

**The contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political
transformation in South Africa: A critical evaluation**

by

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DECLARATION

I, Motale Daniel Sebego, hereby declare that this extensive mini-dissertation for the Programme in Governance and Political Transformation at the University of the Free State (Bloemfontein) is my own original work and has not been submitted by me or any other individual at this or any other university. I also declare that all reference materials, used for this study, have been properly acknowledged.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The research undertaken for this study aims to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

The Institute on Governance (2014:1 of 2) states that the complexity of governance is difficult to capture in a simple definition. However, the Institute (*ibid.*) also mentions that the need for governance exists any time a group of people come together to accomplish an end:

Though the governance literature proposes several definitions, most rest on three dimensions: Authority, decision-making and accountability. Governance determines who has power, who makes decisions, how other players make their voices heard and how account is rendered. Ultimately, the application of good governance serves to realise organisational and societal goals.

Governance is thus concerned with monitoring performance. In the context of this study, it refers to the South African government and how the government is applying authority. It includes the government's decision-making processes and its accountability to the South African public at large.

South Africa as a country has a past that saw the majority of its citizens excluded from political participation and political transformation. Many were disenfranchised and were not allowed to vote. Masango (2002:152) puts it succinctly:

... during the Apartheid era, black South African citizens who constitute the majority of the South African population, were not given an opportunity to participate in general elections, or to contribute to the process of making and implementing policies that affected them.

So-called Bantustans or self-governing territories were created for Africans. Many laws were enacted to ensure racial exclusivity like the Land Act of 1913, the so-called pass laws, and so forth.

Since 1994 the political landscape in South Africa has been radically restructured and transformed to make it more diverse – reflecting the demographics of the Rainbow Nation. Of particular significance in this regard is the much-acclaimed speech made by then president F.W. de Klerk on 2 February 1990. He unbanned all political parties and related activities and announced the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela – then ANC leader.

A less discriminatory interim constitution was adopted in 1994; it was replaced by a permanent one in 1996. In the 1994 general elections, for the first time, all South Africans irrespective of race were allowed to vote, with the ANC obtaining a significant majority of 62.5% (Masango 2002:1). In the 2014 elections, 29 parties contested the elections. Any person could contest the elections as long as they were able to afford the fee required by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC).

Governance and political transformation are therefore seen as two aspects that are crucial for a democracy. South Africa, however, only became a democracy after the first democratic elections in 1994. Of importance to this study are the normative media theories that applied to the previous and current political dispensation.

Whereas the apartheid regime, under the National Party, followed an authoritarian media approach, the current political dispensation, under the ANC, follows a social responsibility media approach where the emphasis is on self-control and social responsibility (Oosthuizen 2013:90). Self-regulatory bodies, such as the Press Ombudsmen and the Broadcasting and Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA), have therefore been established to promote and protect the rights of media enterprises. In a democratic society like South Africa, freedom of speech and the right to receive and impart information are aspects the media, and broader society as a whole, live by. In fact, it is enshrined in the Bill of Rights, as well as the ANC's Media Charter.

Various forms of media are employed to promote freedom of speech and to receive and impart information. These range from newspapers and magazines to television and radio. Some are publicly owned, some are commercially targeted, whereas others function in a community-specific setting.

Radio is an important medium as it reaches thousands of people. Radio can easily reach a large and specific audience; compared to television, it is cheaper. Radio is often credited for its adaptability and portability. And because radio is produced for the ear, one can listen to it while doing something else, for example making supper or travelling by car. In South Africa, if one was to take SABC Radio as an example, almost all official languages are covered and these radio stations are exclusive. For example, Xhosa-speaking people can tune into Umhlobo Wenene, while Sotho-speaking people can listen to Lesedi FM.

According to Statistics SA, as quoted in Plaut and Holden (2012:177), 76.5% of the population had access to radio, while 7.2% had access to the Internet. Plaut and Holden (2012:177) further state that the majority of South Africans tune in to SABC radio stations, which are dominated by African languages.

Given radio's large footprint, it was expected that the National Party government would tamper with the SABC's mandate, which was aligned to the BBC model. According to Plaut and Holden (2012:176), it thus "shifted from being a public broadcaster that projected a multiplicity of views to being a state broadcaster, projecting only state sanctioned versions, and filling the airwaves with virtually unceasing Apartheid propaganda". The pre-Apartheid SABC Charter of 1933 was drawn up by the BBC's Director-General, John Reith, with a strong focus on political neutrality and lack of bias (*ibid.*).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will confine himself to public service broadcasting, with the emphasis on SABC-owned radio stations. All radio stations cater for many different tastes and have a variety of programmes to meet societal and constitutional obligations, such as policy, programming, education, and so forth.

In this study a detailed investigation will be carried out on the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

In order to investigate the topic at hand, it is important to have a close look at radio stations, specifically those owned by the SABC, and how they contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

The next section focuses on the SABC radio sector.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The mass media plays a critical role when it comes to sharing information with the public. There is an on-going – and still undecided – academic debate about the effects and influences that mass media have on their audiences (Norris 2000:36). The aim of this study is, however, to determine and evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa. The next few paragraphs will focus on the history of SABC radio, in particular.

Plaut and Holden (2012:176) write that General J.B.M. Hertzog established the SABC under Act 22 of 1936 after he had ordered a study into aspects of broadcasting, especially in Afrikaans. The main purpose was to ensure that government maintains control and monopoly over broadcasting and that Afrikaans, to the exclusion of many African languages, continues to dominate as an “official and exclusive” language of preference. Later developments led to Radio South Africa, which broadcast in English, and Radio Suid-Afrika, which used Afrikaans as broadcasting medium. These later became modern day SAfm and Radio Sonder Grense (RSG) respectively.

In May 1950, Springbok Radio was born, which was more diverse. It broadcast in both English and Afrikaans, but the former dominated. In terms of music it began playing music that had mass appeal, rather than focusing solely on so-called “boeremusiek”.

It was only in 1952 that rediffusion was introduced to cover ‘bantu’ or African languages. Today the SABC has 11 public radio stations, namely Mungana Lonene FM, SAfm, Umhlobo Wenene FM, Ukhozi FM, Lesedi FM, Radio Sonder Grense, Thobela FM, Motsweding FM, Radio 2000, Lotus FM, Ligwalagwala FM, and two commercial radio stations, Metro FM and 5FM.

The Department of Communications (1998:7 of 33) aptly captured this scenario when it observed:

The history of broadcasting in South Africa had, since its inception, been characterised by politicisation of broadcasting systems. Broadcasting was,

thus, used to entrench an oppressive political system that kept a large section of the population out of the public life of the country.

Stevens (2006:49) states that South African broadcasting was heavily skewed in favour of English, with English taking up 91.95% of the total weekly airtime, Afrikaans 5.66%, and all nine African languages sharing a mere 2.39% of airtime collectively. Since 1994, English has gained more territorial political clout in virtually all countries' institutions, including the media. The SABC took a political decision to cut vigorously on Afrikaans programming.

The SABC's Acting Chief Operating Officer, Mr Hlaudi Motsoeneng, addressing staff at an internal meeting in September 2013, said that the quota of bad news to good/positive news must be 30:70 in favour of what he called positive (service delivery) news, as compared to bad news (protest marches). This was seen as an endorsement of the governing party, the ANC, by its so-called deployees.

The Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) remarked that the "SABC seemed to be drifting from its mandate of being a public broadcaster and seemed to be setting itself up as a propaganda arm of the government". Concerns around the content of news, the blacklisting of commentators, the non-screening of the documentary on President Thabo Mbeki, among other issues, were also raised (FXI 2015:1 of 1).

This research speaks to the need to assess these urgent motions/challenges facing the Corporation, in particular, or public service broadcasting, in general.

Mosibudi Mangena, writing for *The Star* newspaper (*The Star* 21 February 2014:15), raises important questions relating to the issue of governance at the SABC:

Why should it require the public protector to uncover all the funny things when there is a governing body to look after the affairs of the corporation? Hlaudi Motsoeneng was irregularly appointed acting Chief Operations Officer of the SABC. He has neither a matric certificate nor any other qualification for this important position; he fired employees that crossed his path; he got a salary increase three times in one year from R1.4 million to R2.4 million a year, ballooning the SABC's salary bill by a whopping R29 million.

Mangena (*The Star* 21 February 2014:15) continues to pose important ethical or governance issues. He contends that a look at the successive boards which oversee the SABC “reveal a mighty concentration of brain cells, experience and varied skills, which leave you with no doubt that they are eminently qualified to provide this important body with the corporate governance it deserves. They perfectly understood the law, corporate governance and ethics.”

In other words, the present SABC (in some instances) fails the democracy test. Lack of leadership is cited in this regard in that power within the SABC is highly centralised in the hands of a few politically connected individuals, such as Motsoeneng. Khoza (2012:171) defines a true leader as:

... one who works within the systems that allows participation. By establishing and maintaining the principles by which the organisation functions - its terms of governance – the leadership forms a mutually trusting relationship with the followership.

Governance does not merely rest with the will of politicians, but has to incorporate the rule of law, transparency, and accountability; it is not merely technical questions of administrative procedure or institutional design. It is the outcome of a democratising process driven not only by committed leadership but also by the participation of, and contention among, groups and interested parties in society – a process that is most effective when sustained and restrained by legitimate, effective institutions.

From the preceding paragraphs it thus becomes clear that the SABC had to transform – especially in as far as democracy and good governance was concerned. Among others, the SABC was transformed to:

- Truly serve the SABC’s public in its entirety without bias or prejudice;
- Make services available in all official languages and have high quality broadcasting in all official languages;
- Reflect the unity and diverse cultural and multi-lingual nature of South Africa;
- Provide fair, unbiased, impartial, balanced and independent news and public affairs programmes of high journalistic standards, as well as fair and unbiased coverage;

- Have educational programmes on, among others, human rights, health, early childhood development, agriculture, culture, religion, justice, and commerce, and contribute to a shared South African consciousness and culture;
- Enrich South Africa's cultural heritage by supporting traditional and contemporary artists;
- Offer a broad range of services targeting children, women, youth and the disabled;
- Include programmes made by the SABC itself and those produced by independent producers; and
- Include national sports programmes, as well as developmental and minority sports.

Transformation and governance go hand-in-hand. In terms of governance the SABC is governed by a board that consists of 12 non-executive members, according to the Broadcasting Act, 1999 (Acts Online 2013:1 of 1). The Board must uphold the following: commitment to fairness, freedom of expression, right of the public to be informed, openness and accountability; represent a broad cross-section of the population and different regions of the country; and be nominated through a process with transparency and openness.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In conducting any research, the process commences by identifying a general area of research and then developing a focused research question that will be taken into account. Next a research protocol is created. The protocol needs to be appropriate to the research question, but also feasible in terms of time, resources and ethical considerations.

The media (radio) is a very important tool for the government to communicate public issues that pertain to governance and political transformation. This study will investigate whether SABC radio stations contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

Thus, it is envisaged that the government, the SABC and the radio stations owned by the SABC will become part of the study as relevant stakeholders that are directly affected by the issue to be addressed.

It is significant for members of society to understand that freedom of speech is enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa. Free access to information and the freedom to create and disseminate information are important rights of the individual; these rights are observed in a democratic setting. Section 16 (1) of the Constitution indicates that freedom of the media, to receive and to impart information, is crucial for members of society. Mass media as a tool for information communication and dissemination should provide a platform where a plethora of ideas can be exchanged by ordinary members of the public with government, and vice versa.

Kraus and Davis (1976:110) indicated that in most industrialised societies the control of information had become an growing concern of government, for example in the Soviet Union and China, where it was argued that information could serve the whole society rather than elite groups.

In South Africa, the social responsibility theory applies. According to Oosthuizen (2103:147):

Regulating broadcasting through legislation is an indication of the potential influence that the government affords the broadcasting media. Upholding a public broadcasting system ensures that the media contribute optimally towards the democratic process, by providing equal access to culturally relevant content.

Furthermore, the obligations that the media must adhere to under the current dispensation are strongly influenced by expectations regarding human rights (Oosthuizen 2013:147).

The study at hand focuses on the 20-year history of the SABC since the first democratic elections of 1994. Of relevance to this enquiry will be the extent to which the Corporation, through its public radio-broadcasting platform, has been able to contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa. This will be

evaluated through the programming, language policy and governance of SABC-owned radio stations. For the purpose of this study, the researcher will confine himself to Lesedi FM, which broadcasts in Sesotho to mainly the Free State and Gauteng, and to a lesser extent, to Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape. However, with more access to the Internet and live audio streaming, the station is available in South Africa and abroad, where there is Internet connectivity. RSG, an Afrikaans-medium national radio station, will also be studied.

The outcomes and results of this particular investigation will hopefully assist these radio stations in streamlining their content and programming offering to make an even bigger and better contribution towards governance and political transformation in South Africa.

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to evaluate SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study can be summarised as follows:

- To investigate and analyse SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation by focusing on programming, language policies and (corporate) governance issues.
- To improve SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.
- To create awareness, through SABC Radio, about the importance of governance and political transformation.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology will outline the method which the researcher will adopt.

According to Haralambos (1992:698):

Any academic subject requires a methodology to reach its conclusion: It must have ways of producing and analysing data so that theories can be tested, accepted or rejected. Without a systematic way of producing, the findings of a subject can be dismissed as guesswork, or even as common sense made to sound complicated.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher would like to evaluate the contribution of the SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa. In the next few paragraphs the researcher will outline the research methodology to be employed.

1.6.1 Research design

The empirical investigation will comprise a qualitative interview-type survey of two SABC radio stations to evaluate their contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa: Lesedi FM and RSG will provide a useful focus.

There will be a quest to understand, rather than to offer explanations, in view of the fact that human beings naturally will, at all material times, change how they view matters.

The study will be qualitative in nature and will follow an interpretive tradition. As highlighted by Mouton and Marais (1990:70), the qualitative mode of inquiry refers to "the generic research approach in social research according to which research takes as its departure point, the insider perspective on social action". Mouton and Marais (1990:271) further note, in relation to the researcher, that:

He or she also has to make a deliberate attempt to put themselves in the shoes of the people they are observing and studying and try and understand

their actions, decisions, behaviour, practices, rituals and so on, from their perspective.

1.6.2 Qualitative versus quantitative research methodologies

Many social scientists turn to science for a methodology on which to base their subject.

According to Mouton and Marais (1990:698):

Not all sociologists have agreed that it is appropriate to adopt the methodology of the natural sciences. For these sociologists studying the human behaviour is fundamentally different from studying the natural world. Unlike the subject matter of, for example, chemistry and physics, people possess consciousness, which means that sociology requires a different type of methodology from (natural) sciences.

Mouton and Marais (1990:698) add that a qualitative approach to research is considered in many academic circles as more enhanced and more in-depth in outlook. Further, on the basis that it is more direct, their outcomes are a truer picture of a way of life or the varied experiences of people. As Neuman (1997:69) asserts, the goal of social research is the development of an understanding of social life and the ultimate discovery of how people construct meaning in more natural settings.

1.6.3 Advantages of qualitative research versus quantitative research

As mentioned earlier, the researcher will employ a qualitative research design.

Qualitative researchers, in sharp contrast, use a smaller number of cases as opposed to quantitative, which is broader. As Ragin (1994:137) points out, the kind of picture that qualitative researchers paint is more detailed or elaborate.

In qualitative research, research is conducted in the natural settings of social action (Mouton and Marais 1990:270). The focus is on process rather than outcome. The actor's perspective is emphasised. The primary aim is in-depth research, and the research process is mostly inductive and often generates theories.

1.6.4 Sampling

The researcher will make use of a non-probability sampling strategy, which means that the researcher is more selective in his approach. As Neuman (1997:206) points out, it “uses the judgment of an expert”. The mind, as he (*ibid.*) states, is more purposeful and directed. The cases are more useful in that they are relevant and informative.

For a more focused study approach, as indicated before, Lesedi FM and RSG will be the focal point. The researcher envisages to interview between ten and 20 staff members. Many of them have been with the radio stations for more than 30 years. In other words, they worked for the radio stations long before the advent of democracy and also witnessed the 20 years of democratic broadcasting at the SABC. Many of them retired recently. As they will attest, the main focus has always been to control or maintain dominance of the newsroom.

Some of the well-known radio personalities the researcher will interview are Sebota Lekhelebane, Tseliso Leballo, Pulapula Mothibi, Pontsho Makhetha (now the Manager for Programming/Content) and Teboho Koekoe (the first black station manager of Lesedi FM). The researcher will also interview trade unionists who served on the SABC’s Transformation Committee, such as Sthembele Khala, academics such as Prof. Franz Kruger (who once worked for the SABC), prominent columnists such as Allister Sparks, some senior politicians, the Public Protector and others.

1.6.5 Data gathering

The use of available literature or documents remains critical to any social science or humanities-related enquiry. More than anything else, this provides a fertile ground for the theoretical basis for the study.

Relevant to this particular study is existing legislation or regulatory frameworks that exist, such as the Broadcasting Act and the ANC Media Charter, the Broadcast Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA), White and Green Papers on Broadcasting, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA),

and the Department of Communications. Historical SABC documents will also be studied.

Data will be gathered in person by the researcher and each interviewee will be individually contacted to conduct the interviews. In this regard, the qualitative researcher interacts with those he studies and actively works with them (Wimmer and Dominick 2000:48) to minimise the distance between him and the phenomenon being studied (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:16).

1.6.6 Data gathering and instruments

The researcher will act as the main data gathering instrument. The researcher has been part of the SABC establishment for a combined 15-year period. Having joined the SABC just after the ushering-in of a democratic government in South Africa, it places him in a good and ideal position to study the institution from an insider's point of view. As the researcher has spent 15 years with the SABC it can be argued that he is better placed to conduct this study from an interpretive researcher's point of view. In other words, the researcher will conduct the research from a strong footing, as he will speak to people who directly felt the wave of transformation or change that took place at the SABC as it related directly to its contribution to governance and transformation of the society.

The researcher will make use of interviews and archival research to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

1.6.6.1 Interviews

With regard to the type of interviews that will be conducted, the researcher will employ unstructured interviews since this will allow for probing questions; it also provides the opportunity to obtain more information from the interviewees.

Conversations will be focused by means of questions relating to governance, political transformation and how SABC radio stations are contributing towards governance and

political transformation through their programme offering, language policies and governance structures.

The interviews will also be based on the perspectives the researcher gains from the literature review, as well as from the archival research.

Ragin (1994:80) postulates that interviews are more useful as they are direct and immediate when clarity is sought. Interviews also boast the advantage of follow-up questions that can be asked.

Haralambos (1992:735) agrees with Ragin, but cautions regarding the conduct of the interviewer. Haralambos (*ibid.*) asserts that the researcher must refrain from offering opinions and avoid expressing his approval or disapproval. It thus becomes clear that the researcher has to take an unbiased, detached position while conducting an interview, and be objective at all times.

1.6.6.2 *Archival research*

Besides the unstructured interviews that will be conducted, the researcher will also make use of archival research to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa. Ragin (1994:85) defines archival research as the “routinely gathered records of the society, community, or organisation which may supplement qualitative methods”. May (1993:149), however, warns that the risk associated with this approach is that documents can be selectively read.

Haralambos (1992:751) adds that “historical documents are of vital importance to sociologists who wish to study social change which takes place over an extended period of time”.

1.6.7 Data analysis

The qualitative data obtained during the investigation will be analysed by means of content analysis. The respondents' answers to the questions will be reviewed and grouped into categories.

1.6.8 Ethics

Ethical conduct in any research is of critical importance. Neuman (1997:443) stresses the point that ethical and professional conduct is "non-negotiable" in undertaking a study. This is in order that the process and outcomes of the research derive and command some significant degree of credibility.

In the course of the study, applicable ethical principles will be thoroughly considered. Reliability and validity will be enhanced by the format of the instrument used, as well as the consistent way in which the data will be analysed.

1.7 THE LAYOUT OF THE STUDY

The study will consist of six chapters:

CHAPTER 1:

The first chapter focuses largely on the introduction and motivation, research problem, aim and objectives of the study, research methodology, and layout of the study.

CHAPTER 2:

This chapter encompasses the literature study. A conceptual and contextual analysis will form part of the chapter. In this particular chapter the functions and characteristics of the mass media will be outlined, while mass media theories will be discussed. The researcher will define what radio is and how it evolved over the years as broadcasting medium. An overview will be provided of SABC Radio, with specific reference to programming, language policy and governance.

CHAPTER 3:

This chapter will focus on political transformation and governance – a conceptualisation of both, so to speak. Emphasis will be placed on the media strategies and mechanisms employed by government to promote governance and political transformation. A discussion on how government employs SABC Radio to contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa will also form part of the chapter.

CHAPTER 4:

The evaluation of the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa will be discussed in Chapter 4. As such, this particular chapter focuses on the research undertaken for this study.

CHAPTER 5:

Chapter 5 will focus on the results and findings of the study. As such, there will be an in-depth discussion about the answers to the questions posed during the interview-type survey.

CHAPTER 6:

An integration of the findings is outlined in Chapter 6. The chapter will also include a summary of the previous chapters, recommendations and a conclusion.

CHAPTER 2: RADIO - THE THEATRE OF THE MIND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The conceptualisation of the study is outlined in this chapter. Since the aim of the study is to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa, the researcher deems it necessary to outline, illustrate, and discuss the theory pertaining to this study. Therefore, various theoretical concepts referring to radio as broadcasting medium will be defined and discussed, whilst a conceptual and contextual analysis will also form part of the chapter.

In this particular chapter the researcher will define what mass communication is and discuss the characteristics and functions thereof. Various mass media theories and how it pertains to the study will be discussed. Since the study focuses on radio as broadcasting medium, radio as such will also be defined, and an overview will be provided in terms of its evolution and how it is regulated in South Africa. The researcher will furthermore discuss SABC Radio, with specific reference to programming, language, and governance.

2.2. MASS COMMUNICATION

McQuail (1993:1) refers to what he terms an “information society”. He defines an information society as “a form of society in which there is a high and increasing dependence of individuals and institutions on information and communication in order to be able to function effectively in almost every sphere of activity” (*ibid.*). To apply this definition to the study at hand would mean that people in general depend on the mass media, in this instance radio, to be informed, educated and entertained. These functions will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter. As an information society it is important to understand the role, characteristics and functions of mass communication.

Therefore, the researcher will outline what mass communication is since the study at hand focuses on radio as a form of mass communication. As such, the term “mass communication” will be defined, whereafter the characteristics and functions of mass

communication will be discussed. The section will conclude with a discussion of various mass media theories.

2.2.1 Defining mass communication

Wimmer and Dominick (2010:2) define mass communication as any form of communication that simultaneously reaches a large number of people, including but not limited to radio, television, newspapers, magazines, billboards, films, recordings, books, and the Internet.

DeFleur and Dennis (1994:20-28) identify mass communication as a process in which professional communicators design and use media to disseminate messages widely, rapidly and continuously in order to arouse the intended meaning in large, diverse, and selectively attending audiences in attempts to influence them in a variety of ways.

Baran and Davis (in Fielding and Du Plooy-Cilliers 2014:306) define mass communication as “when a source, typically an organisation, employs a technology as a medium to communicate with a large audience”. In the context of this study mass communication takes place when the SABC, the organisation (source), employs broadcasting techniques (the technology), to reach the South African public (a large audience) through radio (the medium) to provide them with news and relevant information (mass communication). Mass communication can thus be regarded as the transmission of messages to a wide audience.

2.2.2 The characteristics of mass communication

Engelbrecht (2007:36-37) identifies the following characteristics of mass communication:

- Mass communication is indirect. It connects the sender with the receiver *via* some technical vehicle because of the time and/or space gap between them. Mass media therefore overcomes the physical limitations present in face-to-face communication (Schmitz 2012:1 of 9).

- Because of its lack of immediacy, mass communication is impersonal. The message is directed to many people instead of one specific individual. One advantage of radio in particular, is that it is accessible to most people, especially those in remote areas (Clear 2011:113).
- Mass communication messages involve less interactivity and more delayed feedback than other messages. Feedback is not received in the short run and therefore this form of communication does not afford the sender the opportunity to adjust message as it is delivered. For example, we don't have a way to influence a news broadcast on Lesedi FM or RSG. One could send a message to the producers of a radio show or programme, via twitter, facebook or e-mail and hope the feedback is received, but it is unlikely to influence the people responsible for sending the message.
- Mass communication reaches many receivers simultaneously. In some cases, like radio and television, it means the same instant; whereas in print form it will reach the intended audience in the same approximate time period (e.g. every day, week, or month).

All of these characteristics aptly apply to the study at hand. The SABC, through its radio stations, reaches its audience in an indirect, impersonal way. Many receivers, situated geographically apart, receive the radio communication simultaneously and are not in a position to provide immediate feedback.

2.2.3 The functions of the mass media

Radio as a form of mass communication has to perform a variety of functions. Fourie (2003:149) asserts that radio has to perform basic functions like the provision of an impartial space for members of the society to freely express themselves as this is also a constitutional imperative. Fourie (2003:149) adds that in fulfilling this role, radio has to cater for the different tastes and needs of consumers or listeners. However, the major functions of the mass media are to inform, persuade and entertain (Fielding and Du Plooy-Cilliers 2014:306; Erasmus-Kritzing, Swart and Mona 2011:46-47).

According to Schmitz (2012:1 of 9) we have a need for information to satisfy curiosity, reduce uncertainty, and better understand how we fit into the world. All media, such as traditional media and new media, seek to inform the general public in some way. It means “to inform members of society or specific communities objectively about what is happening around them – in their communities, in their country and around the world” (Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.* 2011:46). Major news networks like CNN and BBC primarily serve the information function by broadcasting news to their viewer audiences. Some media outlets, however, exist to cultivate knowledge by teaching instead of just relaying information (Schmitz 2012:2 of 9).

These media outlets not only inform their audiences about news happenings, but they also interpret the news for them. Examples are Fox News and MSNBS. In this study the focus is on SABC owned radio stations Lesedi FM and RSG. Both stations serve the information and interpretation function. News is not only conveyed through news bulletins, but also interpreted by means of in-depth news reports, debates and interviews with experts who analyse, interpret and contextualise the news. Examples of these programmes on RSG include “Spektrum”, “Met raad en daad” and “Rand en sent”, and “Makumane” and “Ha Re Ye” on Lesedi FM.

According to Fielding and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014:308), all organisations need to persuade customers to use their services, buy their products, or make decisions. The mass media therefore play a very important role in forming public opinion and persuading the audience of a certain viewpoint. Commercials and advertisements serve as examples of persuasive communication employed by the mass media. These are also used to a great extent on SABC radio stations Lesedi FM and RSG. During voting campaigns, for example, political parties buy advertising space on radio stations to persuade why and how the public should vote for them.

The mass media, such as radio, also seeks to entertain. “This function serves as a form of escape or diversion. The entertainment (or diversion) function attracts an audience and makes it worthwhile for advertisers to advertise” (Fielding and Du Plooy-Cilliers 2014:308). Entertainment programmes with a focus on humour, phone-in

programmes, live sport commentary, music programmes and lifestyle programmes on Lesedi FM and RSG serve as examples of this function of the mass media.

In addition to the functions discussed previously, media outlets also serve a gatekeeping function. The term was developed in the 1950s to describe people who control the flow of information (Nel 2015:8). Mass media requires some third party or channel to get the message across from one person to the next. A news story that you read on www.lesedifm.co.za, for example, went through several human “gates”, including a writer, editor, publisher, photographer, and webmaster, as well as one media “gate”, the internet.

Gatekeepers can edit the news by cutting the content, expand it by working in some additional background information or reinterpret the news by writing it in more simplistic terms so that people who are not familiar with complex terminology or a complex topic can understand it. Schmitz (2012:3 of 9) asserts that the media can fulfill or fail to fulfill its role as the “fourth estate” of government - or government “watchdog.”

2.2.4 Mass media theories

There are various schools of thought when it comes to audience interpretation of media content. According to Schmitz (2012:4 of 9) theories of mass media have changed dramatically since the early 1900s, largely as a result of quickly changing technology and more sophisticated academic theories and research methods.

Extending Aristotle’s linear communication model that included a source, message, and receiver, early theories of mass communication claimed that communication moved, or transmitted, an idea from the mind of the speaker (source) through a message and channel to the mind of the listener (receiver) (Schmitz 2012:4 of 9). To test the theories, researchers wanted to find out how different messages changed or influenced the behaviour of the receiver. This led to the development of numerous theories related to media effects.

In the next section five mass media theories will be outlined. Two of the theories (the hypodermic needle theory and hegemonic theory) depict media consumers as passive role players, while three others (two-step-flow theory, uses and gratifications theory and reception theory) view media consumers as being active in the interpretation of media content. The section will be concluded with a discussion of media effects, since all of these theories are based on the media's effect on media consumers.

2.2.4.1 *Hypodermic needle theory*

The hypodermic needle theory suggested that a sender constructed a message with a particular meaning that was “injected” into the individual media user, resulting in particular behaviour (Fourie 2007:232). The recipient was seen as a passive and helpless victim of media impact. McQuail (in Greer 2008:98) asserts that American commercial television and popular cinema “moulded people into a standardised, passive state of being that allowed them to be easily manipulated.” Schmitz (2012:4 of 9) postulates that:

It was assumed that the effects were common to each individual and that the meaning wasn't altered as it was transferred. Through experiments and surveys, researchers hoped to map the patterns within the human brain so they could connect certain stimuli to certain behaviours. For example, researchers might try to prove that a message announcing that a product is on sale at a reduced price will lead people to buy a product they may not otherwise want or need.

Among the best-known studies supporting the hypodermic needle theory was the broadcast of H.G. Wells's novel “The War of the Worlds” on the 1938 CBS radio station. The radio play was about the invasion of Earth by warriors from Mars. The intention of the play was to entertain, but listeners who did not recognise the programme as a play panicked as they perceived it to be real (Fourie 2007:233).

The hypodermic needle theory was criticised for not having a direct connection between a message's intent and any single reaction on the part of the receiver. Rayner (in Greer 2008:99) criticised the theory for concentrating too much on the text of a programme without taking into account the audience's interaction with and interpretation of the text's meaning.

2.2.4.2 *Hegemony*

Fourie (2007:279) asserts that hegemony was used to explain the power of a dominant, ruling group who continuously tries to persuade subordinate groups to accept its moral, political and cultural values. According to the hegemonic theory (just like the hypodermic needle theory), the audience plays a passive role in the communication process. As such, the audience's interpretation of a media text is generally aligned with the beliefs and values of the dominant culture (Greer 2008:96). The dominant class represent their own interests as being aligned with the welfare of society as a whole. According to Greer:

The subordinate class, in adopting this view, willingly consent to the continuity superiority of the dominant class. Although a mass media text may be open to several interpretations, the text indicates a "preferred reading" from the perspective of the media communicator. The audience assumes a passive role.

It is important to note that hegemony is readjusted and re-negotiated constantly since people in a particular society do not always share the same way of thinking and may oppose the dominant ideology. Their resistance may take the form of active struggle, such as through riots or demonstrations (Fourie 2007:279). In South Africa, for example, people who signify their efforts to combat HIV/AIDS wear a curved red ribbon, while those who support the fight against breast cancer may wear pink.

The researcher holds the opinion that audience members are never totally passive, that they are dynamic. However, some audience members may be more experienced or more active participants than other, so members' understanding and interpretation of mass media content will always differ.

2.2.4.3 *Two-step-flow theory*

The critical question of the hypodermic needle theory was: *What does the media do to people?* In the two-step flow theory the question changed to: *What do people do with the media?* (Fourie 2007:236)

J.T. Klapper, a communication scientist who developed this theory, pointed out that studies of media effect should always take account of some factors which co-determine human behaviour and attitudinal change (Fourie 2007:234). These factors include the following: Media consumers expose themselves selectively to media content on the basis of their background, education, knowledge, experiences, culture and expectations. Your circle of influence (family, friends, and colleagues) can filter media users' interpretation of media messages. For example, people often discuss the news events of the day with colleagues, family and friends. These people act as buffers against one-sided interpretations since they also air their views about the topic of discussion.

Opinion leaders, such as politicians, teachers and parents also act as filters and buffers in the interpretation of media messages. Lastly, the media themselves provide divergent interpretations of news happenings (Fourie 2007:235). A news broadcast about the State of the Nation address by President Zuma, for example, is interpreted differently by media outlets such as television, radio and online news agencies.

According to Fourie (2007:236) the two-step-flow theory acknowledges that mass media users are not passive (as the hypodermic needle theory and hegemonic theory suggest), but members of a structured society. Media consumers form part of different groups, each attributing different interpretations to mass media messages.

2.2.4.4 *The uses and gratifications theory*

The uses and gratifications theory also views the media consumer as an active role player in media content interpretation. As the theory suggests, media users have certain needs that they want the media to address, and in return, enjoys some form of gratification if the media satisfy those needs.

Gratification can take on the form of emotional release, for instance, since people turn to media to escape from their daily work and other routines (Fourie 2007:236). An example of this would be when people tune in to a particular radio station to listen to a popular music show. Some media content gratifies the needs for companionship and sociability. As such, many people listen to the radio for its sense of companionship. Media users even sometimes build relationships with media personalities by forming invisible friendships with them. Radio presenters become like friends and family members. Added to this notion is the fact that radio can provide a focus for interaction with others to discuss programmes and content offerings. Media content can also explore, challenge, adjust or confirm personal identity (Fourie 2007:236). "People use media content to compare themselves and their situations and values with those of others."

The media, such as radio, gratifies the need for information about people's environments and circumstances. Media users need information about issues affecting them directly. In South Africa, for example, the widespread draught and water shortage of 2015 and 2016 had a direct impact on all citizens. The public relied on the mass media to inform them about the state of water affairs in the country and on how they can take precautionary measures in using water sparingly.

Although still used today, the uses and gratifications theory lacks a strong theoretical basis and do not really explain the complex cognitive process involved in the experience and interpretation of media content (Fourie 2007:237).

2.2.4.5 *Reception theory*

Reception theory suggests that the audience of a mass media message plays an active role during the interpretation phase of a message (Greer 2008:96). In this regard audience members may interpret media messages entirely different than the preferred reading dictated by the media commentator. For example, children may be more sensitive than adults to messages about child abuse. In the context of this study, it would refer to selected groups of people (for instance minority groups or people with a specific political stance and background) being more sensitive to media content about political transformation. Reception theory furthermore deals with personal taste,

while certain variables can affect how an audience member interprets media content. These include background, interest level, attitude, concerns, demographic profile, psychological profile, communication environment and life experience (Greer 2008:97).

2.2.4.6 *Media effects*

Whereas earlier mass media theories viewed media consumers as passive role players in the communication process, recent theories depicted media consumers as having an active role. The media certainly has effects on audience members. The degree and type of effect varies depending on the theory. Schmitz (2012:6 of 9) puts it succinctly:

We underestimate the effect that the media has on us, as we tend to think that media messages affect others more than us. This is actually so common that there is a concept for it! The third-party effect is the phenomenon just described of people thinking they are more immune to media influence than others.

Some media effects are obvious (for example dressing according to the temperature forecasted on a radio stations' weather bulletin), while others are not (for example the media may influence your personal sense of style or values). According to Schmitz (2012:6 of 9) it is difficult to determine how much influence the media has on a belief or behaviour in proportion to other factors that influence us. "Media messages may also affect viewers in ways not intended by the creators of the message." Two media effects that are often discussed are reciprocal and boomerang effects. According to Schmitz (2012:6 of 9):

The reciprocal effect points to the interactive relationship between the media and the subject being covered. When a person or event gets media attention, it influences the way the person acts or the way the event functions.

For example, the #Feesmustfall campaign that started in South Africa last year (2015) gained a lot of attention from the media and people using micromedia platforms like independent bloggers and other social media users. Once the movement started getting mainstream press attention, the coverage affected the movement. As news of the campaign spread, people in other cities and towns across the globe started to form

their own protest groups. In this case, media attention caused a movement to spread that may have otherwise remained localised.

The boomerang effect refers to media-induced change that is counter to the desired change (Schmitz 2012:6 of 9). In the digital age where news are always at one's disposal and where there are constant streams of user-generated material, the effects of poor decisions are much more difficult to control or contain. South Africa, for instance, has seen many stories, especially those about political governance, going viral before some aspects of the news stories could be clarified or put into context.

A recent example of such an effect occurred when President Jacob Zuma replaced Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene with Mr Des van Rooyen, a shocking move that saw the rand plummeting to below R15 to the US dollar. This move has sparked some serious debate in the mass media, locally and internationally. Four days later Van Rooyen was replaced by Mr Pravin Gordhan.

2.3 RADIO: REAL AUDIO DECISION INFLUENCING OPPORTUNITY

Before Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Google and YouTube became revolutionary tools, there was radio. David Roth (in BrainyQuote 2015:1 of 40) describes the magic of radio as follows:

When you get something like MTV, it's like regular television. You get it, and at first it's novel and brand new and then you watch every channel, every show. And then you become a little more selective and more selective, until ultimately ... you wind up with a radio.

Cridland (in The Media Online 2015:1 of 2) wrote an interesting article about personalising radio. Cridland opines:

It almost seems ludicrous that radio is still so popular. Nine out of 10 of us listen to radio every single week, whether in South Africa, the United Kingdom or North America. It's still far more popular than anything the internet has to offer. Indeed, in Africa apparently more people own a radio than a mattress.

Radio is one of the most powerful mediums to inform, persuade and educate. In bygone days people relied on the media to inform them of important news, keep them

updated of global developments, and play their favourite music. Today thousands of radio stations deliver programmes that entertain, inform, educate and amuse their listeners. Cridland (in *The Media Online* 2015:1 of 2) states:

Our radio sets are in the more intimate areas of our homes: Our bedrooms, kitchens and bathrooms. We change them far less than our television sets, because they're unseen by visitors. They're not status symbols, they work well and most people are quite satisfied with the choice available on their FM dial.

The researcher has 20 years' experience in the broadcasting industry, having been introduced to broadcasting in 1995 as a university student. He spent many years in the radio industry, specifically Lesedi FM, as a Bulletin and Current Affairs Producer. The reason why this inference is being made is because it was at this stage that the researcher was introduced and made to understand the difference between radio and television; thus, writing for the ear and also for the eye. The difference is monumental, and perhaps telling – hence many refer to radio broadly as the theatre of the mind. One has to be able to read the mind of the listener and be a good forecaster in predicting what the listener wants.

Fundamentally the difference between radio and television is based largely on writing style and format. For radio, which lacks visuals, one has to be particularly creative, always keeping in mind that you are writing for the ear. Radio does, however, enjoy many advantages over television. These include:

- It has a far wider reach;
- It is relatively cheaper;
- More households have access to radio than television; and
- It is more convenient and user-friendly as it can be carried to different places with ease. Its portability - one can listen to the radio practically anywhere - makes it a convenient medium (Erasmus-Kritzinger *et al.* 2011:42).

One cannot, however, talk of radio in isolation. This brings us to the issue of public interest. There is no single definition of public interest, but there is some understanding of what it constitutes. In this instance it relates to public service broadcasting.

Public interest and public service broadcasting go hand-in-hand; however, there is ambiguity regarding these concepts. Both politicians and the general public grapple with it daily; and it is this ambiguity that is exploited. According to Buckley (2009:8),

... the goal of regulation in the public interest and of a specifically public interest approach to media is to tread a path that mediates among these interests, encouraging and offering incentives and, where necessary, imposing obligations and constraints on each group, while evading capture by any specific interest.

McQuail (1993:3) is of the opinion that there is a relationship between public interest in communication and public service broadcasting. Society has to derive some benefits from public service broadcasting; this is universal provision of services to regions and minorities, especially in countries like South Africa where the majority of citizens were excluded from the mainstream media, which was largely partisan, authoritarian and exclusive.

The next few paragraphs will outline what radio is and how it has evolved over the years.

2.3.1 Defining radio

Webster's New World College Dictionary (2014:1 of 1) defines radio as the practice or science of communicating over a distance by converting sounds or signals into electromagnetic waves and transmitting these directly through space, without connecting wires, to a receiving set, which changes them back into sounds, signals, etc. The Free Dictionary (2014:1 of 1) defines radio as follows:

The wireless transmission through space of electromagnetic waves in the approximate frequency range from 10 kilohertz to 300,000 megahertz; communication of audible signals encoded in electromagnetic waves; transmission of programmes for the public by radio broadcast.

The above-mentioned definitions may be true, but the researcher regards the following definitions to capture the essence of what radio and radio broadcasting is all about: Radio is "Real Audio Decision Influencing Opportunity" (Rothschild 2013: personal communication) and "the art of the imagination" (Hilliard 2008:10).

2.3.2 The evolution of radio

According to Fielding and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2014:309), “Radio has been a popular and successful medium for many years. It is especially effective for a non-literate audience. It is also very useful for people who are busy doing work that stops them from viewing television or reading.”

Radio derives its being from the discovery by, amongst others, a Scottish physicist, James Maxwell, who in the 1860s discovered radio waves, and was later developed by Heinrich Hertz, who projected electric current into space in the form of radio waves (Verma in EngineersGarage 2012:1 of 1).

Twenty years later an Italian by the name of Guglielmo Marconi put music on radio through tele-lines which could reach a mile away. His attempts to interest the Italian government in his invention failed and he went to England. In 1898 the first-ever public broadcast of a sporting event took place. Marconi opened his first radio factory in Essex in 1899, which linked France and Britain, and the US in 1901 (Verma in EngineersGarage 2012:1 of 1).

But Marconi’s wireless telegraph only transmitted signals. Voice on radio came about in 1921. A year later he introduced shortwave transmissions. Marconi was, however, not the first person to invent radio:

Nikola Tesla who moved to the US in 1884, launched radio’s theoretical model prior to Marconi. In 1915, Tesla tried to acquire the court’s injunction against Marconi. And in the year 1943, the Supreme Court of the US reviewed the decision. And due to this Tesla was acknowledged as the inventor of radio even when he did not ever build a working radio (Verma in EngineersGarage 2012:1 of 1).

Radio has shown tremendous growth over the years. Transmitters were established for ship-to-ship and ship-to-shore communication; they were not used for public broadcasting, as is the case today.

Eventually radio transmitters were improved. Overseas radiotelegraph services were slowly developed and in the early 1990s Lee DeForest invented space telegraphy. He was the first person to use the term “radio”. His work resulted in the discovery of AM radio that capably broadcasts various radio stations, which early gap transmitters did not allow (Verma in EngineersGarage 2012:1 of 1).

Radio was developed before television and has remained ever-popular in modern times. This is largely due to its comparatively easier accessibility. According to world statistics, in 2014, there were over 2.4 billion radio receivers in the world and over 51 000 radio stations (Encyclopaedia of the Nations 2010:1 of 1).

Radio has become a popular medium of portable entertainment. In the 21st century, technological advancements have given birth to Internet radio. Satellite radio is also a recent development in the field. According to Cridland (in The Media Online 2015:1 of 2):

Radio is appearing on more devices and more platforms. CliffCentral and Ballz Radio are two obvious examples in South Africa of how radio's distribution is slowly changing. Primedia Broadcasting's 'Oscar Extra', set up to be an extra radio station delivered online and via apps during the Oscar Pistorius murder trial, shows how broadcasters can take advantage of new platforms. Podcasting gets radio-like audio into the ears of many. Radio's availability via platforms such as DStv gets radio back into the living room – especially during the day.

In recent years there has been more reliance on, and a move from traditional radio sets to mobile applications:

In some markets, like the UK, listening via FM now accounts for less than 66% of all radio listening. The start of Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB) in South Africa, coupled with cheaper smartphones and more affordable data rates, will all disrupt radio” (Cridland in The Media Online 2015:1 of 2).

This is especially the case in countries like India where by February 2014 75% of households had access to radio through their cellular telephones (BBC 2014:3 of 9).

In South Africa, more than half of the population (about 30 million) people listen to radio, with more than 15.4 million radio sets available. South Africans, according to the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF), spend an average of three-and-a-half hours a day listening to the radio (SouthAfrica.info 2012:3 of 8).

According to Statistics South Africa's 2007 report (in Plaut and Holden 2012:177), 76.5% of South Africans have access to radio. This attests to the large footprint radio enjoys in South Africa.

The next section will focus on the history of radio in South Africa.

2.4 AN OVERVIEW OF RADIO BROADCASTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.4.1 The history of South African radio

Radio broadcasting in South Africa can be traced as far back as 1923 with the first radio broadcast in December of that year. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) was established in 1936 by an Act of Parliament, but had only three radio stations (South African History Online n.d.:1 of 1).

The three stations were almost exclusively along language lines. The English and Afrikaans Services were for many years known as Radio South Africa and Radio Suid-Afrika respectively. They are now called SAFM and Radio Sonder Grense (RSG), and each broadcast more than 115 hours of programmes each week. In 1950, the third programme service, Springbok Radio, was introduced. The latter was bilingual and commercial in nature and also carried a variety of programmes. These included soap operas, news and talk shows. Springbok Radio was considered the most popular of all the SABC's services, "but following the appeal of TV in the late 1970's and the resulting loss of revenue, its audience steadily declined and the station closed at the end of 1985, despite protests from many loyal listeners" (Mishkind n.d.:1 of 7).

But as time passed there was a need to include African languages or broadcast services. These were mainly Nguni (IsiZulu and Xhosa) and Sotho services (Tswana and Sesotho). In 1952, the Rediffusion Service was established. Broadcasts were

done in three Bantu languages to the townships in Soweto west of Johannesburg. Ten years later broadcasts were done in Tswana and North Sotho from Pretoria. This was followed with Zulu from Durban, and Xhosa from Grahamstown. In 1965, broadcasts in Venda and Tsonga were inaugurated from studios in Johannesburg and transmitted from stations in the Northern Transvaal province (Mishkind n.d.:1 of 7).

The inception of an FM broadcast service in South Africa began on 1 September 1961 from the Brixton Tower (now known as the Sentech Tower). A massive drive through the 1960s and 70s saw the rollout of the FM network to the rest of the country. The first FM transmission of the English and Afrikaans Services, Springbok Radio and the South Sotho and Zulu Services was made on 25 December 1961. FM stereo tests began in Johannesburg in 1985, while the first station to go FM stereo was 5FM in 1986 (Mishkind n.d.:1 of 7).

In 1996 the six once “regional” programmes operated by the SABC were sold to private owners through deregulation. They are now called Private Commercial Radio Stations. They include 94.7 Highveld Stereo, East Coast Radio, KFM 94.5, OFM, Jacaranda 94.2 and Algoa FM (Mishkind n.d.:3 of 7). “Government raised over half a billion rand in cash as the stations were licensed to various black controlled groups” (The National Association of Broadcasters 2015:1 of 14).

Outside of the mainstream media, there are so-called community radio stations. These are local radio stations that were formed after 1994 by the regulatory body. ICASA began the process of assessing and granting licence applications from groups as diverse as rural women’s cooperatives, Afrikaner communities, and a variety of religious bodies (Mishkind n.d.:4 of 7). Community radio is a crucial part of the South African broadcasting landscape, providing diversity for listeners and much-needed skills for the commercial radio sector. It is estimated that there are almost 170 of these stations, broadcasting in a variety of languages. Their reach is limited as they mostly cover a radius of about 60 kilometres (South Africa.info 2012:4 of 14). According to the National Association of Broadcasters (2015:4 of 9):

Although the sector has struggled to access advertising and other forms of financing it is recognised as being a crucial part of the South African

broadcasting landscape - in providing diversity for listeners and much needed skills for the commercial radio sector.

2.4.2 SABC Radio

The SABC boasts huge listenership figures in South Africa due to its offering. According to the Corporation's Annual Report (SABC 2014:45), the SABC reaches or has 69% of total radio market share. It produces 1 255 news bulletins weekly in all 11 official languages. The African language stations command the largest daily listenership share, especially Ukhozi, with over 6 million listeners daily and Lesedi FM with about 4 million.

The year 2005 was a watershed year in the development of SABC Radio broadcasting. It was required to fulfil certain constitutional obligations and was subsequently divided into two wings. The SABC was relicenced in June 2005 and in line with Section 10 of the Broadcasting Act, the new licences reflected a reorganisation of the Corporation into a Public and a Commercial Broadcast Service. Public Broadcasting Services focus essentially on the indigenous language spoken in certain parts of the country. Examples of these stations include SAfm (which focuses on English programming) and RSG (which caters for Afrikaans-speaking listeners).

The Public Broadcast division has 11 full spectrum sound services (including Ukhozi FM, Umhlobo Wenene, Lesedi FM, RSG and SAfm); a regional service, KFM; a community service, X-K FM, Lotus FM, and Radio 2000 (The National Association of Broadcasters 2015:3 of 9). The Commercial Broadcast Service is run largely for commercial purposes with the intention to subsidise the public service portfolio. Public Commercial Services Metro FM and 5FM target young audiences (16 to 25 years old). Metro FM's format is essentially hip-hop/urban, while 5FM caters for alternative/dance/urban tastes (Mishkind n.d.:2 of 7).

2.4.2.1 Lesedi FM

The two radio stations being used as case studies for this research are Lesedi FM and RSG.

Lesedi FM, founded on 1 June 1960, is a South African radio station broadcasting in Sesotho for people who speak and understand the language. The station is headquartered at the SABC offices in Bloemfontein and has studios in Auckland Park, Johannesburg. Lesedi FM's aim is to entertain, inform, educate and empower South African citizens in the station's footprint (Lesedi FM 2015:2 of 6).

Lesedi FM enjoys a daily listenership of about 3.78 million listeners – making it a needs-driven participatory radio station, with regular programming that touches on issues with a direct bearing on economic and personal empowerment (Media Club South Africa n.d.:3 of 6). As such, the station's vision is to be a source of enlightenment to its listeners, broadcasting full spectrum, quality programmes, while the music format includes youth, gospel, Sesotho traditional and contemporary music (Lesedi FM 2015:2 of 6).

2.4.2.2 *Radio Sonder Grense*

Radio Sonder Grense (RSG) is a cultural service radio station, which translated means radio without borders. It targets mainly Coloured, Indians and whites under the slogan “alles in een, sonder grense”, meaning “all in one, without borders”. This station is owned by the SABC and started transmission as the SABC's “B” service in 1933, but in the early 1990s it changed its name to “Afrikaans Stereo” (ListenRadios 2015:2 of 8) .

RSG has an estimated daily listenership of 1.79 million listeners. The format is primarily talk and current affairs, interspersed with soft pop and rock hits, 60% of which are English and 40% Afrikaans (Media Club South Africa n.d.:2 of 6).

2.4.3 Programming

In terms of programming, the Public Broadcasting Services were required to meet certain obligations as imposed by ICASA. These included broadcasting different programmes to cater for a variety of tastes, such as children's and adult programmes, news, current affairs and actuality. These are strongly monitored by ICASA and there

are strict compliance measures in place. Programming also has to take into account the promotion of local content and talent in scheduling.

At Lesedi FM, for example, there are so-called “Takalane Sesame”. These are mainly educational programmes that cater for children. On weekends between 08:00 and 09:00 the hour is set aside specifically for children where they are asked to talk about their experiences at school and at home; these programmes are largely entertaining. There are also programmes for the elderly where they read poetry, talk about culture, etc.

The same applies to RSG. This radio station has programmes like “RSG Befonk”, which is broadcast on weekdays and focuses on youth who have recently left school. It tackles issues like career guidance, employment, and study choices. Another programme is “Oggend op RSG”, which deals with lifestyle issues and other topics.

A critical question which arises here is whether the SABC can be neutral in fulfilling its role, or not be influenced, both internally and externally. Ideally South Africa’s young democracy requires a strong independent press, especially in public service broadcasting.

In 2000 interested parties organised a conference aimed at taking stock of the SABC. The conference was organised by the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI), but was boycotted by the SABC. The participants were concerned that the SABC, as the public broadcaster, was drifting away from its mandate. The SABC was criticised for:

... mismanagement, corruption and nepotism, a drop in the quality of news and documentaries, and too few local productions. In short there was rising discontent that very little had materialised of the vision of public service broadcasting as formulated during the years of the struggle (Fourie 2003:153).

It was further noted that while the SABC was meeting and exceeding quotas, this achievement was misleading as it was based on many repeats in programming (Moletsane in The Media Online 2013:1 of 3).

2.4.4 Language policy

The challenge that the SABC faced was broadcasting in 11 official languages as this was a legal mandate it had to comply with. But budgetary constraints remain real to this day. According to Television Industry Emergency Coalition, SABC had a mixed funding model. It derives less than 5% of its revenue from government grants, less than 15% through licences and less than 80% through advertising (www.ngopulse.org).

The SABC is required to promote all official languages on its radio channels. However, as the research will show later, according to a study by Media Monitoring Africa (2012:12 of 42) more than 76% of programming is still in English. The Charter that established the SABC dictates that the programming should reflect South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity; should display South African talent; should offer a plurality of views; and should advance national and public interest.

The *Mail & Guardian's* Press Ombudsman, Franz Krüger, wrote that the challenges related to language also involved staffing. Krüger contends that by 1994 staff levels in African language stations, serving the majority of South Africans, remained a fraction of those serving English and Afrikaans speakers (*Mail & Guardian* 2014:2 of 8).

Fourie (2001:125) asserts that radio's unique structure is to suit a particular audience. He further argues that the exercise of power by those who are politically powerful becomes less arbitrary (*ibid.*). This may be achieved through affording listeners an opportunity to become involved in programmes through listener feedback sessions and so on.

But, as has become fashionable in modern day South Africa, "news becomes a theatre in which conflicts inside government are played out" (Schudson 2008:01). This has become more so within the ruling party if one considers intra-party rivalry. For example, the ANC in Gauteng will always have differences with its national structure or the National Executive Committee (NEC).

One of the radio station under study, Lesedi FM, targets mainly Sesotho-speaking people and those who understand the language. Presenters hired by the radio station have to demonstrate a considerable ability to speak the language. However, when it cannot be avoided, newsmakers who speak other languages are also interviewed but presenters have to translate into the vernacular immediately afterwards.

The situation also applies to RSG in terms of language usage or policy. According to the researcher's observation, geography has played a part in how these stations were conceptualised, even though there was a move away from how things were done during Apartheid. For instance, former Radio Xhosa is still in the Eastern Cape, but it is now called Umhlobo Wenene. The same applies to Lesedi FM, which is in the Free State and Gauteng, while Ukhozi is in KwaZulu-Natal.

2.4.5 Governance

Buckley (2008:8) defines governance as follows:

... the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good, but excluding the process by which those authorities are selected, monitored and replaced; and the capacity of government to effectively manage its resources and implement sound policies.

From the above definition it is clear that good governance is about processes and outcomes. The media can enhance the accountability of good governance by uncovering and logically publicising events that lead to specific outcomes, especially those that are not in line with the public interest.

The SABC is owned by the state and regulated by ICASA. The Corporation is financially independent of taxpayers' money, deriving its income from advertising and licence fees in a ratio of four to one (Media Club South Africa n.d.:1 of 6). In terms of its governance structure, it is governed by a 12-member board appointed by Parliament.

According to Oosthuizen (2013:133):

As a public broadcaster, Parliament oversees the appointment (including the shortlisting and interviewing) of candidates to the SABC Board – and the final appointment is made by the President. Under the Broadcasting Act of 1999, the SABC's executive management accounts to parliament through the minister of Communications who is government's 100% shareholder in the SABC. Parliament is also responsible for the oversight of the SABC's corporate governance plans and finances. The SABC Board appoints the executive Board members (the CEO, COO and CFO).

But, as history has proven, the respective SABC Boards have limped from one crisis to another, with many failing to complete their mandatory legislative terms. Instead they were dissolved.

It is worth mentioning that even during its Apartheid past, the SABC, and as captured by Tomaselli (1989:91), through its Joint Director-General, Dr Jan Schutte, should have stood above party politics, but even in its formative years prioritised issues around what was considered to be state security and national interest which were vaguely explained and attempts to obtain clarity were thwarted.

Attempts to conceal this reality did not help - even with the introduction of African language stations. While they were introduced and offered some voice to the previously marginalised, whites who could speak African languages became station managers and their task was to monitor what went on air and ensure compliance with what government described as national interest. This was done in the belief that the media shapes public opinion (McCombs 2011:98).

Schudson (2008:01) observes that truth and politics were “on bad terms with each other”. Schudson (*ibid.*) asserts that factual truths constituted the very text of the political realm and that this also constituted the text of journalism. Spence, Alexander, Quinn and Dunn (2011:125) aptly captured it when they postulate as follows:

Though instances and types of corruption are varied and wide-reaching in journalism, one of the most damaging modern forms of journalism corruption comes in the form of news that is embedded in substantial and deliberate political partisanship, one it attempts to conceal.

Inevitably the SABC was used by the then government as a propaganda mouthpiece. It became the true champion of what was considered as good in the Apartheid order.

While there is a need for public service radio to remain neutral and serve the interest of the public in present day South Africa, there have been various instances of, or attempts to, influence broadcasting.

Krüger (in *Mail & Guardian* 2014:2 of 8) writes:

In 1994, the SABC was an exciting place to be, full of the promise of a new start. With new leadership, the corporation wanted to forget its past as the mouthpiece of the apartheid regime and become a public broadcaster for the new South Africa.

Krüger (in *Mail & Guardian* 2014:2 of 8) adds that the SABC experienced issues with resourcing, staffing and governance.

Above all, the corporation needed to get rid of the ingrained culture of doing what you were told. It needed to find its own role and voice, to become a marketplace of ideas for a loud, argumentative new democracy. It needed to be the place where South Africans could hear each other, often for the first time.

However, the underlying culture of the SABC did not change. Krüger (in *Mail & Guardian* 2014:3 of 8) says that ongoing political pressure and leadership crises prevented staff from finding the confidence to take risks and innovate:

Public broadcasters in some countries are leaders of innovation in programming, journalism, technology and much else. But, to get to that point, their independence has to be secure.

Mwakawago (in Wedel 1986:84) warns that governments, regardless of how democratic they are, may always try to tip the scale in their favour:

... a government which is committed to rapid socio-economic change by means of dynamic state intervention tends to wish to control all the instruments of persuasion and influence. But even a government committed to a laissez-faire, free enterprise system will insist on controlling the mass media.

Governance is a critical factor at all radio stations within the SABC, but it is highly centralised at the head office. The radio stations do not have their own governance structure, but have a management structure made up of several heads of units. For instance, at Lesedi FM there is a Head of Programmes, a Head of Educational Programmes, a Head of Sports, and a Head of Current Affairs. However, they all report to the Station Manager, who directly reports to both the Provincial General Manager and the Head of Radio at national level, who is referred to as the Group Manager Radio, who in turn reports to the Group Executive for Radio. The latter reports directly to the Chief Operating Officer, who then accounts to the SABC Board, and the Board accounts to Parliament and/or the Minister of Communications.

As captured by Moletsane (in *The Media Online* 2013:1 of 3), the SABC is critical to democracy. He (*ibid.*) aptly sums it up as follows:

The SABC is one of the most underrated, constantly attacked public entities within the developmental state. In analysing the role that the SABC plays in society, there ought to be 'a transition of thought' beyond confining ourselves to corporate governance issues. This is not to argue that corporate governance issues are not important for public institutions. In fact, it is corporate governance that gives public institutions legitimate accountability. We must, however, note though that the ultimate arbiters of public value in the context of broadcasting, including the legitimacy thereof, contrary to popular belief are not interest groups (preoccupied with management and corporate governance issues) but the ears, eyes and voices of citizens of the Republic and default recipients within extended borders.

Moletsane (in *The Media Online* 2013:1 of 3) further states that the SABC does not have the luxury of broadcasting to exclusive target markets, relative to other independent media houses; consideration must be taken of balancing collective public value irrespective of income disparities, race, class or gender. Moletsane adds that this "'potjiekos pot' broadcasting for all presents both its challenges and opportunities and ultimately allows SABC to drive both social cohesion and transformation of the society agenda accordingly" (in *The Media Online* 2013:1 of 3).

2.5 REGULATING RADIO IN SOUTH AFRICA

Radio has always been regulated. Even in the United States, the Radio Act of 1927 was promulgated. Its main function was to issue licences and oversee the overall development of radio. The same scenario applies in South Africa with ICASA, the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) and the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) performing the same functions, including enforcing compliance with pieces of legislation. However, it was only after democratisation in 1994 that a move away from the control of the media by government to self-control took place (Oosthuizen 2013:126).

The next section sets out the mandate of these three regulatory bodies.

2.5.1 The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA)

ICASA is the regulator for the South African communications, broadcasting and postal services sector and was established by an Act of statute, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act of 2000, as amended (ICASA 2015:1 of 1; Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services 2015:3 of 3). It was a merger of the telecoms regulator, the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) and the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) (Department of Telecommunications and Postal Services 2015:3 of 3). The merged regulator was governed by the ICASA Act. Mandla Langa, previously the chairperson of the IBA, was appointed as the first chairperson of ICASA (The National Association of Broadcasters 2015.2 of 9).

ICASA's mandate is spelled out in the Electronic Communications Act for the licencing and regulation of electronic communications and broadcasting services, and by the Postal Services Act for the regulation of the postal sector (ICASA 2015:1 of 1). According to Oosthuizen (2103:133), "ICASA must ensure that SABC sticks to its Charter and adhere to its licensing conditions".

In addition, the Authority (ICASA 2015:1 of 2) is responsible for:

- ... regulating the telecommunications, broadcasting and postal industries in the public interest and to ensure affordable services of a high quality for all South Africans. The Authority also issues licenses to telecommunications and

broadcasting service providers, enforces compliance with rules and regulations, protects consumers from unfair business practices and poor quality services, hears and decides on disputes and complaints brought against licensees and controls and manages the effective use of radio frequency spectrum.

The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa Act, 2000, in terms of which ICASA was established, provides that the Minister of Communications is responsible for developing policy for the communications sector and may issue policy directives to ICASA in this regard (Bowman Gilfillan 2015:1 of 2).

Bowman Gilfillan (2015:1 of 2) further states:

ICASA is required by the ICASA Act to function without any political or commercial interference. ICASA is an 'organ of state', and its conduct in considering licence applications and performing other regulatory functions constitutes administrative action. This means that ICASA must act in a lawful, rational and procedurally fair manner in exercising its statutory powers. Should it fail to do so, its actions and decisions may be set aside on review by the High Court.

However, the governing structure responsible for governing broadcasting affairs in South Africa may seem to have been struggling with governance issues itself. René Smith (in White 2007:33) conducted a study to review the performance of ICASA in relation to its overall mandate, with a particular focus on implementation of its objectives in licencing and handling of complaints. The review found that ICASA faced a number of challenges in relation to, for example, potential interference with independence, funding constraints and apparent contradictions both within the underlying legislation and between these laws and other legal requirements (e.g. the Public Finance Management Act and the Constitution). Smith (in White 2007:33), states further findings of the evaluation:

Furthermore, the evaluation has found that ICASA is not always adequately and effectively fulfilling its mandate in relation to ensuring accountability, transparency, access to information and in fulfilling its regulatory objectives. This, it is found, is exacerbated by, amongst other things, centralised decision-making, apparent lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities between Council and management and the lack of proper record-keeping.

2.5.2 The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)

The National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) is a non-profit grouping of organisations and individuals working in broadcasting and related industries. As such, “the NAB helps the industry regulate and promote itself, grounded in the principles of democracy, diversity and freedom of expression” (SouthAfrica.info 2012:6 of 8). The NAB, also regarded as the voice for South Africa’s radio broadcasters, advances the interests of its members in federal government, industry and public affairs; improves the quality and profitability of broadcasting; encourages content and technology innovation; and spotlights the important and unique ways stations serve their communities (NAB 2015:1 of 1). The NAB also delivers value to its members through advocacy, education and innovation.

2.5.3 The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA)

The Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) is an independent judicial tribunal (BCCSA 2015:1 of 3) set up by the NAB in 1993 to adjudicate and mediate complaints against any broadcaster who has signed its code of conduct (SouthAfrica.info 2012:6 of 8).

According to the BCCSA's Constitution, it is:

... a body corporate, capable of suing and being sued in its corporate name, and of performing all such acts as are necessary for or incidental to the carrying out of its objects, and for the performance of its functions and duties under its Constitution” (BCCSA 2015:1 of 3).

2.6 CONCLUSION

Politicians and the government are concerned about the effects and effectiveness of their messaging, and employ the mass media as a tool to communicate their messages to their desired audiences. In this chapter the researcher conceptualised the study by focusing on the role and functions of the mass media, in particular radio

as broadcasting medium, since the study focuses on the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

The mass media theories discussed in this chapter point to the fact that media messages do affect people and even shape public opinion, but that people have some agency in terms of how much or little they identify with or reinterpret a message. The mass media can and will always contribute to social development. The media, such as radio, can even encourage individual change and mobility, and they can help spread democracy by supporting the electoral process (Nel 2015:8).

Radio as a form of mass media was discussed in detail, referring to its origin and evolution, its development in South Africa, its role and functions, and its place within an information society. An overview was provided of SABC Radio with specific reference to the two radio stations to be studied for the empirical investigation, namely Lesedi FM and RSG. The researcher also discussed SABC's Radio's broadcasting mandate in terms of its programming, language and governance policies. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the three regulatory bodies relating to radio broadcasting in South Africa. In terms of governance, the researcher holds the opinion that the SABC owned radio stations are still used as a propaganda mouthpiece since the SABC is ultimately controlled and governed by the ANC government. The theory discussed in this chapter accentuates the need for a public service radio station to remain neutral and serve the public interest.

Chapter 3 will focus on governance and political transformation and how it relates to the study at hand.

CHAPTER 3: GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 focuses on a conceptualisation of governance and political transformation and how it applies to the South African landscape. Strategies and mechanisms employed by government to promote governance and political transformation will be outlined, while the legislative and/or regulatory framework will also be discussed. The chapter concludes with SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

The term “governance and political transformation” have become synonymous and are sometimes used interchangeably in the ever-changing world, especially in the public and the corporate or private sector.

The next section will focus on the conceptualisation of governance and political transformation.

3.2 CONCEPTUALISING GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

Governance is very difficult to define for scholars in simple universal terms, but has similar outcomes and applications. Schneider (2012:130) asserts that the word or concept governance is a very complicated phenomenon and has a variety of applications to different settings.

“The broadest meaning of governance is the production of social, collective goods or problem solving through purposeful political and social intervention, either by authoritative decisions or by establishment of self-governing arrangements.”

Lynn (2010:50) explains it even better by associating it with a particular action. He (*ibid.*) emphasises that it is “a manner of governing...or regulating individuals, organisations, nations in conduct or action”. A strong case can be made that governance does not equate with government and is not the sole proprietary of

government; hence it cuts across even in the private sector. It has a very strong relationship with the issue of implementation whenever a group of individuals, companies, institutions or organisations have come together. It is all about rules and regulations, practices and accountability. It follows a more structured approach as it often has tools for measurement especially around compliance for the benefit of those who associate with a particular course.

Bevir (2009:vii) says the concept of governance has also become increasingly dominant in engagements around the nature and role of state. He (*ibid.*) further states that very diverse disciplines gave rise to governance. They include political science, public administration, economics, sociology and business.

The World Bank (1994:1 of 21) defines governance as follows:

It is epitomised by predictable, open and enlightened policy-making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos acting in furtherance of the public good, the rule of law, transparent processes, and a strong civil society participating in public affairs.

In their introductory remark on governance, Chhotray and Stoker (2010:1) assert that the term “governance” has seen some major attention and emphasis in the last two decades as it has now become extremely fashionable to apply. These authors (*ibid.*) add that the term is widely used and applied in all facets of society, namely the social, economic and political realms.

Governance in one way or another helps us in an interesting manner to understand the socio-economic and political order of things. Chhotray and Stoker (2010:2) postulate that it is more about collective decision-making and it involves a myriad of players, especially under democratic rule. These authors (*ibid.*) further state that “the first is the extent and degree of globalisation”, while the second is “the spread of basic institutions of democracy and more generally the triumph of the democratic ideal”. Although governance theory obviously touches on themes explored previously by scholars, what makes the current governance turn new is the context of the current debate: a context defined by substantial social and economic change (Chhotray and Stoker 2010:7).

It is worth mentioning that the issue of governance started gaining momentum during the First World War in 1919 with the formation of The League of Nations, which later became the United Nations. In Africa countries grouped themselves together and formed the Organisation of African Unity, which later changed into the African Union at a continental level. At a regional level, one can cite institutions such as the Economic Community of West Africa and the Southern African Development Community.

The widespread prominence of governance issues began in the early 1990s as a drastic development in both the social, but mainly the political, sphere (Chhotray and Stoker 2010:17). Community-based and non-governmental organisations also played a vital role. They too became active actors in issues of governance. As a result of this, they assume major responsibilities, which they co-own with government. According to Salamon (2000:2):

The public administration problem has leapt beyond the borders of the public agency and now embraces a wide assortment of third parties that are intimately involved in the implementation, and often the management, of the public business.

Rothstein (2012:143) made similar observations that the use of the word governance became too prominent in the 1990s especially in developing countries. It became widely applied and used in the private sector as well especially at institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Its use, he (*ibid.*) contends, should be for the benefit of the general population and that it is a team or a collaborative effort. Accordingly the well-being of the society will be improved unlike in corruption which is negative.

The so-called delegation of authority is a key and fundamental aspect of governance. This is essential to allow for a plurality of actors. As noted earlier, those who are given or delegated authority are active participants in decision-making. Furthermore, they are expected to be accountable to their own constituencies (Chhotray and Stoker 2010:50).

Moletsane (in The Media Online 2013:1 of 3) rightfully remarks that it is (corporate) governance that gives public institutions legitimate accountability. According to Chirwa

and Nijzink (2012:5), the concept of accountability is key to governance and transformation. This is widely expressed in South Africa through various mechanisms. But, it is highly central in the political realm. Chirwa and Nijzink (2012:5) assert that there are three elements that are vital to the concept, namely answerability, responsiveness and enforceability.

Stoker (1998:17-28) mentions what he terms five key propositions of governance. A careful analysis of these serve to illustrate and further emphasise the role of governance beyond the formal state or government. These are:

- Governance refers to a set of institutions and actors that are drawn from but also beyond government.
- It is about autonomous, self-governing networks of actors.
- It identifies the blurring of boundaries and responsibilities for tackling social and economic issues.
- It identifies the capacity to get things done which does not rest on the power of government.
- It identifies the power of dependence involved in the relationships between institutions and involved in collective action.

Political transformation on the other hand, can be regarded as the reproduction and change of political institutions by social actors (Universität Basel 2015:1 of 1):

Political transformation studies the crucial link between processes of (often global) social change and the individual lives of different people. In studying political transformations, institutions are crucial, but they cannot be accurately analysed without recurring to the individual actions that shape and transform them. The state, groups in civil society, traditional authorities or a village meeting as political institutions only become tangible and effective through the agency of people who orient their actions towards them.

In politics, and especially in Africa, political transformation can arguably or convincingly be associated with the process of decolonisation. Many African countries, in the latter half of the 20th century, became decolonised and most aspects of life, whether political, social or economic, began a process of almost wholesale restructuring, democratisation or reform – societal transformation so to speak. South

Africa was no exception to this wave taking place, although only many decades after other African countries became democracies. South Africa was the last country, after Namibia (the former South West Africa), to become a democracy.

In terms of transformation, it certainly involves changing the order of things and how society reacts to these changes. Pickel (in TIPEC 2003:4 of 14) emphasises that in a social science discourse or setting, transformation denotes an open-ended process of change, and as such has become accepted as a substitute for transition as it follows normal transition periods.

To give effect to this new dispensation there was a need to transform politically. This involved, in some instances, the liberalisation of institutions and giving political rights to people such as the right to associate, organise and contest, or take part in an election. Once this process was achieved, it was necessary that some form of governance was introduced to ensure representation and accountability. South Africa, as stated before, was no exception to this process.

Bimber (1998:133) takes political transformation even further. He (*ibid.*) asserts that the Internet has become increasingly used in political transformation. This has thus rendered the Internet to be highly important in recent times. Its application is for a variety of reasons or tasks like mass mobilisation.

Understanding political theory is also very critical. Held (1984:3) emphasises that political theory – political transformation – manifests itself theoretically and practically.

The next section will focus on governance and political transformation in South Africa. This clearly illustrates the political context (that of transformation) that the SABC as a subject matter, specifically radio, operated within.

3.3 GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's past is one that was characterised by a system known as Apartheid. The system was intended to exclude the majority of South Africans from political

participation and playing a major managerial role in the many sectors of the economy including agriculture, mining, banking and others.

Jung (1999:121) defines Apartheid as “a social and political system that created racial and ethnic boundaries among people living in South Africa”. The Apartheid system was premised on white racial supremacy that denigrated the majority of the population, who were black. But to sustain Apartheid, there was a need to create a legislative framework. When the National Party came into power in 1948, Apartheid was legitimised and several laws were passed to formalise it. But, this is not to claim that Apartheid started in 1948 or that prior to Apartheid there was no discrimination.

To cite but a few examples, in 1913 the so-called Land Act was passed. The Act ensured that the majority of Africans were banished to the so-called Bantustans or self-governing territories based on their language or tribal classification. For instance, the Zulus were allowed to live in Zululand, the Basotho in Qwaqwa, the Tswanas in Bophuthatswana, and so on. This also created a reserve for cheap labour, which was to supply a major mining revolution that was taking place.

On the political front, blacks were not allowed to associate politically and could therefore not contest elections. However, in the homelands political activity was allowed where residents could choose their own political parties that would represent them in homeland parliaments, but not in the country's parliament which was exclusively white. Later, due to pressure it began transforming into a tri-cameral parliament.

As pointed out by Ottaway (1993:4), the homeland system did not solve the problem for the Apartheid regime as they lacked legitimacy and were seen by many as attempting to strip millions of Africans of their South African identity and nationality.

As this was happening and more draconian measures were being introduced, black people were becoming more and more conscientised. The African National Congress (ANC), which was formed in 1912, resisted Apartheid and other liberation movements were formed like the Pan African Congress (PAC) and the Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO). These liberation movements put mounting pressure on the

government and when peaceful means of protests were met by the might of the military, such as in Sharpeville in 1961, armed resistance gained momentum, especially with the ANC forming an armed wing called Umkhonto we Sizwe.

There were also international actors, including the Soviet Union, China and African countries, offering military assistance for the overthrow of Apartheid. The armed struggle gained momentum, but this was met by military attacks and covert operations by the then National Party government.

There were, however, not only government-engineered savage attacks on black protestors or the liberation movements. A new wave or form of violence was to follow. It was called black-on-black violence. Many people believed that this violence involved more of what became known as the Third Force, which was fuelling it. In other words, both the military and the police were involved covertly.

In 1998, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission chaired by Emeritus Archbishop Desmond Tutu, heard that a “network of security and ex-security forces operatives fomented, initiated, facilitated and engaged in violence which resulted in gross violation of human rights, including random and targeted killings” (Thomson 2014: 249).

The deaths associated with this violence were merely the beginning. Many more people were to die. According to Thomson (2014:248), 3 699 people died in 1990, 2 706 in 1991, 3 347 in 1992, 3 794 in 1993, and 2 476 in 1994.

South Africa became an extremely violent society. The South African Institute of Race Relations found that by 1989 more than 1 400 people had died in political violence (Thomson 2014:267). People were mostly killed in sporadic attacks at taxi ranks and railway stations, and also killed during the night while asleep in what was believed to be state-sponsored killings.

The point above is further demonstrated by Marais (2001:59), who indicates that the method of operation was slightly changed from direct security forces operations to more sophisticated operations:

It was not surprising that more and more vigilante groups sprang into action, with the support of security forces; or that the victims of so-called 'black-on-black' seemed to outnumber those killed directly by the security forces (Marais 2001:59).

It is in this regard that Marais (2001:63) makes an important observation: To this day millions of South Africans, especially blacks, still bear the scars of these wars or violence, both in their physical and psychological outlook, caused by the state security forces, but also, in more significant terms, by internecine violence between political opponents, mainly the mass democratic formation led by the ANC/UDF on the one hand and the Inkatha Freedom Party on the other hand.

Relations soured between the former ANC President, Nelson Mandela, and President F.W. De Klerk. Mandela believed that either De Klerk had lost control of the police and the army, or that they were following orders. This tension became more severe in the early 1990s, particularly around 1993 – almost on the eve of the first democratic elections. One of the casualties was SACP leader Chris Hani who was assassinated by Polish national Janusz Walusz although this was not related to what was called “black-on-black-violence”.

Apartheid did not only manifest itself on the political front but also in the workplace. It is perhaps fitting that this be explored further as this led to massive inequalities that still characterise the modern day, post-Apartheid democratic society in what writers like Marais refer to as the “two-nation theory”.

This can be traced back to the 19th century with the development of race-based capitalism. This was enhanced by the discovery of minerals – notably diamonds in 1867 and gold in 1886. These also attracted countries such as Britain into South Africa with more skilled immigrant labour, while South Africa provided largely unskilled labour from the homeland reserves.

But the provision of unskilled labour from the homelands or black townships relied on a process. What was critical was what could be called “the proletarianisation of the peasantry”. Many Africans were peasants who relied on subsistence farming. A

process of ensuring that they were removed from this system of livelihood was encouraged and supported by the state.

As noted by Marais (2001:9), measures to discourage the peasantry system were put in place and the benefits to the system of racial exclusion in this sector were noticeable. According to Marais (*ibid.*), the number of African peasants dwindled from 2.5 million in 1936 to about 832-thousand in 1946.

As mentioned by De Jongh (2000:84), the inequality became South Africa's legacy, but was race-based and became institutionalised; this corresponded with the levels of economic wealth, political power and social status. The white minority enjoyed more freedoms, protection and access to wealth as compared to other race groups especially the black majority.

This inequality or uneven development was done through a formal process such as the land expropriation of 1913 and the 1936 Land Acts. In this way, Africans were confined to the reserves with little agricultural prospects. According to estimates, the reserves made up only 7.3% of South Africa's land area. Agricultural production also became heavily mechanised. Blacks were confined to areas outside of the main industrial zones as labour reserves that ensured capital expansion along racial lines.

The point above is further illustrated by Landsberg and Venter (2011:6), who state the following:

Eventually nine independent states African states were to be seceded from South Africa on around 13% of the total land area. Eighty-seven per cent of South Africa would remain in white hands, despite the fact that the majority of the population of the so-called white states would be black.

While this led to the immiseration or impoverisation of the peasantry, South Africa faced another phenomenon – the poor white problem. Whites, especially Afrikaners, were also becoming poorer. But state intervention came in handy through the measures that were implemented. These included, as captured by Marais (2001:20), Affirmation Action; the establishment of the Afrikaner Bank; and Preferential Procurement for Afrikaners. Through these measures, Marais (2001:21) concludes:

Afrikaner capitalists were propelled into the upper reaches of the economy and integrated into the steadily evolving web of conglomerates that would dominate the economy by the 1970s. Significant were the joint ventures by English monopolies with Afrikaner corporations. In one instance, the Anglo-American Corporation practically handed over its General Mining and Finance Corporation to a subsidiary of the Afrikaner-owned insurance giant Sanlam.

White-owned companies, or those that invested heavily in procuring and advancing white workers, were rewarded. The rewards included tariff concessions. These were formalised by the 1925 pact government formed between the National Party and Labour Party under both Hertzog and Creswell. As noted by Reddy (1994:120), these measures led to an increase in the number of whites employed, also in the public service. The numbers rose from 4 760 to 7 683 between 1924 and 1933. At the same time, the number of blacks decreased from 37 564 to 22 008.

Finchilescu and Tredoux (2010:223) point out that the four different races in South Africa enjoyed skewed access to resources. Whites were at the helm, followed by Coloureds and Indians, while blacks were at the lower end of the equilibrium and enjoyed fewer privileges. As will be shown later, measures were introduced to deal with this disequilibrium.

The government remained relevant to the needs of the Afrikaner or white race, while millions of Africans were deprived of the means to advance themselves economically. Agriculture was economically key to Africans at this stage. It is critical to mention that this situation was achieved and strengthened formally in 1948 when the Nationalist Party won the elections by five seats.

Access to the much needed resources for personal or group advancement became an exclusive privilege for whites. They enjoyed better wages and jobs, mainly at managerial or supervisory level, through the Job Reservation Act of 1926; this inevitably led to whites having superior economic power comparatively.

Marais (2001:50) concludes that access to more skilled and better paying jobs was restricted by law to whites or so-called Europeans, who then could afford a better education system until the 1970s, while Africans could access only lower paying jobs.

Reddy (1994:117) states that it was through targeted legislation that whites were advanced, such as the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924, the Wage Act of 1925, and the Mines and Works Act of 1926, but to the disadvantage of millions of African workers.

3.3.1 The reform process

The most significant development in the history of the anti-Apartheid struggle in South Africa was perhaps the formation of the South African Native National Congress in 1912, which later was to become known as the African National Congress or ANC.

While the pre-1935 period was less militant, a more radical group emerged in the form of the organisation's Youth League in the 1940s with a more pronounced African nationalism philosophy, which also became dominant in other African countries. This led to the adoption of a programme of action to fight and eradicate racial discrimination. This radical group consisted of young militants, including Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela, Govan Mbeki and Andrew Mlangeni.

There were mass demonstrations in the whole of South Africa, especially in the urban areas, and more defined programmes of action against the Apartheid state, such as the 1952 Defiance Campaign led by women and consumer boycotts against white-owned businesses.

It however was in 1955 that politically like-minded organisations and persons converged under the Congress of the People, which led to the declaration and adoption of the Freedom Charter. This, in a way, was more of a wish for a democratic South Africa. This led to heightened political activity and consciousness. Marais (2001:23) states that the ANC's membership grew from 4 000 to hundreds of thousands.

But perhaps the watershed years were in the 1960s following the banning of both the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress. The two organisations were forced to operate secretly; discussions around the need for more violent confrontation with the Apartheid

regime ensued. This culminated in the formation of the several armed wings, notably the ANC's Umkhonto we Sizwe and the Azanian People's Liberation Army. In 1969, the ANC held its conference in Morogoro, Tanzania, which in more fundamental ways endorsed the need for guerrilla warfare against the South African state.

Trade unions also played a pivotal role during this period; 1955 saw the formation of the South African Congress of Trade Unions. During this year more strike action also occurred. The formation decades later, during the 1980s, of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) added impetus to the anti-Apartheid struggle. Cosatu was closely linked to the United Democratic Front (UDF), the ANC and the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco).

3.3.2 International solidarity

The war against the Apartheid regime was waged on many fronts, including at international level. Following the banning of political activity and the massive repression that followed, many so-called activists were exiled to many African countries and European countries.

In this manner they were able to mobilise international solidarity for the struggle, also materially. Many were trained as soldiers and others were able to attend school and university, and further their studies. This ensured that the struggle was waged both internally and externally. The Apartheid regime's hands were full, but they were almost equal to the task – although at a cost. This (the struggle) will be explored later as it led to the negotiated settlement.

The churches were not silent during this time through formal organisations such as the South African Council of Churches, led by Dr Frank Chikane and others, through what was referred to as "black theology". There were calls for economic sanctions against South Africa from high-profile people such as Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

But, as noted by Landsberg and Venter (2011:6), it will be wrong to conclude that the struggle only started after the formation of the ANC in 1912. There were protests prior to 1909 which did not produce any tangible results,

Following the advent of democracy in 1994, when all South African citizens began enjoying political rights, the situation stabilised to a large extent. The democratisation of South Africa followed a watershed announcement by then president F.W. de Klerk on 2 February 1990 where he unbanned all political activity unconditionally. The process also coincided with the repeal of many Apartheid laws (Jung 1999:121).

Williamson (2015:2 of 5) rightfully notes:

Democracy is more than a political system; it's an evolutionary step forward for the human race. It isn't just our right, but also our responsibility, to protect our democracy when it's threatened and expand it where its scope is limited.

Currently South Africans, irrespective of colour and creed, continue to enjoy the many freedoms associated with democracy. Some of these, as enshrined in the Bill of Rights, include but are not limited to the following:

- Freedom of the press and the media;
- The right to form a political party, to campaign for a political party or cause, and to vote in an election.

The process of democratisation in South Africa was not an easy one. Both the Apartheid regime and the liberation forces realised that for peace to prevail, there was a need for peaceful co-existence. This included giving democratic rights to previously excluded groups.

There were serious disagreements within the ruling Nationalist Party government under the leadership of P.W. Botha. These later led to F.W. de Klerk emerging and pushing forward the process of democratisation. Botha's strategy was that of limited reforms for Indians and Coloureds through the creation of the tri-cameral parliament to the exclusion of the African majority.

In this way, it could be argued that Botha had wrongly believed that by giving rights to some sections of the population, blacks will be alienated to some extent and that this will inevitably paralyse the anti-Apartheid struggle.

This was vehemently opposed and there was a noticeable surge in violence despite the establishment of black local councils through the Black Local Authorities Act 102 of 1982. According to De Jongh (2000:85), in 1990 200 councillors had resigned and 237 of the 692 seats were left vacant in the Transvaal due to intimidation and violence.

The South African Institute of Race Relations supports this assertion. There were an estimated two attacks daily on councillors, and between 1984 and 1990 about 120 houses belonging to councillors were attacked and some 20 black councillors were murdered (De Jongh 2000:86).

Elections that were held in 1983 under the Black Local Authorities Act were severely boycotted as they were marred by significant voter abstention. This signalled a massive blow to the Apartheid regime's attempt at including blacks in some arranged political organisation and activity.

Reforms were introduced with the repeal of some Apartheid legislation. Influx control was abolished in 1986, the Job Reservations Act was scrapped, and the Labour Relations Amendment Act was introduced in 1981. It is against this background that it is estimated that the legalisation of trade unions boosted their membership, which grew to 1.4 million by 1984 and the number of strikes from 101 to 342 in 1991 (Marais 2001:50).

Negotiations to solve the political impasse began with the famous CODESA talks that led to the signing of the interim constitution and the holding of the country's first free and inclusive democratic elections in what Dickinson (2002:10) aptly describes as "an unimaginable finale to a long and truly globalised struggle".

This also signalled the beginning of the mammoth task of rebuilding the nation. Finchilescu and Tredoux (2010:223) describe it as follows:

The democratically-elected government faced the monumental task of transforming South African society. A start has been made in providing basic resources such as housing, running water, electricity, education and health care to sectors of the population denied this in the past.

Talbot and Durrheim (2012:476) contend that policies like affirmative action significantly altered power relations, though modern day South Africa remains a highly unequal society, even though deracialised.

The process of swift democratisation was also externally generated. One critical factor that forced liberation movements to abandon the armed struggle was the shift internationally. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) was also facing its own challenges. Liberation movements were supported largely by the USSR and Eastern European countries and the fall of both meant less or no support at all from this part of the world. In this manner, liberation movements were forced to rethink their strategy and increasingly the idea of a negotiated settlement became inevitable.

The role played by African states cannot be overlooked. Most African countries were colonised but there was a wave of decolonisation that took place and it became heightened in the 1960s. Many South Africans were exiled in other African countries. These countries provided material and other support to the anti-Apartheid struggle, thus becoming a dependable ally.

These African countries were not spared the military might and attacks by the South African apartheid army as raids were carried out mainly in the South African Development Community region. Even small countries like Lesotho experienced military raids aimed at struggle fighters in those countries, but also mainly to intimidate them.

The ANC and other liberation forces were able to penetrate the borders of South Africa and mount attacks on strategic places. One such attack was carried out in Sasolburg. Railway lines were also bombed.

While South Africa was able to achieve what became known as a political miracle, it certainly came at a cost in terms of human life. The negotiation process was not entirely supported on the side of the Apartheid regime and the liberation movements. There was opposition and great debate within the ANC and some believed that the armed struggle would result in total capitulation of the regime, while others believed that the regime was still strong militarily.

The ANC made an undertaking through what was called “the sunset clause” that all white senior civil servants would be guaranteed their positions, even if the ANC was to implement affirmative action. This move was resisted within the liberation movement as it was seen as selling out and betraying the struggle for liberation.

It was through the efforts of political stalwarts such as Nelson Mandela and Joe Slovo on the one hand, and F.W. de Klerk and Roelf Meyer on the other, that a negotiated settlement was reached.

The assassination of the MK chief of staff, Chris Hani, in 1993 by rightwing groups twisted the regime’s hand as the ANC under the leadership of Mandela pushed for an election date. While this became a reality, there was another challenge. One of the main African parties, the Inkatha Freedom Party, and the rightwing Freedom Front boycotted or were opposed to the elections. But shortly before the elections were held in 1994, both announced their late participation in the elections – signalling a major and perhaps a lasting breakthrough. Marais (2001:1) sums it up well:

... little wonder then that the bemused admiration of the world was matched by a sense of triumphant pride and hope among the majority of South Africans and the liberation organisations, the ANC they voted into power in 1994.

Bertelsmann Stiftung (2004:1 of 11) states that the largely successful process of democratisation in South Africa engendered high expectations for its transformation and that the relatively good starting conditions (development status, infrastructure, abundant natural resources) intensified these expectations:

From a regional perspective, South Africa was regarded as a potential growth engine. These hopes were only partly fulfilled. Although the country has made progress toward democracy and a market economy in recent years, no breakthrough occurred. Transformation proved difficult in both the political and the economic realm. Given the extent of the social challenges, the pace of reform is too slow and economic growth too limited.

3.4 STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT TO PROMOTE GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

The South African government has employed various strategies to promote political transformation and governance. One such measure is guaranteed as enshrined in the 1996 final constitution of the Republic of South Africa. The Constitution establishes what are commonly known as Chapter 9 Institutions. Two institutions that are currently in the media spotlight, namely The Public Protector, and The South African Human Rights Commission, will briefly be discussed in the next section.

3.4.1 The Public Protector

As a measure to ensure that the conduct of government or government activity is in line with the Constitution and serves not to undermine the public, the office of the Public Protector investigates allegations of misconduct thereof and seeks to enforce remedial action.

Recent cases involve the upgrades done at the private residence of the President, Jacob Zuma, and the lease of buildings by government departments such as that of the IEC and Public Works Department on behalf of the South African Police Services.

3.4.2 The South African Human Rights Commission

The Commission is tasked with, among others, the promotion of and the respect for human rights and culture, and also to monitor observance of human rights in the country. The Commission can also investigate human rights abuses. Reported cases include racism in schools and the provision of clean water to communities.

In terms of the media, the observation of the researcher is that most media strategies employed by the South African government are aimed more at showcasing government's service delivery track record than promoting political transformation and governance. It is more a case of government blowing its own trumpet; this includes programmes aired on SABC 2 (e.g. TNA Media Breakfast), advertorials purchased in various newspapers, and advertisements broadcast on community radio stations.

In terms of the media the Promotion of Access to Information Act is a critical piece of legislation. In one way or the other, the Act ensures that citizens are able to access

any information held by the state and if such is refused or cannot be granted voluntarily, one has recourse to the court of law.

3.5 LEGISLATIVE AND/OR REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The media is regarded in many circles as the Fourth Estate after the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. It provides an important platform for public dialogue. This is guaranteed under the Constitution, which promotes freedom of expression and speech. The media enhances democracy and is a critical pillar thereof.

The Media Development and Diversity Agency (MDDA) ensure the plurality of media providers. As contained in the ANC's Media Charter, quoted in Oosthuizen (2013:122):

... mere declarations of 'media freedoms' (on their own) were not enough, media freedoms had to be underpinned by an equitable distribution of media resources, development programmes and a deliberate effort to engender a culture of open debate.

To regulate broadcasting, the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) of South Africa was also established under Section 192 of the Constitution. It further regulates the telecommunications industry. It is now referred to as the Broadcast Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA).

Print media is regulated under the Press Ombudsman and the Press Council. They promote and encourage good or ethical conduct by the media, especially journalists, and they hear cases brought against the media.

While these are self-regulatory bodies, the ANC has been seen as completely inadequate. ANC voices became more pronounced during the organisation's 2007 Polokwane conference. The ANC believed that self-regulation by the media was inadequate and also held the view that there was too much anti-ANC sentiments among the public. These sentiments were peddled by the media, especially around its president, Jacob Zuma. This subsequently led to the formation of the Press Freedom Commission, headed by a retired judge, to examine media regulation in South Africa.

The body consisted of people who were not involved in the media industry as it was believed that they could be impartial.

The issue of media regulation did however not disappear with the ANC's 52nd national conference in Polokwane. It gained momentum again during the organisation's Mangaung conference that was held in Bloemfontein in 2012. This was, it can be argued, in direct response to what was considered unfair or negative coverage of ANC President Jacob Zuma in the media. The organisation believed that there was a concerted effort by the media to portray Zuma as corrupt.

The ANC believes that the self-regulatory mechanisms by the print media itself is inadequate and that the process of the media being the "referee and the player" at the same time is not fair. Hence there have been calls for the Media Appeals Tribunal with very strict penalties enforced by law. However, government attempts at enforcing this have been met by stiff opposition from civil society and media formations, which consider it as an attempt at censorship.

In recent newspaper reports (*Volksblad* 3 September 2015:2), the Minister of Communication, Ms Faith Muthambi, was quoted as saying that government will do everything in its power to "transform" the media. According to the news report, a question was posed to her by Mr Gavin Davis, DA-MP, in the National Assembly whether her department has a policy on the regulation of the media. Muthambi answered that the Department did not have such a policy, but would issue a discussion document about "media transformation" later this year (2015).

3.6 SABC RADIO'S CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The SABC, through its many radio programmes, encourages free political thought. According to what the researcher has observed, this is achieved through news programmes, especially current affairs. A plurality of news items and interviews are broadcast daily. These are often characterised by debates between political parties.

Ahead of elections, studio debates and live broadcasts featuring various political parties are broadcast. This is done under stringent monitoring by ICASA. Time is allocated proportionally to parties, especially those in parliament. So-called outside broadcasts are also held at community halls. Political parties that have registered for elections are given an opportunity to be part of the panel and express or popularise their manifestos. The audience or prospective voters are part of this and they have an opportunity to interact with their political principals or representatives. This does not exclude parties which are new entrants.

The researcher, in his capacity as the Provincial Head of Current Affairs in the Free State, observed that the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) led by Julius Malema enjoyed considerable coverage because of the kind of impact that was projected by analysts and independent political commentators. The SABC also encourages that each news bulletin should carry different items from different political parties. This is strictly monitored by ICASA and even parties themselves are encouraged to do their own monitoring and raise issues when they feel badly or unfairly treated, especially by the public broadcaster.

The SABC will remain foremost in the minds of politicians because of its dominance of the airwaves and its reach. Eastman (2003:71) asserts that for over 50 years the Corporation has maintained its dominance in broadcasting in South Africa with three-quarters of television viewers and two-thirds of radio listeners. This point is emphasised by Kruger (in The Media Online 2011:1 of 2):

The SABC is, as everybody knows, the gorilla in the room with huge news in both television and radio. It is far and away the most popular source of news for the majority of South Africans, and speaks to them in all official languages and a couple more.

Moletsane (in The Media Online 2013:3 of 3) remarks that the SABC, as the public broadcaster, has done well in enhancing the democratic developmental state and influencing overall cultural development, and inevitably, human development:

The role that SABC has played and continues to play in shaping the media industry in its entirety cannot be underestimated or undermined; it is one institution that continues to drive South Africa's overall strategic objectives and

the building of a socially inclusive republic, a true beacon of transformation in a post-democratic dispensation.

In other words: the SABC enjoys an advantage in the media world, which could make a significant contribution to transformation and governance.

Chapters 2 and 3 focused on the literature review and a theoretical discussion of the study at hand.

In the next chapter the researcher will outline the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER 4: EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The first chapter introduced the research topic, orientation and background. In Chapter 2 the researcher discussed the theory pertaining to the study, specifically referring to radio as theatre of the mind, while Chapter 3 dealt with a discussion on how government employs SABC Radio to contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa. This chapter will focus on the research methodology, in other words, systematic ways to solve the research problem.

The study at hand focuses on the extent to which the SABC, through its public radio broadcasting platform, has been able to contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa. This will be evaluated by focusing on the following aspects:

- Programming
- Language policy
- Governance

The two radio stations to be used as case studies are Lesedi FM and RSG. The former uses Sesotho for broadcasting, while the latter is an Afrikaans-medium station.

The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994, which was characterised by the first historic general elections, did not mean the country became a transformed society. It is well documented that the discriminatory system of Apartheid permeated all layers of society. For instance, in the workplace jobs were reserved for whites, especially at managerial and supervisory level. Marais (2001:29) noted that:

Access to skilled jobs was heavily restricted, through discrimination in the workplace and an education system which, until the early 1970s, was explicitly designed to equip Africans only with the recruitments required for entry into lower ranks of the labour market.

For Apartheid to be sustained a series of racially-based laws were enacted. Homelands or so-called black self-governing territories were created. Apartheid

propaganda was one of the major methods of entrenching the system. This was also to ensure that blacks did not have access to information. What they could access was strictly monitored and sifted, or carefully selected.

One such medium was the creation of the SABC as a state broadcaster in 1936. Over time, black radio stations were created but faced severe limitations in terms of broadcasting. These included, but were not limited to, the hours of broadcasting per day, the kind of music they could play, and the largely political content of the programming. Broadcasts were strictly monitored, according to the testimony of some of the people who the researcher interviewed.

With the democratisation of the country, many measures were created to liberalise the airwaves. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this research is to evaluate the extent to which the SABC radio stations have contributed to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

Mouton and Marais (1996:7) describe social research as a collaborative human activity in which social reality is studied objectively with the aim of gaining a valid understanding of it. To this end, research is conducted and becomes part of endless inquiry by researchers. Mouton and Marais (1996:15) state that the primary aim of research is to generate valid findings, in other words the findings should approximate reality as closely as possible.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher employed a qualitative research method since the study wanted to take into account what people had experienced. Ragin (1994:85) emphasises this point by stating that the images that qualitative researchers construct are detailed and in-depth.

The research question examines the subjective experience of individual interviewees. The selection of people to be involved or interviewed for this study is more purposive in that those identified have a direct interaction with the subject matter being pursued.

The researcher has been employed by the SABC for 15 years and is knowledgeable on the subject matter being studied. Given that it is a purposive and qualitative study,

it will focus on a few cases. The researcher has come across many staff members who served the SABC for many years before the advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 and also after democracy, which is a period of 20 years (1994 to 2014).

A quantitative study will not be useful as it aims at uncovering knowledge by focusing on many cases by producing numerical data and applying statistics for analysis. This strategy will not help the researcher uncover real experiences, and authentic and in-depth accounts from the respondents. The epistemological position of both quantitative and qualitative studies will always differ.

With regard to a qualitative research strategy, the epistemological position is that of interpretivism – a strategy that helps to uncover and interpret meanings according to what people attach to them. In relation to a quantitative strategy, its epistemological position is that through systematic procedures, one can uncover trends that underlie social behaviour.

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design provides the conceptual structure within which research can be conducted. As mentioned earlier, the study is qualitative in nature and follows an interpretive tradition. The empirical investigation comprises a qualitative interview-type survey at the SABC radio stations, Lesedi FM and RSG, to evaluate their contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

There was a quest by the researcher to understand, rather than to offer explanations, in view of the fact that human beings naturally will at all material times change how they view things.

Research design mainly has four key components, namely the research question; theory; data; and the use of data.

A discussion of each of these concepts and how they relate to the study at hand will follow.

4.2.1 Research question

The researcher regards the research question the most critical initial step. It inevitably leads to the formulation of the research topic. It should, as noted by King, Keohane and Verba (1994:15), be important to real life experience. The researcher should also ensure that it is not similar to a previous study, or a complete duplicate, which does not take the enquiry any further. In simple terms, there should not be any traces of a previous study. Instead, “it should deal with a significant real world topic and be designed to contribute, directly or indirectly, to a specific scholarly literature” (King *et al.* 1994:18). In this particular study, the researcher aims to evaluate the extent to which SABC Radio has contributed to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

4.2.2 Theory

Caution should always be taken when dealing with theory. According to Maxwell (2005:46), theory should be applied correctly; one should avoid using too little of it or relying too heavily on it without any critical approach.

Theory is an important component of a research process. It is more often than not informed by our own knowledge or experience within a defined setting or environment. As mentioned by Du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis and Bezuidenhout (2014:13), theory has a direct bearing to a particular practice. For individual researchers, an understanding of theory is essential in undertaking any work.

Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2014:38) define theory as follows:

... is the grounding in which a research study is rooted. It forms the conceptual and theoretical framework within which data is collected, interpreted and understood. The theoretical foundation thus provides the frame or outline by which we organise what we know about a phenomenon.

4.2.3 Data

Data itself crosses boundaries as it may be quantitative or qualitative and may be an important tool in evaluating theory. Rugg and Petre (2004:147) state that a well-

developed research question must have clear and achievable objectives or implications. The objectives or goals of the study are an important part; as emphasised by Maxwell (2005:15), the goals help direct your decisions as to the significance of undertaking the study – the worth, so to speak, and also in terms of justification for the study.

The objectives of this study, as mentioned in Chapter 1, are:

- To investigate and analyse SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation by means of, or focusing on, programming, language policies, and (corporate) governance issues.
- To improve SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.
- To create awareness, through SABC Radio, about the importance of governance and political transformation.

4.2.4 The use of data

The use of data comprises a crucial aspect of any research enquiry. If the data is not correct, the outcome will be compromised, and may present or result in incorrect and invalid findings.

Data helps researchers to examine both reliability and validity. It may be in the form of information collected from primary and/or secondary resources. On the basis that this enquiry uses qualitative research methods, numerical or statistical data will not be employed.

4.3 QUALITATIVE VERSUS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Qualitative research was previously associated with disciplines or schools, such as Sociology and Anthropology. Flick (2014:4) observes that it later became associated

with Nursing and Medicine. According to Willis (2007:151), qualitative research emerged in the 1900s and was employed by anthropologists.

According to Ritchie and Spencer (2002:305), there has been a dramatic increase in the use of the qualitative approach in the past two decades. "Qualitative research is now used to explore and understand a diversity of social and public policy issues, either as an independent research strategy or in combination with some statistical inquiry" (*ibid.*).

As stated by Haralambos (1996:607-608), scientific approaches are inadequate on their own for explaining, collecting and also analysing data, but this is more profound especially when it deals with human action. This kind of data (qualitative) is regarded as richer and a truer reflection of the state of affairs.

Qualitative researchers believe that general, as opposed to specific, technical requirements are mostly appropriate and allow for more flexibility as set-out rules can be altered. This is in sharp contrast to quantitative research, which is more pre-determined, including its settings.

Flick (2014:302) asserts that qualitative research is based on phenomenology and takes into cognisance the examination of life or the world as encountered by human beings. Quantitative researchers choose their work from a highly specialised and standardised set of data analysis, which is highly developed and relies to a high degree on mathematical interpretations, calculations or statistical data. Qualitative data on the other hand, states Neuman (1997:48), is less standardised and there are many approaches or methodologies that deal with data analysis.

Quantitative researchers begin by collecting all data that is required and thereafter they do an analysis, but qualitative researchers themselves analyse data as they collect it and do not wait until the final stages. This may well guide subsequent data to be collected.

Hypothesis is also central to quantitative researchers and they attempt to manipulate data or figures. Qualitative researchers create new concepts and theory by "blending

together” all empirical evidence gathered, and also conceptual frameworks (Neuman 1997:48).

Quantitative researchers, just like statisticians, assume that numbers can be used to represent social life. This is in sharp contrast to qualitative researchers who believe that one cannot draw on a large well-established body of formal knowledge from either statistics or mathematics. Qualitative methods employ general ideas, themes and concepts, while quantitative methods merely conceptualise and refine variables.

Valadez and Bamberger (1994:329) argue that qualitative methods are more intent on understanding reality as construed by the actual study and that the researcher attempts to have a clearer understanding of the meaning of particular activities or belief systems. Studies in this regard are not conducted in isolated places, but within the real environment being studied. In short, an attempt is always made to understand the world or order of things from a direct experience or contact and exposure to the environment.

In this particular study, many of the people who were interviewed are still employed by the SABC. Quantitative data may be descriptive in nature, but perhaps its shortfall is that it cannot tell how subjects or research communities really feel.

4.4 ADVANTAGES OF QUALITATIVE VERSUS QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

Below are a few points that are worth considering when dealing with both qualitative and quantitative studies in research. Certainly each paradigm will argue strongly for its case. What may be advantageous to qualitative researchers may not be construed as such by quantitative researchers. The advantages of qualitative research methods are key to this particular study.

In the table below the advantages of qualitative and quantitative research are listed:

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

It prefers a more natural environment or setting.	It works from controlled settings like a laboratory.
It interprets a phenomenon or event.	It works and relies heavily on predictions or expected outcomes.
It is more inductive in approach and contextualises.	It uses a deductive approach and is more generalised.
Here concepts are seen or presented in distinct variables.	Concepts are presented in the form of themes.
Discovers meaning while the research is in process.	It starts by testing a hypothesis that the researcher begins with.
Procedures are particular and replication of data is rare.	Procedures are standardised and replication is assumed.
Data is in the form of words or images from documents.	Data is numerically presented.

Source: Presentation notes by Dr. T. Coetzee in 2014 on Research and Methodology for Programme of Governance and Political Transformation, UFS.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher decided to employ the qualitative research method. As such, the qualitative modes of inquiry:

- increased the researcher's depth of understanding of the research topic;
- allowed the researcher to become the instrument;
- made it possible for the researcher to examine the SABC's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa;
- resulted in the drafting of concepts which were in the form of themes and categories; and
- enabled the researcher to present data in the form of words and quotes (see Chapter 5).

4.5 SAMPLING

Haralambos (1996:722) states that in any research community there is a group of people who is central to the study. This group may be selected according to the value they will add. Haralambos (*ibid.*) adds that this group represents a particular grouping or sector of a broad community. This, he (*ibid.*) says, may serve to provide economies of scale given the limited budget researchers often face or have to operate from within. In other words, it reduces the size of a population or community to be studied and is more practical and achievable.

Maxwell (2005:88) aptly characterises sampling in the following manner:

... in qualitative research, the typical way of selecting settings and individuals is neither probability sampling nor convenience sampling. It falls into a third category ... purposeful.

The researcher will rely on a comparatively small number of respondents (purposeful), although this will form the central theme of the data to be used.

During the selection of participants, the researcher had a specific purpose in mind – evaluating the contribution of SABC-owned radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa. Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky (2001:165) state that the researcher should be knowledgeable about the population and the purpose of the study before the sample is selected. The population of this study comprised all staff members from all SABC-owned radio stations.

Sampling is more practical and cost-effective as it is difficult to, for instance, interview the almost 5 000 SABC staff members. Therefore the researcher decided to only interview those people he regarded as essential and knowledgeable about the study at hand. The researcher chose to employ non-probability sampling as the sampling method. The reason was simple: to choose people who could offer useful insight into the subject matter. This choice enabled the researcher to select only a few SABC employees for interviews in order to establish an in-depth understanding of their experiences and positions.

Most of the interviewees have been with the SABC for more than 30 years. In other words, they worked for the SABC long before the advent of democracy and also have witnessed the 20 years of democratic broadcasting at the Corporation. Many of them retired in recent years.

The sample consisted of 19 people. Below is the exact breakdown of the participants:

- ✓ Ten people from Lesedi FM = four females and six males
- ✓ Five people from RSG = three females and two males
- ✓ Two unionists from the Media Workers Association of South Africa
- ✓ One politician [male] who has served in parliament and writes extensively about broadcasting, especially issues relating to transformation
- ✓ One male, now with the Government Communication and Information Systems, who writes extensively about broadcasting on social media

4.6 DATA GATHERING

In the process of data collection, the researcher set the stage for the discussion of issues involved in data collection. Data gathering or collection involves the application of various ways or methods in an attempt to obtain information that is reliable. The most commonly used methods of collection are interviews, questionnaires and observation of participants.

The data was collected personally by the researcher and each interviewee was contacted individually to conduct the interview. In this regard, Wimmer and Dominick (2000:48) state that the qualitative researcher interacts with those he studies and actively works with them so as to minimise the distance between the researcher and the phenomenon being studied (McMillan and Schumacher 2001:16).

It is worth noting that data was also collected from various newspaper articles and from respected institutions which deal with monitoring and analysis, such as the FXI and the Media Monitoring Group.

4.7 DATA GATHERING INSTRUMENTS

Data gathering techniques, as mentioned in Chapter 1, include using available documentation or archival records, interviews, the administration of questionnaires, discussions involving focus groups, and observations.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher relied more on one-on-one interviews and archival or available documents.

4.7.1 Interviews

Interviews are associated more with qualitative research studies. Haralambos (1996:737) says it is more useful in initiating and suggesting hypothesis and theories and is not as rigid comparatively.

Interviews primarily involve one-on-one interaction. Willis (2007:244) says interviews may result in powerful stories being told that may inspire and be informative. Willis (*ibid.*) adds that in interviews words are important and that it involves asking questions.

In view of the settings that involve interviews, which relate to the point above that it is usually one-on-one interaction or dialogue, the two, as opined by Potter (2002:160), may bring their own background into the bigger picture. It is therefore imperative that the interviewer must in advance consider the relationship he may have with the participants since qualitative inquiry involves personal involvement to some significant extent.

Willis (in Glesne and Peshkin 1992:118) aptly describes the relationship as follows:

However the researcher is unlike the baseball pitcher, whose joy drives from throwing balls that batters never touch ... Instead you toss questions which you want your respondents to hit and hit well in every corner of your data park, if not clear out of it - a swatted home run of words.

Interviews as data-gathering method are preferred by many researchers as it has many advantages. In certain ways, respondents' views may be probed (Haralambos 1996:736). Respondents may be at ease and a rapport may be established between

the interviewer and interviewee; it also offers a reasonable degree of confidentiality as it is conducted privately or anonymously.

The point above is further illustrated by Goddard and Melville (1996:49) who state that one always has the opportunity to ask the respondents to further illustrate or clarify their views or answers.

It is also worth noting that the flipside of the coin is that the interviewee may feel intimidated by the presence of the interviewer and recording machines or devices (Haralambos 1996:737). Others may feel that they are not comfortable speaking about their conditions and may feel threatened.

Bell (2005:163), on the other hand, believes that interviews, especially unstructured interviews, may “produce a wealth of valuable data though this may require and impose challenges, especially when it comes to analysing data”.

A disadvantage of interviews, experienced by the researcher, is that they proved to be expensive to conduct as most respondents lived in Johannesburg and this involved costs related to travelling and accommodation. Another challenge was that many SABC employees, who could have been useful to this research, were aged and ill; thus they could not participate.

In terms of structured interviews, respondents will favour what is directly important to them and engage with it. Sometimes more than one person or a group of people may be interviewed together. This method may prove problematic. Naturally there are people who speak more than others and they may dominate discussions. This situation could have a negative effect. Bell (2005:163) asserts that it could distort the real picture. Some people may feel intimidated by those who speak and express themselves freely.

In any interview setting or community, there are those who are crucial to the study because of the knowledge they have or their direct experience with the subject matter. According to Valadez and Bamberger (1994:348):

A key informant is an individual who, as a result of his or her education, experience, or physical or social position in a community, has access to information about the functioning of society, the habits of its people or their problems and requirements.

For this study, interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis with the participants mentioned earlier under 'Sampling' (see paragraph 4.5). With regard to the type of interviews that were conducted, the researcher employed unstructured interviews since this allowed for probing questions and offered an opportunity to obtain more information from the interviewees. Conversations were focused by means of questions relating to governance, political transformation and how SABC radio stations are contributing towards governance and political transformation through its programming, language policy and governance. The interviews were based on the perspectives the researcher gained from the literature review, as well as from the archival research. The questions are contained in Appendix A.

Some of the questions that were asked are:

1. What was/is your job at the SABC?
2. What kind of programmes, especially news and current affairs, did you have?
3. What changes, if any, did you notice since 1994 especially around programming, use and application of language, and political content?
4. To what extent do you think the SABC, in the 20-year history of democracy, has been able to introduce programmes that advance democracy and transformation?

4.7.2 Archival research

Ragin (1994:85) defines archives as routinely gathered records of a society, community or organisation, which may further supplement qualitative research methods. May (1993:149), however, cautions that documents may be selectively read.

Archives are important documents that may reflect the history as experienced by people. They are stored safely, and in most cases governments take care of the safekeeping of archives. Hill (1993:21) says access to archives is often restricted and highly controlled. Access may be denied in the course of conducting research and this may well affect the completion or success of the research report.

This was the experience of the researcher when dealing with the archival records of the SABC. Access was denied, with no one in authority willing to take responsibility for granting access to information dealing with governance issues, in particular.

Hill (1993:6) warns that archival records may serve to confirm or not confirm the researcher's legitimations, and while it is important for the study, it is a highly uncertain and unsafe route. In practical terms, there may be volumes of files and records to work through. Hill (1993:17) states that archives might also not be as comprehensive as expected. Another factor is that archival material is generally unique, and once lost, cannot be recovered again. In some cases, the owners of archived material may also have private property rights.

According to Hill (1993:17), some "archives do try to obtain representatives materials that reflect the lives of ordinary people, but even these archives cannot hope to build comprehensive collections for every individual who might like to donate his or her papers and memorable".

In terms of this study, much has and continues to be written about the SABC. This includes, but is not limited to, the resignation of Board members and senior managers (e.g. Chief Executive Officers and Chief Financial Officers) over the years. Newspaper articles and opinion pieces will also be scrutinised by the researcher.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

For qualitative researchers, data analysis remains a central feature. According to Flick (2014:3), data forms and determines the outcomes of research; it may further be advantageous by giving an extra or in-depth explanation, though it may be subjective.

It involves using documents that may be classified as primary and secondary sources. Primary sources cover a period of research, while secondary sources are interpretations based on primary sources. Responses are recorded and coded as they are found or received.

There are various forms of data analysis. These include, but are not limited to, the following: typology, grounded theory (GT), discourse analysis, content analysis and phenomenology.

Both phenomenology and GT methods are widely applied and the former relies heavily on personal experiences. Qualitative studies can produce large volumes of data, which has to be carefully dealt with. The qualitative data obtained during this investigation was analysed by means of content analysis. The respondents' answers to the questions were reviewed and grouped into categories. The results and analysis of the qualitative data will be discussed in Chapter 5.

4.9 ETHICS

Ethics, or the observation and respect for proper ethical conduct, is critical in any research. Bell (2005:44) stresses the need to observe protocol at all times. Bell (*ibid.*) says those taking part in the research need to be fully aware of what is being researched, including their role in the subject, and lastly, the purpose of an inquiry. This has to be fully and clearly spelt out and participants should be "fully aware of the purpose of the research and understand their rights ... explaining that participation is voluntary, that participants are free to refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw from the interview at any time" (Bell 2005:44-45). Berg (2004:58) opines that one of the most serious ethical concerns in behavioural research is the assurance that subjects/participants are voluntarily involved and informed of all potential risks. Participants have to voluntarily or eagerly participate in research and the researcher must not trick participants into participating.

Some people who take part in a research study may prefer to remain anonymous or unidentified. Some may even press for a research contract, which should be signed confirming agreements or preconditions to participation.

Blaxter *et al.* (in Bell 2005:46) defines research ethics as follows:

... is about being clear about the nature of the agreement you have entered into with your research subjects or contacts. Ethical research involves getting the informed consent of those you are going to interview, question, observe or take materials from. And it is about keeping to such agreements when they have been reached.

This is further emphasised by Rugg and Petre (2004:157), who say that there is a binding duty on the researcher to take due care of his or her community. Neuman (1997:48) states that there are two preconditions to an enquiry being carried out. These are the “pursuit of knowledge”, and also ensuring that all the rights of participants to the study are protected and respected at all times.

Neuman (1997:48) says a researcher who upholds strong ethical standards wins neither praise nor rewards. Worth noting is that the respect for ethics may clash with the desire to uncover data and the respondents’ wish that their rights be respected.

Ethical considerations were considered throughout the planning and data collection phases of this study. As such, the researcher informed all participants about the purpose of the research and the methods to be used. The participants were given a choice on whether they wanted to participate or not. Confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed by ensuring that the data could not be linked to individual subjects by name. In the midst of the research, respondents expressed concerns regarding their identity being kept confidential as they feared that the SABC might victimise them, especially for expressing views which were critical of the Corporation.

Therefore, data was collected anonymously. Reliability and validity were enhanced by the format of the instrument used, as well as the consistent way in which the data was analysed. For something to be relied upon, it has to pass the litmus test (Goddard and Melville 1996:41). This means the same result should be obtained if the same experiment is performed. But for it to also comply with validity testing, the measurements have to be accurate.

The researcher also has to ensure that respondents feel free and protected to air their views; that the research is not going to be publicly displayed in newspapers and other media. The researcher took all these ethical considerations into cognisance.

4.10 CONCLUSION

The qualitative mode of inquiry as a method for data collection was used in order to understand how SABC Radio has contributed to governance and political transformation in South Africa. It is believed that the qualitative research method provided a platform to gather information through interviews and archival research.

The results of the study will be analysed and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS OF RESULTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim that influenced the undertaking of this research was to evaluate the SABC radio stations' contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa. The primary and exclusive focus was on Lesedi FM, which serves mainly Sesotho-speaking listeners, and the Afrikaans station Radio Sonder Grense (RSG). The study also had the following objectives (see Chapter 1 and paragraph 4.2.3 of Chapter 4):

- To investigate and analyse SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation by means of focusing on programming, language policies, and (corporate) governance issues.
- To improve SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.
- To create awareness, through SABC Radio, about the importance of governance and political transformation.

Therefore, this chapter aims to present the research findings as investigated in the empirical study. The empirical investigation, as outlined in Chapter 4 (see paragraph 4.2), consisted of a qualitative interview-type survey at Lesedi FM and RSG to evaluate their contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

In analysing the data and results of the empirical investigation it was important to examine how the two above-mentioned SABC radio stations contributed to governance and political transformation by means of their programming, language policies and governance. Data was obtained through two data collection methods, namely face-to-face interviews and archival research.

It is important to note that during the data-gathering process many participants were reluctant to share information with the researcher in fear that their identity might not be protected despite the many assurances given to them by the researcher of good ethical conduct and anonymity.

5.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The data, as mentioned in the preceding chapters, was obtained largely through qualitative research by primarily conducting face-to-face interviews with people who were carefully selected on the belief that they had useful experience at various levels within the SABC (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.5).

As mentioned in Chapter 1 (see paragraph 1.6.7), data analysis was done by means of content analysis. According to Nieuwenhuis (2007:101), content analysis is useful when analysing responses to open-ended questions on surveys and interviews and, as such, "... is a process of looking at data from different angles with a view of identifying keys in the text that will help us to understand and interpret the raw data ... we look for similarities and differences in text that would corroborate or disconfirm theory". As the researcher had already completed the literature review when the data analysis was undertaken, the researcher worked inductively in assigning codes (where the codes emerged from the data) to an extent, but also made use of *a priori* or predetermined codes (Nieuwenhuis 2007:107) related to the topic and research questions at hand. By utilising the coding and other procedures in content analysis it was possible to identify patterns and, ultimately, themes and categories of meaning related to the theory and the focus of the research. In the next few paragraphs the results of the interview survey and findings from archival research will be discussed.

5.3 INTERVIEW SURVEY

Interviews were conducted over a longer-than-expected period due to the unavailability of some interviewees and others who withdrew at the last minute. The interviews commenced in July and August 2014, but the majority of participants were interviewed from January 2015 onwards. In total, 19 people were interviewed (see Chapter 4, paragraph 4.5) - seven females and 12 males. Interviews were conducted on a one-on-one basis, apart from one telephonic interview, but this did not limit the discussion or the information the researcher aimed to obtain.

5.3.1 Results of qualitative data analysis of interview results

The data collected was largely qualitative in nature based on the methodology that was used. As stated by Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014:386), it is important to take note of the dire need to “describe classifications” that have been taken from the data used as this may serve to illustrate the range of attitudes, beliefs, judgements, actions and behavioural patterns.

The following section entails an outline of the key aspects pertaining to respondents’ views of the research topic at hand, namely the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa.

5.3.1.1 *Job positions and years of service at the SABC*

The first two questions dealt mainly with personal information about the interviewees to determine, one, their relevance in terms of knowledge of the SABC by virtue of having worked for the Corporation, and secondly whether the job they did, did actually expose them sufficiently to have insight into the content, programming and language policies of and within the SABC. As such, Question 1 read as follows: “*What was/is your job at the SABC?*” and Question 2 stated: “*For how long did you do this job?*” (see Appendix A).

Twelve interviewees had been with the SABC prior to democracy or, to put it simply, have been there for over 20 years and have therefore experienced it before the advent of and during democratic rule. One respondent, for instance, had been with the SABC for 42 years at the time of his resignation. He had started as a junior announcer and rose through the ranks of an announcer, specialist announcer, programming manager and during his latter years as the station manager. The other respondent almost travelled the same path and ended as station manager. Many became supervisors and joined managerial ranks.

Another respondent had worked for almost a decade and was expelled for political reasons only to be rehired years later although in a different department as a drama producer whereas he was initially a news reader and also presented a programme.

Seven respondents had a direct role and participated in structures that were aimed at democratising the SABC, for example formally through the unions, such as the Media Workers Association of South Africa (MWASA) and the Broadcasting Electronic Media and Allied Workers Association (BEMAWU). They rose through the ranks and somehow later, became a link between the then African National Congress and the SABC. It is worth mentioning that the former (MWASA) was a predominantly black union which spread outside of the SABC to print media, including *Sowetan*, *Sunday Times* and the *New Nation*. The latter, BEMAWU, was dominated by whites and less militant black workers within the SABC.

5.3.1.2 Views on news and current affairs programmes

The third question “*What kind of programmes, especially news and current affairs, did you have?*” attempted to probe the views of interviewees to a significant extent.

Here a clear distinction appeared. Many respondents had experienced biased news and current affairs shows. The broadcasting of these shows was extensively monitored by whites who could speak and understand African languages.

At Lesedi FM the station manager was a white man known as Watson. He spoke Sesotho fluently and never missed a single news bulletin or current affairs show by all accounts of those who worked with him. There were programmes broadcast, such as “Qapollo ya ditaba”, loosely translated as “an analysis”. Here there were so-called experts who spoke on topical issues and offered analysis. Relevant experts were chosen who were aired. Subjects or topics covered included whether sanctions were good for the South African economy and whether the introduction of sanctions served to hurt Apartheid or blacks, who it was intended to assist.

All of the respondents from both RSG and Lesedi FM admitted that they were always given what to read or present on air. They did not know who had produced and compiled these news items and were told to read as is. This viewpoint directly corresponds with Kruger’s (in *Mail & Guardian* 2014:2 of 8) notion of “doing what you were told” (see paragraph 2.4.5). A distinction in this regard is that those who worked

for then Sesotho Stereo, now Lesedi FM, say they were not trusted if they will do what was instructed. As a safety measure, they were required to rehearse the script several times and when it was the actual time to read - on air -, they were strictly monitored.

Their counterparts from RSG say they never had this experience of being strictly monitored and admittedly, they complied. One Lesedi FM presenter says at some point, because he was irritated with the situation, made a disclaimer that the news he was about to present may not necessarily be true. He was dismissed, but his colleague who presented after him, did the same and claimed on air that he does not believe what he had just presented. He too got fired. What became clear in this regard is that all that was or represented white people, was believed to be true. It is interesting to note how these views correspond with the authoritarian normative theory applied by the previous political dispensation under the leadership of the National Party (see paragraph 1.1). The mass media theory applicable here is the hegemonic theory (see paragraph 2.2.4.2).

It was also highlighted by one presenter that topics were carefully selected so as to spread the propaganda that would have served to sustain Apartheid or create more confusion among the liberation movements or within the anti-Apartheid struggle, the mass democratic movement as to whether the paths suggested were of real value or not. To instil some fear, one respondent remarked that the number of casualties on the liberation front was always exaggerated. For instance if one soldier was killed, it will be written and presented as if a dozen or so had been killed and that army camps had been infiltrated.

The same question was presented as a scenario to one RSG presenter and she said the reason for this was to instil fear and eventually cut on the number of people inside the country who may want to join the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe and other liberation forces.

Asked about why they chose to comply with orders which may have compromised ethical standards of fair and accurate reporting, job security was mentioned as a reason for this by all the presenters or staff from Lesedi FM. Many had just bought

houses and cars. Because of language demographics then, many were from the Free State as they were required to write proper and speak Sesotho language fluently.

Other topics discussed included the armed struggle waged by liberation movements, consumer boycotts spearheaded by civil organisations, and the need for self-determination in South Africa. Topics were chosen that served to maintain and sustain, and to some extent justify, the existence of the illegitimate system of Apartheid. This was not only limited to news and current affairs, but extended to normal magazine and entertainment programmes.

Songs were also banned that were considered to be politically undesirable and were scrapped from the SABC's record library. There were artists who formed part of the mass mobilisation against Apartheid, such as the group Stimela as they sang what became commonly known as protest songs. They were banned from the airwaves. Violation of this was a serious crime that warranted severe punishment. This form of punishment in most cases was immediate dismissal without a hearing. All programmes were recorded as evidence.

Announcers, as presenters were then called, were rewarded for loyalty and were promoted into supervisory levels. According to some respondents, the more they "sold-out" their colleagues who may have had different views to SABC management, the more they were rewarded with higher positions. This served as an incentive to others that if you cooperated with management, you might be rewarded with a salary increment that was coupled with promotion to a more senior position, mainly at supervisory level. But it also created a situation where workers were always suspicious of one another, especially if they realised that you were becoming white management's "darling".

5.3.1.3 *Views on changes in programming, language usage and political content since 1994*

Question 4 was concerned with the post-Apartheid broadcasting era at the SABC – focussing mainly on the kind of programmes that were introduced in an attempt to delink from the past. As such, Question 4 asked: *"What changes, if any, did you notice*

since 1994 especially around programming, use and application of language and political content?”

All respondents agreed that the period especially from the early 1990s became more liberalised. Many of the journalists who worked for the print media joined the SABC in management positions, especially in the news and current affairs division. Almost all respondents say the ANC had an upper hand in placing comrades in the SABC and they were tasked with transformation. Probed on why this was the case, they say the ANC then believed that its own people understood in more deeper terms, the need to transform the SABC, and the extent to which the liberalisation of the airwaves could mean the levelling of political playing fields. In this way the leadership of the ANC, ahead of elections, could reach millions of people. One respondent believed that the other outcome was that the monopoly the National Party had over broadcasting could be severely dealt a blow. This was critical to free and fair political activity including access to the masses.

The process also saw many former white managers of African radio stations resign or take severance packages; this freed up more positions for blacks. Asked about why this could have been the case, all respondents from RSG, except one, believed that some whites who enjoyed privileges in the SABC feared that they were to lose substantially once blacks took over; they may revenge. One respondent felt that these were largely white people who were racists and therefore could not stand to witness change that would sweep their rights of preferential treatment away.

According to the testimony of many of the respondents, not so many new programmes were introduced, but the content was changed. For instance, there was a striking shift towards adherence to the basic tenets or principles of journalism (unbiased and objective reporting). Many voices that hitherto had not been heard now had a platform. But all respondents add that with the advent of ICASA regulations, stations had to add more hours of current affairs programmes and news bulletins. One remarked as follows;

“We were forced to add many broadcasting hours weekly to our news programmes. At Lesedi FM, we now came with an hour long midday current affairs show from Monday to Friday. On weekends we added two hours, one

hour Saturday morning and the other on Sunday and the net effect of this arrangement was that we had to add more staff and employ people”.

Politically all parties enjoyed the same treatment and there were no repercussions for interviewing, for instance, previously banned or barred voices. The reason for increased hours of current affairs was to give effect to the need to have more voices on radio and cover for different needs of a public broadcaster.

To ensure strict adherence to governance and perhaps regulations, the SABC introduced a code of conduct that was to ensure, among others, good practice. Through this code of conduct or ethics, (summarised hereunder), the SABC made a strong undertaking to the following:

- Report, contextualise, and present news honestly by disclosing all relevant facts, and by not suppressing or distorting information.
- Not discriminate or promote discrimination.
- Political or personal considerations will not be allowed to influence news.
- Editorial decisions will be based on news merit.
- No obligation to any interest group.
- Ensure accuracy and objectivity.

But the situation also developed some dynamics. Half of the respondents say the ANC also felt a bit uncomfortable and became too sensitive to news that was seen as critical of its leadership or conduct. Four of the respondents stated that there was still some bias as they sometimes were prevented from broadcasting certain news items. This, they said, was due to the ruling party’s discomfort with some material that was critical of the ANC. These respondents drew attention to different presidential epochs in the country. They opined that during the presidency of Nelson Mandela there was no noticeable interference, but that there was more pronounced interference during the presidency of Thabo Mbeki and later Jacob Zuma.

This, they claim, was done through a process that became known as blacklisting experts or political analysts and it became more frequent. Fifteen respondents remarked that senior news managers in the SABC were called to ANC headquarters,

Luthuli House, to account or take instructions on what to broadcast - a process they referred to as the “Luthulification” of the SABC.

It should be noted that none of the respondents claimed to have experienced this directly, except that they (the respondents) were told at times to drop certain news stories or news items without proper or editorial reasons being advanced. This group, although they stated it individually, said the outcome of non-compliance with these orders was dismissal (which was suspect or unjustified) or deployment to other divisions within the SABC.

This was coupled with the employment of former ANC operatives to senior positions within the SABC, or to its governing structure, the SABC Board. As an example the former Executive of News, Dr Snuki Zikalala, is cited. He was a former operative of the ANC military wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe. Eighty percent of the respondents said Zikalala had close friendship ties with then president Thabo Mbeki who started dominating news and was featured almost daily on prime news. The test of newsworthiness, they assert, was abandoned to accommodate Mbeki.

All of the respondents observed that even under the presidency of Jacob Zuma, there are journalists known as presidential corps. They said these are reporters who cover every event that the president attends or hosts and are carefully selected to ensure that they report positively about the presidency. This according to them, even applies on the president’s international visits.

It is interesting and worth noting that all respondents felt that this situation has not changed to date. One remarked:

“The ANC government started making blunders and was faced with community protests over service delivery – often violent in nature. The ANC does not want this on air. As a result the current COO interferes, but sometimes it is inevitable and we show this on-air”.

All the respondents referred to the appointment of the current COO, Hlaudi Motsoeneng. This despite his much-publicised lack of qualifications and possible

improper conduct as revealed and reported by the Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela, in her report into improper conduct (Motsoeneng was then the SABC's Acting COO).

Seventy-five percent of the respondents were of the opinion that the SABC was no longer biased, but they said that it faced challenges in this regard. They pointed to instability, largely at Board level, following the dissolution of successive boards and they linked this directly to the interests of the ANC to ensure that governance at the SABC was compromised. They asserted that there had been attempts by senior managers at the SABC to "cleverly" influence the direction the News Department should take.

For instance, at some point, the COO spoke about the need to "ignore" what he termed bad news, such as service delivery protests, proposing a 70:30 ratio of good versus bad news. In other words, more focus and resources (70%) should be spent on producing good or positive stories, instead of bad news. About half of the respondents felt that this was an attempt to control news that was anti-ANC and also to restrict views that the citizenry might be getting more disgruntled with the ANC-led government. Once again, the hegemonic media theory applies.

Regarding language use, almost all the respondents opined that there was more respect and tolerance for other languages, and while there was an attempt to ensure that the purity of languages was maintained, other languages were given a chance and translated to ensure that people were not discriminated against on the basis of language or illiteracy levels, especially regarding news that was of national interest. One respondent remarked:

"... There was free reporting on political and social issues and that the use of language was more relaxed and informally applied according to the style of each programme or show. Programmes became more interactive with audience feedback and participation. Politicians invited as guests could be interrogated by the listeners live on air without presenters interfering".

Another respondent concurred:

"Programming is much more balanced on RSG news programmes. Views and input from political, social and community spheres are heard, which was not the case prior to 1994. There is no 'taboo' subject anymore, although some

sensitive issues like violence, sexual abuse, etc. will be handled in a sensitive manner. Language usage is more relaxed although correct words must still be used. Different language variants are heard and reflected equally”.

One respondent was of the opinion that the ANC largely enjoyed electoral support from the African constituency. As such the ANC was more concerned about what was broadcast on African language stations, rather than on SAfm (English) and RSG (Afrikaans). He believed that more news which was critical of the president, the ANC and the government was broadcast without interference on these two radio stations than on the “black” stations. This point of view was put as a follow-up question to the other respondents, mainly black, and the majority agreed this might be the case while others had no opinion in this regard as they had not observed this and had no basis for supporting this view.

On the issue of language, respondents from Lesedi FM believed that radio has done a lot in terms of ensuring that all languages are heard as compared to TV. They assert that TV still does not cater especially for minority African languages like Xivenda, Xitsonga and others. This is in sharp contrast to radio which has several radio stations spread across all provinces and are able to cater for all languages.

One interesting observation made was that even stations such as Lesedi FM, do use Sesotho strictly, but are accommodative of other languages if there is a need and this is always translated. The same applied to RSG, for example many politicians, especially from former liberation movements are now ministers and can only speak their vernacular and English only.

Eighty percent of the respondents believed that, because of the demographics of the country, the SABC management structure had to change and be dominated by Africans and that this somehow unsettled many whites who worked for the Corporation and some people outside of the SABC – thus, ordinary citizens. This might have led to perceptions of bias, which might not be true.

The two radio stations, according to all respondents, made remarks that amongst some good positive measures, is that listeners are always allowed an opportunity and space to air their views on topical issues. One respondent said:

“Even when the issue was hot at Nkandla between opposition parties and the ANC, we did ask our listeners to air their views on our open line slot. Some reacted harshly and called on the president to own up and pay for the non-security upgrades. In the past we could not have done this or we could have faced immediate dismissal without a disciplinary hearing”.

The view expressed above came from a Lesedi FM presenter and even the RSG respondents agreed that they are free to determine the news line-up and content of the show. They say each show has producers, a senior producer and an executive producer. These are people tasked with determining and deciding on any show without interference at all. These viewpoints support the normative media theory being applied after democratisation, namely the social responsibility theory.

5.3.1.4 *Views on the extent to which the SABC, in the 20-year history of democracy, has been able to introduce programmes that advance democracy and transformation*

Question 5 dealt generally with content or programmes that may advance democratic rule in South Africa: *“To what extent do you think the SABC, in the 20-year history of democracy, has been able to introduce programmes that advance democracy and transformation?”*

Many of the respondents were of the opinion that no specific content had been introduced specifically for the above-mentioned purpose. Almost all the respondents stated that specific programmes were introduced as a result of government departments purchasing advertisements. These advertisements were paid for by the respective departments and they determined the content. These served mainly to educate communities on specific departmental services. For instance, at Lesedi FM you would find the Department of Labour sending a representative or an expert to speak about the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF); the Department of Justice

would speak about child support or maintenance for children abandoned by either of their parents; and parliament would speak about public participation.

The programmes mentioned above are not necessarily an initiative of the SABC, but are aired on SABC channels, such as television and radio. However, these are seen as necessary content that promotes democracy because a well-informed citizenry is critical for the growth and deepening of democracy. One respondent remarked that these paid for content is generally not controversial and is very popular with the ordinary citizens.

Asked about political party sponsored adverts, all respondents felt this is not problematic especially during elections time as it supports equitable share of time available for any party without undue control or influence from any authority.

Respondents were asked to raise any other matter without feeling restricted by the questions posed by the researcher. This could lead to the researcher making an important, yet unexpected discovery, which might be critical for further studies or research. One respondent made one such an important observation:

“Before 1994, the news and current affairs and to an extent programming content was skewed in terms of race, gender and politics. There were bans on certain persons as guests/experts on shows; self-censorship was done on the type of topics and experts. There was no interaction on air. Whites, especially white males, enjoyed more prominence on radio and TV as opposed to other races and gender”.

Two respondents from the radio stations concerned cautioned that senior management must always try and avoid possible political influence or interference in editorial matters.

5.4 ARCHIVAL RESEARCH

As stated by Ragin (1994:85) archives are routinely sourced records of a society, community or organisation which may assist qualitative data. May (1993:149) however warned of the inherent dangers of archival research - that material sourced from archives may be compromised in that the researcher may use them selectively.

In this regard, much of the material used was from organisations that are not involved in broadcasting. One such organisation is the FXI. A study of documents that the organisation produced in its stocktaking of the SABC indicates only negative factors and very little of a positive nature. Its evaluation of the SABC was thus not considered objective. The SABC never responded or critiqued the papers produced by the Institute. However, its critique of the SABC assisted the researcher in probing questions during the interviews with the participants.

The SABC itself is lacking in this regard as it does not archive its own contribution to governance and political transformation through language, content or programme offerings. Attempts by the researcher to lay his hands on useful archival material from the Corporation did not yield any results. Many of the documents only speak to what is required in parliament; they focused largely on the SABC's financial performance and management vacancies.

5.4.1 Results of data analysis of archival research

The archival research yielded the following results: Not only is the SABC being controlled by the ANC, but is also a highly unstable organisation (especially in terms of corporate governance) that is unable to meet its constitutional mandate.

While the issue of instability is real at Board level, it has not filtered down to programming as news that is critical of management or the Board is aired on SABC's different media platforms.

5.5 OVERVIEW OF EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

The face-to-face interviews and archival records brought valuable insights with regard to the contribution of SABC radio stations (Lesedi FM and RSG) to governance and political transformation in South Africa. The conclusions are drawn from the empirical investigation.

- Many respondents had worked for the SABC for a period of 20 years plus. They have therefore witnessed the state of broadcasting pre- and post-Apartheid.
- The views on news and current affairs programmes (before the advent of democracy) yielded some interesting thoughts about the authoritarian normative media theory when the National Party was still the ruling party.
- The views on changes in programming, language usage and political content indicated that a shift was made from biased reporting to unbiased and objective reporting. This was primarily brought about by the SABC's code of conduct. More hours of current affairs programmes and news bulletins were added to comply with ICASA regulations. It appeared from the answers of the respondents that the ANC interferes with news content, especially in so far as the party is being criticised for misconduct or poor service delivery. This supports Kruger's (in Mail & Guardian 2014:3 of 8) notion that the underlying culture of the SABC did not change and that the corporation still experienced ongoing political pressure.
- In terms of language usage, more respect and tolerance for other languages is demonstrated, while still maintaining purity of the particular languages spoken on air.
- No specific content had been introduced to advance democracy and transformation. The results indicated that there were non-specific programmes aimed at achieving this and that the content of programmes and news served this purpose. However, programmes were introduced where government departments purchased airtime to educate listeners about their services. As mentioned earlier, these programmes or content promotes democracy because a well-informed citizenry is crucial for the growth and deepening of democracy.

The next chapter offers an integration of the results and findings, summary, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER 6: INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 6 an attempt will be made to integrate the findings as presented in the previous chapter. A summary will also be given of the previous chapters while the researcher will make recommendations, especially on further studies that may be undertaken.

Interpretation and integration of findings should, at all times, correspond and attest to the data that was collected or analysed. Therefore, the aim of the research, namely the evaluation of SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation should be achieved, while the researcher should also indicate how the objectives of the study (see paragraphs 1.5, 4.2.3 and 5.1) are met.

The aim of the research was achieved by means of the qualitative face-to-face interviews with the 19 respondents. In meeting the first objective of the study (to investigate and analyse SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation by means of focusing on programming, language policies and governance issues) the researcher asked questions to the respondents that dealt with these aspects specifically (see paragraphs 5.3.1.3 and 5.3.1.4).

With regard to programming, the interviews indicated that the programme and content offerings of both Lesedi FM and RSG changed from biased reporting (pre democratisation) to unbiased reporting (under democratic rule). The researcher ascribes this change to the fact that the SABC has introduced a code of conduct – stipulating how the corporation could, by means of broadcasting regulations, contribute to a free and democratic society. The SABC as a public service broadcaster has introduced a code of conduct to enhance democratic principles in the sense that the radio stations Lesedi FM and RSG became a platform for the general public at large to voice their opinions. The introduction of especially social media and platforms serve as a tool whereby listeners can provide feedback and become active role players in the communication process. Here the two-step-flow theory, uses and gratifications theory and reception theory apply where media consumers are seen as being active in the interpretation of media content (see paragraph 2.2.4).

The interviews conducted served to confirm the researcher's view that broadcasting under democratic rule has largely become more relaxed – especially in terms of language usage (see paragraph 5.3.1.3). Both Lesedi FM and RSG allow commentary (by guests and listeners) in other languages than those spoken on air, although the official broadcasting languages (Sesotho for Lesedi FM and Afrikaans for RSG) are kept professional and pure. This is to accommodate everyone listening to the particular radio station and give them a chance to voice their opinion in a language they feel comfortable to speak.

With regard to corporate governance issues, it became evident that, although a social responsibility normative media theory applies under the new political dispensation, the ruling ANC still, to a certain extent, interferes with news content. There were minor pockets of people who felt that there were attempts at some point to influence the broadcasting of certain items or curtail them in favour of the ruling party. Concerns were raised around instability at governance level (i.e. the SABC Board) - that this might create the impression, rightly or wrongly, of ANC control over the SABC. This notion supports the literature study whereby it is stated that the SABC still experience ongoing political pressure. The interviews conducted yielded that the roles between the SABC Board and management were blurred; however, the need was expressed for the Board to maintain its constitutional oversight role over the SABC, thus ensuring accountability and good governance. The researcher holds the opinion that broadcasters and the SABC must be free to determine the direction they wanted to take in order to enhance democracy and transformation.

The second objective of the study was to improve SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa. The fact that no specific radio content had been introduced to advance democracy and transformation creates an opportunity for the public broadcaster to revisit programming and content offerings. Currently the only platform where content about political transformation and democracy is being broadcast is by means of news or actually show broadcasts. Furthermore, political campaigns are aired prior elections, but this normally takes on the form of paid-for advertisements by political parties and organisations.

In meeting the third objective, namely to create awareness, through SABC Radio, about the importance of governance and political transformation, the researcher deems it necessary for the corporation to keep track of its programme and content offerings dealing with governance and political transformation. As stated under paragraph 5.4, the researcher could not find any archival records related to the SABC's contribution to governance and political transformation.

6.2 SUMMARY

The research was undertaken to assess and evaluate the contribution of SABC Radio to both governance and political transformation in South Africa. The measurement used was to check language, content and programming offerings employed by SABC owned radio stations. To this extent, two radio stations, namely Lesedi FM and Radio Sonder Grense (RSG), were used as case studies for the purpose of the enquiry. The choice was deliberate as Lesedi FM enjoys popular support among Sesotho-speaking nations while RSG uses Afrikaans as a medium and was seen as very dominant during Apartheid.

It became clear during the course of the enquiry that there was not a single acceptable definition of governance but that there were certain features or characteristics of governance. These were largely how institutions may be viewed by the public or how they were expected to behave or conduct their affairs under a democratic dispensation. A great deal of time was spent also on political transformation of South Africa in rather broad terms and the evolution of broadcasting especially different phases of the SABC since its establishment. It also became clear that radio as a medium has a far wider reach as compared to other media platforms and enjoys some considerable advantage because it is cheaper and for its immediacy among others. It was shown that over 75% of the population listen to radio as shown in Plaut and Holden (2012:177). The role of a public broadcasting service came under the spotlight. The next few passages present a summary and synopsis of each chapter of the study.

The introduction and background of the study was dealt with in Chapter 1. The media is seen as an important instrument governments worldwide employ to communicate

with their citizens at any given time. The media also has a role to play in advancing democratic rule. The main purpose of the research was to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and transformation in South Africa. Chapter 1 covered the research problem, aim and objectives of the study as well as the research design to be employed.

Chapter 2 was a theoretical presentation of the literature study and focused on the characteristics and functions of the mass media. The researcher presented a thorough discussion on theories of mass media since humanity now lives in what could be termed “information society” and since radio is an important component of mass media. The theories were dealt with adequately which includes hegemony, hypodermic needle, two-step, uses and gratifications and reception theories. Radio as broadcasting medium was discussed, especially in terms of its evolution as broadcasting medium and the history of radio in South Africa. An overview was provided of SABC Radio stations Lesedi FM and RSG, with specific reference to programming, language policy and governance. The chapter was concluded with a discussion of broadcasting regulation mechanisms.

Chapter 3 focused on governance and political transformation in the context of South Africa. It also examined media strategies employed by government to promote governance and political transformation. There was a discussion of the Constitution, especially so-called Chapter 9 institutions like the Public Protector, the SA Human Rights Commission, and others. Legislative and/or regulatory frameworks were outlined. In this regard agencies and regulatory bodies like MDDA, the BCCSA, Press Ombudsman and the Press Council were mentioned. The chapter concluded with a discussion about SABC Radio’s contribution towards governance and political transformation in South Africa.

Chapter 4 focused on the empirical investigation of the study. The mode of enquiry was largely qualitative in nature and focused on semi-structured interviews with people who were selectively and purposefully chosen. To this extent a pool of people to be interviewed were largely people who had served the SABC under Apartheid and democratic rule over many years. Unstructured interviews were used which allowed for more probing and extraction of more information. The most critical step in the

beginning phase was the research question – ensuring that there were no previous studies focusing on the same question and ensuring that there is an academic value in pursuing the research work. Nineteen people were interviewed during the face-to-face interviews. The questions focused on personal information and years at the SABC while the rest were more substantive in nature and required some probing and digging of explanation with regard to the research aim and objectives in question. The use of and analysis of data was also key during the empirical phase. The correctness of data cannot be over emphasised. It should be reliable and valid. Data were analysed by means of content analysis. Also, the data was treated cautiously to ensure that outcome is not compromised in the process. The importance of ethical considerations was clearly spelt out. Research protocol was observed at all times to ensure strong ethical standards as emphasised by Neuman (1997:48).

In chapter 5 the focus was on interpretations and findings of results. All five questions that were asked during the face-to-face interview phase of the empirical investigation were outlined and discussed. Documents retrieved from archival records also brought valuable insights, assisting the researcher with the integration of findings. The chapter was concluded with an overview and summary of the answers provided by the interviewees.

Chapter 6 dealt with the integration of findings. There was a correlation between data collected and results of the study or findings. A summary was provided of the previous chapters while the researcher made recommendations, especially on further studies that may be undertaken.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research, it remains of critical importance that:

- The SABC's impartiality is respected and enhanced. Content on radio is not interfered with by politicians if the SABC is to delink radically from the Apartheid past of broadcasting.

- More effort is made to introduce programmes that are not paid for whose sole purpose would be to strengthen the role of the broadcaster in enhancing transformation and good governance.
- Legislation should be enacted to ensure protection from any influence.
- The Protection of State Information Bill is not imposed as it creates the perception that the ANC, the government, or the President wants total control of the SABC.
- Uninterrupted feedback from listeners is ensured and maintained.

It is important that organisations such as the SABC must be severely monitored by government. This can be done through legislation, some reporting mechanisms that can sort of be monitored and quantified to give a clearer picture of how the organisation is performing in enhancing governance and political transformation. It is also important that an audit be done to ascertain the extent that the SABC has contributed to transformation through language policies, content and programming. This should be done at all SABC-owned radio and television stations and should form part of the organisation's assessment by parliament and the auditor-general. The same applies to new entrants into the market, such as community radio stations, and they may be assessed as part of their licence conditions by ICASA.

There may be a need for the establishment of a body whose task would be to elect persons to serve on the Board of the SABC. These people should and must not report to the Minister of Communications. Their approval or appointment must not serve before parliament for ratification. This would ensure that they are not accountable to individual politicians, a particular political party or the president who may have had a hand in their appointment. This may have the important effect of stabilising the Board which is largely responsible for governance issues at the SABC.

The researcher's personal view is that given the significance of the SABC's role in society, there is a need to establish it as a so-called Chapter 9 institution - this in the same way as the office of the Public Protector, South African Human Rights Commission and the Auditor-General. To this extend the constitution may require

some amending but the benefit is that the independence of the SABC may be guaranteed and all suspicions that it is the government's mouthpiece, may be quelled.

6.4 CONCLUSION

As mentioned earlier, the purpose of this research was to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio (as mass media) to governance and political transformation. Despite the many challenges faced during the undertaking of this inquiry, expectations were met. This included some reluctance of staff members to grant interviews fearing that they may be victimised if their identity may be revealed by the researcher. It was after a long period of persuasion that they started co-operating with the enquiry but still insisting and emphasising that their identities should not be revealed.

The sincere hope is expressed by the researcher that the SABC, through its radio stations, will be able to implement the suggestions and recommendations, based on the findings of the empirical investigation, and make it an integral part of their daily practice.

The researcher also hopes that the results and recommendations of this study will assist the SABC in revisiting their contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa so that all citizens of this country will benefit from democracy.

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Appendix A: Interview questionnaire for respondents

This mini-dissertation aims to evaluate the contribution of SABC radio stations to governance and political transformation in South Africa. The mass media plays a critical role when it comes to sharing information with the public. There is an ongoing – and still undecided – academic debate about the effects and influences that mass

media actually have on their audiences. The media (radio in this particular study) is an important tool for the government to communicate the public issues that pertain to governance and political transformation. This study will investigate whether SABC radio stations contribute to governance and political transformation in South Africa. This will be evaluated through the programming, language policy and governance of the SABC-owned radio stations, Lesedi FM and RSG.

The outcome and results of this particular investigation will hopefully assist these radio stations in streamlining their content and programming offering to make an even bigger and better contribution towards governance and political transformation in South Africa.

The objectives of the study can be summarised as follows:

- To investigate and analyse SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation by means of focusing on programming, language policies, and (corporate) governance issues.
- To improve SABC Radio's contribution to governance and political transformation in South Africa.
- To create awareness, through SABC Radio, about the importance of governance and political transformation.

In realising the aim and objectives of the study, I please need you to answer the following questions:

1. What was/is your job at the SABC?

2. For how long did you do this job?

3. What kind of programmes, especially news and current affairs, did you have?

4. What changes, if any, did you notice since 1994 especially around programming, use and application of language, and political content?

5. To what extent do you think the SABC, in the 20-year history of democracy, has been able to introduce programmes that advance democracy and transformation?
