

Constructing a local approach to journalism education: A study of Zambian  
educators' conceptualisation of the ideal journalism curriculum

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By

Mulako Milupi

Supervisor: Dr. Jeanne Du Toit

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**Dedication**

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my late mother Christabel Mabebo Nyambe. Your support through your words of wisdom you imparted on me in pursuing education as a key driver in life has left an indelible footprint in my life. No words are sufficient to describe your contribution to my life. I owe every bit of my education to her. This thesis is dedicated to her memory.

I equally dedicate this thesis to my family particularly my children Natasha, Matthew and Sarina. Your affection and love gave me purpose and drive in completing this thesis.

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## **DECLARATION RELATING TO PLAGIARISM**

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work. I have acknowledged all other authors' ideas and referenced direct quotations from their work. I have not allowed anyone else to borrow or copy my work.

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**Name of Student:** Mulako Milupi

**Year:** MA 2009

**Student no:** 609C4270

**Course:** Masters Degree in Journalism and Media Studies

**Supervisor:** Dr. Jeanne Du Toit

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## **Abstract**

This research is an investigation of *Zambian* journalism educators' conception of the knowledge, competencies and values that should inform their teaching practice. The study establishes how such educators conceptualise of the purpose of journalism education within the *Zambian* context. As part of this examination, it identifies characteristics of this context that educators regard to be of relevance to their conceptualisation of such purpose. It then identifies what they understand as the implications for the design of the ideal journalism education curriculum. The study assesses the relevance of these perspectives to the teaching of journalism in *Zambia*, as an example of an African country with a 'developing' economy.

The study draws for its theoretical framework on journalism studies generally and scholarship about journalism education more specifically. It is argued that a review of the global history of journalism education points to the existence of three main traditions of teaching that have developed internationally. The first of these traditions is described as being dedicated to the project of 'professionalisation'; the second to the production of 'critical practitioners', and the third to the project of 'social development'. These traditions are based on different understandings with regard to the principles on which journalism education programmes should be based and the kind of knowledge that they should draw on. It is noted that this body of literature does not include extensive research of the way in which particular groups of African journalism educators respond to these traditions. In order to contribute to such research, the empirical component of this study sets out to explore *Zambian* journalism educators' conceptualisation of journalism education within their own social context. It does so by means of an exploration of journalism educators based, respectively, at the Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts (EHC) and the University of *Zambia* (UNZA)'s Mass Communication Department. The foremost conclusion of the research is that both the professionalising and developmental tradition can be observed to influence the participants' discussion.



## INTRODUCTION

This research focuses on journalism education and draws for its theoretical framework on journalism studies generally and scholarship about journalism education more particularly. Its aim is to increase understanding of how educators in a developing country with limited media freedom negotiate the relationship between broadly accepted ideals as to the purpose of journalism education, the realities of journalistic practice in their environment and the implications for their own journalism curricula. The study considers how, in conceptualizing the ideal curriculum, such educators respond to changes in journalism practice as these can be identified within their social context.

Chapter One discusses the theoretical framework that informs this study. It draws on literature about journalism education in order to map out debate that exists around the knowledge, competencies and values that should be prioritised in teaching journalism. In this way, it sets up terms of reference for an exploration of the way in which educators evaluate their own teaching practices. The chapter identifies how such evaluation is positioned in relation to what it refers to as vocational, professional, and critical perspectives on the teaching of journalism. It unpacks the relevance of these perspectives to journalism education in Zambia, as an example of an African country with a ‘developing’ economy.

Chapter Two serves as a contextualisation of the empirical section of this research project. As this is a case study of journalism education in Zambia, it is necessary to describe the social context in which the research is located. The chapter presents an overview of the way journalism studies tend to represent journalism practice and journalism education in Africa generally and more specifically in Zambia, as a developing economy. It describes the historical development of tertiary-level journalism education in Africa and then in this country, identifying factors that influenced this history. In this way, it locates the Zambian experience of journalism practice and journalism education within the broader African experience.

Chapter Three deals with the research decisions that were made as part of designing the empirical component of this study. The first part of the chapter describes the methodological framing of the study, the choice of method, the design of research instruments and the fieldwork plan. The second part deals with the implementation of this research plan, and evaluates the extent to which such implementation ensured the validity and reliability of the study.

Chapters Four and Five discuss the interview material that resulted from this study. These discussions identify themes within these interviews and attempt to explain them in relation to the theoretical and contextual terms of reference established in Chapters One and Two. It considers how such responses can be seen to be informed by the way these educators understand the ideal purpose of journalism education within the Zambian context. Chapter Four pinpoints the characteristics of the Zambian context that these educators regard to be of relevance to their conceptualisation of such purpose. Chapter Five then identifies what the educators understand as the implications for the core knowledge, competencies and values that should inform their teaching practice. In this way, it establishes how educators evaluate their own teaching practices, measured against such an ideal.

# CHAPTER ONE

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### **Introduction**

This chapter draws on literature about journalism education in order to map out the spectrum of debates that exist within such teaching with regard to the knowledge, competencies and values that should be prioritised within journalism programmes based at tertiary institutions. It proposes that such debates are characterised by the articulation of different perspectives on journalism education that exist in opposition to each other. In particular, debate has been structured around two conflicting positions regarding the central purpose of tertiary-level journalism education. From the first of these positions, it is assumed that such education is primarily concerned with ensuring that students achieve the competencies required by existing conventions of news production. The second position, in contrast, argues for an approach to journalism education that produces graduates able to bring a reflective element into journalistic practice. This position is, as such, concerned with teaching that sees itself as engaging critically with existing conventions, and setting standards that do not necessarily reproduce those conventions.

Both positions are clearly informed by specific assumptions about the role that tertiary institutions play in responding to the possibility of change in journalism as a social practice. It is argued, in this chapter, that these assumptions have implications for the principles that tend to guide processes of curriculum design. For the purpose of this research they are of particular significance to decisions that are made around the kinds of knowledge, competencies and values that are prioritised within such teaching.

With this argument in mind, Section One reviews the spectrum of debates that exist within the field of journalism education around the social purpose of university-based teaching about journalism. The discussion assesses the implications of different arguments about such purpose in terms of the role journalism is seen to play in society. The section demonstrates that the debates tend to be organised around the two perspectives on the purpose of tertiary-level journalism education referred to above; that of delivering graduates to a news marketplace, and that of making a critical intervention into journalism as a social practice. Against this backdrop, Section Two then deals with the way in which journalism education literature makes sense of changes that have taken place, during recent history, in journalism as a social practice. The section reviews the different approaches that emerge in context of each of these positions around

guidelines for journalism education as it should be practiced in tertiary institutions. The focus is on ideas about the kinds of knowledge, competencies and values that should inform such practice.

Throughout the discussion in this chapter, the emphasis is on making sense of how the literature constructs journalism and journalism education. The aim is to demonstrate how certain conceptualisations of journalism and journalism education are reproduced within the literature. In this way, the study identifies different traditions of thought about journalism and journalism education that can be said to circulate within academic communities of practice. This then provides the terms of reference for the empirical study. It enables the study to explore the extent to which these same “ways of talking about journalism and journalism education” can be seen to repeat themselves within the discussions with the research participants.

### **1.1 The purpose of journalism education: a review of debates**

The clash among proponents of different schools of thought about tertiary-level journalism education has been called a “battle of clichés” (Deuze 2000:142). This is a reference to the repeated oppositions set up within such discussions between theory and practice, skills training and liberal arts education, craft and profession. Debates focus, for example, on how best – and whether at all – to teach journalism at universities, particularly given that these institutions tend to place a high value on theoretical knowledge. It can be argued that these debates have been structured around conflicting positions on the central purpose of journalism education. From one position, the emphasis is on serving newsrooms by preparing graduates that are suited to their requirements. This position, which will be referred to in this study as the ‘vocational’ perspective, assumes that the purpose of journalism education is to deliver graduates to newsrooms. Because of this, it prioritises ‘practical’ knowledge and skills about journalism (Deuze 2006:28; Cullen 2014: 1-16). The focus then tends to be on information-gathering, writing and editing, as these practices tend to be defined by that industry. It is argued that technical skills are needed because the media is built on a foundation of technical operations. It is also pointed out that this knowledge of how technology operates allows proper managerial decisions about new equipment, operations and innovation (Herbert 2000:39; Herbert 2016). Principles of ethics, law and management that are regarded to be of direct practical relevance to the daily business of reporting are also emphasised (Medsger 1996: ii).

From the second position, which is more reflective and critical in its emphasis, it is argued that the fundamental purpose of journalism teaching is to contribute towards journalism that can impact positively on society by equipping students for informed acts of citizenship. Here, journalism education is understood to play a role in the establishment and nurturing of journalism founded in the principle of social responsibility (Berger 2005). It is typically assumed that journalism teaching is not just about equipping students with practical skills but also about producing self-reflexive and critical graduates whose practice is autonomous and makes a contribution to achieving social justice (Brand 2008). This perspective differs from the vocational one because it understands journalism education to be about the improvement of journalistic practice rather than simply reproducing vocational knowledge as it already exists. A central concern often expressed in this context is that journalism should not be influenced by political and economic interests to the extent that this impacts on its ability to operate in service of the public good. It is assumed that journalism can best achieve this goal by reporting on social events in a way that contributes to democratic process. Journalism education is then justified in terms of the role that it can play in preparing journalists for such reporting practice (Deuze 2006: 24; Hume, 2007:7).

Available literature suggests that the vocational and the reflective positions do not exist as separate traditions but instead co-exist in journalism education. It has been suggested, at the same time, that when journalism education takes place in a university context, the second position tends to become foregrounded. This is understood to result from the fact that the commitment to ideals of reflective practice and social responsibility resonate with the principles in which academic communities tend to be based (Campbell 2005). Commentators have pointed out that the vocational position nevertheless also has a strong influence on university-based journalism education (Frohlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003:52-53).

As a related point, it has been pointed out that the concept of the 'professional' is employed in two very different ways within debates about such education (Herbert 2004:7). On the one hand, one can identify references to the role played by such education in the 'professionalisation' of journalism (Joseph 2010). Such reference seems to be more strongly informed by the 'reflective' position on journalism education, as already described. The assumption, here, is that a key purpose of such education is to ensure that journalism becomes more like other occupations that have the status of professions, such as medicine and law. The

articulation of professional norms, and in particular a public service orientation, is said to be key to such professionalisation. Professionalisation has to do, in other words, with ensuring that journalism strives to achieve a high level of autonomy, professional norms and a public service orientation. On the other hand, journalism education debates are also informed by arguments for the role that teaching plays in serving the ideal of 'professionalism'. The reference, here, is to the effective functioning of journalism as an occupation and social institution - without particular concern for ensuring that it is driven by other agendas than that of profit. Professionalism as it is conceptualised here recognises journalism as an occupation that requires a skilled workforce, and journalism education is positioned as a vehicle for the delivery of this workforce (Hallin & Mancini 2004: 11 cited in Josephi 2010). Such arguments are, in other words, strongly informed by the 'vocational' approach to journalism education, as already described.

Historical discussions of journalism education also point to the existence of three main traditions of teaching that have developed internationally. Each is based in different conceptualisations with regard to the values in which journalism education programmes should be based, and the kind of knowledge and competence that they should focus on. As will be demonstrated below, these three traditions engage very differently with the notions of 'vocational' and 'reflective' journalism education respectively. These distinctions seem to be closely associated with differences in approach to the notions of 'professionalism' and 'professionalisation'.

The first tradition, which is framed by an interest in the 'professionalisation' of journalism, emerged in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, particularly in the American context (Murphy & Scotton, 1987:12; Frohlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003:57; Deuze 2006:22; Berger 2006:42). The literature indicates that this tradition in journalism education came to define itself in terms of a commitment to the improvement of journalism as a social practice. This is described as a commitment to ensuring that journalism operates not just as a commercial enterprise but also makes a contribution to democracy. For this reason, this approach to journalism education prioritises the need to provide journalists with occupational norms, competencies and knowledge that enables them to lay claim to a professional identity informed by a public service orientation (Dunn 2004: 23). This tradition was exported internationally during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Frohlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003:57-8).

The second tradition, which defines its identity in terms of critical media literacy, is closely associated with the field of cultural studies and with media education. Media education grounded in the field of cultural studies has existed in tertiary institutions since the 1960s, and is strongly associated with the British context. It is, however, only much later that cultural studies became associated with journalism education programmes. Cultural studies first emerged as an important component of such programmes during the worldwide boom in university-based journalism education in the 1990s (Frohlich and Holtz-Bacha 2003:57-8). Within such teaching, the purpose of journalism education tends to be defined as that of preparing students to analyse the existing conventions of journalism and media and in this way to become ‘critically literate’ about journalism and the media generally (Goodman 2007:14-15; UNESCO 2007:31). The assumption is that media literacy helps students to better understand and defend the role of journalism in a democratic society (Wahl-Jorgensen et al 2004:351; African Media Barometer2013; De Abreu and Mihailidis 2014). Such education tends to be organised around the analysis of the role played by media in reproducing the uneven power relations in which the institutions of Western industrial society are based. What is described here is clearly not a tradition that identifies itself closely with the occupational identity of the journalist. It is, in other words, one in which students are taught to criticise journalism, rather than being taught how to be journalists. Such education tends to be most strongly associated with teaching institutions that do not place a strong emphasis on teaching students the practicalities of journalistic production skills.

It can be argued that, although the ‘professionalisation’ and ‘critical literacy’ traditions are very different in their emphasis, they can in fact be seen to share certain preoccupations. Both understand the relationship between journalism education and journalism practice to be ‘reflective’ in nature, even if the implications of such reflection are differently interpreted. Both respond with caution to the idea of ‘professionalism’. They do so, however, from very different perspectives. The professionalisation tradition offers students an alternative occupational identity, grounded in norms associated with social responsibility and public service. On the one hand, this tradition can be seen to incorporate some of the ideals of the vocational position - particularly the commitment to a strong foundation in technical competency. On the other hand, it balances this commitment with an insistence on the importance of norms and values associated with democratisation and public service. The ‘critical literacy’ tradition, as we have seen, to a

large extent rejects association with occupational identity, and with this the notion of ‘professionalisation’. As such, the two traditions can be said to be based in opposing conceptualisations of the purpose of journalism education, reproducing the dualistic opposition between practice and theory referred to at the start of this section. In particular, the ‘professionalisation’ tradition tends to foreground production competencies, while the ‘critical literacy’ tradition places the emphasis on the study of media (Deuze 2002:89-90). It has also been pointed out, within journalism education literature, that this opposition is reproduced even within the ‘professionalisation’ tradition, which tends to teach students separately about technical competence and reflective consciousness (Wasserman 2005:166-170).

It is significant to this study that both of these traditions originated within Western industrial societies based in a liberal democratic conceptualisation of the State. Commentators have pointed out that, even though they have now circulated around the world in a wide range of social contexts, they still take liberal democracy and advanced capitalism as their primary term of reference (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996:125 cited in Frohlich & Holtz-Bacha, 2003:57). Viewed in this way, both traditions can in fact be seen to share some basic characteristics, beyond their commitment to reflective engagement with journalism practice. In particular, both define themselves in relation to an ideal of democratic society from a Western liberal perspective (Murphy & Scotton, 1987:12; Deuze 2006:22). It is possible that the ‘battle of clichés’ as described at the start of this section, and the oppositions in which it is based, is of particular relevance to the Western liberal context.

Commentators point out that journalism in ‘developing’ countries faces unique challenges, different from those that characterise the ‘developed’ context assumed by these dominant approaches to journalism education<sup>1</sup>. The literature indicates that journalism education in ‘developing’ countries has nevertheless drawn heavily on internationally circulating models of such teaching, such as those of the ‘professionalisation’ and ‘critical literacy’ traditions referred to above. Commentators identify a lack of appropriate resources, within developing environments, for the implementation of curricula that draw on these traditions, such as equipment, staff and reading material (Berger & Matras 2007:18-19; Hume 2007:4-5; Freedman & Shafer 2008:3). Mention is also made of a disjunction between the content of coursework and

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<sup>1</sup> Within journalism education literature, the terms ‘developing’ and ‘developed’ are used as they are in everyday discourse, to draw a distinction between the material well-being of different nations. Countries falling into the first category are understood, as per the World Bank definition to describe those with low and middle-income economies (World Bank, 2010).



the realities that journalists face in their daily work (Freedman & Shafer 2008:3-4; Banda 2009:4). The standard curricula fail, for example, to engage with the working conditions that journalists face in developing countries (Berger 2009:2).

It is proposed in such literature that debates about journalism education as it exists in developing countries need to be more sensitive to the implications of government control on both journalism and education in these environments (Merrill 1987:37; Freedman & Shafer 2008:4; Josephi 2010). There is also a need for greater acknowledgement that journalism education in developing countries should be designed to draw on resources that are available in their immediate environments. Such literature also points to the importance of engaging with the specific concerns faced by the journalistic communities that form part of these environments. The argument is that, rather than simply reproducing existing approaches to journalism education, other approaches that engage well with local conditions could be made to contribute to the development of journalistic practice (Freedman & Shafer 2008:4; Banda 2009:4). It may be that, within such debate, one can observe the emergence of a third tradition of journalism education, sensitive to the concerns of developing environments.

In context of the focus of this dissertation, debates on journalism education in Africa provide a crucial term of reference with respect to arguments for the importance of the emergence of a 'developmental tradition'. There is, indeed, a well-established tradition of commentary within journalism education literature dealing with the extent to which such teaching, as it exists in Africa, can be said to have lost its 'African-ness' to the processes of 'westernisation' (Chibita 2010:2; Dube 2010:2). Some scholars have maintained, in this respect, that there are some essentially 'African' values relating to the practice of journalism that do exist both within African journalism education and African journalism practice, and journalism education should be designed to strengthen their presence (Skjerdal and Ngugi 2009; Mfumbusa 2008). The literature suggests, for example, that there is a need to focus on peace journalism and developmental journalism within African journalism education (Amner 2010:2). Recently, such literature has also focused on the development of resources that could help to ensure that African examples of journalism education could be tailor-made to suit the needs of the societies in which they are based. Examples of contributions to the establishment of such education include the UNESCO model curriculum (2007), the UNESCO criteria of excellence developed for African schools (2007), and Fackson Banda's 'Reporting Africa' curriculum (2008). These documents

represent curriculum resources that respond to shortcomings within the ‘professionalisation’ and ‘critical literacy’ traditions of journalism education, as these have circulated internationally.

These debates point to an interest amongst educators and scholars working in African contexts in approaches to journalism that are relevant to local contexts and that are differently situated from the Western ideal of what journalism should be. They also suggest an interest in approaches to journalism in which practice and theory come together, rather than that they are positioned as opposites. Development journalism is, for example, strongly informed by theories of social development, while guidelines for the practice of peace journalism draw on a rich tradition of social theory dealing with the conceptualisation of conflict (UNESCO 2007). It may in fact be that, within such an approach to the teaching of journalism, some of the oppositions that have characterized the first two approaches to journalism education begin to dissolve.

## **1.2 Journalism education and the conceptualisation of change in journalism**

In scholarship about journalism education, it is pointed out that the practice of journalism has changed rapidly all over the world, particularly during the last 25 years (Deuze 2006:19; Wenger 2010:2-3; Kaul 2013). The literature points to changes in content and form, and in both contexts refer to the ‘convergence’ of traditional media (Jenkins 2006:16; Mould 2010:61). Shifts are also identified with regard to who produces journalism and the role they play in production (De Beer & Prince 2005:139; Schaffer 2007; Hume 2007: 10). These trends are understood to be informed by technological change, particularly the rise of the Internet and the digitalisation of media (Deuze 2006:19; Hume 2007:17; Wenger et al 2010:3; Kaul, 2013). It is also understood to take place in the context of the economic and political transformation of contemporary society (Thor et al 2006:249; Banda 2009:236).

This section provides a review of the way in which journalism education literature makes sense of such change as it exists in journalistic practice and its environments, and it then assesses the implications for the teaching of journalism. The first subsection deals with conceptualisation of change as this can be identified in discussions of the broader environments in which journalism practices are based. The second subsection focuses on the way the literature approaches changes in the practice of journalism itself, while the third deals with the way the literature sees journalism education responding to such change. This final subsection also

reviews the different approaches that emerge with regard to guidelines for journalism education that is sensitive to social change.

### 1.2.1 Conceptualising change in the environments of journalism practice

When reference is made in recent literature to patterns of change characterising the contemporary landscapes of journalism, journalism education scholars tend to highlight technological developments. It is typically pointed out that advances made in information and communication technology have impacted both on kinds of work that journalists are required to do, and on the nature of information that is being disseminated. It is noted that even the basic tools of ink and paper are changing as there is an increasing reliance on the Internet and mobile technology. Within this environment, all aspects of the production of journalism have become reliant on computer-based resources (Herbert 2000:10; Murray 2010: 24; Quinn 2010:1; Kaul, 2013). New forms of information collection and dissemination – the Internet and satellite – are understood to play a role in reshaping of the environments of journalism practice (Herbert 2010:10; Wasserman 2010: 3).

The literature identifies ways in which new technologies influence the environments of journalism; such as the relationship between journalists and their audiences. The changes in technology are understood to have impacted, for example, on the expectations that audiences hold of journalism. Audiences are described as wanting the option of reading the news online, and checking the news out on mobile devices. News organisations must provide audiences with these options or lose readers (Deuze 2006:19; Hume 2007:17; Murray 2010: 23-24). The pace at which the Internet is becoming accessible internationally is, furthermore, understood to have provided opportunity for people the world over to become more analytical and sophisticated in the manner of reading news. The argument is generally that, because of these changes in audiences and their relationship to journalism, it is crucial that journalists are conversant with new technologies in information gathering, processing and dissemination (Hume 2007:10; Wasserman 2010: 3; Herbert, 2015).

Literature on journalism education also indicates that journalism practice is being redefined by the emergence of other information providers (Gasher 2005; Kaul 2013). Such changes are, again, primarily discussed in context of the technological transformation of the journalistic landscape. It is, for instance, frequently proposed that the biggest change in the

environments of journalism practice has been the increasing involvement of the ‘former’ audience of journalism in producing the content of journalism. Key factors identified are the rise of blogging, social media and mobile media, which have impacted on the very definition of what counts as ‘journalism’ and ‘journalists’. The literature indicates that, as a result of such changes, there has been a rapid increase in user participation within processes peripheral to news journalism. Users have also begun over time to perform work previously reserved for professional journalists (George, 2010). The growth, in this context, of ‘alternative’ media is then often described as providing more open and participatory structures for the public. It has, however, also been argued that the shift towards greater user participation in journalistic activities clashes with the notion of professionalism. This is a position that, as we have seen, offers practicing journalists an occupational identity that is grounded in norms associated with social responsibility and public service (Herbert 2000: 9).

The literature indicates that economic changes have also impacted on the environments of journalism practice (Deuze 2006: 25). One aspect of such change is represented by the extent to which media companies now own several outlets, including print, broadcast and online. A second theme that emerges relates to the business model that companies employ - and in particular the tendency to cut down on the resources allocated to newsrooms. It is often pointed out in the literature that it is more economically viable to employ fewer people to produce content for multiple outlets (African Media Barometer Report, 2013).

The literature further indicates that changes in the political environment have had an impact on journalism (Deuze 2006: 25). It is suggested that internationally, these changes have tended to contribute to the improvement of journalistic practice. The argument seems to be that the emergence of democracy has helped, in certain environments, to overcome a tradition of explicit political bias. Such change is usually mentioned in context of the increase in freedom that exists in so-called emerging democracies (Berger and Matras 2007). This focus on political context tends to be primarily foregrounded in journalism education literature that deals with developing countries. It is argued that such developments do not necessarily change the role of journalism in society, but that they make the work of journalists more complex (Deuze 2006: 25). This is thought to be the case because political and economic power is still concentrated in the hands of a few, so that the democratic function of the media remains far from being fulfilled. It is also pointed out in such literature that changes in technology can represent an integral part

of such political change. Here it is pointed out that technological development can either enhance democracy or be used to inhibit democratic process. This is understood to be particularly the case in Africa, where access is often limited to the elite (Berger and Matras 2007).

### 1.2.2 Perceptions of changes in journalism practice

These changes in the environments of journalism practice are said to have influenced the way in which journalism is practiced. There is a preoccupation in journalism education literature with the role that such changes have played in putting more pressure on journalists to work more quickly. It is argued that, due to both economic and technological change, journalists have to produce more stories in less time and with fewer resources at hand. It is generally understood that less journalists are expected to do more work because of the scaling down of newsrooms. Furthermore, due to the phenomenon of convergence, journalists are often expected to provide content for more than one platform (Deuze 2006: 25; Wasserman 2010: 4). The literature suggests that many of the criteria for rigorous, independent journalism are inevitably compromised when reporters are obliged to produce more stories in less time (Lewis et al. 2008:27-28, 42 cited in Cole and Harcup 2009:170). These changes are understood to be affecting the extent to which journalists are given the opportunity to produce in-depth investigative work (Deuze 2006:19; Hume 2007:17).

Journalism education literature has also identified new forms of journalism that have emerged in response to the environmental changes referred to above. Such trends are observed, for example, in context of online news sites. These online environments are said to be characterized by a deliberate shift in the definition of journalistic objectivity. There is, furthermore, a drive towards community-based conversation and discussion, and broader definitions of “news” that seek to connect readers to a sense of the place where they live (Hume 2007:17-18). The literature reveals, then, that journalism on news and information websites is increasingly becoming an act of participation and not just an act of observation. It is argued within the literature that this participatory involvement requires that the site editors collaborate with readers in trawling for stories, unravelling news as it is happening and also ensuring that people know how to engage in community issues and events (African Media Barometer Report 2013).

Literature suggests that the changes in the environments of journalism practice have also had an impact on journalism content. It is suggested, for example, that there has been a reduction in the number of pages of newspapers; and stories are believed to be a lot shorter (Temple et al, 2012). Papers both large and small have reduced the space, resources and commitment devoted to a range of topics. It is however also argued that even if stories are shorter and presented within fewer pages, the coverage of some local issues have strengthened (Temple et al, 2012).

The literature further indicates that the changes in the environments of journalism practice have had an impact on the production practices of journalism. Technological convergence along with multi-media production are, in particular, understood to be contributing to the transformation of broadcast news production (Wasserman 2010; African Media Barometer Report, 2013). Journalists are, furthermore, alert to a shift towards practices and formats which permit forms of audience participation (Murray 2010:23-24; Herbert, 2016). Research concerning user participation in online news demonstrates that news websites offer a wide range of participatory features that enable users to critically engage with the news (Temple et al, 2012). It is further suggested that the involvement of citizens in public life through the Internet, described by terms such as interactivity and user-generated content, is frequently held up as a democracy-enhancing development. This has been described by commentators and practitioners as having revolutionised journalism by disrupting the traditional relationships between producers and consumers of the news (Wahl-Jorgensen et al, 2010).

### 1.2.3 Approaches to journalism education

It is generally argued in journalism education literature that the knowledge and proficiencies needed by journalism graduates have not simply changed as the pace of change accelerates; instead, they have expanded (Deuze 2005:22; Goodman 2007:12). Such literature points to the need for such graduates to have multiple skills and competencies which they can employ in a range of environments. It is, for example, understood that students should be prepared to report, write and edit for multiple media platforms (Murray 2010:26; UNESCO 2007). It is suggested that consciousness of this requirement should represent the core of any programme designed to prepare students for careers in journalism (UNESCO 2007).

It is also noted, however, that the practice of journalism requires not just the technical competencies that are, for example, involved in recording and representing, but also "... methods

of knowing and thinking” (UNESCO 2007: 7-8). It is argued, in this context, that such conceptual competencies enable journalists to identify relevant and newsworthy issues and angles for stories, appropriate to a given audience and medium (UNESCO 2007: 29). Conceptual ability also ensures that journalists are able to establish in-depth knowledge of current events (UNESCO 2007: 29-30).

There is also a strong emphasis on the growing importance of technological competence for journalism students at tertiary institutions (Goodman 2007:12-13; Deuze 2006:27; Herbert 2000: x). The literature recommends that journalism students should be introduced to different journalism skills in the electronic age. Technical competence for journalists is now imperative, as digital stories are commonly transmuted into video, audio, animation and graphics (Murray 2010:24). Literature also indicates that the published stories are often accompanied by online interaction with the audience and newsmakers themselves. Information is communicated and distributed via social networks that challenge traditional concepts of audience and community (Murray 2010:24).

The literature suggests that changes in technology have also made it more important for journalists to be interpreters of knowledge, given the complexities of the new ‘knowledge society’. Due to such changes, journalists now need to know how to sift through knowledge, far more than they did in the past. This is so because information is now said to be available to everyone, and for this reason, journalists are now required to explain, clarify and interpret information for readers, listeners, and viewers (UNESCO 2007:30). It is noted that such information may include a range of highly complex subject areas, including, for example, that of science, technology, medicine, economics and politics. Journalists therefore need to be able to synthesize information. Literature suggests that journalists can borrow the tools of the social scientist and the statistician to become experts in analysing and interpreting data (Herbert 2000: 8-9; UNESCO 2007: 8, 30). The literature further suggests that tertiary institutions should help students to build critical thinking skills, a capacity for intelligent inquiry, and the ability to express complex ideas in a clear, straight-forward manner (Goodman 2008:15-16).

The literature further emphasizes the need for learning about professional values and standards. It is suggested, in this context, that it is important that students are exposed to the institutional and societal contexts within which journalists function and that they connect the practice of journalism to related human activities. It is argued that the ability to do so would

strengthen the professional identity of the journalism graduate, by solidifying their understanding of democratic functions and legal and moral constraints (UNESCO 2007: 8).

It is also noted within the literature that journalism education programmes are becoming more standardised, based on a shared set of agreements about what should be prioritised. One interpretation of this trend is understood to stem from the fact that many different environments around the world are affected by the same kinds of change (Deuze 2006:22). Local context is, however, still believed to have an impact on what is required in different communities of journalistic practice. It is pointed out that many national and international journalism and media organisations have developed lists of competencies. An example is the Tartu Declaration of the European Journalism Training Association, June 26, 2006 (<http://www.ejta.nl/>). This document groups journalism competencies under three headings: professional standards; journalism and society; and knowledge. It is suggested that such projects serve to pull together some of the thinking from different stakeholders around the world towards the improvement of journalism education (UNESCO 2007; <http://www.ejta.nl/>).

### **1.3 Conclusion**

Section One of this chapter establishes a set of categories that can be applied to discussions of journalism education. It is argued, in this section, that it is possible to identify two opposing positions within debates about journalism education as to the purpose of such teaching. From the first position, it is assumed that such education is primarily concerned with teaching the skills that are required by existing conventions of news. From the second, it is argued that journalism education should contribute to the improvement of journalism as a social practice, and that it should therefore produce graduates who are reflective practitioners. It is further argued in this section that these two positions can be seen to co-exist within three historically specific traditions of journalism. The first of these traditions is described as being dedicated to the project of 'professionalisation', the second to the production of 'critical practitioners', and the third to the project of social development. In the context of this research project, it is of value to consider the extent to which each of these traditions can be seen to inform approaches to journalism education as they exist in the Zambian context.

Section Two provides a review of the way in which journalism education literature makes sense of social change – in the social environments of journalistic practice; in journalistic



practice itself and then finally in the way that journalism education responds to such change. These changes are identified in discussions within journalism scholarship of the broader environments in which journalism practices are based. The section identifies certain shared understandings in the way that the literature describes social contexts. It points to the importance of the relationship between the practice of journalism and technological, economic and political change. There are also shared patterns in the way that this literature makes sense of the way journalism has changed in response to such shifts in social context. The general sense seems to be that journalism has changed radically - in its form, its content, and in terms of modes of practice.

The section also identifies shared themes within the literature with regard to the way journalism education is supposed to respond to such change. The patterns of change characterising the contemporary landscapes of journalism are seen to highlight technological developments as this is believed to have impacted both on kinds of work that journalists are required to do, and on the nature of information that is being disseminated. The Internet and mobile technology are understood to play a role in reshaping of the environments of journalism practice. The explanation is that, because of these changes in the audiences of journalism and their relationship to news, it is crucial that journalists are conversant with new technologies in information gathering, processing and dissemination.

It should be pointed out that the primary focus, in the literature reviewed in this chapter, is on the question of technological change. The focus on economic and political environment is not as strongly present. This focus comes through much more strongly in literature dealing with journalism as it exists in developing environments such as that of Africa. This point will be demonstrated in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH

#### **Introduction**

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, this study investigates how journalism educators based in a developing country conceptualise of tertiary-based journalism education. The focus is on the relationship between such conceptualisation and the realities of journalistic practice as this exists in the environments in which such educators are based. In order to achieve this goal, the research is designed as a case study focusing on Zambian journalism educators' evaluation of their own teaching programmes. Chapter One served as the first stage of a literature review, focusing on theoretical terms of reference of relevance to such a study. This current chapter presents a further review of literature, this time focusing on writing that offers insight into the social context in which the case study is based. Throughout the discussion, the focus is on how this literature constructs journalism, journalism education and the relationship that exists between them.

Section One draws on literature from the field of journalism studies dealing with processes of change that have characterised journalism in African social contexts. It does so by looking at comments within such literature about broad patterns of change that have taken place in these environments from the mid-20th century onwards. The discussion places particular emphasis on comments that are of relevance to the last 25 years, from the 1990s onwards. It focuses firstly on the way that such commentary represents processes and patterns of political and economic change in these environments. It then interrogates the way in which the literature makes sense of the implications of such change for journalism as it is practiced within these spaces. Finally, the section zooms in on discussions of the relationship between processes of social change and journalism practice in the Zambian context.

Section Two provides an overview of literature dealing with the development of Africa-based journalism education. The section first reviews literature that maps out the development of tertiary journalism education in African contexts. It then zooms in on commentary dealing with Zambian journalism education, in order to establish how this historical example is understood to be positioned within the broader history of journalism education in Africa. The section then assesses the implications of these histories for the terms of reference that should guide the

attempt, in this study, to make sense of the way in which Zambian educators conceptualise of teaching journalism in this country.

## **2.1 Change in the environments of journalism practice**

### 2.1.1 Patterns of change in African journalism

Within studies dealing with journalism practice as it has developed in African contexts, it is possible to trace a preoccupation with similar categories of social change to those identified in the previous chapter, in the context of journalism education literature. Commentators place more emphasis, however, on changes in the political and economic environments in which journalism is practiced across different parts of Africa. Such discussions often centre on the role that is played, in this respect, by processes of democratisation (Berger & Matras 2007; Banda, 2009; Chirambo 2011; Hadland, 2015). The literature generally refers to global processes of political change – particularly the collapse of socialism, and a growth of democracy. It is then proposed that these trends can also be traced in African social environments. It is argued, in particular, that many African countries have become ‘liberalised’ due to the influences of such processes of economic and political change (Keller 1996; Banda 2009). Liberalisation is described, within these discussions, as a loosening of social restrictions and the expansion of individual and group rights and freedoms, based on principles associated with liberal democracy. The consequence of such change is then understood to manifest in both the political and economic arena (Hamasaka 2008; Banda 2010:8). It is argued that the 1990s saw the unfolding of such processes of liberalisation across the African continent, with corresponding deregulatory policy and legislative changes (Banda 2010: 8).

The literature suggests that these changes in political and economic environment have played an important role in the patterns of development that have characterised media landscapes in African contexts in recent times. It is argued, in particular, that processes of liberalisation have led many countries in Africa to promulgate so-called ‘liberal’ media and information policies. This has led to the rapid growth of radio, television as well as print media. Much of this growth has taken place, furthermore, within the commercial sector, so that private media players have achieved a dominant position in the region (Kasoma 2002:21; Chirwa 2010:41). It is explained that, in the wake of de-regulatory economic policies, private financiers have emerged to invest in

media business. This is said to have resulted, for example, in the rapid growth of commercial radio across the continent (Banda 2010:9; Chirwa 2010:41-43; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013; Hadland 2015). Commercial broadcasting can therefore be seen as an important example of the expansion of private media (Chirwa 2010:41). The literature also points to the promotion of competition in media markets, again brought about by the liberalisation of media landscapes (Banda 2003:51; Chirwa 2010:41). It is suggested, further, that many media outlets are competing for too few financial resources. Media assistance programs from donors in established markets are also seen to contribute to this high level of competition by encouraging the proliferation of media outlets (Jacobsson et al, 2008:1).

The literature also suggests that, because of the political and economic liberalisation of the media, there has been a tendency towards greater commercialisation of state-owned media (Butegwa 2006; Jacobsson et al 2008: 1-2; Kasoma 2010: 451; Chirwa 2010: 41-42; Hadland 2015). Commercialisation has been described as the "... drifting of ultimate control into the hands of men with business motives" (Ross 1997:4). It is observed that the drive for profits has "... encouraged the entry of speculators into media ownership and this move has increased the pressure and temptation to focus more intensely on profitability" (Chirwa 2010: 41-42). State-owned media systems are, in other words, seen to be restructuring in response to the commercial imperative.

Literature on journalism indicates, furthermore, that there has been a growth in community radio stations from the late 1990s across Africa. Community radio is generally defined as media which are controlled by a non-profit entity and carried on for non-profit purposes to serve a particular community (UNESCO 2001: iii; Banda 2003: 83; Chirwa 2010:46). It has been argued that, in context of the growth in such radio in Africa, this region is 'catching up' with a well-established tendency, across other parts of the world, to prioritise networks of stations that service small communities, as opposed to only investing in broadcasters that target national audiences (Banda 2003: 74; Chirwa 2010: 46-47). The literature also suggests that the community media sector across the African continent has, during the two decades of its existence, shown promise and risen to a position of significance. This sector is observed to advocate for freedom of speech and communication empowerment at the grass roots level in the communities where they operate (Musanshi 2004:17; Muzyamba & Nyondo 2006:12; Muzyamba 2009:1). It is seen as a medium that gives 'voice to the voiceless', which is

understood to mean that it serves as the ‘mouthpiece’ of people who are marginalised from participation in public discourse. As such, community media is understood to be at the heart of communication and democratic processes within African societies (UNESCO 2001: iii; Kasoma 2002: 23-25). It is suggested within the literature that, through community radio, African communities have the means to make their views known on decisions that concern them. Such radio is further observed to be a catalyst for the development efforts of rural communities and the underprivileged segments of urban societies in Africa, given its exceptional ability to facilitate dialogue and share information (UNESCO 2001).

As in the journalism education literature referred to in Chapter One, there is also repeated reference in studies of African media on the impact of technological developments on media landscapes. There is, however, a far stronger focus on the role that such technological change can play in context of social development. The advent of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) is said to have ushered in a new era of media, signalling unlimited opportunities. ICTs have, in particular, come to be perceived as a catalyst in bringing about democracy and development. It is suggested in this regard that the impact of technology on media landscapes and particularly the growth of ICTs in such contexts could have the capacity to enhance development strategies. The literature suggests, furthermore, that a global move towards embracing ICT as the engine of economic growth in Africa could afford hitherto technologically ‘backward’ societies an opportunity to ‘leapfrog’ some stages of development to achieve an ‘information society’ or ‘knowledge society’ (UNESCO 2005). New technologies are also said to have expanded the number of media channels available to ordinary people, transforming individuals into media producers with global distribution networks through blogs, social networking sites, and websites such as YouTube (Banda 2010:25; Berger 2010:7-9). It is suggested that new modes of communication are resulting from these changes in African environments, both in online contexts and via mobile technology. Much of this communication is said to “fall under the regulatory radar”, so that it escapes easy control due to its speed (Berger 2009:11).

These shifts in political and economic contexts generally and in media landscapes more particularly are understood to impact profoundly on journalism practice. One reason for this is understood to be a growth in the supply of available media content (Jacobsson et al, 2008: 2). The literature suggests that one reason for this growth in content is the diversification of media

landscapes, particularly through the formation of private and community media. Through such developments, the voices of ordinary people are more highly represented in news media (UNESCO 2001: iii; Muzyamba 2009: 1-2; Chirwa 2010:45-46). Diversification is particularly observable within the context of radio and through the growth of online journalism. It is argued that this has resulted in greater participation of people hitherto marginalised from mainstream news media (Banda 2010:8-9). It is further suggested that, due to such change, journalists have greater access to content (UNESCO 2001: iii; Jacobsson et al 2008: 2).

At the same time, a second trend that is understood to be impacting on journalism practice in developing countries is a decline in available resources for the production of journalism (Makungu 2004:60-61). It is suggested that one reason for this decline in resources relates to the tendency towards cross-media ownership. Because of such ownership patterns, corporations take ownership of journalism initiatives when they do not, in fact, have a commitment to the occupational norms that traditionally define journalistic practice. It is understood, for example, that such companies have not invested in the idea that journalism needs to be well researched and written. This is then seen to impact on the decisions that companies make with regards to resources that are allocated to newsrooms (Kantumoya 2004: 41). The literature suggests, furthermore, that the competitive nature of media environments impact negatively on the ability of media organisations to employ and retain experienced staff (Mare 2010: 13-14). It is also observed that the reaction of media owners faced with ever-declining newspaper sales and shrinking audiences for prime time television news has been to cut back on editorial resources and to reduce spending on training and investigative journalists (Kantumoya 2004:x). This decline in resources is thought to affect news media in that these organisations opt for low-cost, low-quality news content (Hollifield, Becker & Vlad 2004, 2006).

The literature also acknowledges, however, that within the African context, the supposed 'decline' of print journalism is not as strongly felt as in some first world environments. In some places, readership is in fact said to be growing. It is suggested that this expansion of audiences can be linked to processes such as urbanization, a growth in literacy and improvement in the living standards of particular social groupings. It is, at the same time, further explained, that this growth in print journalism in developing countries may be temporary as those countries shift to new technologies (Norris 2000; Santhanam & Rosenstiel 2013:1).

These changes within African media landscapes are understood as having an effect on the maintenance of standards of excellence within journalistic practice (Berger & Matras 2007). The literature suggests that different news organisations are increasingly relying on the same sources, often because they have the same owners, the same advertisers, and compete for the same market. The result is said to be that different news outlets often tell the same stories and in the same way. This situation, combined with a lack of news resources, can result in an environment in which journalists can be easily bribed, sensationalism dominates, and media coverage is imbalanced (Jacobsson et al 2008: 1-2; Skjerdal 2010:368; Kasoma 2010: 451; Nwabueze 2010: 497). It is explained that, in this context, there has been a decline in ‘serious’ journalism (Hollifield, Becker & Vlad 2004, 2006). It is also noted that, due to the social changes in the media environments there is a general lack of innovation with regard to approaches to journalistic practice (Kantumoya 2004: 64-65).

It is also suggested in the literature that new technology plays an important role in adding to trends within journalism as it is practiced in African countries. It is for example argued that ICTs have given rise, within these environments, to new ways of encouraging citizen interaction with news media. The pace at which the Internet is becoming accessible across Africa is, for example, understood to have provided an opportunity for people to access and read news (UNESCO 2005; Mwale 2010:5-6). In addition to terrestrial and satellite broadcast platforms, it is suggested that today’s news broadcasters have access to new platforms such as those for mobile TV and the Internet (Chibita 2010: 8-9). The utilisation of new technology in African media environments is understood, in particular, to have brought about an increase in the involvement of the ‘former’ audience of journalism in producing the content of journalism (Chibita, 2010: 8). The literature points, here, to the rise of blogging, social media and mobile media. It is also pointed out that, for countries such as Cameroun, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia, the significance of the availability of cell phones is evident when one considers the fact that they constitute the only feasible telecommunications option (Orbicom 2007: 19). Phone-in programmes on both radio and television are now, for example, employing text messaging to access people’s views. It is suggested that such trends are redefining the concepts of universal service and access for greater interaction between journalists and ordinary citizens (UNESCO 2005; Babatope 2014).

### 2.1.2 Changes in journalism practice in Zambia

When one traces patterns of social change in Zambia over the last few decades, it is possible to identify dramatic shifts in the nature of the state and economy. Zambia gained independence from Britain in October 1964 (Banda 2004:13; Makungu 2004:4; Chirwa 2010:1). The United National Independence Party (UNIP), a mass democratic movement that had led the country to its liberation, formed the first government under the presidency of Dr. Kenneth Kaunda and ruled the country from independence until late 1991. In 1973, the government declared the new republic a one-party state, effectively banning multi-party politics (Banda 2004:13-14). This is said to have ushered in the so-called 'Second Republic' (Banda 2004:13; Chirwa 2010:1). Over the following years, rival political parties nevertheless emerged, established as break-away groups from the UNIP. These groups contributed to the democratisation of the Zambian political environment. In 1991, Zambia became the first English-speaking country in Sub-Saharan Africa to peacefully revert to multi-party democracy (Baylies et al 1996). This change saw a new government, led by the Movement for Multi-party Democracy (MMD). It is explained that the transition resulted from popular dissatisfaction with one-party rule, and the collapse of communism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe (Sichone & Chikulo 1996: 9). The liberalisation of the economic and political environment that was discussed above in relation to the broader African context is, therefore, seen also to apply to the Zambian instance.

It is generally proposed that the processes of change discussed in the previous section, in relation to African media landscapes in general, can also be seen to play themselves out in the Zambian context. Here, too, commentators point to a growth in media diversity; the growing dominance of private media; the commercialisation of state media and the simultaneous emergence of community media (Hamasaka 2008; Chirwa 2010; Banda, 2010). An important feature of the growth of the media sector is, again, understood to be the digitisation of media (Chirwa 2010:8-10). The first sub-section below deals with such change, as it is understood to apply to the Zambian media landscape in general. The second sub-section then discusses the way in which the literature presents the implications of these patterns of change for the practice of journalism.



### 2.1.2.1 Changes within the Zambian media landscape

Commentators generally argue that, in Zambia, mass media has historically served the purpose of mobilising people for the economic and social development of the country. At the same time, such media is understood to have operated primarily in service of the interests of the ruling class (Kasoma 1997; Makungu 2004:5; Muzyamba 2009:1). The literature suggests, for example that, as in many other African countries, the initial development of both broadcast and print media was directly linked to the objectives of colonial rule (Chirwa 2010: 11). After independence, the new government tended still to adopt an autocratic approach with regard to its relationship with the media (Makungu 2004). The literature also proposes, however, that over the past 25 years there has been a shift away from government control to one of a more liberalised media culture. It is then also pointed out that in context of such change; the media landscape began to diversify, particularly in the context of the growing presence of privately owned media (Makungu 2004: 30; Chirwa 2010: 8; Mbangweta 2012).

The literature shows, for example, that from the 1990s onwards a growing number of newspapers and magazines were registered by the National Archives of Zambia. Between January and October of 1991, not less than 25 newspapers and three magazines were registered in this way (Chirwa 1997; Makungu 2004:30). Currently, Zambia has four operational national daily newspapers, mainly distributed in Lusaka. These include *The Post*, and *The Daily Nation* which are privately owned, and the *Times of Zambia* and the *Zambia Daily Mail*, which are both State owned (Makungu 2004; Mwale 2010:6; Sinkala 2012:1; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013). Other national but privately owned newspapers that are cited include the *Monitor & Digest*, *The Weekly Guardian* and *The New Vision*. These newspapers are currently distributed on a weekly basis in all major towns and provincial centres around the country (Chirwa 2010:8). All the daily newspapers are published in English and have circulations in the 25,000 to 50,000 range. It is explained within the literature that these newspapers have taken advantage of technology by also producing online publications that are accessed for free (Chirwa 2010:8; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013; Muchangwe 2014).

Some commentators argue that within the context of the print industry this process of diversification has allowed for the establishment of more progressive elements within the media landscape. It is pointed out that it is since the introduction of multi-party democracy that the newspaper industry in Zambia has been expanding (Sinkala 2012: 1; Makungu 2004). The

suggestion is, in other words, that it is possible to trace a close relationship between the diversification of print media and the democratisation of Zambian society. It is argued, furthermore, that the relationship to democratisation is of particular relevance to print media, and less so to broadcast media. In this context, it is noted that legislation surrounding the publication of content in newspapers and magazines has been less restrictive than that of radio and television broadcasting. It is also observed that, within the broader community of journalistic practice in Zambia, it was particularly the private press that took upon itself the role of public watchdog and defender of freedom and the truth (Mwale 2010:6; Chirwa 2010:8).

The history of Zambian broadcast media is characterised by similar trends to those identified within the history of print media. Here, too, it is possible to observe the impact of colonial rule and then the emergence of Zambia as an independent state. The earliest form of broadcasting can be traced back to 1941 during the colonial administration (Chirwa 2010: 11). Television broadcasting was then introduced in 1961 by a privately owned international company, the London-Rhodesia Company (Lonrho) (Chirwa 2010: 11). This station was then bought and nationalised by the Zambian government in 1964 and became part of the Zambia Broadcasting Services (ZBS). The station was transformed into the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) in 1987 by the ZNBC Act, Chapter 154, of the Laws of Zambia. ZNBC is described in the literature as a government-owned statutory corporation (Chirwa 2010: 11-12). Within the current context, however, the ZNBC television claims to be a public service broadcaster rather than being government controlled (Banda 2003; Makungu 2004; Hamasaka 2008).

As in the case of print media, the liberalisation of the Zambian media landscape is understood to have enabled a number of investors to start up commercial radio and television stations. The literature indicates, in particular, that there has been an increase in the number of privately owned, commercial radio stations in the country from 2000 onwards (MISA 2006; Chirwa 2010:41-44; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013:28-31). The emphasis on radio rather than television is understood to have resulted from the fact that this medium does not require as large a capital outlay (Chirwa 2010:41). It is explained that private radio stations have largely been those owned by the Roman Catholic Church, which has emerged as a dominant actor in Zambian commercial broadcasting (Catholic Zambia 2013). It is also observed that most of the commercial radio stations are concentrated in the capital (Chirwa 2010: 41-44; African

Media Barometer Zambia 2013:28-31; BBC 2013). Recent statistics show that there are 11 commercial radio stations in the country (Chirwa 2010:42-44; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013:30). The Lusaka-based Radio Phoenix has the largest reach, operating five repeater transmitters that provide good signals in the capital and the Copperbelt province (Chirwa 2010:42-43). It is explained, at the same time, that the ZNBC radio channels continue to enjoy economic hegemony in the market in terms of advertising and listenership (MISA 2005:45; Mwale 2010:4-5).

Another important trend that is highlighted in the literature is the rise of community radio, which is now recognised as a distinct sector within the Zambian media landscape, both in legislation and in practice. It is explained that this sector has developed side by side with the commercial stations belonging to the church (Kasoma 2002:20; Banda 2003; Tembo 2011; Siakacha 2015). By 2001, there were three community stations in the country (Kasoma 2002:20-21). Currently, of the 26 licensed radio stations in Zambia, 14 are designated “community” (Chirwa 2010: 45; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013). Each of these stations serve a specific community defined either geographically or as a community of interest, or both (Kasoma 2002; Muzyamba 2009). There are also suggestions in the literature that because community radio is relatively new in Zambia, it faces many challenges. Most community stations have found it difficult to sustain themselves because of weak organisational structures and an inadequate marketing base (Muzyamba 2009:5).

Commentators also speak of the influence of technological change on the Zambian media landscape. It is explained that, despite limited access to new media by many citizens, the increasing presence of such media is impacting in important ways on the Zambian media landscape as a whole. Newspapers such as *The Post*, the *Zambia Daily Mail* and the *Times of Zambia* are now seen to have an Internet presence. There are also online publications such as the *Zambian Watchdog*, *LusakaTimes*, *Tumfweko* and *Timbuktu Chronicles* providing interactive options that allow for audiences to comment on different issues (Chirwa 2010:9; Banda 2010: 31-32; African Media Barometer Zambia 2013:28-31). The influence of technological change is also noted in context of the broadcasting sector. Reference is made, in this context, to Radio Phoenix, Q-FM and ZNBC, who have established websites with audio streaming capabilities (Chirwa 2010: 41). It is argued that, by means of an online presence, these stations have enhanced their own capacity to distribute content as well as to compete for audiences with the

older, conventional broadcasters (Banda 2006:30). Furthermore, phone-in programmes on both radio and television stations are now employing text messaging to encourage audience participation. It is argued that this technological change is redefining the concepts of universal service and access (Mwale 2010: 4-5; Banda 2010:14-15).

It can be noted from the above that many of the trends and patterns, as identified in journalism studies literature, echo the observations made in the context of the journalism education literature discussed in Chapter One. This points to a shared understanding, both within the general field of journalism studies and in the more specific context of journalism education, of the relationship between social change and journalism practice in African contexts.

#### *2.1.2.2 Journalism practice*

In the previous section, focusing on the broader African context, it was noted that commentators generally argue that recent changes in African media landscapes have resulted in at least four trends within communities of journalistic practice. These changes are understood to consist of a growth in audiences, a diversification of content, an escalation in the challenges that journalists face in accessing resources and increasing struggles around journalistic standards. Literature dealing with Zambian journalism suggests that all four trends can also be identified in this context. The growth in audiences is firstly noted in terms of the expansion in the number of media channels and the number of audiences participating as contributors of content in different programmes. It is noted that, since the late 1990s, there has been an increase in the number of people participating in media programmes.

Secondly, reference is also made to a growth in the supply of available content on the various media platforms (Kasoma 2002:3; Mbangweta 2012; Muchangwe 2014). As a result, there has been a diversification of perspective on fundamental social issues such as the rule of law, freedom of the press, and universal human rights (Muzyamba, 2009:3-4). The media have also started to report on a myriad of previously untouched social and lifestyle subjects. It is suggested that this growth in content is as a result of the diversification of the media landscape as discussed above, particularly through the formation of private and community media (Chirwa 2010:45-47; Muzyamba 2009; Tembo 2011).

Thirdly, a challenge relating to the availability of resources is again noted as another issue that is affecting the practice of journalism in Zambia. This problem is believed to have led

to poor coverage of news in both broadcast and print media (Makungu 2004: 60-61; Muzyamba 2009: 5; Mwale 2010:4-5; Muchangwe 2014). It is also explained that poor infrastructure such as inaccessible roads in rural areas and the non-existence of telecommunication services is affecting the distribution of print media (Makungu 2004:60). The lack of access to modern information and communication technologies is, furthermore, understood to affect the timely and effective delivery of information to the outside world. The high cost of newsprint and equipment is also seen as a hindrance to the growth of existing media and as discouraging new investment in the sector (Makungu 2004: 60-61; Muchangwe 2014). It is noted in this context that many newspapers that started well have folded due to failure to meet the high cost of imported newsprint and machinery (Makungu 2004:60-61). Inadequate capacity, arising from low funding, is also understood to make it difficult to cover development issues in far-flung areas (Makungu 2004:61). It is explained that the situation is exacerbated by the inadequate training and lack of specialisation among journalists (Muzyamba 2009:5).

Fourthly, the literature notes that there is a tendency in some media organisations for journalists to take a casual, uninformed approach to journalism (Makungu 2004:61; Muzyamba 2009:5-6). At the same time, while commentators point out that there are problems with an adherence to standards, they also note that there is a greater consciousness, at the level of editorial leadership, of the need for better standards. Here it is explained that the changes in the political and economic environments of journalism practice in Zambia has led to a movement in the direction of transforming the occupation of journalism into a more defined practice. This has been done, for example, through the formation of the Media Ethics Council of Zambia (MECOZ) (Makungu 2004:67-68).

Reference is also made, again, to the impact of technological developments on all four of these trends within journalistic practice. Such developments are said to have ushered in a new era of media, signalling new opportunities for practicing journalists (Banda 2010:25; Mbangweta 2012). It is argued that citizens now use various online platforms to participate in the media using the available technologies. They do so, for example, as bloggers on online newspapers and as participants on call-in programmes such as '*let the people talk*' on Radio Phoenix (Makungu 2004: 31; Chirwa 2010:41; Mbangweta 2012). The literature also emphasises the centrality of 'interactive' features in online newspapers, which allow users to comment, give feedback or even vote on controversial issues. It is suggested that these technological developments are

changing news production processes and the understanding of who produces news (Mwale 2010:4-5). It is also explained, however, that technological advances have had detrimental effects on the methods journalists use to find and report news. The literature notes, for example, that in the past, journalists relied mostly on direct contact with news sources. Journalists were encouraged to initiate and sustain such contact, in order to confirm and re-confirm the legitimacy of their stories (Makungu 2004: 61).

This assessment of journalism as it is currently practiced in Zambia can be seen to imply that broad changes within the immediate social context have impacted in important ways on the communities of journalistic practice in this country. Democratisation and the consequent liberalisation of the Zambian media landscape are understood to have played a particularly important role in this respect. The forces of liberalisation and commercialisation can be seen to have operated both to enable and to constrain journalistic practice. In terms of commercialisation, the growth of private media is said to have had an impact on the promotion of competition in media markets. Such competition is seen to pose challenges for the sustainability of high standards of journalism practice in this country.

## **2.2 Histories of journalism education**

This section provides an overview of literature dealing with the development of Africa-based journalism education. The first subsection reviews literature about the development of tertiary journalism education in African contexts. The second subsection focuses on commentary dealing with Zambian journalism education. The aim is to establish how this historical example is understood to be positioned within the broader history of journalism education in Africa.

### **2.2.1 The history of journalism education in Africa**

Scholarship about journalism education in Africa is seen to take the form of scattered examples of individual national studies. It is nevertheless possible to trace within the literature a coherent and shared debate amongst scholars and educators about journalism education as it has come to exist as an international phenomenon on the African continent. This literature indicates, firstly, that journalism education has a very short history in Africa in general (Sibanda 2010:1; Nyamnjoh 2005). Commentators point out that journalism education programmes were first

established in Anglophone countries in Africa in the late 1950s, while further developments followed in Francophone Africa in the 1960s (Nyamnjoh 2005:98).

It has been noted that the emergence of these early initiatives coincided in many instances with the period in which particular States first acquired independence from colonial powers. Journalism education in Africa is, nevertheless, still described as having developed in the context of a relationship of dependency on the resources of the industrial West (Murphy & Scotton, 1987:13-14). It is suggested in the literature that in the post-independence era, many African countries became aware of the need for growth in their journalism sectors so that such media could play a supportive role in the establishment of new democratic States (Salawu 2009:81). From the early 1970s onwards, training programmes were established in universities in several African countries, including Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and Zaire (Murphy & Scotton 1987:15; Nyamnjoh 2005: 95). It is noted that America was particularly influential in this development of journalism education on the continent, among other contributors who targeted the African region such as Britain, France, China and the Soviet Union (du Toit 2013:11).

Within the contemporary landscape of journalism education that has emerged from this history, programmes tend to be taught within tertiary institutions (Sibanda 2010:2). It is explained that in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, for example, journalism training generally takes place in departments and units attached to technical colleges and universities (Sibanda 2010; Banda et al 2007: 166-167). Within such institutions, courses in journalism form an integrated part of Liberal Arts programmes – and are, as such, taught alongside courses in Arts and Social Sciences (Sibanda 2010:2). It is further suggested that, in both institutional contexts, journalism educators tend to draw a distinction between teaching modules in which students learn how to produce journalism and those in which they study the social context of journalism and learn to engage with academic knowledge about journalism (Gaunt 1992:12-13; Deuze 2008:23). It is generally assumed that technical colleges tend to place the emphasis on the first category of teaching while university-based programmes foreground the latter (Murphy & Scotton 1987: 14; Sibanda 2010: 2). In South Africa, for example, the first tradition in journalism education is represented by ‘technikons’, which are strongly skills oriented (Berger & Kyazze 2008; Sibanda 2010: 2; Mare 2010: 10-11). Many of these

technikons have become ‘universities of technology’ – and in this, the distinction between colleges and universities begins to fall away (du Toit 2013).

Commentators also indicate that in many countries in Africa, aspiring journalists can pursue two main strategies for establishing themselves as practicing journalists. They may, firstly, acquire a formal degree or diploma in journalism at a tertiary institution, and then seek employment in media organisations (Banda et al 2007:166). On the other hand, individuals who wish to work as journalists may seek direct employment within media organisations, learning the practice of journalism ‘on the job’. Such learning sometimes takes place informally and at others in the context of apprenticeships. On the job training is understood to represent the more typical trajectory into a career in journalism within the African context (Banda et al 2007:167).

The literature also indicates that there tends to be a disjunction in many programmes between the way journalism education is taught and the requirements of the social environments in which they are based (Murphy & Scotton 1987; Freedman & Shafer 2008:3-4). It is generally suggested that this disjunction results from the extent to which the conceptualisation of programmes has been based on models originally developed in Western industrial nations. It has been explained, in this respect, that journalism education in Africa has commonly been a result of fragmented initiatives by Western donor organizations (Banda et al 2007:166; Skjerdal & Ngugi 2007). Commentators point out that journalism in ‘developing’ countries face unique challenges, different from those that characterise the ‘developed’ context. It is noted, for example, that programmes based in economically vulnerable locations are characterised by struggles around access to teaching resources and by concerns about the need for educators to develop ‘self-reliance’. Reference is made, in particular, to a lack of qualified staff, teaching material and appropriate technology (Boafo-Arthur 2006; Hume 2004). Further, it is observed that coursework often does not take account of aspects of political context that are of relevance to particular countries. One example, in this respect, is the role played within some environments by high levels of government control over journalism practice or education (Freedman & Shafer 2008:4; Merrill 1987:37; Josephi 2010). Mention is also made of a disjunction between the content of coursework and the realities that journalists face in their daily work (Banda 2009:4; Freedman & Shafer 2008:3-4). It is explained that the standard curriculum fails to engage with the working conditions that journalists face in developing countries (Berger 2009:2).



The literature also deals with the extent to which one can talk about the emergence of an ‘African’ approach to journalism education, in which different institutions talk to each other in order to develop shared terms of reference for teaching. Here it is noted that from the early 1990s, there have been attempts towards the formalisation of journalism education across the region (Berger & Kyazze 2008). The literature suggests, however, that there is still a long way to go before one can talk about a coherent approach to curriculum and to the mapping out of the field of journalism studies in Africa (Skjerdal & Ngugi 2009).

In the first part of this chapter, it was argued that the history of journalism practice can best be understood in the context of broad social changes that have occurred across the continent. The above discussion suggests that this is also true for the history of African journalism education. In both contexts, these social changes are understood to take place in context of the economic and political transformation of contemporary society.

### 2.2.2 The Zambian example of journalism education

Looking at the current Zambian situation, it is possible to see how the development of journalism education is located within the broader patterns identified above. Literature about journalism education in this country describes themes that resonate with those that are traced in the contemporary journalism education landscape of other African contexts. Here, too, such education is described as having developed in the context of a relationship of dependency on the resources of the industrial West. The location of journalism education within the contemporary social landscape is also similar to that of other African countries.

Commentators suggest, firstly, that in Zambia, aspiring journalists can pursue two main strategies for establishing themselves as practicing journalists. They may, on one hand, acquire a formal degree or diploma in journalism at a tertiary institution, and then seek employment in media organisations (Banda et al 2007:166-167). Alternatively, individuals who wish to work as journalists may seek direct employment within media organisations, learning the practice of journalism ‘on the job’. Such learning sometimes takes place informally and at others in the context of apprenticeships. On-the-job training is understood to represent the more typical trajectory into a career in journalism. Journalists who establish themselves in this way may, in many instances, have no tertiary training. Those who do have degrees will often have gained them in undergraduate programmes far removed from

journalism (Mass Communication Studies Year Book (MCS), 1994:2-3). Formal journalism education does not, in other words, as yet represent a key access point into journalism as a career. As can be seen, this situation is representative of the location of journalism education within many African contexts.

Secondly, the patterns that can be observed in approaches to curriculum design repeat those that have been identified within the broader African context. Here, as elsewhere, journalism is taught as an integrated part of tertiary education, either in the university context or in technical colleges. Within both kinds of institution, journalism education is again organised around a distinction between modules in which students learn how to produce journalism, and also those in which they study the social context of journalism. At the same time, within the context of technical colleges, the focus tends to be more on the production of journalism rather than its academic study. Within the university context, in turn, there is a stronger focus on the theoretical study of media and journalism (Banda et al 2007; MCS 1994).

Two of the main institutions that provide journalism education in Zambia, the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Zambia (UNZA) and Evelyn Hone College's Media Studies Department, can be seen to represent examples of the two kinds of institutions mentioned above. The Department of Mass Communication at UNZA is the longest established journalism programme in the country, founded in 1966 (Sibanda 2010:10). This department is said to be a "pioneer" of university-based journalism education in Southern Africa, as it was one of the first to introduce a formal degree in mass communication, in 1984 (Sibanda 2010:10). By the mid-1990s, more than 100 people had obtained their Bachelor of Mass Communication (BMC) degree through this programme (MCS 1994: 2-3). At this point, the department also launched a Master of Mass Communication, the only one of its kind offered in Eastern and Southern Africa (MCS 1994: 12). It is noted that the UNZA courses are structured so that students at undergraduate level can 'minor' in other subjects such as philosophy, linguistics, economics, development studies and public administration (Banda et al 2007:166). It is further explained that this design is informed by an interest in strengthening the credibility of journalism education as a university-based field of study, by ensuring that it draws upon multiple disciplinary models and methods. This approach is described as acknowledging the multi-disciplinary nature of the field of communication and media studies generally (Banda et al 2007).

Within this overall curriculum, the emphasis tends to be placed on the academic study of media and communication theory (Sibanda 2010: 2).

Evelyn Hone College (EHC), in turn, was opened in 1963. This institution falls under the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training (MSTVT) (Evelyn Hone College website, 2012). The college includes a number of departments, primarily focusing on aspects of professional and vocational training such as business studies, communication, creative arts and health science. It is noted that there are more journalism students at this college than any other such programme in Zambia. The Department of Media Studies has a three-year diploma programme in journalism, and here the focus is understood to be on teaching the skills of journalism practice (EHC 2012).

It is also noted in literature that the disjunction between journalism education and local context, as described in the previous subsection, can again be observed in the Zambian context. The suggestion is, again, that this disjunction results from the extent to which the conceptualisation of programmes has been based on models originally developed in Western industrial nations. It is argued, in this respect, that Zambian journalism education tends to be based on the supposition that students are being prepared to work as ‘watchdogs’ of democracy. The assumption is, in particular, that the responsibility of the journalist is to place the activities of government under scrutiny. Within such an approach, journalism education assumes an antagonistic relationship with those in political power. It is suggested that this approach is informed by an American model of journalism education, which takes as its reference point a social context that is very different from that of Zambia. The literature suggests, for example, that journalism educators could place a greater emphasis on peace journalism and development journalism, given that these traditions in journalism can be seen to respond better to social issues that are of relevance to the Zambian context (Banda et al 2007:166).

It is also explained that Zambia faces the same challenges that have been identified in other African contexts with regard to access to teaching resources and concerns about the need for educators to develop ‘self-reliance’. The assumptions that are made about the kind of resources that are demanded in journalism education are again seen to be heavily informed by internationally circulating models of such teaching. Commentators have identified a lack of appropriate resources for the implementation of curricula that draw on these traditions. Reference is made, again, to a lack of qualified staff, teaching material and appropriate

technology (Freedman & Shafer 2008:3). The general argument seems to be that these problems are understood to result from Zambia's status as a developing country.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

It should be remembered that the central purpose of this study is to consider how journalism educators in Zambia respond to changes in journalism practice, as these can be identified within their social context. The study considers how such responses can be seen to be informed by the way these educators understand the ideal purpose of journalism education within the Zambian context. It also sets out to pinpoint characteristics of this context that educators regard to be of relevance to their conceptualisation of these ideals. In order to establish a backdrop against which these research aims could be pursued, Section One of this chapter reviewed recent developments within journalism practice in African contexts generally, and Zambia more particularly, as discussed in journalism studies scholarship. Section Two then drew on journalism education literature in order to describe patterns in the history of such teaching within these same environments.

There is, in fact, little detailed discussion in the journalism education literature of how, and whether, educators are attempting to make sense of this context, as part of their approach to their own teaching practice. It may be that this absence is indicative of the dominance of internationally circulating models of teaching in African environments. The conceptualisation of journalism that is embedded in such a model may, in other words, be restricting the extent to which African journalism educators are getting to grips with journalism education as it actually exists within their social context. It may also be that the kind of research that has been conducted about journalism education in Africa has not, as yet, adequately explored the extent to which such teachers have, in fact, attempted to engage with journalism practice as it exists in their own context. The empirical section of this study, as presented in the chapters that follow, sets out to explore these questions.

For the purpose of this dissertation, it is also of value to consider how the histories of African journalism education, as discussed in this chapter, can be located in relation to the three traditions of teaching described in Chapter One. It is argued, in that chapter, that a review of the global history of journalism education point to the existence of three main traditions of teaching that have developed internationally. Each of these traditions is based in different understandings

with regards to the values and principles on which journalism education programmes should be based, and the kind of knowledge that they should draw on.

The first tradition, which is framed by an interest in the 'professionalisation' of journalism, came to define itself in terms of a commitment to the improvement of journalism as a social practice. This was described in Chapter One as a commitment to ensuring that journalism operates not just as a commercial enterprise but also makes a contribution to democracy. This approach is seen to prioritise the need to provide journalists with occupational norms and standards, competencies and knowledge that enable them legitimately to lay claim to a professional identity informed by a public service orientation. The descriptions of journalism education in African societies, as described in the current chapter, can be said to suggest that it is the first of these three traditions that is most strongly represented in these contexts. The specific presence of this tradition in Zambia is seen here to be a result of colonial influence, from the time of the inception of the practice of journalism in this country. The second tradition, which defines its identity in terms of critical media literacy, is closely associated with the field of cultural studies and with critical media education. In Chapter One it was explained that the purpose of this tradition tends to be defined as that of preparing students to analyse the existing conventions of journalism and media and in this way becoming 'critically literate' about journalism and the media generally. It was explained that such education tends to be most strongly associated with teaching institutions that do not place a heavy emphasis on preparing students to work as journalism practitioners. The review above does not suggest that this tradition is strongly represented within journalism education in the African context. The references that are made to the content of the courses suggest, rather, that the main point of reference is the American tradition of journalism education. As such, the emphasis is on the field of mass communication studies rather than cultural studies, and also on the cultivation of professionalism rather than critical literacy.

The third tradition is described in Chapter One as 'developmental' in its approach, and as an approach that is 'emerging' rather than already well established. It is argued that the emergence of this tradition can be identified, in particular, within African contexts. The developmental tradition is described as sensitive to the concerns of developing environments. This tradition is informed by an interest in the establishment of approaches to journalism that are grounded in a locally grounded normative framework. As we have seen, however, there is very

limited reference to this approach within the literature reviewed in the current chapter. This would suggest that the 'emergence' of such a tradition remains very much in its infancy in African journalism education. It may again be that the further articulation of this tradition remains restricted by the extent to which journalism education in African countries continues to be framed by models of such teaching drawn from the industrial West. These questions will, again, be addressed in the empirical study that follows.

A review of relevant literature suggests, then, that it is the first of these three traditions in journalism education - that of 'professionalisation' - that dominates African contexts generally, and Zambia more particularly. This body of literature does not, however, include extensive research of the way in which particular groups of African journalism educators respond to the dominance of this tradition. It may be that individual educators, in particular social contexts, take seriously the potential of either the 'critical' or the 'developmental' tradition. It is with such questions in mind that the empirical component of this research sets out to explore Zambian journalism educators' conceptualisation of journalism education within their own social context.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND EXECUTION

#### **Introduction**

This chapter deals with the design and implementation of the empirical research project that forms part of this study. Section One of the chapter deals with the research plan. It describes the methodological framework in which the study is based, the more specific choice of research methods, the fieldwork design and the approach to analysis. Section Two explains how the implementation of this plan worked out in practice. Throughout, I make use of the first person form of address so that I can talk freely about the decisions I made in designing and implementing this project.

#### **3.1 The research plan**

##### **3.1.1 Methodological framework**

It should be apparent from the research aims as described in previous chapters that this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is defined in literature dealing with social research methodology as an extension of the normal human activities of looking, listening, speaking, and reading (Lincoln & Guba 1995:199). The qualitative researcher, however, adopts a more rigorous and systematic approach to such activities than is possible within 'everyday' processes of interpreting social meaning (Jensen 1982:37, Wimmer & Dominick 1991). Such rigour enables the researcher to draw on rich and detailed description of historically specific social experience and phenomena in order to contribute to social scientific knowledge (Deacon et al 1999). This is, indeed, also the central task of this study; to explore approaches to journalism education as they exist in a specific social context, in order to contribute valuable terms of reference to scholarly debate about such education.

My decision to locate this study within a qualitative paradigm was informed by the fact that it deals with the ways in which journalism educators in Zambia respond to changes in journalism practice as these can be identified within their social context. I was conscious that qualitative research lends itself to the examination of social practices that are constantly adapting to changes in context. This, as we have seen in previous chapters, is true both for journalism and journalism education as social practices. Qualitative research is understood to be suited to the

study of such phenomena because it allows for the accommodation of unanticipated findings (Bryman 1988:46).

The study draws on guidelines for qualitative research that are based in an interpretive framework. The interpretive tradition of social research concerns itself with gaining insight into the way in which people understand phenomena or construct meanings (Babbie & Mouton 2001:272; Deacon et al 1999:6). It often seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of a historically situated community or group of people (Bryman 1998). Such an emphasis is relevant to my study because it looks at the way a particular group of journalism educators conceptualise of their own practice.

### 3.1.2 The research design

The research project has a case study design. It is explained in literature about social research that case studies can enable researchers to gain in-depth understanding of historically specific situations. Such research often explores the way a given group of people deal with a problem or issue in a specific social context and historical moment (Babbie & Mouton 2001:279). The emphasis is, then, on an in-depth understanding of the specific example rather than the articulation of general principles (Deacon et al 1999:6). I understood such an approach as being suited to my study, given that my goal was to look at journalism education as it exists within a particular historical moment and social space.

In the previous chapter, I argued that journalism education in Zambia is typical of such teaching as it exists in many other African contexts. I noted that, both in literature about the Zambian context and more generally, such education is described as having developed in context of a relationship of dependence on the resources of the industrial West. The literature also suggests that the Zambian example is typical of journalism education as it exists in Africa, both with regard to curriculum design and the relationships that exist between educational institutions and communities of journalistic practice. For these reasons, I have assumed in my design of this study that Zambian journalism education can usefully be seen to represent a 'case' of such teaching as it exists in Africa – and in fact in 'developing' contexts more generally. My aim was, then, to draw insights from the Zambian case with regard to journalism education as it exists within these broader environments. Nevertheless, as noted above, my emphasis was not on



generalisation but rather on gaining insight into a historically situated example of journalism education in all its rich detail.

The study also deals with two institutional ‘cases’ of journalism education within the Zambian context. It does so by focusing on the Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts (EHC) and the University of Zambia (UNZA)’s Mass Communication department. I made these choices based on the observation that they can be seen to represent the two kinds of institutions in which journalism education has typically established itself within African contexts, as discussed in Chapter Two. Evelyn Hone is, as such, representative of a college in which journalism education is taught with a strong emphasis on technical preparation for work environments. UNZA, in contrast, represents an institution in which the teaching of journalism forms part of a general undergraduate university programme with a stronger emphasis on academic knowledge. These institutions also represent appropriate choices for case studies because both have been in existence for more than two decades and have therefore built up particular approaches to journalism education. One of my aims was therefore to compare the kinds of discussion that emerge from the two institutions, in order to explore the extent to which they can in fact be seen to represent different approaches to journalism education.

### 3.1.3 The choice of research methods

As noted already, my aim was to gain insight into journalism educators’ understanding of journalism practice as it exists in Zambia and to examine the conclusions they draw with regard to the approach they should adopt to their own teaching. In order to achieve this goal, I decided to make use of focus group interviews with educators at both Evelyn Hone College and UNZA. I also decided to include individual in-depth interviews, working with a selection of these focus group participants.

#### *3.1.3.1 Individual in-depth interviews*

It is argued in discussions of social research that the kind of interview material that can be obtained from focus groups is not identical to that which results from individual interviews. This is because focus groups tend to deal with notions shared and negotiated by the group, while one-on-one interviews enable an exploration of the views and opinions of the individual (Berg 2001). They enable the researcher to single out opinions that could be distorted in group interviews due

to group influences (Berg 2001:298). I was conscious that these arguments might have some relevance to my work, given that some perspectives on journalism education may have become hegemonic within the particular institutions that form part of the study. It seemed likely that, in a focus group consisting of educators from one such institution, a particular set of arguments would dominate. For this reason, I concluded that there would be value in also talking to people separately, so that they could feel free to express their particular perspectives. I aimed, in this way, to widen the set of positions on journalism education discussed by the participants in each institution. It also becomes possible, in context of such interviews, to explore the issues raised in the focus groups with greater acknowledgement of their nuance and complexity.

Typically, an in-depth individual interview is used to explore the respondent's own perceptions and accounts in some detail. This method is appropriate when research deals with subject matter about which little is known and where it is therefore important to gain in-depth understanding (Patton & Cochran 2002). I felt that this principle was of relevance to my study given that so little has been written about journalism education as it exists in the Zambian context. One-on-one interviews would enable me to respond to this absence, by exploring the diversity of perspectives about journalism education that may exist amongst teachers at Evelyn Hone and UNZA.

### *3.1.3.2 The focus group discussions*

Focus group discussions are described, in social research scholarship, as the "... systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in formal or informal settings" (Fontana & Frey 1994). They involve bringing together a group of people to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator (Lunt & Livingstone 1996:44). It is argued that the group context can induce the expression of "latent" ideas, as conversation amongst participants produces an awareness of others' thoughts (Hansen et al 1998). The emphasis is then typically on the promotion of an active, open ended dialogue with minimal guidance from the moderator (Deacon 1999). This strategy is considered particularly useful for a study informed by interpretive interest, in which the researcher seeks to discover the way participants understand the phenomenon under study (Lunt & Livingstone 1996). I recognized this method to be of particular relevance to my study, given its focus on the ways in which educators conceptualise of their own practice and its relationship to social context.

### 3.1.4 Planning the fieldwork

#### *3.1.4.1 The number of interview sessions and selection of participants*

I decided to conduct focus groups at each institution with the full component of teaching staff. At Evelyn Hone, this meant the involvement of nine participants and twelve at UNZA. In designing an approach to these focus groups, I kept in mind that within each of these institutions a distinction is drawn between staff members responsible for courses dealing with the academic study of media and those who teach about its production. I felt that it was possible that these two categories of teaching staff could have very different perspectives on the nature and purpose of journalism education. For this reason, I decided to run separate focus groups for each of these categories of staff. I was conscious that this meant that some group interviews would have an unusually small membership. It is typically argued that focus groups should include between five and nine people (Hansen et al 1998; Patton & Cochran 2002). I nevertheless felt that adherence to optimum group size was of lesser importance than the need to avoid scenarios in which differences in perspective interfered with the participants' ability to engage coherently with the issues and questions being discussed (Berkeley 2006:1-3). I decided to conduct focus group with each of the groups, bringing the total number of sessions to four.

#### *3.1.4.2 The design of interview questions for both the focus groups and the individual interviews*

The design of the interview guide for the focus group discussion was that of a semi-structured interview. I chose this design because it would enable me to be flexible in my approach, so that I could determine when it is necessary to explore certain subjects in greater depth (Fontana and Frey 1994). The resulting interview guide was structured so that the discussion would be divided into three sections (see appendix 2: Interview schedule). In the first section, the participants are prompted to talk about their understanding of the role that journalism as a social practice should ideally play within the Zambian context. In the second section, they are encouraged to share their perception of journalism practice as it currently exists in Zambia and their views on whether such practice can be seen to match up to their ideals about good journalism. The aim was also, as part of this discussion, to ask participants to comment on changes that are taking place within such practice. In the final section, the participants are asked to draw conclusions about the role that journalism education in Zambia should play in engaging with journalistic practice.

With regards to the questions I would pose in the individual interviews, my intention was, at this stage, to take further some of the discussions that were generated in context of the focus groups, expanding on them, as seen from the particular perspective of individual participants. In my judgment it was not appropriate to try to come up with the particular formulation of these questions until I had completed the focus group process. I could, then, develop the interview guide for the individual interviews based on the kind of discussion that had taken place in the focus groups.

#### *3.1.4.3 Selection of venues*

It is noted in guidelines for qualitative fieldwork that location can impact in important ways on the process of interviews. It is for example important to choose venues that can help to ensure that participants are not otherwise preoccupied or distracted. Generally, this means that interviews should be conducted in an environment in which the needs of comfort and confidentiality can be met (Lindlof & Taylor 2002:187-188). With these arguments in mind, I felt that it would be important to conduct the interviews in a place insulated from interruptions or the presence of others who might listen in. I therefore selected the staff rooms at Evelyn Hone College and UNZA as appropriate locations. In my judgement, these venues met the above conditions in terms of environments that provided comfort and confidentiality. In the case of the location for the individual interviews, most of the participants preferred to use their individual offices as they found them to be most suitable.

#### *3.1.4.4 The facilitation of group and individual interview sessions*

In formulating the steps involved in conducting the focus group discussions, I followed the guidelines that are generally stipulated in social research literature (Berg 2001; Patton & Cochran 2002:10-11). The plan for each meeting was therefore structured to include a preliminary stage, which would serve as an orientation for the participants. This introductory section included time to explain the focus of the research and the way the group discussion would be conducted. Here I kept in mind the proposal that the moderator needs to establish ground rules that can guide interaction during the focus group discussion. They should explain, for example, that it is important for one person to speak at a time, so that everyone's ideas and thoughts are clearly recorded (Berg 2001; Patton & Cochran 2002). I also kept in mind that it is

important to explain to the participants why the recording of the discussion was necessary. Finally I considered the need to talk about informed consent and to ask each person to sign an informed consent form.

One of the responsibilities of the researcher is to create an atmosphere conducive to an open and free-flowing discussion (Zikmund 1999: 36). The first request I therefore decided to make to the participants was for them to tell me something personal about themselves, so as to help them to relax (Berg, 2001). As part of this 'warm-up' phase I also planned to encourage the group members to engage in a free-ranging discussion around the research topic. Further, I asked the participants whether there would be a need to deal with questions of confidentiality and anonymity.

During the course of the interview, it is the role of the researcher to ensure that the discussion remains on the issue at hand, whilst eliciting a wide range of opinions on that issue (Lunt and Livingstone 1996). It has been argued that, during a focus group discussion, the participants who think that their viewpoint is a minority perspective may not be inclined to speak up (Patton 2002). The moderator must then intervene to encourage participation from such individuals, ensuring that there is reasonable balance of contributions from the discussants. At the same time, it is important that such interventions do not disrupt the course of discussion, and that a balanced flow of ideas is maintained (Hansen et al 1998). I prepared myself to keep these principles in mind during the focus group sessions.

### 3.1.5 Approach to analysis

I planned to make use of thematic coding in my analysis of the resulting interview material. Such coding involves the categorisation of extracts from the interview material, guided by key concepts, headings or themes (Jensen 1982:247; Hansen et al 1998: 113; Holsti 1969:116). It is noted, in literature, that such analysis can refer to the identification of patterns of recurring words, as units for categorization. It is also pointed out, however, that coders must be able to work strategically, interpreting the meaning of interview material. They are required, as part of this process, to identify certain themes or ideas in the text, and then to allocate these to pre-determined categories (Beardsworth 1980, in Deacon et al 1999: 118). Such categories may be represented by a theme, which can usefully be defined as a single assertion about some subject (Wilbraham 2005:2). The coder may then draw up lists of beliefs, opinions, ideas, observations,

statements and attitudes expressed for each theme (Patton 2002: 441). Such analysis is understood to be complex, because the unit of analysis is not so easily identifiable. A single sentence can contain several assertions, all classifiable under a single theme or each classifiable under separate themes. I knew I would have to keep these principles in mind in analyzing how the educators who participated in my study relate to the conceptualisation of journalism education and its relationship to social context.

I planned to focus, in my analysis, on the extent to which established models of journalism education can be said to inform the participants' evaluation of their own practice. I also aimed to compare the kind of discussion that emerges from the two institutions, given that they are supposed to be representative of different approaches to journalism education. In this way, I hoped to make sense of the way educators negotiate the relationship between such models, the realities of journalistic practice in Zambia, and their own approach to teaching. As part of this process, I aimed to explore the relationship between what the participants say and the terms of reference for discussions of journalism education that are established in Chapters One and Two.

## **3.2 Implementing the research plan**

As the first step in setting up my fieldwork plan, I spoke to the heads of department at both EHC and UNZA in order to gain their permission for involving their staff in the study. They were happy to allow me to conduct the research. I also made follow-up calls and was informed that staff were willing to participate in the interviews. In the section that follows, below, I describe my efforts to conduct this fieldwork and analyse the resulting interview material.

### **3.2.1 Setting up and convening the interviews**

Whereas my aim was to include the full component of teaching staff in the focus groups, I did not achieve this goal in practice. One of the limitations that I encountered was that some of the individuals who had committed themselves to participating in these discussions did not, in the end, attend the focus group meetings. One reason for this was that, although I had been informed that the participants would generally be available at the time of the scheduled meetings, some turned out to be involved in other assignments. This applied, in particular, to lecturers from UNZA. I was finally able to conduct only one focus group discussion at each of the institutions.

This also meant that, although I had hoped to conduct separate discussions with teachers of media theory and media production, I ended up, in the case of both institutions, having to include these participants within one meeting.

The focus group that I convened at UNZA included three out of the eleven members of teaching staff. Those present were Gerald Kachingwe Mwale, the Head of Department; Sister Rose Nyondo, a senior lecturer who teaches mass communication theories and Elastus Mambwe, a lecturer for both radio and television including digital journalism.

I was, however, able to approach five more of the people who were not involved in this focus group in context of individual interviews. In this way I was able to involve Fidelis Muzyamba, a senior lecturer for both mass communication theory and practical courses, who has been lecturing in these areas for more than twenty years; Colonel Emmanuel Kunda who teaches theory courses and has taught mass communication for more than fifteen years; Eustace Nkandu, who has been teaching public relations and mass communication for more than twelve years; Youngson Ndawana, a lecturer in media and development studies, print layout and editing, and online media and Carole Chibbonta, teaching basic news reporting, feature writing and sub editing, and has also taught for ten years. I therefore succeeded in interviewing eight members of this department.

The focus group that I conducted at Evelyn Hone College's Department of Media Studies included four of the nine members of their teaching staff. Those present were George Kalimbwe, who is Head of Department and also teaches basic reporting skills and radio broadcasting; Joe Nkadaani, who teaches practical courses for senior students in the journalism section as well as lecturing radio and television theory, media law and ethics; Daniel Nkalamo, a senior lecturer who teaches writing for the media, photo journalism and English for specific purposes (ESP-Communication Skills) and Ernest Mweemba, who teaches feature writing, public relations and sub-editing .

I was then able to approach four of the individuals who had not attended the focus group in the context of my individual interviews at EHC. In this way I was able to include Mundia Mushoke, who teaches media law and ethics and media management and Constantine Mwale who teaches television broadcasting, both of whom have been teaching in this institution for the last ten years. Others included where Mujinga Kamoto Phiri, who teaches mass communication and Masauso Soko who teaches media management and sub-editing. I was, therefore, able to

involve eight of the nine members of staff at EHC in my research process. The ninth member of teaching staff, Judith Tembo, who teaches advertising, was on leave during the time of this research process.

Although I managed to include most of the teaching staff within the two institutions in the interview process, the fact remains that the focus groups were not of an ideal size for good discussion. However, as Strelitz argues (2002), it is in fact possible to have a productive discussion with only two people. I found, similarly, that the EHC focus group generated valuable discussion, despite the fact that only four participants were involved. The discussion that took place at UNZA, with three participants, was also of value.

Given the limited level of participation in the focus groups it was also necessary for me to reconceptualise the approach that I aimed to adopt in the one-on-one interviews. As explained in the previous section, these interviews were originally intended to serve as a second phase in my fieldwork process. The aim of this phase was to expand on and deepen the discussion that would take place in the focus groups. In the end, however, the individual interviews served simply as a way of reaching participants who had not attended the focus group sessions, and therefore as a way of concluding phase one of the fieldwork process. For this reason, I chose to ask these participants the same questions that I had included in the original focus groups.

### 3.2.2 Conducting the interviews

In conducting the focus group discussions, I followed the guidelines that I had outlined in my research plan. I began by explaining the focus of the research, and stipulating ground rules for the discussion. I explained that it was important for one person to speak at a time, so that everyone's ideas and thoughts would be recorded. I also explained to the participants why the recording of the discussion was necessary. Each participant was informed about the need to sign the informed consent form and was asked to sign one.

During the course of the focus groups, I ensured that the discussion remained on the issue at hand, whilst eliciting a wide range of opinions on the issue. I encouraged contributions from all the participants by prompting particular people to speak. All the individuals who participated in the focus group discussions were willing to share their views, and each individual gave ample time to the other participants to share their views.



In conducting the individual interviews, I also followed the guidelines that I had outlined in my research plan. I began by explaining the focus of the research, and stipulating ground rules for the one-on-one discussion. I also explained to the participants why the recording of the discussion was necessary. The participants were informed about the need to sign the informed consent form and were asked to sign one. During the course of the individual interviews, I ensured that the discussion remained on the issue at hand. All the individuals who participated in the individual interviews were willing to share their views; some participants provided more details during the interviews while others provided very brief responses.

Each of the focus group interviews that I conducted lasted approximately one hour, while the individual interviews lasted about forty-five minutes on average; some participants had more to say in their responses. I was, therefore, able to generate sufficient interview material for the purpose of this research project.

### 3.2.3 Transcribing and analysing the interview material

The difference between the two institutions was not really that significant a factor in this research. Important distinctions between the approaches adopted by the EHC educators versus those from UNZA were not identified. An initial aim of the study was to make this comparison, but it soon became apparent, in the empirical stage of the study, that participants at the two institutions did not adopt two distinct approaches to journalism education.

In this study, I preferred to employ verbatim quotations from interviewees' replies in order to illustrate several points from the interview material. Hence, I transcribed all the interviews verbatim. Analysis of research material is crucial as it is argued that all interview statements are actions arising from an interaction between interviewer and interviewee, and as such, interviews were interpreted so as to transform the material from data to sources of information. The analysis of the interview material for this study is provided in Chapters Four and Chapter Five.

## 3.3 **Conclusion**

In reviewing the above discussion of the conceptualisation and implementation of my research plan, I conclude that I have been successful in producing a study that is both valid and reliable. Although I was not able to follow all aspects of the original research plan, the fieldwork process

was nevertheless successful. I was able to source rich responses that helped me, in the process of analysis, to answer the research question based on the perspectives of participants whose social experiences this study seeks to understand. The next chapter presents a description of the study's findings.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: CONCEPTIONS OF JOURNALISM

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the way that participants in this study conceptualise of the knowledge and values that should inform journalism education in Zambia. Section One pursues this question in context of an exploration of the participants' understandings of the ideal purpose of journalism. As part of this, it assesses the explanations they provide of the role that journalism as a social practice should play within the Zambian context. Section Two examines their understanding of the kind of changes that are currently taking place within journalism practice in Zambia. It also deals with their evaluation of journalism as it currently exists in Zambia, measured against these ideals.

In the discussion that follows below, the participants have been referred to by their surnames only. Their full titles and names have been included in Chapter Three. Also, when deemed appropriate, the discussion indicates which of the two educational institutions a participant represents – that is, either the Department of Mass Communication of the University of Zambia, or the Media Department of Evelyn Hone College. In order to ensure that the inclusion of this information does not become unwieldy, 'shorthand' descriptors will be used (respectively, 'UNZA' and 'EHC'). As noted in the previous chapter, the identification of the participants' institutional location reveals that there is, in fact, no clear distinction between the approach to education adopted by the two groups. Instead, there are ideas and principles that are shared across the two institutions, and some internal differences among staff within each institution.

#### **4.1 Conceptualising journalism as it should ideally exist**

##### **4.1.1 Ideals of journalism practice**

When asked to comment on the purpose of journalism, a number of participants from both teaching institutions refer to the well-known mantra, "to inform, educate and entertain". It is in fact this exact phrase that is used by Mushoke, who teaches media law and ethics at EHC (Mushoke, 2014, individual interview 7, p.1). A close examination of the participants' discussion suggests, however, that they generally do not accord equal status to all three of the tasks referred to in this motto. Although Mushoke's statement may suggest such equal status, this may be the

result of the fact that the catch-phrase is often used in everyday discussion of the media. When other participants discuss journalism, they define its purpose in more specific terms. Kunda, who teaches mass communication at UNZA, also makes use of the catch-phrase – but he signals that it is the first two functions that are conventionally associated with journalism:

...particularly the role of journalism is to inform, educate and a lot of us want to add on the aspect of entertainment (Kunda, 2014, individual interview 3, p.1).

Other participants refer only to the first of the three tasks – that of keeping audiences informed. Phiri, who teaches radio broadcasting at EHC, implies that there is broad agreement in society that journalism primarily serves as a source of information:

Journalism should ... fulfil the accepted ideal of informing (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

Kalimbwe who teaches Basic Reporting at EHC, understands this to be the central purpose of journalism:

...the biggest role that journalists play in society is that of providing information... (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

Nkadaani, who teaches Television Broadcasting at EHC, also stresses that journalism is defined by its informational role:

Journalism ... should be ... a platform through which people in society ... access all information (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p. 1).

The participants also give some indication of the kind of information that journalists should provide in order to achieve this goal. Soko argues that journalism concerns itself with occurrences within a range of social domains:

...[journalists] need to inform the people on what is happening around them, so this must be in terms of new developments, it can be in terms of the political scenario, technology, health... (Soko 2014, individual interview 9, p.1).

Nkadaani suggests that the focus is on events taking place within our context that are of relevance to our welfare:

...it [has] to do with disease, rainfall, climate change, anything to do with the well-being of a human being... (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p. 1).

Ndawana, who teaches media and development studies at UNZA, suggests that journalism should deal with information that can help to change society for the better:

...to reach a lot of people with messages that will effectively change people's lives, to build lives of communities and nations at large... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 4, p.1).

Phiri, who teaches radio broadcasting at EHC, emphasises that the nature of the information that journalists provide should contribute to the economic well-being of communities:

...to be more effective ... we [should be] able to help our communities ... to begin to make changes that will enhance economic development... (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

A number of the participants also comment on the nature of the relationship that should exist between journalism organisations and their audiences. They suggest that this relationship defines the role that journalism plays in providing that audience with information. Nkadaani suggests that audiences can be regarded as consumers who should be able to select the content that they want to buy:

...people should be able to make free choices. Journalism is an information exchange business... (Nkadaani 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

In this commentary, Nkadaani describes the relationship between journalists and their audiences in commercial terms, while most of the other participants define it in terms of public service. They invoke the concept of a 'public' that is served through the provision of information. Mwale, who teaches broadcast journalism at EHC, argues that access to information is generally understood to be a human right. In his view, journalists have an obligation to provide such access, irrespective of the context that they are working in:

I think providing information to the public is the universal ideal. Journalists should sniff for information out there ... give it to the public because the public has the right to know (Mwale, 2014, individual interview 6, p.1).

The participants generally suggest that journalism should provide information that is of relevance to this public's well-being. This can be seen in the case of Chibbonta, who teaches Basic Reporting and feature writing at UNZA:

I think [journalism] should be able to inform the public, mostly provide information for the public... (Chibbonta, 2014, individual interview 5, p.1).

A number of the participants note that journalism also provides people with the chance to discuss social issues that are of relevance to them. Fidelis Muzyamba from UNZA describes journalism in these terms, and his words are echoed by many of the other participants:

Apart from ... giving news to people, journalism should be a platform ... for debate (Muzyamba 2014, individual interview 2, p.1).

Participants also argue that journalism should increase the public's understanding of the events that unfold around them in society. Mambwe, who teaches mass communication at UNZA, describes this as an imperative that informs the daily practice of journalists:

...to ... get to the root of something, and to create a level of understanding ... almost every journalist will try to get to... (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.1).

The participants tend to assume that, by enhancing public understanding of issues in this way, journalism can strengthen the processes of public deliberation that form part of a democracy. The assumption is that growth of knowledge and understanding amongst the audiences of journalism can help to ensure that such deliberative processes work better. This assumption is signalled, for example, in the explanation of the purpose of journalism offered by Phiri (from EHC):

'To inform' is to give information so that people are able to [make] informed decisions (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 7, p.1).

Muzyamba, who teaches broadcast journalism at UNZA, suggests that journalism should provide the public with opportunities to engage in discussion about issues that are of significance in a democracy:

...we also should be a platform ... for debate, discussion of issues so that our democracy thrives (Muzyamba 2014, individual interview 2, p.1).

Within these comments, it is possible to identify the shared assumption that journalism plays an important role within a democracy by contributing to informed public discussion.

The participants also generally argue that if journalism is to succeed in this role, it needs to have credibility – and such credibility depends on the extent to which it can be regarded to be truthful. Indeed, Nkadaani (from EHC) argues that truthfulness is the central ideal against which the credibility of journalism should be measured:

...the truth and nothing but the truth ... Once [this value is] lacking, then we will see a compromise of the journalism profession (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

Muzyamba argues that truth-telling is important because it enhances democracy:

We also want journalists who will speak truthfully; we cannot build a democracy on a foundation of lies (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.2).

Participants from both institutions identify criteria against which journalists need to be assessed in order to establish whether they are ‘speaking truthfully’. In doing so, they refer in particular to the criterion of objectivity. Mweemba (from EHC) suggests that this criterion should always guide journalism:

I tend to feel that one of the universal ideals is to be objective (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.2).

Muzyamba goes on to explain that, if journalists are to achieve objectivity, their personal analysis of events must not impact on the way they present a story:

...among the ideals that we always talk about, we try to have objective journalism in which the journalist does not interfere with the news. She or he tries to bring out the news without necessarily colouring it with their own interpretation... (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.2).

Nkandu, who teaches public relations at UNZA, also argues that objectivity has to do with the extent to which journalists tell stories without allowing their own views to play a role:

...objectivity, trying to distance yourself from the story that you are covering is always important... (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.1).

Ndawana (also from UNZA), argues that the journalist’s views must not be reflected in the way they report on events:

...you have to tell the story ... objectively and without your opinion ... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 4, p.1).

It is noticeable that in discussing responsibility for the maintenance of objectivity, these participants tend to highlight the interests and agendas of the individual journalist, rather than those of the media organisation that they work for.

Some of the participants also argue that, in order to achieve objectivity, journalists would do well to be guided by the concept of ‘fairness’. Muzyamba argues that fairness has to do with the extent to which a journalist succeeds in presenting the diversity of perspectives of the interest groups involved in the event or process that is being covered:

It is ... very important that ... all people should ... have access to ... news channels on an equitable basis. If one person is saying something against another person ... it is a good practice to encourage journalists to go out and talk to the person... (Muzyamba, 2014, interview 2, p.1).

Nkandu (from UNZA) emphasises that fairness must be upheld by journalists whether or not they are in agreement with the perspectives on which they are reporting:

...how fair are you in your treatment of sources whether they are saying something you do not agree with ... give them benefit of doubt and see how you can be fair to them... (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.1).

For these participants, fairness means that reporters covering a story must remember that there is more than one side to an issue, and that those differing viewpoints should be given equal space in any news story. Muzyamba (from UNZA) also refers to the importance of the notion of accuracy. He suggests that in order to adhere to this criterion, journalists must refrain from altering the facts in order to support an account of events that serves particular interests:

...we also want journalists who will be accurate in their reporting, the accuracy is very important because if you tamper with the facts, tamper with the numbers then it becomes propaganda, it becomes less than what is (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.2).

It is possible to observe, within these participants' comments, a shared understanding of the purpose of journalism. This is a conceptualisation in which it is assumed that journalism should not be driven by a particular political agenda, and should not shape events in favour of particular interests. This assumption is expressed by participants both from Evelyn Hone and the University of Zambia. However, some of the participants' comments (again from both institutions) also point to a second conceptualisation of journalism, which does allow for journalism to be informed by agendas, and to play a role in the deliberate shaping of society. Ndawana (from UNZA) argues, for example, that the circulation of information necessarily operates as social action – and he clearly sees this as part of the purpose of journalism:

...you are able to reach a lot of people with messages that will effectively change people's lives ... build lives of communities and nations at large. ...where there is information, action comes in... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 5, p.1).

Nkandu (also from UNZA) argues, in contrast, that it is not the provision of information on its own that facilitates or impedes change, but also active attempts to influence the way such information is interpreted:

...journalists are not just conveyors of information, taking of information from one end of the other ... but also actively involved in shaping society, trying to change the way citizens in society perceive certain issues (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.2).

Nkandu's conceptualisation of the purpose of journalism, as described here, can be seen to challenge the assumption that journalism should be objective. His point of view is echoed by



Phiri (from EHC), who also argues that journalism should play a more direct role in facilitating social change:

...we must do extra ... to help our communities and also our government to begin to make changes that will enhance economic development so that ... the media is seen to be playing an active role in that (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

It is noticeable that the participants who invoke this action-oriented conceptualisation of journalism tend to support their arguments by referring to their own social environment. They speak, in particular, about the role that such action-oriented journalism can play in contributing to social development in Zambia. Phiri (of EHC) suggests that it is because Zambia is a developing nation that journalism in this country should play a more direct role in shaping society:

...for Zambia in particular we look at ourselves as a developing nation and being a developing nation, it means that we are striving to do so much to enhance economic development and social development (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

These participants also refer to the role that journalism can play within processes of 'nation building'. Nkandu (from UNZA), for example, makes this point when he suggests that the media should promote shared values and beliefs in Zambian society:

...much as we promote plural politics which is very good but we also need to realise that as a country we need a media that would want to promote unity and national building... (Nkandu 2014, individual interview 1, p.2).

These participants also talk more generally about Africa, and how it should be presented by journalists. They argue that journalists need to offer alternative representations to those descriptions of Africa that tend to dominate Western media. Mushoke (from EHC), for example, explains that journalism in other parts of the world often represent Africa only in context of stories that deal with violence, disaster and suffering. She argues that journalists working in African environments should provide alternatives to such representations:

...journalists have a very big role [to play in] trying to change that perception ... there are a lot of positive things to talk about ... unlike just trying to focus on issues like war, poverty, disease ... (Mushoke, 2014, individual interview 7, p.1).

Mushoke makes this argument in the more specific context of Zambia. She suggests that social conditions in Zambia challenge the assumption that African countries are necessarily defined by

violence. Journalists should highlight this facet of Zambian society as part of their reporting practices:

...something unique about Zambia of course is the fact that it is a peaceful country if we compare [it] to most of the countries around us ... Journalists [should] actually pick on this unique aspect of the peace that we have ... (Mushoke 2014, individual interview 7, p.1).

The discussion in this section has mapped out the way the research participants conceptualise of the social purpose of journalism. It is clear, from this summary, that they generally agree that journalism should play a public service role, by informing deliberations within a democracy. This understanding of the purpose of journalism resonates with the shared assumptions about such purpose embedded in the different traditions of journalism education referred to in Chapter One. As we saw in that chapter, it is assumed both within the ‘professionalisation’ and ‘critical media literacy’ traditions that journalism practice should be driven by a commitment to democracy, rather than operating purely as a commercial enterprise. It would seem that this assumption is also fundamental to the conceptualisation of the social purpose of journalism articulated by the participants in this research.

At the same time, as we have seen, it is possible to identify two contrasting understandings amongst the participants with regards to the way journalists should achieve this goal of public service. These understandings are based in different conceptualisations of journalistic practice as it should ideally exist – what has been referred to in this section as a ‘journalism of objectivity’ and an ‘action oriented journalism’. These conceptions can be seen to resonate, respectively, with two out of the three traditions of journalism education described in Chapter One.

Firstly, as we have seen, the participants describe the ‘journalism of objectivity’ as facilitating democratic process through the neutral provision of information. It should be noted that this conception is accompanied by a lack of explicit reference to local context. The assumption seems to be, rather, that this model of journalism is universally applicable, irrespective of context. As we have seen in Chapter One, the first tradition of journalism education (that of ‘professionalisation’) is also informed by this assumption. It was argued in that chapter that this assumption becomes particularly significant when one considers the fact that this tradition has circulated around the world, informing the establishment of journalism education and communication programmes in a wide range of contexts. Irrespective of this

diversity in context, the assumption about universality remained intact. Similarly, the participants who invoke a 'journalism of objectivity' do not refer directly to the specifics of social context. The participants' reference to the journalism of objectivity could, then, be seen to be indicative of the possible influence, within the Zambian context, of at least one of these internationally circulating traditions of journalism education.

When the participants' comments are considered more broadly, it becomes clear that their approach to journalism education resonates, in particular, with the educational tradition that was described in that chapter as serving the goal of 'professionalisation'. We saw in Chapter One that this tradition offers students a clearly defined occupational identity, grounded in norms associated with social responsibility and public service. It is an approach to journalism education that prioritises the need to provide journalists with occupational norms and standards, competencies and knowledge that enables them legitimately to lay claim to a professional identity informed by a public service orientation. It is also in these terms that the research participants articulate their understanding of journalistic practice.

However, as we have also seen, the participants describe the second, 'action oriented' conception of journalism as 'developmental' in its approach to society. Here, in sharp contrast to the first conception, they make reference to the context in which journalism is produced in Zambia, and in African societies more generally. This emphasis is thus reminiscent of the ideas associated with the third tradition of journalism education referred to in Chapter One – which was described there as 'developmental' in its orientation. Within this tradition of journalism education, it is assumed that journalism in developing environments should engage with the specifics of local context. The participants' invocation of the role that journalism can play in social development, peace building and nation building can be seen to be indicative of the possible influence of this third tradition of journalism. The 'action oriented' understanding of journalism can, then, be seen to suggest the presence of this 'third tradition' in the two institutions in this study, alongside the 'professionalisation' tradition.

#### 4.1.2 The participant's perception of journalism as it is practiced in Zambia

The previous section focused on the research participants' conceptualisation of the purpose that journalism should ideally fulfil within Zambian society. This next section deals with their evaluation of the extent to which journalism as it is currently practiced in this country measures

up to these ideals. The discussion deals, firstly, with the participants' understanding of the way Zambian journalism is informed by changes that are taking place within its social context. The second part then serves as a summary of the participants' assessment of the kind of journalism that emerges from this context.

#### *4.1.2.1 Changes in the context of journalistic practice*

The participants generally agree that the practice of journalism in Zambia has changed rapidly, particularly during the previous two decades. They also agree that these changes are informed by developments that have taken place in the local environment. In discussing such contextual change, they refer to some of the broad themes that also emerged in context of the journalism studies literature discussed in Chapter Two. They explain, similarly, that since independence the political and economic context in Zambia has become 'liberalised' – and this has led to a rapid expansion and diversification of the media landscape. Soko, who teaches sub-editing at EHC, argues that this can be observed in an increase in the number of media houses:

...it is changing because ... we are experiencing the coming up of so many media organisations (Soko, 2014, interview 9, p.2).

Muzyamba (from UNZA) points out that it is in context of the establishment of multi-party democracy that the diversification of the broadcast sector became possible:

...with the coming of the MMD in 1991, we had the air waves being opened up for broadcast stations to be set up... (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.3).

Mweemba (from EHC) adds that the new voices that consequently emerged within the broadcast landscape are not owned and controlled by the state:

Some time ago we only had ZNBC offering radio facilities ... and now we are seeing ... radio stations booming up from everywhere... (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.3)

Indeed, the participants seem generally preoccupied with the fact that the diversification of the Zambian media landscape has allowed the emergence of other media beyond that of the State. They also seem to be in agreement that the rise of commercial media is of particular significance in this respect. It is, however, possible to identify contrasting understandings amongst the participants with regards to the implications of the establishment of commercial media for

Zambian journalism. On one hand, Nkadaani (from EHC) suggests that the growth of such media is a positive development:

...we have seen over the years ... changes or improvement ... in the media industry in Zambia in that in the past ten years or so, we have seen quite a mushrooming high number of private radio and television stations ... we have seen also an improvement in terms of magazines (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p. 1).

Soko (from EHC) argues, in contrast, that the growth of commercial media may in fact be problematic because their purpose is purely that of making profit for shareholders:

...the people that are involved in bringing these institutions ... just want to use [them] as a money making venture where they just put up an institution or radio station and broadcast ... just commercializing (Soko, 2014, interview 9, p.2).

It is possible to infer from Soko's statement that such an environment does not lend itself to the encouragement of journalistic practice that operates in service of the public interest. Mweemba (from EHC) makes a similar point when he states that the new commercial media organisations are competing for limited ad spend:

...in Zambia ... media houses are mushrooming now to make money. They are all fighting for adverts from very few organisations which are ready to pay for them. To get this money, they have to win these advertisers... (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.3)

Soko also proposes that shifts in patterns of ownership have placed limitations on journalists' freedom:

...they [journalists] are told what to do and what to write ... journalists are told what they are supposed to do, they should not go against the owners even if the owners know that this is not a journalism practice, they would still make them do it... (Soko, 2014, individual interview 9, p.3).

Again, the implication seems to be that, within such a media environment, journalistic practice as a public service is likely to become marginalised.

The participants point out, at the same time, that the growth of local media can also be observed in the rise of community radio. Some of the participants suggest that community media fulfils at least one of the three tasks that they had identified in their discussion of the ideal purpose of journalism summarised in the previous section – that of keeping audiences informed.

Phiri (from EHC) suggests that community media plays an important role in the circulation of information:

...community media is actually doing a lot of good to our country because this is media that is taking information to the furthest places in our country. You will find that in places where they do not have access to Radio Phoenix, for instance, they have a community radio station (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.3).

Soko also suggests that the role that such media play is identified particularly through supplying information that is of a local nature:

...community media has the potential because it is close to the people and so they are able to know what is happening around them... (Soko, 2014, individual interview 9, p.3)

Within Soko's understanding, it is not only information that is important, but locally grounded information:

...they [community radio] speak the language of the locals and actually talk about what is happening around them... (Soko, 2014, individual interview 9, p.3)

Mushoke (from EHC) also speaks of the role that community radio plays in circulating local information, and emphasizes that this task is fundamental to community media. She goes on to say that such media do not only play an informative role, but also provide a platform for voices from the community:

...we have so many community media coming up and ... these media are close to the people, so you will find that people are able to express themselves so much through these community media ... I think we are actually growing in terms of allowing these community media... (Mushoke, 2014, individual interview 7, p.2).

The participants also explain that through these activities – that of circulating local information and providing a platform for local voices – community media enables communities to participate in development. Muzyamba (from UNZA) argues that, unlike commercial broadcasting, the community radio sector does in fact have the potential to play a development role at the local level:

...we are one of the countries which are doing very well and allowing the setting up of these broadcast media in the communities ... we have communities in Zambia being empowered at the local level... (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.3)

The participants' descriptions as summarised above suggest that, in their estimation, the emergence of a community media sector in Zambia is creating opportunities for the kind of journalism they described in the previous section. Some of their comments in this regard seem to be informed by the idea of a 'journalism of objectivity' as described in that section - with a strong emphasis on the provision of information. However, their commentary also allows for a wider conceptualisation, in which the subjective perspectives of communities are understood to form part of the 'information' that circulates in this media space.

It could be seen as significant that Soko, who is one of the people who points to the importance of community voices, also gives explicit expression to the idea of 'action-oriented journalism', as discussed in the previous section. He suggests that community media can be seen as a platform that has potential to play a more direct role in facilitating social change:

So community media [offer] very good strategies, they are a source of developing our nation if we [use them] well... (Soko, 2014, individual interview 9, p.3).

Here we see an appreciation of the developmental power of journalism that is based in an action oriented approach, rather than the notion of neutrality and objectivity.

In the previous subsection it was noted that this action-oriented understanding of journalism is accompanied by an emphasis on the role that it plays in social development. In the participants' discussion of community media, we again see the emergence of this emphasis on development. Ndawana, (from UNZA), suggests that community media have the ability to provide information that can help to change the local context for the better:

...to reach people with messages that will effectively change people's lives, to build lives of communities... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 4, p.1).

Phiri (from EHC) emphasises that the nature of the information that community media provide could contribute to the economic well-being of communities:

...we [should be] able to help our communities ... to begin to make changes that will enhance economic development... (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

It would seem, then, that the participants generally believe community radio offers space for the articulation of the second approach to journalism identified above - that of an action oriented practice, that serves the purpose not just of democratisation but also of social development.

However, there are also suggestions within the participants' comments that community media faces challenges in realising this potential. Soko argues that one of these challenges relates to the achievement of economic sustainability:

...it is falling down because it does not have proper funding (Soko, 2014, interview 9, p.3).

The participants also suggest that the involvement of people who are not adequately trained may be affecting community radio negatively. The argument seems to be that the people assigned to do the work at these media organisations lack proper skills to apply in this new environment:

...the people that are [working at] community radio stations are not trained ... they ... go on radio thinking that it is just about talking (Soko, 2014, interview 9, p.3).

Mweemba (from EHC) draws a relationship between this lack of skill, and what he sees as the failure of community media to provide audiences with information:

...they lack the much desired skill ... they fall too much into entertainment. Entertainment without information defeats the whole purpose of journalism (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.2).

In the previous subsection, we saw that participants identify 'entertainment' as one of the three tasks of journalism. However, this comment by Mweemba represents the only instance in which a participant refers back to the question of entertainment. Furthermore, in this commentary, Mweemba may not necessarily have a problem with entertainment but the lack of balance in such media. He suggests that the informational role of journalism is 'good', while an emphasis on entertainment is a sign of weakness.

The participants also point out that digitalisation of media, particularly the rise of the Internet and developments in mobile technology, are shaping the media in important ways. Nkandu (from UNZA) suggests that these developments are impacting profoundly on journalism as a community of practice:

...with the change in technology, the journalism fraternity in Zambia is also changing... (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3).

Nkalamo, who teaches English for Specific Purposes (ESP) at EHC, also suggests that technological changes taking place in the contexts of media have influenced the way that journalism is practiced:



...the [journalism] environment is also changing very fast in terms of technology because it is shaping the field (Nkalamo, 2013, group interview 2, p. 2).

Kalimbwe, who teaches Basic Reporting at EHC, observes that one way in which technological developments have impacted on media is in providing audiences with greater access to many outlets – including those from outside the country:

...we see a lot of media that people have access to ... people are able to watch news outside Zambia unlike in the past when we depended entirely on the local media; people can access foreign media, they can access [this] through the internet as we have satellite TV (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.2).

Muzyamba (from UNZA) points out that such access provides audiences with a greater diversity of choice:

...more media are coming on board ... for example, South African media through Multi Choice. This brings a lot of news flavour to the media scene and gives options ... if you look at international news, through Multi-Choice, you are able to access various channels. So, there are a lot of changes and a lot more competition (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.4).

Within these comments about the way changes in technology are impacting on the Zambian media landscape, it is again possible to identify a preoccupation with the ideal social purpose of journalism. The participants could be suggesting that, through the provision of more options to audiences, the media is seen to deliver different kinds of information to audiences, which, as we have seen, is understood by them as a key purpose of journalism.

Within this section, we have seen that the participants' assessment of changes within the context of journalism in Zambia is characterised by a preoccupation with the emergence of new forms of media. Furthermore, in discussing such media, the participants place particular emphasis on the impact that they are having on the emergence of new relations of power within journalism. These shifts are understood to have implications for the extent to which spaces are opening up for the kind of journalism that the participants believe in. This can be observed, firstly, in the discussion of the emergence of new sectors of media – that is, that of commercial and community media. The participants' assessment of these sectors can be understood to be a commentary on the extent to which they are opening up possibilities for journalism that operates in the public interest. Further, they seem to suggest that the power relations that are associated with commercial media places restrictions on the kind of journalism they would like to

encourage, and that it is really in community media that the potential for such journalism can be identified. Also, in discussing the potential of journalism in the community media sector, the emphasis is on the action oriented, developmental approach.

The preoccupations with power and public interest can also be observed in context of the participants' discussion of new (digital) media. Here, again, the suggestion seems to be that the rise of new forms of media is leading to shifts in relations of power that can help to strengthen journalism in Zambia. The participants' assessment of new technologies is that they have expanded the number of media channels available to ordinary people with global distribution networks. The suggestion is that the impact of technology on media landscapes could act as a catalyst in bringing about democracy and development.

#### *4.1.2.2 Assessment of journalism as it exists in this changing context*

The participants identify at least three ways in which Zambian journalism is changing, as a result of these shifts in context. They refer, firstly, to changes that are taking place in the content of journalism. Some participants note, in this respect, that shifts in relations of power between the media and elite groups in society has diminished the role that journalism plays in providing the public with a diversity and depth of information. Mwale (from UNZA) notes, for example, that the news agenda is increasingly being set by people in positions of political power rather than inside newsrooms:

There has been a paradigm shift in terms of reporting among journalists. There is too much influence from politics ... the politicians have played the system in such a way that they are directing the direction of journalism rather than the other way round (Mwale 2013, group interview 1, p.2).

Mweemba (from EHC) argues that restrictions are also placed more directly on journalistic practice by media owners themselves. Because of such constraints, journalists cannot provide their audiences with information even when this relates to questions that have quite obviously been raised by news events:

We lack in-depth access to information ... certain issues are just scratched on the top when you start the whole process of informing the people ... because of the ownership, you just start the story and then it fades away before you can actually give the final details ... you create these gaps where people are still waiting (Mweemba, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

Mweemba also argues that journalists tend to censor themselves even when they are not explicitly constrained from reporting on certain events:

...the aspect of freedom of information, certain types of information is aligned to barriers; you do not accept some information because maybe it borders on the government or rather a political party that is forming government. That portion will not be released because it might taint the government of the day... (Mweemba, 2013, group interview 2, p.2)

Nkandu (from UNZA) suggests that the journalistic community should take some responsibility for their own lack of power. In his view, they have given over control of the news agenda to the politically powerful sectors of society:

...the journalism sector has failed to set the agenda, we are in most cases dancing to the tune or to the rhythm of the political players, be it opposition or in government (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3).

He notes that, as a result of these shifts in power relations, it is the political elite who are placed at the centre stage in journalistic coverage:

...the elite, the people that are politically and economically powerful, these are the people that we tend to cover most... (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview, 1, p.3)

Mambwe (from UNZA) notes that the rise of commercial media has also led to a 'tabloidisation' of the content of journalism. He suggests that this change is motivated by a desire for media houses to attract large audiences:

...one of the things that is changing is that there is a shift towards ... a form of ... tabloid sort of reporting, the sensational type of writing when it comes to writing the same political stories... (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.2)

Nkandu (also from UNZA) argues that the tabloidisation of journalism is accompanied by a prioritisation of the 'shock value' of stories - which can lead to an overemphasis on 'bad news':

...there is some level of sensationalism, just focusing on the negatives... (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3)

Only Phiri (from EHC) points to aspects of journalistic content that have improved. She notes that there are more examples of coverage in which the focus is on ordinary members of society rather than political leaders:

...the content of the media itself is improving because unlike where you just see news about a particular government, we tend to see news about ordinary

people in our communities, which is a step forward from what we used to have (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.3).

Phiri also suggests that journalists are developing strategies that enable them to side-step the constraints that are placed on their work by those in authority. She explains that they have been able to do so in context of the increased availability of online platforms and social media:

We are also beginning to see a journalist being more assertive, more aggressive ... overcoming challenges of control and self-censorship, reporting as they should and ensuring that ... they bring out the truth as long as it's for the good of the nation (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.1).

The participants also argue that the changes in context referred to in the previous section are impacting on the nature of the relationship between Zambian journalism and its audiences. They identify such changes, firstly, in the context of the rise of digital media, which they say is enabling the establishment of a more interactive relationship with audiences. This, again, is seen to impact on the content of journalism. Phiri argues that, because of such interaction, the social experience of ordinary people becomes part of news content:

...they [audiences] will not just read what is being published; they also tend to feed in their own comments... (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.3)

Nkalamo (from EHC) points out that such contributions from the audiences of news represent an important resource for journalists:

...we have these social networks; social networks have actually really shaped the way journalism is being conducted in this country, because you don't need really to get information from one source. Some of it comes from these people who are on the social networks (Nkalamo 2013, group interview 2, p.3).

Muzyamba (from UNZA) warns, however, that journalists need to scrutinise the credibility of such content:

...mobile phones are able to take pictures of what is happening. Some of this is helpful, but the problem comes in where people are staging events and try to get the agenda in a different direction (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.4).

A third sphere in which the participants understand contextual change to impact on journalism is that of journalistic standards. Mambwe (from UNZA) suggests that journalistic standards are being affected in terms of ethical standards. He argues that the changes that are taking place within journalism have affected journalism practice, and that this is the reason why ethics in journalism should be emphasised:

I think one of the challenges that has also been there, maybe, is the issue of ethics. There are lots of concerns about ethics among journalists nowadays more than ever ... stories are [to be] written in an ethical way (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1.p.2)

Kalimbwe, who teaches Basic Reporting at EHC, points to some instances where ethical standards within journalism practice become questionable, particularly in the area of print journalism:

...journalism should be ... be ethical ... at times some pictures that are shown in the papers might not be in good taste for some people... (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.1)

Phiri, who teaches Radio Broadcasting at EHC, suggests that this applies in particular to journalism as it exists in online environments. Such journalism is not as closely monitored and controlled, and because of this, journalists often fail to adhere to guidelines for credible and responsible reporting:

...it is one area of media that is not very regulated. So anything goes and so anything comes. That tends to work against maybe values or beliefs of a particular society (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.2).

Mwale (from UNZA) similarly understands this decline in journalistic standards to apply to the sphere of online journalism. He claims that the decline has resulted from a lack of commitment, amongst journalists working in this environment to a professional identity:

...journalists have stopped being vocational, they are not mission oriented (Mwale 2013, group interview 1, p.2).

Kalimbwe (from EHC) also suggests that journalistic standards become compromised when journalists are bribed in order to cover a particular event. He believes that this practice leads journalists to deprioritise news that is of interest to their audiences:

...the people that work for the public media: ZANIS, NAIS and ZNBC<sup>2</sup> itself. Usually people [journalists] will follow those organisations ... and individuals that will probably pay them something in order to cover an event unlike

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<sup>2</sup> The Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS) is a public relations wing of government under the Ministry of Information, Broadcasting Services. The department came into being in 2005 following the merger between the Zambia News Agency (ZANA) and Zambia Information Services (ZIS), both Government wings (mibs.gov.zm). The National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS) is a specialised information wing of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, whose main role is that of supporting the extension services of the ministry through the dissemination of agricultural information through the mass media. NAIS is also the Public Relations wing of the ministry.

The 'Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation'(ZNBC) is a Zambian state-owned television and radio station.

situations where journalists decide whether what to cover has greater public interest (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

## **4.2 Conclusion**

The first section of this chapter mapped out the way the research participants conceptualise of the social purpose of journalism. It is demonstrated that the participants generally assume that journalism should play a public service role, by informing deliberations within a democracy. It is noted, furthermore, that this assumption resonates with the conceptualisation of journalism embedded in each of the three ‘reflective’ traditions of journalism education referred to in Chapter One. It is, in other words, an approach that informs journalism education dedicated, respectively, to professionalisation, critical literacy and social development. However, Section One also identifies two contrasting understandings amongst the participants with regards to the way journalists should achieve this goal of public service. These understandings are based in two different conceptualisations of journalistic practice as it should ideally exist – what has been referred to in this chapter as a ‘journalism of objectivity’ and an ‘action oriented journalism’. It is argued that these two conceptions are also present within the traditions of journalism education described in Chapter One; the ‘journalism of objectivity’ is closely associated with the journalism education for professionalisation, while ‘action oriented journalism’ can be linked to journalism education for social development. The participants’ reference to these approaches to journalism was seen to be indicative of the possible influence, within the Zambian context, of these two internationally circulating traditions of journalism education.

Within the second section, it was noted that the participants’ assessment of changes within the context of journalism in Zambia is characterised by a preoccupation with the emergence of new forms of media. Reference is made to the rise of commercial media, to the emergence of community media, and to a growth in digital media. In discussing such media, the participants place particular emphasis on the impact that they are having on the emergence of new relations of power within journalism. These shifts are understood to have implications for the extent to which spaces are opening up for the kind of journalism that the participants believe in. In assessing this potential, the participants generally suggest that commercial media is, in fact, not living up to this potential, due to the constraints placed on such media by relations of power. In contrast, they speak positively about the role that community media – and community radio

more particularly – is playing in this respect. In discussing the potential of journalism in the community media sector, the emphasis is on the action oriented, developmental approach. They do, at the same time, express concerns about the extent to which this potential can be fully realised, due to lack of resources and skilled staff within this sector.

The preoccupations with power and public interest can also be observed in context of the participants' discussion of new (digital) media. Here, again, the suggestion seems to be that the rise of new forms of media is leading to shifts in relations of power that can help to strengthen journalism in Zambia. The participants note that new media platforms are providing journalists with a way of getting past the constraints placed on them by political groups and media owners. Their assessment of new technologies is also that they have expanded the number of media channels available to ordinary people with global distribution networks. The suggestion is that the impact of technology on media landscapes could act as a catalyst in bringing about democracy and development. The participants do, at the same time, express concerns about the extent to which lack of proper guidelines for ethical practice apply within on-line media.

The participants' understanding of the purpose of journalism within the Zambian context and of Zambian journalism is one that is shared across the two different institutions. It is possible to trace a shared understanding, amongst many of them, regarding the social purpose of journalism, the way journalism is developing in Zambia and how journalism in this country can therefore be said to live up to its ideal purpose. These understandings do not seem to be specific to any one of the institutions - they find expression amongst participants in both institutions.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS: CONCEPTIONS OF JOURNALISM EDUCATION

#### **Introduction**

The previous chapter explored the participants' understandings of the ideal purpose of journalism. It also dealt with their evaluation of the extent to which journalism as it is currently practiced in Zambia measures up to these ideals. This chapter deals with the participants' explanation of the implications of this assessment for their own approach to journalism education. The first section looks at their understanding of the role that tertiary institutions such as their own should play in engaging with journalism practice as it exists in Zambia. The second section focuses on their description of the learning outcomes that tertiary-level journalism education should have within the Zambian context. The final section deals with their conceptualisation of the kind of programme that could achieve such learning outcomes. This section deals, more specifically, with the kind of content that the participants believe should be included in such a programme, and the kind of teaching strategies that should be employed.

#### **5.1 The role of tertiary-based journalism institutions in Zambia**

The participants generally assume that institutions that deal with the tertiary-level study of journalism and communication have an important role to play in the strengthening of journalism practice in Zambia. Indeed, Muzyamba (from UNZA) argues that there are currently too few of such programmes in existence in order to adequately play this role, and that there is a need for expansion:

...we need to do more, encourage junior colleges to also do more in terms of curriculum development and not the University of Zambia alone and other universities that are being set up because some do not even have communication programmes (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.3).

Many of the participants suggest that such programmes are important because they can help to ensure that journalism in Zambia contributes to the betterment of society. In describing the kind of social change that they have in mind, they refer both to the role that journalism can play in facilitating democratisation, and its relevance to development. Development and democratisation are, in fact, understood to be interrelated. This relationship can be observed in a comment by Muzyamba (from UNZA):



We ... try to train journalists at UNZA who are going to have a critical eye for development ... to make sure that the community is able to rise up politically, socially, economically, even spiritually ... [and participate in the public] discussion of issues so that our democracy thrives (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.1)

Ndawana (also from UNZA) proposes in similar terms that programmes should equip students to practice journalism which operates as “informed acts of citizenship” that “... stimulate development”. In his view, such journalism can improve the quality of life of the Zambian people:

I think that journalism has a key role to play in helping to develop the nation ... I think news must go beyond what we hear on radio and read in the newspapers, it should help influence certain sectors of the society (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 6, p.1).

Mambwe (from UNZA), proposes that in order to achieve such goals, programmes should incorporate a focus on social challenges that are relevant to the Zambian context:

...there is need for ... institutions to ... introduce courses addressing things like HIV/AIDS, child labour, and poverty which are a problem here in Zambia but might not be a problem as such [elsewhere] (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.1).

Nkandu (from UNZA) suggests that programmes should, in addition, emphasise the importance of building social unity. This goal should not be overshadowed by that of teaching students about the role that journalism can play in facilitating a diversity of perspectives. Nkandu’s commentary suggests, again, that an emphasis on democracy and development should both be present in approaches to journalism education:

...as a country we are still at a stage where we require a lot of development ... communication that ... would deliberately bring about [nation building] ... much as we promote plural politics ... we also need to realise that as a country we need a media that would want to promote unity and [nation building], even unity amongst diversity (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.2).

Some of the participants note, however, that Zambian media organisations do not recognise that tertiary institutions have an important role to play in the preparation of journalists. They explain that one indicator of this lack of recognition is the fact that such organisations often do not even employ graduates from journalism or communication programmes. In the participants’ view, this helps to explain the lack of competence that they observe amongst some

media practitioners. Nkandu (from UNZA) suggests that this problem is particularly acute within the broadcast sector:

...you find that a number of people that are practicing, they may not have even gone to a journalism school. Lack of qualified personnel is one of the challenges that affect or dilutes the good work that a few trained media practitioners or journalists can do. This has been a huge challenge in most media houses for some time now (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3).

Nkandu notes that some media houses are using “disk jockeys and volunteers” to read and to write the news:

... [they] are not qualified to do the work that qualified journalists are supposed to be doing. This in [turn] compromises the standard of journalism that we are seeing in Zambia today ... because the volunteer or DJ lacks adequate and qualified training that journalists undergo (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3).

Some participants also note that in those cases where graduates from media programmes are employed the knowledge and skills that they have gained through their education is not viewed as appropriate. To compensate for this perceived weakness, media organisations will ‘retrain’ such graduates. Chibbonta (from UNZA) suggests that such retraining signals a dismissal of the principles and values that inform journalism programmes:

I think it is tough because at the moment the industry does not appreciate what is being turned out of these training institutions. Journalists are trained at school, then they go to a media organisation, they train them again, so there is a disconnection ... the training institutions have to find a way of connecting with the industry... (Chibbonta, 2014, individual interview 5, p.1)

Kalimbwe argues that such retraining is designed to ensure that graduates abandon the ideas that they have developed about media as part of their education, and adopt alternative ones:

...journalism students are trained in ... institutions like Evelyn Hone College, University of Zambia or Open University ... but when they go to work for these various organisations ... it is like there is another field of training again that takes place and they are shaped to think the way these particular media organisations want them to think. As a result you will find that they start aligning themselves where their media organisations are aligning themselves ... there is this conflict in the picture of what is taking place (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

Kalimbwe's comment suggests that there is disjunction between the "ways of thinking" about media and journalism that exists in media organisations and those that are encouraged in educational institutions.

Mambwe proposes that this disjunction could be addressed by offering educational opportunities to working journalists. Institutions such as Evelyn Hone and UNZA should, in other words, continue to be involved in the education of journalists, even after they graduate. They should, furthermore, offer education to journalists who have not benefitted from tertiary education. This can, for example, be achieved through the provision of short courses targeted at working journalists and editors. He presents this suggestion not as a 'solution' to the conflict in "ways of thinking", but rather as a way of ensuring that tertiary institutions have an influence in the working spaces of journalism:

...to never stop skills delivery or imparting skills ... we should never stop interacting with the industry on a daily basis ... and this is how we can solve the problem of training and retraining by the industry as what is happening in Zambia today (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.1).

Mambwe further notes that the journalistic community does, in fact, recognise some of the flaws that exist in its own practices, and have looked to universities for guidance on this. Such scenarios represent an opportunity for educators, enabling them to make an intervention into the working world of journalism:

So, for example, [members of the journalistic community] realised that there is a problem when it comes to reporting on children, there is a challenge. So, they come to the University and the university offers this expertise and they bring journalists from selected media houses and we reinforce that skill (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.1).

Nkadaani (from EHC) believes, however, that the influence of educational institutions over journalism practice should go beyond that of a provision of support through education. The educational sector should, in fact, become integral to the provision of licenses for journalists, and in this sense play a similar role to that of programmes that prepare graduates for the medical and legal profession:

...there is need to make the journalism fraternity to operate as a professional body like the legal profession and the medical fraternity for instance ... no one should ... be allowed to operate as a journalist, especially in community radio,

without a practising certificate from MISA<sup>3</sup> Zambia or another regulatory body (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p.3).

The participants also suggest that, beyond their role as educators, academic institutions should contribute to creating an environment that would allow their graduates to put into practice the ideals that they have learned about. As part of creating such an environment, they should advocate for press freedom. In commenting on the fight for press freedom, Nyondo (from UNZA) suggests that every institution involved in journalism training should get involved in pressuring the Zambian government to come up with laws that support press freedom and human rights:

...pressing for press freedom, freedom of expression, human rights, and so on  
... every institution that has good will at heart has to continue fighting for press freedom (Nyondo, 2013, group interview 1, p.2).

Phiri, a lecturer from EHC, also argues that it is necessary for training institutions to join forces with other organisations advocating for press freedom:

...firstly, it is to ensure that we [training institutions] get involved with those that are advocating for press freedom... (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.2)

Kalimbwe (from EHC) suggests that if educational qualifications had more status, this could also help journalists to claim the right to such freedom. If they are able to confirm that they have been properly trained, they can argue that they be allowed to regulate themselves:

Journalism should be left to operate without any interference from anybody because I believe journalists are trained; they know what their role is in society (Kalimbwe, 2013, group interview 2, p.1).

The participants' comments, as summarised in this section, can be seen to be expressive of what has been referred to in Chapter One as the 'reflective' position regarding the purpose of journalism education. Within the participants' approach, this position is informed by assumption that the fundamental purpose of journalism teaching is to provide critical support for the practice of journalism. The word 'critical', within this definition, indicates that such education is informed by a critique of the way in which journalism is practiced, and aims to improve such

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<sup>3</sup> MISA Zambia is the Zambian chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa. It is an organization designed; for all intents and purposes, to promote Zambian media rights and responsibilities, as well as tolerance, freedom and pluralism.

practice. The emphasis is, more particularly, on strengthening the ability of journalism to contribute to progressive social change. It is possible to see evidence of this assumption in the participants' repeated reference to the role that journalism can play in facilitating democratisation and development.

Furthermore, the participants' comments can be seen to be informed by a rejection of the alternative position on the purpose of journalism education discussed in Chapter One, referred to there as 'vocational' in its emphasis. From this position, journalism education is understood to be operating in service of the media industry, delivering graduates to newsrooms according to their expressed requirements. As such, journalism education is conceptualised as the reproduction of vocational knowledge as it already exists. A rejection of this position can be seen in the participants' concerns about the way students are 'retrained' by media organisations, and their sense that educational institutions need to gain more influence in communities of journalistic practice.

It is also possible to see evidence in the participants' comments of the 'professionalising' tradition of journalism education, as described in Chapter One. We saw, in that chapter, that this tradition is informed by the reflective understanding of the purpose of journalism education, as described above. It defines itself in terms of a commitment to the improvement of journalism as a social practice. Journalism education is understood, more particularly, to play a role in the establishment and nurturing of journalism founded in the principle of social responsibility. It is assumed that journalism can best achieve this goal by reporting on social events in a way that contributes to democratic process. The participants invoke the importance of the role that journalism plays in relation to strengthening democracy - which is, as we saw in Chapter One, the point that is always reiterated in the 'professionalising' tradition of journalism education.

However, the participants' comments can also be seen to be expressive of the 'developmental' tradition of journalism education, also discussed in Chapter One. It will be remembered from the discussion in that chapter that this tradition emphasizes the need for journalism education to engage with the concerns faced by journalistic communities who are based in developing countries. Particular emphasis is placed on the need for economic development and social unity. A preoccupation with these concerns can, indeed, be identified in the participants' discussion as summarised above. They insist that the contribution that journalists can make to these social goals need not replace their role in the strengthening of

democracy but can, rather, stand in balance with it. It would seem that, within the participants' approach to journalism education, they are able to accommodate both the professionalisation tradition and the developmental tradition without causing contradictions.

## **5.2 Participants' conceptualisation of what graduates should learn**

The participants' discussion of what students should learn points to two categories of learning outcomes that, in their estimation, should apply to journalism education within the Zambian context. They refer, firstly, to the kind of knowledge that graduates should have. Secondly, they discuss what graduates should be able to do as practicing journalists. The discussion below deals with the participants' comments on each of these categories in turn.

### 5.2.1 The knowledge that graduates should have

There is general agreement among the participants that graduates should have knowledge of society in order for them to be effective in their work as journalists. They argue that such knowledge is essential to journalism practice because society expects journalists to provide information that concerns itself with occurrences within a range of social domains. Soko (from EHC) suggests that for these reasons, by the time students complete their degrees, they should have learnt how to stay informed about current events:

... [graduates] need to have knowledge on what is happening around them, so this must be in terms of new developments; it can be in terms of the political scenario, technology, health... (Soko 2014, individual interview 9, p.1).

Mambwe (from UNZA) speaks of the need for students to have an in-depth understanding of social issues that are of relevance to the achievement of social well-being:

...they should be able to contribute positively, which means their work should be work that addresses the needs of ... a democratic society like ours ... to show that they have a deeper understanding of some of the issues ... we expect them to do more than, 'he said, she said' stories, but perhaps to give more insight, more depth (Mambwe, 2013, group interview 1, p.2).

Nkadaani also suggests that the focus should be on events that are of relevance to the welfare of society, and the individuals that form part of that society:

...it [has] to do with disease, rainfall, climate change, anything to do with the well-being of a human being... (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p. 1).

Ndawana, who teaches media and development studies at UNZA, suggests that graduates should have access to knowledge that can help to change society for the better:

...to reach a lot of people with messages that will effectively change people's lives, to build lives of communities and nations at large... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 4, p.1).

The participants also make reference to what seems to be specialisation in terms of content as an area of knowledge about society:

...you do not only need someone [a graduate] who knows how to write the story, it also needs people [graduates] who can then specialise into a particular field of journalism ... this way we are able to get information from a well informed and researched point of view (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.3).

Mweemba (from EHC) suggests that specialisation in subject areas enables a journalist to become an expert in that field, which means that they will serve their society better:

...we have fields such as specialised areas of reporting ... when somebody does that, they have to really engage themselves in that area ... become an expert in that area... (Mweemba, 2013, group interview 2, p.3)

Nkandu (from UNZA) also suggests that graduates need to have knowledge on a particular aspect of society, such as education, the economy or government:

For example if someone was to study economics, they will do better if they came up with a business story because they would have understood it better (Nkandu, 2014, individual interview 1, p.1).

These comments can be seen to complement the participants' views, summarised in the previous section, about the role that journalism education should play in ensuring that Zambian journalism practice becomes strongly grounded in knowledge of local context. Knowledge of local context is, furthermore, understood to operate in service of the betterment of society. As such, this insistence that graduates should have knowledge of social context can be seen to be further evidence of the participants' identification with the third tradition of journalism education referred to in Chapter One – that of 'developmental' journalism education. It can also be seen to represent the 'action oriented' conceptualisation of journalism that was identified in the last chapter as being associated with the developmental tradition.

### 5.2.2 What graduates should be able to do

In discussing what graduates should be able to do the participants talk about two main categories of competence. The first learning outcome that they foreground relates to the ability to produce reliable and valid journalistic knowledge. They explain that this outcome requires of students to produce journalism that is guided by the ideals of credible research. Muzyamba refers to such journalistic practice as a process of “truth-telling”. He argues that the ability to produce such journalism is crucial to the survival of democracy:

...students [graduates] should be able to speak truthfully; we cannot build a democracy on a foundation of lies (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.2).

Participants from both institutions identify criteria against which journalists need to be assessed in order to establish whether they are ‘speaking truthfully’. In doing so, they refer in particular to the criterion of objectivity. Mweemba (from EHC) suggests that this criterion should always guide journalism graduates:

I tend to feel that one of the universal ideals is to be objective (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.2).

Ndawana (from UNZA), explains that this means that the journalist’s views must not be reflected in the way they report on events:

...you [the graduate] have to tell the story ... objectively and without your opinion ... (Ndawana, 2014, individual interview 4, p.1).

Ndawana argues that if graduates are to fulfil the requirement of objectivity, there is need to provide them with guidelines for ethical journalistic practice. He understands the ideal of objectivity to be central to such ethics:

I think our role is to inculcate in [students] the ethical dimensions, like objectivity ... we want them to be able to practice journalism in a [principled] manner... (Ndawana 2014, individual interview, 6, p.2)

Secondly, the participants foreground the importance of technical competence which includes both the ability to use technology and the ability to produce particular formats and genres of journalism. Nkalamo (from EHC) argues that a strong focus on technical competence is important because technological changes taking place in the contexts of media influence the way that journalism is practiced. He justifies the need for graduates to have the ability to handle the tools that relate to such changes:



...the [journalism] environment is also changing very fast in terms of technology because it is shaping the field (Nkalamo, 2013, group interview 2, p. 2).

The participants argue, in particular, that graduates need to be prepared to work in a journalistic environment that is shaped by the rise of the digital era. They point out that the rise of the Internet and developments in mobile technology are shaping the media in Zambia in important ways. Nkalamo (from EHC) suggests that as one aspect of students' adaptation to digital technology they need to know how to establish online platforms for the purpose of journalism:

...we are talking about newspapers and ... other publications ... incorporating the new media ... we are talking about designing websites and launching them, they [graduates] should be able to handle that... (Nkalamo, 2013, group interview 2, p.3)

The participants point out that, in preparing students for journalism in a digital age, educators also need to respond to the phenomenon of convergence in which the traditional distinctions between media specialisations fall away. In such an environment, one journalist may be expected to produce written stories, video, photography and radio material. Nkadaani (from EHC) suggests that graduates should therefore be prepared to report, write and edit for multiple media platforms. In this way, they become better prepared for a converged working environment:

...now things are changing, now a reporter is supposed to be a camera person ... to be your own editor and ... to be your own subeditor ... people are no longer just learning radio or TV in that you should know bits and pieces of everything (Nkadaani, 2013, group interview 2, p.3).

Nyondo (from UNZA) argues that it is important for a graduate of journalism to have knowledge about various platforms for journalism practice:

...you cannot train your student to be a broadcaster or to be a print journalist; they have to be 'all-round'... (Nyondo, 2013, group interview 1, p.2)

Mweemba (from EHC) also suggests that students of journalism should be prepared to produce journalism for different media platforms:

We expect them to carry out all the duties of a journalist. They are supposed to write, to report so that they create that courage in them ... they have to write magazines, they have to design newspapers so that as they go out there, they already know what journalism is all about (Mweemba 2013, group interview 2, p.2).

Within such education, students can no longer specialise in one medium, or contribute to just one traditional media platform.

From this summary it becomes evident that, in discussing what graduates should be able to do, the participants are preoccupied with distinguishing between competencies that are fundamental to journalistic practice and those that may change over time as context changes. The focus on fundamental competencies emerges in their discussion of graduates' ability to put into practice the ideal of journalistic objectivity. The emphasis on competencies that may change emerges in the discussion of the graduates' technical abilities, and the need to respond to the rise of a digital age. The participants seem to suggest that there are some features of journalism practice that can change in order to adapt to context, while other aspects of practice are fundamental to journalism itself, and cannot change, particularly the commitment to objectivity.

In the previous chapter we saw that this commitment to objectivity emerged as one aspect of some of the participants' conceptualisation of the social purpose of journalism. It was noted that this conceptualisation tends to be associated with the second tradition of journalism education referred to in Chapter One – that of 'professionalisation'. The discussion in this last section confirms, then, that this tradition in journalism education continues to inform the approach to education adopted by the participants, alongside the 'developmental' tradition.

It should be noted, however, that there is in fact a fundamental contradiction between these two traditions. It has been argued in this study that the 'professionalisation' tradition in journalism education tends to be accompanied by blindness to context. The 'journalism of objectivity' which is closely associated with this tradition, reinforces this blindness to context. The assumption is that the 'journalism of objectivity' is universally applicable, irrespective of context, or of changes in that context. On the other hand, the 'developmental' tradition is informed by acknowledgement of the importance of context, and sees this as placing the principle of journalistic objectivity in question. It is of interest to note that, at different moments within their discussion of journalism education, the participants are able to accommodate both conceptions without acknowledgement of any contradiction.

### **5.3 Conceptualising the ideal journalism education programme**

In discussing the kind of programme that would achieve these learning outcomes, the educators speak about the need to balance an emphasis on what journalism should ideally achieve with an

engagement with the existing conditions of journalistic practice in Zambia. They argue that students need to become familiar with what it means to attempt to put the ideals in practice in context of these conditions. The suggestion seems to be, furthermore, that existing educational programmes do not adequately achieve the establishment of this connection between teaching about ideals and the actual conditions of journalism. Mwale (from UNZA) argues that much of the knowledge about journalism that is included in curricula is concerned with journalism as it should ideally exist. He proposes that journalism educators should not only teach their students about the ideals of journalism in theory; they should also ensure that students experience journalism as it actually exists. Mwale points out that such journalism is often not representative of the ideal, but suggests that this imperfection is something students should learn about. He argues that the exclusive focus on journalism as an ideal creates a divide between theoretical knowledge of journalism, which is then understood to exist primarily within the academy, and knowledge of journalism as it is practiced:

...there is always ... a boundary between the theoretical aspect of [journalism] education and the practical aspect of it (Mwale, 2013, group interview 1, p.1).

In order to ensure a balance between exposure to ideals and knowledge of the realities of practice, the participants generally suggest that experiential learning is important. Muzyamba, a lecturer in broadcast journalism at UNZA, suggests that experiential learning becomes possible if students produce journalism as part of their coursework instead of just talking and reading about production. His suggestion seems to be that students do not do enough of such production:

...we should not just teach in class but we should also ... do more production in radio and television ... and learn from the world as well (Muzyamba, 2014, individual interview 2, p.3).

The participants also suggest that in producing media as part of their coursework, students need to use equipment that is used in work environments. Soko, who teaches sub-editing at EHC, argues that the emphasis should be on the latest equipment used by journalists. He argues that it is through learning how to use such equipment that students can best prepare themselves for the working world. This is especially of relevance for broadcast journalism:

...when you talk about radio and you do not have right equipment to train ... or the right equipment for journalist to work with then you are not doing the right thing (Soko 2014, individual interview 9, p.1).

Phiri (from EHC) proposes similarly that the technology available in institutions of learning must match up to that which is on offer in media organisations. Not to meet this requirement would be a disservice to graduates:

...if as an institution we are going to work with equipment that is out of tune, it will be ... difficult for the journalist to do their work ... we should ensure that journalists from the onset are given the chance to have hands on practice on the latest technology (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 8, p.4).

Nkalamo (from EHC) proposes that another approach to experiential learning, besides the inclusion of media production as an aspect of coursework, is the placement of students in work environments, for example through internships. He argues that, apart from the general value of such experience, internships help students to develop contacts that strengthen their journalistic practice once they start working after graduation. He notes that students can develop such contacts not only by being placed in journalistic environments, but also in places of work where they are exposed to individuals with other kinds of expertise:

[Students should establish relationships not only within journalism-related networks], we also have organisations that ... are accounts bodies, we can also send [students]... there. I know we have economics but do our students in journalism know about Economics Association of Zambia. Probably not... So we need such kind of networks: professional networks (Nkalamo, 2013, group interview 2, p.4).

Mushoke (from EHC) submits that work placements allow students to come into close interaction with the working world of journalism. She points out, furthermore, that through such interaction, tertiary institutions can become more informed about the kind of education that this industry would like graduates to be exposed to:

I think the interventions we should be making is to have a link between the trainees and the industry ... sometimes we let these people graduate after using our own criteria to train them but we actually leave out what is really needed in the industry. So I think the intervention is to interact as much as possible with the industry (Mushoke, 2014, individual interview).

Another strategy that the participants suggest for creating a balance between learning about ideals and exposure to the realities of practice is by bringing the working world of journalism into the university. Phiri (from EHC) proposes that one way in which educators can achieve this goal is by inviting journalists into their classrooms:

...we should ... make sure that we invite ... professionals out there because ... knowledge is power ... it would actually enhance [the students'] understanding (Phiri, 2014, individual interview 7, p.1).

Mwale, a lecturer from UNZA, suggests that in identifying the kind of individuals who should be invited as guests, educators should include people in leadership positions because they can give students a sense of what will be expected from them by their future employers:

...we need to engage the editors, management, directors and those people at the top who can come and share with our students on the knowledge and skills that they expect from our graduates... (Mwale, 2013, group interview 1, p.2).

The participants also refer to the importance of establishing a strong link to the social context that journalism is supposed to serve. Nkalamo (from EHC) suggests that, in order to achieve this aim, journalism education programmes should include lectures and seminars by people from professions other than journalism – such as those involved in health services. This would expose students to aspects of the world that they need to cover in their journalism. Such exposure would be of particular benefit to students who are interested in specialising in a particular subject area of journalistic work:

...sometimes you will find that there are certain students who are so biased in different fields. One could be a journalist, but you will find he likes writing about health. So we should encourage those professionals that are not trained as journalists to be part of journalism training programmes... (Nkalamo, 2013, group interview 2, p.4).

The suggestion here is that, by exposing students to individuals who can educate them about what is going on in society, for example with regard to health, their relationship to that context is strengthened.

In this section we see, again, that the participants are concerned about the need to establish a constructive relationship between tertiary journalism education and the working world of journalism. In Section One of this chapter, we saw that this preoccupation also emerged in the participants' discussion of the ideal purpose of tertiary level journalism education - that of contributing to strengthening journalism practice in Zambia. In that section, it was argued that the participants' comments are informed by the assumption that the relationship between tertiary journalism education and journalism practice should be one of critical support. This was understood as a rejection of the idea that tertiary-level journalism education operates

unquestioningly in service of the interests of industry. The discussion, above, can be seen to expand on how such a relationship can be established through the way a programme is designed.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Section One of this chapter mapped out the way the research participants conceptualise of the role that tertiary-based journalism education should play in Zambia. The participants' comments are described as expressive of the 'reflective' position regarding the purpose of journalism education, as defined in Chapter One. Within the participants' interpretation of this position it is assumed that the ideal purpose of tertiary-level journalism education is that of the 'critical support' of journalistic practice. Such support is understood to involve the strengthening of the ability of journalism to contribute to progressive social change. We saw that the participants identify two aspects of social change that journalism should be encouraged to contribute to, through such teaching. Firstly, there is the role that journalism can play in contributing to the strengthening of the democratic process. Secondly, there is the role it can play in the encouragement of economic development and social unity, as key requirements of a 'developing' society such as Zambia. The two categories of social change that are emphasised here can be seen, respectively, to be expressive of ideas associated with the 'professionalising' and 'developmental' traditions of journalism education. Within the participants' commentary on the social purpose of journalism education, these two traditions appear, then, to co-exist.

Section Two provides a summary of what the participants thought graduates should have learned from being involved in tertiary-level journalism education. In commenting on what students should know by the time they graduate, they focus on the importance of knowledge of social context. The argument seems to be that Zambian journalism practice must be strongly grounded in knowledge of local context - and that this knowledge will enable such journalism to operate in the betterment of society. This can be read as further evidence of the participants' identification with the 'developmental' tradition of journalism education. Furthermore, participants' comments on such learning are accompanied by the 'action oriented' conceptualisation of journalism that was identified in the last chapter as being associated with the developmental tradition.

Section Two also summarises the participants' comments on what graduates should be able to do by the time they graduate. In discussing this question, the participants are preoccupied

with distinguishing between competencies that are fundamental to journalistic practice and those that may change over time. They suggest that ‘technical’ aspects of journalistic production may change over time – and that this is important to acknowledge in the current setting, in context of the rise of digital media. On the other hand, they propose that the ability to produce credible and valid journalism remains an unchanging fundamental – and this ability requires of graduates to be able to put into practice guidelines for journalistic objectivity. It is suggested in Section Two that the participants’ proposal that this ability is core to the learning outcomes of their teaching is, again, indicative of the ‘professionalising’ tradition of journalism education. It is pointed out that adherence to journalistic objectivity is called into within the other tradition of journalism education that the participants give expression to – that is, the ‘developmental’ approach. In relation to this point, then, a contradiction emerges within the participants’ commentary.

The last section of the chapter describes the participants’ proposals with regard to the kind of journalism education programme that can achieve such learning outcomes. Here the participants focus on the need to establish a constructive relationship between journalism education and the working world of journalism. They propose that such a relationship will enable educators to balance an emphasis on what journalism should ideally achieve with an engagement with the existing conditions of journalistic practice in Zambia. The argument is that students need to become familiar with what it means to attempt to put the ideals in practice in context of these conditions. The section expands on how a relationship between tertiary journalism education and the working world of journalism can be established through the way a programme for such education is designed. Further, the participants’ emphasis on the relationships of critical engagement that they refer to is also evidence of this emphasis on critical support. It could be that if the relationship between journalists and journalism educators is based on a mutual commitment to critical engagement, then one can accommodate differences of opinion and debate, both about the purpose of journalism and about what students of journalism should learn.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

This study has presented a discussion of how journalism educators based in Zambia define the appropriate purpose of journalism education and how they conceptualise of the kind of programme that can achieve this purpose. The empirical component of this study pursued these questions in context of interviews with teaching staff at Evelyn Hone College (EHC) and the University of Zambia (UNZA). It is proposed, in this study, that the way these educators engage with these questions is influenced by internationally circulating understandings of the role that both journalism and tertiary institutions should play within processes of social change.

Chapter One identified two positions with regard to the purpose of journalism education – and describes these as the ‘reflective’ and ‘vocational’ positions. The first position assumes that the purpose of journalism education is to deliver graduates to newsrooms, and to reproduce current conventions of journalistic practice. The second position argued that the fundamental purpose of journalism teaching is to contribute towards journalism that can impact positively on society by equipping students for informed acts of citizenship. Such journalism education is understood to have the potential to facilitate change within journalistic practice, improving its ability to contribute positively to society.

The chapter argued that tertiary institutions across the world tend to adopt the reflective position. Stated differently, the reflective position can be identified as a key term of reference within the three traditions of journalism education identified in this chapter. These are the ‘professionalisation’ tradition, the critical media studies tradition, and a third, emerging tradition that foregrounds social development. The three traditions can all be seen to reject what is referred to in Chapter One as the ‘vocational’ approach to the education and training of journalists.

At the end of Chapter One it was also concluded that, within the academic literature that was reviewed, there is a tendency to focus on journalism as it exists in industrially advanced Western society. This points to a lack of conscious acknowledgement, at least within context of the reviewed body of literature, of the extent to which approaches to journalism are shaped by specific social contexts.

Chapter Two explored how journalism studies literature describes characteristics of African societies that can be seen to influence journalism practice. It also dealt with this question in the more specific context of Zambia. It is noted, in this discussion, that literature dealing with



journalism in African contexts tends to include a strong focus on the significance of political and economic change. There is, as part of this, an emphasis on how such change is understood to have led to the emergence of alternatives to state owned media – commercial and community in particular, but also digital platforms.

Chapter Two also dealt with the histories of journalism education in African contexts and in Zambia more particularly, as described in journalism studies scholarship. The chapter notes that it is generally understood that these histories are strongly informed by international models of journalism education. Critics suggest that such influence may restrict educators' ability to respond to the specifics of their local context, as described earlier in the chapter. Chapter Two notes that this disjunction between journalism education and local context is also observed in the Zambian context.

Chapter Three dealt with the research decisions that were made as part of designing the empirical component of this study. As such, the chapter dealt with the methodological framing of the study, the choice of method, the design of research instruments and the fieldwork plan. The chapter also discussed the implementation of this research plan.

Chapters Four and Five capture the findings of the empirical component of the research project. As such, these chapters serve as a discussion of the interviews conducted with journalism educators from Evelyn Hone College and the University of Zambia. It is demonstrated, in Chapter Four that the research participants assume that journalism should play a public service role in Zambia by informing deliberations within a democracy. It is noted that this assumption resonates with the conceptualisation of journalism embedded in the first and third traditions of journalism education referred to in Chapter One.

Chapter Five demonstrates that the research participants reject the vocational position as to the purpose of journalism education and locate themselves within a reflective one. In doing so, they again draw on the professionalisation and development traditions rather than the critical literacy tradition. Within both traditions, there is a strong focus on “what students should be able to do” – preparing them for work. The educators foreground this as a key outcome of their programmes.

It is also noted in both these chapters that the participants are preoccupied with the importance of social context. This is, for example, apparent in their approach to the appropriate outcomes of a journalism education programme. In discussing what graduates should be able to

do, they draw a distinction between what is fundamental to journalistic practice and what may change over time. In this way, they acknowledge the impact of social context on the way that journalism is practiced. It is significant that “what journalists should be able to do” is not defined in technicist terms. The participants speak, rather, about the importance of teaching students how to report truthfully – and how to adapt to new technological contexts. This, again, points to a rejection of the technicism of the ‘vocational’ position.

Both in Chapters Four and Five, it is demonstrated that the participants’ conceptualisation of the social purpose of journalism and of journalism education is largely shared across the two institutions. It would seem, then, that the kind of institution they are based in does not make a significant difference to their conceptualisation of the ideal approach to journalism or journalism education. Within this shared approach, it is nevertheless possible to identify certain tensions and contradictions. These are, however, not the traditional dualisms identified in Chapter One between theory and practice. Rather, it is possible to observe a tension between education about ideals and education about the realities of journalistic practice. The educators argue for an approach in which these two aspects are taught together.

It is also noted that the two traditions that the participants draw on (of professionalisation and social development) are grounded in different conceptualisations of journalism. The former foregrounds what has been referred to in this dissertation as a ‘journalism of objectivity’, while the latter foregrounds an ‘action oriented’ journalism. Despite the contradiction between these two conceptions of journalism, they seem to co-exist within their approach to journalism education.

A key tension within the participants’ discussion becomes apparent when one compares their comments on the social purpose of journalism and their discussion of how a journalism education programme should be designed. In the first context, they speak about the importance of ensuring that journalism contributes to social development and to nation building. They also make mention of the potential of ‘alternative’ media (both community radio, commercial media and digital platforms) as resources for social development, nation building and democratisation. In discussing such media, they place particular emphasis on the impact that they are having on the emergence of new relations of power within journalism. The suggestion here seems to be that the rise of new forms of media is leading to shifts in relations of power that can help to

strengthen journalism in Zambia. These shifts are understood to have implications for the extent to which spaces are opening up for the kind of journalism that the participants believe in.

However, in the second context, the participants still seem to assume that the central term of reference for partnerships between tertiary education and communities of journalistic practice is the mainstream media industry. One could argue that they are reverting, as such, to a quite narrow adoption of the conventional model of journalism education that has circulated internationally. The conceptualisation of journalism that is embedded in such models may, in other words, be restricting the extent to which these educators are able to articulate the implications of their own engagement with the specific requirements of their own social context.

Given the scope of the study, I was able to gain insight into journalism educators' understanding of journalism practice as it exists in Zambia and to examine the conclusions they draw with regard to the approach they should adopt to their own teaching. It would be of great value to pursue further research on this topic using a multi-method research approach, involving media houses and media owners, and participant observation based within a journalistic community of practice. This may enable the researcher to transcend the limitations that were experienced, during the current study, as a result of drawing only on interviews from the journalism educators. It is possible, for example, that they would be able to unearth richer and more complex perspectives on the conception of the knowledge and values that should inform journalism education.

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: INTRODUCTORY LETTER**



**School of Journalism & Media Studies**  
Rhodes University, South Africa



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

31 October 2013

Letter of support for Mulako Milupi

Mulako Milupi is currently registered for a Masters' degree in Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University, where I teach. She has successfully completed her coursework, and is now working on her dissertation, which represents the final component of the degree. I have been allocated as her supervisor in order to guide her through her research project, which deals with journalism education in the Zambian context.

Ms Milupi is now about to embark on the empirical section of this research project. She has chosen, for this component of her research, to deal with two institutional 'cases' of journalism education within the Zambian context, focusing respectively on the Evelyn Hone College of Applied Arts (EHC) and the University of Zambia (UNZA)'s Mass Communication Department. Her choices are based on the observation that these institutions have been in existence for more than two decades and have therefore built up well established approaches to journalism education.

As Ms Milupi's supervisor, I would like to support this initiative. In my assessment, her research project has the potential to be of great value to the development of insights into the conceptualisation of journalism education in the Zambian context.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries regarding this letter of support.

Your truly,

Dr. Jeanne E. du Toit  
School of Journalism & Media Studies  
Rhodes University  
PO Box 94  
Grahamstown, South Africa  
6140  
083 573 9970  
j.dutoit@ru.ac.za

## **Appendix 2: THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

### Thematic questions

The questions below have been categorized under three sections: ideals of journalism practice, opportunities and challenges of journalistic practice and the role of journalism education.

#### Section 1. Ideals of journalism practice

1. What role do you think journalism should ideally fulfil?
2. Are there universal ideals that journalism should always fulfil?
3. Is there something unique that journalism needs to do in a context such as Zambia that is different from other places? (Give examples)

#### Section 2. Opportunities and challenges of journalistic practice

1. How would you describe journalism as it currently exists in Zambia?
2. How does it measure up to the ideals that you have spoken about before?
3. Would you say that journalism practice is changing in Zambia – and if so, how?
4. What are the key challenges faced by journalism in Zambia, in putting into practice the ideals that you have mentioned?

#### Section 3. Role of journalism education

1. Given what you have said above, what do you think your role should be, as a journalism educator working in the Zambian context?
2. In your view, what kind of interventions into journalism practice should your institution be making?
3. What kind of work should your students be able to produce once they graduate?

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