Can you hear me now?

Possibilities of an engaged citizenry by way of *Izwi loMzansi FM*

community radio and mobile phone convergence

by

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Declaration

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Social Science, in the Graduate Programme in Culture, Communication and Media Studies, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. All citations, references and borrowed ideas have been duly acknowledged. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Social Science in the Faculty of Applied Human Sciences, 03 / 10 / 2014 University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. None of the present work has been submitted previously for any degree or examination in any other University.

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Acknowledgements

Abstract

Radio and mobile phones have existed in developing countries for years, however the diversity and pace with which these innovations have grown has made it difficult for researchers to effectively explore their effects. Community radio came into being after the shift to democracy in 1994 and community radio became a "third voice" between state public radio and commercial radio in South Africa (NCRF 1999; Servaes 1999:260). While community radio is attributed with this potential it is also critiqued for its failure in this regard. In particular, the presumed interactive and expressive 'community' of several community radio stations in the greater Durban area has been argued to be more mythic than real (Dalene 2007; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). By the same token, the South African communications landscape has changed and expanded significantly since the onset of mobile phone networks and mobile Internet. The dual ubiquity, versatility and affordability of radio and mobile phones demonstrate the complementary potential of their convergence towards participatory citizenship.

This research investigates this understudied link between new and old media, particularly focusing on community radio in terms of its mandate for community participation and citizenship (ICASA 2011). Using a network ethnography and mixed methods approach, this study explores interactivity by means of mobile phone functions (calls, Short Message System [SMS] and Facebook) in Durban's *Izwi loMzansi FM's* knowledge community. Additionally, the study employs du Gay et al.'s (1997) Circuit of Culture model and examines possible hegemonic discourses in the media public sphere (Gitlin 1998; Habermas 1989; Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987).

It is revealed that, in general, availability and accessibility of mobile phones and social media platforms create more possibilities for diverse dialogue and active participation in community radio programming. However, the biggest hindrance for active citizenry lies not in regulation protocol but with the presenter's comfort

and resourcefulness in integrating new media technologies into their programmes.

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

AMARC: World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters

ANC: African National Congress

CAQDAS: Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis

CCCS: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies

CCMA: Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

DA: Democratic Alliance

DIWO: Do It With Others

DIY: Do It Yourself

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICASA: Independent Communications Authority of South Africa

ICT: Information Communication Technology

ITU: International Telecommunication Union

KFC: Kentucky Fried Chicken (restaurant chain)

MISA: Media Institute of Southern Africa

MTN: Mobile Telephone Network

RAMS: Radio Audience Measurement Survey

SAARF: South African Audience Research Foundation

SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation

SAPT: South African Posts and Telecommunications

SATRA: South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority

SMS: Short Message System

ZNBC: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Historical parallels of community radio and the mobile phone in South Africa

INTRODUCTION

This study aims to examine the emerging opportunities and limits for engaged citizen participation in South African community radio station *Izwi loMzansi FM* through the use of the mobile phone. This introductory chapter outlines the historical and social context of the South African telecommunications sector, focusing on community radio and mobile telephony.

HISTORY

The history of the mobile phone and community radio sectors in South Africa can be traced alongside the country's political history. South Africa's system of racial separation was dramatically explicit and manifested itself in a series of reprehensible laws known as apartheid. In these laws, South Africans were formally classified by race and tribe[1] and legally required to reside only in the particular geographic areas set aside for them in the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 (Horwitz 1999). Decades of legalised discrimination against black South Africans resulted in a remarkably unequal society and distribution of access to telecommunication technologies. In 1989, blacks represented 73.8 per cent of the population[2] but only 2.4 blacks per one hundred had access to a telephone. This is in contrast to 25 per one hundred whites who had access (Coopers & Lybrand 1992:8).

Until 1991, telephone services were operated by the South African Posts and Telecommunications division (SAPT). SAPT served as a classic mail, telephone

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[1] Here race refers to white, mixed race or "coloured", Indian or "Asian", black or "African" citizens. Tribe refers to the grouping of black citizens based on their native language (Horwitz 1999).
[2] Whites represented 14.3 percent, Coloreds 9.1 percent and Asians 2.8 percent of the population in 1989 (CIA World Factbook 1989).

and telegraph monopoly and was run through the Minister of Transport and Communications (Horwitz 1999). South Africa's telecommunications structure changed in October 1991 when post and telecommunications were separated from each other and set free from direct ministerial control (Republic of South Africa 1991). The change was induced by lobbyists demanding improved telecommunications service quality and distribution, rapid advances in the fields of mobile communications which had begun to erode the sector's monopoly, and a debt-ridden economy (de Villiers 1986; Horwitz 1999). Telkom SA became a formally registered company in October 1991 under the South African Companies Act, with the state as the sole shareholder (Horwitz 1999). The new telecommunications entity, acting as both a regulatory body and provider, primarily served to provide improved phone services to all racial and tribal groups throughout the country[3].

In 1993, the apartheid government convened to map out how the newly deregulated entity should be privatized and reorganized. At the time, the South Africa was at the vanguard of an era of rapid technological innovation. Telkom's mobile phone infrastructure provided service in a limited geographic area to 13,000 citizens and was not outfitted to meet the mounting communication technology needs of their consumers (Horwitz 1999). Their decision was to authorize two mobile phone licenses[4]. Applicants submitting tenders for the licenses were required to specify, among other things, "the extent to which their choice of technology would lead to high volumes and low costs, how they would support South African industry, and how they would provide service to poor communities" (Horwitz 1999:221). The first license was given to Telkom who entered into a partnership with the UK-based Vodafone and Rembrandt Group of South Africa. Together they formed a separate subsidiary called Vodacom (Horwitz 1999). In late September 1993, the government announced Mobile

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[3] Information retrieved from www.vodazone.co.za/history, last accessed 01 October 2013.
[4] Ibid

Telephone Network (MTN) [5] as the recipient of the second mobile communications contract. Two years later, Telkom was still the monopoly provider of most telecommunications services in South Africa, but mobile networks Vodacom and MTN had picked up 400,000 subscribers countrywide (Horwitz 1999).

Around the same time South Africa's mobile communication networks were being established, the country was preparing itself for democratic elections and accordingly, the end of the apartheid era. On April 27th 1994 the first democratic elections were held in South Africa, with people of all races being able to cast their vote. The freedom to vote was just one of the rights enacted during this period, as the freedom of South African broadcasting airwaves was also on a pathway of development. Community media initiatives, such as *Bush Radio* in Cape Town, were fighting for democracy long before 1994, when broadcasting was firmly in the grip of the state (Bosch 2006). The Jabulani! Freedom of the Airwaves conference in the Netherlands in 1991 was the starting point for the development of a diverse broadcasting media sector in South Africa. The main idea aimed to enable the post-apartheid media sector to operate as a watchdog and agenda-setter, keeping an eye on the authorities and contributing to information-sharing among the public (Dalene 2007). A South African community radio sector was officially formed in 1993, by the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (IBA), making up the country's current mediascape of public, private and community media (Berger 2001; Olorunnisola 1997).

The IBA Act and the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (SATRA) were merged on July 1st, 2000 to create the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) [6]. ICASA cites their responsibility in licensing community media as "aimed at the protection of democracy and ensuring free and open airwaves and access to communication"

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[5] MTN is a consortium of M-Net, which is a TV provider in South Africa, NAFTEL, Transtel, and Cable and Wireless, a UK-based company (Ibid).
[6] Information retrieved from ICASA website, last accessed 01 October 2013.

and as "contribut[ing] to democracy, development of society, gender equality, nation building, provision of education and strengthening the spiritual and moral fibre of society" [7]. The country now has over 100 community radio stations, one of which is *Izwi loMzansi FM* in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.

Figure 1: *Izwi loMzansi FM* logo[8]

Izwi loMzansi FM is a Zulu community radio station located in the Durban Station transport terminal. They broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week, predominantly using their native Zulu language. Programmes are a mix of urban contemporary talk and music, all of which incorporate a community empowerment focus. The station describes itself as a socially inclined community radio station that aims to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor[9]. *Izwi loMzansi FM* had their first broadcast on December 5th, 1998, on a temporary 30-day event license. However, the station is, in actuality, only six years young as a full-time broadcaster. After several additional 30-day event broadcasting licenses, significant delays from ICASA, legal battles with another station over the broadcasting frequency[10] and complications with signal distributor Sentech, *Izwi loMzansi FM* finally achieved a full-time broadcasting status on August 1st 2007 [11]. The station's signal covers the greater eThekwini municipality in

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[7] Ibid
[8] Retrieved from *Izwi loMzansi FM* website, 01 October 2013
[9] Information taken from [www.southafrica.info/about/media/community-radio.htm#.UnmHwY0mzmY], last accessed 01 October 2013.
[10] *Izwi loMzansi FM* became involved in a legal dispute with Good News Community Radio over the 98.0FM broadcasting frequency in 2002. See Khumalo & Richmond 2005, Kuppan 2006
[11] Vela Xulu Interview, 15 August 2012

KwaZulu-Natal, reaching Port Shepstone to the south, Camperdown to the west and Eshowe to the north (see Figure 2)[12].

Figure 2: *Izwi loMzansi FM* signal coverage (in light blue)[13]

The Radio Audience Measurement Survey (RAMS) report from the South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) from November 2007 logs *Izwi loMzansi FM's* first listenership numbers at just 19,000 (SAARF 2007). During the period of research from July to August 2012, the station's listenership figure had grown to 178,000, according to SAARF (SAARF 2012). However, *Izwi loMzansi FM* staff speculate the actual number of listeners is higher due to data inaccuracies and SAARF bureaucracy[14] [15]. The rapid growth in *Izwi loMzansi FM* listenership could be attributed to the quality of their community-focused programming and to radio's continued popularity due to its portability, cost-

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[12] Information taken from *Izwi loMzansi FM* website, 01 October 2013

[13] Retrieved from [*www.demosite.abundantwebhosting.com/listing/izwi-lomzansi*], 01 October 2013

[14] Sifiso Sibisi personal communication, 13 May 2012; Vela Xulu personal communication, 13 May 2012

[15] The most recent SAARF RAMS report at the time of this thesis submission was issued in August 2013 for the period of March – June 2013, has *Izwi loMzansi FM's* listenership figure at 184,000 (SAARF 2013). Audience numbers from other RAMS reports published between September 2012 and May 2013 go as high as 241,000 listeners (SAARF 2012b).

effectiveness, versatility and orality (Mudhai 2011). Radio still remains a powerful and far-reaching communication tool in South Africa. There are an estimated 15.4 million radio sets in South Africa, with community radio garnering almost 8.6 million listeners a week[16]. The country's rapid expansion of mobile phone use can also be credited for the growth.

The South African mobile communications landscape has changed and expanded significantly since 2007, when *Izwi loMzansi FM* aired their first full-time broadcast. Currently, there are an estimated 35 million adults in South Africa, of which more than 28 million, or 82%, own a mobile phone. This is in comparison to only 56% ownership in 2007 (SAARF 2012). Equally as impressive, current figures show mobile phone subscriptions at 134.8 per cent, meaning South Africa has more mobile phone subscriptions than people (ITU 2012; see also Rao 2012; Rawlinson 2011). This is due to a mobile phone user having a mobile phone number for multiple providers. The country currently has five mobile networks; Vodacom, MTN, Cell C, Virgin Mobile and 8-ta.

The competing mobile phone networks have brought down the costs of phones and calling and data tariffs, although in comparison to other neighbouring countries, costs are still high[17]. The ownership of Smartphones[18] and mobile phones capable of Internet connectivity is also on the rise in thanks to affordability. There were an estimated 8.5 million Internet users in South African by the end of 2011, an increase from 6.8 million the year before.[19] Memberships to social media networks are also on an upward trend. Social media platform

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[16] Retrieved from www.SouthAfrica.info, accessed 01 October 2012
[17] See Calandro et al. (2012) for an extensive analysis of prepaid mobile phone costs in Africa.
[18] A smartphone is a mobile phone with highly advanced features. A typical smartphone has a high-resolution touch screen display, Internet connectivity, Web browsing capabilities, and the ability to accept sophisticated applications. The majority of these devices run on any of these popular mobile operating systems: Android, Symbian, iOS, BlackBerry OS and Windows Mobile (http://www.techopedia.com/definition/2977/smartphone, last accessed 15 November 2013).
[19] South African Social Media Landscape 2012, Accessed 01 October 2013 at: http://www.worldwideworx.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/Exec-Summary-Social-Media-20121.pdf

Facebook has over 5 million registered South African users[20]. Furthermore, reports show that many South African Facebook users access their accounts through a mobile device (ITU 2012; Kreutzer 2009; Rao 2011, 2012). Such overwhelming statistics and dual ubiquity demonstrate the complementary potential of mobile integration with community radio.

Importance of the research

Telephone interaction in radio is not a new concept, but more recently attention has been given to ways in which stations construct their audiences through their utilization of interactive technologies, consequently impacting constructive two-way participation (Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013). Many argue that the convergence of radio and mobile phones have the potential to generate both top-down authority-driven and bottom-up consumer-driven processes, depending on the imbalances that may exist between institutional and community ownership and participation in programming (Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013; Jenkins 2006). While there is a substantial body of literature relating to media convergence, audience participation and media power relations, it is largely confined to northern highly industrialized contexts, where the focus is primarily on the convergence of the Internet with conventional media outlets.

This research aims to explore if and how audience participation and regulation using mobile phones contributes to community-driven radio programming, and subsequently an empowered community of listeners via the use of *Izwi loMzansi FM* case study.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study has three main research questions, which are developed around the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter Three. These questions are:

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[20] Ibid

1) How are the voices, concerns and ideals of the audience incorporated into *Izwi loMzansi FM's* programme content by presenters?

2) What mechanisms of gatekeeping and framing are employed in regards to audience participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming?

3) How are mobile phones used by *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners to participate in programming and what opportunities do these methods present for widespread participation and citizen engagement?

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter Two expands on the historical, social and economic themes that exist in South Africa and its current mediascape that have been outlined in Chapter One. The chapter discusses the notions of community as relating to community radio, disparity between audience and public, and citizenship. The concept of media convergence is also explored in terms of community radio and the mobile phone, bringing in elements of the Public Sphere theory in order to properly review degrees of audience participation.

Chapter Three outlines the Cultural Studies theoretical framework that informs the study. The discussion addresses the merging of Cultural Studies with its "alter-ego", Media Studies (Tomaselli 2012:14). Attention is given to functioning of the media in relation to the acquisition and maintenance of power (Tomaselli 1989:25), addressing both "the public performance" and "the hidden transcripts" of power relations (Mills 2010:41). It does this with reference to the holistic approach enabled by du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture.

Chapter Four briefly outlines the methods employed to gather and analyse the data for this study. This chapter discusses why a qualitative approach was chosen and why the subsequent data gathering methods, such as interviews,

participant observation of *Izwi loMzansi FM* show and listener questionnaire, were used. Lastly, the chapter discusses the analytic approaches followed in this study, specifically thematic analysis and inductive coding.

Chapter Five provides a discussion of the findings and thematic analysis defined by the theoretical framework.

Chapter Six offers conclusions of the research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review: Evolving characteristics of South African community radio and the Public Sphere

INTRODUCTION

This chapter expands on the historical, social and economic themes that relate to South Africa and its current mediascape that have been outlined in chapter one. The South African mediascape is marked by a rich and fascinating fusion of traditions, influences and innovation (Hyde-Clarke 2010; Nyamnjoh 2005). Community radio was envisaged as a principle communication platform in post-apartheid South Africa. It intended to ensure the participation of marginalized voices in discussion, decision-making and community empowerment by drawing meaning from their everyday experiences within a "shared cultural space" (Howley 2002:4). However, its existence has not been without debate. The term 'community' in community radio is deemed problematic, complicated and contradictory. With the advent of newer digital technologies facilitated by the mobile phone, the notion of 'community' can range from a simple geographical community to more complicated communities of subcultures, virtual spaces and ethnicities (Azzopardi 2011; Carey 1997).

The landscape of African media continues to be transformed in response to the increasing availability and access to mobile phone and web-based social media platforms. Radio and mobile phone technology has been accessible in developing countries for years. However, the diversity and pace with which these innovations have grown has made it difficult for researchers to effectively explore their potential in contributing to community dialogue and engaged citizenry (CGHR 2011). Today, mobile phones and community radio are both available, accessible, and affordable in many parts, if not all, of South Africa (SAARF 2012a; SAARF 2012b). While there has been significant research conducted on

the role of South African community radio in the establishment of 'community' and an active citizenry (see Bosch 2006, 2011; Dalene 2007; Hart 2007, 2011; Kanyegirire 2002; Karamagi 2012; Mhagama 2004; Mhlanga 2006, 2010; Teer-Tomaselli 2001; Tsarwe 2011), there are few studies that commit their research focus to critically examining the blended potential of community radio and mobile phones in contributing to community building and interactive dialogue (see Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013; Moyo 2010, 2013; Willems 2013).

Important aspects to consider in relation to community are communication, interaction and power relations (Dahlgren 2005). Just as in all spheres of daily life, questions of power and power relations are issues for all media or communication platforms, and they are never outside the influences of regulation (Castells 2007; Tomaselli 1987). Incorporating re-theorizations of the Habermasian public sphere, this study examines the aspect of participation in South African community radio through the use of mobile technologies and the inherent social relations that may liberalize or limit opportunities for citizen engagement.

COMMUNITY RADIO

In a general sense, community radio represents an interactive process that entails the exchange of views and information from various sources from within a particular community (AMARC 1998). Community radio is viewed as a "shared cultural space" where community members are given a platform to draw meaning from their everyday experiences in the hopes of contributing to community-building, democracy and open dialogue (Howley 2002:4). In South Africa, community radio has been a principle communication platform since its onset as a tool for post-apartheid rationale. This rationale aimed to address imbalances between elite and marginalized groups, by allowing the "voiceless" access to media so that they could shape their own specific needs (Tamminga 1989:3). Thus, the rationale of community radio responds to issues of control and power

in the operations of broadcasting by permitting communities to own and manage a station, while also producing their own community-centred broadcasts (Mhlanga 2006; Tamminga 1989; Teer-Tomaselli 2001; Tyali 2012).

The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) argue that for a radio station "to qualify as community radio, the ownership and control of the station must rest squarely, and unquestionably, with the community it claims to serve" (MISA 2000:56). For them, the concept of ownership is both fundamental to understanding community radio and its role as a facilitator in community development through interactive debate. Community radio stations in South Africa are mandated by the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) to contribute to community development through their broadcast content among its many objectives (ICASA 2011; MISA 2000). When ownership lies squarely in the hands the communities themselves, arguably the potential exists for the creation of active participation and sustainable community building (Hyde-Clarke 2010; Myers 2011; Teer-Tomaselli 2001; White 1994).

A community radio station is viewed, then, as providing a platform for the creation of a self-defined community communication system, enabling a collective group of people to define their identity through the means of access to expression and participation in debate, decision-making and production. A community can only build itself if there is a platform for it to:

> (…) exchange initiatives, information and meanings in the process of defining, creating and maintaining a group identity and interests for survival within a specifiable geographical and/or cultural space (Opubor 1999:779).

Yet, the existence of a platform and, for this study in particular, communication technology does not guarantee increased human interaction (Zuckerman 2013). Because community radio commits itself to the social progression of a specific,

unified community and not a fractured, mass audience of consumers, the formation and success of a community radio lies in a community's "sense of internal cohesion and consciousness" about its problems and its ability to address them through dialogue, debate and participation (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2001:71). The platform of community radio can only act as an agent of community building if the community it serves is conscious of a shared identity and agenda for promoting societal development.

Who is the 'community' in community radio?[22]

The value and purpose of community broadcasting lies in the complex relationship between the community radio station and its community (Hart 2011; Tyali 2012). The existence of this relationship supports the founding philosophy of community radio as constituting a form of "grassroots" or "the people's media" (White 1994:12-20). Yet, the relationship of community radio versus community is not straightforward. 'Community' is argued to be one of the most ambiguous, contested and complex concepts and a myriad of discourses exist that propose varied definitions (Carey 1997). As such, the question of 'who is the community in community radio' needs to be unpacked and clarified as it related to this research (Teer-Tomaselli 2001).

Community is most commonly understood as being either a social unit or group of people sharing a geographical location or common interests, hobbies or ideals (see Bordieu 1977; Gusfield 1975). These characterizations have been argued to be limited, idealist and for failing to effectively take into account the significance of governance, negotiation, development and other basic social elements of ordinary daily routine (Azzopardi 2011; Carey 1997; McMillan & Chavis 1986). It is in the context of the 'ordinary', the 'everyday' and the 'common' where the word community has its linguistic roots (Carey 1997:9) and therefore, this context

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[22]Teer-Tomaselli (2001)

holds a focal position in the discourses on community, its development and its maintenance (Azzopardi 2011).

More recent interpretations of 'community' propose that the notion is not dependent on geography but is rather a quotidian "feeling of belonging [and] shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together" (McMillan & Chavis 1986:4; Olorunnisola 1997). This 'belonging' and 'shared faith' is composed and maintained by four interlinking elements: membership, influence, integration and emotional connection (McMillan & Chavis 1986:4). The identity of a group and its members is negotiated in relation to these four components. This negotiation takes place within the symbolic boundaries of the group, such as a community's self-defined identity and distribution of power. Community boundaries are not dependent on geographical location. Instead, they represent social distinctions and divisions constituted by social interaction (Azzopardi 2011:180).

In addition, although a community is often associated as being a geographical or social collective grouping, communities are not homogenous entities, but composed of a wide range of subcultures and people with different identities established along the lines of class, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation and ethnicity (Fairbairn 2009). It is not uncommon for internal tensions and conflicts of class, language, generation and gender to exist in defined communities and groups with contrasting views are sometimes viewed as posing a serious threat to the cohesion of a specific community and its communicative needs (Dahlgren 2006; Fairbairn 2009). Furthermore, certain groups within communities can be sidelined, suppressed and silenced from playing an active part in the community (Tyali 2012). Thus, in the context of community radio, the term community possesses contradictory and potentially destructive undertones. This renders, as Jean Fairbairn notes, the "questions of shared ownership service in community radio more complex and problematic" (2009:9).

With the idea of 'community' being contested, Guy Berger (1996:4) cautions against viewing community radio as a tool of community-building and interactive engagement based solely on the inclusion of the community at all levels of station ownership, management and production. The ideals of community ownership and participation in community radio are considered below.

Ownership

Ownership of a community radio station may be claimed on the grounds that it is their people who are managing and working at the station, transmitting in their languages, and voicing their stories, music and respective heritages (Jankowski 2002; Nyamnjoh 2005). However, such claims are not sufficient evidence that the station is indeed operated for and by the community. Community radio does not operate in a vacuum as an autonomous form of media, but instead is embedded in the economic, political and regulatory contexts of the community and the nation (Chiumbu 2010:116). In his research on community station *X-K fm* in Platfontein, Brilliant Mhlanga (2006:89) argues that the station does not conform to the traditional definition of what constitutes ownership of community radio. Instead, he determines that *X-K fm* operates more as a tool for manipulation by the government broadcaster SABC[23] and other ruling elite rather than as a facilitator of local development and dialogue.

Due to historical, socio-political, economic and regulatory contexts, especially in terms of ownership and control, the term 'community radio' has adopted varied and arguably more flexible definitions over recent years (Berger 1996, 2010). Because of these contexts, pinning down the community in community radio using the traditional definition proves difficult (Teer-Tomaselli 2001). Therefore, while community ownership and control are still important in terms of categorizing community radio, this criterion cannot be considered fundamental in the

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[23] South African Broadcasting Company

distinction and conceptualization of what is community radio and what is not (Hart 2011; Tyali 2012).

Participation

In addition to community ownership, Berger (1996) argues that participation in community radio should not be seen as a fixed index but as on a continuum from total ownership to different degrees of audience involvement in programming and management. Participation in community radio cannot be confined simply to call-ins, musical requests, on-air dedications and visits to the station. Stations are expected to provide a space for community participation in management, programming and broadcasting of content (Moyo 2012; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). As part of the application to obtain a South African community radio broadcasting license, stations are required to explain the methods they will employ to ensure community participation in the selection and provision of programmes (Tyali 2012). This is intended to ensure that the community will be afforded an opportunity to critique the stations' programming and to suggest new programming ideas (Mgibisa 2005). Participation, then, entails both an interaction, flow and sharing of local knowledge and experiences in every facet of community radio (Manyozo 2005).

By aiming to include community participation in all facets of radio management and programming, community radio stations see themselves as serving the needs of their listener community (Teer-Tomaselli 2001). Although community stations aspire for broad and active community participation there are few stations, if any, that have been able to achieve them in their entirety (Teer-Tomaselli 2001). Nico Carpentier (2001, 2009) has regularly raised concern about the quality of audience participation in community media, calling for a more critical and detailed analysis of what the nature of 'participation' actually entails. For example, while community radio programming may be dependent on the active participation of its audience, the role of the radio presenter and the overall

station environment may not be representative of the community's needs and instead serves as a dissemination tool for the elite (see Mhlanga 2006; Willems 2013). Power relations, both internal and external to the community radio environment, affect participation. Participation in community radio:

> (...) changes its colour and shape at the will of the hands in which it is held and, as a result, can suggest many different meanings, depending on the socio-political contexts of each station (White 1994:31).

Therefore, while recognizing the media's potential to provide audiences with access to a variety of information in the hope of creating an interactive audience, it is also important to recognize that:

> (…) the media can also be a vehicle for uncritical assumptions, beliefs, stereotypes, ideologies and orthodoxies that blunt critical awareness and make participatory democratization difficult (Nyamnjoh 2005:2).

The democratic potential inherent in the values of community radio and an active audience are thus challenged by the socio-political and economic setting of the station as well as on a national level. Community radio staff is often local volunteers who receive no salary for their work and have no formal training in radio production or broadcasting ethics (Govender 2010; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). In addition, high unemployment rates, history of cultural oppression and unequal access to wealth and power are argued to have shaped a "Jekyll-and-Hyde democracy" in South African media, where journalists or media practitioners are "tolerant in principle but stifling in practice" (Nyamnjoh 2005:21).

At community radio station *Siyaya FM,* Maria Dalene's (2007) research dealt with how the station included its community members in their operations. Although *Siyaya FM* was founded as a community development project for the marginalized Durban township of Cato Manor, the station management failed to prioritize the needs of their community over their own. In an interview, one

member of station management admitted to feelings of discontent when poorer members of the community were elected to the management board instead of people with influential economic and political connections (Dalene 2007:53). Additionally, volunteer radio presenters were not adequately trained on the technical components of radio broadcasting. This inevitably led to mismanagement of on-air participation, where presenters purposely kept call-in commentary short. Regardless of whether this was done to sidestep competing views from being presented, this practice undoubtedly limits the possibility for callers to contribute to the discussion with questions or comments.

Not only is participation affected by the economic, social and political contexts of each station but also by the social cohesion and consciousness of the community it is located in. As noted before, the concept of community as homogenous collectives or groups based on geographical location or common interest is inadequate. In a South African context, the word 'community' has tended to be associated with either poor rural or urban black populations (Bosch 2003; Chiumbu 2010; Distiller 2011). However, there exists a wide array of different identities divided along the lines of class, gender, age and ethnicity (Tyali 2012). Subcultures within a community can possess opposing views that challenge the cohesion of a community's and complicate what counts as its communicative needs (Mhlanga 2006; Tyali 2012).

Research on degrees of youth participation in *Radio Grahamstown*'s *Y4Y* talk radio programme found that although the station clearly identified the programme's target audience as Grahamstown youth, there was a "generational disconnect" between the *Y4Y* adult host and the programme's younger audience (Karamagi 2012:77). The show's discussion themes focused mainly on current affairs and formal political debate, which members of the audience stated was "not relevant to them personally, and that they have difficulty identifying with older political actors whom they feel do not understand their life situations" (Karamagi 2012:77-78). One interviewed listener, a student from the local high

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school, questioned whether the ownership of the *Y4Y* programme is actually controlled by the youth as the radio station claims. The student suggests that their voices are not heard or valued by the presenter, stating that the *Y4Y* presenter "is good, but I think he should give us a chance" (Karamagi 2012:78). It was thus concluded that the community of this particular community radio programme was more mythic than real.

The apparent absence of a well-defined community in South African community radio has been recognized in studies undertaken over the past several years (see Dalene 2007; Hart 2011; Kanyegirire 2002; Karamagi 2012; Mhagama 2004; Mhlanga 2006; Teer-Tomaselli 2001; Tsarwe 2011). Community participation is identified in this research as a major component in the sustainable establishment of a clear radio community. In several of these studies there existed strong interest from listeners to make song requests and dedications on-air, but there was less enthusiasm to engage actively on views relating to social issues or to risk aligning themselves with political ideals (Dalene 2007; Karamagi 2012; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). Explanations offered for the shortage of citizen voice include fear of publicly speaking out on social issues on the part of community members, limited or no access to a phone and a lack of awareness of a community by its own members (Bosch 2011; Dalene 2007; Karamagi 2012; Mhlanga 2006; Teer-Tomaselli 2001). In one case study, residents of Cato Manor township confessed to having no knowledge that a community radio station *Siyaya FM* even existed in their community (Dalene 2007). Thus, in the case of *Siyaya FM*, the station was addressing a group of people that did not even recognize each other as constituting part of the radio community.

The notions of 'community radio', 'community' and 'participation' prove to be problematic. Research by Teer-Tomaselli (2001), Dalene (2007) and Karamagi (2012) in particular highlight the inherent difficulties in trying to clearly distinguish when a radio audience is made up of "mere beneficiaries" of programming and when these listeners actually become active agents in programming and

producers of knowledge (Ngomba 2011:8). Unpacking the difference between an 'audience' and a 'public' of radio listeners is dependent on the degree of community engagement.

AUDIENCE VS. PUBLIC

The media audience is conventionally thought of as a group of recipients or consumers of information (Hall 1997; Ngomba 2011). Audiences, it is argued, are conceived as "aggregates of individuals" and their own awareness of membership or of other common members is not necessarily acknowledged (Livingstone 2005:21). However, it is through increased awareness of commonality that audiences can begin to become what Warner (2002) defines as a 'public'. According to Warner (2002), "a public is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself" (413) and that publics "do not exist apart from the discourse that addresses them" (416). However, a paradox comes into play because for discourse to exist the producer and consumer of the message need to be present[24]. This process of defining a public is not unidirectional. A continual discursive cycle of interpretation and agreement is essential for the public to be able to organize itself (Curtin & Gaither 2005:102). Conceiving of the public as self-organised, through interactive dialogue rather than through an external framework, implies a reduction in mediation and ascribes power and agency to the public (Warner 2002).

In relation to the issues of the organization of a public, Livingstone (2005:11) poses an important definitional question: "when is an audience acting so as to participate in, or to constitute, a public"? One response is that in order for an audience to become a public, its members must communicate with each other and only once they know what they think they represent, are they able to act as a public (Easton 2005:26). Importantly, this collective communication does not imply a unified voice nor does it enable a public to be quantitatively pinned down.

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[24] See Chapter 3's circuit of culture.

As outlined by Fraser (1990) and Mouffe (2000), publics are not defined by their homogeneity or size. They consist of individuals with contrasting needs, views and identities (Stevenson 2002). When disagreements arise they take place within certain bounds that cannot be transgressed, and those boundaries work together to continually define the parameters of a public (Easton 2005:26).

In summary and in relation to a radio-specific context, a group of people listening to radio make up an audience – "they are an aggregate collection of listeners". A group of people listening to radio and also expressing their response in a programme's discussion area comprise a public – "they are a collective of individual listeners" (Easton 2005:24). A 'discussion area' where a group of people listen to each other and voice their ideas and arguments as mentioned by Easton (2005) can be viewed as a conceptual but limited public space, like a community radio programme, where listeners call or message their comments to the presenter. Yet, when audience members are given access and opportunity to participate collectively in radio programming it is argued that a "swing of the pendulum" occurs, allowing them the potential to transform themselves from a consumer audience into a public, co-producing relevant commentary and information (Ngomba 2011:8). While the media catalyse the formation of audiences, these audiences only coalesce into publics through processes of engagement with issues and with discursive interaction among themselves. By taking part in these processes of engagement, publics make use of and further develop their cultures of citizenship (Dahlgren 2006:275).

CITIZENSHIP

In critiquing the various notions and objectives of community radio, Teer-Tomaselli (2001) notes that, taken together, the idealistic aspirations of community radio stations are onerous and few stations, if any, have been able to achieve them in their entirety. The main purpose of community radio remains to provide marginalized communities with access to a voice through the

broadcasting channel of radio so they can express their concerns, interests and needs, promote and protect their cultures, traditions and heritages and determine their own development (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada 2001; Tabing 2004; Tyali 2012). For a community radio station to serve its purpose and achieve success, members of a community need to be allowed access to participate in the day-to-day activities of a community radio station and have access to relevant information to better their circumstances.

Having access to information is argued to be a prerequisite for the advancement of knowledge, mobilization and the creation of citizenship (Bignell 2000:155). On a basic level, citizenship implies an individual's physical presence in a society and ways in which a person plays a part in daily societal activities (Azzopardi 2011; Dahlgren 2006). 'Engaged' citizenship encompasses not just being a part of society, but partaking in active learning for political literacy and empowerment, addressing structures and relations of power while pursuing social justice, development and democratic agendas (Lister 1997). A community radio 'public', as outlined by Warner (2002), can be viewed as a space organized by active community discourse conducive for 'engaged' citizenship to take form (Willems 2011). Community radio as a communication platform is thought to be an ideal space in which individuals sharing a geographical location can exercise their role as citizens through active membership in station management and programming.

Contemporary Citizenship

In South Africa, as elsewhere, an ever-increasing presence of new media technologies, in particular mobile phones, has brought to light new questions concerning delineations of interactivity and citizenship (Hartley 2012; Nyamnjoh 2005). The notion of citizenship as a restricted and simplified relationship between a territorial state and individuals has been disputed and calls for a broader conception of contemporary citizenship have been sought (Dolby 2006; Hartley 2012; Miller 2007). To this end, modern interpretations of citizenship can

be divided into three elements: political "the right to reside and vote", economic "the right to work and prosper" and cultural "the right to know and speak" (Hartley 2012; Miller 2007:35). While political and economic stages of citizenship call on identities of 'the voter' and 'the worker' respectively cultural citizenship affords a greater emphasis on the identity of the individual within cultural practices and meaning-making systems of society (Hartley 2012). It acknowledges that individuals in many societies experience everyday life as voters and workers, producers and consumers, publics and audiences, simultaneously (Hartley 2012:141).

Any medium of communication, traditional or modern, does not solely define an individual or their role in society. Technology should be seen as a facilitator of access, participation and citizenship and not a guaranteed solution to achieving these standards (Banks 2010; Zuckerman 2013). Notwithstanding praise and criticism, it is argued that the ways in which people utilize new media technologies to build a 'virtual' character complements the shaping of their 'real-life' identity (Hollander 2002; McQuail 2010). Media innovation is best captured by the notion of flexibility – "flexible mobility, flexible belonging, flexible citizenship" (Nyamnjoh 2011:26). The fundamental act that needs to be present for any fostering of citizenship is participation in a social and cultural system (Hollander 2002; McQuail 2010). "Do It Yourself (DIY)" and "Do It With Others (DIWO)" citizenship (Hartley 2012:144) places engaged participation at the forefront of identity formation and redefines citizenship as an active process involving people's everyday interactions and their use of both new and old media technologies (Dolby 2006).

Due to the divergent research findings on the potential and real life results of community radio in terms of liberal participation between community members, a central question emerges: Has the citizen's role in community radio ever been truly established (Hyde-Clarke 2010; Teer-Tomaselli 2001)? It is from this point in which this study begins to focus on the developing convergence of new media

technologies, specifically the mobile phone, with community radio.

COMMUNITY RADIO AND MOBILE PHONE CONVERGENCE

Community Radio

Radio broadcasting is a prevalent communication medium in Africa, mostly because it does not require literacy, can be broadcast in multiple languages and can reach large geographical areas (Bosch 2011). Nearly 90% of South Africa's population tune into radio airwaves on a daily basis, of which more than eight million people are community radio listeners (SAARF 2013). The African tradition of oral storytelling is also thought to help radio maintain its status as a communications tool. Moyo (2010) argues that citizens across Africa have merely appropriated broadcasting technologies, like community radio, to perform a wide-reaching social function that had already existed in verbal form. 'Pavement radio' or *'radio trottior'* (Ellis 1989) is described as the grassroots and informal communication networks that allow everyday citizens to discuss and comment upon important issues, often political, of the day (Moyo 2010).

Word of mouth transfer of information between citizens is particularly significant for the creation and maintenance of citizenship, especially in African communities where culture and tradition still play a large part in daily routine. This is because oral exchange intertwines with speech's element of performance and the continuous recreation, accumulation and division of knowledge across groups depending on social systems (Ellis 1989). Digital communication technologies, therefore, are not credited with the creation of an oral culture but rather as amplifying the number and reach of messages exchanged (Moyo 2010).

Mobile Phone

The African mobile phone landscape has grown incrementally in the past ten

years[25]. Previously characterized as a "black hole of informational capitalism" (Castells 1998, c.f. Carmody 2013:24), the African continent now has over 620 million mobile phone users, second only to Asia (Carmody 2012; GSMA & ATKEARNEY 2011). Currently, there are an estimated 35 million adults (age 18 and over) in South Africa, of which more than 28 million, or 82%, own at least one mobile phone. This is in comparison to only 56% ownership in 2007 (SAARF 2012b). The mobile penetration rate in South Africa is logged at nearly 100% (Rao 2011) and mobile subscriptions[26] surpass 100% (ITU 2012). This means not only that there are more active mobile phone subscriptions than people in South Africa, but also that the greater majority of the population has access[27] to a mobile phone (ITU 2012). On a global scale, but still relevant in perspective, a 2013 United Nations study reports that of the world's estimated 7 billion people, 6 billion have access to a mobile phone[28].

Yet recent studies conducted within South Africa suggest that mobile phone penetration statistics have been grossly misrepresented and "overstated by up to 20% over the last five years" (Goldstuck 2004; c.f. Murphy 2012:4). Etzo and Collender (2010:659) question whether the mobile revolution in Africa is real or mere rhetoric and caution for the growth in numbers to be defined using celebratory "superlative" and "unrestrained terms". They argue that current figures refer mostly to the number of mobile phone subscribers and owners, rather than specific patterns of use and users (2010:665-6). However, what these mobile phone penetration figures do identify is the dependency many people now place on mobile phones in their daily lives (Murphy 2012). Mobile phone use in daily routine is enhanced by its versatility and ubiquitous usability (Green &

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[25] See Chapter 1
[26] Subscriptions refer to the number of mobile phone numbers in operation in a given period as per the information collected by mobile network providers. One person could simultaneously have three active mobile phone subscriptions from three different networks. This is often the case for individuals who travel frequently through areas where one mobile network is more accessible than the others (see ITU 2009, 2011; Rao 2011, 2012)
[27] Access implies that the individual can obtain use of a mobile phone through a relative, friend, colleague or at a publicly available communication post.
[28] Only 4.5 billion, however, have access to a toilet (UN News Centre 2013).

Haddon 2009; Mudhai 2011; Wasserman 2011). Some users develop such an intimate relationship with their mobile phone that it has been characterized as an extension of their body (Townsend 2000).

Domestication and Convergence

The continued popularity of radio and newer mobile phone technologies can be attributed to the "domestication"[29] of their usage in daily routine (Green & Haddon 2009:7). Here, 'domestication' refers to active process of adopting the use of a communication or media device into daily routine, in both public and private environments (Green & Haddon 2009; Silverstone et al. 1992). Radio broadcasting has transformed the act of listening from being a public activity into the private sphere. In this domestic space, individuals can listen to the radio in their own homes instead of as a collective listener in a public space (du Gay et al. 1997). The division between public and private spaces is both material – in that it indicates a contrast between physical spaces such as the 'office' and the 'home' – and symbolic – in that these spaces denote different things in relation to each other, public signifying the collective and the rational and private the particular and the expressive (du Gay et al. 1997:113-4).

More recently, the widespread adoption, or domestication of the mobile phone has reversed the traditional model, by allowing its users to reintroduce "the emotional and the personal" (du Gay et al. 1997:114) aspects of communication back into public spaces through online social networking websites, public conversation and participation in broadcast media programming (Rojek 2008). Although landline telephones first enabled the transition of private conversation to public spaces, the ubiquity and practicality of the mobile phone enables conversation to take place in spaces and in forms inaccessible by landline connections. This reversal facilitates a shift of social interaction from private to

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[29] See Silverstone et al. (1992) and Schoon (2011) for more detail on the stages of the technological domestication process.

public places, and conversely, filters back to private spaces after being consumed in the public (Leung & Wei 2000). This sequence of communication has allowed not only individuals to develop close relationships with technology, but also for different types of technology to be used in conjunction with one another in unpredictable ways. This type of media convergence is argued to have helped to rekindle community radio ideals of facilitating an area of information dissemination and cooperative exchange:

> One would expect radio to naturally be a casualty of the proliferation of newer information and communication technologies. [Yet,] this culture has been boosted by social networking applications via the Internet and mobile phones that enable erstwhile rare audience feedback and participation (Mudhai 2011:253).

The incorporation of the telephone into radio programming is not a novel concept in South Africa. For years, listeners have interacted on-air with radio presenters by using landline phones to call in and take part in talk shows or to request music (Bosch 2003; Jankowski 2002). What has changed in South Africa is countrywide access to mobile phone technologies. Some of the most popular and utilized functions of the mobile phone are phone calls, text messaging and Internet connection. This study specifically highlights the emerging convergence between community radio and the Short Message System (SMS) and community radio and social media sites accessed through a mobile Internet connection.

Short Message System (SMS)

SMS or text messages have been celebrated for allowing an anonymous and affordable way for radio listeners to interact with radio presenters and other listeners bypassing the previous need for a landline telephone connection (Bosch 2011; see also Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013; de Bruijin et al. 2009; Ekine 2010; Girard 2008; Moyo 2010; O'Donnell 2013; Smith 2011; Tettey 2011; Willems 2013). A Programme Organizer for the Zambia National Broadcasting

Corporation (ZNBC) highlights that the use of SMS is especially popular in community radio shows because it allows radio presenters:

> (…) to interact with people out there. It does not cost a lot. It's minimal, at a minimal fee. And you are able to interact with people in the remotest areas. And I feel that new technology has been an inclusive kind of radio and more interactive. Because before it was only concentrating on landline, it was only concentrating on the elite. But now even the poorest of the poor [participate in radio programming]. (…) I think it has broadened the listenership and participation (Willems 2013:227).

The use of SMS by radio presenters has consequently impacted on two-way participation. Research in Zambia found that community radio stations are increasingly incorporating text messaging into their programming as a way of interacting more with their audience, collecting feedback and promoting upcoming shows (Willems 2013). The majority of SMS interactivity between the radio presenter and radio listener occurs while a radio presenter is on-air, but can also take place when the radio programme is off-air. This type of participation can be 'unsolicited' or 'solicited'. 'Unsolicited' participation refers to when listeners take the initiative to offer contributions to content production. 'Solicited' participation, on the other hand, occurs when the radio host invites listeners to participate during a certain part of the show (Willems 2013:224). SMS messages are sent to the community radio station's phone number or, in the case where the station's phone connection can only receive calls and not texts, to the presenter's personal mobile phone number (Girard 2008). Once the radio presenter receives the SMS, the message can be shared on-air with the rest of the radio listeners. (Bosch 2010; Girard 2008; Willems 2013).

There are some who also agree that by engaging with radio programming via SMS, community radio listeners are shifting the power of radio content creation from the radio producers to themselves. Willems (2013) and O'Donnell (2013) note cases where radio listeners were not only actively participating in

programming through text messages, but creating show content by proposing future discussion topics and questions for in-studio guests. Ghanaian and Zimbabwean citizens notably used SMS messaging in 2000 and 2008 respectively, to anonymously report election irregularities to local community radio stations that may have otherwise gone unreported (Girard 2008; Moyo 2010). The irregularities were publically reported during community radio broadcasts, often putting pressure on authorities to do their part to amend the issues or prevent future cases (Moyo 2010). This is an example where the community radio show material is developed by the audience feedback and eyewitness experiences and not by political or institutional influences[30]. In hostile political environments, text messaging provides a relatively safe way of receiving and reporting information (Atwood 2010; Banks 2010). The anonymity of listeners' reports is also vital in cases like this, where reporting of criminal activity or punishable behaviour by government officials could result in citizen victimization (Bosch 2010; Coleman 2001).

When it comes to sending a participatory SMS to a radio presenter during a broadcast, there are still many people who prefer to call in instead of text, whether as a consequence of illiteracy or being unfamiliar with SMS function (Nassanga et al. 2013). SMS, just as any message are largely up for interpretation by the recipient, which can cause misunderstandings (Hall 1997; Pelckmans 2009). But while calling in to the station may be an easier and quicker way for community radio listeners to make their voices heard, the telephone lines are often busy or the calls are disrupted by poor telephone network coverage (Moyo 2010; Nassanga et al. 2013). If this is the case, radio listeners then opt to

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[30] This is commonly referred to as 'citizen journalism', defined as a type of alternative journalism, operating in a de-professionalized, de-capitalized and de-institutionalized environment where the process of newsgathering and dissemination is neither carried out by professionals but rather driven by an individual citizen's desire to share information and experiences of what they perceive to be in the public interest (Moyo 2010). Citizen journalism is thought to be enabled by mobile technology and has been celebrated for complimenting traditional means of journalistic reporting (Moyo 2010). However, the merits of citizen journalism have been criticized for the lack of professionalism and accuracy in reporting information (see Ekine 2010; Gunner et al. 2011; Moyo 2010).

send their comment to the radio presenter through an SMS message or by posting to their Facebook page after the show has ended (Nassanga et al. 2013).

Social Media and Mobile Internet

The recent widespread availability of mobile Internet technologies across South Africa has opened up more avenues for audience participation in radio programming. Radio stations are also increasingly using online social media forums to distribute their content and interact with their audience, combining vertical and horizontal communication methods (Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013). The term 'social media' is used to describe online tools and utilities that allow communication of information, participation and collaboration (Steenkamp & Hyde-Clarke 2014). Popular examples of social media sites are Facebook, Twitter and MXit[31]. Some stations have created their own social media accounts and allow programme presenters to add to and edit the page, while other stations leave the responsibility of integrating social media platforms in the hands of individual presenters (O'Donnell 2013). In the case of a programme on *Kagadi-Kibaale* community radio in Zambia, the show's presenter invites her listeners to comment on programming and engage in discussion on her own personal Facebook page (Nassanga et al. 2013). This is often the case when the community radio station does not have Internet access in the studio or when there are not resources to pay a staff member to maintain the station's social media sites on a full-time basis. Community radio presenters who decide to incorporate social media content into their programming often do so by using their personal mobile phone's web connection (Gunner et al. 2011). In South Africa, at least 7 million Internet users have leapfrogged computer-based Internet

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[31] South Africa is ranked at 31 on the global scale of Facebook users (Socialbakers 2012), and is ranked at number 2 in Africa, just behind Egypt (OAfrica 2010). Facebook is the second most popular social media network in South Africa – eclipsed only by MXit, a locally designed mobile/cellular phone network. Currently, in 2012, MXit has approximately 10 million users (Vermeulen 2012), as opposed to the 5,365,460 Facebook users (Socialbakers 2012; Steenkamp & Hyde-Clarke 2014).

and instead access popular social media sites through their mobile phones (Rao 2012).

Mobile Internet connection allows community radio listeners to access and engage with the conversation taking place on the community radio station's social media pages from virtually any location. Because membership is not dependent on geographical location and is accessible at any time, users are able to read and post comments on a social media site before, during and after a community radio broadcast. In addition, social media users are able to send and receive direct messages with other community radio listeners instead of being limited to just being able to send an SMS to the radio presenter. This 'off-air' but 'online' dialogue may contribute to topics being discussed on-air or develop into other separate topics, which may or may not be used for future on-air discussion (Moyo 2010).

What sets social media messaging apart from text messaging is that the conversation takes place in a public forum. Messages posted to a community radio presenter's Facebook and Twitter page, for example, are visible to everyone who chooses to follow activity on those pages. In contrast, SMS messages are sent directly to the presenter, not seen by the rest of the radio audience and are only verbally shared with the audience if the radio host decides to mention the message on-air. Social media messages are also saved on the page and can be accessed during and after the live radio broadcast. This allows for a radio show conversation to continue online even after the live broadcast has ended (Moyo 2010). However, while SMS messages from radio listeners are largely anonymous, commentary posted to a social media page is accompanied by the person's name and profile picture. Although in some cases the profile names and pictures are fictitious especially if the conversation at hand is considered taboo (Sundar 2011). This could have consequences depending on the nature of the discussion. Still some argue that the publicity of member names and photos complements the 'community' atmosphere (Moyo 2010; Steenkamp & Hyde-Clarke 2014).

Convergence Celebration or Caution?

Although mobile Internet and social media has been largely celebrated for enabling more participatory and interactive communication amongst marginalized populations, either through user-generated content or through a broader participation of audiences, the degree to which listeners can actively participate in community radio programming is debatable (Moyo 2013; Nassanga et al. 2013; Willems 2013). Similar to notions of community radio ownership and participation,

> (…) digital media technologies on radio are [also] subject to organizational, institutional, and social shaping, and questions about the emancipatory power of these technologies especially to audiences and citizens are often exaggerated because the question of power relations between actors or interests is often overlooked (Moyo 2013:214).

While there might be a tendency to categorize communication in terms of 'one-to-one' or 'one-to-many' interaction, these neat distinctions unravel when adding new mobile technologies to the equation (Dahlgren 2005:150). The development of digital, interactive and horizontal networks of communication is argued to have given rise to a "network society" (Castells 2007, 2011). This society, based on the interplay between communication, culture and technology, induces the emergence of "mass self-communication", which embraces both one-directional (or vertical) mass communication and horizontal communication, manifest on social media platforms (Castells 2007:239). Traditional mass media, such as South African radio for this study in particular, have historically been exercises of power, counter-power, of domination and social change. The 'network society's' inclusion of many communication channels, means of interaction and a plurality of individual voices challenges views of how power (and counter-power) is

generated and maintained in a society[32] (Castells 2007, 2008, 2011; Dahlgren 2005, 2006; Jenkins 2006; McQuail 2010; Tomaselli 1987).

There are now specific concerns as to how these new forms of convergent participation are produced, consumed and regulated[33]. it raises questions specifically pertaining to SMS and social media messages in community radio programming such as: Who is sending the message? Why does the sender choose one messaging platform over the other? Will the content of the SMS and social media messages be shared on-air? Who controls which messages are shared on-air? How, if at all, is the social media page monitored? When does community radio listener engagement and interaction constitute the formation of a citizen public (Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013; Moyo 2013; Nassanga et al. 2013; Pelckmans 2009; Willems 2013)? In addressing these issues, participation can valuably considered in relation to the debates pertaining to the 'Habermasian' public sphere.

THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The term 'public sphere' was coined by the German sociologist Jürgen Habermas (1989). The classical public sphere can be defined as a conceptual and singular space that offers the possibility for private citizens to come together to publicly engage in rational-critical discussion on issues of common interest (Habermas 1989; McQuail 2010:569. However, through various processes of division and inclusion of non-bourgeois into the discourse, Habermas suggests that the representative public sphere disintegrated. Others in the field of media and cultural studies argue that remnants of the Habermasian public sphere are still visible in institutions representing public citizens today (see Bosch 2010; Castells 2008, 2011; Dahlgren 2005, 2006). Habermas (1996) himself also revisits his original concept of the public sphere on account of critique. A

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[32] See Power Relations and the Media, Chapter 3.
[33] See Circuit of Culture, Chapter 3.

resulting consensus is that, instead of total dissolution, the classical public sphere has undergone a series of transformations from its prime during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and still remains influential in communication and media research (Calhoun 1997; Habermas 1996; Dahlgren 2005, 2006; Willems 2008).

Exclusivity and Pluralism

One of the biggest points of contention in critiquing the classical public sphere is its use in singular, idealist forms. For this study, a cultural studies approach to the public sphere is useful:

> In large-scale, differentiated modern societies, not least in the context of nation states permeated by globalization, we have to understand the public sphere as constituting many different spaces. (…) A functioning public sphere is understood as a constellation of communicative spaces in society that permit the circulation of information, ideas, debates (Dahlgren 2005:148).

Habermas's idealistic and singular public sphere is noted to not only deny access of women, black and working-class groups membership to participate, but also fails to acknowledge these groups as public in their own right (Fraser 1990:60). Fraser continues to argue that "the bourgeois public was never *the* public" (Fraser 1990:61, emphasis original). She proposes the possibility of competing and conflicting "counter publics" (Warner 2002:423) that contemporaneously arose alongside the bourgeois public from its onset (Fraser 1990:61).

Fraser's critique of Habermas's select public sphere is supported by Gitlin (1998:173), who puts forth the notion of a divided public sphere, which is split into "public sphericules". Public sphericules are defined as segmented spheres of assimilation that have their own dynamics and forms of composition, but remain intangibly linked in competing discourse with one another (Gitlin 1998). While some researchers interpret this plurality to represent the elite and plebeian

publics (Negt & Kluge 1972), others allow for the coinciding existence of a variety of sphericules not limited to exclusive and inclusive definitions (Gitlin 1998; Karppinen et al. 2008; Warner 2002). Under this re-theorization, groups excluded from the Habermasian public sphere are acknowledged as valid discursive publics in their own right.

Community Radio and The Public Sphere

Community radio is often greeted as one form of a public 'space' which embraces at least the core principles of the Habermasian public sphere, primarily encouraging interactive and open discussion of general socio-political issues in a process in which discursive argumentation is employed to identify issues of common concern (Bosch 2011:78; Howley 2002). In South Africa, community radio target audiences are commonly marginalized populations and constitute a 'counter public', as defined by Fraser (1990). Talk radio and gender empowerment shows, the radio formats monitored in this study, are popular in community radio programming because of the possibility for marginalized voices to participate in programming, simultaneously strengthening their ties to the radio community.

Talk radio programmes, where the format is characterized by conversation initiated by a host and augmented by listeners participating in debate via telephone calls, text or social media messages (Tettey 2011), are argued to engage the audience in a more structured discussion and debate on socio-political issues (Bosch 2011). By allowing listeners to participate in the live discussion, talk radio "moves beyond the traditional reporting of the mainstream press" (Bosch 2011:79) and "ensures that issues do not die with the news cycle, but can be kept in the public realm and in the public consciousness for some time" (Tettey 2011:21). By allowing for certain issues to continue to be debated in the talk radio format, community radio listeners are given more opportunity to organize and engage their opinions for discussion, and thus working towards the

formation of an active public and a greater sense of community (Livingstone 2005; Warner 2002).

Although not as politically charged as the talk radio format, cultural or gender empowerment radio shows also encompass a "dial in democracy" component to their programming (Bolce et al. 1996). In her study of gender balance in African radio, Myers (2009) found that community-focused programming can have practical relevance for female audiences and can contribute to a feminist public sphere (Mitchell 1998). She cites examples of how one community radio station has helped to empower its female audience through its interactive programme focusing on issues of domestic and sexual violence (Myers 2009). Overall, research has found there exists a notable lack of female voice on South African community radio airwaves, both as radio staff (Mall 2006; Molefe 2011; Teer-Tomaselli 2001) and telephone callers (Bosch 2011). Lack of female participation in community radio broadcasts can also linked to lower numbers of female mobile phone ownership or accessibility (Manyozo et al. 2011). In some cases, the host of a gender empowerment community radio programme will be a female and it is thought that this may encourage female listeners to participate in the show's programming more so than if the presenter was male (Bosch 2011). However, there has not been significant research conducted on gender relations in South African community radio stations to prove this correlation (Myers 2009).

Media Convergence in the Public Sphere

The developing convergence between traditional community radio programming and newer mobile communication technologies is argued by some to be contributing to reinvigorating public spheres debate in a digital era (Obijiofor 2011:212; see also Bosch 2010; Chiumbu & Ligaga 2013; Mudhai 2011; Papacharissi 2002). Through the acceptance of its use in day-to-day situations as a "versatile" (Wasserman 2011:148) mobile phone users are thought to be able to make distinct and positive contributions to community radio debate

(Dahlgren 2005). These contributions can be received from a multitude of radio listeners and is not dependent on their personal characteristics such as social status, age, location, race or political affiliation. In this sense, combining mobile phone use and community radio arguably plays a significant role in blurring private and public, institutional and community, virtual and fixed arenas and consequently reconstructs the relationship between them (Castells 2007, 2011; Dahlgren 2005, 2006; Goggin 2006; Grätz 2013; Green & Haddon 2009; Leung & Wei 2000; Wasserman 2011).

Listener participation in community radio programming via the mobile phone is thought to extend and pluralize the public sphere in a number of ways (Dahlgren 2005). It also contributes to the ways in which we define a 'community' (Nassanga et al. 2013). In particular, virtual communities like Facebook provide membership to a larger and more diverse body of individuals. Individuals are permitted to hold membership in more than one virtual community or "sphericule" (Gitlin 1998:173) simultaneously and contribute towards a local and transnational social responsibility (McQuail 2010). By subscribing to Gitlin's (1998) notion of multiple communicating publics, the possibility of the Internet as a place for democratic debate is relevant because it rejects the notion of the public sphere as a single entity:

> (…) it is doubtful that a single public sphere could consist of millions of people and still function, since deliberation would be difficult. Allowing for multiple publics with different interests, allows for smaller and thus workable, yet still global, public spheres through the Internet (Poor 2005: 8th paragraph).

Furthermore, as outlined earlier, a community is formed based on member commonalities and cohesion, but this does not imply that the entire community is homogenous in their opinions or beliefs (Azzopardi 2011; Fairbairn 2009). Within community radio, which might be considered a 'counter public' on its own, 'sub-

counter publics' may form through listener engagement on web-based social media platforms (Fraser 1990; see also Castells 2007; Dahlgren 2006).

However, while the combination of population-wide participation with media technology allows everyone in the relationship, not just the elite, professional or dominant power to contribute to the generation of new meanings and ideas (Hartley 2012:144), the question still exists whether new media are "a force for fragmentation or cohesion in society" (McQuail 2010:141). For example, a utopian approach claims that the Internet provides beneficial means of communication and community building through vast access to information and social networks (Wellman 2004). Conversely, some critics find the use of the Internet and mobile phones as a primary form of communication as contributing to disintegration of interpersonal interaction and progressive organizational involvement. The notion of mobility is not the same as being connected (de Bruijn et al. 2009; McQuail 2010).

> If emergent mobile technologies facilitate an impressive communicative heterogeneity, the negative side of this development is of course fragmentation, with public spaces veering toward disparate islands of political communication (Dahlgren 2005:152).

There lies a paradox in utilizing an open and inclusive participation format. While space is created for free expression of views and opinions, this space also harbours possibilities for abuse (Bosch 2011; Hungbo 2011; Nyamnjoh 2005). As evidenced in a 2011 study on South African talk radio, "serial callers" are individuals who dial into numerous radio programmes on a regular basis, sometimes even several times during a single programme (Tettey 2011:25). Their contribution to the discussion is largely political and superfluous to regular discussion and is fuelled by radical political web forums. It is also suspected that these individuals are paid fronts for particular political parties looking to take advantage of a sizeable community radio audience (Tettey 2011:25-6).

Several African media and cultural studies academics have credited the Internet and SMS for expanding the variety of discursive voices and by the same token assign responsibility to the media to properly maintain its open and pluralist dialogue (Bosch 2006, 2010, 2011; Hyde-Clarke 2010; Mudhai 2011; Moyo 2013; Nassanga et al. 2013; Nyamnjoh 2005, 2011; Wasserman 2011; Willems 2013). The media do not constitute a place "where the public sphere resides (…) but it is a vehicle through which such a space can be created" (Iosifidis 2011:627). Thus it is argued that the quality of the community radio public sphere will ultimately depend on power relations inherent in station ownership, programming, participation and society as a whole (Dahlgren 2005; McQuail 2010; Moyo 2013).

Power relations

In addition to notions of exclusivity and pluralism, critics have problematized Habermas's declarations of bourgeoisie rational-critical debate, noting that it fails to adequately theorize power struggle at play (see Fraser 1990, Karppinen et al. 2008; Mouffe 2000; Willems 2008). Habermas (1989) emphasizes that public deliberations should strive for universal consensus and that a public that only practices "opinion-formation and does not also encompass decision-making" is defined as "weak" (Fraser 1990:68). Fraser (1990) and Mouffe (2000) share the view that the public sphere was, from its outset, constituted by power struggle, conflict and disagreement. They envision a progressive civil society as characterized by conflicts of interest, contestation and a complex multiplicity of values rather than traits of homogeneity, all of which contributes to the vigour of public debate (Fraser 1990; Karppinen et al. 2008; Mouffe 2000). Habermas's insistence of rational consensus is not only idealized, but also exclusive and is deemed too theoretical and threatening to democratic standards (Mouffe 2000).

Fraser (1990:62; 2008:76) considers issues of access to, and participation in the public sphere when confronting power relations in public discourse. She argues

for a concept of the public sphere which contributes to a critical theory of democracy that interrogates whom has access to the public sphere, to what degree, authorized by whom and what, and how public participation is used to contribute to larger processes of meaning construction. She defines the public sphere as:

> (...) a theatre in modern societies in which political participation is enacted through the medium of talk. It is the space in which citizens deliberate about their common affairs, hence, an institutionalized arena of discursive interaction (...) it is a site for the production and circulation of discourses that can in principle be critical of the state (Fraser 1997:70).

This conceptualization of the public sphere is useful in the analysis of power relations and to this study in particular. While commentary of public or state matters in private spaces are common, citizens may encounter repressive and authoritarian political environments where speaking out on a controversial matter could result in harassment (Bosch 2011; Coleman 2001). In young democracies like South Africa, community radio, also commonly understood to form part of "alternative" media (White 1990:12), aims to serve as a haven for marginalized voices of opposition, independent from commercial or state media (Ayedun-Aluma 2011; Carpentier et al. 2003; Jankowski 2002; Megwa 2007).

Robert White, who has engaged extensively with development communication, acknowledges the agency of subaltern classes as "actively interpreting mass media, selectively resisting what is not in their interest" (White 1990:15) and "constructing cultural meaning in everyday life" (White 1990:17). He views audience participation in community radio as a cycle of confrontation and negotiation over cultural ideology. Emerging from this struggle is a cultural framework that "engages the energies of diverse people" (White 1990:20) and allows them to "recognize themselves as the major actors" (White 1990:20) in social change and development, often times which go against dominant parties and principles (Howley 2002). While Internet and SMS technologies have been

praised for opening up more opportunities for the subaltern classes to engage in community radio programming, their use does not guarantee democracy, change or any kind of development or social action, nor are they immune to regulation (Castells 2007; Nyamnjoh 2005). It is imperative not to lose sight that democracy and citizenship reside ultimately not in technology, but with citizens who engage in talk with each other (Dahlgren 2005:149). Consequently, the degree to which the relegated community members can engage in rational-critical debate using new technology is not immediately clear.

> The diffusion of interactive technology surely enriches the possibilities for a plurality of publics – for the development of distinct groups organized around affinity and interest. What is not clear is that the proliferation (…) of publics contributes to the creation of a public – an active democratic encounter of citizens who reach across their social and ideological differences to establish a common agenda of concern and to debate rival approaches (Gitlin 1998:173).

No media or communication platform is immune from the influences of power and regulating bodies, both public and private. The idea of civic culture, as defined by Dahlgren (2005), places citizens as social agents and also takes into account the cultural factors behind such agency (or absence of agency):

> Civic cultures point to both the conditions and the manifestations of such participation; they are anchored in the mind-sets and symbolic milieu of everyday life. Civic cultures are potentially strong and vulnerable. They help to promote the functioning of democracy, they can serve to empower or disempower citizens, yet like all domains of culture, they can easily be affected by political and economic power (Dahlgren 2005:158).

The foundation of any culture or community is based on structures of power and counter-power (Castells 2007). Although community radio stations are physical and concrete entities, they are also considered symbolic products of discursive practices by agency that occupies them (Moyo 2013). In principle, new mobile

technologies like SMS and social media converging with community radio programming should yield wider and more diverse participation within and across social classes (Moyo 2013). However, media convergence refers to a process, not an endpoint. Technologies, whether traditional or modern, are only "tools in the broader pursuit for community participation, empowerment and action" (Jenkins 2006:16). For any of these to take place, technology use needs to be rooted in local knowledge, practice and culture (Banks 2010; Ekine 2010).

CONCLUSION

South African community radio is evolving into a virtual space, a network space, and a mobile space where citizens can participate in public debate (Moyo 2013). In this merged environment the balance of power and influence is constantly moving and notions of who is in or out of control is not always apparent (Hungbo 2011). The link between culture, technology and power relations is exemplified in the performance of everyday life and in the theorization of a 'cultural public sphere' (McGuigan 2005). This approach to rethinking the public sphere put forth by Habermas focuses on forms of popular culture and in shared spaces where both elite and ordinary people might engage with one another in rational-critical debate (Hungbo 2011; McGuigan 2005). The potential for this open debate and for the emergence of an active citizenry to exist on community radio airwaves, in partnership with mobile phone applications, is still in its nascent stages. This study aims to examine the emerging opportunities and limits to active citizen participation in South African community radio through mobile phone engagement.

CHAPTER THREE

Theoretical Framework:

Cultural Studies and the Circuit of Culture

INTRODUCTION

This study examines the possibilities for audience engagement in a converged media atmosphere between *Izwi loMzansi FM* community radio and interactive utilization of mobile phones. This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that informs the study, which is located in the post-structuralist paradigm and falls within the theoretical field of Cultural Studies.

The chapter begins with a brief historical account of Cultural Studies approach to research and a contextualized critique of the concept of culture. Central to this are the concepts of power, struggle and domination, which are considered by contrasting the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Karl Marx. The discussion addresses the merging of Cultural Studies with its "alter-ego", Media Studies (Tomaselli 2012:14). Attention is given to functioning of the media in relation to the acquisition and maintenance of power (Tomaselli 1989:25), addressing both "the public performance" and "the hidden transcripts" of power relations (Mills 2010:41). It does this with reference to the holistic approach enabled by du Gay et al.'s (1997) circuit of culture.

CULTURAL STUDIES

Cultural Studies emerged in the 1960s, notably at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham, where it drew upon numerous academic disciplines such as Marxism, semiotics, feminism, psychoanalysis, reception studies and post-structuralism (Hall 1997b:224). Defined as more of "a constellation of questions and concerns regarding the

nature of social experience and the character of cultural phenomena" than a coherent field of study (Howley 2002:3), Cultural Studies embraces the blurring of disciplinary boundaries and encourages a cross-pollination of subjects, concepts and traditions gathered from the humanities and social sciences (Barker 2000:5; Rojek 2008:35). Still, several Cultural Studies subscribers insist that the finest attribute of Cultural Studies has less to do with its multitude of disciplines and more to do with its critical perspectives, theoretical orientations and innovative methodological frameworks, all of which encompass relations of power within particular social contexts (Dahlgren 1998; Fiske 1992; Hall 1980, 1997b). Central to Cultural Studies' approach to research has been its nuanced, diverse and contested notion of culture.

Notions of Culture

The concept of culture is multifaceted and a single, unproblematic definition is difficult, if not impossible, which adds to the complexity of employing a Cultural Studies approach to research (Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987). Raymond Williams (1958, 1965) relates culture to the giving and taking of the available ideas, practices and meanings through which societies make sense of and reflect on their common experiences. Here, his conception of culture no longer solely consists of what the elite understood as a privileged domain of formalized literature or fine art (Dahlgren 1998; Hall 1980; Rojek 2008). Williams and other scholars at the Birmingham School perceived culture in a far more comprehensive fashion by acknowledging the significance of analysing seemingly routine, ordinary practices and influences that are often dismissed or purposively left unquestioned by intellectuals for being "philistine, vulgar and regressive" and belonging "to the culture of everyman" (Howley 2002; Rojek 2008:30-31). Williams insists that an adequate study of culture must view it as continually threaded through all social practices, lived interactions and shared values across a global space (Barker 2002; Hall 1980, 1997). In fact, culture is so

common and comprehensive that it "is ordinary" and therefore, needs to be analysed as a "whole way of life" (Williams 1965:63).

Popular culture finds its niche in ordinary, daily life, in that its utilization requires no formally acquired skills or knowledge and is therefore made available to large numbers of people of varying economic statuses (van der Westhuizen 2008). This is in contrast to high culture, which demands refined knowledge of choice literature, art, music and philosophy, of which is restricted to the elitist, dominant classes (Hall 1997:2). The term generally refers to a space in which mass-produced products are consumed, for example television or radio (McQuail 2010:554). However, in Cultural Studies research, popular culture has also commonly been used to refer to the production and innovative use of tangible artefacts of cultural expression, which can be (re)distributed amongst a community (see Goggin 2006; Nyamnjoh 2005; Willems 2011). Popular culture is now considered to be a critical component of people's everyday lives throughout the world and it is often the vehicle through which an individual or group reflects, enacts or displays their circadian emotions or values (Dolby 2006; van der Westhuizen 2008). In this sense, people do not consume culture mindlessly or passively. Instead, culture is understood as comprehensive and inherently political.

Williams's holistic approach to defining culture as the set of ideas, values and practices by which individuals classify their common, lived "quotidian experience" (Tomaselli 1987:10) allows for the analysis of how culture is both susceptible to economic, cultural and political manipulation and resistant to change, fragmentation and reformulation (Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987; Rojek 2008). No "whole way of life" is without its dimension of conflict and struggle over opposed ways of life between individuals, groups and institutions (Hall 1980:61). Cultural analysis, then, can be defined as the attempt to uncover the inter-relationships of conflict between practices and patterns of a lived cultural experience (Hall 1980; Williams 1958, 1965).

The notion of 'lived' experience, instead of textual, was significant in the development of the Birmingham School in the 1980s and remains a central focus in the Cultural Studies paradigm today. The issue of experience is the main point of opposition between the cultural viewpoints of structuralism and culturalism. Both perspectives hold that individuals have their own experiences, their own history (Tomaselli 1987). However, where the structuralist position deems that people experience in and through the frameworks of culture, "under conditions which are not of their own making" (Tomaselli 1987:2), the culturalist stance emphasizes the agency of individuals to (re)establish their own history through collective experience (Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987). Resistance is at the heart of a culturalist analysis (Muller et al. 1989:20). Cultural Studies theorists admit that neither structuralism nor culturalism sufficiently embodies a complete analysis of culture. They maintain that the significance of both perspectives lies in their dependency on the other's interpretation of domination, struggle and ideology (Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987).

Struggle, Consent and Domination

The residual gap amid structuralist and culturalist theories of cultural experience is examined extensively in relation to the concept of ideology, as well as to hegemony in the work of Antonio Gramsci. The notion of ideology has been a central focus in Cultural Studies and has been broadly defined and debated by many (see Barker 2000, 2002; Gramsci 1971; Hall 1980, 1997b; Thompson 1990; Muller et al. 1989). For Marxist theorists like Theodore Adorno and Louis Althusser, ideology is seen as systems of meanings, thoughts and practices serving the interests of the dominant, which are accepted by the oppressed (Mills 2010). Marxist theory focuses on only a systematic one-way, base-superstructure flow of power and assigns a "false consciousness" to the passively oppressed (Mills 2010; Muller et al. 1989:16). Gramsci's contributions to ideology are

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multiple and he is recognized for emphasizing the positive role of ideology in governance (Muller et al. 1989; Tomaselli 1987).

Contrary to Marxism's asymmetrical and constant currents of power, Gramsci argues that ideologies are constantly not static and recognizes the perpetual and complex interplay for control between both dominant and subaltern forces (Muller et al. 1989). He formulates the concept of hegemony, wherein power is "performed" rather than possessed by one entity, and therefore should be considered, contextually, as a verb instead of a noun (Mills 2010:35; Rojek 2003). By focusing on the individual as an active subject, Gramsci (1971) reveals how the oppressed are not merely recipients of power, but the site where power is repeatedly negotiated between parties (Mills 2010:35).

For Gramsci, ideological struggle is part of the larger political struggle for hegemony (Muller et al. 1989:26). He developed the concept of hegemony to theorize and critique the domination and exploitation by one class of another or "the total process of winning consent – from the imposition of force to the most subtle seduction of meaning" (Muller et al. 1989:24). Hegemony, therefore, implies an indirect process of consent wherein:

> (…) the leadership uses intellectual devices to infuse its ideas of morality to gain the support of those who resist, to retain the support of those who consent to its rule, and to establish alliances as widely as possible to enable the creation of an ethical-political relationship with the people (Gramsci 1971:207).

For Williams, the Gramscian concept of hegemony is preferred to the Marxist approach to the base-superstructure, because it enables a more nuanced examination of the complex interaction of social forces that exist in the "densely lived culture of everyday life" (Fiske 1992:157; Rojek 2003). This complex interaction entails "a contradictory mixture of creativity and constraint" (Fiske 1992:157) and a temporary "combination of force and (…) consent" (Barker

2002:225). The provisional presence of achieved consent amongst subordinated classes implies that popular consent constantly needs to be "rewon and renegotiated" as it is continuously contested (Barker 2002:58).

A central question for Gramsci is how classes won and, albeit temporarily, maintained consent (Muller et al. 1989). Furthermore, he sought to comprehensively understand the role of the subaltern in hegemonic struggles in modern capitalist society. To address this issue, Gramsci turned to the notion of the intellectual. For him, hegemonic control is achieved when popular consent to the collective will of the leadership is achieved, both "morally and intellectually" (Rojek 2003:115). An intellectual, of any class of society, is defined as a moral leader who counteracts rival ideologies with "coherence and intellectual rigour" (Crehan 2002:5).

Gramsci (1971) distinguishes between the 'traditional' and 'organic' intellectual. "Traditional" intellectuals are individuals who "fill the scientific, literary, philosophical and religious positions in society" (Barker 2002:180). This type of intellectual may descend from varied class backgrounds, but stands independent from a particular class allegiance (Barker 2002; Crehan 2002). At the same time, Gramsci asserts that traditional or "professional" (Gramsci 1971:51) intellectuals "produce, maintain and circulate" dominant ideologies based on formal and institutional structures that, consequently, "become embedded and naturalized in common sense" of a class or culture (Barker 2002:180; Crehan 2002). Muller et al. (1989:25) define "common sense" as representing:

> (…) the precipitated elements of philosophy that form the consciousness and ground for experience of ordinary people. These are the terms with which they experience and make sense of the world and a given social structure (Muller et al. 1989:25).

A class or culture depends on 'organic' intellectuals to organize the actions and consciousness of an ordinary, working-class people (Barker 2002; Muller et al. 1989). These intellectuals are said to be "the organizing elements of the counter-hegemonic class" (Barker 2002:180), a class to which the intellectual "organically belong[s]" (Gramsci 1971:3). Furthermore, organic intelligence exists not only in individuals, but also could inhere within an institution or organization, as long as the interests are representative of the class from which the intellectual originates (Gramsci 1971). It is in this way that the intellectual's alliances can be differentiated. While the traditional position aligns with ideologies of established institutions, the organic allies itself with the thoughts and ideas of a particular class (Barker 2002; Crehan 2002).

Alter-egos: Media and Cultural Studies

From the mid-twentieth century the media received academic attention for their role as being 'intellectual' figures in their own right and, therefore, occupying a central role in the construction of common sense and meaning in society (Barker 2002; Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987, 2012). This has led to the acknowledgment of the media to potentially act as a powerful regulatory institution, capable of prioritizing "attention [given] to problems, solutions or people in ways which can favour those with power" (McQuail 1979:21). Additionally, media are attributed as functioning as instruments of social and cultural influence by conferring status and confirming legitimacy of information and on occasion by acting as "a channel for persuasion and mobilization" (McQuail 1979:21). While Marxist analysis underscores the use of media outlets by dominant ideologies to gain and maintain control of the oppressed by imposing 'false consciousness', Cultural Studies theorists take a more critical approach to media research by also acknowledging existing agency amongst media audiences (Hall 1980; Gramsci 1971; McQuail 1979, 2010; Muller et al. 1989). Cultural Studies and its "alter-ego", media studies, together examine the relationships of domination and resistance in modern society communication (Tomaselli 2012:14).

ICTs and Hegemony

While traditional media outlets' reported ideological functioning stands accused of securing hegemony, new participatory information communication technologies (ICTs) have been considered as a potentially revitalizing escape from dominant ideological forces (Hartley 2012; McQuail 2010; Nyamnjoh 2005). Over the past decade many countries have witnessed a "scaling up" of information and communication processes through the availability of broadcast satellites and the Internet to areas and populations previously without (Hollander 2002:31). More than ever, individuals are able to access global networks and information that was previously difficult or impossible to obtain. On the other hand, a "scaling down" of these processes has also taken place to include regional and local levels of communication via individual mobile phone and digital technology use (Hollander 2002:31). Families, friends and neighbours are able to communicate and build tighter bonds with one another by calling, texting and sharing photos.

This mix of varied availabilities to participatory technology is claimed to increase the capacity for ICT users to claim access and to overthrow methods of cultural oppression (McQuail 2010:157). As a consequence of this increased accessibility, responses to ICTs and other forms of popular culture have been disputed in contrasting ways, either "it is good or bad [and] it evokes either anxiety or celebration" (Dolby 2006:33). However within the field of Cultural Studies, participatory ICTs are embraced as representing dynamic systems of popular expression that enable interaction with and responses to conditions in commonplace society (Tomaselli 1987).

CIRCUIT OF CULTURE

Within Cultural Studies, culture is understood as a primary and constitutive aspect in the process of defining social practices in the modern world. It represents the unstable intersection between power and struggle (Fiske 1992) and the balance between creativity and constraint (Mackay 1997). Rather than analysing a single element of a culture in isolation, it requires a holistic approach that acknowledges various social forces, processes and regulations (du Gay et al. 1997). To this end, du Gay et al. (1997) proposed the 'circuit of culture', a heuristic model which highlights the holistic, interdependent nature of a lived cultural experience (Champ 2008:4). It directs the analysis of a cultural phenomenon in terms of "the articulation of a number of distinct processes whose interaction can and does lead to variable and contingent outcomes" (du Gay et al. 1997:3). In order for adequate analysis of a cultural phenomenon, or for this study, this approach directs attention to five interconnected moments of culture, namely representation, identity, production, consumption and regulation. This approach then informs this study of the mobile phone and community radio convergence.
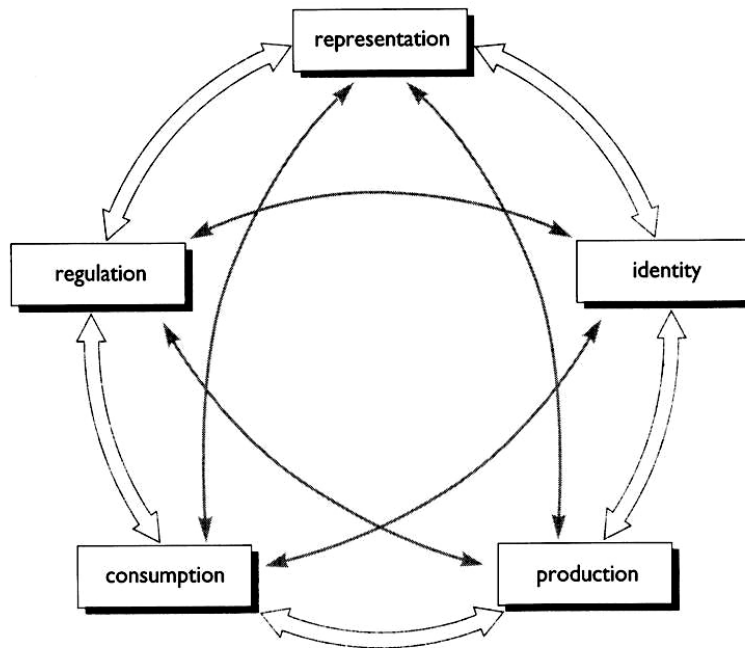
Figure 3: The Circuit of Culture (du Gay et al. 1997)

The circuit's web of interconnections represents a dynamic and organic entity in which meanings of cultural products are determined, negotiated and subverted (Taylor et al. 2002). Du Gay et al. (1997:3) tag these connections between each moment as "articulations", or arbitrarily joined points where the collision and creation of media phenomena and meaning take place. Each moment of the circuit is outlined separately below. However, due to their interactive nature, fluctuation in one moment and/or its articulations will affect all the other elements and it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to isolate any one process from the rest of the circuit (Champ 2008; du Gay et al. 1997; Taylor et al. 2002). Similarly, there is no particular common starting point for meaning-making, as meaning can be produced anywhere and in any combination of moments (Champ 2008; du Gay et al. 1997). I begin with the moment of Representation that introduces the concepts of discourse, knowledge and power (Foucault 1980; Hall 1997a).

Representation

Significant emphasis has been placed on the close connection between communication, meaning and culture in their notion of an everyday, lived experience (Williams 1965; Thompson 1990). The construction of community is dependent on the exchange of shared meanings through daily communicative interaction, that is in the process of representation which connects meaning and language to culture (Hall 1997a:15). In order to examine how meaning is actually produced, Hall identifies two related processes, or systems, of representation: first, a map of mental representations and second, a system of signs that enables meaning to be communicated (Hall 1997a:16-20).

Our conceptual maps contain ideas and images formed through our thoughts and in this way we mentally represent the world around us (Hall 1997a) for "things and events simply do not or cannot make sense on their own. We seem to have to try and make sense of them" (du Gay et al. 1997:14). In order for representations to convey meaning, Hall (1997a) argues that people must communicate with each other using levels of common language and shared codes through which they can make sense and interpret life in similar ways. Cultural Studies' focus on language as a key element of meaning-making broadly defines it as "any sound, word, image or object which functions as a sign, and is organized with other signs into a system which is capable of carrying and expressing meaning" (Hall 1997a:19). This definition incorporates the concept of language as a system of visual signs and as verbal discourse in the study of representation (Barker 2000; Hall 1997a). Further, cultural meaning is not static or innate in representations, but is socially constructed through cultural practice and social discourse (Curtin & Gaither 2005; du Gay et al. 1997; Hall 1997a). The process of meaning construction through shared conceptual maps and a shared language is referred to as representation (Hall 1997a:17-19).

The concept of discourse as theorized by Foucault has been influential within the field of Cultural Studies. It relates to the production of knowledge through discourse, not simply through language (Hall 1997a; Mills 2010). In contradistinction to the linguistic meaning of discourse, Foucault broadened the concept to refer to a group of statements, which "unites both language and practice" (Barker 2002:224) and also "constructs the topic. It defines and produces the objects of our knowledge" (Hall 1997a:44). The production and regulation of knowledge is of greater interest to Foucault than the statements produced (Hall 1997a; Mills 2010). By influencing how knowledge is constructed and defined, discourse structures the way that we perceive our reality and thus, constrains our perceptions of the world (Mills 2010:55). In the same way that discourse permits the distribution of certain ideas, by definition it also limits and restricts circulation of statements and practices (Hall 1997a). Therefore, if meaning and meaningful practice are constructed within discourse (Hall 1997a:44), then nothing is meaningful outside of discourse (Foucault 1980; Mills 2010).

Central to Foucault's theorizing of discourse (1980) is a concern with the relationship between discourse and power. Power is understood in relation to how discourses produce 'truth' and legitimize it in relation to a particular reality. Dominant discourses embrace their own distinctive objects of inquiry, their own criteria for determining truth and falsity of discourse, their own procedures for generating, storing and arranging information and their own institutional sanctions and matrices (Foucault 1980; Fraser 1981). Foucault refers to this as "politics of the discursive regime" (Fraser 1981:274). Consequently, discourse is not purely representational, as it is productive of the sets of ideas and practices of the discursive regime that it inhabits (Hall 1996).

Yet, power does not necessarily always generate in a one-way direction from top to bottom or from a particular sovereign source (Hall 1997a). Instead of "function[ing] in the form of a chain", power circulates and consequently,

introduces and distributes new and varied discourse, knowledge and truth in society (Foucault 1980:98; Hall 1997a). It is through this arena where forms of contesting discourse and their interpretations take root. A single discourse never produces an absolute truth, but rather is always and endlessly followed by the production of varied supplementary discourses (Hall 1997a:42). It is in this logic that Foucault does not render the subordinate(s) of a discursive regime as without agency (Hall 1997a:50). The presence of contesting discourses calls attention to ways in which power embodies forces of both oppression and resistance and thus is also productive (Hall 1997a; Mills 2010). Additionally, Foucault argues that discourse produces not only knowledge, but the subject of discourse as well (Hall 1997a).

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse (Foucault 1980:119).

Media institutions have been faulted for constraining which discourses are authorized as true or false, what statements can be made, who is permitted to speak and when and where he or she can speak (Barker 2000; Hall 1997a; Mills 2010). Yet they can also constitute an important site of confrontation and exchange between cultural institutions and audiences. Media outlets that constructively serve and represent their target communities through reciprocal interactive dialogue exhibit not only signs of resistance and subversion, but also evidence of collaboration and compliance as well (Howley 2002). This is due to the notion that meaning and discourse are never fixed (Hall 1997a:62). Contesting ideas and practices are capable of producing new behaviour, knowledge and alternative discourses (Hall 1997a; Mills 2010), all of which flow through each point in the cultural circuit and thus what du Gay et al. (1997:10) classifies as our "social profiles" or identities.

Identity

Identity, within this framework, is understood to comprise a multitude of socially constructed meanings and practices such as class, ethnicity, gender and nationality (Curtin & Gaither 2005:101). This conceptualization of identity draws attention to how people negotiate and adopt meanings and how meanings are utilized in the formation of relationships with others (du Gay et al. 1997; Hall 1996). Relationships are formed between individuals and groups either through perceived similarities or a lack of awareness of differences (du Gay et al. 1997). Through the recognition of likeness, individuals and groups also reflexively differentiate themselves from others who do not share the same likeness. Identity, therefore, can be defined partly in relation by what is left out, "that is by what it is not" (Woodward 1997:2) and it is dependent on the notion of difference for its construction (Hall 1996).

Because identities are commonly defined through difference, there exists a risk of cultural stereotyping of "the other" (Curtin & Gaither 2005:103; Rojek 2008:23). Power is inherent in the construction of identities because "all signifying practices that produce meaning involve relations of power, including the power to define who is included and who is excluded" (Woodward 1997:15). Within discursive spaces those individuals or groups who are deemed authoritative can influence perceptions of reality through defining what counts as 'truth' or common sense. In turn, generally they are in powerful positions to influence strategically the processes of production, consumption, representation and regulation so that the discourses they articulate and the identities they privilege may be accepted by consumers as factual and authentic (Champ 2008; Taylor et al. 2002). However, it is argued, strategic processes aimed at controlling identity formation are never absolute and almost always unpredictable (Hall 1997c). The negotiation of identity as defined by difference supports the claim that identities are never fixed. Instead, they are constantly changing, evolving and overlapping with one another (Hall 1997c; Woodward 1997).

Overlap of identities occurs at a number of levels - the individual, the organizational, and the national – all of which are in constant interplay (Curtin & Gaither 2005). An individual or group is capable of holding multiple identities simultaneously and altering or adopting new identities at any time. In this regard:

> our identities are probably better conceptualized as the sedimentations over time of those different identifications or positionalities we have taken up and tried to 'live' (…) from the inside, no doubt inflected by the particular mix of circumstances, feelings, histories and experiences which are unique and peculiar to us as individual subjects. Our identities are culturally formed (Hall 1997b:219).

The "discourses of a culture" (Hall 1997b:219), in Foucauldian logic, are central in the creation, negotiation and adoption of identity. African identities, like all others, have long been situated at the crossroads of multiple competing forces (Dolby 2006). South Africa is a powerful example of how historical notions of 'difference' and 'other' are considered to be primary building blocks of a national, South African identity, both past and present (Distiller 2011; Tomaselli 1987; van der Westhuizen 2008). Individual South African identities still largely relate to inherited ethnic and racial qualities, which are over-determined by the systems of colonialism and apartheid (Distiller 2011:102). However, the (re)construction, articulation and subsequent acceptance or rejection of 'official' state identities by civil society highlights the complexities and fragmentations of the South African notions of identity and cultural citizenship (van der Westhuizen 2008). At the heart of cultural citizenship and identity formation lie the processes of production and consumption.

Production

Production refers to the myriad of aspects of the creation and distribution of goods, services and experiences "both material and cultural" (Taylor et al. 2002:617). It is the "moment" (du Gay 1997:1) in the circuit of culture when

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cultural products and ideas are encoded. Encoding refers to the manner in which messages and meanings are generated and distributed through any form of communication or language (Hall 1980a:508). The process of encoding is only realized through discourse, an "elaboration of a language for conceiving of and hence constructing" meaning (du Gay et al. 1997:4). As established above nothing, whether object or idea, is meaningful outside of discourse. In this sense, discursive broadcast media practitioners are viewed as "cultural intermediaries" and are responsible for the creation and circulation of cultural messages and meaning to audiences (du Gay et al. 1997:62).

The moment of production takes place in relation to social and institutional constraints that may influence the way meanings are eventually encoded (Curtin & Gaither 2005:100). By generating and distributing messages, media producers encode meaning or articulate the discourses they wish to present to audiences (du Gay 1997). Production itself is the consequence of individual, organizational, and circumstantial decision-making and practices. Media producers inhabit the institutional and the organizational culture of the establishments that they work for. Such discursive practices come to be normalized and serve the interests of that discursive regime (McQuail 2010). Organizational culture impacts powerfully on production as it is generally dictated by corporate imperatives, constraints and cultures (du Gay et al. 1997). As a result, the process of production entails a complex structure of authority, which has been critiqued for, among others, constructing gendered and racialised representations or discourses (Curtin & Gaither 2005:100).

Consumption

The above accounts of the significance of representation and production should not be construed to suggest that meaning resides solely either in an object or idea, or in how the object or idea is constructed through discourse, for no moment of the circuit can be considered the ultimate source of meaning.. For

discourse to be effective, encoded messages must be received by consumers. While meaning is encoded during production, the process is only fully realized at the point of consumption, where the message is 'decoded' by receivers (Curtin & Gaither 2005). Consumption is a powerful and crucial moment in the cultural circuit.

Produced messages are interpreted or mediated according to the context and cultures of the audience members (McQuail 2010:73) and can and do result in different meanings to that the producer or 'encoder' intended (Hall 1980a). While the encoding or sets of representations might be intended to articulate discourses consistent with institutional or even hegemonic purposes, agency exists within the receiver to choose whether to accept, reinterpret or reject the intended message (du Gay et al. 1997; Foucault 1980; Mackay 1997). The relationship between production and consumption is not linear or absolute. Similarly, production and consumption do not exist in a relation of resistance to one another. Their combined effect forms continual discourses of contested and negotiated meanings (Taylor et al. 2002).

The creation and negotiation of meaning is better viewed as a circular process of message encoding and decoding, and where consumption itself becomes a form of production (Mackay 1997). The interactive nature of new media technologies, like the mobile phone and the Internet, has created a new degree of participation and content creation between the media and their audiences. McQuail (2010:560) credits this interactive relationship for allowing "the capacity for reciprocal, two-way communication, (…) mutual adjustment, co-orientation, finer control and greater efficiency". Media researchers have struggled to agree on one terminology to fully explain the narrowing distance between moments of production and consumption in contemporary media culture (Spurgeon & Goggin 2007). Still, they do not doubt that agency exists in the "prosumer" (Rennie 2007:25), "produser" (Bruns 2007:1), and "consumer-citizen" (Spurgeon & Goggin 2007:318), subverting the traditional power structure (Taylor et al. 2002).

Regulation

The moment of regulation comprises the attempt to control cultural activity, and is inclusive of the formal controls of technological infrastructures and regulatory bodies to the informal or local controls of limiting cultural norms and expression of values (Champ 2008; Curtin & Gaither 2005:103). The goal of dominant regimes is to "regulate and organize conduct and practices" (Thompson 1997:1) in order to "fix meanings in ways they deem desirable" (Champ 2008:6). Hall (1997) has argued that the more important a cultural activity or message becomes, the more determined the effort will be to shape, regulate and govern it.

> Whatever has the capacity to influence the general shape of the culture, to control or determine the way cultural institutions work or to regulate cultural practices, exerts a definite kind of power over cultural life (Hall 1997b:227-8).

The manipulation of meaning by dominant parties is often associated with strong-armed coercion or political influence. For this study, power is recognized as also operating discursively and proposing ways of being that permeates all our social relationships in multiple ways (Hall 1997b:233; Mills 2010).

> Power can be invisible, it can be fantastic, it can be dull and routine. It can be obvious, it can reach you by the baton of the police, it can speak the language of your thoughts and desires. It can feel like a remote control, it can exhilarate like liberation (…) it is systematic and it is particularistic and it is often both at the same time (Gordon 1997 in Green & Haddon 2009:108).

This not only emphasizes the many different aspects of power, but also underlines the idea that while power is highly visible in some social relationships, in others it is all but unseen (Green & Haddon 2009:108). The power relationships in broadcast media and modern ICTs lean towards the invisible,

often being so mundane, routine and everyday as to seem largely unremarkable (Green & Haddon 2009:109). For example, as a consequence of the 'culture of television' and the cultural knowledge and meaning that have become "institutionalized" (Hall 1997b:234) and "taken for granted" (234) by audiences appear to them as part of their innate culture. Thus, since culture works to regulate social behaviour and habit, it is of critical interest who, in fact, is instrumental in regulating culture.

"Regulation *of* culture" and "regulation *by* culture" remain tightly and thoroughly associated with one another (Hall 1997b:233, emphasis added). Normative, every day processes of regulation allow for constant contestation (Hall 1997b; Thompson 1997). Regulation is dynamic and likely to be influenced by both economic power structures and the creative actions of individuals and groups (Thompson 1997:4). The macro and micro struggle for control of meaning-making and distribution together encompass "the overall process through which the social reality transmitted by (…) media is constructed, and is not just a series of 'in' and 'out' decisions" (Shoemaker et al. 2001:233).

Gatekeeping, in macro media regulation terms, is more than merely a simple selection of content for audience circulation (Shoemaker et al. 2001). The term "gatekeeper" was developed by social psychologist Kurt Lewin in order to explain the points of social change (Barzilai-Nahon 2008:1493; Shoemaker et al. 2001). Two levels of regulation are identified in the macro struggle for meaning regulation: the individual routine (media producer's selection responsibility and decision-making patterns) and the organizational (internal factors and characteristics of organization) (Barzilai-Nahon 2008; Shoemaker 1991). Recent research submits that the nature of converging media technologies and consumer participation allows for the empowerment, development and liberation of an activist public from strict media gatekeepers (see Alexander n.d.; Bowman 2008; Enli 2007).

A third level of analysis, an important element in this study, is referred to as regulation by the social system (Shoemaker 1991) and is self-imposed by contributors to media programming. Normative regulation allows for individuals and groups to identify who belongs and who does or says things outside the normative limits of particular ways of doing things (Hall 1997b:234). In radio broadcasting and on Internet social media site or discussion forums, audiences regulate themselves in the dominant language, vocabulary and tone of voice they use to participate in programming (Bosch 2011; McQuail 2010). In turn, this type of cultural regulation imperceptibly assists in determining who contributes to on-air programming and whose interaction is labelled "unacceptable" or "abnormal" (Hall 1997b:234). Similar to moments of representation and identity, these limits define sameness and difference and position media technology as being either empowering, disempowering, liberating or incarcerating, depending on the situational context and articulation (Taylor et al. 2002).

CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the research and adopts the organic and interconnected approach of du Gay et al.'s (1997) Circuit of Culture. This framework allows for the holistic analysis of new media phenomena that acknowledges various social forces, processes and regulations (du Gay et al. 1997) as a substitute for the simplistic and antiquated sender-receiver communication theory.

CHAPTER FOUR

'Network Ethnography': Navigating the Method

INTRODUCTION

Anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) notes that we cannot fully understand people without knowing them. Ethnographic research seeks to shed light onto how individuals and groups differ in the social production of meaning in their daily lives and especially in view of the diverse social settings in which forms of media are used (Deacon et al. 2007). In South Africa, ownership and utilization of radio, mobile phones and connection to the Internet is becoming increasingly and overwhelmingly embedded in society (Bosch 2008; Nyamnjoh 2009). In light of this, media and cultural ethnographers need to accommodate their investigation to include performances of both media producers and their audience. A full, critical interpretation of participatory behaviour is incomplete without acknowledgment of multiple voices existing within a communication channel (Hall 1997). This chapter discusses the research methodology and analysis adopted in order to investigate the potential for constructive interactivity using mobile phones in community radio programming and the challenges faced as a foreign 'network ethnographer'.

A COMPOUND APPROACH: INTEPRETIVISM VS. POSITIVISM

Two arguably unharmonious approaches divide academic research in the fields of humanities and social sciences; positivism and interpretivism (Guest et al. 2012; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Howe 1988). Positivism is embedded within the boundaries of the scientific method. This approach to research is based on the fundamental ideas that interpretations should be derived from quantitative data and that data collection and analysis methods should be reductionist, systematic and transparent. (Guest et al. 2012:15). The positivist paradigm

maintains that generation of 'pure' knowledge must be based on observation that is free of individual interests and psychological schemata (Howe 1988:13).

In contrast, interpretivist, and to some extent phenomenological[34], traditions are concerned with "exploring the ways that people make sense of their social worlds and how they express these understandings through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals" (Deacon et al. 2007:24). An interpretivist approach embraces the notion that human intentions, beliefs and values, both of the researcher and the researched, must be included in research processes in order to achieve a certain 'pureness' of data (Howe 1988:13). Overall, this epistemology tends to employ data analysis that focuses less on rigid structure and quantifiable measurement. It highlights meaning - both personal and social - that is interpreted within the discourse being analysed (Guest et al. 2012:14).

Debates concerning the merits and application of these two seemingly contrasting epistemological paradigms in academic research continue to be rigorously discussed (see Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Teer-Tomaselli 2008). However, some challenge the designations of positivism and interpretivism, stating that their characterizations require the researcher choose the employment of one approach over the other (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Howe 1988). This limits the types of acceptable data collection and analysis that can be used for research (Howe 1998). Instead, some scholars have opted to voice the potential compatibility of positivism and interpretivism in research design (see Barker 2003; Deacon et al. 2007; Guest et al. 2012; Howe 1988; Teer-Tomaselli 2008).

Howe (1988:15) suggests dismantling the "quantitative *versus* qualitative conversation" [italics original] and in its place reworking the notion of research to include facets of both approaches as valuable. His proposal rejects the idea that positivism and interpretivism are incompatible in research.

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[34]In phenomenological research, it is the participants' perceptions, feelings and lived experiences that are paramount and that are the object of the study (Guest et al. 2012:13).

It is what you do with qualitative data, and not the method themselves, that define whether you are engaged in a research endeavor [sic] that is interpretive, positivist or a hybrid of the two (Guest et al. 2012:5).

A hybrid example of this can be seen in a quantitative dimension in a qualitative study which "the reduction of texts to codes that represent themes or concepts and the application of quantitative methods to find patterns in the relations among the codes" takes place (Bernard & Ryan 1998:596). In this example, the quantitative component of the analysis serves to stabilize the frequently "dizzying complexity" of qualitative findings and enabling discrimination of larger delineations of the social and cultural landscape under study (Schrøder et al. 2003:31; Teer-Tomaselli 2008).

This study employs a holistic ethnographic perspective on the use of mobile phones in two South African community radio shows' discourse and the possible construction of an engaged public. This perspective focuses not only on routine processes of production and consumption, but also on how these practices relate to other moments in the circuit of culture and to social and cultural systems (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, since any investigation involving media discourse implicates multiple communicating individuals in numerous activities in countless channels, rich comprehension of this dynamic interaction is difficult to achieve through a single method of research. Consequently, this study incorporates both interpretivist and positivist elements. More concretely, while my research method is predominately qualitative, it employs quantitative research methods to a limited extent as well. This fusion of methods, contained within an ethnographic approach, is detailed below.

ETHNOGRAPHY

Ethnography can be understood as "the writing of culture" and refers to any outsider's analysis of a group or community's everyday values, practices, social relationships, and sense of identity (Anderson 2012:351; Coplan, forthcoming). It is fuelled by the attention paid to habitual human behaviours as being sensible and sense-making actions (Stokes 2013). This definition meshes well with Raymond Williams' notion of studying culture as a "whole way of life" (Stokes 2013; Williams 1965:63). It is argued that "the greater contribution to knowledge is not the transitory 'whyness' of behaviour but the much more long-lived 'howness' of social action" (Anderson 2012:355). Thus, by immersing themselves in an environment over a period of time and studying a specific people as they go about their everyday routines, ethnographers are able to identify 'what' patterns of behaviour exist and consider 'how' those patterns get established.

The quality of an ethnographic study is affected by several components, including the coherence of the ethnographer's access and membership into the explored environment, the sophistication and completeness of the field-notes and other texts, and the ethnographer's familiarity, systematic analysis and insightful interpretation of those texts (Anderson 2012:373; Fetterman 1998; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). The term 'texts' refers to any written or spoken text such as field-notes, interviews, audio recordings, video recordings, newspaper articles, organizational reports and all other materials containing research data which require analysis (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011; Fetterman 1998; Stokes 2013).

Obtaining such texts successfully is dependent on the ethnographer gaining a certain degree of access into the studied community. However, access is not simply a matter of physical presence or the granting of permission for research to be conducted (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:56). Ethnography entails a process of negotiation, often beginning with the host community's "gatekeeper" as the initial point of contact (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:63). A gatekeeper is an

individual who holds membership in a community and has the hierarchic authority to grant or refuse access to an outsider requesting entry. Gatekeepers can be few or many and obvious or obscure depending on the setting and nature of the group (Anderson 2012; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). Even if the researcher is given access to a particular setting the quality of his or her membership is determined by social behaviour, credentials and other "ascribed characteristics" such as age, gender and race (Coplan, forthcoming; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:84).

Such ascribed characteristics may limit or enable the negotiation of an ethnographer's access and membership in the field (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). For example, in environments where there is a strong division between the sexes, a female researcher, no matter her age, may experience difficulty in accessing particular domains restricted to men. However, in other situations a woman may be seen as unthreatening and gain exclusive access to settings, informants and other research material with relative ease (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:84). Furthermore, these ascriptions are culturally inscribed and have power dimensions as well. While being a foreign ethnographer entails a variety of challenges and limits, to a certain degree his or her "foreignness" can also assist in limiting cultural restrictions to establish a relatively impartial community membership (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:86). This can be the case for a young, foreign female who may be afforded a pseudo-membership of an "honorary man" by the studied community and granted exclusive access that another researcher could not attain (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:86).

Social behaviour is a central focus of ethnographic research and although emerged in an alien environment, an ethnographer should strive to find ways to establish normal and neutral social interactions with research informants. Gatekeepers and other research informants will have expectations related to the ethnographer's identity and intentions (Anderson 2012; Fetterman 1998; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). This often leads to the researcher being labelled

as "an expert" or "a critic" by the studied community, both of which threaten the quality and validity of research outcomes (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:75). Members whose way of life the ethnographer is seeking to understand and document may not tolerate probing questions and requests for 'behind the scenes' access from an outsider (Coplan, forthcoming). Generally, community members become concerned with the ethnographer portraying them, their environment and activities in a sympathetic light. Consequently, attempts by gatekeepers to exercise surveillance and control "either by blocking off certain lines of inquiry, or by shepherding the fieldworker in one direction or another may occur (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:65). By engaging in professional, yet impartial relations with gatekeepers and informants, an ethnographer can develop levels of mutual trust and respect with the community under study, increasing the chances of yielding reliable and valuable research results (Anderson 2012; Coplan, forthcoming; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

Although researcher access and membership are critical components in ethnography, the approach also requires degrees of detachment on behalf of the researcher in order to be able to maintain his or her own reflexivity in the analysis (Anderson 2012; Fetterman 1998; Stokes 2013). Geertz (1973) observes that while ethnography takes place in the in field, anthropology takes place at home, for the researcher needs to regularly re-evaluate and analyse the collected information in a mental or physical state outside of the researched environment. In doing this, the ethnographer can disconnect from or "make strange" the processes and practices occurring around them (Coplan, forthcoming). This also allows researchers to better understand the empirical inquiries in the field, to decide when to pursue a new theme, and when the gathered results are sufficient (Coplan, forthcoming). Flexibility, therefore, is also an important attribute for an ethnographer to possess during fieldwork (Anderson 2012; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

Ethnography and Media

Ethnography is often used to study how individuals and communities interact with and mobilize through, forms and channels of media (Teer-Tomaselli 2008). The recent widespread adoption of new 'online' communication platforms such as e-mail, social media sites and blogs has altered the way many South Africans interact with one another (Nyamnjoh 2009). While some are divided on appropriate approaches for incorporating these new virtual platforms into media and cultural research, whether as a research tool or object of research, it is clear that they present challenges for traditional qualitative approaches to methodology (Dicks 2012; Howard 2002). It has become routine and second-nature for many individuals to take part in a continual, seamless switching between online and offline modes of interaction in the course of daily life (Dicks 2012:xxvi). This movement between social realms of separation to integration has led researchers to question what, if any, are the differences between online and offline social relationships? How do individuals' online and offline selves relate to each other (Dicks 2012:xxix-xxxii)?

Instead of solely focusing on cultural and media ethnographic research to physical settings or bounded organizations, a "network ethnography" approach is valuable as participants in any community are interconnected and communicate with one another (Dicks 2012; Howard 2002:267-89). Network ethnography involves an exploration of multiple communication channels and methods of data collection and analysis, all of which are complimentary to a holistic, everyday account of social interaction (Howard 2002). This study employs a networked ethnographic approach, utilizing methods of participant observation, interviews, and questionnaires (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011; Wilson 2006).

Participant Observation

Participant observation, a term often used synonymously with ethnography, has long been used to study the working practices in the media and cultural industries (Berger 2011; Fetterman 1998; Guest et al. 2012; Stokes 2013; Wilson 2006). In participant observation the researcher joins the researched and observes socio-cultural patterns from a point of view of complete or partial membership with the intention of studying patterns of behaviour (Anderson 2012; Stokes 2013). This observation is informal and can be done secretly or with the researched community's knowledge. It attempts impartiality and is systematic in that it focuses on identifying themes and behaviours which can be related back to theoretical ideas previously pinpointed by the researcher (Berger 2011; Stokes 2013).

While it is an option to rely on memory to preserve data over the course of research it is not recommended, as there are limits to the quantity and quality of data that can be retained. In order for the researcher to avoid a distortion of information and to maintain a reflexive position, participant observation is often augmented by researcher field-notes, photographs and audio or video recordings (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). This material is often saved and reviewed over a period of several days, weeks or months of analysis. Still, it is important to note that these techniques are not a replacement for the actual act of observation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

Interviews

Interviews enable the ethnographer to obtain information that they cannot gain by observation alone, such as an informant's personal beliefs and values, a community's historical background or unpublished statistical information (Berger 2011; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983; Stokes 2013). Interviews can be formally or informally structured, however traditionally in ethnographic interviews, the

ethnographer does not enter the conversation with a pre-defined list of questions. Instead he or she aims to casually direct the conversation to themes of particular interest to the context of the research (Berger 2011). Such an approach offers the potential to uncover themes that are relevant to the informant and possibly unanticipated by the researcher (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

Questionnaires[35]

Questionnaires gather information relating to individual demographics, ideas, opinions and attitudes unattainable by observation alone (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011; Stokes 2013). Questionnaires are often utilized when the researcher seeks to collect and analyse social data from a representative sample of a population (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011; Stokes 2013). There are numerous ways of collecting data from a targeted group of individuals, namely by conducting the questionnaire in-person, by distribution via mail and the Internet, or through phone conversation (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011). Each technique of conducting and distributing questionnaires has its own benefits dependent on a study's objectives, sampling and possible combination with other methods of data collection (Berger 2011).

SAMPLING PROCESS

My broad intention was to undertake a study at community radio stations in KwaZulu-Natal to explore issues relating to interactivity as a consequence of using the mobile phone in programming. Because resources and time were limited, I adopted a non-probable and systematic sampling process to identify a community radio station where I could conduct my research. Non-probability or

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[35] There are conflicting views on the differences between a questionnaire and a survey. Arthur Berger (2011) claims that the differentiation depends on who or what is conducting the inquiry. He says "most surveying is done by interviewers" while the questionnaire "does not use interviewers but is sent" through the mail, Internet or other publications (Berger 2011:222). Other researchers use the terms interchangeably (see Anderson 2013; Fetterman 1988; Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

purposive sampling is a process that does not depend on random selection of individuals, populations or locations. Instead, it systematically includes and excludes elements in order to reasonably match the objectives and boundaries of the study (Anderson 2012:159-68). Similarly, the process of sampling involves not only selecting a research population or setting, but also the timeframe and context (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:46). As such, a purposive sampling technique informed the choice of radio station and the research process.

I was able to collect preliminary data on community radio stations in the Durban area to establish historical background, current production state, programming themes and demographics of listenership. It was also important that the radio staff under study were open and interested in my research being conducted within their station. To this end, I approached several community radio stations in the greater Durban area by simply calling the contact number listed online on their website or public telephone directory. In many cases the phone was disconnected, not answered or the station never returned my calls. In the case of *Izwi loMzansi FM*, my call was answered by the station's secretary who patched my call through to the Station Manager and the study's primary 'gatekeeper', Mr. Vela Xulu. Our connection was poor, "Can you hear me now? It's *Izwi loMzansi* radio here." I briefly introduced myself and he invited me to meet with him at the station the following day.

As I arrived early on the day of our meeting I waited in the station's lobby, where I had the opportunity to engage in an informal conversation with *Izwi loMzansi FM's* News Director, Sifiso Sibisi, the station's secretary and studio guests seated nearby. We eventually discussed not only the objectives of my research, but also shared stories about our families, hobbies and interests. Everyone was interested and intrigued by my presence at the station, which was most likely accentuated by my foreign race and North American accent. Not only was I the only white individual at the station, but also the only non-South African. This waiting period before the Station Manager arrived proved immensely valuable in becoming familiar with the staff and the station's community ambiance while establishing a non-threatening researcher identity.

When the Station Manager became available, I formally introduced myself as a student researcher from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and outlined my research plan. Mr. Xulu described the station's long-standing commitment to serving their community, their variety of programming, and he also provided concrete profiles of each radio programme currently on-air. We discussed the station's established but growing listenership, which is quantitatively expressed by recent releases of the community Radio Audience Measurement Survey (RAMS) conducted by the South African Audience Research Foundation (SAARF). Based on the information and the profiles provided by Mr. Xulu, I purposively selected to observe two *Izwi loMzansi FM* radio programmes at with dissimilar platforms, target audiences and broadcast times. The two shows I selected were a day-time gender empowerment magazine programme targeting female listeners called *Senza Kwenzeke* hosted by Cindy "Halfpynt" Shezi and a male-dominated evening talk radio show, *Sifiso Sibisi Talks,* hosted by News Director Sifiso Sibisi. Mr. Xulu formally granted me permission to conduct my research at the station and authorized my access to these two programmes. This access enabled a research assistant and I to undertake and to record participant observation of these programmes' live broadcasts, to perform semi-formal interviews with the hosts and to conduct listener questionnaires.

PROCESS OF DATA COLLECTION

The collection of research data for this study related to three research stages, namely: Production, Programming Content and Audience Participation. This is consistent with du Gay et al.'s (1997) Circuit of Culture model (see Chapter 3). Additionally, these three stages correspond directly with the study's research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The three stages of data collection are outlined below (see Table 1). No one stage takes place before or after the other, but rather are exercised in conjunction with one another, unless otherwise stated.

Table 1: Three Stages of Data Collection

	Stage 1: Production	Stage 2: Programming Content	Stage 3: Audience Participation
Research Question	How are the voices, concerns and ideals of the audience incorporated in *Izwi loMzansi FM*'s programme content?	What mechanisms of gatekeeping and framing are employed in regards to audience participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming?	How are mobile phones used in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming and what opportunities do they present for participation and citizen engagement?
Sampling	Purposive	Purposive	Purposive
Qualitative/ Quantitative	Qualitative	Hybrid	Hybrid
Method(s)	Participant observation, semi-formal interviews	Participant observation	Participant observation, questionnaires
Data Collected	Field-notes, transcript of radio broadcasts, transcript of Facebook dialogue, transcript of interviews	Field-notes, transcript of radio broadcasts, transcript of Facebook dialogue	Field-notes, transcript of radio broadcasts, transcript of Facebook dialogue, telephonic questionnaires, Facebook questionnaires
Analysis	Thematic analysis	Thematic analysis	Thematic analysis

Stage 1: Production

Question: How are the voices, concerns and ideals of the audience incorporated into Izwi loMzansi FM's programme content by presenters?

Observation of radio broadcasts took place two to three times a week for four weeks between July and August 2012. Each radio programme and presenter was observed at least once every week. Days of observation were alternated to ensure data consistency and were approved in advance by radio hosts to ensure their scheduled in-studio guests were informed and also agreed to observation (see Table 2).

Table 2: Schedule of *Izwi loMzansi FM* programme observation

	Senza Kwenzeke with Cindy "Halfpynt" Shezi (Monday – Friday, 09h – 12h)	*Sifiso Sibisi Talks* with Sifiso Sibisi (Monday – Thursday, 18h - 19h)	
Week 1	Friday, 03 August 2012	Monday, 30 July 2012	Tuesday, 31 July 2012
Week 2	Monday, 06 August 2012	Tuesday, 07 August 2012	
Week 3	Wednesday, 15 August 2012	Tuesday, 14 August 2012	
Week 4	Wednesday, 22 August 2012		

Observation of radio show production began from when my research assistant and I first arrived at the station and met with the presenter of the radio show being observed that day. For this stage, the purpose of having a research assistant at the studio with me was to assist with verbal Zulu to English translation. This researcher limitation is discussed further in detail later in this chapter. This pre-production period of observation began anywhere from sixty to ten minutes before the live broadcast. I took detailed field-notes in the time leading up to and during the entirety of the radio programmes. These field-notes served to identify specific patterns of behaviour by the host, in-studio guest or participating listener relating to overall programme production.

When the live broadcast was set to begin, my research assistant and I entered the studio with presenter and guests. My research assistant and I did not participate as on-air guests, but rather were assigned permanent seats in the studio next to the presenter(s) and his or her guest(s). When the radio presenter was not on air, such as when music or an advert was playing, we were able to engage in casual conversation with the host and guests, inquiring about their backgrounds, their thoughts on the topic being discussed and relationship with

Izwi loMzansi FM radio. All observed broadcasts were recorded using a voice recorder and later digitally translated into English by the research assistant.

Ethnographic observation, as noted earlier, is an active research method and much more complicated in practice than in theory (Berger 2011; Coplan, forthcoming). Since this method embraces the significances of everyday social interactions rather than scientific expectations, researchers must be prepared to be flexible and to shift focus depending on how events unfold (Berger 2011). During the first observed broadcasts, I became concerned that my foreign presence in the studio was influencing participation of in-studio guests. In an effort to include me in the conversation and topics being discussed, some of the guests consciously or unconsciously spoke in English rather than the station's vernacular of Zulu. Thereafter, to avoid this my Zulu-speaking research assistant and I briefed on-air guests to speak in whatever language they would normally use or felt comfortable using on the radio. This intervention was made in order to maintain a more authentic research environment, where those who were being observed would not modify their behaviour because of researcher presence (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983).

Researcher attentiveness and flexibility was necessary in another aspect of my fieldwork. Fairly early into the process of participant observation of radio broadcasts, I observed that in addition to the predicted means of participation of call-in and SMS, *Izwi loMzansi FM* radio hosts and listeners were utilizing Facebook on and off-air as a strategy of interactivity. As this was both significant and unanticipated, I made the decision to incorporate a 'network ethnography' approach and include online translations of the commentary which was taking place on both hosts' Facebook pages. It was necessary to expand the observation of Facebook activity from the defined timeframe of the live radio broadcast to the entire period of my data collection. This decision was made because the radio hosts and listeners frequently posted comments on Facebook before, during and after the actual live broadcast. I received authorization to

become Facebook friends[36] with Cindy and Sifiso in order to access this interaction. English translation of this online dialogue was undertaken by a research assistant and later thematically analysed alongside the other collected texts.

In order to compliment the observation of radio broadcast production, semi-formal interviews were conducted using a purposive sampling of three *Izwi loMzansi FM* radio staff. The purposive sampling focused on the Station Manager and the two Producers whose shows were being obsvered for the study. These open-structured interviews played an integral part in the data collection, in that they complimented participation observation and were likened to normal conversation (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983). The interviews took place at the radio station, frequently during musical interludes or commercial breaks while the radio host was seated behind the studio microphone. By asking questions during an actual broadcast, I was able to ask the radio presenters to explain or clarify specific elements of the show's processes of production in the moment they took place. However, conversations that took place in the studio were often interrupted or cut short by listener phone calls or by the presenter needing to go back on-air.

Additional informal interviews were conducted with radio hosts immediately after a broadcast as a method of 'debriefing', allowing for a follow up on specific issues or ideas earlier introduced by the presenter (Schrøder et al. 2003). The most formal of the interviews was with the station manager, Vela Xulu, and was scheduled in advance and was guided by a prepared, but still flexible list of questions. This interview aimed to chronicle the history, adversities, triumphs and objectives of *Izwi loMzansi FM* community radio. All interviews were conducted in English, recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed for thematic analysis.

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[36] To become 'friends' with someone on Facebook, one person must send a 'friend request' to the other person to authorize. Once the request is accepted, both individuals are able to view comments, pictures and other updates posted on each others' page. Before the request is accepted, the items available for viewing on each individual profile are limited depending on the individual's privacy settings.

Stage 2: Content Programming

Question: What mechanisms of gatekeeping and framing are employed in regards to audience participation in Izwi loMzansi FM programming?

The notion of media gatekeeping in this stage is similar to the instrumental role of a gatekeeper in ethnographic research. Just as research gatekeepers control means and levels of researcher access into a community or setting, on-air media gatekeepers, such as radio presenters, control who and what takes part in programming and when and how this participation takes place (du Gay et al. 1997). Observing the patterns of individual or workplace practices allowed me to incorporate theoretical themes relating to the power relations that were normalized in this context (Hall 1997; Stokes 2013). While main data collection technique at this stage was participant observation of live radio programming, it was complimented by later analysis of live programme transcripts, field-notes and online conversation taking place on the presenters' Facebook pages.

For this stage, the in-studio research assistant played a prominent role in the collection of data by taking field-notes throughout the radio shows. While my field-notes focused more on documenting qualitative patterns of behaviour rather than what was said, the research assistant was responsible for keeping tally of the number of times the host or participating listener performed a specific action. This included, for example, noting how many times the presenter asked for audience participation and by what means (by SMS, calling in or Facebook) or the number of times radio listeners send SMSs to the radio host during the live broadcast (see Appendix 1). The intention of this largely quantitative documentation was to establish patterns of practice over several broadcasts in the two radio programmes under study. This inclusion of quantitative data alongside qualitative observation has been argued to contribute to more balanced and transparent research conclusions, and to also improve

ethnographic reliability (Fetterman 1998). All of the data was later analysed thematically (see Table 1).

Stage 3: Audience Participation

Question: How are mobile phones used by Izwi loMzansi FM listeners to participate in programming and what opportunities do these methods present for widespread participation and citizen engagement?

It is important to note that participant observation of radio programming is woven through the three stages of this study (see Table 1). To achieve a full and critical interpretation it is important to acknowledge the multiple voices that exist within a communication channel (Hall 1997). Since this study seeks to discover the potential for constructive interactivity using the mobile phone in community radio programming, it is vital to include not only the performances, opinions and attitudes of both the radio presenters but of their listening audience as well. It is for this reason that the questionnaire was employed as a research tool in this study.

The completion of the questionnaire in this study was limited to listeners of *Izwi loMzansi FM's Senzwa Kwenzeke* and *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* shows during the period of fieldwork. It aimed to discover the listeners' attitudes and opinions relating to *Izwi loMzansi FM's* objectives, programming and means of community engagement. The questionnaire was brief, concise and was comprised of two binary, two open-ended and ten closed-ended questions (Stokes 2013). A diversity of question types enables a wide range of information to be accessed which may serve to qualify respondents, provide evidence for hypotheses, or to provide the data for analysing different components of the research sample (Anderson 2012) (see Appendix 1).

My original intention was to log the numbers of all in-coming text messages and phone calls to *Izwi loMzansi FM* during the observation of the *Senzwa Kwenzeke* and *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* broadcasts. I then intended to call these listeners back to conduct the questionnaire over the phone, filling in their answers by hand using a paper form. However, because the radio station did not have caller identification technology or a phone line dedicated to solely receiving SMS, I adjusted my approach with the cooperation of the radio presenters. I asked that the presenters put out a brief call on-air during one of their shows to let their listeners know about my research and to ask for feedback. The listeners were invited to send a missed call[37] or please call me[38] to a mobile number I established for the purpose of research. In this way, those interested could send me their contact number without spending any money or airtime. To guarantee a listener response large enough to conduct the questionnaire and get representative and quality results, a small incentive of free mobile phone airtime was offered to questionnaire participants and distributed after the survey was completed.

The telephonic questionnaire was conducted by the Zulu-speaking research assistant while I managed the process. Using the phone number set aside for the research, he called back the *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senzwa Kwenzeke* listeners who had volunteered their numbers. The method of selecting which numbers to call back was systematic in that numbers were called in the order that their missed call or please call me messages were received. If there was no answer or if a number was repeated, we moved on to the next number on the list until there were 25 completed questionnaires for each radio programme. The research assistant conducted the questionnaire verbally while simultaneously completing a

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[37] A 'missed call' is when a mobile phone caller calls a number and purposely ends the call before the other person can answer. Since the call does not connect, neither person is charged for the call. Often, this method is used in order to let the person being called that the caller has arrived at a location, that the caller is no longer busy or that the caller is requesting for the other person to call them back.

[38] A 'please call me' is generic message that a mobile phone user person can send, for free, to another mobile phone user. For many mobile phone providers, the number of please call me messages that can be sent per day is capped. An example of a 'please call me' message is: *At 13:40:43 on 2013-04-23 you received a call from 0785555555 who would like you to call back. This message is brought to you by MTN.*

paper version of the questions, which were later compiled and analysed thematically.

It became evident during the observation process that, due to significant Facebook interaction between the radio presenter and their listeners, it was necessary for an online version of the questionnaire to be made available to members, commonly referred to as 'friends', of the radio hosts' Facebook pages. There were two purposes for this decision; I did not want to exclude a significantly active community of *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners and I was also curious to discover if there existed any considerable differences in the active participation of online and offline radio listeners. This unanticipated exploration sought to not only reveal who engaged in *Izwi loMzansi FM* related dialogue via Facebook, but also why, when and how these listeners chose to utilize Facebook as a communication platform rather than texting or calling in to the studio.

I employed the free, online survey builder website KwikSurveys.com to recreate and distribute the questionnaire to the online audience. Internet links to two versions of the questionnaire, one in English and the other in Zulu, were posted to both Facebook pages as a comment. By posting the links directly on the pages, the questionnaires were made available to Cindy Shezi and Sifiso Sibisi's Facebook friends. However, it should be noted that while Sifiso's page, titled "Sfiso Sibisi Talks", was strictly a professional page dedicated to his radio programme, Cindy's Facebook page was personal and included many of her friends as members who may not have been *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners. To accommodate this inconsistency, I carried out a purposive selection of people to whom I would send the survey. I identified members of these two pages who had recently posted, commented on or 'liked'[39] material published on the pages and sent them a direct message with a link to the survey to complete. Individuals who

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[39] "Liking" implies that a Facebook user approves or enjoys a particular comment, picture or video posted to a Facebook page.

completed this online questionnaire received the complimentary airtime for their participation.

While the live on-air, but offline request for questionnaire respondents yielded a high number of volunteers to participate, the online version of the same questionnaire presented some difficulties in this regard. My experience highlights the contention that the biggest challenge with employing a survey technique in research is a low or inconsistent response rate (Anderson 2012; Berger 2011; Stokes 2013). Although I was an official 'member' and 'friend' of Cindy's and Sifiso's Facebook pages, got permission from both of them to send the questionnaire to their Facebook followers, and sent messages explaining who I was and the purpose of the survey in English and Zulu, the respondents expressed an enormous amount of speculation and doubt from possible respondents about my true intentions. Some individuals requested my personal phone number or that I approve their Facebook friendship request to confirm my claimed identity before taking the questionnaire. Others insisted that they preferred to consult with Cindy or Sifiso about the questionnaire before accessing it online. Additionally, although many people accessed the Facebook pages and even the questionnaire on their mobile phone, not all of them knew how to properly use the technology or owned a phone capable of opening the questionnaire. All of these elements resulted in only 22 respondents completing the online questionnaire over the period of four weeks that they survey was active online.

THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis is a qualitative method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes within data (Braun & Clarke 2006:79). This type of analysis fits well with this mixed methods study because it allows qualitative data to be understood and described by quantitative means (Boyatzis 1998; Stokes 2013). One of the benefits of employing thematic analysis is that it is flexible in its approach to

theoretical and epistemological frameworks. While some techniques of analysis require a direct correlation to theory, thematic analysis embraces both metric (theory-driven) and interpretive (data-driven) analysis[40] (Anderson 2012; Braun & Clarke 2006). This study exercises an interpretive approach to analysis, while acknowledging that researchers are never free of their study's theoretical and epistemological backgrounds (Guest et al. 2012). Instead of testing the implications of pre-established theoretical framework, interpretive analysis seeks to add to the body of the theory in the exploration of texts (Anderson 2012:287). Similarly, thematic analysis is an inductive approach, meaning that research themes and codes that later emerge as categories for analysis originate from the data itself. A total dependency to theoretical context is not advisable because it can influence researchers in the coding process (Braun & Clarke 2006).

Coding is an active process that seeks to reach beyond the surface of text(s) for the purpose of identifying and underlying characteristics, structures, social meanings and cultural ideologies (Anderson 2012:273). Interpretive coding values the role of the researcher in his or her ability to personally interpret the text and assign codes (Anderson 2012). A code is "the most basic segment or element, of raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" under exploration (Boyatzis 1998:63). The tagging of codes throughout a text may result in the formation of a list of themes, or patterns that emerge in the data. These themes or patterns assist to organize and describe the ethnographer's observations while also interpreting aspects of the studied phenomenon (Boyatzis 1998; Braun & Clarke 2006; Guest et al. 2012).

The coding process can become long and laborious depending on the amount and type of data and the researcher's approach to coding (Anderson 2012; Braun & Clarke 2006). The task of classifying, analysing and managing data can be significantly simplified with the help of computer aided qualitative analysis software, also referred to as CAQDAS (Anderson 2012; Stokes 2013:139). While the use of computer software cannot replace human research endeavour, its

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[40] Metric and interpretive analysis are also referred to as deductive and inductive analysis respectively (see Braun & Clarke 2006; Sundar 2011)

capacity for recording, linking and reviewing data can be utilized to help researchers better interpret their research findings (Bazeley 2007:2). I use the CAQDAS programme called NVivo for much of the digitally transcribed texts such as the recorded radio broadcasts, interviews and Facebook dialogue. I also utilize other more traditional, manual practices of interpretive coding and analysis such as highlighting and underlining printed research material, namely field-notes and newspaper articles.

RESEARCHER LIMITATIONS

One of the limitations often raised in connection with ethnographic work is that because often only a single case is studied, the representativeness of the findings is always in doubt (Hammersley & Atkinson 1983:44). I did my best under time and resource constraints to work with a representative sample. Another study in the future could opt to extend the fieldwork period or expand the number of radio programmes are observed. This exploration would provide a more holistic view of how a community radio station and its audience utilize mobile phone technology for active participation.

The other limitation I faced dealt with my inability to communicate in Zulu. I addressed this research challenge by hiring a research assistant to accompany me to the station for everyday of scheduled observation. The assistant helped to clarify questions that were not clearly understood by *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters. I attribute some of this lack of understanding to my foreign accent and some unfamiliar vocabulary. The dual presence of the assistant and I also served to assure apprehensive radio staff and guests of my academic intentions. While having a research assistant who was Zulu speaking helped to validate my position as a researcher, it also disadvantaged it in some regard. I found that some radio staff would speak to me through him, instead of addressing me directly. This created a barrier for processes of open communication.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Findings and Analysis

INTRODUCTION

As outlined in Chapter Three, this chapter draws on a cultural approach to media studies (Hall 1980; Gramsci 1971; Muller et al. 1989; Tomaselli 2012) and du Gay et al.'s (1997) elaboration of the Circuit of Culture theory in order to examine the relationships of power and participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming. Modern adaptations of the public sphere theory (Fraser 1990; Gitlin 1998; Habermas 1989; McGuigan 2005) and notions on citizenship, presented in Chapter Two, are also employed in the evaluation of audience participation. Cultural Studies' inclusion of popular culture as a critical component of people's everyday lives allows for this study to understand culture as ordinary, comprehensive and inherently political (Tomaselli 1987; Williams 1965). The circuit of culture theory complements the focus on the 'everyday', 'lived experience' by enabling a holistic analysis of a cultural phenomenon and by acknowledging the various social forces, processes and regulations at play (du Gay et al. 1997). Public sphere theory and its contemporary reworkings allow for an assessment of *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming as an informational, interactive and representative platform through which listeners can explore and develop notions of citizenship.

This chapter is organized in six sections. First, this chapter gives a brief historical account of the station in order to evaluate the general working atmosphere, broadcasting standards, and staff principles of *Izwi loMzansi FM.* This provides a backdrop of the inter-workings of the station and the ways in which social contexts are guiding its evolution. Second, the two shows observed for this study, *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke*, are outlined based on their format, programming, target audience and the community radio broadcasting ideals of

each respective presenter. The days and topics of all observed shows are presented as well.

The third, fourth and fifth sections address the study's three questions defined in Chapters One and Four. The first question, "How are the voices, concerns and ideals of the audience incorporated into *Izwi loMzansi FM's* programme content by presenters?" is reviewed by looking at shared methods of how presenters select show discussion topics and foster audience participation. The next section considers the study's second question, "What mechanisms of gatekeeping and framing are employed in regards to audience participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming?" by analysing the management of the three methods of audience participation (call-in, SMS and Facebook posts) by radio presenters. The study's third question focuses specifically on the audience activity in the radio shows. This question asks, "How are mobile phones used by *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners to participate in programming and what opportunities do these methods present for widespread participation and citizen engagement?" Here, the study blends themes of listener participation with quantitative data regarding *who* participates, *how* and *when* this participation takes place. An exploration into why listeners may not participate is also included.

The final sections discuss missed opportunities in *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke* shows for radio listeners, guests and presenters to critically engage with one another and final conclusions.

IZWI LOMZANSI FM **Culture**

"The Voice of the South"

Izwi loMzansi FM had their first broadcast on December 5th, 1998, on a 30-day event license. As a full-time broadcaster the station is only six years young. After several additional 30-day event licenses, significant delays from ICASA, legal

battles with another station over the broadcasting frequency, and complications with signal distributor Sentech, *Izwi loMzansi FM* finally achieved a full-time broadcasting status on August 1st, 2007[41]. Currently, the station has about 25 local staff members consisting of the board of directors, show presenters, newsreaders and secretarial workers. Station Manager, Mr. Vela Xulu, has been at the helm of the station since the beginning and cites that community education and empowerment has always been the station's focus and derives directly from local issues and concerns:

> During the holiday season of 1997, there was a German tourist who was killed in Durban, and then I saw that we needed to create a station that would educate the people from low economic levels about the influence of crime in our country. (…) The first temporary license we got was in December 1998 and we were focusing on crime and HIV/AIDS community campaigns (*Ilanga Letheku*, 16 Aug 2012).

The other 30-day broadcasting licenses awarded to *Izwi loMzansi FM* from 1999 through 2001 focused on educational programming around local events affecting the Zulu community. These events included the 1999 South African general elections, women's celebration month in August, heritage celebration month in September, the arrival of the new millennium, and the World AIDS Conference in 2000. Thus, *Izwi loMzansi FM's* emphasis on community-driven programming both aligns with and precedes the South African Broadcasting Act of 2002, which established a constitutional mandate for South African community radio stations to:

> (…) contribute to democracy, development of society, gender equality, nation building, provision of education and strengthening the spiritual and moral fibre of society (ICASA website, 1 Oct 2013).

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[41] See Chapter 1 for a more detailed account of *Izwi loMzansi FM's* broadcasting history.

Since obtaining a full broadcasting license in 2007, the station has expanded its programming repertoire and has amassed a wide-ranging listener demographic. Although the Station Manager labels it "a family radio station, where everyone can listen", their primary audience is Zulu speakers between the ages of 24 and 49[42]. *Izwi loMzansi FM* also broadcasts everyday and all day without interruption. The on-air schedule, during the period of this research, was a mix of 18 talk and music programmes, all of which claimed to incorporate a 'community' focus.

The target 'community' of listeners varies depending on the format, day and time of the show, but always characterizes a portion of the larger Zulu community in KwaZulu-Natal. For example, the morning show on weekdays from 6AM until 9AM caters to those waking up, starting their workday, or in transit to work or school. Another show, in partnership with a community rehabilitation centre, specifically serves to abet suffering and recovering drug addicts. Other *Izwi loMzansi FM* programmes are tailored expressly to male or female and youth or adult audiences. Although each radio show finds its own community niche within the larger Zulu community, the station's overarching objective is to make a difference in the lives of their listeners through their interactive programming. To this end, they employ a station-wide motto of "*Yizwa umehluko*" or in English, "Feel the Difference", which is frequently featured in station promos (*Izwi loMzansi FM* website, 01 Oct 2013). As explained below by Mr. Xulu, this motto serves a dual purpose: to reach out to their listeners and to distinguish themselves from other South African community radio stations.

> There was a need [for this community radio station] because there were other radio stations in our area of broadcast but we said we'll come in at a different angle. We want our people to talk. We want them to talk for themselves. We want to hear them, not hear the presenters alone. So all stations, if they touch the issue of HIV, they give them a five-minute slot. We will give them an hour. We discuss the issue thoroughly, so everyone takes part and plays a role. We want

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[42] Interview, Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012

the people to check if they get the difference between us and other stations. They hear your voice, they hear my voice, they hear other people's voice and they think 'wow'. Okay, now they feel it. *Yizwa umehluko!* (Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012)

The keywords of 'voice', 'to speak', 'to talk', 'to hear' and 'to listen' are recurrently threaded throughout the interviews, on-air and Facebook commentary and listener questionnaires carried out by this study. The most obvious and signifying reference appears in the station's name. *Izwi loMzansi*, translates into English as "Voice of the South", where 'south' corresponds to the citizens of South Africa[43]. The station's effort towards including the 'voice' of their audience in their shows refers not simply to opening the phone lines for calls, but also incorporates the component of listener engagement. As Mr. Xulu explains below, this comprises engagement with the radio presenter(s), with radio guest(s) and with other radio listeners. He refers to the radio presenters as facilitators of dialogue between the audience and in-studio guests.

> Most of the radio stations they impose to the masses. It's like the politicians. They tell us, they think on our behalf. But we believe nothing about the listeners without them. Let them speak. You listen and then you take what they say and you throw it back to them as well. And then you engage each other. So they must talk. They must have the platform where they can express their views themselves. Allow them to speak, don't speak on their behalf. Allow them to speak and then hear what they say and then bring in the experts, bring in the leaders of the country and then they must listen to them and they must engage each other. That is why we call it *Izwi loMzansi*. We speak. We want to hear their voice (Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012).

According to the Station Manager, audience participation takes place at number of different levels. In addition to on-air contributions, the station abides by an "open door policy", where listener involvement in the development of radio

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[43] Ibid

programming is welcomed and valued[44]. In part, this is carried out in order to fulfil the community participation clause required by their broadcasting license, but also because Mr. Xulu believes that any station that operates without audience input in station management and programming will flounder:

> The audience, big or small, is always there. You just have to know how to engage with them. (…) I believe what makes [a station] die is maybe the management and the board of that station. They think for the people [and] they don't let the people tell them what they want (Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012).

Izwi loMzansi FM and mobile technology

The popularity of mobile telephony, and more recently mobile Internet, in South Africa has also been linked to recent research suggesting that the appeal of community radio is disappearing amidst more modern forms of media and methods of communication (see Obijiofor 2011). *Izwi loMzansi FM* staff acknowledge the impact of mobile technologies in their daily routine, but do not subscribe to the notion that radio will ultimately be suffer or even be replaced by mobile phone and mobile Internet communication technologies. Instead, they have begun embrace new technology as a tool for potentially reaching out to new listeners and for increasing the quality and quantity of audience participation both on-air and off-air. *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenter Cindy "Halfpynt" Shezi credits mobile technology for allowing her audience to be better informed on current events:

> Everyone has a cell phone! They can even read news there. Everything is on their cell phone. Everyone is informed. This technology, eish! I don't know something and then the listener tells me, "did you hear that?" (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012)

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[44] Ibid

As outlined in Chapter Two, other similar studies on South African community radio observe that the station's perceived 'community' of listeners is more mythic than real (Teer-Tomaselli 2001; see also Tyali 2012, Mhlanga 2010, Karamagi 2012). These studies cite a significant lack of critical engagement between radio hosts and their listeners as well as a disconnect between the ideals of the station management and the ideals of the community it was meant to be serving. The popularity, ubiquity and convenience of mobile phones has created more options for community radio listeners to partake in programming. Mr. Xulu recalls how access to mobile phones has opened up more opportunities for participation:

> [Before] it was difficult for people living in the rural areas to get the landline because Telkom was the monopoly of the sector. But since these cell phone companies came in everyone can communicate with anyone, anywhere at anytime. So it made things easier. You can text [or] you can call because the prices are different. If you have 45 cents you can send a text message. But if you have 1 Rand 50 you can make a call and your voice can be heard (Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012).

Participation on community radio shows via the mobile phone is not one-way. Many, if not all, of the radio presenters at *Izwi loMzansi FM* incorporate mobile technology into their shows. The mobile phone has become a crucial instrument in the *Izwi loMzansi FM* studio and is utilized simultaneously alongside other studio equipment and media resources. Still, Cindy believes that *Izwi loMzansi FM* continues at the top of South African community radio listenership rankings not entirely because of their adaptation of mobile technology, but instead because of their simplistic, direct approach to community interaction:

> (…) at *Izwi loMzansi* we say let us leave everything and stick to the basics. I'm talking about basics of life, relationships, friendships [and] family problems. You can't get all that [support] on the Internet or in the technology. Technology cannot truly help you with all these things. (…) But we, as radio community, we can. Radio can't die. It won't die (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

The next section outlines the two radio programmes observed during the study; *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke.*

OBSERVED *IZWI LOMZANSI FM* PROGRAMMES

Sifiso Sibisi Talks

Sifiso Sibisi Talks is a public affairs programme hosted by Sifiso Sibisi. The show is broadcast Monday through Thursday from 6PM until 7PM and is built around a debate format. A debate format entails publically engaging in an argument or discussion by which multiple contributors and viewpoints are heard. Discussion topics may focus on any issue, but are commonly associated with political or current affairs. Every Monday, independent political analyst, Mr. Nathi Mazibuko, co-hosts the show and contributes to political discussion. When the show's topic focuses on a local story, individuals who are experts or representatives connected to the topic may be invited into the studio to share their story during the live broadcast. Most days, Sifiso, who is also the station's News Manager, chooses a specific topic for discussion based on regional or national news reports. In addition to the topics organized by Sifiso, at least one night a week is reserved for an "open line" show, where listeners can call in and decide the topic(s) of discussion. Four *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* broadcasts were observed and recorded for this research (See Table 3).

Table 3: Observed *Izwi loMzansi FM broadcasts*

Date	Show Topic(s)	In-studio guest(s)
Monday 30 July 2012	By elections in KwaZulu-Natal	• Mr. Nathi Mazibuko *(independent political analyst)*
Tuesday 31 July 2012	Manase report	None
Tuesday 07 Aug 2012	KFC labour laws	• Mr. Bheki Shabane *(Secretary of the Workers' Union)* • Mr. Jabulani Cele *(fired KFC employee)*
Tuesday 14 Aug 2012	Open line (Manase report, transport strike, labour laws)	None

Each show starts by Sifiso greeting his listeners and introducing the topic up for discussion for that evening. Any in-studio guests participating in the show's discussion are also introduced to the listening audience at this time. Sifiso finalizes the show's opening statement by giving the station's contact information and inviting the listeners to share their opinions and ask questions concerning the topic at hand. The rest of the show comprises of debate, between callers, Sifiso and any in-studio guests with one or two commercial breaks. Member of the show's audience contribute to discussion through calling the station's in-studio phone line and by posting comments on the show's Facebook group, *Sfiso Sibisi Talks*[45].

Sifiso admits that, although the show's format or topics do not cater to any specific listener demographic, the majority of the participating listeners are men:

> The majority of them are male, the callers, but when you take the station out to the people some females will say, no we do listen to your show, we like to. It depends on the issue. They [women] usually don't participate on shows of high-level politics. They seem not interested in that. (…) But it depends on the issue again, because one of the days last week I was talking about public transport and

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[45] The Facebook group can be accessed at: www.facebook.com/SfisoSibisiTalks

we got issues. They [women] were calling. So it's more general, so it varies (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012).

Whether the listeners are men or women, *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* is dependent on audience participation. The number of callers often depends on the topic of discussion and Sifiso acknowledges that many of his callers phone-in to the show on a regular basis.

> [Sometimes] we have few listeners, but we can still advance debate. Not to just listen to them, you also learn from them. Tonight someone was comparing us to *Ukhozi*. He was complimenting the level of debate that we always have. He said he doesn't listen to our neighbours. We know it's *Ukhozi*[46] (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012).

This open-debate tactic has helped *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* maintain a loyal audience base, many of whom are politicians themselves. When the debate topic touches on high-level politics, such as local or national elections, Sifiso admits that the on-air atmosphere can become tense and divided. He says he manages to maintain control of the debate by playing the role of mediator and relying on foundations such as the national constitution to guide the conversation.

> What is important with radio is how you say things, not what you are saying. In terms of impact there is a difference between 500,000 and half a million, but the value is the same. In that sense, you really have to be on top of your information. But again, saying that you don't know when you don't know. Because that is another strength to make you a human being. You can't know it all because the role that you play as a presenter, you are facilitating, you are chairing the debate and you need to be able to analyse your own segment (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012).

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[46] *Ukhozi FM* is an SABC owned radio station based in Durban, South Africa that also caters to the Zulu-speaking community.

Figure 4: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* on-air (credit Lauren Fox)

Senza Kwenzeke

In order to balance out the type of radio show and audience observed, *Senza Kwenzeke*, a community empowerment programme with a large female listenership, was also surveyed. *Senza Kwenzeke* is broadcast Monday through Friday from 9AM until 12PM and is hosted by Cindy "Halfpynt" Shezi. *Senza Kwenzeke* means "Make it happen" in Zulu and reflects on the show's emphasis on female empowerment programming. Cindy shapes the discussion topics around a loosely defined weekly schedule which reserves time on Mondays for cooking and nutrition, Tuesdays focus on family matters, Wednesdays look at health issues, Thursdays are dedicated to faith and prayer and finally Fridays cover topics of beauty and hygiene. While topics may vary from day to day, *Senza Kwenzeke* consistently follows a magazine format which includes elements of music, community announcements, in-studio interviews, news updates, commercial breaks and casual discussion between Cindy, in-studio guests and participating listeners.

Figure 5: Cindy in the studio (credit: Nqobile Mbonambi, *Isolezwe* 11/04/2013)

Song requests and music do form a part of *Senza Kwenzeke* and Cindy takes pride in specifically pairing musical selections with that day's discussion topics. The discussion and accompanying songs are meant to empower her female audience. She explains:

> Music can help you, but sometimes it can't make your brain think of something else, to empower you. We give them [women] a chance to talk, we share our problems (…) and you know, learning to face challenges as women (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

At the start of the show, she outlines the specific features or guests that are planned for that day, but the majority of the show is open for listener contributions. Cindy prefers a more unrestricted format and feels that it fosters more diverse interaction:

> And that is why during my programme I am not just checking and looking on the computer because everyone does that. They all talk about the same things. I am going out there to speak, to ask, to write it down, to call in, debate and discuss. Commercial radio if they open the lines it is only a few and maybe for like three minutes and that's it. But we're all the time talking, talking, talking. We are a talking radio station. That's how we communicate (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

A large portion of the dialogue that takes place on the show puts Cindy in a position acting as a counsellor for her listeners, both on-air and on her Facebook page *Halfpynt Cindy Shezi*[47]. She describes this as being the greatest challenge she faces as a radio presenter. In spite of this difficulty, she stays devoted to helping her listeners, knowing that when she needs advice she can rely on them to return the favour:

> You know sometimes I have my personal problems. Something breaks my heart but I still come to work. It is hard trying to be happy for others when I am sad. But it is like therapy. I talk to my listeners. I play music and after 12 I feel better. Yes, it is like therapy. Even if I am sick I come sometimes. When I'm sitting there I talk and I am in love with the listeners. We are like a family and it helps me a lot (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

Four *Senza Kwenzeke* broadcasts were observed and recorded for this research (see Table 4).

Table 4: Observed *Senza Kwenzeke* broadcasts

Date	Show topic(s)	In-studio guest(s)
Friday 03 Aug 2012	• Beard styles • Gospel CD promotion • Lobola traditions • 'How were you born, bred and buttered?' feature	• Ngobile *Gospel singer* • Mr. Tembe *Zulu culture expert*
Monday 06 Aug 2012	• Weekend ceremony thank you feature • 'An event that did not sit well' feature • Nutritious cooking tips	None
Wednesday 15 Aug 2012	• 'It will get better' feature • When should parents stop supporting or protecting their children? • Stroke, ulcer risks	• Fikile *Recovery Machine health representative*

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[47] The Facebook group can be accessed at: www.facebook.com/halfpyntcindy.shezi

Wednesday 22 Aug 2012	• 'It will get better' feature • Family representation at funerals • Gospel CD promotion • Traditional Medicine	• Pastor Mabaso *Hope for the Future representative* • Mpume Sikhakhane *Singer* • Mpume's manager • Mcinelelwa Shezi *Traditional Healer*

Engaged citizenry involves interaction from both the community members and their cultural intermediaries, in the case of this research, community radio presenters. This research investigates the possibilities of engaged citizenry at *Izwi loMzansi FM* via the use of mobile phones and evaluates if and how the listening community constructively interacts with one another.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following three sections deal directly with the study's three research questions outlined in Chapters One and Four. These questions are influenced by the five moments of the Circuit of Culture theory (du Gay et al. 1997) discussed in Chapter Three. These moments are: Representation, Identity, Production, Consumption and Regulation. 'Moments' of the Circuit can be defined as arbitrarily joined points where the collision and creation of media phenomena and meaning take place. As noted in Chapter Three, evaluating each moment of the Circuit in isolation is difficult, if not impossible, due to their interactive nature. Instead, a holistic and interdependent approach is encouraged when employing this framework of analysis (Champ 2008; du Gay et al. 1997; Taylor et al. 2002).

Question 1: How are the voices, concerns and ideals of the audience incorporated into *Izwi loMzansi FM's* programme content by presenters?

The first research question focuses on, but is not restricted to, the Circuit of Culture articulations of Representation and Production, by addressing how and from where *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters select and gather the community

information, discussion topics and news reports featured on their radio shows. This section also discusses similar ways in which Sifiso and Cindy cultivate interaction with their audience and similar programming themes that result from this interaction.

How and where do the presenters get their information?

For this study, a significant emphasis is placed on the close connection between interaction, language, meaning and culture in the notion of an everyday, lived experience (Thompson 1990; Williams 1965). Representation refers to the process of meaning construction through mutual experiences and common language (Hall 1997a:15-20). Cultural Studies' focus on language as a key element of meaning-making broadly defines it as "any sound, word, image or object which functions as a sign, and is organized with other signs into a system which is capable of carrying and expressing meaning" (Hall 1997a:19). The formation and maintenance of a community is similarly dependent on its members' exchange of shared knowledge and shared ideals through daily communicative interaction (Hall 1997a). Language and meaning production are explored here by analysing if and how *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters incorporate their listener community's ideals and everyday experiences into programming.

Cindy's and Sifiso's processes of selecting discussion topics, featured news stories and in-studio guests for both programmes are relatively transparent. Newspapers, local and national, in English and in Zulu, independent and government-owned, are noticeably present and read by staff in the station reception area, offices and in the studio. The studio is small, but contains a desktop computer and a television, which is muted but always on and set to a South African news or sports channel. During commercial or music breaks, Sifiso and Cindy often scan the newspapers and glance at the television for stories that may directly affect or interest their target community of listeners. These stories may be mentioned that day on-air, or set aside for another day's discussion.

In addition to keeping informed on current events through television and newspaper reports, Cindy surveys her environment outside of the studio as well by listening to people:

> (…) in the community, in the taxi, in the streets, [in] different working places, whatever people are talking about. I see that this is a problem and we have to discuss about this, you know? My researching is in the community. I do use Internet just to get some more information, but most places [are] in the community (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

On top of tuning into conversation taking place in the community, Station Manager Vela Xulu encourages the presenters to take a pro-active approach to finding out what issues are circulating the streets by directly asking the radio listeners for information:

> We open the lines. We want [the listeners] to tell us what they know about democracy or HIV/AIDS or whatever communicable disease or whatever issues are in their area; sports, church, faith issues, every issue. We invite participation on different levels; phone-in, SMS, Facebook, tweeters[48] and so forth (Vela Xulu, 15 Aug 2012).

Cindy and Sifiso both promote audience participation in live broadcasts by asking for listeners to call the studio phone number or to comment on their Facebook page. The desktop computer's Internet connection was not working during the data collection period of this study and, for this reason, presenters used their personal mobile phones to access Facebook. Yet, it is important to note that the presenters each request audience participation in different ways and for different reasons.

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[48] Mr. Xulu refers, incorrectly, to the social media site Twitter. Cindy and Sifiso, the two *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters observed for this study, did not use Twitter in their radio programmes.

Calls

Cindy utilizes phone calls to engage with listeners in casual discussion and to console them. The feature, *Nakuwe Kuyeza*, invites listeners to call-in to offer messages of encouragement to family members, neighbours or friends who are facing difficulties:

> Cindy Shezi (22 Aug 2012): You can speak to me at this minute if there is someone who you would like to comfort, telling them that better times are still coming. We listen to radio and we have the words to heal you. To listeners at home facing bad situations, better times are coming. They will come to you. The number that you can get a hold of me at is 031 3057 306 on *Izwi loMzansi FM,* so that we can get a hold of each other.

Several of the in-studio guests on *Senza Kwenzeke* are regulars and participate in the on-air broadcast several times a month, depending on their availability and the show's programming. Below, Cindy introduces Cultural Expert, Mr. Tembe, to her listeners and reminds them of his previous visit to the studio, giving a brief summary of the conversation:

> Cindy Shezi (03 Aug 2012): Alright we are still continuing on your show on 98.0 FM today, yeah! We're saying *Zizwele umehluko*, Feel the Difference! Mr. Tembe is here. The last time he showed up he created some commotion around the topic of lobola. While many people participate in lobola, some groups now are saying it is a big disgrace, that there is a shame on this process when someone has paid lobola and then leaves the marriage. Well I don't know if you have done that Mr. Tembe, but is there shame in that? Let us greet and welcome Mr. Tembe on the show today on *Izwi loMzansi*. We'll be taking your calls soon my sweethearts! Get ready!

This example shows the mixture of shared experience between Cindy, Mr. Tembe and the *Senza Kwenzeke* audience: the previous shared time and space

where they were all together, the discussion that took place on a traditional aspect of their shared culture and the current shared time and space that they are occupying by welcoming Mr. Tembe back to the show. Although in this example Cindy solicits audience participation, in many other cases her listeners phone-in to ask questions, request music or to just greet Cindy and say they are listening without Cindy giving out the studio number or asking for callers. This observation supports the notion that for many, listening to *Senza Kwenzeke* is a part of their everyday routine.

Sifiso Sibisi Talks' structured debate format relies largely on listener calls. Sifiso gives out the studio phone number between five to twelve times over the course of the hour requesting the listeners to share their opinions concerning the topic at hand:

> Sifiso Sibisi (07 Aug 2012): We are talking about Jabulani Cele's matter. He is a victim at the Empangeni Village KFC. We are talking about his matter as he was dismissed after he refused to sign a written warning concerning the beans and pap lunch he ate on the restaurant premises. I will go to the commercials shortly and when we come back we would like to hear your views on 031 3057 306.

On nights when the show has no predetermined topic and is open-line, Sifiso gives a brief rundown of news stories collected from local newspaper and television reports. He prioritizes civic and current affairs stories taking place in KwaZulu-Natal. He does this in order to "get people motivated, thinking" and also invites them to share stories that are being circulated in their neighbourhoods[49]. The open-line show observed on August 14th, 2012 focused on more on following up on old debate topics instead of presenting new ones. Listeners called in to continue conversation on matters relating to The Manase Report, local transportation strikes and restaurant labour laws. These were topics were featured on *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* in previous shows during that week. Sifiso expressed that

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[49] Sifiso Sibisi Interview, 31 July 2012

one hour is sometimes not enough and that certain discussions need extra time and more voices to cover all of the sides of the debate.

Sifiso admits that facilitating open-line shows is one of the biggest challenges of his job. For other shows he is able to research and prepare notes on the topic in advance, but an open-line makes him more vulnerable:

> I don't fear a guest. I don't fear anyone. I don't mind talking to my listeners about any topic, but the hardest part is an open-line. The participation varies. Some issues are new to you [but] some of the issues are old and you need to pick it up and move to the next level. (…) You have to be on top of your information. If you need to defend [what you said during] a previous show, you defend. If you make a mistake, you make a mistake (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012).

Facebook

The use of the social media platform Facebook is also incorporated into both *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke.* Sifiso utilizes the programme's Facebook page to announce the debate topic for that evening in advance, in hopes of attracting more listeners and also so that listeners can prepare on-air contributions. In the cases below he promotes the in-studio appearance of the fired Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) employee and on another day announces an open-line debate:

Sfiso Sibisi Talks
August 7, 2012 via mobile

Talking to Mpangeni KFC victim tonight.

Like · Comment · Share   1   8

Figure 6: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook post (07 Aug 2013)
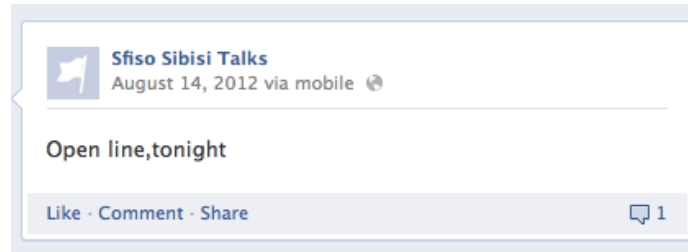
Figure 7: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook post (14 Aug 2012)

During this study's observation period, Sifiso followed up on a show's debate topic on Facebook after his show only once. This single post was made in order to update his listeners on the case result concerning the fired KFC worker's petition against his employer for wrongful dismissal:

Figure 8: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook post (13 Aug 2012)

English translation: Let us be proud of Jabulani Cele for winning the case against KFC at CCMA[50] in Empangeni. Let us continue giving support and fighting against unfair treatment and racism in our country. We should stand together and use our buying power especially now that the economy is not in a good state. Thank you for the support.

In contrast, Cindy often invited her listeners to comment on her Facebook page during her show. Here she uses Facebook as polling tool for her listeners to share what they think of men who do not clean their beards:

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[50] South African Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration

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Cindy Shezi (03 Aug 2012): Alright it's 11:24AM. When you open Facebook you will see my beard update and you can comment specifically for us to hear if you like beards. How do you like it? More especially, do you enjoy when a man has a beard or don't you like it? What is it that makes you dislike it? Tell us about your husband at home. Maybe he has a beard and you are not into it and it hurts your face? Tell us what it is that you don't like about the beard or if you like it you can share that too. You are free to comment on the topic on my Facebook page.

Cindy shared some of the Facebook comments for this topic on-air at the end of her show:

Cindy Shezi (03 Aug 2012): Let's go to Philile2 on Facebook. She says 'a beard looks good if the owner takes care of it'. And then Nothi Malunga Ngcobo says 'maybe the bread crumbs are better than ice cream'. [laughing] This one seems to be more funny than serious. She says 'it seems like men with beards need to carry mirrors so that they can take a look to see if something is wrong. Because things become more noticeable if there is a beard.'(…) Zinhle Tukulu says 'this can reveal secrets because you can visit someone and claim to be hungry but the beard will show the evidence that you were just eating.' (…) Nombuso Ndulini writes 'I don't like a beard on a man. It makes him look older. Secondly, whatever he drinks will stay on the beard. Let them "make it happen" and cut it!'

Similarly, Cindy posts messages and questions for her listeners on her Facebook page to read and discuss even when her show is off-air:

Halfpynt Cindy Shezi
August 6, 2012 via mobile

ukhule kanzima umama wakhe wadlula emhlaben eno14yrs.ubehlala emzin yabant encenge iplate egada izingane angalal ebsuku ethulisa izingane.abuye ashawe kthiwe uqeda ukudla kwezingane zalaykhaya.esekhulile ubesothandwen nomunt wamthembisa ukumenza umkakhe.uthe esemtholise izingane ezimbili wamxosha wath akaye kubo ebe az ukuth ikubo akanalo.ungathin kulo wesfazane impilo yakhe aybona ingayindawo?

Like · Comment · Share   👍 1 💬 38

Figure 9: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook post (06 Aug 2012)

English Translation (posted at 8:20PM): she had a difficult childhood because her mother passed away when she was just 14 years old. She spent her days taking care of children in order to get something to eat and sometimes found herself beaten up for being accused of finishing the children's food. As she grew up she met a guy who promised to marry her. After having two kids with this man, he threw her out and said she must go back home, knowing very well that she had no home to go back to. How would you advise this woman about where her life is and where it is going?

Halfpynt Cindy Shezi
August 14, 2012 via mobile

ma umgaqagela ngisaphotha yiph iteam? hala 4rend lunjan usuku lwakho?

Like · Comment   1   44

Figure 10: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook post (14 August 2012)

English Translation (posted at 3:44PM): Take a guess about which soccer team I support? Hello friends, how's your day been?

<u>Familiarity</u>

In addition to encouraging participation in various ways, Cindy and Sifiso take advantage their roles as "cultural intermediaries" by addressing their audience members with a noteworthy degree of familiarity and respect (du Gay et al. 1997:62). The moment of Production in the Circuit of Culture for this study relates to how the radio producers create and encode messages to the audience (du Gay et al. 1997; Hall 1980a). Cindy always opens her show by warmly greeting her audience and thanking them for tuning-in:

Cindy Shezi (15 Aug 2012): Hello my sweethearts, hello my loves, hello my loveys! I wonder how you are doing my spice. Wherever you are where our radio *Izwi loMzansi FM* reaches you, I am saying to you hello. My name is Cindy "Halfpynt". My surname is Shezi. At this time I thank you for listening and I promise I will be with you until 12 o'clock, midday.

She uses similar names of affection with her callers, who reciprocate the amiability:

> Cindy Shezi (03 Aug 2012): You are on *Izwi*!
> Caller: Yes ma'Cindy[51]!
> Cindy: How are you doing my baby?
> Caller: I am fine. How are you today my sis?
> Cindy: We are very well love.

Sifiso uses traditional clan names, instead of names of affection, to show respect to his callers and in-studio guests. He repeatedly referred to dismissed KFC employee, Jabulani Cele, as "Ndosi". "Ndosi" is the clan name that corresponds to Jabulani's surname, Cele. Sifiso would also refer to participating listeners by using their clan name instead of the name they used to identify themselves. Callers would also address Sifiso using his clan name, "Mahlase":

> Sifiso Sibisi (31 July 2012): Hello caller!
> Caller: Hello Mahlase. This is Musa Zulu.
> Sifiso: Yes, Mageba. What is your view?

Callers also often introduced themselves using their full names. There were few cases of callers requesting anonymity. "Sometimes they like to remain anonymous and we allow that," says Sifiso. "Their ideas are more important than their names."[52]

Yet, even with clearly observed requests for audience contribution and exhibitions of camaraderie, there is no guarantee that progressive audience interaction will be achieved. The next question relates directly to the moment of Regulation and its effects on *Izwi loMzansi FM* audience participation.

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[51] 'Ma' is an abbreviation for mom or mother and is used in Zulu culture when speaking to a female elder or a respected female figure.
[52] Sifiso Sibisi Interview, 31 July 2012

Question 2: What mechanisms of gatekeeping and framing are employed in regards to audience participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming?

Question two presents and analyses methods of Regulation in *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke.* The moment of Regulation from the Circuit of Culture builds on notions of Representation, specifically on how culture impacts on meaning construction and interaction. Cultural Studies regards meaning as being in a constant state of fluctuation and socially constructed through cultural practice and social discourse (Curtin & Gaither 2005; du Gay et al. 1997; Hall 1997a). Discourse, as theorized by Foucault (1980), is not limited to language alone, but also concerns the relationship between knowledge production and power. The media is often regarded as occupying a central role in the selection, generation, encoding and distribution of meaning and discourse in society and thus, can potentially act as a powerful regulatory institution, capable of prioritizing information, solutions or people in ways in which favourably align with the dominant discursive regime (du Gay et al. 1997; Foucault 1980; McQuail 1979, 2010; Tomaselli 1987).

At the same time, Cultural Studies theorists do not discount agency from existing amongst media audiences (Hall 1980; Gramsci 1971; McQuail 1979, 2010; Muller et al. 1989). The presence of contesting discourses calls attention to ways in which power embodies forces of both oppression and resistance and thus is also productive (Hall 1997a; Mills 2010). Additionally, Foucault argues that discourse produces not only knowledge, but the subject of discourse as well (Hall 1997a) [53] . Recent research submits that the nature of converging media technologies and consumer participation allows for the empowerment, development and liberation of an activist public from strict media gatekeepers (see Alexander n.d.; Bowman 2008; Enli 2007). This section is broken down into two categories of regulation: organizational and social.

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[53] See Chapter Two for further discussion on Cultural Studies and the Circuit of Culture.

<u>Organizational regulation</u>

A media outlet's organizational culture significantly impacts on the moments of Representation and Production, as it is generally dictated by corporate imperatives and constraints (du Gay et al. 1997). During individual interviews with Cindy and Sifiso, both presenters repeatedly describe the station's organizational culture as devoted to serving their listener community. Yet, a media producer's individual routine of decision-making, also referred to in this study as gatekeeping, may be influenced by organizational culture in ways not immediately recognizable, making regulation seem mundane and part of the everyday (Green & Haddon 2009). Gatekeeping techniques observed in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programmes are discussed below and focus on the three principal methods of audience participation: call-in, SMS and Facebook.

Calls

The *Izwi loMzansi FM* studio has one landline phone connection. This phone line can only receive one call at a time and there is no system set up for call waiting. This makes it impossible for radio hosts to screen callers before putting them through to speak on-air. Moreover, the studio does not utilize any caller identification device. This device could potentially allow presenters to recognize a number from a frequent caller and purposively decide whether or not to answer. Sifiso believes this notable absence of regulation distinguishes *Izwi loMzansi FM*'s production processes from other radio stations':

> In other commercial stations they control the views. They scan calls. You call while the show is running and then the producer will ask you what do you want to talk about. You tell him or her and then he or she puts you through. If you're going to say something that they don't want you to say, they will drop your call or do whatever, but you won't get through (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012).

By not scanning callers before they are put on-air, *Izwi loMzansi FM* allows for anyone to contribute to dialogue. However, this unrestricted format of participation also opens the door for abuse. Sifiso confirms that he recognizes the voices of his regular callers and that "they call two times a day. They call from 12 to 3 and they call me from 6 to 7. Tomorrow it will probably be the same people."[54] There were three noted "serial callers" (Tettey 2011:25) who called-in during each of the *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* programmes observed for this study. Unlike in related research on power relations in community radio, the repeat callers did not appear to radically support a specific political agenda. Their participation varied depending on the discussion topic, but over they spoke clearly, poised and their input contributed to the conversation. Therefore, it is hard to evaluate if these repeat callers were political representatives monitoring the show's discussion or if they were simply citizens with a passion for debating. There were, however, a couple of callers who did not call-in on a regular basis whom offered only speculative commentary on political affairs.

For Cindy, the absence of equipment to scan callers is necessary in order to allow everyone to have their chance to participate, but it also presents some challenges when she is trying to advance conversation on a specific issue:

> Sometimes you want the listeners to debate on something and you ask them to call in. Some of them are calling in to say, 'Hello how are you? Okay thanks' and then dropping the phone down. So it's bad if you have a guest and you are trying to discover things to help others. The programme sticks. It doesn't move because [the callers] are just using the line for nothing (Cindy Shezi, 22 Aug 2012).

Cindy and Sifiso both employ methods of redirection in order to keep the discussion on track, further supporting the Station Manager's claim that the station's presenters facilitate conversation instead of obstructing it:

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[54] Sifiso Sibisi Interview, 31 July 2012

Cindy Shezi (15 Aug 2012): Let's hear another caller and what he or she has to say about the issue of protecting our children as parents. You are on-air, hello!

Caller: Yes, I'm not sure if I can get help, because I'm going to talk about an unrelated issue.

Cindy: Ok my love. You have to dial this number again and press 4 because here we are dealing with this issue only.

Caller: Thank you maCindy.

Sifiso similarly redirects debate concerning allegations of corruption and delays in releasing the Manase Report:

Caller (31 July 2012): I say it's about time the ANC[55] move over and let the DA[56] take charge and see how they rule.

Sifiso: No, no. We are not voting. We are looking at the decision of the DA to go to court and whether this decision rests on having the residents of Durban and eThekwini at heart.

Caller: Well then yes, the DA is right.

Sifiso: Why do you say so?

Caller: Because they are fighting for our rights.

Sifiso also acknowledges that, because his show is only an hour long, he often has to facilitate the debate by making sure that the discussion is evolving:

You are on the climax now. You are concluding now. Maybe in the last ten minutes or five minutes someone will come with a view that belongs in the introduction. You need to make him come closer to home. You are not cutting him, but you are asking him a question, pushing him or giving him a direction because now we are closing. We don't want to start again. (Sifiso Sibisi 31 July 2012)

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[55] African National Congress (ANC) is the ruling political party in South Africa.
[56] Democratic Alliance is the main opposition political party in South Africa.

SMS

Since the studio phone line is a landline, it is unable to receive or send text messages. Therefore, *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters must use their own mobile phone if they want to incorporate SMSs from their listeners into their show. This requires that the presenters give their person mobile number to the listeners on-air; a practice that not all presenters are comfortable doing. Sifiso and Cindy never gave out their personal mobile phone number on-air and likewise never specifically solicited audience participation via SMS during observation. Cindy admits that she had given out her personal number on-air several times before, but recently she has stopped. She received just one text message from a listener during the period of observation, but chose not to share the message on-air because "it was saying hello, not saying anything on the topic"[57]. On other occasions not observed for this research, Cindy says she has received so many SMSs during the show "that I can't even read them all and I have to skip them"[58].

In addition to the cited difficulty of sorting through many listener text messages while hosting the radio show, SMS is also not a popular interaction technique due to the feedback an incoming message creates over the airwaves. There is even a "NO CELL PHONES" sign posted in the *Izwi loMzansi FM* studio. Cindy confesses that using a personal mobile phone in the studio is normally forbidden, but presenters were recently allowed to start using their phones in the studio because the studio computer's Internet connection was not working.

Sifiso has never incorporated SMS interaction into *Sifiso Sibisi Talks*. He confidently states that he prefers interacting with his listeners through phone calls rather than SMS or Facebook comments. This preference is not due to time constraints, frequency feedback or convenience. He insists that on-air comments need to be debated and proven to be credible. For this to be realized Sifiso says:

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[57] Cindy Shezi in-studio conversation, 06 Aug 2012
[58] Cindy Shezi interview, 22 Aug 2012

(…) the people must speak! The danger with [SMS] is that some will raise allegations and you need to challenge those allegations, you know? (…) Name-dropping is very dangerous without evidence. If it's an SMS, you just read the text and it remains an understanding that that was a fact that he sent. It was not a fact. It was just a view and again, a view that can't be tested to be true. He's expecting you to read it as it is. But if he calls, you can say 'wait chief. Can you verify this? How did this happen or why are you saying this? Do you have evidence?' (Sifiso Sibisi, 31 July 2012)

A significant number of *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners polled in the telephone and on-line questionnaire agree with Sifiso. Both parties want to understand each other and be clearly understood. When asked, "Which form of participation do you prefer to use to engage with *Izwi loMzansi FM* programmes and announcers?", several listeners selected "Call-in" as their preferred method. This question was followed-up by, "Why do you prefer this method of participation over the others?", to which these listeners answered:

Listener 1: Because if the presenter doesn't understand my point/view he may able to ask or challenge me when he needs clarity.

Listener 2: I always prefer to communicate with them telephonically to express my view clearly and be straight-forward. I don't want anyone to misquote me.

Listener 3: I prefer to use [call-in method] because if the presenter wants to engage/challenge my viewpoint on the programme he/she can do that without any problem because I would be live on-air.

Listener 4: Because it's direct and it's not open to distortion!

Listener 5: Because it is easy to communicate with radio presenter and to be able to question him or her or answer his or her questions live on-air until both announcer and listeners get your point of view.

The difference in cost between making a call and sending a text message in South Africa is substantial. Making a short phone call is significantly more expensive than sending an SMS, depending on the mobile service provider used and if the dialled number is a landline or mobile line (Calandro et al. 2012). Although similar research focusing on converged media environments has praised the SMS for its low cost and anonymity (see de Bruijin et al. 2009; Ekine 2010; Girard 2008; Moyo 2010; O'Donnell 2013), this study's findings exhibit quite the opposite. *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners acknowledge their own agency. They want to be heard and they are willing to spend extra money on airtime to make sure their voices and ideals are represented accurately.

Facebook

As presented earlier in this chapter, both hosts utilize Facebook to encourage more diverse audience participation in their broadcasts, but the ways that they use the social media site vary. Sifiso and Cindy are the owners of their Facebook accounts. This status affords them the power to permit or delete a comment posted that does not meet their approval. Neither presenter admits to ever deleting or even monitoring the activity on their Facebook pages. Mentioned before, Sifiso makes Facebook postings in order to announce a show topic in advance. Cindy uses her page as a polling platform and also to keep in touch with her audience when her show is off-air.

One point of possible regulation presents itself in the type of Facebook pages Sifiso and Cindy have. *Halfpynt Cindy Shezi* is Cindy's personal Facebook page and not a public page like *Sfiso Sibisi Talks.* Anyone can see or post on Sifiso's page, but in order to read and comment on Cindy's page she must first accept them as a Facebook friend. As personally experienced, this acceptance is not immediate. Cindy receives dozens of Facebook friend requests weekly, and sometimes it takes her several days to review all of them. My request was made simply in order to analyse the discussion taking place on her page. However,

Senza Kwenzeke listeners who want to engage in conversation with Cindy and other listeners using this platform are often waiting days or weeks for Cindy's approval, and thus are prevented from participating. Conversely, *Sfiso Sibisi Talks* is open for anyone to use with no member limit and membership does not require Sifiso's acceptance.

Facebook, as a means of participation, presents no limit on the period of time when comments can made, the number of times a person can comment or the number of people participating in discussion. This is in contrast to calls and text messages. While the callers who phone the *Izwi loMzansi FM* landline are not regulated, paradoxically, the studio's single phone line restricts the number of listeners who want to contribute to the show. *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners polled in the phone and Internet questionnaire overwhelmingly stated that the biggest criticism they had was that the studio phone line was always busy and that they could not get through to speak to the presenter. As an alternative, listeners are turning to Facebook to share their comments.

Cindy believes that her listeners are utilizing her page as discussion platform because it is convenient, personal and public all at the same time. The listeners' name and profile picture accompany their comment and "everyone sees this. There is no chance of their message being ignored"[59] she says, such as with sending an SMS. Facebook commentary is stored publically, which also allows for *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners to continue the conversation after the radio show has gone off-air. Similarly, one questionnaire respondent states that she likes using Facebook "because if I miss some on-air show topic in this method I will still get some information" after the show.

Izwi loMzansi FM presenters guarantee a variety of audience participation in their shows by offering the audience multiple methods of engaging with programme content. Call-ins, SMS, and Facebook were all used during their broadcasts, in

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[59] Cindy Shezi Interview, 22 Aug 2012

different ways, with diverse methods of regulation and with varied effects. Organizational regulation deals largely with 'who' gets on-air and 'how'. Next, I will discuss social regulation, which focuses on how participants regulate each other.

Social regulation

Organizational regulation refers to "regulation *of* culture" whereas social regulation is considered to be "regulation *by* culture" (Hall 1997b:233, emphasis added). Regulation by the social system is self-imposed by contributors to media programming and identifies who belongs and who does not based on normative behaviours of dialogue and performance (Hall 1997b; Shoemaker 1991). Similar to moments of representation and identity, these limits define sameness and difference and position media and complementary technology as being either empowering, disempowering, liberating or incarcerating, depending on the situational context and articulation (Taylor et al. 2002).

Although both *Senza Kwenzeke* and *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* programmes were analysed during this research, the most notable and consistent pattern of social regulation in programming was observed during *Sifiso Sibisi Talks*. Normative means of interaction on *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* revolves around the show's layout. As mentioned beforehand, Sifiso always starts his show by giving his listeners a summarized account of the issue at hand. Social regulation begins when Sifiso officially announces the phone line is "open" and listeners begin to call. Callers lead by Sifiso's example by contributing statements that often seem to be rehearsed or planned out in advance. Most callers are open and honest about their opinions or the political party they support. These positions are valued by Sifiso and the show's audience members, as constituting part of the debate. However, dissonance develops between listeners when a caller does not provide evidence to support their statement, gives contradicting statements or shies away from answering Sifiso's follow-up questions. Other listeners then call-in or

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post on Facebook to share their views and reprimand previous callers who, as one caller puts it, are "wasting our time"[60].

Listeners who participated in the questionnaire also noted forms of social regulation that, otherwise, could not be perceptibly observed. *Izwi loMzansi FM* broadcasts almost entirely in Zulu, with some infrequent cases when English is used as well. These exceptions are when playing music, featuring an audio clip in a news report or when there is no Zulu translation for the English word or name. This is a problem for *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners who would like to contribute to the discussion, but who do not speak Zulu, or even English, well. There was one questionnaire respondent who stated to this study's research assistant and translator (who speaks Xhosa[61]):

> The announcers and the guests give the information and the number too quickly. I don't speak Zulu well and I am afraid they will not understand me. I only speak Xhosa. (Female, telephone questionnaire)

Another respondent says that *Izwi loMzansi FM* "caters for African blacks only"[62], suggesting that participation by South Africans from other races is not permissible according to the station's social system. There was also a noticeable absence of on-air female participation during *Sifiso Sibisi Talks*. Even though Sifiso asserts that women do listen and participate in his show and that their involvement depends on the topic of debate[63], it is possible that some women may feel intimidated by the male-dominated conversation. There were no reported signs of female inferiority in oral transcripts of radio broadcasts, on Facebook or from the female questionnaire respondents. A breakdown of male and female participants is portrayed in the next section, which aims to evaluate the moments of Identity and Consumption in audience participation on-air and

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[60] Sifiso Sibisi Talks, 31 July 2012
[61] Xhosa is a Bantu language widely spoken in the Eastern Cape, South Africa
[62] Female, telephone questionnaire
[63] Sifiso Sibisi Interview, 31 July 2012

online.

Question 3: How are mobile phones used by *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners to participate in programming and what opportunities do these methods present for widespread participation and citizen engagement?

This section discusses the moments of Identity and Consumption in the Circuit of Culture (de Gay et al. 1997) by analysing means of audience participation in *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke* programmes. The moment of Production involves the 'encoding' of messages in discourse by cultural intermediaries, in the case of this study, radio presenters. For discourse to be effective encoded messages must be received by consumers or listeners. While meaning is encoded during production, the process is only fully realized at the point of consumption, where the message is 'decoded' by receivers (Curtin & Gaither 2005). The relationship between production and consumption is not linear or absolute. The creation and negotiation of meaning is better viewed as a circular process of message encoding and decoding, and where consumption itself becomes a form of production (Mackay 1997).

Identity is also closely linked to this process of creation and negotiation of meaning. The conceptualization of identity draws attention to how people negotiate and adopt meanings and how meanings are utilized in the formation of relationships with others (du Gay et al. 1997; Hall 1996). Relationships are formed between individuals and groups either through perceived similarities or a lack of awareness of differences (du Gay et al. 1997). Through the recognition of likeness, individuals and groups also reflexively differentiate themselves from others who do not share the same likeness. Identity, therefore, can be defined partly in relation by what is left out, "that is by what it is not" (Woodward 1997:2) and it is dependent on the notion of difference for its construction (Hall 1996). Elements from Gitlin's (1998) 'public sphericule' interpretation of the Public Sphere (Habermas 1989), outlined in Chapter Two, are also employed in order to

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evaluate the degrees of citizenship enacted by participating *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners on-air and online.

In order to comprehend these concepts as interconnected to one another, this section divides itself into four main questions: How do listeners participate? By what means do listeners participate? Who participates? When do listeners participate? What prevents listeners from participating?

<u>How do people participate?</u>

Izwi loMzansi FM listeners contributed to programming in several different ways, which are discussed below (See Figure 11). These themes were generated via codes produced from staff interviews, listener questionnaires, show transcripts, researcher oberservation and Facebook dialogue.
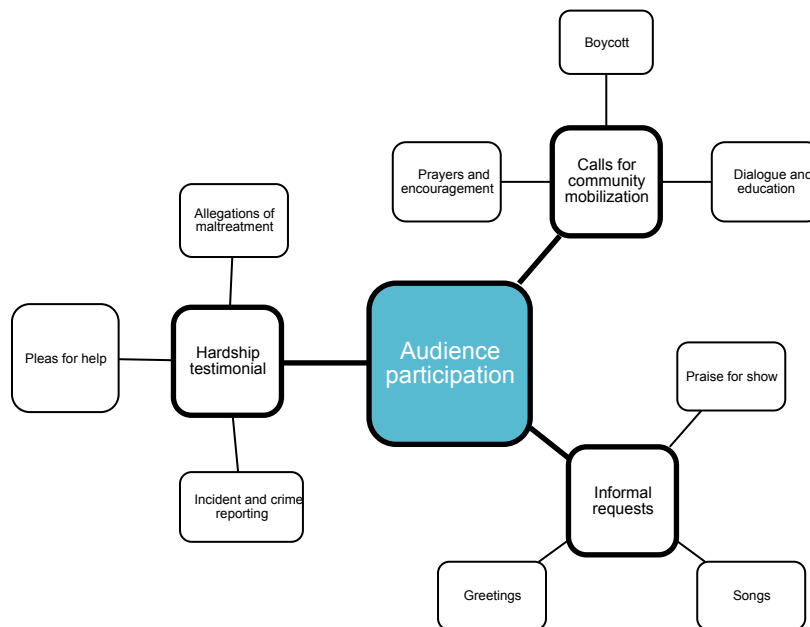

Figure 11: Themes of Audience Participation over entire data collection period

Hardship testimonial

The interactive nature of new media technologies, like the mobile phone and the Internet, has created a new degree of participation and content creation between the media and their audiences. Listeners used *Izwi loMzansi FM*'s airwaves and online network to report violent or illegal incidents that they had witnessed or suffered themselves. During a *Senza Kwenzeke* broadcast, a listener called in to share a case that had happened to her:

> Caller (6 Aug 2012): On Saturday a guy just came speeding towards me and forcefully pulled out my earrings from my ears. It really hurt a lot. Should I tell the police?
>
> Cindy: It's really unsafe out there. I mean I know we like to wear shiny things, but some people can just rip them off your ears and even an ear can come off because the thief won't stop until he has what he wants.

Here, the caller seeks out sympathy and advice from Cindy. Similarly, Cindy's audience frequently call-in and use Facebook to ask for help finding employment or housing. Listeners often act as "produsers" (Bruns 2007:1) by reporting information but also responding to the calls for assistance. After hearing one listener's pleas for help, a fellow *Senza Kwenzeke* listener posted on Facebook:

> **Phumla Promise Khowa** Singamsiza kodwa konke kulele kuye aguqule impilo yakhe nd if it serious kunomama engingamxhumanisa naye odinga umuntu ozimisele unebhiziniss so udinga ozomsiza kulona ikhona ndawo yokuhlala food provided no rent nd she wl earn1000 a month
> August 7, 2012 at 5:16am via mobile · Like

Figure 12: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook comment (07 Aug 2012)

English translation: We can help her but it is all in her hands if she wants to turn her life around. If she is serious, I can connect her to this other lady who is looking for someone who is willing to help her out. She has a business and she needs someone to help her run it. There is a place to stay, food is provided, you will not pay rent and you can earn R1000 a month.

Other *Izwi loMzansi FM* participants also report incidents in hopes of creating debate and community response. This type of reporting can be seen in comment posted to Sifiso's Facebook page where one listener reports an incident as suggested topic for discussion on *Sifiso Sibisi Talks'* open-line:

Figure 13: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook comment (09 Aug 2012)

English translation: Mahlase I would like to comment about an incident that occurred in my hometown, Umlazi. A 19-year-old student from Gagasini Secondary School passed away after being mugged and stabbed by an ex-pupil inside the schoolyard. How safe are schools? If pupils are being killed inside schoolyards, what are security guards hired for? Are they not appointed to ensure that students are safe? The government should really make an effort to ensure safety and security in our schools or increase the number of security guards appointed in schools as incidents like this are occurring quite often. Thank you!

The reports of community adversity often underscore situations of discrimination or allegations of oppression suffered by the *Izwi loMzansi FM* audience. The *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* debate on KFC labour laws[63a] drew a wide variety of participation. While most phoned-in to voice their support for the KFC employee who was fired for eating non-Halaal food on his break, other listeners called-in and went to Facebook to voice similar maltreatments at their work establishments:

63a For more information regarding the KFC Labour Laws story see: http://creepingsharia.wordpress.com/2012/11/19/south-africa-kfc-forced-to-rehire-man-fired-for-bringing-non-halal-lunch/
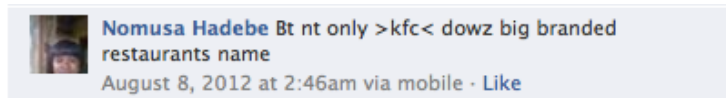
Figure 14: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook commentary (08 Aug 2012)

English translation: But not only KFC, this happens in big name restaurants as well.

Caller (07 Aug 2012): Brother, I hear the issue that you are dealing with here on the radio. We have a problem also but I would like to remain anonymous. I work at one of the Debonairs restaurants. At Debonairs we start working at eight in the morning until eight at night. How do you think it feels for a person to be questioned about what type of food they are eating after working for so long?

Many contributing audience members from this specific broadcast of *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* did not only voice their dissatisfaction with the restaurant's managers for the firing, but also encouraged others in their community to mobilize in support for the dismissed employee. This leads us to the next audience participation theme focusing on community mobilization.

Calls for Community Mobilization

As noted above, the *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* KFC Labour Laws programme received a large and varied amount of audience participation. Contributing listeners alleged the firing of KFC employee Jabulani Cele, for eating non-Halaal food during his break, was an act of discrimination. One listener calls for the Empangeni Zulu community to join together and boycott buying food from any KFC establishment, intensifying the discussion by adding an 'us versus them' approach:

Caller (07 Aug 2012): These companies are all doing the same thing to us in different ways and at different times. It's not only KFC we see other companies oppressing black people. So fellow Zulu people, we have a lot of options where to spend our money. My opinion is to boycott KFC from today until they rectify the mess they have created.

The *Izwi loMzansi FM* audience, in general, largely identified themselves as the 'other', deriving from inherited ethnic and racial qualities over-determined by the systems of colonialism and apartheid (Distiller 2011:102). Similar comments relating to community mobilization through boycott are posted to *Sfiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook page:
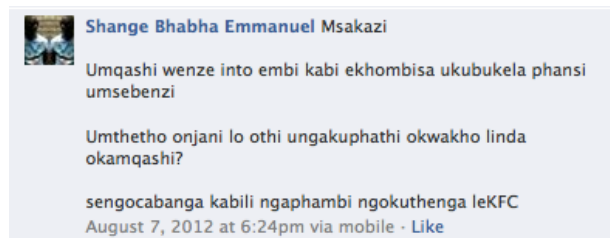

Figure 15: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook comment (07 Aug 2012a)

English translation: The employer acted in an unethical manner. What type of rule restricts employees from carrying their own food to work and making them wait to be given food by KFC? From now on I will have to think twice before buying from KFC.
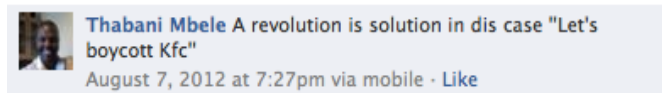

Figure 16: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook comment (07 Aug 2012b)

Figure 17: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook comment (07 Aug 2012c)

English translation: I will never buy from KFC again. This incident is a sign that the abuse of people and unethical behaviour at the workplace will never come to an end.

However, one caller suggests a different approach to mobilizing community support by encouraging dialogue between both parties instead of shutting each other out:

Caller (07 Aug 2012): What I am trying to say is that we must try and apply our mind to this issue. I'm asking this because we cannot take this matter on with our emotions only. We need to work together and to apply our brain when analysing the situation because we lose respect and cases due to the fact that we use our emotions. I am very worried about these things.

Cindy's audience members also encourage each other to unite towards a common cause, but in ways different from the boycott example used above. They use prayer and messages of encouragement to support one another. Many offered their support, in different ways, in response to a post Cindy published on her page concerning an anonymous friend who was suffering from spousal abuse:
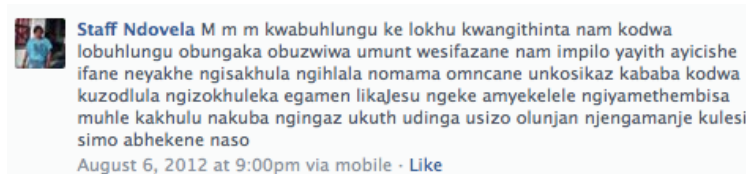

> **Staff Ndovela** M m m kwabuhlungu ke lokhu kwangithinta nam kodwa lobuhlungu obungaka obuzwiwa umunt wesifazane nam impilo yayith ayicishe ifane neyakhe ngisakhula ngihlala nomama omncane unkosikaz kababa kodwa kuzodlula ngizokhuleka egamen likaJesu ngeke amyekelele ngiyamethembisa muhle kakhulu nakuba ngingaz ukuth udinga usizo olunjan njengamanje kulesi simo abhekene naso
> August 6, 2012 at 9:00pm via mobile · Like

Figure 18: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook comment (06 Aug 2012s)

English translation: Mmm, this is so painful. No woman deserves so much pain in her life. I was once in a similar situation as I grew up with my father's second wife. But it will all pass and I will pray in the name of Jesus and I know He won't forsake her because the Lord knows exactly what she needs in the situation she is faced with.

> **Mhlengi Shuku Shangase** isifundo lesi mashezi akumele unkulunkulu simsebenzise njenge sparewheel ,abantu bamcabanga ngoba sebesenkingeni kanti kumele bamsebenzise njenge steeringwheel ukuzi abanike a good direction ongakakholwa manje angabe saphenduka ,
> August 6, 2012 at 9:34pm via mobile · Like

Figure 19: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook comment (06 Aug 2012b)

English translation: This is a lesson Mrs. Shezi. We should not use God as a spare wheel. We tend to think of Him when we are loaded with problems but rather we should use Him as a steering wheel so that He can give us direction to the right path.

Figure 20: *Senza Kwenzeke* Facebook comment (06 Aug 2012c)

English translation: Cindy, the only way the lady will be able to solve this problem is by going back to school so she can be able to be independent of men, because we men are not all the same.

The varied interaction between the radio presenters, callers and Facebook users support Gitlin's (1998) re-theorization of the public sphere. This theory puts forth the notion of a divided public sphere, instead of a singular, holistic one as presented by Habermas (1989). Public sphericules are defined as segmented spheres of assimilation that have their own dynamics and forms of composition, but remain intangibly linked in competing discourse with one another (Gitlin 1998). By allowing and incorporating multiple methods of participation into programming, the *Izwi loMzansi FM* community members are able to have more diverse and continual public interaction. Furthermore, this continual interaction presents citizenship as an active process involving people's everyday interactions and their use of both new and old media technologies (Dolby 2006).

Informal requests

Song requests, shout-outs[64] and praise for the show's announcers or radio station in general make up a significant part of *Izwi loMzansi FM's* audience participation, both by calling in and on Facebook. However, this type of participation is not viewed by this study as contributing to debate or adding to the potential of an engaged citizenry and is therefore not included in analysis.

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[64] A shout-out is when a listener says hello to another listener, possibly a friend, on-air.

<u>By what means do people participate?</u>

Calling-in to the studio landline is the most prevalent method of audience participation in *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke* programmes (see Figure 21) 126 calls were received on-air between both Cindy and Sifiso during the shows observed for this study. Facebook is the second most popular form of audience participation, as 114 messages were posted on *Halfpynt Cindy Shezi* and *Sfiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook pages. These 114 posts include all posts and comments made by the two presenters and their listeners on a day when a radio show was observed. Comments made on a date when a show was not observed, but that refer to a topic discussed during an observed show are also included in this number. Only one SMS was registered during observation.

Figure 21
Forms of Audience Participation
Sifiso Sibisi Talks and
Senza Kwenzeke
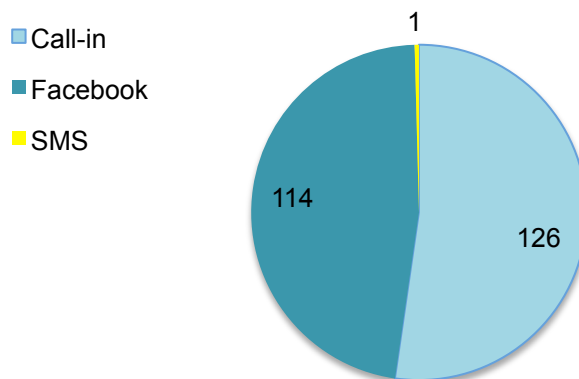
Figures 22 and 23 break down the forms of audience participation further by analysing both *Izwi loMzansi FM* programme separately. It should be noted that *Sifiso Sibisi* Talks and *Senza Kwenzeke* programmes do not share the same amount of time on-air and therefore the participation numbers from each show should not be directly compared to one another. *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* is a one-hour show, while *Senza Kwenzeke* is three-hours, and will therefore, always have a higher amount of on-air participation. However, it is still necessary to evaluate which methods the listeners from each programme are choosing to engage with

each other. *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* audience relies heavily on calling-in to the studio landline to participate and rarely post messages on Facebook. In contrast, Cindy's listeners dominantly use her Facebook page as a platform of participation.

Figure 22
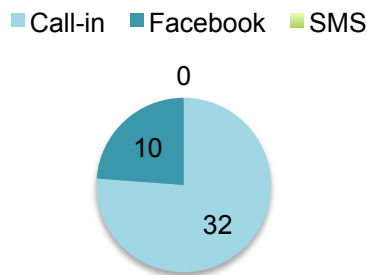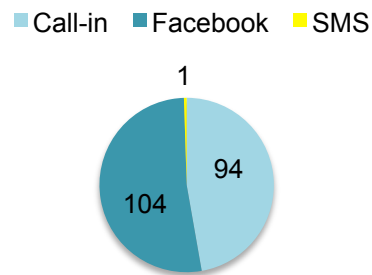**Forms of Audience**
Participation
Sifiso Sibisi Talks

■ Call-in ■ Facebook ■ SMS

0

10

32

Figure 23
Forms of Audience
Participation
Senza Kwenzeke

■ Call-in ■ Facebook ■ SMS

1

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When do people participate?

Since call-ins can only be taken while the programme is on-air, Facebook presents a unique opportunity for *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners to engage with radio programming and the community before, during and after the show has ended its live broadcast. In some cases, listeners continued discussing a topic on Facebook hours or even days after the conversation started during one of the shows. The elements of time and space also come in useful in the utilization of Facebook for *Izwi loMzansi FM* community dialogue taking into account that the single studio phone line does not adequately accommodate the number of callers who want to participate. With Facebook, the listener has the option of voicing their contribution even when the phone line is busy.

As visualized below (see Figure 24), most posts were made to Facebook while both shows were on-air. This signifies that listeners were likely both listening to the radio and on Facebook simultaneously. Similarly, this implies that the listeners were also engaging with the information they consumed audibly via the radio and then producing information visually on Facebook. This supports the

notion suggesting that the convergence of new and old media technologies has created a new degree of participation and content creation between the media and their audiences (McQuail 2010; Spurgeon & Goggin 2007).
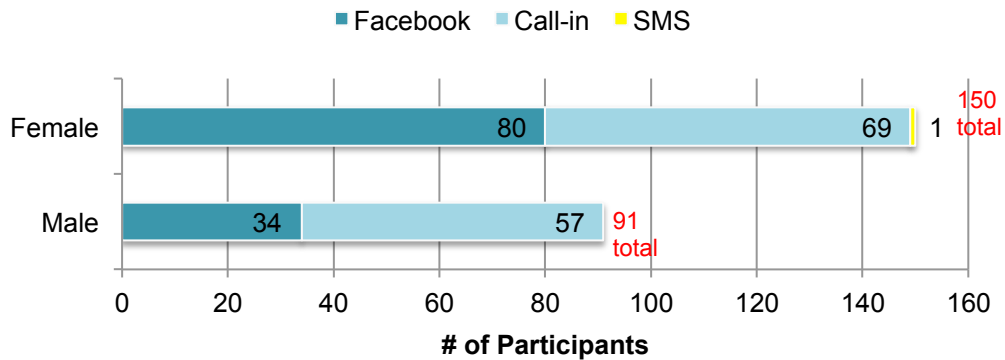
Figure 24
Facebook participation by time period
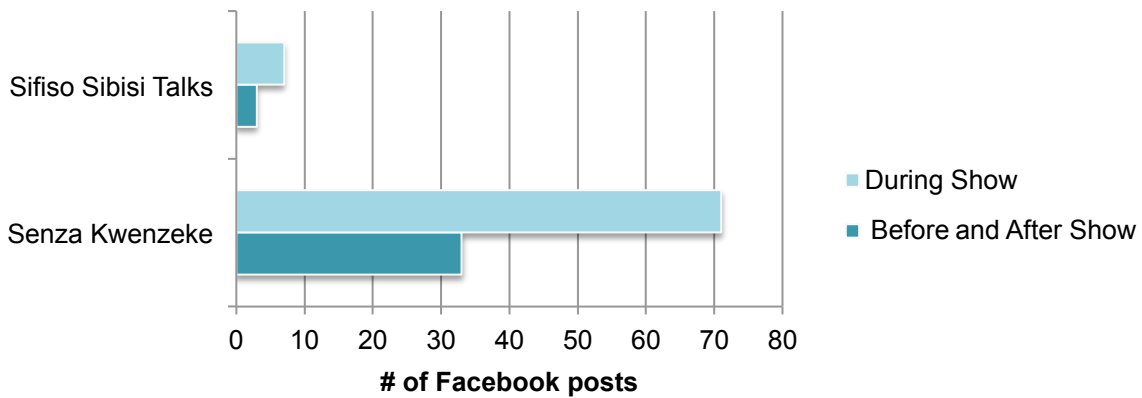
Who participates?

Cindy and Sifiso identified the majority of their participating listeners by gender correctly; *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* participation is dominated by men, while participation in *Senza Kwenzeke* comes largely from women (see Figure 25). Of course, the longer broadcast length of *Senza Kwenzeke* also affects these results.

Figure 25
Participation by gender
Sifiso Sibisi Talks and
Senza Kwenzeke

An interesting point of analysis comes when looking at the breakdown of male and female Facebook or call-in participants (see Figures 26 and 27). 57, or 62%, of the 91 male *Izwi loMzansi FM* participants utilized the studio landline to contribute to programming, compared to 46% of females. Female participants used Facebook as their main method of participation in both shows. Over half of all participating female listeners played a part in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming via Facebook.
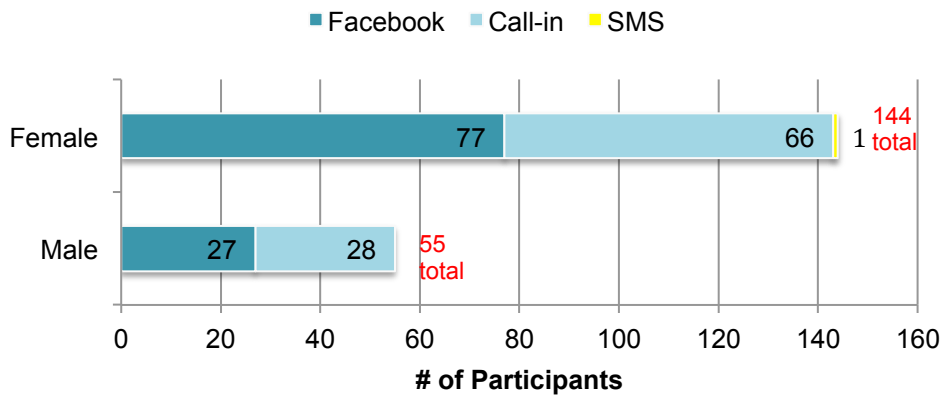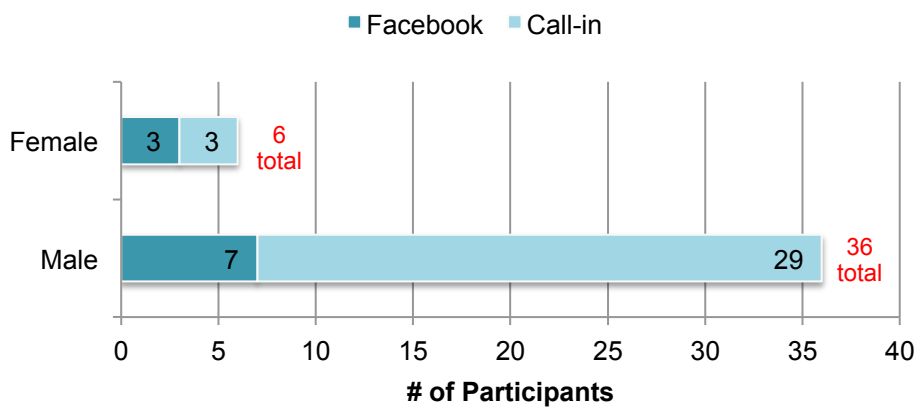
Figure 26
Participation by gender
Senza Kwenzeke

■ Facebook ■ Call-in ■ SMS

Figure 27
Participation by gender
Sifiso Sibisi Talks

■ Facebook ■ Call-in

Sifiso reasons in an interview that women to do participate often in *Sifiso Sibisi* Talks because they are "not interested" or "lack confidence" in debating[65]. Sifiso's theory as to why female listeners do not call in to the show as much as males can be used as a point of analysis when comparing the number of female callers and female Facebook commenters (See Figures 27 and 28). Although there were just six female participants during the four shows observed, three, or 50%, of the females used Facebook as their mode of participation. This is in contrast to seven, or 19.4%, of male Facebook contributors.

This could indicate that female listeners are, indeed, not as confident in their verbal debating skills and prefer to engage in written discussion online where they feel less vulnerable. In fact, the large majority of repeat Facebook posters were women. Of the 114 Facebook comments posted on days of programme observation, 43 were made by one of 15 'serial Facebookers', meaning that they posted on the page multiple times throughout the day. 13 of the 15 serial Facebookers were women. Additionally, in the listener survey administered over the phone and online, some females noted that their preferred method of participating in radio programming is through Facebook because it is familiar and convenient:

> Female 1: Most of da times I'm on facebook. I'm always online
> Female 2: I'm always online. I like facebook.

Others, including male listeners, agreed that using Facebook to engage with *Izwi loMzansi FM* is useful, especially when they are listening to the radio while occupied with another activity:

> Male 1: Because even if m busy I can be able to check and it does take long to b received on the phone
> Male 2: sometimes i am unable to call or send sms, facebook is easily accessible

---

[65] Sifiso Sibisi Interview, 31 July 2012

Female 3: it is because if i miss some show topic in this method i will get some information

Although some radio listeners are able to participate in programming while simultaneously occupied with another activity, in this case via Facebook, others remained sidelined. This reason and others are discussed in the following section, which focuses on why audience members do not participate.

Why do people not participate?

Senza Kwenzeke and *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* both incorporate and receive significant amounts of audience participation in different ways and multiple media. The SAARF listenership survey conducted during the period of this research documents *Izwi loMzansi FM*'s audience figures at 178,000 listeners daily (SAARF 2012b). Yet, not all 178,000 listeners participate in programming. A question in the listener questionnaire administered telephonically and online specifically asked listeners why they do not participate. The most common responses are presented in Figure 28.

Figure 28
Reasons why listeners do not participate
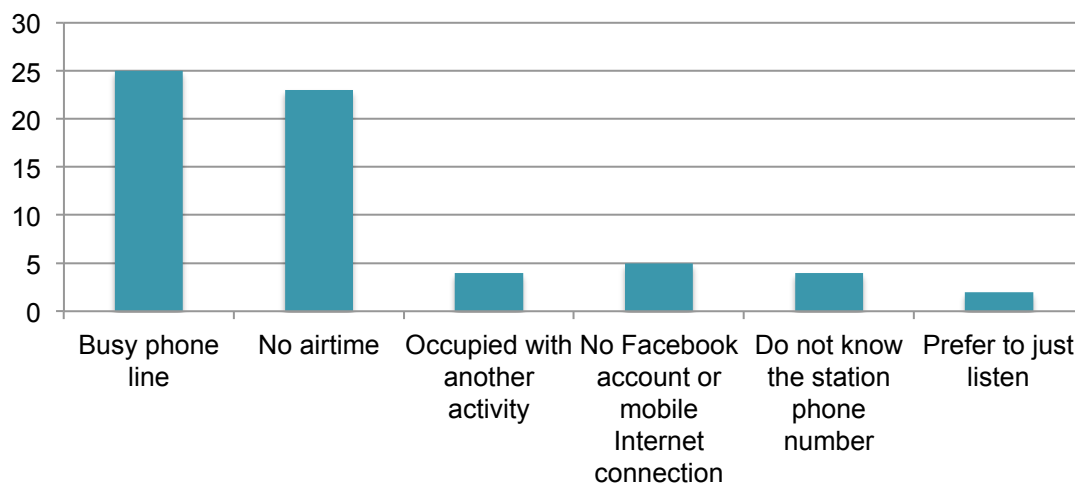
The vast majority of *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners are unable to make contributions to the shows due to the studio's single phone line always being busy and

because they do not have enough airtime. Lack of airtime prevents listeners from calling-in and connecting to Internet on their phone. A significant amount of questionnaire respondents also noted that their mobile phones were not able to connect to the Internet or that they did not have a Facebook account, both accounting for their inability to join discussion taking place on social media. Others cited that although they tuned-in to the radio while they were at work, their responsibilities prevented them from picking up their phone and partaking in discussion. One anonymous female respondent from the telephone survey says she is unable to participate because, "I am busy at work and I can't call when the boss is watching me." Some listeners are content just listening to *Izwi loMzansi FM* shows and others mentioned that they did not know the station's phone number or that they were unable to record it because the presenter announced it too quickly.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Since there are no established regulatory or gatekeeping systems in place by Cindy and Sifiso, their listeners have ample opportunities to make their voices heard. However, *Izwi loMzansi FM's* single landline phone connection significantly limits the number of callers the station can receive. Similarly, the nonexistence of a station SMS number also limits the amount of audience contribution, although it is undetermined if listeners would actually utilize this methods considering the inherent control enacted by the radio presenters who receive the messages.

The convergence of Facebook, accessed via mobile phone, with community radio offers significant potential for diverse and widespread audience participation. *Izwi loMzansi FM* listeners who are unable to get through on the studio landline phone utilize Cindy and Sifiso's Facebook pages to partake in discussion before, during and after the show's live broadcast. Facebook commentary can be publically viewed, along with the commenter's name and profile picture. Yet, the convergence potential of Facebook and community radio still largely depends on the radio presenter. Cindy and Sifiso do not actively

manage their Facebook accounts. They do not review, edit or delete the commentary made on their pages. While this may encourage more open and honest debate from audience members, it also frustrates others who contribute information but receive no acknowledgement of the post from the presenters. A male listener says during the telephone questionnaire that:

> Facebook is easily accessible [but] most announcers do not read Facebook messages on their shows. They do say their pages but [they] don't read postings.

Sifiso never accessed his Facebook account during the course of his programmes, that checking Facebook during the show is challenging due to the rapid pace of the debate and that the programme is only and hour long and includes commercial breaks.[66] He largely uses the show's page for announcing the debate topic for that evening and only once posted a message following up on a previous topic. Consequently, he never acknowledges Facebook comments or questions from listeners on-air, a point from which one of his Facebook followers expressed dissatisfaction:
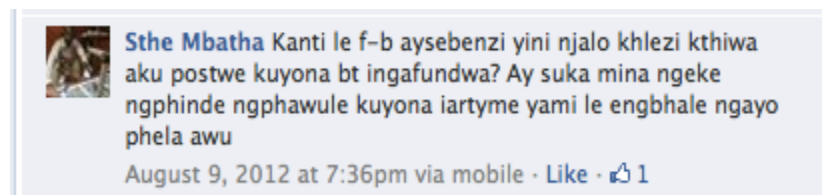

Figure 29: *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* Facebook comment (09 Aug 2012)

English translation: Doesn't this Facebook work? I always post here but no one reads I will never post here again I'm pointlessly wasting airtime.

This study's results suggests that female listeners prefer contributing to community radio programming using Facebook, instead of calling-in or sending a text message. By harnessing the potential of Facebook before and after his show, Sifiso could also foster more female participation.

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[66] Sifiso Sibisi interview, 31 July 2012

Senza Kwenzeke listeners were very active on Cindy's Facebook page before, during and after the show's live broadcast. Cindy also posts messages daily and also at different periods throughout the day. These messages usually relate to a show topic, but other times cite bible verses or wish her listeners a good day. The fact that Cindy herself was active on her Facebook page and incorporates Facebook messages into her live show encourages others to contribute using that medium. The commentary continues hours, even days, after the programme has gone off-air. Although Cindy's page generates a lot of traffic, the comments are simply that, comments. The posts rarely involve listeners interacting with each other. The majority of the comments thank Cindy for doing a good job as presenter, request a song to be played, respond to an audience poll Cindy has announced or simply write to say hello and to say that the person is listening. This observation is not meant to discredit the commentary taking place, as it clearly serves a purpose in giving listeners and alternative outlet to actively partake in the *Senza Kwenzeke* community. However, while the audience may be active, this does not equate to also being engaged.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the data collected through participant observation of *Senza Kwenzeke* and *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* radio programmes, *Izwi loMzansi FM* staff interviews and a listener questionnaire. The data is analysed through each moment of the Circuit of Culture (du Gay et al. 1997) and by utilizing Gitlin's (1998) re-theorization of the public sphere as interlocking cultural public 'sphericules'. Emphasis is given to the regulation and representation patterns used by organizational and social systems in order to determine the possibilities of engaged citizenry in radio programming via convergence with mobile technologies. This chapter also presented some quantitative data in order to tease out a more holistic understanding of *Izwi loMzansi FM* audience demographics, patterns of participation and degrees of interactivity with the radio

station. Several missed opportunities for engaged publics to form were also observed in this study and largely rest on the radio presenter's lack of familiarity with social media platforms rather than organizational gatekeeping techniques.

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusions

This study set out to establish whether the convergence of community radio and the mobile phone offers more possibilities for community dialogue and interaction. Furthermore, it sought to establish processes of regulation within *Izwi loMzansi FM* organizational and social systems and their effects on enabling an audience to transform itself into an engaged public.

Chapter two presents the dilemma of the notion of community and subsequent research suggesting the absence of a community in South African community radio (see Teer-Tomaselli 2001; Dalene 2007; Karamagi 2012; Mhlanga 2006). The onset of accessible and affordable mobile phone technology throughout South Africa in the early 2000s is thought to put means of participation back into the hands of the marginalized populations through increased connectivity and social communication. The fundamental act that needs to be present for any fostering of citizenship is participation in a social and cultural system (Hollander 2002; McQuail 2010). Theories of citizenship are being redefined as South African community radio is evolving into a virtual space, a network space, and a mobile space where citizens can participate in public debate (Moyo 2013). This link between culture, technology and power relations is exemplified in the performance of everyday life and in the theorization of a 'cultural public sphere' (McGuigan 2005) or cultural 'public sphericules' (Gitlin 1998).

To address these changes this research explored processes of production, consumption, identity, representation and regulation in two *Izwi loMzansi FM* radio programmes. This theoretical approach, referred to as the Circuit of Culture, allows for a holistic analysis into the dynamics of various social forces, processes and regulations rather than a single element of a culture in isolation (du Gay et al. 1997). Evaluating the ideological foundations of the media is a focal point of this study, as the media receive significant academic attention for

their role as being 'intellectual' figures and occupy a central role in the construction of common sense and meaning in society (Barker 2002; Gramsci 1971; Hall 1980; Tomaselli 1987, 2012). Yet, the control of cultural meaning between dominant and subaltern forces is not static but rather perpetually renegotiated (Mills 2010; Muller et al. 1989). Additionally, new participatory media have been considered as a potentially revitalizing escape from dominant ideological forces (Hartley 2012; McQuail 2010; Nyamnjoh 2005).

Several conclusions can be made from the findings, which were gathered through a network ethnography approach including participant observation of *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* and *Senza Kwenzeke* broadcasts, staff interviews and a listener questionnaire. *Izwi loMzansi* FM's was created around the South African community radio mandate, which specifies a requirement of serving the listener community. This service must include community ownership, management and programming. Observed show presenters, Cindy and Sifiso, reach out to their audiences in varied ways, mostly through calling the station's landline phone number or through their Facebook pages.

The study observed no habitual patterns of gatekeeping by presenters, aside from redirection tactics in order to keep the conversation from stalling or from going off topic. Callers and presenters created a communal atmosphere for debate by referring to each other using traditional clan names to show respect and create a shared identity. Additionally, *Sifiso Sibisi Talks* callers regulated themselves to a certain degree, publically reprimanding those who would call-in with nothing concrete to share. SMS, as a tool for audience participation, was relatively non-existent. *Izwi loMzansi FM* presenters and audience members agree that SMS, while the most economical option, is not a suitable means of participation for listeners who acknowledge their own agency and want to he heard.

The convergence of social media sites, specifically Facebook, with community radio is innovating the moments of Production and Consumption. Radio audience members are able to interact with programming via applications on the mobile phone while simultaneously listening-in and performing everyday activities. In this sense, the onset of mobile phone technology and community radio supports the notion of cultural citizenship, which acknowledges that individuals experience everyday life as voters and workers, producers and consumers, publics and audiences, simultaneously (Hartley 2012:141). These individuals are part of multiple but overlapping cultural public sphericules, comprised of shared cultural experiences and meaning.

Along with the outlined conclusions, this study also observed several missed opportunities for audience participation in *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming. Availability and accessibility of phone lines, SMS lines and social media platforms create more possibilities for diverse dialogue and active participation, however, the biggest hindrance for active citizenry lies not in *Izwi loMzansi FM* regulation protocol but with the presenter's comfort and creativity in integrating new media technologies into their programming. The current rapport *Izwi loMzansi FM* has with mobile phone technology is a "jerry-rigged relationship" rather than a documented and "fully integrated system" (Jenkins 2006:17). Sifiso and Cindy incorporate Facebook and calls into their shows using different approaches and anticipated results. Yet, both shows fall short in utilizing the social media platform towards the formation of an engaged, not simply an active, listenership. The possibilities for fostering cultural citizenship by means of *Izwi loMzansi FM* programming and mobile phone technology convergence are still emerging. However, it is imperative not to lose sight that citizenship resides, not in technology, but ultimately, with citizens who engage in talk with each other (Dahlgren 2005).

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Cindy Shezi Interview, 22 August 2012

Sifiso Sibisi interview, 31 July 2012

Sifiso Sibisi personal communication, 13 May 2012

Vela Xulu Interview, 15 August 2012

Vela Xulu personal communication, 13 May 2012

Observed Radio Broadcasts:

Senza Kwenzeke with Cindy "Halfpynt" Shezi:

Friday, 03 August 2012

Monday, 06 August 2012

Wednesday, 15 August 2012

Wednesday, 22 August 2012

Sifiso Sibisi Talks with Sifiso Sibisi:

Monday, 30 July 2012

Tuesday, 31 July 2012

Tuesday, 07 August 2012

Tuesday, 14 August 2012

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Appendices

APPENDIX: 1

Observation Coding Scheme – tally for every activity

DATE: _____   **SHOW TOPIC:**

_____

ON AIR PRESENTER(S):

Radio Presenter Activity

Encourage/request audience participation – How?

Call-in	
SMS	
Internet site	
Other (explain)	

Encourage/request audience participation – By what means?

by posing a question	
by asking for feedback on a specific issue	
by asking for feedback in general	
Other (explain)	

How many times does the presenter:

take listener calls on-air	
take listener calls off-air	
incorporate SMS messages into programme discussion	

Radio Listener Activity

Programming Participation – How?

Call-in	
Text	

Internet	
Other (explain)	

Programming Participation – By what means?

by posing a question/topic	
by responding to a question/commentary from presenter	
by responding to a question/commentary from another listener	
by requesting a song	
by requesting information/charity	
Other (explain)	

APPENDIX:2

Questionnaire:

Hello! I am a Master's student at UKZN Howard College. My research focuses on *Izwi loMzansi* radio and the utilization of mobile phone participation. I have been working on this research with the radio station, Cindy Shezi and Sifiso Sibisi since 2012. If you have time, please complete this survey about your relationship with *Izwi loMzansi* radio. To say thanks for completing the survey, you will receive free airtime if you provide your RSA contact number! The link to the survey is below. If you have any questions, please ask. Thanks.

This research is for a University of KwaZulu-Natal Master's degree study regarding degrees of community radio audience participation. Your participation is completely voluntary. Your telephone number will not be published or circulated to any person not related to this study and your responses will not be linked to your telephone number. The information collected will aid the researchers in their study and also aid the community radio station to better understand their listening audience. You will receive complimentary airtime in thanks for taking this survey.

Do you agree to participate?
a. yes b. no

1. Are you male or female?   a. male b. female

2. How old are you?
a. 0-17
b. 18-29
c. 30-49
d. 50+

3. How often do you listen to *Izwi loMzansi* radio?
a. once a week
b. 2-3 days a week
c. 4-6 days a week
d. everyday

4. Where do you listen from? (check all that apply)
a. Home
b. Work/Office
c. Market/Shopping
d. Transport (while driving, in a taxi, etc.)
e. no specific location

5. Who do you listen with? (check all that apply)
a. Friends
b. Family
c. Colleagues
d. Strangers
e. No one, I listen alone.

6. What *Izwi loMzansi* programmes do you listen to?
7. How often do you CALL-IN to a *Izwi loMzansi* live radio programme to participate?
a. Never
b. less than 3 times a week
c. 4-7 times a week
d. more than 8 times a week

8. How often do you send an SMS into a live *Izwi loMzansi* radio programme?
a. Never
b. less than 3 times a week
c. 4-7 times a week
d. more than 8 times a week

9. How often do you read, post or comment on a radio announcer's FACEBOOK page?
a. Never
b. less than 3 times a week
c. 4-7 times a week
d. more than 8 times a week

10. Which form of participation do you prefer to use to engage with *Izwi loMzansi* programmes and announcers?
a. Call-in
b. SMS
c. Facebook

11. Why do you prefer this method of participation over the others?

12. What are the reasons why you may NOT participate in radio dialogue? (check all that apply)
a. I don't have enough airtime.
b. I don't own a phone.
c. I don't have a Facebook page.
d. The line is busy when I call.
e. I am busy with another activity when I am listening to the radio.
f. I have no interest to participate
g. Other, please specify

13. What do you like about *Izwi loMzansi* radio?
a. focus on local issues
b. the announcers
c. the music
d. community involvement
e. audience participation
f. other

14.Please enter ONE South African mobile phone number to receive complimentary airtime for completing this survey. Your number will not be saved or linked to your answers. Thank you.