not have war credentials. Chiumbu (2004) argues that Tsvangirai has been declared an enemy of the state and has been depicted negatively in *The Herald*, *The Chronicle* and the national television Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC). Tsvangirai has been portrayed on ZBC as a coward who has ran away from the liberation struggle. Chiumbu's argument was one sided as she focused on how ZANU PF used the state media to represent Tsvangirai. In her paper, Chiumbu overlooked the response of Tsvangirai to his negative representation as a coward on ZBC.

In as much the pro-government paper wanted to silence and downsize Tsvangirai, there are scholars like Ncube also refer to the role played by the radio through playing segregators songs. Ncube (2013) argues that the "*Team ndikusetere team*", jingle which is frequently played on ZBC was used to eliminate Tsvangirai in the political hierarchy although he ruled side by side with Mugabe during the Government of National Unit. The jingle is also meant to naturalise the leadership of Mugabe thereby excluding Tsvangirai and Mutambara. This study agrees with Ncube's argument that MDC-T replied to the team line up by being strong to give ZANU PF a red card but differs on the methods used MDC-T's response. The use of the radio managed to fuel the tensions between the two parties' supporters, since the message reached a number of MDC-T supporters. Since the intention of the song was crystal clear that ZANU PF wanted to eliminate Tsvangirai from the political scene, it gave a negative motion hence led to the MDC-T responding back to the threats of being eliminated, thus cyber warfare was in motion between the two political parties.

3.1.10 News coverage perception of Independent Media

(i) (The Daily News portrayal): MDC-T used “Biblical allusion” to lure votes:

In the 2013 election advertisements, the researcher found out that MDC-T made use of Biblical allusion. The allusion was used to counter Zanu PF’s biblical themes. Chitando (2005) argues that ZANU PF using biblical themes to put an emphasis on its argument that MDC-T is a puppet party especially during the land reform programme. However, MDC-T resorted to use the same technique to attack Zanu PF. In the Daily News newspaper advertisement, 33years of desperate leadership. There is allusion to the bible verse cited from Proverbs 29:18 “*where there is no vision, the people perish*”. The bible verse was not mistakenly quoted in this study and also was not innocently used. It is a metaphor meant to show that ZANU PF is a disorganized party which has no vision. The party contradicts itself in the ways they handle issues, thus basing on the perception of MDC-T members.

Apart from that the bible verse is implying that ZANU PF is a divided party. ZANU PF was signing a death penalty for Zimbabweans because of lack of vision according to Baines (2009). With these factors, the future of ZANU PF is uninviting. The bible verse is trying to warn people not to vote for ZANU PF, if they do the future of Zimbabwe will die because Zanu PF lacks vision. Therefore from the oppositional point of view the daily paper was trying with all efforts to show the significance of MDC-T, by way of referring to biblical verses that have similar or parallel stories to that of Morgan Tsvangirai and Robert Mugabe during this time.

In as much from the above analysis, MDC-T managed to revenge its opponent ZANU PF, through media coverage by the private media specifically DAILY NEWS. It managed to reencounter what was previously said by ZANU PF that MDC T were sell-outs, stooges & puppets of the Western through the use of biblical reference in newspaper prints.

The researcher would want to argue that MDC-T made use of biblical allusions basing on the fact that the country is a Christian society. Hence they may have thought it would be easy for people of Zimbabwe to grasp their perception towards ousting ZANU-PF since vast of the population are Christian believers.

One would also want to argue that, MDC-T wanted to influence church institutions so as lure large numbers of the electorate. This was however effective evidence being drawn from most churches nationwide preaching politics giving people hope with reference from the Bible. Politics and religion are difficult to separate as they are dependent on each other to be effective, Dolan (2012).Therefore the print media platform was effective in escalating conflict , since the conflict emanated from name- calling ,bad representation and framing through media platforms towards and during elections as a de-campaigning strategy by political parties.

In spite media being used as a de-campaigning strategy it was also used to respond back to threats and allegations posed by the political parties. This can be proven by the above analysis, whereby MDC-T and ZANU PF used print media to converse with each other, with the public as the audience. Print media has always been the most readily available, affordable and used by most people as a source of news hence its effectiveness towards information dissemination tended to successful. Though media houses comprised of different editorial policies, coverage was determined by who produced the news either private media or state owned media.

I a nutshell one may conclude and suggest that, locally ZANU PF got more coverage in terms of representation in the media industry as compared to its opposition. State has proved to be loyal to the government since its endorsement of R.G Mugabe as their legitimate president such has also been done by the private media which had endorsed Hon. Morgan Tsvangirai as its legit presidents. Regardless of both parties receiving coverage from both entities (Private

& State media), ZANU PF was at an advantage since it was able to finance its media. Unlike the private media which has failed to be effective because of financial constraints, tyrannical media laws and the abduction/disappearance of journalists and activists etc. by alleged state personnel to mention but a few of the reasons which undermined the effectiveness of the independent media.

3.2 ROLE OF BROADCASTING: (Television & Radio)

3.2.1 Role played by the Radio during Election period- 2008/2013

Radio is part of the traditional modes of media, it has played a significant role during the 2008/13 elections. Historically Zimbabwe inherited these types of media from the colonial government however due to the advancement in technology there was the introduction of new mediums of communication these include use of internet, social media and online blogs. The rise in new communication technology may however be attributed to the strict control of the traditional media by the government. The government as part of its clampdown on dissenting voices introduced and selectively applied repressive legislation such as the Broadcasting services Act (BSA), the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), the Access to information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA) and the Criminal law (Codification and Reform) Act to restrict the rights of the majority of Zimbabweans to freely associate, assemble and express themselves. Specific provisions of these laws have been used by the government to narrow the space for public debate, silence those perceived to be critical of its policies and shield itself from domestic and international scrutiny.

In the mix of these historical events was the return of Professor Jonathan Moyo as the Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services. Hon. Moyo's return is of great significance in that he is widely believed to be the architect of the draconian media laws that have been mentioned above like, the law on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA). From the minister's determinations the researcher tries to deduce that, he

wanted to guard the government from the emanating diverging views of the people of Zimbabwe through strict censorship of the Broadcasting Services. In as much the Daily News, Daily News on Sunday, The Tribune and Weekly Mail were closed under the (AIPPA) which defended ferociously during his preceding tenure as Minister of information.

3.2.2 Radio Zimbabwe station:

Political tensions started to rise due to the continuous playing of pro-Mugabe songs on state media after the signing of the Global Political Agreement. MDC-T saw this as undermining the provisions of a government of national unity as the state owned radio stations continuously played pro-Mugabe songs regardless of the GNU. VOA (2010) Zimbabwe's Cabinet agreed on Tuesday that ZBC should stop playing the extended political songs because they do not reflect the spirit of the unity government established in February 2009 following a traumatic election cycle in 2008. Ministers said the spots asserting, Mugabe remains in charge re-open wounds from that bloody period. From the above argument one may posit that the government personalisation of the traditional media played a pivotal role in escalating conflict between itself and the opposition party (MDC-T). This is evidenced by the refusal of MDC-T to tolerate the continuous playing of pro-Mugabe songs during the era of GNU. MDC-T advocated for the cancellation of playing such songs as they undermined the provisions of the Global Political Agreement.

Media Guardian (2010) Media analyst Alexandre Rusero, a lecturer at Harare Polytechnic College, told the *Mail & Guardian* that the Zimbabwean media failed to practice what it's supposed to. "The media is a yardstick to assess democracy in any country. Sadly in Zimbabwe we've got something completely different." Rusero said the Zimbabwean media started wearing political colours after the formation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) in 2000, with the public media taking Zanu-PF's side and private media largely sympathising with the opposition.

3.2.3 Voice of Zimbabwe Station (VOA):

Voice of America is a U.S. government-funded international radio broadcast source that serves as the United States federal government's official institution for non-military, external broadcasting. The station has been so critical towards the ZANU PF regime by broadcasting human rights violations and analysis of election rigging by the party. It may be of paramount importance to note that the station has managed to disseminate some of the vital information that the government filters through gate keeping and other agenda setting methods. More so VOA has managed to unfavourably enlighten a number of the Zimbabwean population on the ongoing political and socio-economic governance procedures in the country.

In as much, the station's effectiveness can be credited as evidenced by a number of respondents responding through calls and live chats in the studio contributing knowledge base to the people of Zimbabwe and the international community. It has been able to shade more positive light towards the government's opposition MDC –T. Another benefit is that some of the government sensitive issues that are not covered by state media were covered by foreign based radio station in an attempt to enlighten the public without bias so that people voted with zeal.

Generally radio stations were so much effective during elections since radio in the African context is regarded as the most reliable source of news. The diaspora stations had significance in the sense that they managed to reach a bigger audience since radio is also capable of disseminating news to rural areas through airwaves. News was broadcasted without fear of being persecuted or jailed for being critical towards the government, hence most people had now preferred the use of foreign radio stations which people perceived had no bias.

3.3 ROLE & IMPACT OF EXTERNAL MEDIA THROUGH SATELLITE USAGE & DIASPORA JOURNALISM DURING ELECTION PERIODS 2008/2013

3.3.1 Introduction & Effectiveness of 1st TV during Elections

1st TV was introduced in Zimbabwe in 2013 after Wiz-Tech a satellite and decoder company was officially allowed to provide free to air of news. The channel has its broadcasting company in South Africa. It is of vitality to note that the free to air channels provided by wiz-tech were a step ahead in liberating the media environment in Zimbabwe. It so happened that the masses were no longer dependent on state media for news however there was provision of international news which was rarely covered by the state media which mainly covered news that upheld the government.

The introduction of foreign airwaves from South Africa was a major step towards eliminating dependence syndrome towards same specific source of news. During the same period when the new SABC television channels were introduced is also the same time when Zimbabwe was experiencing elections hence satellite had major effect in news dissemination comparing with the local media. By 2013 majority of the people had resorted to the use of satellite decoders as source of news and entertainment. Some scholars are of the view that, it was a challenge of government since the main objective of the company was bring into light the MDC-T, through covering positive news towards the opposition. 1st TV's effectiveness is recognised with the number of satellite subscribers during 2013 which was recorded high.

During the elections it was of benefit to the electorate since people were able to make informed decisions. Almost all the electoral processes were broadcasted with impartiality on the SABC channels, the channels attracted lots of people as a result of good and quality picture quality on televisions as compared to that of Zimbabwe which by then was using analogue in provision of airwaves hence poor quality.

In as much as the satellite was concerned it played a pivotal role in liberating the media environment since people of Zimbabwe had access to news of what is happening globally.

Also news concerning opposition was also broadcasted which was of benefit for voters to have knowledge on the political on goings hence people got to know about politicians before they voted for them. News through this station was broadcasted without being partial. Thus the introduction of the 1st TV brought in exposure to masses, however it can also be said that the station's effectiveness made some of the population to be critical as they got exposure of politics occurring in other democratic countries. Hence wiz-tech airing brought radicalism amongst the people.

3.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE NEW TECHNOLOGY TOWARDS ELECTIONS (Internet, Mobile phones & Social Media)

3.4.1 Role and impact posed by Internet & Social media

Internet and social media were a development in the establishment of independent media in Zimbabwe. These two components were a major step in liberating the repressive media environment which had been inherited and partially amended to suit the needs and wants of the current population. Internet and social media were effective in the sense that the government had no control over the usage of internet and social media hence people discovered new channels of communication to reach vast population within a short period .Its relevance was much realised during the 2013presidential harmonised elections whereby mobile, internet and social penetration was at its peak during election times.

Majority of the population were proud owners of cell phones and many could also access internet thus enabled a lot of the population to make use of the new media technology. The growth and penetration of internet use in Zimbabwe can be traced back to the initial days when there was dominance of internet café shops in most urban areas of the country. A survey was carried out in 2011 by the Business mirror, it showed that Harare alone by this time comprised of over 30 thriving internet cafes up from less than 2years ago. Nkala

attributed what he called the tremendous growth in internet use among the public desire by mainly the youthful generation to access the internet for educational entertainment reasons.

According to United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) report in 2008 Zimbabwe was recorded among the top 11 countries with substantial internet usage with more than 200 000 dial up internet subscribers who had accounts with the country's six major internet service providers (ISPs) at that time. The service provider's included Africa online, Eco web, Telco net, ZimOnline, and ZimWeb & ComOne. The number of people who actually had access to internet in Zimbabwe kept on increasing such that by year 2008 there were about 500 000 internet subscribers. However the continued expansion of internet cafes might have been hindered by the high tariff costs of purchasing licences to operate.

Therefore from the above analysed statistics of internet penetration and use, one may argue and give credit to a lower extent the effectiveness of internet during the period 2008. Whereas during 2013 election period the majority of the population owned cell-phones and had also the number of internet subscribers was booming. Internet came in as a new dimension in the media sphere which was then regarded as a media tool since internet allows the dissemination of information from on individual to another or even allow group discussions online hence it was qualified an instrument of media. According to Rutsito, (2013). (e.d), the country's internet penetration rate has jumped from an all-time low of 11 percent in 2010 to 47 percent this year (2013).

The rate is still increasing with indication pointing to an additional growth of 3 percent in the last quarter, while the mobile penetration has soared to a new all-time heights of 103 percent. According to Postal and Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (Potraz), Zimbabwe's total number of internet subscribers was 6, 1 million as at June 30, 2014 from 5, 6 million in March last year .Without the benefit of doubt people were now able to mobilise each other, especially aspiring politicians during towards elections and also paved way for people to discuss sensitive political issues without fear of being persecuted by the authorities because

of the anonymity nature of the media platform (social media). Hence Social media was more pronounced in the year 2013 whereby party manifestos were spread through reliable social media platforms like What App, Facebook and online blogs and websites to the masses in the comfort of the electorate's home/location.

In addition to show the relevance of social media during 2013 elections is that both political parties established online platforms where they were able share information with the electorate. Social media platforms like Facebook and Whats App were the mainly used, political figures would advertise their campaigns and manifestos on these platforms since they are able to send news or any information within a short period of time and also reaching a bigger audience. Unlike mobilising people individually for a discussion which is costly and possess consequences of being convicted if found discussing sensitive political issues.

3.4.2 ROLE PLAYED BY MOBILE PHONES & SOCIAL MEDIA DURING ELECTIONS

In many parts of Africa, as Aker and Mbiti (2010: 208) note, mobile phones “have represented the first modern telecommunications infrastructure of any kind” given that the fixed telephone service never went as far as the most remote parts of the continent. The rapid increase in mobile phone coverage has been possible thanks to massive investment in the industry by both local and multinational players, sometimes against considerable odds in the early days. Although the costs of access, both in terms of the mobile phone device and airtime vary from country to country, the past decade has generally seen a dropping of costs across the board, resulting in greater acceptance. The fact that there is a huge market for used mobile phones as well as cheap imitation models introduced from China makes it far easier to acquire a working phone in Africa. So swift has the growth in mobile phones been in Africa that some scholars have referred to them as ‘the new talking drums of Africa’, in reference to

the traditional African drum which was the key communicative tool in mostly pre-colonial Africa (see De Bruijn, Nyamnjio & Brinkman, 2009)

In the context of Zimbabwe during period under review people were able to access events concerning elections i.e. manifesto launches, campaigns and dates of voting in real time with the advantage of mobile phones. More so phones also were used as security tools during elections, one would easily report through a call to the authorities to report on a malpractices be it on polling station or anywhere where quick response is needed. The researcher is also of the view that the introduction of phones gave platform for the citizens to contact their political representatives. Campaign rallies were advertised on social media especially Whats App and Facebook which has a huge base of audience compared to mobilising individual manually which is time consuming and costly in transporting people thus mobile phones played a pivotal during election campaigns.

3.5 Media as influence towards electoral violence

Definition: electoral violence is a sub-type of political violence in which actors employ in an instrumental way to advance their interests or achieve specific political ends. (RAU, 2013)

Research and Advocacy Unit-: Electoral violence includes acts, such as assassination of opponents or spontaneous fistcuffs between rival groups of supporters and threats, coercion, and intimidation of opponents, voters, or election officials. Threat and intimidation is a form of coercion that is just as powerful as acts of violence can be. Indeed, one purpose of acts of terrorism such as tossing a grenade into a crowd of rival supporters is an act diabolically designed to induce fear and to intimidate (e.g., to suppress mobilization or voting by that group). Violent acts can be targeted against people or things, such as the targeting of communities or candidates or the deliberate destruction of campaign materials, vehicles, offices, or ballot boxes.

One of the main stimulus of Electoral violence is media which has however played a significant role in promoting the escalation of violence during election times. Regardless of the already existing differences between MDC-T and ZANU-PF towards their perception of democracy and good governance, media managed to fuel the tensions between the candidates and also among the party supporters. It of paramount importance to note that through intimidation, hate speech, in-sighting violence, name and shame made media to penetrate into political arena more so promoting electoral violence through its segregatory ideology when disseminating news by either one of media platforms.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSION:

From the previously discussed arguments pertaining the role played by media during election times, it could be argued that the two major political parties (MDC-T & ZANU PF) received reasonable coverage by the mainstream media. While the public media carried the voice of ZANU PF, the independent media carried that of MDC-T for instance the Daily News versus the Herald which is pro-government. At the end of the day, although not being best media scenario, an unintentional balance was archived in the coverage of the two political parties as prescribed by SI 33 of 2008.

However locally the government was at an added advantage since most of papers were owned by the state with a few opposing independent papers thriving because of financial constraints to sustain themselves especially in a country with a crippled economy like Zimbabwe mostly during 2008 where the country realised highest rates of inflation. Whilst the main opposition MDC-T got more coverage from most of the pirate media like individual journalists, Online News websites, Blogs, Social media V.O.A, V.O.P and Shortwave but a few platforms which shaded more positive coverage in favour of ZANU PF which most diaspora media disregard because of its alleged human rights violations.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Firstly, the researcher would want to suggest the revisiting of the media laws in Zimbabwe so that the laws may be adjusted suit the ever changing environment in media. Since most the SADC countries are experiencing high influx of technology due to industrialisation revolution there have been marked drastic changes in how news is spread from one place to another. These technological advancements should have legislation which can govern the

relationship between government and the public hence there is dire need to revisit media legislation so that the laws suit the new era of 21st century way reporting news.

In as much as the laws need to be revisited, there is also need for the government to appreciate the evolving technology advancements through upgrading the mode of broadcasting transmission. There should be at least digital transmission which allows good quality of news transmission for both television and radio nationwide. For example, some of the in marginalised rural areas during elections were not able to access any source of media even the radio which is regarded a traditional source of media in Zimbabwe.

Some areas like Dete had not been installed some broadcasting transmission sites hence airwaves could not reach places like these. It was a disadvantage since people located in these areas were not able to make informed decisions in casting their votes as they had no knowledge of their political representatives. Thus the researcher recommends the alignment and amendment of media laws to the current constitution in a bid to suit the new media technology like social media and internet. Researcher also purports that the newly formed ministry of cyber security should take further measures to curtail the pirate media which are however said to be anti-government. The Ministry should at least impose policies that govern use of the internet and social media, for example if one tends to use these platforms yet posing threats towards state security, government should be able to track people like these e.g. famous Baba Jukwa who has not been found his identity yet has been so critical of the government using social media to air his news.

Therefore, upgrading transmission sites and modernising them is of paramount importance for easy access of news by the public through the use of mediums like television and radio in the comfort of their homes. Hence the Digitalisation project undertaken by ZBC should be quickened for broader supply of news around the country and globe.

In spite of the above suggestion, the researcher would also want to recommend that, there should be establishment of more community radio stations around the country so that people are able to access news regardless of location. From the previously content analysis, the researcher has been able to deduce that there should be clear separation between facts and opinion in the coverage of political parties' activities. This has been the researcher's concern since some of the stories were not clearly stated whether they were opinions or facts, thus a contribution to the public to receive biased news. Therefore, publisher companies like Zimpapers, should have qualified editors recruits thus a step ahead in trying to oust poor journalism in form of grammatical errors or omission errors to mention but a few of things that can be addressed if state media recruit qualified personnel.

In terms of reporting, there should be equal coverage of both the ruling party and the opposition parties hence allowing people to judge whom to vote for basing on the success news people hear through media. For example, during elections all parties should have equal coverage unlike having the ruling party having to dominate all spheres of influence in media. Comments should be subject to self-restraint; strict impartiality is called when reporting election activities. Everyone else knows that journalists are capable of formulating stories and as such that should not override their job. Thus it not advisable for media to use these skills as it is a lead to biased reporting.

Journalists in Zimbabwe should also take a stance in introducing peace journalism as a way to promote the prevalence of peace even during election times. Peace journalism advocates for reportage which focuses on the dangers of coercion/violence. If journalists show the real effects of possible conflict through reportage, this may be a convincing signal to the masses to avoid violence in some cases. But however if journalists praise possible conflicts this has resulted in escalation of conflict, for example during 2008 when Elliot Maniyka famous song rocked the nation though the song had lyrics which promoted violence e.g (*Viva ZANU* ,

ZANU ndeye ropa...). Since harmonising both political parties and placing emphasis on the destructive effects of violence is one of the core ethics of peace journalism, it would be easy to pave way for peace during elections since both parties are covered fairly though with emphasis on non-violence. Furthermore, peace journalism is of significance since journalists are allowed to suggest solutions.

Moreover, in trying to promote a conducive media environment, government impose strict finds for perpetrators of false reportage so as to decrease the spread of biased news during critical times like elections. The media should use above party politics and be able to educate various publics and readership of the electoral laws, voting process and shortcomings of the systems and provide solutions where possible.

The media is encouraged to desist from propagating hate speech, smear campaigns and all sorts of muddling. For instance, the naming and shaming that the two political parties in Zimbabwe practised so as to downsize each other towards elections ZANU PF referring to MDC-T as Stooges and sell-outs. Media should present issues factual and objective to enable the readers/ audience to make their preferred choice when casting their votes during election times.

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