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# ZAMBIANS' PERCEPTION OF THE PRESS: THE CASE OF ONLINE NEWS MEDIA – ZAMBIAN WATCHDOG AND ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL (2014-15)

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## **Chapter One**

### **1.0 Introduction**

#### **1.01 Chapter Introduction**

This research aims at soliciting views of Zambians who have access to the internet on the Zambian press. The perception being sought from Zambians is to understand how they regard the Zambian online news media, mainly the only news media that has brought shockwaves among politicians and public officials. Multiple methods in theory, data collection and analysis are used in the study to consolidate the findings.

#### **1.02 Chapter breakdown**

Chapter two will present the literature review considering methodologies and theoretical concepts such as political economy of the media, framing and identification and isolation. A brief background of the Zambian press will be given with particular interest to the press. Chapter three will explain the methodology and procedure of the research. It will explain the qualitative and quantitative components of the research. The research will apply multiple methods and triangulation in data collection and analysis respectively. Chapter four will report results and analysis of the survey, content analysis and case studies. Chapter five will discuss the findings, limitations and recommendation for future research.

#### **1.03 Scope and rationale of the study**

This research was inspired by the fact that in Zambia the press, both public and

private, were all on the side of the government. The Zambian public had been looking for a balanced and objective media that would provide the checks and balances for the public and corporate elite. The media arena was missing something very important. Journalists were only seen to be active at press conferences and also working their stories on press releases. Both broadsheet and tabloid newspapers had become the mouth-piece of the government and mostly used as a propaganda tool. The broadsheet newspapers namely the *Zambia Daily Mail* and the *Times of Zambia* had their managing editors appointed by the government on a political basis since they were public newspapers. Of the few tabloids, the most vocal and influential one, the *Post* had turned out to be a mouth-piece of the government. Previously, during the run-up to the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2011 the tabloid was giving coverage to Patriotic Front (PF), the main opposition then that later won the elections. Before 2011 it was known that the media were polarized with the privately-run tabloid providing checks and balances on the government and also accommodating the opposition while the public media paid allegiance to the government. After the 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections most of the journalists from the *Post* and also from the public media houses were sent on diplomatic missions and some were given political positions within the government. Most people had stopped trusting the media because they believed they were not balanced in their reporting and they came out as biased. Most news stories were about the government and members of the ruling party. Dissident voices were left out of the press. Most stories that involved those in the opposition would be one sided as the opposition would not be given the same degree of coverage as the government officials. Other tabloids that existed on the Zambian market

like the *Daily Nation* and the *National Voice* were not very critical of the government of the day. They, too, avoided political issues and covered other issues of the economy and development.

Apparently the only ray of hope for the Zambian media was the notorious online news publications like the *Zambian Watchdog*, which had worried the ruling elite and their subordinates. The online media had been subjected to threats of closure but only survived because their sponsors and operators remained unknown. The online news media were labelled as being propelled by disgruntled journalists who had a hidden agenda to discredit the government. The presence of the online news media brought many ethical and legal challenges to policy makers. The desire to find out what Zambians themselves felt about the press in Zambia and also where they found credible and reliable news spurred the need for this research. Was it online or in the mainstream media? Were the online media providing an alternative voice for the people who had been bombarded with government propaganda and unbalanced news? I decided to measure and analyze the perceptions of Zambians on the Zambian media. No known research in Zambia had looked at the role of the online news media in democracy or in the political life of the nation. Nothing much had been written on the Zambian online news media, yet the emergence of *Zambian Watchdog* was on the mouth of everyone. It was very evident that those who supported the government or the ruling party's views were devastated and disappointed by the online news media whilst those who found the government wanting applauded the online news media for their investigative journalism and also for their ingenious appropriation of the freedom of expression and freedom of the press. For them, the online news media

provided an alternative voice to that of the traditional media that had become a propaganda tool for the government. This research into the emerging role of the online news media was to establish whether the journalism done through new media and social media were reliable sources of news or were they credible sources of news as compared to the mainstream newspapers that had become the propaganda tool for the government.

The rationale of the study is to assess Zambia's perception of the press, especially the online news media. Zambia's views are varied, with some applauding the online news media and others castigating them. The target is to solicit opinion from those who are actively involved in Zambian politics and have access to online news through new media and social media. Mostly those who form opinions are the workers and students in tertiary institutions because they are fully active in the life of the country. These were the demographic covered in the research and the findings were overwhelming. The results and findings of the research are very important to the reader in the sense that they would give him/her a clear picture of the role of the new media in the political life of Zambia and its people.

This research used multiple methods in data collection and analysis through survey questionnaires, online content analysis and online news cases studies, which brought out revealing results. It was found that both public and private media were unbalanced and favorable to the government of the day. It was found out that the private online media provided an alternative voice to that of the traditional media. It was also found out that most Zambia's who had access to the internet found online news media more reliable as

compared to the mainstream media. And finally, it was found that Zambians perceived the online media as a credible source of news as compared to both the public and private mainstream newspapers.

#### **1.04 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has managed to introduce the research and also gave the chapter breakdown. It has explained the scope and rationale of the research. The next chapter is going to discuss the literature covering the theoretical concepts of political economy of the media and framing, especially across literature on social media and the press. The Zambian media landscape will be discussed to give the basis for the grounding of the research and its focus.

## **Chapter Two**

### **2.0 Literature Review and Background of the Zambian Media**

#### **2.01 Chapter Introduction**

This chapter will focus on the literature and background of the media landscape in Zambia especially the press and online news media. It shall explore the literature on the political economy and framing. Kenneth Burke's identification and isolation as communication theory will later be applied to the analysis of online news media. Most literature covered on media coverage, content analysis, media case studies are usually analyzed using theories like framing and political economy. This is so because these theories are identical in terms of establishing the starting point or point of views of the media owners and editorial preference. Burke's identification and isolation theory is a better approach that can validate the other theories used in the research especially when dealing with new media and social media where the roles of media producer and media consumer are not recognizable. In the new media the two functions become one encapsulated in citizen journalism. Therefore, the concept of framing and political economy of the media can be addressed by applying the concept of identification and isolation to

online news on new media and social media. The chapter will also explore the literature on the relationship between the press and politics. Furthermore, it shall review literature on new media and political engagement.

## **2.02 Political Economy, Framing, and identification and isolation**

The theoretical concepts which anchor this study are the political economy of the media, framing, and identification and isolation. Political economy theory looks at how the media are managed, controlled and later on how the media owners through their ideologies influence society by what Herman and Chomsky (1988) call ‘manufacturing consent.’ This is done by framing the news and by agenda setting. Louw illustrates the role of the media in the political process in terms of framing by use of Plato’s “Allegory of the Cave” in the *Republic*. Louw’s paraphrase of the moral lesson of the allegory for the media is that the media do not offer an accurate reflection of reality but they only reflect certain aspects of reality. (2005, p 4)

McQuail describes critical political economy theory as embodying concepts derived from the critique of capitalism, with reference to the processes of concentration and commercialization (McQuail, 2005, p 219). He notes that “it is usually believed that the higher the dependence on advertising as a source of revenue, the less independent the content from the interests of the advertisers and business generally” (p 223). In summary critical political economy is about media ownership and control and how these have control on the ideas and views that are disseminated to the readers and viewers. Whilst the public media aims to serve public and national interest, the independent media balances between

serving market interest and fulfilling the public interest mandate.

Ervin Goffman (1974) originated the theory of framing. In his major work entitled *Frame Analysis* he defines framing succinctly when he notes that:

Primary frameworks vary in degree of organization. Some are neatly presentable as a system of entities, postulates, and rules; others – indeed, most others – appear to have no apparent articulated shape, providing only a lore of understanding, an approach, and a perspective. Whatever the degree of organization, however, each primary framework allows its user to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences defined in its terms. (p. 21)

Therefore, framing is primarily a perspective, though sometimes unconscious, that is intentional in identifying an occurrence and intentionally presenting it as such. In the media this might be choosing to present a source or event in good light or bad light depending on the intention of the media house and the journalist carrying the story. Following Goffman's idea it can be deduced that the media are capable of manufacturing different types of frames, for instance what he calls "manufacturing negative experience," as for instance deliberately choosing to report the negative side of the government performance.

Kasoma (1996), in what he terms 'vendetta journalism,' offers an idea of what might be perceived as framing in the press. For instance, talking of private newspapers after the introduction of democratic rule in most African countries in the early 1990's, he

notes that,

African newspapers, particularly the independent tabloids in countries which adopted multi-party politics in the 1990s, have spared no one in their muckraking journalistic exploits libeling, invading privacy and generally carrying out a type of reportage on those they report on that can best be described as ‘vendetta journalism. (1996, p. 99)

Some of the characteristic of “vendetta journalism” that Kasoma notes are:

- (a) using abusive language against sources or any other people in the news they are reporting;
- (b) choosing not to approach a source for a comment on a story that incriminates him/her; (c) selectively choosing facts that paint a bad picture of the source and writing a biased story; and finally
- (d) using sarcasm in reporting sources the journalists hate or dislike. (p. 99)

Kasoma castigates ‘vendetta journalism’ as being wrong because it compromises the role of the journalist by putting his/her feelings before the interest of society and that of his profession. (p. 99)

Pippa, Montague and Mario (2003) discuss the theory of framing using the American media coverage of terrorism after 9/11. In their work they try to give a succinct explanation of what exemplify news framing. For instance they note that,

The heart of our explanation lies in the idea of news frames, representing persistent patterns of selections, emphasis, and exclusion that furnish a coherent interpretation

and evaluation of events. Decisions and common practices in newsgathering- determine what and how stories are covered-contribute toward these frames. (p. 4)

They further elaborate by arguing that framing is not only commonly applied in the field of media studies but also in other disciplines such as social psychology and public opinion (p.10). To make clear the understanding of news frames, Pippa and his colleagues argue further that:

The idea of ‘news frames’ refers to interpretive structures that journalists use to set particular events within their broader context. News frames bundles key concepts, stock phrases, and iconic images to reinforce certain common ways of interpreting developments. The essence of framing is selection to prioritize some facts, images, or developments over others, thereby unconsciously promoting broader norms and values common within a particular society, dissident movements challenging the mainstream news culture are likely to prove most critical of their use, providing rival ways of frame and interpret events. Frames serve multiple functions for different actors. (p. 11)

Framing theory best applies to content analysis as a way of examining how the media cover its stories. A scan into the literature will later show that framing has indeed been used in this way. Therefore, it is a most reliable theory that can be applied to this research when doing content analysis on online news media.

Burke (as cited in Quigley, 2015) brings in the element of the identification and division (i.e. isolation or alienation or dissociation) which is similar to political economy

and framing. In as much as framing is taking a certain perspective on an issue for instance, in media ownership the public media have their own vested interest. Therefore, identification and division captures well the main concept of political economy and framing especially for new media and social media. We feel identified in the new media and social media when we feel connected like on Facebook or tweeter. We feel isolated at the same time emotionally to people we are around while engaging in new media and social media. For instance, Quigley (2015) explains Burke's rhetoric theory of Identification thus:

To overcome our division and our guilt, we look for ways in which our interests, attitudes, values, experiences, perceptions, and material properties are shared with others, or could appear to be shared. These instances of "overlap" make us "consubstantial" with others. We continually seek to be associated with certain individuals or groups (and not others), attain some position in the hierarchy of social relations, and relieve ourselves of the guilt we bear. (p.1)

Therefore, in discussing the connectedness or holding particular perspective Burke's concept of identification and division shall be utilized.

### **2.03 Media and Politics**

In journalism, communication, media studies and political studies research has been done and continues to be done in the area of media and politics. Most of the research has specifically targeted the coverage of political campaigning and elections (See, e.g., Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Lavrakas and Holley, 1991; and Lavrakas and Traugott, 2000). For instance, in the United States, *Media Studies Journal*, had three issues in 1995, 1997 and

2000 dedicated to “Media and Democracy,” “Covering the 1996 Presidential Campaign” and “Campaign 2000” respectively. In South Africa, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) in the run-up to the 2009 presidential election produced weekly Election’ Reports.

Some researchers have tried to understand the role and impact of the media and press in society (Ramaprasad and Kelly, 1999; Figenschou, 2010; Ferguson and Musa, 2013; Montali et al., 2013). Ramaprasad and Kelly provide a profile of Nepalese journalists at a time when democracy had been restored and media freedom had been guaranteed. They specifically focus on the perception of journalists themselves of what their role is in a democracy especially at the time of the transition in government.

Figenschou’s (2010) study focused on the media outlet, specifically examining how in Al-Jazeera English editorial distinctiveness is expressed in its daily news coverage. The research aimed at finding out whether the channel’s news profile represents the other side to existing mainstream international news. Ferguson and Musa (2013) examined how journalists portray the enemy image and stereotypes through their writings and in the process how they generate hatred and shape attitudes with the possibility of fueling/ amplifying sectarian violence.

With the emergence of the new media and social media, political communication has shifted drastically. New media and social media have changed both the roles of citizens and journalists participating in the new communication platform. Media and Information Communication Technology (ICT) scholars are grappling with this new trend in information dissemination.

Many scholars agree that the use of new media and social media have impacted greatly the way politics is done and has actually engineered radical changes in many parts of the world, for instance the Arab Spring in North Africa and part of the Middle East (Wolfsfeld, Segev, Sheaffer, 2003; Robertson, 2013; Enjolras, Steen-Johnsen, and Wollebaek, 2012). The work of Wolfsfeld et. al. (2013) shows how the citizens used social media to plan and execute the Arab Spring in covering material from about twenty Arab countries. They argued that it is difficult to understand the use of social media without considering the political climate of the countries involved. They also note that for instance during the Arab Spring a significant increase in the use of social media was followed by a significant amount of protest activities that preceded it.

Some scholars have noted that new media and social media have played a major role in the political development of some countries but they have not at all caused a revolution other than creating a new public sphere to share ideas (Bosch, 2013; Tunc, 2013; and Matsvirio, 2013). Matsvirio showed that the use of social media, by those in diaspora in the 2008 elections in Zimbabwe, did not influence a political change. Bosch highlighted the use of Facebook by youth in South Africa to participate in politics, and the result has been that youth are engaging with an alternative form of political sub-activism that work at the margins of the dominant public engagement. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in the South African case, the youth who have in the past played a dormant role in the nation's politics since 1994 have not been awakened to get involved by the use of social media. They have rather concentrated on political and philosophical themes rather than the

dominant national politics.

Other scholars, while also acknowledging the vital force of the new media and social media in the political life of nations have rather been careful not to attribute social activism and revolutions to new media and social media, but have argued that there are other factors like cultural hegemony and political economy of the ICT that have played a major part (Olorunnisola and Martin, 2013; Ananny and Kreiss, 2011; Gill and Dickson, 2008; Arya, 2011; and Aouragh, 2012). Enjolras, et. al., (2012) argued that the type of participant mobilization via social media is characterized by lower socioeconomic status and younger age than those mobilized via other channels. Therefore, there are other major factors at play in the politics of resistance than just the use of social media and new media. Ananny and Kreiss (2011) focus on discussing digital technology as creating opportunities for democratic expression at the same time the networked public sphere has its challenges in terms of issues of intellectual property rights. Ananny and Kreiss argue that the first amendment requires both that citizens have a broad legal and technical freedom to express themselves and that democratic public spheres are robust, inclusive, and diverse. Meanwhile, Arya's (2011) research is a quantitative content analysis of citizen centred ICT news items in 9 main Indian English and Hindi dailies. The theoretical framework of the study is based on agenda setting theory. Zhang (2013) focuses on the latest exploration of network communication research papers covering the period 1995 to 2006. This work is evaluative on the studies done on network communication.

The methodologies and communication theories used by scholars to understand the

relationship of social media and political mobilization vary, with some using two-wave web survey (Enjolras, et al., 2012), comparative case study (Olorunnisola, et al., 2013), empirical interviews (Mutsvairo, 2013), critical theory (Harrington and McNair, 2012; Wolfsfeld, et al., 2013; and Tunc, 2013; Aouragh, 2012), survey and focus groups (Bosch, 2013), historical, cross-section survey and quantitative analysis (Ramaprasad and Kelly 1999), framing theory and interpretative phenomenological analysis (Ferguson and Musa, 2013; Pippa, Montague and Marion), representation and critical discourse analysis (Montali et al., 2013), and content analysis (Gill and Dickson, 2008; Figenschou, 2010; Robertson, 2013).

Many of the studies have relied greatly on critical theory in order to explain the new media phenomena and this also created an understanding of new media and social media as tools of resistance and change. While the methodologies used have covered a broad spectrum, it seems those that applied critical theory to content analysis on use of social media had produced more credible findings than those that concentrated on interviews and surveys. This is due to the fact that people's opinions do change constantly while people are more accurate with written text.

Combining both theoretical and empirical data in analyzing a media phenomenon in media research provides much more valuable results. While the overall question had been understanding whether new media and social media influence political activism, the findings revealed that this new platform could not be isolated as the engineer of the revolutions that have taken place. Therefore, future studies should aim at comparative studies that look at a media phenomenon in relation with other factors at play. For instance,

it is mainly young people that were dissatisfied with the Arab authorities perhaps due to the fact that most of them were unemployed. Another factor is that those countries had despotic regimes who had outlived their stay and used the mainstream media as their propaganda tool thereby gagging alternative views. Because most youth have access to new media and are the primary users of social media, this new platform provided for them an alternative medium to display their political engagement. Therefore, critical theory and other media communication theories like political economy, framing, and identification and isolation, to mention but a few, are to be applied specifically to inform the phenomenon being studied. To do this effectively the inter-disciplinary approach needs to be applied like the political and social theories, cultural studies theories and economic theories.

In many young democracies the media are polarized just as in what has been indicated above in terms of using social media and political engagement. This study is about perceptions of Zambians on the new media and social media as sources of credible, reliable news and at the same time as providing an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media. Therefore, the concepts of framing, political economy and identification and isolation are basic in analyzing the Zambian online news media. Framing and political economy are about who controls the media and how that controller wants to influence opinion by articulating a given perspective contrary to that of his/her rival or competitor. While identification and isolation has semblance to framing and political economy, it can be distinguished in the sense that it focuses on the beneficiary of the media who chooses either to belong or not to belong. Thus the beneficiary of media products in new media and social media is both a producer and consumer of news. Thus he/she is identified with the media

by choice and not by influence and that goes for isolation for the one who chooses not to identify with a particular perspective being promoted by a particular online media.

#### **2.04 The Zambian Press/ Online News Media Landscape**

In Zambia the studies of Chirwa (1997) and Banda (2004) are good examples of the role of the press in democracy, especially during political campaigning. Banda (2004) had also documented the history of newspapers and magazines in Zambia. Kasoma (1979, 1981) had also written on the development, role and control of national newspapers in Zambia and on news reporting. Some authors (Kasoma, 1986; Makungu, 2004) had documented the history of the press in Zambia before and after independence. Other authors (Kasoma, 1990, 1994, 1999, 2002; Makungu, 2004; Matibini, 2006; Moore, 1992; Kalyango, 2011) have written on law, policy, regulation and ethics on the media in Zambia and Africa. However, there has been a gap in research in the field of communication, media, journalism and political studies in Africa to focus on how the press or the media impact political activism and engagement in the discourse of media and politics. If we are to seriously assess the role of the African media in democracy this kind of research is indispensable. Audience research to measure people's perception of the media has also been missing in the Zambian research.

The introduction of multiparty politics in 1991 brought with it many changes in the Zambian media landscape. Prior to this development in the second republic (1972 – 1991), there were only a handful of media outlets in both broadcasting and print. In broadcasting, there was no privately owned broadcaster but only the public broadcaster, the Zambia

National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) comprising only one television station, ZNBC TV, three radio stations, ZNBC Radio One, ZNBC Radio 2 and ZNBC FM Radio Four (Matibini, 2006, p. 38). In the area of the print media, the state also owned about 70% of the publications. The state owned four newspapers namely the *Times of Zambia*, *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Mail* and the *Zambia Daily Mail* (p.4). The other publications were owned by the Church. *National Mirror*, a weekly newspaper, was owned by Multimedia Zambia, an institution established by an ecumenical body comprising the three Church mother bodies namely, the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC), the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) and the Christian Council of Zambia (CCZ) (p. 4). Furthermore, the Catholic Church, through the Mission Press, run by the Conventual Franciscans in Ndola Archdiocese, owned two magazines namely, *Icengelo*, a Bemba publication and *Speak-Out*, a youth magazine. *National Mirror* and *Icengelo* were very critical of the then one party government of Kenneth Kaunda. Though *Icengelo* was a Bemba publication (one of the local languages) it had a leaf insertion on politics in English penned by Fr. Umberto, an Italian Conventual Franciscan missionary. In 1994 Fr. Umberto was threatened with deportation due to his politically charged articles inserted in *Icengelo* magazine talking about the “family tree;” an allegation that the incumbent president had appointed his relatives in many administrative structures of public institutions. (Matibini, 2006)

After the introduction of political pluralism in 1991, there was a boom in the media landscape. In broadcasting, the state maintained its stations as well as its press publications. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services (MIBS) issued licenses in broadcasting to a number of private television stations such as MUVI TV,

MOBI TV and private radio stations such as *Radio Phoenix* and also private community Radio stations like *Radio Icengelo*, *Hone Radio* and *Yatsani Radio* (Matibini, 2000). Currently, the majority of the community radio stations are owned by religious groups. There are about eighteen community radio stations in Zambia. The Catholic Church owns about ten community radio stations in nearly all of its ten dioceses. *Radio Icengelo* and *Radio Phoenix*, at one time, had been a pain in the side of the government of the time because these two radio stations offered a platform to the opposition and the general public to discuss political, economic and social issues. *Radio Phoenix* had previously been gutted twice since its inception. After the 2008 presidential election Fr. Frank Bwalya, the then station manager of *Radio Icengelo*, was held in custody for stating during his radio programme that the then President Rupiah Banda and the MMD stole the elections and were in power illegally. Fr. Bwalya was summarily relieved of his duties as station manager by his bishop; a move seen as politically motivated. Most of these private radio stations do not broadcast political programs except for the three mentioned above.

With regard to the print media the state maintained their four publications and added another two, *The Financial Mail* and *Sunday Mail*. The Mission Press introduced another magazine publication called *The Challenge*, a Christian magazine that documents religious, political and social concern issues. In 2006 it carried an article, "The Family Tree," that revealed that the Zambian Cabinet was mainly composed of the extended family of the incumbent president, the late President Mwanawasa. The article accused Mwanawasa of nepotism. According to Banda (2004) ten months before the birth of multi-party politics, about twenty-five new private publications hit the market. Between 1990 and 1996 there

were about seventy-one newspapers and magazines registered with the National Archives. Many newspapers were registered but never went into print whilst others had either an intermittent existence or were published but short-lived (Chirwa, 1997). Some of the newspapers that were born during this time and later were *The Weekly Post*, now *The Post*, *The Confidential*, *The Weekly Express*, *The Sun*, *The Nation Herald*, *The Weekly Standards*, *The Chronicle*, *The Eagle Express*, *the Monitor* (Chirwa, 1997) and in the recent past *The Daily Nation*, *The Lusaka Voice* and *The National Voice*. However, many of these did not survive and only a handful have remained. *The National Mirror* after a long struggle finally folded in 2005. It was about the same time that *The Monitor*, a paper run by the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia Chapter, went out of print as well. These two papers have since come back on the market. Of all the independent newspapers *The Post* has had the greatest impact on the Zambian media and democracy. In Zambia, the government controlled newspapers have always been perceived as the propaganda tool of government and the private media. For instance, *The Post* was at once seen as being critical of the government at one time. However, it has been clear that in the recent past *The Post* had become the mouthpiece of the government. Since 2011 when the Patriotic Front party took over power in Zambia, *The Zambian Watchdog*, an online publication, has been seen as an anti-government publication just like other private online news media such as *Zambian Report*. Street argues that if the media systematically promote some interest and misinform the citizenry, the democratic process itself will not operate effectively (2001, p.16).

The Media Council of Zambia (MECOZ) was established in 2002 to act as a self-

regulatory board for the media. Its objectives were to uphold professional integrity in journalism, to promote freedom of expression, to enhance rapport between the media and the public, and to arbitrate complaints between the public and the media (Matibini, 2006, p. 27). However, its membership is voluntary and *The Post* is not a member of MECOZ, nor are the online news media such as *Zambian Watchdog* and *Zambia Review*. The press remains unregulated in Zambia as in other parts of Africa and the world as well.

Most of the electronic and print media had also established an online presence in a form of online news pages and Facebook account. Nonetheless, there has been also new online news pages for both public and private media productions such as *Zambian Watchdog*, *Zambian Report*, *Lusaka Times*, *Tumfweko*, *Zambian Eye*, *Zambian 24*, *Lusaka Voice*, *Solwezi Today*, *Mwebantu New Media*, *Zambia Online*, *Zambian News*, *Zambian Intelligent News*, and *Kachepa*.

## **2.05 The Role of New Media and Social Media in Political News Dissemination:**

In each era in the past the Northern Rhodesia/Zambian media have had a role to play in society. For instance, in colonial Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) the media served the interests of the colonial administration, the European settlers. Its programs also operated as a channel of educating the “natives,” for instance, through educational broadcasting.

Kasoma (1986) discussed the role the press played in colonial times and after independence extensively. After independence, the media, which were controlled by the state, had played their particular role as an educational tool in serving the public interest in terms of promoting national development and nationalism. In these two periods, it would have been

extremely difficult for any other alternative media institution to have expressed views different from those of the government. This is well documented in Kasoma's (1986) work. In the Third Republic, which is anchored in the ideals of democracy, the situation is different and therefore the media have a totally different calling. The democratic dispensation calls for free media and unregulated press. The Zambian situation presents us with a two-tier approach to the press: state-owned and independent or private-owned. What role is the press in Zambia expected to play in the current day?

Are there different roles for private-owned-newspapers and for the state-owned-newspapers? Or does the press have a common role either as private-owned or state-owned? Kasoma's (1994) ideas on African journalism ethics and Ungar's (1990) notion of a free press in democracy are relevant for this discussion. For instance, Kasoma argues that the press should uphold higher ethical standards that safeguard the interest of all such as public and national and not only the self-interest of the journalists. (1994, p. 20)

Kasoma's (1994) position on ethical journalism in fact lays out the role the press ought to play especially in a democracy. On the basis of his argument, it can be inferred that the press, either state-owned or independent, plays a role of serving the interests of all citizens and those of national interest. National interest and public interest, as Kasoma rightly points out, is not only for those who have political power or financial power but for the general populace. Ungar (1990, p. 371) argues that a free press, and especially an independent press, can be more effective than an opposition party in bringing about change in an oppressive regime. In a democracy, the press can equally be effective in unearthing

corruption and bad governance. A free press is a pillar of democracy because it provides checks and balances for the ruling elite and government. The media have often been referred to as the fourth estate. As such, the media have a watch-dog role to play in society. Therefore, the role of the press is not only to report about what the government is doing but also to bring out issues of public interest that politicians sometimes ignore. It can also monitor politicians to see if they are living up to their promises. It is not a bad idea to have an independent press in a situation where the state also owns a number of newspapers. If state-owned newspapers are going to tell us about the government and its projects then an independent-newspaper is an alternative propaganda. Ungar notes that “a free press reinforces democratic ideals” (1990, p. 372). A state-owned newspaper has a public mandate of serving the public and the national interest. Knowing that the private newspaper can sometimes be moved by market interests does not stop it from serving the public interest and national interest. The media, print media in particular, have to uphold their credibility through sound, critical and in-depth analysis of issues. Election time is a period of decision-making and it is only with a free press that people can do that effectively and efficiently.

Citizens will not stop hoping for a fair and objective media. For instance, giving equal coverage to the government in power and the opposition parties by both state-owned newspapers and independent newspapers would be the wish of every citizen and political party. If the state-owned-newspapers do not do it then we would expect the private-owned-newspapers to do it by covering what the state-owned-papers omit.

The background of the Zambian press as discussed in this paper indicates the need for a press that would be an alternative to traditional media that is biased for the government. Therefore, it is upon this study in measuring Zambians' perception of online news media that we can begin to understand the role of the online media. The thrust of the study is to measure reliability, and credibility of the online news media and whether it provides an alternative voice to the already polarized media. The findings of this research could help in understanding what should be the new role of the online news media in Zambian society. It is for this reason that multiple methods are utilized in the theoretical framework, data collection, and in the data analysis. Hence, by using multiple methods the research on the Zambian online news media could be validated and thus adding new knowledge that has been missing.

## **2.06 Ethical Journalism**

It is a sad reality if we were to consider, say, the press in Zambia, both mainstream and online, in terms of ethics. The press is divided among themselves, between government controlled and privately owned, between public and independent. It is for this reason that journalists and the press are faced with a dilemma of upholding professional standards rather than succumbing to the insinuation of government or press-management. In Zambia journalists and the press face the dilemma of truth-telling against reporting what suits their bosses. Further still, in the recent past, the online press and those holding public office are often antagonists. In this battle, freedom of the press stands as the bone of contention. The online press is accused of violating press freedom whilst those in public

office are accused of curtailing press freedom. Hence, it is against this backdrop that the need for ethical journalism arises. The ethical question that we need ask is: How can journalism and the press emancipate themselves from such a dilemma. This is what this study wants to untangle in its evaluation and analysis of both public and private online news media. In order for the online media to be credible, reliable and provide an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media they need to uphold ethical standards at most and show some independency from vested interests of those who control them.

The issue of ethics has not been properly dealt with by the journalism academy. Only a few journalist academicians such as Clifford Christians, Edmund Arens, Dietmar Mieth, Michael Traber, Marshall McLuhan (Serafini, 1989) and others have attempted to treat the question. Within the journalistic fraternity and the press institutions the issue of ethics has only been partially accommodated. In fact this has been done through the formulation of codes of ethics. These codes of ethics have taken the approach of categorical imperatives and prohibitions. Worse still they are usually abstract and irrelevant to the actual situation journalists face.

Besides academics there has been a breed of contemporary philosophers like Mark C. Taylor, Esa Saarinen, John P, Ferre, John Merril, Anita Sivers, Anthony Serafini, and others who have attempted to apply deontology, utilitarian, egoism and other ethical theories to journalistic dilemmas (Serafini, 1989). Thomas Bivins (2004), Robert Berkman and Christopher Shumway (2003) have also applied these ethical theories to online journalism. Mainly they have held that the same criteria of ethics exercised in the traditional

media should apply also to online media. However, they note that there are challenges in doing that given the nature of online media that favors expediency and immediacy of news.

Media academicians, practitioners, philosophers, institutions and governments have argued for either the compatibility or the incompatibility of journalism and ethics.

However, George Herbert Mead (1934), a pragmatic philosopher and social scientist, in his theory of symbolic interaction, particularly the essay on “Fragments of Ethics” offers a more appealing ethical approach that could be appropriate for journalism. Bivin (2004) has adapted a checklist for ethical decision making a work started by Joann Byrd, former *Washington Post* ombudsman, and others that can be used not only for the print media but also for the online news media. This checklist subjects each process of decision making to some values such as never harm others, benevolence and the net aggregate of good for the greater number.

## **2.07 Ethics and Online news media**

The emergence of online publications in the news media has brought out many legal and ethical challenges to journalism. The question often asked is whether there is to be new ethical approaches to new media different from the mainstream media. This is a question media scholars and managers interested in making ethical decisions are to wrestle with in this new dispensation set by the new media. Gracia (2012) describes well the influence of internet on human thinking. He notes that:

The Internet has provoked a revolution as an information and communication technology. A crucial factor in the change the Internet is generating is the fact that it

has become an indispensable working tool for individual people and societies. The genetic determination of our ways of thinking, perceiving and acting is not unique; our experiences and the society where we live also have a crucial influence, but technology (tools) can influence profoundly those mental functions (deriving important ethical consequences). Therefore, the Internet is playing an important and durable role in what we think and how we think. ( p. 14)

There are a number of *Zambian* online news media-run websites hosted in *Zambia*, the United States and also the United Kingdom whose publishers are either private or public. Most of the private online news media also run Facebook pages where they reproduce some of the news reports of their website. Both websites and Facebook pages for these *Zambian* private online news media allow blogging as feedback to the news stories. Some of these sites are connected to the mainstream print and electronic media while a good number of them are specifically online publications.

These sites have reported on allegations of corruption and promiscuity by government officials, politicians, corporate personalities and high profile individuals in *Zambian* society. The affected individuals have complained that their right to privacy has been tampered with. They have, however, raised concerns that the private *Zambian* online news media have convicted them and found them guilty in the press without allowing the accused to defend themselves. This has been due to the fact that the people behind the private online news media, like *Zambian Watchdog*, are unknown and their institutions are unregulated. The argument is that the people behind the particular online media go on to

make allegations against others while at the same time acting anonymously (*allafrica.com*, 01<sup>st</sup> January, 2014).

Some in the government and those others who have been affected have labelled some of the writers on online news media as cowards and disgruntled elements without the interest of the country at heart. Headlines like, “Mahtani files summons against a US site hosting *Zambia Report*,” (*Saturday Post*, 08<sup>th</sup> November, 2014) and “Miles Sampa declares war with *Zambian Watchdog*,” (*allafrica.com*, 01<sup>st</sup> January, 2014) were common in the press, indicating the discontent some quarters of society had with the private online news media.

Legally, the complainants in this scenario could not sue the offenders running the online news publications because they were unknown. It is often argued that the same laws that apply to the mainstream media should also apply to online publications. In terms of morality Bivins, (2004) argued that the same ethical consideration that obtains in society should be applied to the media as well whether mainstream or new media.

The two Zambian cases of “Mahtani vs US site hosting *Zambian Report*” and “Sampa vs *Zambian Watchdog*” bring out a very peculiar ethical dilemma. The ethical issue in this case is that, the online news media fails to take responsibility for their actions. For the people behind the two Zambian online news publications the problem lays in them failing to be responsible for the allegations they make. They fail to be responsible in the sense that they act in bad faith by deciding to be anonymous.

Two online news sites controlled by unknown Zambians and hosted in the United States and United Kingdom namely, *Zambian Report* and *Zambian Watchdog* respectively, are known to publish very damaging dossiers for public and corporate figures and high profile personalities. The writers on these sites claim that actually what they do is investigative journalism. For instance in the case of “Mahtani and the USA site hosting *Zambian Report*,” Mahtani was trying to request that the USA host site reveal details about the owners of *Zambian Report* and their physical address so that legal charges could be issued against them. Mahtani is a well-known banker who owns Finance Bank of Zambia as well as a funder for the former ruling party, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy. As in the case on “Sampa and *The Zambian Watchdog*,” Sampa made an offer of about \$4000 to anyone who would reveal the names of the people behind *Zambian Watchdog*. Miles Sampa is a member of parliament for the Patriotic Front and also Minister of Commerce. *The Zambian Watchdog* had published damning reports over the minister’s extra-marital affairs. It had published on its website and Facebook page pictures of young women whom it claimed the minister had affairs with. After several weeks of such publications, the minister decided to withdraw his offer and threatens to take the online publication to court.

The online news media has made many allegations against government officials and high profile personalities. The complaint that many have is that the online media like any other media do not divulge their sources. Also the *Zambian watchdog* has used derogatory nouns to address its target subjects. For instance, whenever it brought out stories about the late president it would refer to him as “the ailing dictator” or “the ailing Michael.” These

were claims which the government and the late president's family used to discredit though in the end the republican president appeared to be sick at certain national functions and later died in November 2014. People had issue with *The Zambian Watchdog* referring to the republican president by his first name "Michael" and sometimes what seemed like derogatory reference such as "ailing dictator."

The government had often been disturbed by the presence on the online publication because it had often revealed what seemed like inside information. The government had ignored the issue of working on a new national constitution, which it had promised that it would once elected into office to form a government. The Patriotic Party while in opposition even specified that it would institute a new constitution in ninety days and also fulfill many other promises within the same period. For instance on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2014 the *Zambian Watchdog* had an article with the headline, "Let Sata keep his constitution – National attention should be on having early elections." This article noted about the demand for the constitution that, "We believe that it is"Chasing of the wind" or expecting to squeeze water from a stone for the civil society and Church to expect a decent constitution from the PF" (2014, January 24<sup>th</sup> *Zambian Watchdog*). The online news publication constantly had articles that called the PF government as dishonest. This made the government several times issue threats to ban the online publication. The government even instructed the Zambia Information, Communication Technology Act (ZICTA) to block the website for *Zambian Watchdog*. ZICTA went ahead to block the publication but failed to block its Facebook page. This prompted people to develop more interest in reading

*Zambian Watchdog* on its Facebook account. Due to the fact that the government owned most of the media houses in print and broadcasting, the private online news publication was seen as an alternative media. The online media have been regarded as offering an alternative voice to the government controlled mainstream media.

This assumption agrees with the claims of Bivins (2004) who notes that, the internet is a critical source of information and that this information provides freedom to people and creates the belief of self-governing for the masses. However, Fenton (2014) presents a different view of this pre-supposed freedom envisioned to exist with online news publications saying that, “Just as individuals cannot claim the right to freedom of expression in the same manner as media conglomerates, neither can the so-called freedom of individuals online fulfill the emancipatory claims made of them” (p. 36). Fenton’s argument is right in the sense that online media have to be accountable for their actions and also have to assume responsibility of the claims they make. Fenton’s identifies the limitation of citizen journalism as far as freedom of individuals vis a vis the liberty presupposed of online journalism.

Though the online news publication covered government and other news, most of the time it presented the government in a bad light. Just as the government media had gagged the opposition coverage, so did the online news publication opt to put the government and its adversaries in a bad light. In this sense the online news media provided the very negative coverage the government media have been blamed for. Hence, the online news publication was not to claim fairness and balance in its generation of news. Bivins

(2004) reflects this scenario by a caution that “what has been considered unethical in the past will probably still be unethical today.” (p. 226)

There are many issues that *The Zambian Watchdog* revealed that were true but there was other information that made some people in the country and the ruling party insinuate that the publication was being sponsored by the opposition, UPND. The main ethical issue was that the online news publication sometimes crossed the line and failed to uphold its integrity by the use of derogatory language and tone. And it claimed that it had people within the government system who provided them with news stories and classified documents. For instance, when the PF government fails to release the draft constitution, *The Zambian Watchdog* released a soft copy on its Facebook page for the masses to read.

Looking at the information provided about the two Zambian online news publications there are few ethical dilemmas that stand out. Some of them are listed here namely: invasion of privacy; being in possession of classified documents; using derogatory language to refer to subjects in their news stories; maintaining anonymity of its founders, editors and writers; being anti-government and always accusing the government of practicing tribalism and regionalism in its appointment of government and those with public portfolio; failing to apologize when what it had earlier claimed turned untrue.

It can be argued that sometimes it would not be fair to expect ethical principles used in society to be the same as those practiced by media. This is so because media sometimes work in a very challenging environment and the fact that the media have an obligation to society to provide the truth and somehow act as a conscience of society. However, in new

media where citizens become producers of media text, the responsibility of making ethical decisions must be placed on every participant. Given that citizens are participants on the new media platforms and not professionals, the only ethical guidelines they would take recourse to are those provided by society. Some scholars support this notion of applying society's principles to citizen journalism. For instance, Kenney and Ozkan (2011) argue that, "The values that must be treasured and integrated into journalistic activity are not those that have become inculcated within the confederacy of journalists themselves—isolated, by choice, from community—but rather those shared pluralistically by the community itself."(p. 45)

The common argument often given for why the media sometimes should be tolerated when they tend to invade the privacy of a high profile personality or politician is that the public has the right to know everything about their leaders. In this sense, for a journalist what is important is to get the story out there. The worry is about getting the story and not how the story was gotten. This argument is based on the principle that the end justifies the means. In the case on "Sampa vs *Zambian Watchdog*," it could be argued that the online publication was justified to write about Sampa and his alleged girlfriends (2014, January 01<sup>st</sup>, *allafrica.com*). This is so because the truth of the allegation is for the society to find out and also for the minister to sue the publication; even though the people behind it were anonymous. It might be assumed that Sampa's action of withdrawing from pressing charges against the publication indicates that he was somehow guilty and afraid that the online publication would reveal more than they had promised.

The second issue involves the online news media obtaining classified documents and making them available to the public. A good example of this scenario is when the *Zambian Watchdog* released the draft constitution when the government and the president had refused to do so (2014, January 25<sup>th</sup> *Zambian Report*). The PF government had back-tracked on its earlier promise of instituting a new constitution within ninety day of office. It was justified for the online news media to release the draft constitution so as to see what the constitutional review commission had come out with and what was unsettling the government to withhold the document from the public. The obtaining and release of this classified document was not to endanger or compromise national security in the sense that in the final analysis the document was to be made available to the masses. Why it could have been labeled as classified is that it had not been released by the designated authority that had been working on it.

The third issue concerns the use of derogatory language in referring to subjects of their stories. The media are supposed to uphold the level of morality if they are to remain fair and credible. Where satire and figures of speech are permitted the media are not allowed to insult or use insults to refer to someone. For the media referring to the republican president as “ailing Sata” when the mentioned is still enjoying good health is deceitful and alarming the nation. However, in the case of “Sata and *Zambian Watchdog*,” the claims that the online media were making referring to the head of state’s health were difficult to dispute as the president was out of the public sight for weeks. Even the disclaimer by the government that the president was enjoying good health was difficult to

believe because on the few occasion that the president appeared to perform national duties he appeared frail and unwell. This even increased people's speculation about Sata's health. It so happened that the president was unwell and actually died. His eventual demise made the online media appear trusted and an alternative voice to the government publication that was known to conceal the truth. In this sense, the online media reference to the president as "ailing Sata" was not derogatory since it proved to be the truth.

The fourth issue and very important one is that of the online publications in question being anonymous. When dealing with sensitive issues journalists have been known to use any means to remain anonymous. Investigative journalism involves risk taking and as it were, the online media existing and operating undercover sometimes becomes necessary in its quest to find the truth. If most of the information reported by the online media has proven to be true, and many charges against them had no grounding, than harassing the media is all the more necessary for them to remain anonymous to serve the public interest. In as much as the mainstream media will remain a propaganda tool of those who wield political and economic power, then 'submarine journalism' by the *Zambian Watchdog* and *Zambian Report* will remain justifiable.

The fifth issue involves the publishers of the online news media accusing the government of practicing tribalism and regionalism in appointing government and public service leaders (2014, March 11<sup>th</sup> *Zambian Watchdog*). On one hand, we could argue that the publishers of the online news publication were justifiable to air their views on matters of national and public interest. On the other hand, if we consider the context of the

issue then such accusation would be deemed dangerous for the unity of the nation. First, given the nine provinces in the country, the PF government had a support from the majority of those provinces whilst the opposition United Party for National Development (UPND) had support in only two provinces and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) had support from only one province. The ruling party was justifiable to offer positions to members of parliament who were from the provinces where they enjoyed support. Given the ratio of certain ethnic groups it is clear that they were in the majority hence holding many of the ministerial position. For the online media to allude that it was tribalism and regionalism for the government to act in the way it did was dangerous to the unity of the nation. The media should always avoid alarming the nation on sensitive issues as these would lead to chaos in the future. This is where the media are usually called to be honest and fair and to avoid personal interest to overwhelm them.

The sixth and last issue is that of the online media failing to apologize when its claims were proven to be untrue. This is difficult to determine in the sense that those who argued that the online media should apologize where not supported by the legal procedures or ruling to prove that the online media had been wrong. This is due to the fact that it was difficult for the online media to be taken to the court of law. Rulings that had been against the said online media were propelled by the government or individuals with vested interest. In the other sense it is advisable for the online media to be responsible and to admit error and wrong doing when they later discover they had misfired.

Regarding these ethical dilemma posed by online news media it still can be

understood that new media are what Ward (2014) refers to as “mixed” due to the presence of a myriad practitioners who engage in multiple technologies to produce a variation of media content (p. 46). According to Ward, this scenario makes it difficult for online citizens to have what he terms “digital responsibility” because no one is there to verify what is posted on a site as this kind of news is prompt and immediate (p. 47). Bivins (2004) argued that new media provide an opportunity for open ethics where everyone becomes a participant in making moral decisions. Indeed everyone can publish on the internet in online publication. However, there is self-censorship on most online news publication where content is first sent to the editor and where blogs are first approved before they appear to everyone online. Despite these self-censorship approaches citizens are moral beings and are capable of making more choices as they become participants on the online platform. As it were, in the new media ethics is not only practiced by the professional but is open for every participant or citizen. This is what the media scholars now refer to as the new ethics of the fifth estate. In this case the fifth estate is the new media. This is well expressed by Ward and Wasserman (2010) when they note that, “For this new media ethics, one group of communicators is important: a revitalized fifth estate media that presents itself as an alternative or supplement to the mainstream press, the Fourth Estate.” (p. 281)

Private online news publications would have specific measures that they would take in making moral decisions for these ethical dilemmas discussed above. They would first have the online news publication clearly indicate its physical address and the contact on people who would want to approach them for any legal and ethical concern might contact.

The editor and all the writers would append their name after every article they write except in the case of an underground investigation. Their authors would only remain anonymous on those issues and news that identifying the author would hamper future coverage of the same story. Because their concern is to be fair and minimize harm (Bivins, 2004, p. 240) they would abide by the same ethical principles that exist in the mainstream media. They would be required to withhold the names of their sources at all costs and also of contributors who would like to remain anonymous.

The publication would by all means strive to be balanced and assume responsibility and be accountable for their actions. They would be required to have a disclaimer on the home page that would indicate that, should explain that, all views and opinions expressed by contributors do not express the views and opinion of the publication.

They would vow never to be intimidated to carry out investigative journalism and sometimes conceal their identity if that would help them serve the public better by uncovering corruption. Whitehouse (2010) conquered with this assumption of journalistic deception at the service of truth. Whitehouse argues thus, “The public may accept journalistic deceptions in pursuit of a greater good if that greater good actually occurs or is somehow clearly evident. Acceptance, however, is far greater for journalistic watchdogs exposing truth by non-deceptive means.”(p. 317)

The online publishers would be willing to risk their lives for the sake of providing news and information that is fair, truthful and balanced. They would strive, by all means, to substantiate their claims with further evidence and in a balanced manner. They would do

so because they believe in maintaining their integrity and credibility. They would aim to remain the most accurate and reliable online news publication. They would attempt to avoid derogatory language yet not be afraid to call a spade a spade when need be despite the annoyance this might cause to certain sections of society. Being conscious that sometimes bringing out the truth will not please everyone, they will carry out their duty and obligation to serve the public.

In terms of privacy they would respect the privacy of every individual unless when it involves serving the public interest. They would be expected to divulge corrupt and moral decadence involving high profile official holding any position of responsibility in society.

When they discover they made an error or misinformed the public they would attempt to retract and offer an apology. The apology will carry the same coverage accorded to the misleading news. Understand that to err is human and that they are no more than perfect as they too are prone to make mistakes. They would attempt to be as objective as possible (Bivins, 2004, p. 227). However, this would not make them downplay factual and truthful reporting. They would desist from making claims that might seem alarming and placing the national interest in danger. They would do so because for them serving the public and national interest ranks supreme. Their philosophy is to serve and unite the nation. Therefore, they'll avoid unverified innuendos that accuse others of tribalism, regionalism, nepotism, racism and the like.

These managerial and ethical choices articulated above conform to what many media

ethics and scholars suggest. For instance, Lasica (1997) in support of maintaining high standards of ethics for online publications argues that, “we shall embrace the enduring standards and values of traditional journalism; editorial integrity, balance, accuracy, respect for others and fairness.”(p. 4)

## **2.08 Research Questions**

Given the scenario that the media in Zambia are polarized with the public print and online acting as propaganda tools for the government and sometimes some of the private print and online acting as anti-government publications, the Zambian public is left with two options for which media to trust. Further still, since there has been a gap in research in Zambia on the perception of readers of the Zambian press, and even less research on the online news media, we can formulate three research questions:

- 1) Do Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media as providing an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media that has been used as a propaganda tool for the government?
- 2) Do Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media as a reliable sources of news and information?
- 3) Do Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media as a credible source of news and information?

## **2.09 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has managed to discuss the literature review and the background of the

Zambian press. The next chapter is going to explain the methodology and the procedure carried out in this research.

## **Chapter Three**

### **3.0 Methodology and Procedure**

#### **3.01 Chapter Introduction**

This research used multiple methods to gather data for analysis. It was a mixed research using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. It utilized a survey questionnaire, online news media content analysis, and case studies from online news media. Hussein (2009) explains data triangulation as, “the use of multiple sources in the same study for validation purposes” (p. 3). This chapter is going to explain how these methods were applied in data collection and what procedures were utilized to analyze the findings.

#### **3.02 Survey questionnaire**

The sample was picked from Zambians currently living in the country and those in the diaspora who have regular access to the internet. The questionnaire was administered electronically through Gmail and Facebook accounts. Lists of e-mails were solicited from colleagues from institutions of higher learning, religious organizations and the general public. E-mails were easily identified before sending through the address “chishfc@gmail.com” using Google Drive generated survey questionnaire. There no selection or leaving out emails as the survey was send to all the emails that had been collected. Survey responses were auto-entered in the Google Docs spreadsheets immediately the respondent clicked send. The identity of respondents remained anonymous

to the researcher as the survey question did not request for respondents' identification. Out of the over 300 emails sent and the 800 targets through the Facebook page "fchishala@yahoo.com," 229 respondents took the survey. The majority of respondents were high school graduates, tertiary students from the University of Zambia, Copperbelt University, and Zambia Institute of Mass Communication, religious men and women, college and university graduates working and studying either in Zambia or in diaspora.

A survey questionnaire was designed comprising both quantitative and qualitative measurements. From the three established research questions the instrument (survey questionnaire) contained 27 questions. Of these 3 were demographic asking about ethnicity, age range, and the level of education attained. Ethnicity was categorized in the following classes of ethnic affiliation: black Zambian, white Zambian, colored Zambian, and Asian Zambian. There were five answers for the age range, those from 0 to 20, 21 to 40, 41-60, 61 to 79, and those from 80 and above. For the highest level of education attained the answers were categorized in 6 groups, namely: junior secondary certificate, school levers certificate, college/trade certificate, college diploma, first degree, and post graduate degree.

The second category of 17 questions had suggested answers provided and it needed respondents to select either yes or no, and sometimes select as many boxes as possible depending on one's experience related with ICT. Suggested answers were provided to enable the researcher access to quantitative data on how the respondents access the internet, which social media they access, what online news media and mainstream media they

access, and how they rate the media in Zambia. The last set of 4 questions contained qualitative questions that needed open ended answers and were targeted to solicit opinion on what type of news the respondents are interested in and their evaluation of the standard of news in Zambia. Also they solicited opinion about a new online media and what kind of news respondents would like to read about that were not available in the media at the moments.

The survey questionnaire measured the frequency of the particular media used by the respondents in comparison with available options. The more frequently one medium is used in comparison to other media, the more it indicated ease of access to that media. Further, credibility of one form of media against the other is determined by the rating it gets on a scale of worse to better. The better it is rated the more credible it is to the respondents. As to providing an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media we compare the accessibility of both mainstream media and online media. The one that has the highest percentage of accessibility indicates that it is the most reliable and credible media and hence providing the masses with an alternative voice.

### **3.03 Survey questions and what each was measuring**

The survey questions are similar to the ones used by the Pew Research Center (<http://www.pewresearch.org/>) adapted to suit the Zambian situation.

1. ***What is your ethnicity?***

This question wanted to identify the ethnicity of the respondent given that Zambia is predominately of the black race though there are a number of white settlers from the United

Kingdom, immigrants from Asia, and a mixed race classified as colored who are in the minority.

1. ***In what age range do you fall?***

This question aimed at establishing the age groups which would guide the focus of the research. For instance, the target age in the research was the ages between 21 to 40 year olds because this age range captures the youth who are active with new media and social media. It also wanted to establish how each age group has its own preferences on the type of news they watch and from which media outlet?

2. ***What is the highest level of your qualification/education?***

This question was establishing the education levels of the respondents so as to guide the research measuring how much each level of education is influenced by the new media and social media. Also it wanted to establish the characteristics of each age groups in terms of news platforms' preference.

3. ***What do you do for your living?***

This question wanted to classify respondents according to their career. This would inform the research how career can affect the type of news one watches or reads or listens to. It would also show how active or engaged with issues one is according to the type of news or media one uses to access news.

4. ***Do you own a mobile phone?***

This question was intended to find out those who own a phone because internet access through smartphone is cheaper in Zambia. This would be able to give us an idea of how

many respondents have access to the internet on a daily basis.

5. ***Do you have access to a computer, IPad, tablet, laptop?***

This question was intended to find out how many respondents have access to these facilities that makes it easier to access the internet. The respondents were to respond either 'yes' or 'no' to this question.

6. ***Where do you often access the internet from?***

This question was to measure whether the respondents often access the internet at work, at school, at home, at the internet café, or on their phone.

7. ***How often do you use the internet?***

The frequency of the use of the internet would help to determine how useful and important the internet is to the respondents.

8. ***What do you use the internet for?***

This question was to measure the benefits the respondents draw from the internet and what interests them on the internet. This information is important especially for this research that focuses on online news. It is important to find out among the internet users whether news is a priority?

9. ***What do you use your phone for?***

This question requires multiple answers and intends to measure how many respondents use it for internet and for social media. This information is important because the use of the internet and social media is paramount to the measuring of those who have access to online

news.

10. ***What social media and new media accounts do you have?***

This question was to measure or find out what email accounts people have because most e-mail accounts like yahoo and Hotmail offer news also. Also this question was to find out which social media respondents have because some of them like Facebook and Twitter.

11. ***Where do you get your daily news from? This question had answers indicating mainstream media and also online media.***

This is to measure whether respondents access more news online or if they access more news on any of the mainstream media like print and broadcasting. This could be the case especially that the majority of the respondents were students and young working adults who are so fond of social media and new media.

12. ***If you get news from your phone or online, where exactly?***

This question was to measure which social media are used by respondents for news and also which news providers with e-mail services they use such as Google, Hot-mail and Yahoo. Another way was to see if they check news online on media portals.

13. ***Which Zambian news websites do you visit for news?***

Since the research was targeting Zambians who have access to the internet, it is equally important to know which of the Zambian news portals the respondents visit.

14. ***Which newspapers and media houses webpage or online publication do you subscribe to?***

This was to find out which media outlet or news provider, either mainstream or online, was

popular among Zambians with access to the internet. This was to measure also what media outlet was reliable in terms of popularity.

15. ***For you where do you get objective news about Zambia from?***

This was to measure which media outlet is credible as a news provider.

16. ***How do you rate online government media on a scale of 1 to 5 (Worse to Better)?***

This was to measure how Zambians perceive online government media.

17. ***How do you rate Zambian Online Private publications on a scale of 1 to 5 (Worse to Better)?***

This was to measure how Zambians perceived online private media.

18. ***Do you usually give feedback or make comments on Zambian Online news portals, blogs or social media?***

This is to measure if respondents are interactive on online news portals and social media.

The more the engagement the more the respondents value the news such that they enter into an exchange to either affirm or disapprove the news. Depending on the way the respondents interact with online media and which side they take measures how they hold the media outlet as either credible or not credible.

19. ***How do you rate blogs on Zambian online news webpages and social media?***

***This was to measure whether respondents find blogs edifying or useless?***

This would have something to say on the credibility of the social media and blogs as far as engagement of the citizens is concerned. Credibility would be measured also in the quality of engagement by the bloggers and social media interaction.

20. *Are you currently based in Zambia?*

This was to see whether it is those who are in diaspora who access more online news or whether it is those in the country. This would indicate the popularity of online news, new media and social media as sources of news for Zambians with access to the internet hence measuring reliability.

**3.04 Qualitative Questions:**

21. *What kind of news are you interested in about Zambia?*

This is to measure specific interest of the respondents that differ from one respondent to another.

22. *What kind of news stories would you like to read about Zambia that you think the current media are not delivering?*

This is to measure what is missing in the Zambian media news providers. This would inform or provide suggestions to current news providers to diversify their news output. Much more it would provide a sample of market research indicating the gaps in news subjects for new investors in the online news providers.

23. *Anything thing you would want to share about the standards of the Zambian press?*

This is also to measure how the respondents view the Zambian press in terms of credibility.

24. *Are you satisfied with the access to internet services in Zambia?*

This is to measure the strength or limitation of the internet in terms of accessing the internet,

especially online news.

25. *How do you think access to the internet, new media and social media has helped you as a person?*

This question is to measure the benefits of access to the internet for the respondents.

26. *Do you think Zambians are making better use of the internet, new media and social media?*

This question measures how Zambian respondents perceive other users of the new media and social media whether they use them beneficially or misuse them altogether.

### **3.05 Survey Data Collection and Analysis**

Major limit of this survey is that only those with email and Facebook accounts participated as a convenience sample. Paine notes that, “while online audiences are to a certain extent self-selecting, the data has been shown to be reliable and, in many cases, far more robust than phone sampling” (Paine, 2011 p. 54). For analysis of the survey data Google Drive forms and Google Doc spreadsheet analytic software will be used for quantitative data. Qualitative data analysis will be done manually by coding, arranging and interpreting qualitative data from the survey, content analysis and case studies.

### **3.06 Content Analysis and Case Studies**

Content analysis will be conducted on two online news media, one private which is solely online news without a print version, and the other government owned, which replicates its print version. According to Paine (2011) media content analysis, “is one of

the most valuable and commonly used tools in measurement”(p. 48). Content analysis will be coded in terms of visibility, tone, messages, source mentioned, and conversation type as elaborated in Paine’s work. This is in line with the theory of political economy of the media. Those who own the media control what goes in the media in as much as it promotes their interests.

The public news media to be analyzed will be the online page for the *Zambian Daily Mail*. The private online news media will be the *Zambian Watchdog*, which has both an online page and a Facebook page. Analysis will involve both platforms. The choice of *Zambian Watchdog* is that it has spurred controversy as anti-government in the way it frames its stories. The other reason is that it claims to have been doing investigative journalism while maintaining the anonymity of its proprietors and editorial team. The choice of the *Daily Mail* is obvious in the sense that it being a public owned newspaper it was also framing its stories by presenting the government officials in good light and by selectively choosing what image to give to the public of these public servants. For instance, in the absence of the president from the public for a long time why were they hiding that he was unwell and needed rest?

The content analysis for both online news media will focus on tabulating a random table of headlines running for two weeks in early March 2015. The headlines could help us determine how stories are framed and how the publication intends to influence the public through agenda setting. The data will be coded accordingly to measure the frequency of the subject, the use of the language whether it is derogative and also the presence of hate

speech in the headlines. In order to grasp more the tone and frame of the news items, two stories will be picked, one from the public and the private online news media as cases for analysis. The choice of the stories will depend on the frequency and the interest it would have raised in the readers through their blogs and comments both on the webpage and on Facebook. From the *Zambian Watchdog*, story one will be one reporting the sickness of the late president of Zambia. From the *Daily Mail* we shall pick a story related to the sickness of the president or rather a story that was counteracting the idea that the president was sick.

The use of multiple methods, in this case triangulation, in both data collection and data analysis in this study consolidates the analysis and helps to validate the results. A survey questionnaire alone as a method could not answer the research questions with certitude. The combination of survey, content analysis and identification and division made the research more credible. Therefore, in this research, findings are a result of using multiple methods data collection and concepts in data analysis.

### **3.06 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has managed to discuss the methodology to be used as triangulation in both data collection and data analysis. It has also explained the survey question design and what each was measuring. The next chapter is going to report the findings (results) and also give the analysis of those findings.

## **Chapter Four**

### **4.0 Results and Analysis**

#### **4.01 Results and Analysis**

Zambia is a predominately black race nation and it is no wonder black Zambians in this survey are in the majority as an ethnic group, accounting for 96% of the respondents. This group was picked from Zambians who have access to new media and social media. These statistics indicates that we can get reliable information in terms of Zambians' perception of the media because these people are black Zambians who are in majority.

The highest demographic group in this electronic survey was the age range between 21 years to 40 years old accounting for 83% of respondents. This is the age of the

young adults who are either in college or outside college working. Most of these are exposed to new media and social media. This being the most productive and energetic group, it is clear that at this age range many would be interested in what is happening around them. As a result they would be a group that has access to new media and social media often. This group is very much interested in the affairs of the country as it is composed of those in colleges, universities and those working. Their views would be credible and reliable. They would be credible because they are based on people engaged with the day to day issues of the nation, and they would be reliable because they are educated and capable of analyzing issues affecting them. These people would be interested in the affairs of the country hence access to news would be a priority. These groups of course would formulate their opinions based on what they see and read in the newspapers, online and what they hear on radio and television news.

The highest level of education for the respondents was 38% for those with first degree or undertaking first degree. Also 31% of respondents had a college diploma. The third group had 14% of respondents with a school leaver's certificate. Therefore, the combination of the three makes it the largest concentration of 76 % of respondents. These respondents have the highest percentage of educated people who can read and show interest in the country. In this way their perception would be more reliable as they are rational beings who can tell when things are good or bad. Therefore, when they have access to the media, especially online media, they can be in a position to make informed and sound conclusions on issues of national interest.

In this survey 43% of the respondents were students and 21% of respondents were employed as civil servants. This explains why given the highest percentage of students and civil servants it is possible that most of them have access to the internet. Also because they are the most active, they would be very much interested in what is happening around them and elsewhere. Hence, they would need to read or listen to news stories about their country. They would also be interested in the political, economic and development issues in the country because these directly affect their livelihood. This would prompt them to read news either on the mainstream media at work, or on radio at school or online at school and work.

In this survey 99% of the respondents at least own a cellphone and 94% of the respondents have a desktop computer, Ipad, tablet or laptop. Most of the respondents, that is 66%, have access to the internet from their phone. Thirty-eight percent of respondents access internet at school, 37% of respondents' access internet at home and 34% of respondents' access internet at work. From this it can be deduced that the majority of the respondents would have access to internet and online news media. With cheap internet access in Zambia on cell phones, it is very certain that the majority of the respondents access news at least on the phone. This would make it possible for the respondents to have informed opinions on issues of the country especially from what they read and listen to from the media.

Precisely 85 % of the respondents use the internet nearly every day and 10 % of respondents use it more than twice a week. Less than 4% of the respondents use it once a

week. It was found that 77% of the respondents use the internet for socialization, 72 % of respondents use it for news and information, 69 % respondents use internet for school work and 44% of respondents use internet for work. It is interesting though for this study that the second highest percentage of respondents used the internet for news and information.

According to the findings 92% of respondents use the phone for making and receiving calls; 83% of respondents use their phone to send and receive messages. About 71% of respondents use the internet for social networks and 66% of respondents use it to surf the internet. The highest number of respondents, that is 92%, have accounts on Facebook; 73% of respondents are on Twitter; 37% are on Skype. For email, 55% of respondents have accounts with Yahoo; 68% of respondents have accounts with Gmail. Most new media networks like Hotmail, Gmail, and Yahoo are not only email service providers but they have other functions like news and entertainment. Hence, one is able to access news online through these new media platforms.

It is very important to note that 72% of the respondents use the internet for news. However, even those who use the internet for school work also use the internet for news. This is important in the sense that even those who use the internet for other things use it to check for news as well.

Most of the respondents access news from different media content production outlets. For daily news, 74% of the respondents get theirs from television; 71% of the respondents get it online; 64% of the respondents get news from newspapers and

magazine; 60% of the respondents access news from radio; and 52% of the respondents get their daily news from their phones. Most of the respondents who get their news online or on their phone get it on Facebook; 50% of respondents get it on online news portals; 46% of the respondents get their news on Google. Those who access news from the internet are in the second position as their primary source of information is television. The Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) also has a webpage and those who are used to following the news on this channel might also use its website.

The majority of the respondents, 81%, visit online news media *Zambian Watchdog*; 47% respondents visit *Tumfweko*; 45% of respondents visit *Lusakatimes*; and 28% respondents visit *Mwebantu*. Fifty-nine percent of respondents get news from *The Post* Newspaper; 43% of respondents get news on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC); 34% of the respondents get news on *Daily Mail* Newspaper; 35% of respondents access news on *Times of Zambia* webpage.

Most of the respondents, that is 57%, said they get objective news online; 52% of the respondents get it on television; 40% of respondents from radio; 29% of respondents access news from the print; and 9% of respondents access news from other media sources. From the look of things most respondents get news from multiple channels. Objective news is news that is reliable. Therefore, it can be deduced that the majority of respondents in this survey find reliable news online rather than from the mainstream newspapers and tabloids, though most people watch television to get news about Zambia.

Online public media were rated differently on the scale of 1 for worse and 5 for

better. Forty-one percent of respondents rated online government news by entering the number 3 which is neither better nor worse. The rating was leaning towards worse with 2 having 30 % and 1 having 19%. Only 8% of respondents felt that online public news was better or rather reliable.

Zambian respondents rated Zambian Online private publication differently too, using the scale of 1 for worse and 5 for better. Forty-one of respondents rated 3 which was neither better nor worse. Twenty-eight percent of respondents rated 4 and 14% of respondents rated 5 making it 42 % rating the Zambian online private media as better; that is to say it is credible. Only about 15% of respondents rated below 3 for worse. This means that Zambian private online news is a credible source of news.

It can be deduced from the findings here that Zambian respondents in this research rated the private online media better as compared to Zambian public online media. This means that most Zambians find private online news outlets more credible than the public online news media. Most Zambians, 65% of respondents, do not give feedback or make comments on Zambian Online news portals, blogs or social media. This lack of engagement with new media and social media by most Zambians is an indication that the issues discussed do not interest the people.

On the scale of 1 for worse and 5 for better, most Zambians rate blogs on Zambian online news and social media differently. Forty-three percent of the respondents rated 3 or neutral with 31% leaning towards worse and 22% leaning towards better. From the above findings it is evident to respond to the research questions that most Zambians find reliable

news online and also credible news on online news media. *Zambian Watchdog* from the findings is the most popular online news site visited as traditional print media appeared at the bottom of the radar. The fact that private online news media are rated favorably in terms of objectivity means that they are credible and reliable sources of news.

#### **4.02 Qualitative Responses:**

##### ***What kind of news are you interested in about Zambia?***

Most respondents when asked the question as to what kind of news they were interested in, suggested that they like political news, current affairs, business, religious, social interest, development news, educational news, sports news, economic affairs and entertainment news. Further still, others suggested “anything that affects Zambians especially on economy, social and environmental science, research development projects and presidential statements.” It was further noted by one respondent that, “anything that is relevant and will impact my lifestyle for instance current affairs, business, weather, sports.” Some respondents suggested that, “current affairs, politics, development, religious, economical and issues affecting children and the youth.”

It could be deduced from respondents’ responses that most of them were interested in political news, economic news, and development news. These issues give an insight into how related these issues are to the human condition. Most people are interested in developmental news because such news is related to the livelihood of the people. Other respondents also mentioned religious studies, foreign news, entertainment news, gender, tourism, investment, and farming. All these interests form part of what transpires in the

Zambian society in terms of social, economic and cultural outlook.

***If you were to suggest for a new media production online, what kind of news stories would you like to read about Zambia that you think the current media are not delivering?***

Most respondents thought that the most favorable news they would want to read or listen to about Zambia would be on health, social, political, business, economics, agriculture, construction and education. There were also other people's preferences for lifestyle, technology, community, sports, current affairs, and real estate investment. One respondent noted that, "I am interested in knowing how people's lives are in all parts of Zambia, politics, latest and breaking news within Zambia." Another respondent noted that, "anything that is relevant and will impact my lifestyle." One respondent stated that, "as an environmentalist, I am interested in news that is environment oriented such as climate change, deforestation, pollution and also national development news."

Respondents were asked to state what type of news they would like to hear or read about that were missing in the media at present. The following were suggested: Gossip, infrastructure development, educational, ICT, religious, and foreign news.

There was much interest in the type of news people would prefer to hear or read about Zambia. Items like politics, business, economics, environmental, educational, and religious were popular preferences. Things like politics and economics affect all of us such that we see them as subject for the elites. Issues of politics and economics are issues that are sensitive in the sense that to ignore them would otherwise make our lives become even

more difficult. It is the desire to understand what is going on in society that prompts people to listen or read news in the media. The media keeps people aware of their political leaders and how the market is faring. Therefore, there is a symbiotic relationship between the media and politics. Therefore, the choice of which media to follow and which media have objective news is based on the integrity of the media in question. Only a media that adheres at least to ethical norms and expectations is seen as credible and reliable. Hence, in the views of the respondents in this research, private online news portals qualify to be responsible, hence credible and reliable.

The respondents were asked to say anything they would want to share about the standards of Zambian press and the following is what they said. Most of the respondents thought that the Zambian press was not objective though they were more favorable to the government. Others argued that the press was regional, not truthful and full of character assassination. One respondent noted that:

The press seems to be working democratically. However, there should be less influence from the government on what type of news should be broadcast. I have a feeling that sometimes the government hinders the publication of certain information from the different media centers we have in Zambia.

The press was seen as facing many challenges such as government censorship. At the same time some sections of the media were seen as being a mouthpiece of the government. Though the standards were regarded as poor it was, however, deduced that the private media offered checks and balances to that of the government. It was suggested

that private media, “exposed the tax injustice in the Zambian budget allocations and how the money are being used. Also the press revealed the truth about the government in power because the public media fear to deliver the truth about the government of the day.”

Another thing that people thought should not be is that, “in terms of political coverage, it should be balanced, both the party in power and opposition to be covered. This should not always be the main thing to dominate news as we see it today.” It was further stated that, “Zambia is a developing nation and much should focus on development issues, promotion of good governance, science and technology, research and development.” This shows that Zambians are aware of how the media frames its stories according to who owns them. The Zambians are also aware that the government controlled press in Zambia lacks objectivity and they are not balanced. This explains why the majority of Zambians favor the privately owned online news media.

Others in the survey also suggested that they would want to see, “stories that are not aiming at character assassination, stories that will bring unity, and educative stories. Currently, the media have concentrated too much on politics. I need a media that will cast the net wide.” Furthermore, it was noted that, “personal profiles of local business persons who have made it big financially” should often be published in the media. One respondent noted that, “in Zambia we are very behind with investigative journalism. It would be fair enough if they did investigative journalism.” Another issue that touches the polarized media in Zambia was that, “objective news that covers and serves both human and public interest stories. Let stories be balanced and fair unlike stories which are run in favor of the government or attacking the government of the day.” Another respondent noted that, “the

standard of the Zambian press is below par. It needs an overhaul and if self-regulation is granted to it, there could be massive development in the country associated with the kind of reporting that can come along the way.”

One respondent noted about the Zambian press that, “the standards are very poor because they have so much concentrated on politics. They have political issues on top of their agendas rather than development issues such as infrastructure, health, education and so on.” One respondent added further that, “the standards of press in Zambia, still lacks journalists who are courageous, professionally open and unbiased in their reporting.” Just like another respondent noted that Zambian journalists hold back most sensitive news hence it does not adequately inform the citizens. Further suggestions were noted by another respondent that, “News stories about how well we can develop our country, negative and positive performance of the government of the day instead of just praising the government of the day even when things are not right. There is need for more platforms involving other political parties and stakeholders to deliberate on how to bring about development in the country.”

Further still, it is noted that, “the standard is quite poor in the sense that it is full of personal attacks and unconfirmed or non-existing news ‘sources.’ The writers base their news on opinions and less on what people actually said. This has inevitably lowered the standard of professionalism in our press.” In addition it was noted that, “Zambian press is still behind in terms of technology. They need to adopt new techniques to improve their performance and delivery news.” On a sad note one respondent argues that, “there is no

intellectual media reporting in Zambia. Most journalists appear to be copy cats. There is no originality of news nor analysis.” Further still, another respondent noted that, “there is a lot of vindictive reporting, irresponsible journalism and cadre scribing. If these were eliminated then we would have a progressive media fraternity. There is an apparent lack of continuous development of the journalists as this lack of capacity building makes them unable to up the standards of their work.”

Talking about Zambian online news media one respondent noted that, “the press in Zambia needs to be more objective. Too many online publications with personal interest and personal agenda as a result the press in Zambia is full of propaganda and biased news.” Another one added that, “The standard of news in Zambia, especially online news, is all political and there is need to improve. It was too political, biased with the information it gives. Not reliable in that rumors have it that they are controlled either by the bourgeoisie of our society or the politicians. Therefore, I feel like they exclude vital things.” These concerns by the Zambians indicate that usually they do not get what is necessary in terms of news due to poor journalism. Ethical concerns also have been brought out in that the Zambians believe that the journalists are not doing enough to tell the truth. Therefore, Zambians are aware that journalists lack integrity because they are either afraid of losing their career or they are poor trained. This shows that Zambians demand a higher standard of journalism in the country.

The respondents were asked whether access to internet, new media and social media helped them as a person. The following were the responses they gave. It was reported that

by having access to the internet, new media and social media, some respondents become abreast with current news and that it had bridged the gap between them and their friends. The internet also helped them to understand new societies and markets. There was also a feeling that the internet had exposed them to new issues that do not exist in the Zambian society. Most of the respondents found the internet a resourceful tool. With the internet the respondents felt they are able to access variety of information from motivational speakers and financial educators. Social media, however, has reunited lost colleagues and family. As well for others new media has become the cheapest way to access data for different reasons, such as academics. It has also made it easier for respondents as well as people in society to purchase items online.

It was felt that sometimes the Zambian media outlets are poor, not objective as they tend to be biased towards their favorable orientation. It was felt that the Zambian media were far from reaching international standards. The media were very concentrated on politics, lacking professional analysis. Most in the Zambian media mixed opinion and facts forgetting in-depth analysis. One respondent noted that the internet, “helps me get more information that I cannot get from other sources, in fact 95% of the information I have comes from the internet.”

Further still, a respondent noted that, “with access to the internet I have been able to research so many things. I am able to check for current affairs news, communication with different people through social media. Also through social media I am able to know what is happening around the world by news from friends.” Other benefits of the internet are

expressed in a more personal way, when one respondent reported that, “I think it has helped me to be up to date on the happenings in the country on a daily basis. With the internet (poor as it is) I am able to learn so much more than what I normally do access.” One respondent in diaspora noted that, “being outside Zambia it has helped me a lot to be updated with the happenings in the country.” Another one noted that the internet has, “exposed me to a wide range of views thereby becoming an informed person and very knowledgeable on many national and international issues.”

In terms of academics and research many respondents found the internet very useful. For instance, one noted that, the internet has given him, “access to many services and resources which are not easily found in Zambia.” He further noted again that the internet, “has given me access to books and information for academic purposes and also for personal projects –for example I am able to access information on real estate and agriculture business I am currently involved in.” Another respondent noted that, “the news media leaves much to be desired as they are engulfed by rumors and thus tend to be unreliable. The social media has honestly wasted a lot of my time as it is addictive. However, I have learnt one or two things from friends I meet online. The internet as a whole has reduced the time for my research work by more than half, ensuring that I do all my assignments at one place in a short time, saving on my time and money.”

***Do you think Zambians are making better use of internet, new media and social media?***

There was a general feeling that it was a 50/50 situation some use it positively while others use it to access obscene materials. Some doubt that the youth might not know how

to use it. It was noted that some abused new media and social media hence in some sense the social media was underutilized. One respondent noted that, "It is a 50-50 situation. Depending on how someone would like to use it but I think by and large, many people are using it to better their understanding." Another respondent said, "Its relative, some are while others are not. They are, in the sense that these are facilities for research and communication. They are not in that some use these facilities for wrong agendas e.g. pornography, thefts which destroy our culture as Zambians." Another respondent noted that, "I can say some are utilizing internet to do their school work and other important materials while others have abused this by using the internet for illicit activities like accessing pornography and stalking innocent people." Another respondent thought the abuse of internet is average. The respondent noted that, "some are making use of it while others are abusing it for their selfish gains. I am not sure because, I have been living outside the country most of the time. But of late I have noticed that many of my friends and family members are connected to the new media and social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp." Another respondent noted that, "Yes and No! We find some people misusing the internet by publishing material that is not meant for everyone which is not the main idea. Yes, in that we are able to share information and socialize on a large basis which is good." Another positive contribution to the use of the internet is the one that notes that, "some are making use of it with a good intention while others are trying to brainwash the youths with the kind of information which is posted on internet." Another respondent sitting on the fence noted that, "not really, others are using it for pornography somehow. But sometimes it is abused for immoral activities by young generations and it has become the center of

political insults.” Further still, it is noted by another respondent that, “Yes and No. To support my yes, Zambians are putting good use of the internet by posing issues to do with health tips, school, business, to mention but a few. To support my no, Zambians are not making better use of the internet in that some, it has become a platform of insulting each other especially for those involved in politics. Also it has increased the number of theft scandals where companies are hacked in, hence losing billions of money.” Another respondent noted that, “No, most people have misunderstood the essence of the internet. They are more interested in social networking negatively, especially youths who use it mostly with malicious intent of finding hot chicks/dudes.” Another one adds that, “50% yes, mostly the youths are the ones with bumper access to internet, yet they do not use it for the betterment of themselves. Social media is full of ‘nudity.’”

There are those who are positive about the use of the internet. One respondent notes that, “yes, because internet is bringing people together through social media, the internet is one of the fastest ways of communication and because if that we are always up to date and aware.” It is further echoed that, “Yes! Generally there has been a major shift from using mere phone calls, reading hardy copy material to using soft copies. Government systems are generally improving because of the internet and social media. Though the degree of improvement and security remain challenges to all of us.”

Another one noted that, “yes, I feel they are, especially through the use of cell phones which is now a need for easy communication.” Furthermore, it is noted that, “Yes, in that we now have online news publications from where we can access information and

news from anywhere in the country without having to purchase a print newspaper or access the news on TV or radio. Because the country has seen an increased number of Zambians using the net and social media it is an easier and faster way of disseminating information to people.”

It is further noted about the internet, “yes we are making good use of it. To start with WhatsApp is a cheaper and efficient way to communicate not just with friends locally but even relatives in the diaspora. Secondly, media such as *Tumfweko*, *Zambian Watchdog* and Facebook do keep us updated with local news.” Another respondent added that, “personally I know I do and a practical example is the feedback I am providing to your survey. The internet has helped me gather a lot of data and in this sense has made me very knowledgeable. I am also able to keep in touch with relevant people on a professional level.” It is further noted that, “its average, most people are still ignorant on the use of internet especially the older generation. The younger generation use it more often although some of them use it for social networking and pay little attention to news and other developmental matters.”

Those on the negative side argue that:

I think they are using it wrongly. Instead of sending things that make sense, they are more into sending things that are morally disgraceful in the *Zambian* culture. A good example was the Kaingu’s pornography video, then the *Alangizi* video and now we have the video of the woman who was recently stripped naked for allegedly committing adultery. In so much as I respect the fact that we have to go to

such levels. To some extent they are. It has made people to reconnect through social media and share ideas on development issues.

Another respondent who sounded negative about internet use noted that, “No, because there aren’t many people who use the internet, new media and social media.” The standard of the Zambian media is said to be poor as there is no in-depth analytical reporting. Most journalists appear to be copy-cats. They have no originality of news nor analysis. Others argue that the Zambian media are moderate though government owned newspapers ought to be independent of government interference. It was also noted that there is too much vindictive reporting, irresponsible journalism and cadre scribing. In other words the Zambian press is polarized. Another respondent noted that the internet is not put to good use by stating that:

No at all. The internet potential has not been exploited to the fullest extent possible in Zambia. We are still far behind in the sub-region in terms of internet speed, internet utilization. The central government though the biggest purchaser of computer, business systems are yet to be fully integrated. There is a lot we can do to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government by managing information using informatics. New housing developments in the country should be synchronized with internet connectivity as the electric grid supply is being delayed.

To caution Zambians on the good use of the internet, one respondent noted that, “No, I think Zambians do not know how to take advantage of good things like the internet etc. This is a big opportunity for Zambians to be known all over the globe because we live

in a globalized world and internet has played a big role in globalization.” It is further argued that:

Zambians are not fully utilizing the internet services because only a few are able to access the internet and the majority of Zambians are not using mobile phones which have access to the internet. The country is also not fully connected with networking thus, making it difficult for most Zambians to have access to the internet. Another factor can be the charges applied on the use of the internet by network providers is quite expensive for more than 80% number of people.

This section of qualitative results has highlighted many issues similar to those in the quantitative results. Many of these findings are very revealing. The main research is based on the survey but content analysis and case studies are used not extensively but to check the validity of the survey. So emphasis was not put on conducting a thorough content analysis and case studies as these are only incorporated to verify some claims from the survey which is the main focus and source of valuable data. It is important to check also what the content analysis and the case studies would reveal in due course. This triangulation in result analysis helps to consolidate the finding of the research. Zambians’ perceptions about the press will be validated by doing content analysis of the media content and evaluation of case studies. In this sense one form of research affirms the other and makes the research credible in methodology and analysis.

#### **4.03 Content Analysis:**

In this study the content analyses were on Zambian online news media, namely

*Zambian Watchdog* and the *Zambian Daily Mail*. In the content analyses the data were collected by extracting 20 headlines on each of these news portals during a period two weeks covering the first-half of March 2015. Since the news portals were updated regularly, every new story uploaded was noticed and the headline recorded for each online news media.

#### **4.04 Content analysis for *Zambia Daily Mail* – 7<sup>th</sup> March 2015.**

*Zambian Daily Mail* had 22 entries of headlines for content analysis and of these 8 headlines were government oriented and 13 headlines were for neutral issues whilst only 1 headline was opposition oriented. This shows that *Zambian Daily Mail* tries by all means to report neutral and non-political news. However, when it comes to political news the online portal for *Daily Mail*, is biased in the sense that it covers more political issues that are government oriented and less if not none for news covering the opposition. Therefore, *Daily Mail* could be said to restrict news from the opposition and continue to be a mouth piece for the government. This confirms the finding in the survey that showed that the traditional media that is replicated online by *Zambia Daily Mail* is biased, unbalanced and a mouth piece for the government. It is also clear that the same media does not tolerate or entertain opposite views other than those of the government. They do so by excluding the opposition from coverage as proved by the survey, content analysis and the case studies. The highest number of news stories covered in the content analysis is political as it indicates the activities of the government. Therefore, by *Zambia Daily Mail* failing to be balanced it indicates that they are shunning responsibility for serving public and national

interests that includes the activities of the opposition. It is for this reason examining headlines from the private online news media like *Zambian Watchdog* is also needed to check whether it provides an alternative voice to that of the public mainstream print media.

#### **4.05 Content Analysis for *Zambian Watchdog* (ZWD) - 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2015.**

From the headline in content analysis of the *Zambian Watchdog*, it is clear that out of the 19 headline entries, 5 were neutral, 7 were government oriented, and 7 were opposition oriented. In this sense it is clear that the ZWD gave both the government and the opposition equal coverage. If it had equal coverage of the government and the opposition it can then be noted that the private online news media had the highest percentage of political coverage with slightly lower coverage of non-political issues. In this sense it explains why this particular private online news media ranks the highest favorite media in terms of objectivity and the number of people who access it. Zambian people have equal chances of accessing both public and private online news media. However, the frequency with which they prefer private online media to public online media indicates a moral choice based on the reliability and credibility of the preferred news media portal. It is the degree of coverage that we shall identify in the case studies.

#### **4.06 Case Study**

In this research the case studies will be drawn from the story covering the news of the then ailing president Michael Chilufya Sata by *Zambian Watchdog* and that of the opposition UPND request for a police permit under the Public Act by *Zambia Daily Mail*.

These two case studies were done between March 2014 and December 2014. It was not the intention of this research to have a thorough case study analysis. This is so because the main focus of the research is the survey and conclusions drawn from the survey. The case studies are only used to somehow act like a control variable to verify the survey findings. Though it would be unprofessional to draw conclusion from a single case study, however, in the case of validating the survey findings this research can be acceptable. The research will start by introducing the case study of Sata's health as reported *News Week* then also as covered by the *Zambian Watchdog*. The case study of the opposition seeking permission to hold a rally as covered by the *Zambia Daily Mail* will be analyzed last. For analysis of the case studies two particular stories will be selected from *Zambian Watchdog* and *Zambia Daily Mail*. The news story for the case study was chosen either from the online news site of the media outlet or from the Facebook page of the media outlet.

**Case:** How did the Zambian media report the story about the then President Michael Chilufya Sata prior to the United Nations General's Assembly's incidence where the president was taken ill?

#### **4.07 Case One: *Zambia Watchdog***

During the United Nations Head of State gathering in 2014, Newsweek carried a story about the then ailing president of Zambia, Chilufya Michael Sata. The extract from an online publication of Newsweek was published on this address: <http://www.newsweek.com/where-zambias-president-273406> . For the story check the appendix on pages 125 to 131. This story was built from previous stories from online news media,

in particular *Zambian Watchdog* from which this case study comes. The particular story on the ailing president in *Zambian Watchdog* had 87 likes, 17 shared and more than 65 comments (Check appendix). With this kind of popularity and the fact that a larger number was able to engage with the media by liking, sharing and blogging it shows that the private news media is credible and reliable as compared with the *Zambia Daily Mail*. This shall be explained later after analyzing the public online news media case also.

#### **4.08 Case Two: *Zambia Daily Mail***

As in *Zambia Daily Mail* the news case study is about the opposition UPND securing permission under the Public order act from the police to hold a public rally <https://www.daily-mail.co.zm/?p=22732>. Check full story in the appendix pages 125 -131.

#### **4.09 Case studies analysis**

The ZWD story about the then president Michael Chilufya Sata was an interview with the opposition leader who was requesting more information on the president's health after a long spell of silence from the government. The language used by ZWD is fair and neutral in tone and it is considerable of the opposition party leader's views though none from the opposition party had been interviewed. Therefore, from this case study it can be deduced that ZWD was covering the story objectively and by giving voice to the opposition it was offering an alternative voice for the Zambian readership on issues concerning governance. It was providing checks and balances on the government on something that was so relevant in the running of the nation.

The *Zambia Daily Mail's* story is about the police refuting a claim from the

opposition leader of the UPND that they had been denied a permit to hold rallies. The credibility of the story is questionable in the sense that the police spokesperson was the only one interviewed. The opposition leader, who is supposed to be the principle character in the story, is only cited from the remarks he had made and cited in news stories from other newspapers. He is not personally interviewed. The language is neutral and fair though the report is only favorable to the police spokesperson. The story was unfavorable to the opposition. The story was as though the government owned online news media were defending the police.

Looking at the two case studies it can be deduced that, from the way the two online newspapers covered the story, ZDM is a government mouthpiece. Hence, it answers the research question as to whether the private online news media act and provides an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media that appear more like a propaganda tool for the government. Therefore, in this case study, ZWD also offers and acts as an alternative voice to the mainstream media. These revelations confirm the survey findings that ZWD is balanced hence reliable and credible. It also confirms that the ZWD actually provides an alternative voice to that of the ZDM, a government mouth-piece. ZDM in the case study as well as in the survey is shown to be biased and unbalanced, hence not credible nor reliable.

Therefore, it is right to conclude that Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media as providing an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media that has been used as a propaganda tool for the government. It is also true that Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media

as reliable sources of news and information. In conclusion, it is deducible from the above findings that Zambians, who have access to new media, perceive the private online news media as a credible source of news and information. The next chapter is going to report and discuss the findings and offer recommendations.

#### **4.10 Chapter Conclusion**

This chapter has managed to introduce the results and provided the analysis. These results have been presented in succession from survey results, content analysis of *Zambian Watchdog* and *Zambian Daily Mail*, two case studies of the same online news media outlets. The next chapter is going to discuss the findings and where necessary offer recommendations for future research.

## **Chapter Five**

### **5.0 Discussing Findings and Recommendation**

#### **5.01 Chapter Introduction:**

In the previous chapter we looked at results and analysis. In this chapter we are going to discuss findings and give recommendations for future studies. This research used triangulation in data collection. It has used a survey questionnaire with both qualitative and

quantitative measurements. It has also used online content from *the Zambian Watchdog* and *Zambia Daily Mail*. The same media outlets were used for the case studies. Two case studies were used, one about the ailing president Chilufya Michael Sata (late) from *the Zambian Watchdog* and one about the Zambian main opposition UPND request for a police permit to hold rally by *Zambia Daily Mail*.

The findings in this research were very revealing in the sense that it brought some insight especially on the Zambian media that look almost polarized. The discussion of the findings in this research will be categorized following the research questions established earlier in the study.

### **5.02 Providing an Alternative Voice:**

From survey, content analysis and case study it was found that the *Zambian Watchdog* is more balanced and neutral as it covers both news stories for the government and that of the opposition as well as neutral news. The *Zambian Watchdog* has been known to cover different stories about the government and bringing out concealed information about government dealings. Most of the classified information that the *Zambian Watchdog* has dealt with are not covered in the mainstream media and tabloids that are favorable to government. It is for this reason that Zambians trust the *Zambian Watchdog* to provide checks and balances on the government. The *Zambian Watchdog's* claim that it does investigative journalism is also true as witnessed by much of their coverage that has been proved to be true most of the time. It is only the *Zambian Watchdog* that covers sensitive issues about the government. Sometimes they manage to

report an event before it comes into public domain. Most of the time the government reaction is not in disputing the revelations by the *Zambian Watchdog* but it is a reaction because the *Zambian Watchdog* has revealed a concealed report. The *Zambian Watchdog* does not speculate or offer opinion but rather uses sources combined with analysis of the news stories. They make their own conclusions given the facts that they have before them. They, most of the time, promise to even dig deeper into an emerging story. What is surprising to the Zambian masses is the kind of network that the private online news media have. Sometimes they bring out pictures and reports that seem to have come from the insiders. The concepts of new media and social media become pronounced. For instance, the respondents found online news media, especially private, as credible, reliable and providing an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media. This is so because the people themselves identified with the online news media. The people themselves engage with the new media and social media for instance, the *Zambian Watchdog*. They do not find the private online news media trying to dictate what people should read or think about but they present balanced and well investigated news that resonates with the majority of their readership. Here the media consumers also engage by contributing stories as citizen journalists. So instead of the political economy of the media determining the agenda through their biased frames, through identification and division the consumers engage with the media. In the Zambian mainstream media news is framed according to the views of those who wield political and economic power. The editorial through the influences of the owners of the media set the agenda as they frame the stories with the aim of influencing the views and world views of the media consumers. In the mainstream media there is the

divide between the editorial and journalists on one side and the media consumers on the other side. Through political economy theory the media moguls through the editorial and journalists play the flog for the media consumers to dance. With the new media and social media it is difficult to explain the relationship of media producers and media consumers in terms of political economy or framing or agenda setting. However, Burke's rhetorical theory of identification explains well and replaces these other communication theories.

With the new media and social media the line dividing media producers and media consumers becomes blurred in what is known as citizen journalism and community media. In the case of the *Zambian private online news* the readership identify themselves with ZWD in what Burke calls identification by representation. The ZWD gives its readership opportunity to generate news and share. Readership engagement is seen even in the number of bloggers on their website and Facebook page. The identification is also by sharing of common interests and that is the desire for the truth and balanced news. Because the mainstream media is full of government propaganda the readership or many *Zambian media consumers* feel divided or isolated with the media like we are isolated biologically. This feeling of disassociation or division forces them to seek identification with the private online news media that represents their wishes and desires. Those who feel isolated also on the private online news portal are accorded a chance to participate also through blogs where they express their dissatisfaction with the dialogue of interest that goes on. In other way we could say that the balanced private online news media, *Zambian Watchdog*, makes it possible even for those with divergent views who feel the isolation to be identified with their webpage and Facebook page. For Burke communication is a means through which

people form association and feel connected with the other, hence identification. Those who choose to isolate themselves from Zambian private online news media participate as well by airing their views on the same platform. Because the online news media are objective all participants are given coverage. For instance, the bloggers on the *Zambian Watchdog* would show both comments of those who agree with them and those who disagree with them. Quigley (2015) explains well how communications is related to identification when he cites Burke, thus:

Burke explains identification as a process that is fundamental to being human and to communicating. He contends that the need to identify arises out of division; humans are born and exist as biologically separate beings and therefore seek to identify, through communication, in order to overcome separateness. We are aware of this biological separation, and we recognize additional types of separation based on social class or position. We experience the ambiguity of being separate yet being identified with others at the same time: we are "both joined and separate, at once a distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (p. 1)

The *Zambian Watchdog* also gives equal coverage to the government though they have been accused of giving favorable coverage to the main opposition, the UPND and its leader Hakainde Hichilema (Adamu, 2015, February 4<sup>th</sup> *Zambia Reports*). However, the *Zambian Watchdog* is known to be balanced and give equal coverage to almost all the opposition parties that are functioning and participating in political debates or discourse in public and in the media in Zambia.

Unlike the private online news media, the *Zambia Daily Mail* news portal covers more news favorable to the government of the day with no news coverage of the opposition and very little coverage of balanced news. Therefore, given that the *Zambia Daily Mail* which is a public newspaper and a mouth piece for the government, the *Zambian Watchdog* as a private online news media provides an alternative voice to that of the mainstream media. The *Zambia Daily Mail* approach to news is that of reporting events, press releases and conference rather than generating news by being pro-active. Little does the public news media, the *Zambia Daily Mail* reports sensitive issues about the government for fear of its editorial and journalists being victimized. It gives the news about the government wrapped in good language yet very critical and condescending about the opposition and those Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) critical of the government.

No wonder there have been calls in the past for the public press to be privatized. It is important for the government to have a publication but not to control 80% of the press in the country. Private media houses fail to run newspapers because it is a very costly venture. But it is unfortunate that the government should take advantage of this scenario and abuse tax-payers' money to run the press and control information in the country.

A recommendation for the government of Zambia is to follow the model of South Africa that provides subsidies to communities of interests to run the press and also make policies that make the private media mogul run the show and compete among themselves. For instance, the government in South Africa does not dominate the press though its presences is strongly felt in broadcasting where the media are regulated unlike the press

where they are not regulated.

### **5.03 Reliable**

On rating the public online news media most *Zambians* indicated neutrality by choosing the middle number 3 on the scale of 1 worse to 5 better. The number 3 which is neutral in the rating and more ratings of 2 and 1 for worse meaning that they did not find the public online media a reliable source for news. As for the private media most *Zambians* marked 3 which indicated neutrality yet with more ratings of 4 and 5 for better implying that they find the private online news media more reliable media as compared to the public online news media. It is not surprising that most *Zambians* were not decided on whether the private online news media was credible or reliable. But it is a truth that most *Zambians* with access to the internet prefer the private online news media to that of the public online news media. It is also clear that very few *Zambians* read hard copies of public newspapers even though the majority indicated that most people get news from television compared to online news media. For those who get news from television, it is not clear whether it is from the public broadcaster or it is from private television channels. What is interesting is that online news media was the second favorite and the *Zambian Watchdog* had the highest readership with about 98% of respondents with access to the internet. It is then clear to draw the conclusion that many *Zambians* find *Zambian* private online news media as a reliable source of news. This is so because from the survey it is indicated that private online news media are balanced. From the content analysis this finding was also confirmed by the inclusiveness of the *Zambian Watchdog's* coverage of both government officials

and the opposition political parties. Content analysis also confirmed this finding in the sense that the *Zambian Watchdog* used comments from the government or what had been reported in the public media as well as the views of the opposition leader. The use of triangulation in multiple sourced data and data analysis of the data provide verifiable results that can be replicated anywhere. Anyone analyzing the survey, content analysis and case studies would arrive at the same results and findings, which in a sense validates them.

#### **5.04 Credibility:**

According to the content analysis the ZWD was more objective and balanced as it covered equally the government and the opposition political parties. They had interviewed both parties in the story hence balanced. In this sense they were more credible. Unlike the private online news media, ZDM was found wanting in the sense that its story was unbalanced as it had only interviewed the police commissioner and none from the opposition UPND that had requested the permit for a rally. The story was also subjective as it focused on giving the side of the police at the detriment of the UPND's views. Most respondents when asked about the standards of the Zambian press indicated that there was a lot of interference in the Zambian media from the government. They also argued that the public media were not free and their journalists were not free to exercise investigative journalism. These concerns show how journalists in Zambia are always reporting from press conference or press releases, failing to be pro-active and aggressive to interrogate government officials who are wanting and sometimes considered corrupt. It is the same with some private media whereby they choose to support and favor certain candidates.

Some political parties are never covered in news unless they are attending national functions. Most of the time we only find official opposition or the party with the second largest number of members of parliament covered in news. Minority political parties are ignored. Some private newspapers sometimes choose to support the government of the day and together with the public newspapers completely gagging the opposition from coverage. Therefore, if the mainstream media, both private and public, exclude the opposition from their coverage, they are tampering with freedom of expression and freedom of the press that are inherent rights for every citizen, thereby silencing alternative views from those in power from national discourse. When alternative voices and views are silenced it is hard to comprehend how public interest and national interest can better be served by the mainstream media when other members of the society are excluded in participating in the public sphere. The dearth of inclusivity in the mainstream media and the press in general in Zambia inspired this research. We wanted to prove the assumption that all the mainstream newspapers, both private and public, were favoring or rather offering coverage to the Zambian government and only the online private news media, the *Zambian Watchdog*, was doing more check and balances on the government by being balanced and inclusive in their coverage. As discussed earlier in the literature review, the *Zambian Watchdog* seems to have been doing investigative journalism and also putting the ruling party and its government to task to explain themselves.

#### **5.05 Discussion of Findings:**

Most of the respondents had acknowledged that the internet had helped them

become knowledgeable and also that it had connected them with friends and families far and wide. Both new media and social media have the elements of making relationships seem consolidated by the contacts online. Also there has been this element for the online news media to make readers and viewers become producers and consumers of the media commodity. Looking at the public online news media, the *Zambia Daily Mail*, with their news favorable to the government in place, from the content analysis it was found that it was more a mouth piece for the government and that it had gagged the media by hindering covering news from the opposition or those with divergent views. In terms of political economy, in this case the *Zambia Daily Mail* was mandated to carry out the government's agenda and to selectively portray the government of the day in good light. Their stories were framed in a way that they sided with the government or state machinery, in this case the police. In the new media and social media where issues of location or proximity seem to be absent, it would always be ideal to use Burkes' idea of *identification* and *division* in the media. Those who identify with the news media tend to assume familiarity with the media in place. With social media and new media there is constant engagement of consumers and producers.

The demographics of the respondents in the survey were those of the age group that were conversant with technology and a bit active in the affairs of the country. Political and economic news ranked higher among respondents' choice of what they would want to be reported in the media. It was also highlighted in the survey that most of the bias in the media coverage had to do with politics and governance. No wonder the choice of the subject of content analysis and case studies were political, economic, development and

governance oriented. According to the way the news is framed those who toil the route of the government of the day feel appreciated and part of the online news media family.

Bloggers on most social media either identify themselves with the social media and new media. Each news media usually assume a certain language that is used and people in that forum understand each other. Those who do not belong feel isolated and they lack the language to share on social media and new media.

From the comments of the respondents on the nature of the press in Zambia it was very clear that respondents were as divided as the two opposing media, the *Zambia Watchdog* and the *Zambia Daily Mail*. Each of the respondents argued in favor of their media outlet that either they were objective or balanced. Some for instance argued that the public media were unbalanced in the sense that they were always covering stories of politicians instead of other stories related to serving public interest. Those who were critical of the private media expressed dissatisfaction with the public news media. Among the things that people wanted to see highlighted in the media, it was clear that those who were for the public media suggested things like developmental news, local news, science and technology news, current affairs and so forth.

The findings in this research have dispelled the myth that the Zambian media are polarized with one side supporting the government agenda and the other side acting in the opposite direction as if there are two opposing forces. What has been established in this research is that the online news media have provided an alternative voice of a better media that is balanced and one that offers an alternative voice to those that have been gagged out

by the public and some private media houses, especially mainstream media. The image that one would have about the *Zambian media* is that they are antagonistic to each other. Instead of having the public media serving public interest and national interest and then the private commercial media serving the market interest, we have a media divided according to vested interest that might be political and market oriented. The public media and private media in the mainstream are compromised, creating a situation that forces the private online media to chip in and serve both the public interest and national interest mandate. Further still, the unregulated online press to play the role of serving public interest and national interest are just taking on the role that has been identified with new media and social media as the new community media. New community media in the sense that citizens who are none professional journalists participate as both consumers and producers of news (Bivins, 2004). Perhaps future research should focus on spelling out this new role played out by community media brought about by social media and new media.

#### **5.06 Limitations and Recommendations:**

Given that the majority of Zambians in the age group of 21 years to 40 years are educated, have a source of income and have access to the internet, there is need for the private online news media to expand but to diversify. There are only a handful of online news media in *Zambia* that are active like the *Zambian Watchdog*, *Tumfweko*, *Lusaka times*, *Kachepa* and *Zambian eye*. There is need for more private online news publishers. For the mainstream media who have a presence online, they need to improve their online presence by devoting equal energy and increase expedient coverage that is immediate on

their online publications. For instance, news webpages for the following media houses like the *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)*, *Zambia Daily Mail (ZDM)*, *Times of Zambia*, *The Post Newspaper*, *The National Voice*, *Lusaka Voice* and *Zambian Review* should also have a serious online presence apart from uploading and updating news on irregular intervals on their dormant websites. Their online news pages should be unique and different from their ordinary daily or weekly papers in the sense that online presence requires expedient and immediate news.

It seems like all media houses source news from the same content providers like *Zanis*. Most of the time you read the news, they often appear to have been written from the same angle. There is need, like some respondents indicated, for in-depth analysis of news and feature stories. Journalists and media houses should have qualified journalists who are specialized in certain fields like health news, political and legal news, developmental news, economic and business news and entertainment news. *The Zambian Watchdog*, *LusakaTimes*, *Tumfweko* and other online news outlets should combine digital media, new media and social media in their dissemination of fast paced and immediacy news.

This study examined the media in terms of the online presence of even traditional media. Future studies should focus on social media like Facebook and examine how this medium has been used in Zambia by politicians and their supporters for instance in constituent news and information. Much more online news media like the *Zambian Watchdog* that operate on both new media and social media should be studied and examined especially measuring the engagement of its readership and also the contribution

of its readership in terms of citizen journalism. Much research must be done on social media and new media so as to see the new dynamics that unfold especially during exciting moments of the presidential and parliamentary election campaigns and elections periods.

Young people who have access to the internet should also begin showing their presences online as bloggers and opinion leaders by having blogs like the young people in the west. Young Zambians should become active in using new media, social media and digital media in sharing news. Studies should be done on the use of new media and social media by young people and how this makes them be engaged in politics and the social life of their communities of interest.

This survey research was done by administering an online survey questionnaire and the response was phenomenon. More of this kind of research must be encouraged especially by those in the media who are interested in new media and social media. It could be even more interesting to have questionnaires administered to those who have no access to the internet so that also their views could be considered.

This study was meant to assist media scholars identify new avenues for future research especially new media and social media. Very little research in Zambia, if any at all, has devoted much effort in this area. There is much need to explore legal and ethical issues also in the area especially for policy makers. Much of the debate that prompted this research was the fact that the government and the other sections of Zambian society had started viewing the online media as though it was unwanted and a source of confusion in the arena of media freedom and free expression. New media and social media can be a

positive contribution and a relief in news determination. New media and social media are a new terrain that needs to demystify the barriers to free expression, media freedom and citizen journalism. In this new terrain everyone is welcome to participate as producer and consumer of the media products.

### **5.07 Chapter Conclusion:**

This chapter has managed to discuss the findings, to state the limitations of the research and also to offer recommendations for future research. The study has managed to offer new insight in the area of new media and social media in Zambia with regard to news dissemination. It has managed to sample Zambians' perceptions of the media and in particular online media in terms of news and its rating. Future research should continue to use triangulation in data collection and analysis. For the media audience research is important just as the media content is. Therefore, the mixing of survey, content analysis and case studies makes the research more authentic and easy to validate. The findings from the survey were able to be verified by the findings of content analysis and case studies in this case proving that the research findings were varied and sound and could easily be replicated in further studies. The use of triangulation was a strength in this research but it had a limitation also in the sense that the case study used a very small sample size. Future research should accord all the method of data collection a reasonable sample size.

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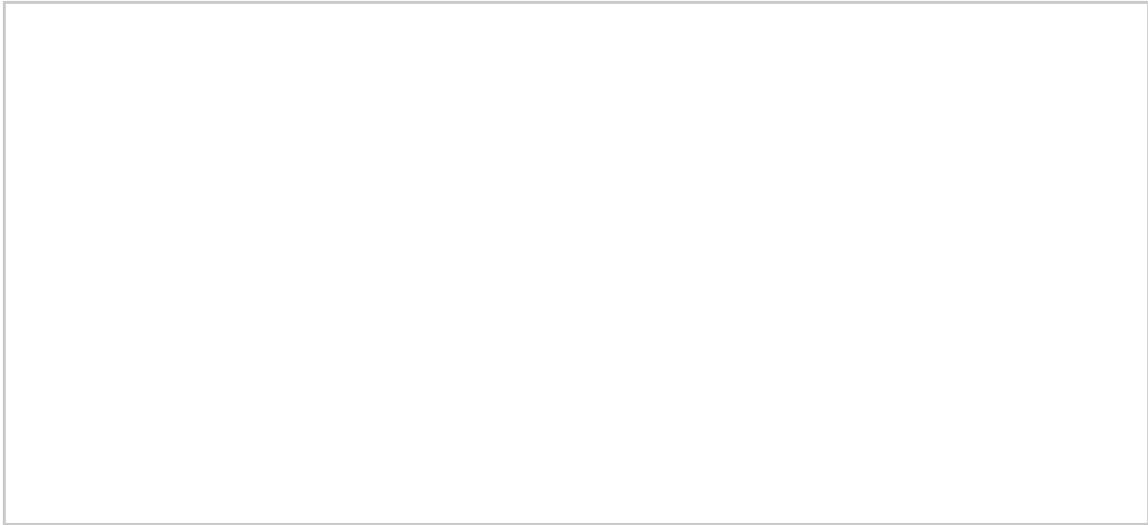
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## 7.0 Appendix

### 7.01 Findings and Results of Survey

1. What is your ethnicity?

Black Zambian	219	96%
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White Zambian	1	0%
Colored Zambian	2	1%
Asian Zambian	0	0%

2. In what age range do you fall?

0-20	19	8%
21-40	191	83%
41-60	17	7%
61-79	1	0%
80-Above	1	0%

3. What is the highest level of your qualification/education?




**4.02 Quantitative Responses on ICT**

4. What do you do for your living?

Employed - Civil		
Servant	47	21%
Employed – NGO	17	7%
Self – Employed	12	5%

Unemployed	15	7%
Student	98	43%
Internship/Volunteer/ Unpaid worker	12	5%
Informal sector/small scale enterprise	4	2%
Employed Corporate World	20	9%
Employed Religion	12	5%
Other	8	3%

5. Do you own a mobile phone?

Yes	227	99%
No	1	0%

6. Do you have access to a computer, IPad, tablet, laptop?

Yes	216	94%
No	9	4%

7. Where do you often access the internet from?

At work	79	34%
At school	88	38%
At home	85	37%
Internet café	59	26%
On my phone	150	66%
None/ No access to internet	0	0%

7. How often do you use the internet?

Nearly everyday	195	85%
more than twice a week	23	10%
Once a week	10	4%
Once a month	0	0%
None at all	0	0%

8. What do you use the internet for?

Business	69	30%
Work	101	44%
Games and recreation	45	20%
Socialization	177	77%
School work	157	69%

Personal projects	89	39%
Religious material	88	38%
News and information	166	72%
Other	17	7%

9. What do you use your phone for?

Make and receive calls	210	92%
Send and receive messages	190	83%
Surf the internet	152	66%
Pay water and electric bills	39	17%
Log to social media: Facebook, WhatsApp etc.	163	71%
Send and receive money	86	38%

Other	16	7%
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10. Which social media and new media accounts do you have?

Twitter	89	39%
WhatsApp	167	73%
Facebook	210	92%
YouTube	71	31%
Skype	84	37%
Instagram	17	7%
Blog	9	4%
Yahoo	126	55%
Gmail	155	68%
Hotmail	17	7%

Other	27	12%
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11. Where do you get your daily news from?

Radio	137	60%
Television	170	74%
Phone	118	52%
online	162	71%
Newspaper/magazine	146	64%
Other	19	8%

12. If you get news from your phone or online, where exactly?

Online News Portal/Blog	114	50%
Facebook	162	71%

Twitter	38	17%
steaming live (Online TV)	15	7%
YouTube	25	11%
Instagram	5	2%
Yahoo	62	27%
Google	106	46%

13. Which Zambian news websites do you visit for news?

Zambian Watchdog	185	81%
Tumfweko	107	47%
Kachepa	27	12%
Zambian Eye	42	18%
Zambian24	12	5%

Lusaka Voice	17	7%
Lusaka times	103	45%
SolweziToday	4	2%
Mwebantu	64	28%
Zambian News	42	18%
Zambia Report	29	13%
ZambiaIntelligentnews	25	11%

14. Which newspapers and media houses webpage or online publication do you subscribe to?

Post Newspapers	136	59%
Daily Mail Newspapers	78	34%

Times of Zambia Newspaper	80	35%
Daily Nations Newspapers	33	14%
The National Voice Newspapers	5	2%
Lusaka Voice Newspapers	7	3%
Zanis	34	15%
ZNBC	98	43%

15. For you where do you get objective news about Zambia from?

Online	130	57%
Print	67	29%
Television	120	52%
Radio	92	40%

Other	21	9%
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16. How do you rate Online government media from a scale of 1 to 5 (1 worse to 5 Better)?

1	43	19%
2	68	30%
3	95	41%
4	12	5%
5	7	3%

17. How do you rate *Zambian Online Private* publications on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 worse and 5 better)?

1	11	5%
2	24	10%

3	93	41%
4	63	28%
5	32	14%

18. Do you usually give feedback or make comments on Zambian Online news portals, blogs or social media?

Yes	73	32%
No	149	65%

19. How do you rate blogs on Zambian online news webpages and social media on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 Worse and 5 Better)?

1	23	10%
2	48	21%
3	99	43%

4	45	20%
5	4	2%
20. Are you currently based in Zambia?		

**Content Analysis Data:**

1	Type of News	Frequency	Total	Percentage
2	Entertainment	R	1	
3	Current affairs	RR	2	
4	Political news	RRR	3	
5	Economic affairs	R	1	
6	Sports news	R	1	
7	Business news	RR	2	
8	Educational news	R	1	

9	Development news	R	1	
10	Social interest	R	1	
11	Religious	R	1	

**R: Number of frequency in the people's responses on the type of news.**

No#	Kind of News	Frequency	Percentage
1	Politics	RRRRRRRR RRRRRRR (18)	
2	Education	RRRRRRRR (8)	
3	Investigative	RRRR (4)	
4	Live TV debate	R (1)	
5	Government News	RRRRRRR (7)	

6	Ordinary life	RRR (3)	
7	Cultural	RRRRRRR (7)	
8	Youth Project	RRR (3)	
9	Balanced reporting	R (1)	
10	Rural news	RRRRR (5)	
11	Business News	RRRRRRRR RR (10)	
12	Religious News	RRRR (4)	
13	Financial & Governance	RR (2)	
14	Current affairs	RRR (3)	

15	Social news	RRRRRR (6)	
16	Development project	RRRRRRRR RRRR (12)	
17	Economic affairs	RRRRRRRR RRRRRRRR RR(19)	
18	Tourism sector	RRRRR (5)	
19	Environmental news	RRR (3)	
20	Local news	RRRRRR (6)	
21	Crime news	R (1)	
22	Worker's condition	R (1)	
23	Parliament reports	R (1)	

24	Gossip news	R (1)	
25	Science technology	RR (2)	
26	Research & development	RRRRRRRR (8)	
27	Health news	RRRRRRR (7)	
28	Arts	RRRRRRR (7)	
29	Agriculture	RRR (3)	
30	Education	RRRRRRR (7)	
31	Infrastructure	R (1)	
32	Child welfare	RR (2)	

33	Job opportunities	RRRR (4)	
34	Sports	RRRRR (5)	
35	International affairs	R (1)	
36	Entertainment	RRR (3)	
37	Women Empowerment	R (1)	
38	Human Development	RRRR (4)	

**R: Number of frequency of people's response on the type of news they would like.**

**Content Analysis of *Zambian Watchdog*:**

<b>Media</b>	<b>Headline</b>	<b>Government's oriented</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Opposition oriented</b>
Zambian Watchdog	Rupiah makes another appointment in PF government	1		
ZWD	UPND to hold rally on Saturday			3
ZWD	May be the OP trusts HH			3
ZWD	HH arrives at Woodlands police as PF thugs gather outside	1		
ZWD	Congrats HH			3

ZWD	New education curriculum is actually a mess		2	
ZWD	Lungu wants police to arrest HH at night	1		
ZWD	Lungu leave HH alone or lead country into chaos	1		
ZWD	Police leaves HH house after harassing family			3
ZWD	I won't order the police to arrest anyone – Lungu	1		

ZWD	Upped retirement age creates chaos in government		2	
ZWD	Nepotism and tribalism at Zamtel		2	
	Technical Department			
ZWD	FDD says Lungu's order to arrest HH is abuse of authority			3

ZWD	Response to Laure Miti's questions on Hakainde Hichelema's role in the Grazier Matapa funeral fiasco		2	
ZWD	Lungu interferes in police work, orders arrest of political rival HH	1		
ZWD	Chikwanda has always been corrupt			3
ZWD	PF's Hapunda hospitalized after road accident	1		

ZWD	Court refuses to enforce betting contract on Lungu and HH		2	
ZWD	Edgar Lungu's obsession with tribalism			3

**Table 2. Table 2. Headline on ZWD March 2015. Government's Oriented = 1, Neutral = 2, Opposition Oriented = 3**

**Content Analysis of *Zambian Daily Mail***

<b>Media</b>	<b>Head line</b>	<b>Government oriented</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Opposition oriented</b>
Zambia Daily Mail	Justice Chibesakunda elected Comesa judge		2	
ZDM	First lady leads women in prayer	1		

ZDM	Veep commends women for national peace	1		
ZDM	UTH in pioneer Kidney transplant		2	
ZDM	Mwale's bail ruling reserved		2	
ZDM	Speaker rebukes Garry Nkombo		2	
ZDM	Mega Power Station to be built in Siona		2	
ZDM	MMD support for PF unsettle rivals	1		
ZDM	Lungu is freeman of Kitwe	1		

ZDM	First lady leads women in prayer	1		
ZDM	Politicians should heed minister's counsel	1		
ZDM	Good roads key for growth		2	
ZDM	Let's step up security in communities	1		
ZDM	Doctors must be fair to state, patients		2	
ZDM	Help us develop infrastructure	1		
ZDM	Zambia gets \$9.5 m WFP allocation		2	

ZDM	Liquidate your debt, NAPSA urges state			3
ZDM	Missing judgment delays justice		2	
ZDM	Woman jailed for stealing electricity		2	
ZDM	Man catches wife defiling daughter		2	
ZDM	Livingstone drug trafficker jailed		2	
ZDM	Zesco, power clash in charity shield final		2	

**Table 1. Headline on ZDM March 2015. Government's Oriented = 1,  
Neutral = 2, Opposition Oriented = 3.**

**Content Analysis for *Zambia Daily Mail*:**

**Total Results:**

<b>ZDM</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Opposition</b>
	<b>Headlines</b>	<b>Oriented</b>		<b>Oriented</b>
	22	1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	22	8	13	1

**Table 1: See appendix for more details.**

**Content Analysis for *Zambian Watchdog*:**

**Total Results:**

<b>ZWD</b>	<b>Headlines</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Opposition</b>
		<b>Oriented</b>		<b>Oriented</b>
		1	2	3
<b>Total</b>	19	7	5	7
<b>Frequency</b>				

**Table 2: See appendix for more details.**

**Preliminary to case study from *New York Times*:**

**Updated** | A mystery no-show at the United Nations raises speculations about the state of health of Zambia's President, Michael Sata, who last week emphatically told the Lusaka parliament, "I am not dead."

The Associated Press reported Friday that the 77-year old president was [treated at his hotel by doctors](#). A spokesperson for the New York Police Department confirmed Friday morning that Sata was treated at his hotel by U.S. State Department doctors and remained there, contradicting earlier reports of his death, including a report by *Newsweek*, credited to a source who has since said his statement was not definitive. A spokesman at the Zambian mission declined comment when several reporters inquired about Sata's health.

On Friday, Zambian vice president Guy Scott told Parliament that the president's health was normal and denied reports that he was unwell, according [to local media](#).

The speculations started swirling Wednesday night, when Sata failed to show up for his scheduled address at the General Assembly, which this week conducts its annual debate, an opportunity for the U.N.'s 193 members to showcase their policies to the world. Sata was slated to follow Venezuela's president, Nicolas Maduro, Wednesday night.

The U.N. moderator then received a notice, and after a short hesitation announced, instead, that the next speaker, Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron, would address the council. No alternative time for Sata's address was announced.

In yet another twist in the mystery, a provisional list of speakers that was issued by the UN Friday slated Zambia's foreign minister, Harry Kalaba, to address the general assembly as the last speaker Friday night. He would speak instead of the president, who was originally scheduled to speak on Wednesday.

According to [All Africa](#), a website specializing in reporting from the continent, Sata traveled to New York accompanied by six doctors as part of his entourage of 38 people. The report cited an unnamed source who said that the reason the president came to New York ahead of the launch of the Wednesday debate was to visit the Sloane Kettering Cancer Center.

Wires agencies [reported last Friday](#) that Sata addressed parliament after failing for a long time to appear in public, raising speculation about the state of his health. His wife, Christine kept him going, Sata told Parliament, adding, "I am not dead."

But rather than finishing his address, he said after a while, "I thank you for listening and I am leaving the whole speech to the Speaker."

### **Case Study: *Zambian Watchdog***

#### **Zambian Watchdog**

July 11, 2014 ·

LAST TIME ZAMBIANS SAW SATA HE WAS FRAIL AND VERY SICKLY,  
NEVERS MUMBA TELLS RADIO FRANCE

By Daniel Finnan (Radio France International)

A Zambian court is examining a request to have doctors assess the health of Zambian President Michael Sata. There has been increasing speculation about the 77-year-old's health and treatment he reportedly received in Israel. RFI spoke to Nevers Mumba, president of the opposition Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) party. What is going on with President Sata's health? There doesn't seem to be much official information from the government.

Listen to Dr Mumba here <https://soundcloud.com/.../zambian-opposition-awaiting-outcom...>

Precisely, yes, we do have a situation. The government is not informing the people as to the state of the president. What is common knowledge in the country now, of course, is that the president is unwell because the last time we saw him on Labour Day, he was very frail, very sickly and the whole country was gripped with great concern and fear for his life. But after that we have not seen him in public again and we continue to receive contrasting statements from government which have brought tremendous anxiety in the nation.

Zambians would like to know exactly, firstly, the state of the president and even his whereabouts. And so as opposition we feel that that the Zambian people are being deprived of information that is supposed to be given to them and we're demanding that the state of the president be made known to the Zambian people.

There have been various reports about his recent visit to Israel. Do you think this was to receive treatment or a working vacation as the information minister has stated?

We have demanded through parliament that a statement be made by the government to give

us details of the so-called working holiday in Israel. We are apprehensive that the visit was a working holiday because the information given to us was that he was supposed to meet with outgoing president Shimon Peres who was in Washington at the time that the president was there. Secondly, the media in Israel did allude to the fact that yes he was in hospital but he was not in dire condition, which confirms that he did not go for a working holiday but rather to the hospital. And this is why the Zambians have now demanded the truth so that we can know what to do next. There's a court case that has begun today requesting cabinet to constitute a board of doctors to determine whether the president is in good health or qualified to continue hold the position of president based on the report that is going to come from the doctors.

Could you give us more information about this legal case which you've mentioned, about having doctors rule on the state of his health?

Well, the constitution demands that if there is any suspicion that the condition of the president is suspect, anybody can demand through the appropriate channels-- the courts of law-- to direct that cabinet institute a board of doctors that is supposed to determine whether the president is actually fit to govern. One of the citizens from civil society has filed in the courts of law, in fact yesterday, demanding that the president's health be checked by a board of doctors to inform the Zambian people as to whether the president is physically fit, mentally fit and emotionally fit to run the affairs of government. So we are going to wait for the ruling of the court and if the courts rule that the board be constituted, then the board is going to have to work on that assignment and give the Zambian people the position and the health of the president and then we're going to pick up from that point.

If he were ill why wouldn't he receive treatment in Zambia?

When he was in opposition that is something he himself criticized former presidents that they needed to be getting medical attention from within the country. But obviously his condition, according to them, needed specialized treatment and they decided to take him out of the country each time he was unwell. I would like to see a situation where Zambia can take care of its president when the president is unwell just like all Zambians go to the medical facilities provided here in Zambia. And I think that President Sata should be comfortable with the treatment that he could receive from within the country.

NB: RFI made repeated attempts to contact the Zambian government spokesperson Joseph Katema about this story, but he could not be reached. RFI spoke to the office of Zambian Vice President Guy Scott about this story. He declined to comment.

**The case follows bellow:**

**We're not blocking HH – police**

TEDDY KUYELA, Lusaka

THE Zambia Police Service has dismissed claims by United Party for National Development (UPND) president Hakainde Hichilema that it has stopped the opposition political party from holding thanks-giving rallies.

Police spokesperson Charity Chanda said in an interview yesterday that the opposition political party has not notified respective commissioners of police of its intentions to hold

thanks-giving rallies countrywide.

Ms. Chanda advised Mr. Hichilema and other political leaders to stop misleading the public that the Police Service has denied them permits to hold thanks-giving rallies.

She advised UPND to follow the provisions of the Public Order Act on public processions.

“We have not denied the UPND permits to hold the thanks-giving rallies throughout the country.

“What they have to do is to contact the provincial police commissioners so that they can facilitate the holding of these thanks-giving rallies across the country because the issue of providing them with security should also be looked at,” Ms Chanda said.

Mr Hichilema is quoted in some sections of the media that police have denied him permits to hold rallies countrywide to thank the people for voting for him and his party in the January 20 presidential election.

	<b>Point of view</b>	<b>Credibility</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Objectivity</b>
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<p><b>ZWD</b></p>	<p>Demanding more information from government to clear speculation on the president's health</p>	<p>Interview with opposition leader</p>	<p>Fair and neutral</p>	<p>Favorable and considerate of the other's views</p>
<p><b>ZDM</b></p>	<p>Refuting claims by opposition UPND that the police had denied them permit to hold a rally</p>	<p>Interview with the police spokesperson. No interview with opposition leader. Only quote from what the media had written about the leader of opposition UPND</p>	<p>Fair and neutral</p>	<p>Unfavorable to the opposition but favorable to police spokesperson.</p>

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