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**Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. *In
Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015.***

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**This Dissertation has been submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
Bachelor of Social Sciences in Media and Society Studies Honours Degree**

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Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents Betty Stella Moyo and Innocent Duduza Moyo and my dear brother Mkhululi Moyo for the way that they supported and prayed for me. Through all the hardships they were always with me encouraging and giving me a shoulder to lean on. They all persevered to make this project a success.

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Abstract

The research explores the performances versus reality in “reality” the reality television show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. The research sought to explore whether what is termed reality is indeed ‘real’ or is a combination of performances by the housemates. The research deploys theories of framing and realism to ascertain the extent to which the show was a depiction of ‘reality’ or simply conformed to predetermined frames constructed by Endemol, the producers of the show. The research employed archival research to collect data. The archive was constituted of episodes of the show downloaded from YouTube. The study employed qualitative methodology designed as a case study in attempt to answer the question why and what aspects of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* constitute reality and performances. In the analysis of the data semiotics and hermeneutics of interpretation were used. The study found out that what we term “reality” is not in actual fact real as there are many factors such as house rules and cinematographic decisions that distort reality hence at the end of the day describing the show as reality becomes a misnomer. In such a scenario the researcher found out that realities have never been real.

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APPROVAL FORM

The undersigned certify that they have supervised the student Sandile Moyo’s dissertation entitled: **Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015**. It was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Social Sciences Degree in Media and Society Studies at Midlands State University.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The media are merely involved in constructing reality. They are in the process of representing reality in our lives. Hall (1997) asserts that representation is an act of representing a ‘reality’ that is already in existence. To get the attention of the consumers there is need for media to take part in recreating certain identities that the consumers can relate with and they attain this by making everything that was directly lived by people to be moved away into performances. Reality TV is only one of the numerous contemporary genres of television programming, which include talent, quiz and game shows. Bailey and Barbato (2003) assert that these shows are about performances of some sort.

This study examines how these reality shows tend to create new creatures from the housemates (participants in reality shows). One may argue that, instead of being real, the characters seem bent on always trying to ‘prove’ themselves. This is in reference to *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. A lot has been researched on reality television, particularly audiences, with scholars like Morley (1992) discussing audiences and the role of the media in the construction of cultural identities, but little has been discussed about the participants in the reality programme, particularly within an African context. In this study the terms ‘Housemates’ and ‘participants’ are used interchangeably in reference to people recruited to reside in the Big Brother house to participate in the show.

1.2 Background to the study

The study focuses on exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. One author who provides some historical background on why reality television came into existence is journalist Richard Huff. According to Huff (2006) during a time when networks were trying to fill programming gaps, reality Television worked as an inexpensive alternative to the audiences. Some of MTV's reality series, *The Real World*, and Fox Broadcasting Company's *American Idol*, became some of the most watched and most talked about shows on television.

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According to Funt (1994) the first reality television show was a series called *Candid Camera* which emerged in 1948. This was followed by *Truth or Consequences* (1950) which frequently used secret cameras. Both of these two ground-breaking series created artificial realities as to how ordinary people would respond. Reality television is a genre of television programming presented as an unscripted program usually featuring ordinary people (Read 2003). The genre has been around for decades, most commonly in the beginning of television history in the form of game shows. More recently since the beginning of the 21st century, the genre has become increasingly popular through the broadening into subgenres such as Documentary style, Competition, Self-improvement, Renovation, Social Experiment, Dating Shows, Talk Shows, Hidden Cameras, Supernatural, and Hoaxes. Reality television is unavoidable when watching television in this day and age because most stations featured at least one subgenre of reality television. (See Chapter 2 for a comprehensive discussion on this)

Mills (2004) refers to reality television as “humiliation television” because it represents a rise in popular culture in which taking pleasure from other’s misfortunes is the ultimate aim. Mills (2004: 79) states, “Today’s humiliation television is a different story. The financial stakes are high, and participants are subjected to prolonged exposure before the camera. Their failings whether of looks or character are discussed in front of them, and if they can be made to cry, so much the better”. It is interesting as far as this study is concerned to assess the extent to which the view of “humiliation television” holds true for “Big Brother Double Trouble”.

Big Brother is a reality game show created by John de Mol and originally broadcast in the Netherlands. The first version of *Big Brother* was broadcast in 1999 Veronica in the Netherlands. Since then, the format has become a worldwide TV franchise, airing in many countries including South Africa. According to Bignell (2005) the first British *Big Brother* contestants were aged between 22 and 38, and its audience mainly comprised viewers ranging from 16–34 years, of whom 75 per cent watched the programme during its first run.

Big Brother has evolved tremendously over the years with many versions of it having been broadcast to various audiences. *Big Brother Africa* is the African version of reality game show. The show involves 12 countries within Africa which include Angola, Zambia, South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi, Ghana and Kenya. Each

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country provides at least one contestant living in the house trying to avoid being evicted by viewers and eventually winning cash prize at the end of the show. The show is produced by Endemol South Africa and broadcast on a 24hours basis on DSTV channel 198, although M-Net is the official broadcaster. Every year different themes are chosen depending on the number of days the show will run for example there was, *Big Brother Revolution* (2009), *All-Star*(2010), *Amplified*(2011), *Star Game* (2012), *The Chase*(2013) as well as *Big Brother Hot Shot*(2015). Celebrities are the ones who most of the time take part in the *Big Brother* show, but with *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* it has taken a twist as it features ordinary people.

In recent years, reality television has come under criticism for being overly provocative and a disquieting representation of society. The South African version of *Big Brother* proved to be highly controversial for its overtly sexual content. Hyde-Clark (2004) found, however that youths perceived the program to be a reflection of their culture.

This study focuses on *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* which was launched by M-Net and the production company Endemol and aired on channel 197 and 198 on DSTV. In the show, a group of people called housemates live together in a specially constructed house that is isolated and cut off from the outside world where they do not have access to their phones, laptops or social media networks. During their stay in the house, contestants are continuously monitored by live, in-house television cameras, as well as personal audio microphones recording their every move 24hours a day. Unlike *Big brother UK and Australia* which follows a group of strangers who are mostly celebrities and lasts for three months this season of *Big brother Mzansi double trouble* lasted for 56 days with contestants being put in pairs. Some entered the *Big brother* house as Niece and Nephew, boyfriend and girlfriend and some as friends. The contestants were in a quest for the grand prize of R2 million. In order to win the final cash prize the contestant must survive weekly evictions and be the last housemates to remain. They do this by voting each other out of the house and the audience also take part in the voting.

Reality television has emerged as a very prominent genre, with many reality programmes enhancing the viewing experience by offering their option of active participation in the show itself. Since reality television has become popular in the 21st era, the study will help in explaining the relationship between reality and performances and whether it is “real” as the name suggests.

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Hence the study is of great significance as it will make meaningful contribution to whether what we term “reality” is not at the end of the day performed or “reality”.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

When we talk of reality it should be real people going on their day to day activities but in the case of *Big brother* it appears the subjects are often coerced and manipulated into doing things they do not desire, their day to day activities are premeditated for them hence this becomes a problem worth studying. Values of the participants are sacrificed in order for them to survive in the *Big Brother* house, they are always trying to prove themselves this leading to the creation of performances. It is therefore worth studying how much of the reality television show can actually be termed as “real”, when there are many factors such as camera angle that manipulate the outcome

1.4 Significance of the study

In as much as reality television is concerned it seems that it is unavoidable in our day to day television viewing hence the study will attempt to explain the relationship between reality and performances in reality TV and bring out how media represents reality and use it as a catalyst to manipulate the participants. Botz-Borstein (2006) explains best that if a group of young people are shut in a space or house together does this really represent “reality” of any kind. The study is significant in that it will explore what reality television is and how it works when there are many factors like camera angle the use of language that manipulate outcomes of behaviour. Media is said to be the mirror of the society which means that it reflects the society, the question at hand is, “Is media really the mirror of the society?” Does it reflect reality? The study goes on to highlight the extent to which what we call reality can as well be acted. It is significant in that it will make real and meaningful contribution to our understanding of what we term as “real” and why the media manipulate participants into acted performances.

1.5 Delimitations

The main thrust of the study is to focus on how real what is termed as reality is by analysing *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* from the period of 29 March to 26 May 2015. The reason for choosing this time frame is because during that time the *Big Brother* TV show featured ordinary participants and not celebrities hence this creates meaningful to the study. The study

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does not focus on the audience behaviour towards the reality programme but the participants as they go on their day to day activities and performing their given tasks.

1.6 Limitations

The research focuses on problematizing what we term “reality”. There are some difficulties in doing so, as I would have to be part of the production team and find out how they go about assigning the participants their daily chores and activities. As a way of making sure this limitation does not nullify my study I have decided to focus on episodes where the participants are given tasks and pay particular attention to their reaction once given a task and follow them as they perform the assigned task.

1.7 Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To identify and classify reality and performances in *Big brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.
- To explore the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of the participants on camera.
- To explain the relationship between reality and performances in reality television programmes.

1.8 Main research question

- What aspects of *Big brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* constitute reality and performance?

1.8.1 Sub questions

- How do the rules of reality TV shape the behaviour of the participants on the Big Brother set?
- What constitutes “reality” in reality television programming?

1.9 Assumptions

This study assumes that when we talk of reality it should be real, real people going on their day to day lives without pretence or performances, television being the platform to air this (McQuail 1994:2) highlights that the media are, “a major source of definitions of social reality; thus also the place where the changing culture and values of societies and groups are constructed, stored

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and most visibly expressed”. There has been some suggestion that programs that are arbitrated to be true have more influence on viewer’s beliefs, attitudes and behaviours than those which appear to be less real according to Elliott and Slater (1980).

1.10 Structure of the study

The research consists of six chapters, chapter one being an introduction chapter which presents the background of the study, problem statement, research questions, objectives, assumptions of the researcher, significance of the study, the delimitation of the study as well as the limitations that may be encountered by the researcher. Chapter two focuses on literature review as well as theoretical framework. Chapter three articulates the research methods and methodology. Chapter four provides the organisational analysis M-Net which is the official broadcaster of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble*. Chapter five provides data presentation and data analysis. Chapter six is the final chapter which consists of the evaluations and conclusions of the study as well as recommendations.

1.11 Conclusion

The chapter looked at the introduction and the main thrust of the study highlighting how the media is omnipresent in every individual’s life through reality television. The study seeks to explain the relationship between performances and reality. The chapter to follow will look at the literature review by different scholars and the arguments they bring forward, at the same time looking at the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

This dissertation has so far presented important views of the study giving the background of the study, objectives and the research problem. The current chapter reviews literature related to the subject under study in addition to discussing the theoretical framework. Some of the arguments that are raised in this chapter are issues to do with voyeurism in reality shows bringing out how participants of *Big Brother* normalize this. The area of voyeurism has been overlooked by most scholars as their main focus is on audiences and how they relate to the voyeuristic nature of reality shows and not on participants. There is also the issue of vulgar that is raised in the study, specifically how the participants tend to empower themselves, using vulgar as an escape route to being told what to do in the reality show.

Neuman (2003) asserts that literature review involves surveying the literature in a chosen area of study, synthesizing the information gathered into a summary, critically analysing the information gathered to identify areas of controversy, formulate questions for further research and presenting the literature according to an organized style. The first part of this chapter is dedicated to the review of related literature, while the second part focuses on discussion of relevant theory. A number of scholars have written about the reality TV (Nabi et al 2003; Hill 2005; Mills 2016) but then these scholars focus mainly on audience behaviours towards reality TV. Their work differs from the current endeavour because they put much emphasis on what the audiences think about and how they feel and less focus on participants’ behaviour.

2.1.1 Voyeurism in reality shows

Reality television not only includes game shows and fashion shows but has now diversified to include talent shows. In the case of *Big brother* it is a voyeuristic reality show where participants are always put on watch 24 hours a day. There are a number of contestations regarding how reality is portrayed through reality shows. Jersely (2002) is of the view that a portion of the programs makes an almost obsessive public fervor, particularly reality shows like *Big Brother* which have transformed into major media events where the popular and everyday representation

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of reality are met by severe elite criticism and moral rejection for its commercial infotainment adaptation of reality.

The title of *Big Brother* is a reference to George Orwell's (1949) novel *Nineteen Eighty-four*, in which a future totalitarian culture could continually screen its citizens by video, summed up in the expression composed on the write-ups showed in his tragic subjective world: “**Big Brother is watching you**” (Bignell 2004). More so Orwell in so doing this in his novel notes that *Big Brother* is taken as a tyrant as the private lives of individuals are always under surveillance. The researcher found this novel Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four* to be interesting in connection with *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*, as the participants are always under surveillance and manipulated to do what they do not desire given rules that at the end of the day shape their behaviour, the camera acting as some form of a dictator. *Big Brother* then becomes misleading and an over exaggeration of reality which at the end of the day sums up to performances and the whole idea of voyeurism comes up during the process.

Interestingly novels seem to be more interested and focused on reality television this is seen in relation to what is brought about by broadcaster Nick Clarke in his book *The shadow of a Nation* cited by Hill (2005) when he argues to say the popularity of reality TV has led to the dangerous concealing of boundaries between fact and fiction. Producers strive to offer “reality” as it is and customers appear to have unquenchable aspiration to access the lives of “real” people. Hill and Orwell (1949) seem to differ in that, Orwell debates the indication that participants are being manipulated as they are always under surveillance and the show has taken some form of hold on its participants, while Hill talks of the consumption rate of the audiences as they are blurred into believing that what they see is actually real. In unpacking this the researcher found it interesting as she is in disagreement with Hill that not everything shown on reality TV is actually real as the participants are often manipulated by being given rules that guide them which at the end of the day does not represent reality. However for Orwell *Big Brother* pressures the participants conform to the through the control of surveillance.

(Sardar 2000; Nabi 2006; Lemi 2009) advances the argument that reality TV came with voyeurism and in so doing it aroused appetite for overt form of voyeurism, they are of the view that the reasons viewers watch some reality programs is to satiate feelings of voyeurism. Moreover Lemi further explains to say media commentators have frequently argued

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that the rising popularity of reality programs come from the show’s ability to provide television viewers voyeuristic needs. Their argument on the voyeuristic nature of reality shows does not hold much water as these scholars do not address the idea of being real as to whether when participants partake in voyeurism are they being real or they are just acting to impress the audiences so that they don’t get voted out of the show. They just end up talking about the idea that audiences approach reality shows to satisfy their voyeuristic needs. Participant’s behaviour of whether they are shaped by the camera to act in that way is left untouched, hence it makes sense for the study to address such issues in relation to *Big brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* of what really constitute reality and performance. Reality TV somehow opens a window into the behaviour of the participants that aren’t really possible through fictionalized television the behaviour add up to voyeurism they take voyeurism behaviour as normal.

While there is controversy surrounding the issue of voyeurism and how reality is then presented in the case of voyeurism (Nabi et al 2003; Bagley 2001) offers a rather interesting and different dimension which is pertinent to this study and will be where the study will build from as they talk of while the viewers observed the casts of reality shows as being real, they did not consider that the situations presented were necessarily representation of reality. Interesting to note is the argument that what may be marketed to the public as “real” may actually be fabricated, coaxed and influenced by those creating the show and editing processes. In his criticism of the *Real World*, Bagley argued about misrepresentative of production practices that put much effort so as to give reality programs the appearance of being real by borrowing from the documentary. Developing from Bagley the study tends to classify reality and performances in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

A barrier that blurs reality is often created as the reality show will display what the audiences can relate to in terms of voyeurism and construction new behaviors which at the end of the day blurs the actual reality. The gap that was left by Nabi at el (2003) in differentiating what is real and what is performed, is raised by Bagley (2009) when he observes that reality is being fabricated, coaxed and influenced by production and editing process. In this sense Nabi brings out the sense that there is no longer reality in what we call “real” due to the editing and production process hence reality becomes somehow distorted. The researcher however notes that Bagley’s findings collaborates with this study as the researcher goes beyond focusing on what reality TV is but also

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looks at the relationship between reality and performances in relation to *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as there are many factors that manipulate the outcome of reality such as camera setting and the use of language once the participants know that they are being filmed they completely change their behaviour. Reality becomes a myth due to the fact that they try to create an environment that tries to resemble what is real.

However even though some scholars tend to be of the same view that reality TV is all about voyeurism Nabi et al (2009) illustrated that voyeurism the curiosity of watching others indulge in sexual behaviour is not always a predictor of reality TV satisfaction. They argue to say there are a number of factors that make up reality TV such as the issue of surveillance and being normal without acted scripts. Deery (2004) posits that reality TV does not necessarily have to be “realistic”, nor does it have to depict common or everyday experiences. He tries to dismiss the whole idea of realism, the question now becomes how can we call it “reality” if it does not depict realness and everyday experiences. What Deery postulates is in contradiction with the researchers point of view as reality should be real and natural without being edited or scripted, then we call that reality.

We talk of class and identity of reality shows and forget the aspect of realness hence the name reality television. However Skeggs and Wood (2008) have dismissed the whole idea of voyeurism in reality show as they have interpreted that reality television is a major site for disseminating neoliberal ideologies of class, consumerism and individualization. The realness of reality becomes distorted with reference to *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as it promotes class division and individualization while it is supposed to create a sense of unity and togetherness in bringing out behaviors that are real.

Viewers wanting to watch the reality shows to fulfil their own sexual needs. That is not what we call reality neither is voyeurism reality. That what we call reality is real people going on their day to day activities, we don't talk about scripts in reality television nor do we talk about voyeurism. The way the reality shows are portrayed tend to depict the idea that voyeurism is an everyday thing and is taken as normal hence makes up reality. The study does not seek to understand the voyeuristic nature of reality TV and how audiences react to that, but it seeks to

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explore the relationship between reality and performances so as to understand how the rules of reality TV shape the behaviour of the participants on the *Big Brother* set which at the end of the day leads to voyeurism which is performed as a way of emancipating themselves. (Hill 2005; Papacharissi and Mendelson 2007) builds upon the same view arguing that television viewers perceive reality programs to be both exhibitionistic and voyeuristic, only a small subset of television viewers watch reality programming to fulfil their voyeuristic needs, reality television viewers also claimed that their outstanding motives for watching are a routine so as to pass time as well as entertainment purposes. However in comparison with the study in trying to explore reality versus performances. McCracken (2003) corroborates with Papacharissi and Mendelson to say Big Brother is obsessed with surveillance, control, trivial consumerism. This clearly reveals that the rules that are set for the participants tend to lead to such behaviours. that reality shows are not all about voyeurism why not take it as the participants are actually trying to convey something by always acting that way it's no longer about being real but a way of trying to survive the *Big Brother* show.

The participants of the reality show are always trying to prove themselves and in so doing behaviors are changed and performances are created hence the whole idea of reality tends to be misleading and biased. Dorr and Kovaric (1990) takes a different approach in trying to understand reality television as they are more concerned about how the content will be judged in terms of voyeurism and language. This is where they differs with (Sardar 2000; Nabi at el 2006; Lemi 2009) who asserts that reality television came with voyeurism, they do not take into consideration how these reality shows at the end of the day will be judged and what drives the participants to act in such a way. Reality television programs such as *survivor, the real world and the bachelor* have made a huge impact on the present day television. Some critics however have argued that reality television shows reflect reality in ways that are illusory or even fraudulent through misleading editing. With this happening “reality” becomes a misnomer being given a name that is not fit or designated for it. With all this happening Reality television is shaping the behaviour of the participants on the camera, as they are propelled by the situation to indulge in sexual activities all the time which at the end of the day will be judged as “reality” portraying some form of voyeurism which are performances of some sort.

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Various scholars have focused on issues to do with representation in reality shows which is still an ongoing debate, but have overlooked the “realness” of these reality shows. Reality television tends to blur the line between production and consumption. Producers of contemporary reality television programs make use of the style of documentaries attempt to depict “real life” and portray characters that are “real”, which generates viewer’s aspirations to someday appear on their favourite shows (Corner and Murray 2009). However Hall (2006) offers a completely contrasting description as to how viewers react towards realism, viewers were skeptical of the realism in reality television, primarily because participants knew they were being filmed. Concurring with Hall the researcher notices that in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* their attempt to bring out reality is guided by a number of rules in the reality show which at the end of the day blurs the realness of the show as compared to what it should be as the name speaks for its self “reality”.

However, existing literature on participants behavior and reality television programming only indirectly addresses the question of how voyeuristic placements and their attitudes bring about the value of privacy element into the choices they make about being watched all the time. The primary objective is to fill the void in understanding why participants act the way they do are they stationed to do that or is it in them they being real or they are just performances. In an effort to manufacture celebrity out of the everyday Kavka (2012) however notes that much contemporary reality television contains a significant amount of deception, manipulation, misogyny, and the celebration of morally contentious behaviors which include voyeurism. Such behavior is reflected on *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* more of it at the end of the day looks like performances instead of showing “reality” as the participants over exaggerate their feeling though the use of voyeurism. Reality television thus becomes a negative force in the shaping the participants behaviors. This then comes to the question of morality and the objective of the study, to explore role of reality television in shaping the behavior of the participants on camera a moral boundary has already been created between “good” and “bad” by the participants themselves.

2.1.2 Power of Vulgarly

Power is everywhere and is mostly used by ordinary people as a way of expressing themselves. It has been adopted in many reality television programs including *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble*. Power can be used both negatively and positively but at the end of the day what counts is what it produces. Cameroon (1995) asserts that expressing power in a negative manner leads to what he terms ideology of verbal hygiene, which is based on the idea that only specific communicational practices are deemed acceptable and appreciated. However Foucault (1998) disputes this assertion as he notes that power is not just a negative, coercive or repressive thing that forces us to do things against our wishes. The power discussed by some of the most famous writers on power (Mbembe 2001; Foucault 1979) may be the same power that the participants of *Big Brother* use as a way of revolting against repressive rules set on them.

It is interesting to note the use of tone in Foucault’s analyses of power as he provides a rather different approach with regards to power and how it is used as a tool for emancipation. Foucault (1979) articulates that individuals who are subjected to surveillance, and who know that they are under scrutiny, assume responsibility for the constraints of power, making the play of power spontaneously upon themselves. He even marks a shift in the exercise of power, from the outstanding display of what he calls "sovereign power" to a regime of disciplinary power whereby the individual exercises power over her or himself (Foucault 1979). In this case the researcher concurs with Foucault in that the participants also have power on themselves where they are able to stand up for themselves. They are now active rather than passive to power. They tend to do this through the use of vulgar or extreme language, noting that language is their source of power.

Foucault (1979) in *Discipline and Punish*, developed a model of power operating in modern society of how power can be used as an emancipatory tool. For Foucault, modern society is comprised of surveillance instead of displays of absolute power to control the populace as in the *olden regime*, surveillance is the key component in the discipline of individuals in modern society (Foucault 1979). He further postulates that power is exercised continuously and efficiently because individuals apply it to themselves. Just like in *Big Brother* the participants exercise power through their use of vulgar language as a way of revolting against the rules that are stressed on them they tend to use it as an emancipatory tool.

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With regards to *Big Brother* however as the participants know that they are always under surveillance and there are certain rules set for them, they tend to use vulgar as a way of empowering themselves and being in some control these rules that are put upon them tend to shape them in the sense that they change their behaviors in order to express their power through language. Bai and Song (2015) comes in with an important point as they note that the participants of *Big Brother* use language which is vulgar as a way of expressing themselves, the ordinary as a way of trying to fit in. Vulgar is in most cases associated with the poor and the uneducated, they use it to express themselves and when they want to vouch for change hence the ordinary people are associated with the kind of behavior. This is taken as true in that the participants of *Big Brother* are ordinary people taken from different cultures who tend to normalize the use of vulgar. The association of Reality TV with the ordinary use of vulgar as a way of expressing power in a rather different and barbaric manner creates a kind of a “real” atmosphere of what reality TV should be. Biressi and Nunn (2004) concur to say reality TV generally, and *Big Brother* specifically, is linked to discourses of ‘media-ocracy’, in which Reality TV is understood as opening up opportunities to ‘ordinary people’ to attain wealth and adulation for being themselves. Following on Birresi and Nunn, it would be interesting in this study, to observe the way the housemates then use language in terms of vulgar and ascertain if this is meant to gain audience votes by trying by all means to bring out “reality” of what is happening in the *Big Brother* house.

Mbembe (2001) in *Aesthetics of Vulgarity* brings in an interesting dimension on power where he highlights the concept of banality of power in post colony where he postulates that ordinary people located the fetish of state power in the realm of ridicule which they can take it or shut it up and render it powerless. With regards to Mbembe’s assertion on power the participants of *Big Brother* use power as a tool of being rebellious to the rules that are set on them. This power is practiced through the use of vulgar. In contrast Mbembe (1992; 3) in his book post colony discusses the idea of banality of power in the 'postcolony'. Where he asserts that:

By banality of power I am not simply referring to the way bureaucratic formalities or arbitrary rules, implicit or explicit, have been multiplied, nor am I simply concerned with what has become routine, though certainly 'banality' implies the predictability of routine if only because it is made up of repeated daily actions and gestures”.

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In this sense Mbembe is referring to those obscene elements that are above all the province of ordinary people. These obscene elements with the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* are seen through the use of vulgar which are expressed by the ordinary participants as a way of expressing power. Mbembe’s work on the post colony provides more vividly and powerfully provides insight of social violation

However there are some scholars such as Wood and Skeggs (2011) who do not agree with the whole idea of power and vulgar they talk of reality TV as promoting class antagonism through “classed pantomimes and morality plays”. To them reality TV is promoting what they term class antagonism this is the same matter that at the end of the day leads to vulgarity as a way of trying to fit in. Cancelling out what is said by Wood and Skeggs reality television shows must be a force for transmitting positive energy and have a positive educational purpose, while this contradicts with what happens in *Big Brother double trouble 2015* as vulgar seems to be promoted and upheld, hence in such a case of Big Brother it promotes class divisions among participants.

However some post-modernist thinkers such as Michael Foucault and Jacques Derrida have raised an important phenomenon as to why reality television normalise the use of vulgar. For them realities are socially constructed produced by power relations, they critic that vulgar is a rampant subjectivism characteristic hence it is not real. However non postmodernist scholars insist that truth is knotted to power, there is a relationship between truth and power. Concurring with the non-post-modernist scholars the researcher notes that in order to come up with truth and power there is need to go through the channel of vulgar as a way of emancipating one’s self and standing up of yourself, hence the participants of Big Brother use vulgar.

2.1.3 Reality television and humiliation

Humiliation is a state of being reduced to submission or being made low, it is felt when Someone’s social status has been decreased to close to nothing. Mills (2016) refers to reality television as “humiliation TV” because it represents an increase in widely held culture in which taking desire from others misfortune is the ultimate aim. He goes on to highlight that making entertainment out of people’s weaknesses has historically been part of television history. Mills (2016) further postulates that the shows that constitute humiliation TV have been classified by

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programmers and critics alike as reality-based television. This basic information brought about by Mills becomes important in the study in understanding reality TV particularly *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*, how the rules of reality TV shape the behaviour of the participants on the *Big Brother* set. At the end of the day while being humiliated the participants of the reality show attain the celebrity status. The way that reality television has been designed in a way that for the ordinary to be celebrities they have to pass through the channel of humiliation.

In this study humiliation is articulated through the rules that are set for the participants. Mills (2004; 79) states, “Today’s humiliation TV is a different story the financial stakes are high, and participants are subjected to prolonged exposure before the camera. Their failings whether of looks or character are discussed in front of them, and if they can be made to cry, so much the better”. As highlighted by Mills (2004) the main thrust is to bring out the humiliation factor of reality television that has been most of the time over looked by a number of scholars. This is mainly applied to the ordinary who are given rules to adhere to in the process they are humiliated Reiss and Wiltz (2001) then comes in with a different perspective to the approach of humiliation in reality TV programming he explains that reality television provides regular young women with the certainty that they too can be turned into celebrities. They also go on to talk about reality television making ordinary people become so important that those watching will have the excitement that on any day the next celebrities will be them. In such a case some of the celebrities have taken the tendency of taking advantage of the short term celebrity. The participants of *Big Brother* are ordinary people who at the end of the day become celebrities overnight as they are always on the spotlight gaining the audiences likes and appreciation it all comes down to fame.

Reiss and Wiltz (2001) go on to analyse the issues of the competitive nature of the contestants when contending for the cash prize. Given such a circumstance it unveils where humiliation comes from, once reality television is filled with competitiveness one way or the other it results in humiliation. In such a scenario then the question still remains what causes people to participate in such humiliating ways when they know their behaviour is going to be broadcast around the world is it all about the fame of wanting to become a celebrity. Hence this becomes important in understanding *Big Brother*. Interestingly to note is what is brought about by Kavka (2012) asserts that in an effort to manufacture celebrity out of the everyday, much contemporary reality TV

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contains a significant amount of deception, manipulation, misogyny and the approval of morally contentious behaviours ranging from vulgar and voyeurism.

Reiss and Wilts (2001) further asserts that research findings have shown that not only average educated people, but also the highly educated ones, tune in to these reality-based programs for entertainment. Ivonne (2006) concurs with Reiss and Wilts to say such findings reveal that people enjoy watching these programs to see various "real life" ethical dilemmas, as well as to witness how each character's desire of changing his/her ordinary life into extraordinary fame play out. According to these scholars they bring into perspective how dilemmas such as voyeurism and the participants constantly fighting that take place emboldens them to watch more of reality TV with that they feel dilemmas bring out reality.

The study then draws from the problem of reality television making every day ordinary people celebrities and in the process the issue of humiliation is brought to light but it is never much of an issue as it is overlooked. In *Big brother* the audiences are introduced to the housemates and are given information about them in terms of age, careers and marital status hence the audience also become part of the programme from day one so that they can be able to relate with what will be taking place. Mill (2016) in the dissent argues to say shows that constitute humiliation TV have been classified by programmers and critics alike as reality-based television. But there is nothing real about them, if by real we mean programs designed to show ordinary people in the process of going about day to day life. In such a case Mills is in an argument to say those shows that bring about humiliation are the ones that are termed “reality based television” but he is of an argument that this is not the case as in these shows the participants daily routine are designed for them while in a normal case they should be normal going on their day to day activities.

In addition to all this, some critics suggest that reality television satisfies a base human desire to watch others be humiliated, and in turn boost our own self esteem. Conlin (2003) calls it “the pathetic desire to feel superior” In a society where perfection reigns, reality television promotes the underdog, the loser and the unattractive person. Imperfection and defeat are qualities celebrated by reality television (Siegel 2003). The housemates are filmed getting in fights, swearing, drinking frequently and engaging in promiscuous behavior.

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Hill (2005) when he argues to say most of the time ordinary people have no option to complain about the manner in which they have been treated or represented in the reality programs. Simply put they do not have complete autonomy as to how they present themselves under surveillance whatever humiliation they receive they tend to embrace it as they want to gain fame, but this does not happen all the time as the participants tend to use language in form of vulgar as a way of speaking back to the humiliation cast upon them. They are humiliated and reduced to mere participants in quest for money at the end of the day. The present study is not based on the effects of humiliation neither is it based on how reality TV bring about celebrities but it is entirely base on explaining the relationship between reality and performances that at the end of the day brings about humiliation.

Raymond Williams (1976, 1977) notes that the term ‘real’ is used in contrast to ‘imaginary’, to refer to the material existence of something in contrast to an unreal or fantastical world. In a second meaning, Williams points out that ‘real’ contrasts with the ‘apparent’, and refers to a hidden truth that might be revealed beneath the surface of what is communicated. Bignell (2005) asserts that in reality TV, the fascination of seeing something unexpected transpire simulates this experience of liveness, and sometimes the events that the camera witnesses are in fact live. This is quite interesting as participants are able to let out their emotions.

McDaniel (2006) asserts that reality TV does not encourage people to be selfless; it involves people doing anything and everything they can to get what they want. It breeds conniving liars and disloyal behavior. We may think the player’s behavior is shocking and uncalled for, but we watch them and root for them. It is worth noting that the rules of the reality show tend to contribute more to how the participants carry themselves in such a manner. Reality TV may also be characterized as inciting a “moral panic” Thompson (1998), in support of that statement Biltreyst (2004) uses *Big Brother* as an example to say some reality TV shows, like *Big Brother*, quickly became the focus of condemnation and moralization.

Reality TV allows ordinary individuals to gaze at others much like Big Brother. In that way the audiences have become Big Brother ourselves.

2.2 Theoretical framework

There are a number of theories that explain how realism operates in the field of television and reality television programming. The study is guided by various theories and theoretical framework that help the researcher explore performances versus reality and how they are maintained in reality TV. The researcher found the two theories realism theory and framing theory to be quite interesting as they made meaningful understanding as to how reality is created by those producing the show. Realism theory which states that the camera should be objective and neutral, framing theory which also states how something is presented in a frame sates an agenda. These theories helped in the exploring of performances versus reality in the reality show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* as they conveyed how reality is created and how it impacts on the participants of the reality show at the end of the day.

2.2.1 Realism theory

Realism looks at how the world is presented outside the human mind. This study is inspired by the work of realist theorist Andrea Bazin (1967) and is a central theory in the study and is based on neutrality and objectivity. Bazin (1967) advocates for a reasonably conservative use of the camera, which is understood as a device that ought to objectively record the events enacted. For Bazin the camera cannot see a whole lot but at least it tries not to oversight whatever it has chosen to see. Bazin further argues to say manipulation of images such as the suggestive editing which was developed by Eisenstein or the dramatic sets and lighting of German Expressionism stand in the way of releasing film’s true potential for realism. Blakeney (2009; 1) quoting Bazin asserts that “reality and everything that can support it such as sound, deep focus, and invisible editing, define what film should be”. The researcher then notes that reality should be neutral and objective when presenting real life situations hence the theory of realism becomes important to the study as it helps in understanding what constitutes “reality” in reality television programming in the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as in most cases the camera tends to be manipulated which at the end of the day produces performances.

Fourie (1988) then postulates that realist theories are concerned with capacity of films that express reality completely to those who receive the message, therefore giving them a new response. Hence for Fourie television and film can portray and represent reality mimetically, meaning they can imitate what is happening as a way of representing reality (e.g news bulletin

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and documentaries), but can also portray a fictional reality. However Bazin (1967) argues as he advocates a relatively conformist use of the camera and against any device that can be used to influence the audience’s perception of the scene and its potential to remain indefinite and open to clarification. Bazin is against the idea of representing reality mimetically he calls for impartiality and fairness so as to bring out the whole idea of reality as it is. Therefore realism becomes a critical issue in the study in identifying and classifying reality and performances in *Big brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

As the realism theory presumes that reality should be presented as it is the researcher however challenges Bazin as the camera is not always innocent hence reality tends to be distorted by those creating the events. This is supported by Pearson and Simpson (2005) who asserts that the blurring of boundaries between fact and fiction has also led scholars to epistemological debates about realism and the representation of reality. Such relevant basic information can be used in understanding how in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* there has been some modifications towards the way in which reality is portrayed, reality is flouted as somewhat unimportant as the camera is not objective all the time. This is also reinforced by Gombrich (1960) who posits that there is no innocent look, the images perceived is always influenced by people’s knowledge of the world and what is happening around them.

In the view of the art critic Herbert Read juxtaposes realism and expressionism when he talks about expressionism being the basic modes of perceiving and representing the world around. He goes on to differentiate it with realism to say actors sit on their chairs discussing about the weather whilst with expressionism they stand on them and shout about the world. The theory of expressionism is subjective in nature unlike realism which is objective hence distorting how it presents the world for emotional effect in order to evoke moods or idea. Bazin and Eisenstein are in contradiction in that for Eisenstein he talks of expressionism as the use of extreme camera angles, high contrast lighting and distorted perspectives. The fact alone by Eisenstein discredits realism theory due to the fact that the camera is seen as not to be innocent hence what comes out of the camera might be distorted reality. In such a case looking at what has been presented by Eisenstein with regards to *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* the whole idea of “reality” becomes a myth as the camera is said to distort reality hence performances tend to be created in

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such a scenario. This then is buttressed by Malcom X to say media has become a double edged sword in the way reality is presented. It is now in the process of representing reality in our lives instead of presenting reality.

However the theory of realism assumes that the camera is objective and neutral thereby recording events as they are, it also assumes that no editing of events is needed. The assumption of the realism theory is further beckoned by Fourie (1988) who asserts that a film should reproduce life very much as it physically is rather than create a world of its own, should bring the viewer’s closer to real life. In that regard the study intends to test how then realism is made possible when there are a number of factors such as camera angle and lighting that manipulate the outcome of events. In such as case therefore the researcher therefore tries to explain the relationship between reality and performances in reality television programmes. However (Dorr & Kovaric, 1990) postulates that even if content is only representative of reality, rather than reality itself, it is still likely to be judged as real.

2.2.2 Framing Theory

The study is grounded by framing theory which emphasise the role of media in the construction of social reality. The theory was propounded by Goffman (1974) which states that how something is presented to the audience called “the frame” influences the choices people make about how to process that information. There is no reality undiluted, framing theory is in close relation to the agenda setting theory hence some scholars term it the second level agenda setting theory, the media tends to set an agenda as to how the audience should think about a situation in this case how reality is presented as it defines the influence of the salience of characteristics of media exposure on the audiences understanding of news stories. In the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* Big Brother sets an agenda for the housemates, through the stringent and draconian rules that he sets or them. Framing being tied very closely to Agenda Setting theory. Both concentrating on how media lures the populace’s eye to specific issues in this way they set the agenda. Nonetheless Framing takes a step further in the way in which it presents issues which then creates a frame for that information.

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Goffman (1974) goes on to say that there are two distinctions within frames the natural frame and the social frame. Natural frameworks identify events as physical occurrences taking place while social framework is socially driven occurrences, due to whims, goals, and manipulation on the part of social players. The basic precepts of the theory are that framing is an unavoidable part of human communication one way or the other frames are brought in communication. The media are involved in the creation of reality the way that they portray a situation shows that there is a thin line between reality and the media. Gamson (1992) postulates that the manner of framing has a significant impact on how people come to understand social, cultural, and political realities.

Such significant basic knowledge could be borrowed in the context of *Big Brother* in the way in which the show has been presented, the housemates are positioned in a “frame” in order to set an agenda which appears to be real the reason being they try to explain how certain things happen in ordinary life. The basis of framing theory is that the media focuses attention on certain events and places them within a field of meaning. Goffman (1974) asserts that media provide a focus and environment for reporting a story, influencing how audiences will understand or evaluate it. Goffman’s framing theory offers a fundamental dimension to the study as it gives more weight to other parts of the reality show compared to others for example when the housemates will be presented as always getting into fights and indulging in sexual activities. At the heart of the theory is the concept that some aspect of a perceived reality are made more outstanding than others. This framing is done in various context, they do this when they want something to be understood in a certain preferred meaning.

However Gitlin (1980) argues that we frame ‘reality’ in order to negotiate it, manage it and comprehend it. *Big Brother* sets frames for the participants through the rules, these rules tend to represent reality instead of presenting reality, making “reality” performances. In such a situation framing theory then suggests that by selecting what to include and what to exclude the media are then shaping people’s perception of media content. Gitlin further argues to say what makes the world seem natural and real is a media frame, how a communicator frames an issue sets an agenda of characteristics and can influence how we think about it.

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For Gitlin (1980) the way an object on the agenda is framed can have measurable behavioural consequences. Simply put the way *Big Brother* participants are given rules and constantly watched all the time creates a behavioural change in them they are trying to prove their worthiness and live up to the standards of Big Brother. This is what Goffman places under social frames as they are manipulated by the rules.

Kuypers (2002) explains how the public is shaped by media news presentation by stating that “the media use frames which are composed of certain keywords, metaphors, concepts and symbols; they work by highlighting some features of reality over others. With this it can be noted that at the end of the day framing plays a great deal in influencing the behaviours of people on what to think concerning issues that involve certain interpretation. He goes on to say they make some facts rather than others more salient or relevant to the person exposed to the frame.” The view is beckoned by Entman (1993) adopting certain frames means that media select some 'aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and treatment recommendation for the item described'.

However an important postulation in this context *Big Brother* is put in a frame to re-present “reality” instead of presenting reality, in the process of framing reality performances tend to be created as participants actions are manipulated. The theory is important to the study as it unpacks how certain things happen in ordinary life. The fact that frames are not consistent they change over time, hence the framing theory becomes important in understanding framing in the various context as to how the participants are presented.

2.3 Conclusion

Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015 being a worldwide watched reality show it is broad in its approach and to reality. In such a case the researcher has gone to the wits end to uncover literature review and theoretical framework that co-exist with her study with reference to related literature in citing, connecting, comparing, contrasting and critiquing what other scholars say about the area of study of the researcher.

Chapter Three: Research methods and methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed related literature and the theoretical framework of the study. This chapter focuses on the research methods and methodology focusing mainly on qualitative research which was the main research methodology used in obtaining and analysing data. The goal of this chapter is to outline research methods, research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection procedures and data analysis methods as well as data presentation methods, used in the study.

The study sought to explain the relationship between reality and performances on the reality show in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* and to explore the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of housemates on camera. In order to do this the researcher made use of qualitative research since it is informed by ‘what’ and ‘how’ questions. This methodology was chosen as it gives a clear picture of how the media represent reality to the audiences. The study also made use of online archival collection of videos which were obtained on You tube. The methods used helped the researcher come up with findings that enabled her to find out how reality was represented. The study is exploratory as it seeks to explore realities and performances and at the end of the day pass a judgement on what is termed reality and performance and how it affects participant’s behaviours on *Big Brother*.

3.2 Research approach

The research approach that was used for this study was a qualitative and interpretive one. The main reason for using this approach was that it takes into account the context where the research effort is vital. This approach helped the researcher obtain the main objective of the study that is to explore the relationship between reality and performances, which could largely be judged using the researcher’s own interpretation. According to Schurink (2009) this form of research produces data that is rich, subtle and very often quite revealing. More to this Krippendorff (2004) posits that qualitative research has its roots in social science and is concerned with understanding why people behave as they do so as to explore the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of the participants on camera, their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and fears. This

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approach was used as it gave a clear picture of the events, language and actions from the perspective of the participants in bringing out the relationship between reality and performances, and how reality television shapes the behaviour of the participants when faced with different situations and tasks. Most researches that have been conducted by different scholars on reality TV such as Morley (2003), tend to focus on audiences. The current research focuses on participants rather than audiences. More to that Corbin and Strauss (2008) assert that qualitative research enables the researcher to have an inner experience of the participants so as to have an understanding on how meanings are formed. Hence the researcher employed qualitative approach as it helped the researcher get a deeper understanding of the issues being investigated, and it allowed research questions to be answered by providing a rich picture on the actual conditions surrounding realities and performances in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

Bryman (1988:60) asserts that “qualitative research enables the researcher to discover unexpected information that may not have been foreseen at the beginning of the study”. Qualitative research also gave the researcher in depth understanding of the feelings of the participants and provided comprehensive understanding of the world as seen through the eyes of the participants being studied.

3.3 Research Design

The researcher was interested in exploring performances versus reality and how at the end of the day they shape the participants behaviour. In doing this the researcher made use of the case study design. This researcher wanted to make a review on what constitutes reality on reality television programming hence the case study approach proved to be most applicable in such a scenario as it looks at already set plans for getting from here to there.

Yin (2003) asserts that this type of case study is used if one is trying to find an answer on a question that requires to clarify the supposed unplanned links in real life involvements that are too difficult for the study or investigation strategies. This research will also make use of other qualitative methods that include archival research, semiotics analysis, hermeneutics of interpretation and thematic analysis. In doing this the researcher will make use of the *Big Brother Mzansi double 2015* episodes that are obtained on You Tube using purposive sampling by using those episodes that are related to the study.

3.4 Research Population

Trochim (2006) describes population as the universe of units from which the sample is to be selected from. *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* was a huge reality show which ran from March to May 2015, for those three months there were 90 episodes which ran for 24hrs a day. Due to the qualitative nature of the research study, the main objective was to use the accessible population in order to do exploratory research, thereby making the research a success.

3.5 Unit of analysis

Trochim (2006) states that the most important ideas in a research project is the unit of analysis as which is the major entity that you are analyzing in a study. In this study the unit of analysis is each episode of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* extracted online. The focus of analyses was exploring the relationship between reality and performances.

3.6 Sampling

Searle (1995) defines sampling as the selection of units of analysis such as people or institutions for the study. Sampling is a numerical exercise concerned with the selection of individual interpretations intended to show some knowledge about population of concern particularly for the purpose of statistical inference. Samples of different episodes of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* were chosen which were used to explore the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of the participants on camera.

3.6.1 Sample

Determining a satisfactory sample size is one of the most debatable aspect of sampling Wimmer and Dominick (1983). In the current study 6 episodes that were selected constituted the sample size. Out of the 90 episodes that ran for 24 hours a day the researcher scaled the sample size to only 10 episodes of not more than 5mins. The reason for this was to come up with a useful and manageable size at the end of the day that clearly revealed the researchers objective to explain the relationship between reality and performances in reality television programmes and explore the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of the participants on camera. A small sample size was used as it made it easy to obtain high quality information.

3.6.2 Sampling techniques

Wimmer and Dominick (1983:53) defines a sample as, “a subset or segment of the population that is taken to be representative of the population. In this study the researcher employed convenience and purposive sampling methods. Best and Khan (1993) maintain that sampling is not a haphazard process but rather a thoughtful way and means of selecting subjects of research.

3.6.2.1 Purposive sampling

According to Smith *et al* (1999) purposive sampling is that sampling method which is based on the judgement of a researcher regarding the characteristics of a representative sample. Vaughn *et al* (1996) also assert that the objective of purposive sampling is to focus on a participant’s ability to contribute to the study. In this case the researcher focused on episodes that answered the research questions and the objectives of the study by using her instincts in choosing episodes that had an element of reality and performance so as to be able to explore the relationship between reality and performances. The researcher purposively sampled different episodes on different days as the housemates went about their day to day activities by closely monitoring how they carried about themselves particularly looking at their use of language. The research purposively sampled the episodes deemed as real and performed which made it easy for the researcher as the episodes were already available online.

Hagan (2006) however brings out the limitation that can be experienced when using this technique that is the lack of wide generalizability, since the researcher would be knowledgeable of the elements selected. The researcher then collected data that she deemed relevant for the study.

3.6.2.2 Convenience sampling

Higginbottom (2004) defines a convenience sample as consisting of participants who are readily available and easy to contact. In light of the study convenient sampling was useful to the researcher in that it conveniently drew the 6 episodes online that were readily available and they had an element of reality and performance making this kind of sample convenient. Convenience sampling is a non-systematic approach that helps the researcher as it allows respondents to self-

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select into the sample. Convenience sampling for this study is the best to use due to the fact that the episodes are taken online hence we use episodes that are already there.

3.7 Methods of data gathering

Duffy (1986) contends that data collection involves applying the measuring instruments to the sample or cases selected for the investigation. Geiger and Moore (2011) postulates that data can be gathered from two sources, the secondary source or from primary source. The study relied on secondary source which is described as information that would be already available. The researcher made use of archival research which was collected on you tube. Once on you tube the researcher was able to locate and select the episodes she wanted as they were all posted on the *Big Brother* site.

3.7.1 Archival research

Geiger and Moore (2011) asserts that archival research is the use of generated information in either a library, a safe place or a website for references, access to information from the past or for detective work. Archival research is used when an individual wants to get a comprehensive picture of past events and it gives detailed information. The researcher made use of archival research which was the major source of data collection method in the study, as it uncovered recorded episodes that were associated with the study. The method was ideal as the selected episodes were already archived online hence the researcher selected ten episodes. From the episodes that were available online the researcher purposively selected the episode. The reason why the researcher chose archival research was that *Big Brother* recorded all the episodes and stored them online hence it was easy access for the researcher to acquire them online.

The researcher used You tube to obtain the information which was found on *the Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* site from the month of March 2015 to May 2015, and from there only 10 episodes were selected.

3.8 Methods of data Analysis

The methods that were employed in the analyses of data were semiotic analysis and hermeneutics of interpretation.

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

3.8.1 Semiotic analysis

The term “semiotics” was coined by an American philosopher and physicist Charles Sanders Peirce. For Raymond Williams semiotics is the study of everything that can be used for communication words, images, traffic signs, flowers, music, medical symptoms, and much more. Media content is composed of sets, of signs that have meaning attached to them. Long and Wall (2009) posit that whether or not we can be sure that our interpretations are convincing shared by other readers or analysts and not based simply upon a very personal and aberrant reading of the text, there is no guarantee that an analysis is not partial. This study employed semiotics analysis to identify reality and performances in *Big Brother* by focusing on the house mates use of language and their dress code as to what message the housemates were conveying. It helped provide an analyses of how meaning is produced through the use of language “vulgar” as a sign or icon which is noted by Saunders in his semiotic analysis when he asserts that, Icon is the sign that looks like what it signifies. The use of semiotics aided the researcher understand the use of signs in the meaning making process to obtain the objective of the study in exploring the role of reality television in shaping the behaviour of the participants on camera. With the understanding of semiotics it is not just about signs and symbols, at the same time ideology and power still make up what we term semiotics. Hence the housemates and participants use the language and dressing as a way of expressing power. To understand how signs and codes shape reality and performances the researcher made use of language and dress code of the participants.

3.8.2 Hermeneutics of interpretation

The researcher also made use of hermeneutics of interpretation as a method of analysing data. This method was mainly used in the bible to study difficult texts. Thiselton (2009) asserts that, it explores how we read, comprehend, and handle texts especially those written in a different connection or framework of life not the same from our own. This method seeks understanding rather than offer an explanation. This approach was then used in understanding and answer the question of what constitutes “reality” in reality television programming *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. Hermeneutics of interpretation brings out the aspect that in order to understand a meaning we have to draw framework from which it is coming from, hence the method was relevant in this study in understanding the rules and how they impacted on the participant’s behaviour as the context of where “reality” was coming from was understood. Now it was bringing out how the “reality” impacted on the participants.

3.9 Data presentation methods

After the collected data has been analysed, the findings were then presented thematically. Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set. From the use of thematic presentation the researcher will extract the key concepts of how reality is actually conveyed and as a result how it impacts on behaviour change.

3.9.1 Thematic analysis

Gilbert (2011) asserts that thematic presentations are very much inductive and expounds that the themes that are used are a reflection of what has been researched and not imposed by the researcher. The data that was collected from archives by the researcher was used to clarify the themes. This was done so as to interpret and provide clarification to the findings of the researcher in exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. Thematic presentation helped the researcher come up with type of topic important to the research.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Baran (2000) defines ethic as well founded values and morals of rights and wrongs that suggest what humans ought to do in terms of moralities, responsibilities and benefits to the society. The researcher will make sure she stays away from plagiarism by acknowledging sources of other scholars study.

3.11 Conclusion

At the end of the day the researcher has managed to explain the research approach and design and how they impact on the research and also draw out the unit of analysis, population and the sampling methods. Looking at how these sampling methods strengthen the study and how much they contribute to the study. The researcher also went to the extent of covering methods of data analyses for the study which were discourse analyses, content analyses and semiotic analyses. Finally coming up with data presentation methods for the study.

Chapter Four: Political economy and organisational Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the origins and historical background of M-Net, the broadcaster of *Big Mzansi Brother Double Trouble*. The chapter also unveils the vision, mission statement and links with other organizations. It will also discuss the funding mechanism of the organization which is of great significance as it points out the political economy of the media as to how frames are set in the reality show.

4.2 Historical background of M-Net

M-Net is an abbreviation for Electronic Media Network, it is a subscription funded television channel meaning audiences subscribe in order to view television shows. It is a privately owned television channel which was established by Nationale Pers (Naspers) an Afrikaans company in the year 1986 and is broadcast in South Africa as well as internationally via the pay preview digital satellite television (DSTV). M-Net is headquartered in Johannesburg. According to Chalaby (2005) M-Net was the only terrestrial channel and only broadcast in South Africa. It only began broadcasting in 1986 breaking several decades of SABC’s broadcasting monopoly. During the years it has completely advanced and has enlarged to broadcast local and international programming including entertainment, children's series, sport and movies. It is a sister company to Multi-Choice. M-Net began its subscription broadcast service via an encrypted signal on terrestrial frequencies (Howitz 2004).

During the early 1990’s M-Net added a second analogue channel called Community Services Network (CSN). In 1991 it was awarded the first African licenses in Namibia and Botswana and thus launched into Africa. In 1993 it was divided into two companies, one dealing with the delivery of entertainment channels, the other overseeing subscriber management, signal distribution, and cell phone operations. With the introduction of Multi Choice a number of channels have so far been created which complement the original M-Net channel. These include M-Net Series, M-Net Edge and M-Net movies among others, which are now available on DSTV.

Over the years the broadcasting company has diversified its channels. They now amount to over 50 channels. M-Net created the continent’s first dedicated African film channel Africa Magic,

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which has now grown to broadcasts 24 hours a day. M-Net has been able to broadcast to 1.23 million subscribers in 41 African countries bringing to its subscribers a number of original international reality programs adaptations such as *Big Brother*, *Idols* and *Deal or No Deal* (Oren and Shahaf 2012).

M-Net has been at the cutting edge of creating African forms of global interactive and reality based shows like *Big Brother*. In the year 2003 the principal *Big Brother Africa* show was launched. Marwaw and Sender (2011) postulates that M-Net knows about the more extensive African market and has even propelled a variety of programs that are aimed at audiences across the continent, among these is the African adaptation of US Television channel lip sync battle.

M-Net was the first to screen movies without any advertisements. Thussu (2007) asserts that channels provided by M-Net include the interactive reality TV show, *Big Brother* which in 2003 was produced as *Big Brother Africa*, with an all-African cast living together in an inclined house until all but one is eliminated. This is where *Big Brother South Africa* reality show emerged from what is known as *Big Brother UK*.

The reason why it is important for the researcher to dwell much on the history of M-Net is because it the official broadcaster of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* and it therefore makes meaningful sense to understand the broadcaster before getting into details with the reality television show and how it operates. The history provided by the researcher helps in understanding where *Big Brother* started from and where it is headed.

4.3 The nature of the organization’s core business

M-Net’s core business is to provide fun filled movies, sports, drama, music and reality shows. Super brands (2007) asserts that the channel does not transmit any news programming, although it does run some current affairs programmes. The channel offers both international and local content. It has been successful in providing its audiences with entertainment as new channels are always brought about.

4.4 Vision

The way M-Net sets their vision is a clear indication of who’s who in the broadcasting process. Their vision is being an African storyteller and in the process set a benchmark for the continent’s content industry. In light of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* this becomes questionable as the participants are given rules to adhere to they end up telling the story set by the producers hence

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reality becomes one sided, in the sense that only M-Net being the official broadcaster communicates with the audiences not the participants communicating with the audiences as well. In a way the housemates are positioned in a “frame” in order to set an agenda which appears to be real. With all this happening this becomes a problem as the participants are no longer telling their own story but that of M-Net because their day to day activities are set for them and they are given rules which they are supposed to abide to. The concern of base and super structure is now brought about, those who own the means of production are the dominant classes and are influential to the social institutions. What benchmark is then set for other media organisations? Ownership patterns come into play, he who pays the piper plays the tune. In other words this means that what the owner say goes. The fact that M-Net is privately owned gives the owner huge powers to control what happens in the reality show.

However with all this happening, M-Net through *Big Brother* has managed to set a benchmark for other media industries as it has managed to expand into different channels and now broadcasts both locally and internationally.

4.5 Objectives and mission statement

In understanding *Big Brother* there is need to understand the objectives and mission statement of its broadcaster M-Net. The broadcaster seeks to showcase stars on the channel. In most cases the selection method is done by the producers to find out who is fit to be part of the reality show. There is need to question and problematize this in trying to understand the criteria which is used in doing this selection. Pitout (2005) postulates that in the case of *Big Brother South Africa*, the producers tried to alter the setting to give it a South African flavour. In doing this they ended up coming with a setting that was typical of a white lifestyle.

It is in their quest to showcase stars, that the producers of the show come up with rules that ground the participants. These rules at the end of the day shape the participants behaviours as they try to adhere to the rules. The whole idea of rules tends to distort reality as they are always trying to fit in and prove themselves. In the process participants behaviours are changed. The media being capitalistic in nature decide what it is to be a star and what it takes to be a star. In *Big Brother* at the end of the day the ordinary become stars, they want to make money out of the Ordinary, they shape them to act, live, dress according to their standards. More so in the process

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of creating stars the issue of humiliation is brought about as the participants are made to feel low and are reduced to submission. Hence this is what Mills (2006) refers to reality television as “Humiliation TV”.

M-Net happens to have an objective of creating content that people talk about however it is problematic because the programming is biased on the western use of English language. This is what is critiqued by Leaves when he talks about mass culture and mass society with the coming in of Americanization and how it has normalized the English culture and language. The view by Leaves is also beacons by Orwell (1946) where he postulates about the Englishness of culture. Simply put he was saying everything is now English oriented it is clear that we are being Americanized.

4.6 Core Values

Danesi (2006) states that, core values of an organization are those that hold foundation on which workers perform work and conduct themselves. According to super brands (2007) M-Net is committed to being upfront about expressing opinions, taking decisions and accepting responsibility. It strives to be brave, which combines being adventurous, innovative and often provocative but never bland. Jersely (2002) is in contradiction to that as he notes that some of the programs create an almost obsessive public fervor, especially reality shows like *Big Brother* which have turned into major media events where the popular and everyday representation of reality are met by severe elite criticism and moral rejection for its commercial infotainment version of reality. In terms of *Big Brother* rules are laid down for the participants with that happening the broadcaster does not adhere to their values everything that is done by the participants is at the end of the day somehow performed as they try to adhere to the rules hence the idea of being adventurous, innovative and provocative is not addressed.

4.7 M-Net Motto

M-Net motto “where the magic lives”

Media are not innocent at all. They have hidden agendas since it is mainly focused on making profit which means that chances are high that it will set agendas that will increase the viewership or consumption of the media in this case being *Big Brother*. M-Net motto “where the magic

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lives” magic is fake. It is not something real so in the case of *Big Brother* nothing then is real, it is all about the money. This then cancels out the “reality” aspect of *Big Brother*.

However on the other hand it cannot be overlooked that M-Net tries by all means to capture the magic element by having a number of channels ranging from entertainment, sports, music and cartoons for the kids, hence bringing out the magic factor as it is able to capture every audience. Put in another way the magic being talked about seems to be applicable in reality shows which distorts the whole idea of being real as magic does not necessarily mean something is real. Magic should be brought out by way of being real not faked or constructed reality.

4.8 Political economy of M-Net

In order to understand ownership and funding mechanism the most important thing is to understand that media are capitalist in nature. Curran and Gurevitch (2000) asserts that political economy is the study of power relations between capitalist’s enterprises and public intervention in the production, distribution and consumption of media products. Schechter (2014) asserts that M-Net is controlled by an Afrikaner media conglomerate. The fact that M-Net is controlled by an Afrikaner Koos Bekker hence the ideologies are of the Afrikaner. Taking for example since M-Net is owned by an Afrikaner they have their own channel kyNet which only features Afrikaans and does not make use of subtitles to accommodate other languages. The one who owns the means of production and with what effect on the content, plays a significant role on the content that is produced, hence the ideologies are that of the Afrikaner, as what is stated by Marx (1867) in every epoch ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling class. At the end of the day the views of the world are that of the ruling class, the mode of production is determined by the capitalist thereby creating class ideologies. In this case what is produced by M-Net is influenced by the owner.

In terms of *Big Brother* the owner is the one who sets rules for the participants to adhere to and also the themes are chosen by the owner, the participants have no say they are taken as empty slates recruited into subjects by doing what the owners want. The media has become increasingly corporate through the process of privatization and the introduction of competition this creates false consciousness. *Big Brother* being privately owned the government has no say it operates as a free market. Media begin central in the constructing of the world, while representing reality they there influenced by ownership patterns.

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Private ownership is central to capitalism and is profit driven just like the case of M-Net which is privately owned and is concentrated in the hands of a few. For any organization to keep afloat it needs funds be it locally or internationally hence, funding becomes a fundamental aspect in any media organization as it helps in the innovation and stability of a company. M-Net works hand in glove with Endemol who is their producer. Apart from Endemol there are a number of sponsors such as Samsung, Coca-Cola, Guinness, and MTN and even countries like Ghana also take part in sponsoring M-Net. Wasko et al (2011; 63) asserts that “to get buyers and sellers into the market, governments needed to provide easy entry to and exit from the market”.

However Fourie (2001) postulates that advertisers form the base superstructure with just the same influence as the owners. Put in another way this can therefore be noted that advertising becomes an important aspect in the funding of an organization as it is the life blood of any media organization. Storey (1994) concurs to say advertisers are concerned and interested in the mass media that attract consumers and communicate content that is amenable to consumption. The way *Big Brother* is designed that keeps its viewers glued on the television by providing drama and action that sustains the viewers interest all the time. This drama is brought about by those creating the content.

4.9 M-Net’s place in the cultural industry

Herman and Chomsky (2000) assert that the media are used as a tool for propaganda on several instances but what differs is the medium used at that particular time. M-Net does not operate in a vacuum it has created strong relations with other service distributors such as Multi Choice so as to maintain the smooth flow of media information. M-Net is concentrated into the hands of a few as it is owned by Naspers and has merged with Multi Choice. Apart from Multi Choice Mawran (2011) asserts that M-Net was a joint venture of 4 newspaper publishers, thereby creating what is known as cross ownership. Fourie (2001) notes that the media has power to guide our perception and interpretation of reality they do this through the use of power. In such a case M-Net being the biggest media company it is able to expand its productive activity to incorporate other media organizations locally and internationally.

M-Net has integrated with a number of international media organizations motivated by capitalist agendas, it incorporated Namibia into a transnational joint venture in 1993, this marked the

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beginning of DSTV (Direct Satellite) a subsidiary of Multi Choice, Paradip at el (2002) asserts that in Television M-Net teamed up with Kalahari holdings in setting up Multi choice Namibia. More so, due to that M-Net has managed to acquire over 1.23 million subscribers in 41 countries over the African continent. With this M-Net ensures to acquire national and international TV formats. Even South African cell phone providers such as Vodacom and MTN also market their products on M-Net, this has helped increase the market considerably. *Big Brother* hardly has advertisements breaks so the advertisers of a particular product tend to showcase their product during the running of the show, take for example when it is alcohol the participants will drink the same brand of alcohol throughout the whole show that way they are advertising their liquor.

4.10 Foreign Institutions

According to Oren and Shahaf (2012) M-Net’s role in the global Television franchise business can well be understood in light of South Africa’s outward looking media industries. Most of the reality shows that are broadcast on M-Net are an African versions of international versions. *Big Brother Mzansi* is an African version of *Big Brother UK*, they tend to acquire ideas form international trends, and then producers customize the location to give it a South African setting. In other words M-Net has become Americanized as it is profit driven and sources ideas from international.

M-Net has established and consolidated regional partners, Kalahari holdings in setting up Multi Choice Namibia. This consolidation at the end of the day leads to the formation of acquisitions and merges. For example in the case of M-Net it merged with Multi Choice which is their distributor platform. This being an advantage in that it increases market share and the reduction of financial risk. More to that it has also managed to penetrate into the TV market across Sub Sahara Africa Namibia and Botswana, practicing what is called horizontal integration which is the merging of companies in the same line of production. M-Net has expanded into regional and global markets to compete with the biggest media conglomerates in the world. Oren and Shahaf (2012) further argues that South African media conglomerates such as Naspers have taken advantage of the less tapped African markets covering areas in internet, pay TV, print and technology.

However Ndlela (2012) postulates that M-Net offers a mix of programming most of which is acquired from overseas and broadcast to its subscribers in South Africa and other African

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countries, either through M-Net terrestrial or satellite distribution through its sister company Multichoice. This then becomes a weakness as at the end of the day as it leads to the absence of locality due to convergence, with the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* the formats are those of *Big Brother UK* there is lack of locality.

Publics are important stakeholders in an organization’s decision making processes. These can be participants, audiences and advertisers. M-Net makes sure it always keeps its public happy so as to maintain loyalty, in abide maintain public loyalty it has engaged in a number of projects in creating new channels and social responsibility initiatives and keeps upgrading. M-Net is also involved in social responsibility initiatives such as reach for a dream where it gives back to the society by landing a hand in helping individual dreams come true.

Jacobs (2007) postulates that *Big Brother* is one of its recent successful reality show that has created a major turn up on M-Net. As a way of getting in touch with the public M-Net has engaged in a corporate social investment Magic in motion academy. As their motto states where the “magic lives” they believe that for them nothing is grey hence in this academy they train their own students in drama, film and film creation. Somehow they do this in a way they are the ones benefiting from all this as they don’t have to source for film producers they create their very own.

4.11 How Departments Mobilize to Achieve Organisational Goals

M-Net believes in team work so as to achieve the organisations goals and objectives. There are a number of departments which include sports, cartoons, movies and reality shows all of them work together in creating entertainment for their audiences. This makes them stand out from other broadcasters, in creating fun filled entertainment which contain the likes of *Big Brother* which has now expanded to broadcast both locally and internationally. Working together of these departments has created strong relations to the extent that the organization has managed to expand internationally. They do this through sourcing and coming up with innovative marketing concepts which are provided by the marketing department, which help in building the brand name M-Net.

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The channel is headed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Yolisa Pahle whose duty is to make sure that all departments work together in harmony and entertainment is distributed on time. This tends to strengthen the organization in that everyone gives a hand in the brainstorming of ideas.

A number of channels are headed by different directors and producers. Importantly there is the director of M-Net channels Jan Du Plessis who is responsible for entertainment channels which include M-Net, M-Net Edge, M-Net City and M-Net Family. In providing a number of channels M-Net is at an advantage that it opens up to new markets hence channelling money for the organization that helping in cash flow. These directors and producers work hand in glove to achieve the goal of the organization that of providing the best entertainment.

The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Russell Edwards who is responsible for all the financial planning and monitoring of the financial performance and anything related to finance and legal requirements. As *Big Brother* is a pay per view channel it faces a lot of threats in terms of price changes so as to accommodate all levels of audiences. At the same time this helps in the boosting the channel in terms of growth rate and profitability. Thereby allowing them to channel profits to other channels that lack funding

However with regards to all this the departments working together, the weakness is lack of locality this is due to the fact that M-Net gets its ideas internationally and fails to add a little mix of South African flavour. At the same time as it is a pay-per view it is affected by the government regulations which charge higher tax this becomes a threat for the organization as they themselves are in the business of making money hence do not need another source milking money from them.

The strength as an organization is that it is able to reduce risks as it has invested in a number of channels and also has practiced horizontal integration thus reducing risks. This thereby increases revenue and profit for the organization.

4.12 Conclusion

The chapter has articulated the historical background of M-Net, who are the official broadcaster of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. Despite the increasing, worldwide attention of reality television and its wider impact on the audiences, there is still very little scholarly research on the subject in terms of how the organization works. The researcher however managed to get

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an understanding of their main objectives and its place in the cultural industry this helping in understanding how it came up with the reality show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* and their motive behind the reality show.

Chapter Five: Data presentation and analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data and interprets it in terms of performances versus reality in the context of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*. The study has so far covered the introduction chapter giving the background of the study, objectives and the research problem. The study went on to explore related literature and the theoretical framework. The researcher has also explored research methods and methodology. Data collected is analysed in this chapter using a thematic approach. This entails identifying and classifying data according to its relevance in answering the research questions guiding the study. The study sets out to answer the following questions:

1. What aspects of *Big brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* constitute reality and performance?
2. How do the rules of reality TV shape the behaviour of the participants on the Big Brother set?
3. What constitutes “reality” in reality television programming?

Theories discussed in Chapter Two are also imbedded into this discussion to ascertain the extent to which emerging data confirms or challenges the central principles of the theories.

5.2 The role of reality TV rules in shaping on screen behaviour

Behaviour is a socially constructed phenomenon. It emphasises the way in which individuals conduct themselves towards others. The study found out that *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* is laden with evidence of the social construction of behaviour. One can conclude from watching the show and understanding its rules, that the behaviour/acting exhibited by housemates on screen is in conformity with the show’s script or rules, much like in TV drama and feature film. The housemates, who in this assessment become actors, are somehow manipulated by being given strict rules to adhere to which at the end of the day shape their behaviour on screen. Fig 1 below is a screenshot extracted from the show, when housemates were being given the rule book. The rule book being a compilation of rules governing the participants on how they should conduct themselves.

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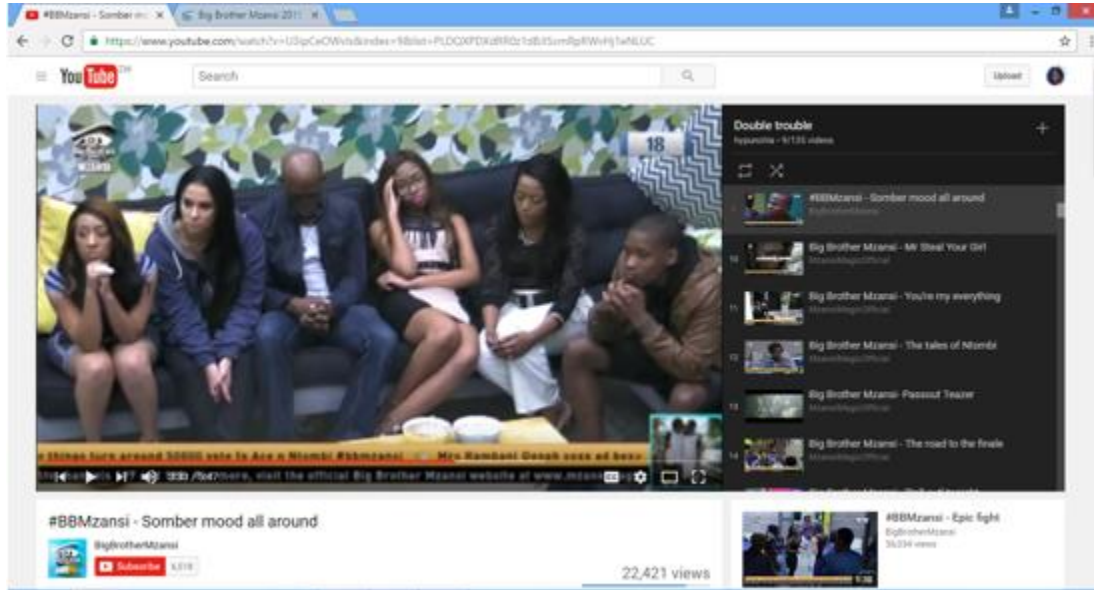


Figure 1 Housemates being given the rule book.

Rules have always been negotiated in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* but they bind the participants in terms of behaviour and oneness. The rules are presented in a rule book by Big Brother who is always watching their every move all the time. The Big Brother is akin to one described by George Orwell (1949) in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-four*, who “sees and hears everything”. The researcher observed that this omnipresence by Big Brother on the participants’ leads them to conform according to the rules imposed upon them hence leading to shaping of behaviours which largely become performances.

There is a rule book that has all the rules listed. Big Brother himself is the one who reads out the rules to the participants or at times one of the housemates is assigned to remind the housemates on the rules of the reality show. The rules are always instilled on the house mates so that they do not forget. Some of the rules are:

1. Participants are not allowed to speak back when Big Brother is talking, even though they may disagree with what is being said.
2. Housemates are not allowed to sleep during the day.
3. Housemates are not allowed to use hate speech.
4. Housemates should wear their name tags all the time.

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5. Violent physical contact is not allowed.

This clearly reveals the amount of power and hold Big Brother has on the participants, they are not able to freely express their feelings which at the end of the day becomes a weakness of the reality show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble*. In such a case the study found out that the participants were treated as subjects who are empty slates recruited into positions, as they did not have free will to say how they felt having no chance to speak back. The study suggests that in terms of these rules they end up drawing some kind of boundary between those with power and the ordinary being the housemates in their use of vulgar. The same view brought about by the researcher tallies with Mbembe (2001) who poses that vulgar is used by the ordinary people as an emancipatory tool. The housemates would use the vulgar amongst themselves at one time Chelsea was cursing and saying “you black son of a bitch” that was racist as she was coloured and saying it to her fellow black housemate. The behaviours of the housemates were shaped in that they ended up using vulgar/language as a way of speaking back so that they can be heard and as a way of emancipating themselves from the strict rules imposed on them. With all this the researcher in her interaction with the video clips noted that reality TV rules greatly impacted on shaping on screen behaviour and observed that behaviours were shaped in terms of change of language.

The researcher also found out that the participants of the reality show were grounded by the rules that were imposed on them hence they had to conform, thus distorting the whole idea of reality. There was a rule that stated that housemates were not allowed to display overt behaviour, meaning they should not show openly show sexual behaviour they were also not allowed to sleep during the day, the housemates were clearly told that they were chosen to entertain the audiences hence they should stick to that. In such a scenario the research found out that the rules shaped the participants behaviour in that they started being passive and docile. This passivity did not reveal any reality as the housemates were doing it for the screen and only wanted to avoid being eliminated. This is what is asserted by Hill (2005) when he argues that most of the time ordinary people have no option to complain about the manner in which they have been treated or represented in the reality programs.

As highlighted in the previous chapter that the views of the world are that of the ruling class, the mode of production is determined by the capitalist thereby creating class ideologies. In this case

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the researcher found out that the ideas were of Big Brother who was told what to say by the owner of the reality show, this revealed that Big Brother resembles the base and superstructure model. They tend to create ideologies by imposing rules on the housemate, these rules have a hold on how the participants should live, eat and think, which at the end of the day leads to shaping of behaviours that resemble ruling class beliefs, such as the use English language as the dominant language. Reality TV plays a significant role in shaping on screen behaviours. This discovery in the research adds a new dimension to previous knowledge about reality television. For example, the researcher having found out that reality TV plays a huge role in the shaping of participants behavior on screen, which means that if we rely on Huff (2004) definition of reality TV as “humiliation TV”, it would make even more sense to say rules shape on screen behaviours a in the process of adhering to these rules they are humiliated.

Inspite of the data presented and discussed above, there was also evidence in the study to suggest that Big Brother rules did not always shape housemates’ behaviour. Sometimes inspite of the rules that were foisted on them, the participants did the direct opposite of what the rules had said. This is demonstrated by the scene that took place between Khali who used hate speech cursing his fellow housemate Mathias, “*fuck you and your four nieces the only reason you are friends with black people is because they feel sorry for you, umsunuwako (ass hole)*” using racist hate speech while some of the housemates were laughing about it as they seemed to enjoy what was happening. The rules in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* had stated that there would be no use of hate speech and overt behaviour, anyone who used hate speech would be disqualified from the show. Some housemates actually broke them as a way of expressing their frustrations. Simply put the researcher noted that rules do not necessarily shape behaviours they are also meant to be broken in order to reveal one’s true self.

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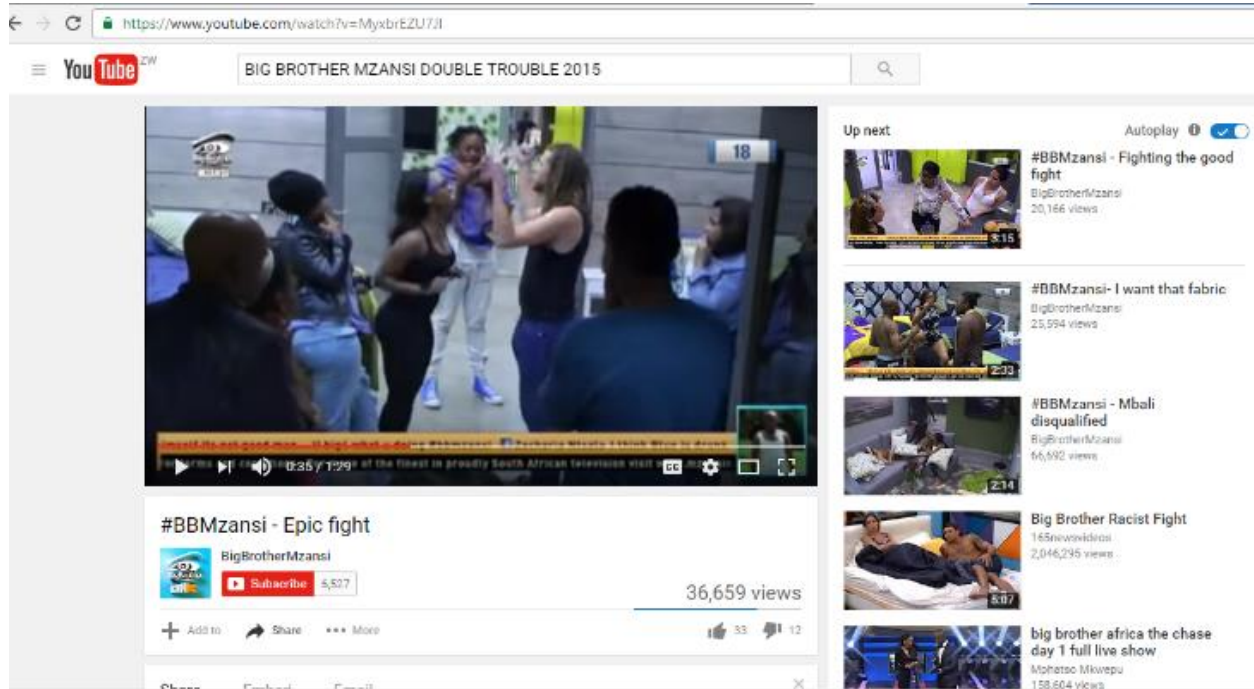


Figure1.1 Housemates Khali and Mathias fighting

Housemates are told the sayable and the unsayable leading to the whole idea of reality being distorted and in the process behaviours are changed as they try to abide by the rules. It becomes hard for the participants to be their normal self as there are rules, but then despite the rules the housemates tend to break them as a way of revolting. Considering that this is supposed to be a reality show, it should show the participants behaviour as they are but with rules it becomes hard to be real as they are always trying to prove themselves that they are worthy to be part of the show. The research found out that the rules contributed to change of behaviour in the reality show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

This then contributes to the researcher’s findings in understating how behaviours are created and changed in the reality show *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as it brings out the fact that “reality” is not always “real”. There are some factors that manipulate the outcome of reality leading to change of behaviour. We are supposed to see the participants in their natural setting being who they really are. The researcher managed to understand why the participants used vulgar and inappropriate dressing, the housemates would spend better half of the day wearing bras it’s inappropriate because it is an undergarment and should not be revealed all the time this was somehow their way of trying of revolt against the rules.

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The findings challenge the works of some critics such as (Nabi 2003; Hill 2005; Mills 2016) who talk of the audiences being the only ones affected by the reality show and they overlook the participants of the show. The research revealed that participants were also affected as they had to change their behaviours due to the rules imposed on them thus creating a world of their own which is a contradiction from the realism theory. As what the researcher had mentioned at the beginning of the research (see introduction of chapter 1) the study was seeking to examine how these reality shows tended to create new creatures from the housemates. Instead of being real, the characters are always trying to prove themselves. The researcher managed to achieve that by drawing a conclusion that rules in the reality show shape behaviour patterns.

An interesting finding by the researcher was that change of behaviours by the participants resulting from the rules somehow in the process humiliated them they felt weak hence revolted to language as a way of speaking back to the rules that were imposed on them. This there by presenting the participants as passive as they had no say at all they took everything that they were told as it was, there were not given space for negotiations. The only time the participants were given time to say how they felt was during diary sessions when they had to report the proceedings of the day no rules were changed that will accommodate them.

The theory of realism as stated by Fourie (1988) asserts that a film should reproduce life very much as it physically is rather than create a world of its own. At the same time it should bring the viewers closer to real life. The viewers are only brought closer to real life if what they watch they can be able to relate to, but if the participants are trying to conform to what they are told then it becomes biased reality and the whole idea of reality becomes null and void. The behaviours of housemates are impacted by the imposition of rules which translate to performances. All too often the participants have no say. They are directed on how to present themselves by the rules.

5.3 “Reality” a misnomer

Reality has always been a contested terrain with many definitions coming up in discussions of that concept. Reality television is unscripted real life circumstances that frequently feature ordinary people going about their day to day activities (Read 2003). The research found out that reality has somehow been distorted through the use of camera angles and the tendency of scripting the day to day activities of the participants as they are being told their tasks beforehand.

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

The tasks are either given to the head of house to read out to their fellow housemates, or at times Big Brother himself calls them in the dining room and reads them out to them. An episode when the participants were assigned to act as cave men and women for the three consecutive days they were not allowed to use cutlery and sleep on their beds (fig 2) this proved not to be realistic as the housemates tended to forget that they were acting. With all this happening reality becomes fabricated, therefore the name ‘reality’ itself may be a misnomer when describing Big Brother as it is supposed to be unscripted and natural but in this case it is the direct opposite.

Fig 2 below is a screenshot of a video clip extracted from YouTube showing the housemates in their acting mode where they are supposed to act as cave man and women for three consecutive days. The acting totally cancels reality and places it in line with performances.

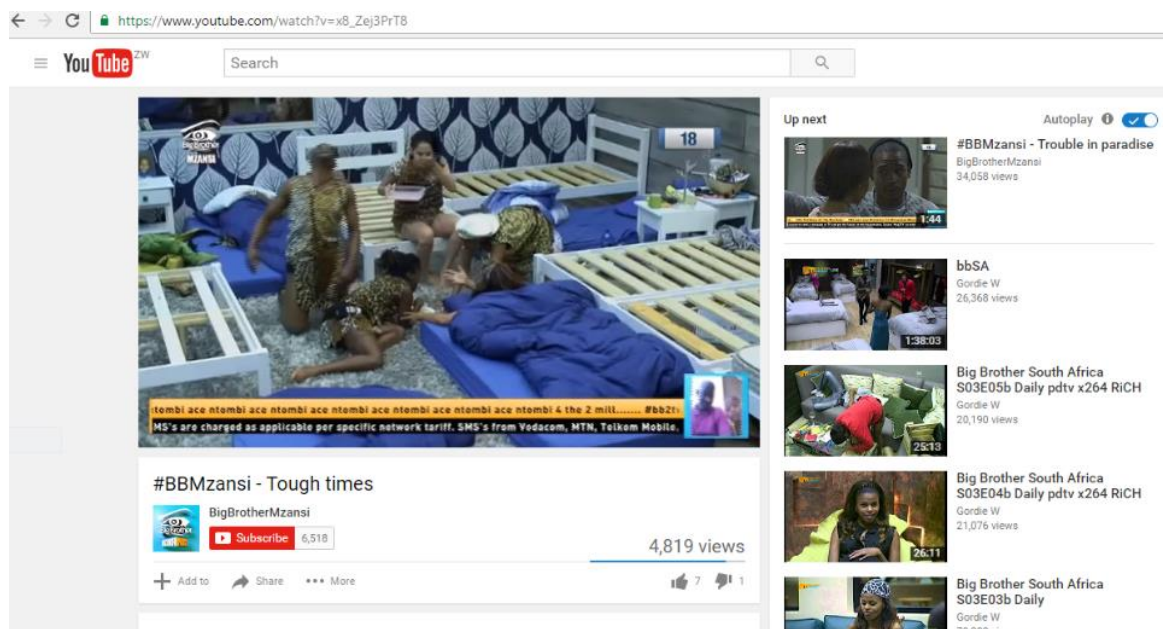


Figure 2 Housemates acting as caveman and women

What the researcher then noticed from the clips of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* was that the whole idea of reality did not come out as the name suggested, the story lines were generated way ahead of time. The whole week the participants knew their tasks of what they were supposed to do, hence they were acting in some way; the reason being that Big Brother told them that they should always stay in character all the time. The problem of all this becomes that the participants tended to forget and would find themselves using cutlery and some of them even sleeping on beds which they were told not to use. The fact that their day to day activities had

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been designed makes them just unreal. Gitlin (1980) coincides to say what makes the world seem natural and real is a media frame, how a communicator frames an issue sets an agenda of characteristics and can influence how we think about it. Simply put the media frame what is happening to make it all seem and sound real in terms of how the participants will behave.

The line of thought generated by the researcher are in deep contrast with Bignell (2005) as he asserts that in reality TV, the fascination of seeing something unexpected transpire simulates understanding of liveness. What Bignell is putting forward is that “reality” is real and unexpected. In this context it has been shown to be not so true as everything is planned. There seems to be no liveliness as the participants know that they are being watched and they are doing this for money. Somewhere somehow they are in the process of impressing both the audiences and the producers in order to get votes and the reality becomes a misnomer in such a situation.

Read (2003) in his definition of reality television postulates that reality television is a genre of television programming presented as an unscripted program usually featuring ordinary people. The researcher found out that that definition presented by Read is in contradiction with what happens in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as the day to day activities are scripted or rather premeditated hence the whole idea of reality becomes fabricated. The participants wake up knowing their roles and duties for the day and how they are supposed to carry themselves. If it means not using cutlery then so be it.

However being in character seemed to be hard for the participants as they are not used to acting. An incident when one of the housemates Mbali actually forgot what she was supposed to do and used the cutlery instead. This reveals that they could not keep up with performances and the fact that the real is genuine. This distorting the whole idea of “reality”. Hence in such a scenario the researcher observed that reality becomes a misnomer, once a person is told what to do there is a possibility of forgetting as they are not being real.

The researcher discovered that the term reality has been over used in a number of shows including *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* to an extent that it has now somehow lost its true meaning, the context that it is now used is just imaginary. The researcher suggest that “reality” is imaginary it has been wrongly placed where it does not fully qualify as it has become

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

one sided. Some aspects of being a reality show such as surveillance are brought about but there are some as well that tend to be overlooked such as being real and desisting from scripted roles. The episode when Big Brother tells the housemates that they were chosen to entertain South Africa. The participants are put in frames, situations where they cannot get out of this being a way of the media to influence the viewer’s decision on how they process information. Goffman (1974) asserts that media provide a focus and environment for reporting a story, influencing how audiences will understand or evaluate it. At the end of the day reality becomes a misnomer as the participants through their premeditated storylines and acts are actually setting an agenda. While *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* is labelled as a reality television show it becomes questionable. The researcher articulates that reality has become an illusion it has now lost its meaning it is just but name. Any show that now features unscripted people going on their day to day activities is now termed a reality show but that’s not what their predecessors had in mind.

The video clip below on (fig 2.1) the researcher observed that it was the only video clip of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* that had time and date. Agenda being set using time symbolising the amount of time that has passed for the participants and it also gives the audiences room to find out what has really happened. The participants are now conspiring amongst themselves.



Figure 2.1 K2 looking for his under wares time displayed

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

An interesting finding by the researcher was that there were elements that were lacking that would make reality real and whole. For example the issue of time, time was only shown on the screens when the housemates were conspiring against each other. An incident when Tembi hide K2's underwear, time was shown on the screens from the time the underwear was hidden up until they were found. In such a scenario an agenda was being pushed, the displaying of time symbolizing the passage of time and events. This becomes problem in that the audience are not able to comprehend whether what they are watching is in real time or not they are left guessing what time it is. This distorting the whole idea of “reality” making reality become one sided. This becomes a weakness of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* as the audience could not see whether they were watching in real time or not. Making it difficult to understand that what they were seeing was actually real or they were seeing the edited version of the original.

5.4 Surveillance in the construction of reality shows

Reality is at times deceiving there is need to be able to differentiate between what is real and what is performed. Nowadays it has become popular with many channels screening reality shows, hence it has now turned into an “I am watching you reality” with constant surveillance from both the audience and the producers of the show. In the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* the participants are always under scrutiny every move they make they are captured by the camera. Reality has now been defined by surveillance, other factors such as unscripted documents have been overlooked which at the end of the day distorts reality. It has now become one sided it is only constituted by surveillance.

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

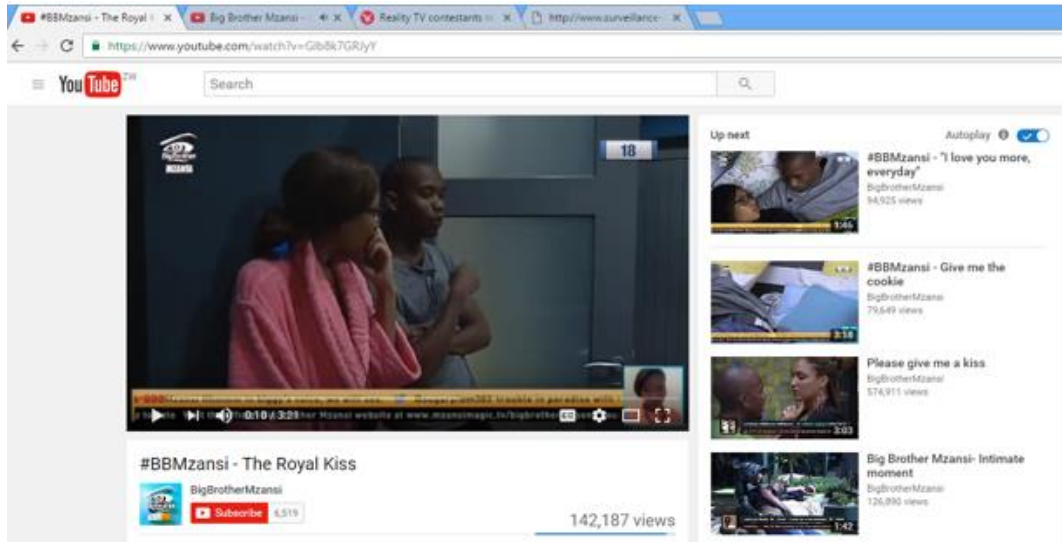


Figure 3 K2 and Blue hiding from the camera

Two of the housemates Blue and K2 were having a conversation that they did not want anyone to listen to, they made sure they stayed away from the camera as far as possible. Unknown to them they were actually being watched. All that they were saying even though they tried whispering was being heard. K2 asking Blue to kiss him before anyone sees them. Through and through the two knew that the camera was always watching them but surprisingly this time around they had thought they were safe from the camera, they were only hiding from their fellow housemates.

The study suggests that you cannot hide from the camera as the camera is objective and innocent when recording events. The two were thinking they were actually hiding from the camera while in actual fact the camera was observing everything that was taking place. Surveillance has always controlled the way the participants behave, they frequently end up performing as they know that they are constantly being watched. Once a person knows that they are being watched they resort to performances as they are reluctant to show their real self the Hawthorne effect. The view is supported by Wong (2001) to say by watching the reality show the audiences have somehow become Big Brother, always keeping an eye on the housemates. The same line of reasoning is also brought about by the researcher to say Reality TV allows ordinary individuals to observe the housemates just like what Big Brother does they also partake in the surveillance, they are now more concerned about surveillance. Through surveillance we have as well become

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a big part Big Brother ourselves, in order to differentiate between performances and reality it give the impression that it is only defined along the lines of surveillance.

With all this happening the researcher noted that the camera is not always innocent, there are some events that it chooses what audiences should and should not see. This is beckoned by the incident where two of the housemates were given a secret task by Big Brother, the camera had them in focus all the time some of the housemates were not broadcast at that time only the two who were assigned the task. The camera showed them stealing the gown and swapping the sugar replacing it with salt. Some of the participants were not even featured not even once. There was a form of performance that was taking place.

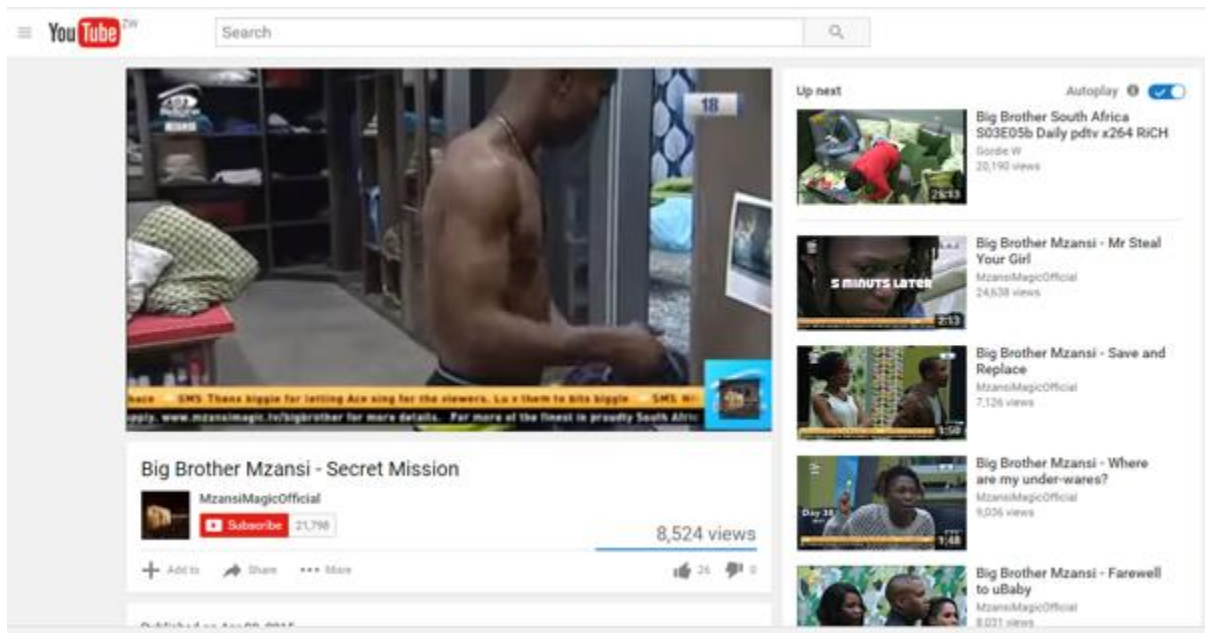


Figure 3.1 Secret mission, Ace steals Tembi's gown and swaps sugar for salt

In that regard the researcher came to learn that reality is constituted by constant surveillance to those matters it deems important. Big Brother was making the participants conspire amongst themselves so that it could cause conflict in the house and he managed to do that by assigning Ace and Mbali to do the conspiracy, Big Brother did not partake in any conspiracy he would assign the participants on his behalf hence will say it is a secret mission.

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

In light of surveillance the researcher suggests that in *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* reality stems from the constant surveillance not the unscripted part. But in such a case then it is not reality as they term it because surveillance has to see and record everything but in this case not everything is seen and recorded at once because the camera will dictate the important parts that need to be seen by the audiences it chooses what to see and what not to see and will only sound out the voices of other participants and not the actions.

5.5 Conclusion

The researcher came to the conclusion that realities have never been real. The reason being the Hawthorn effect takes control, once a person knows that they are being watched they tend to modify or improve an aspect of their behaviour in response to their awareness of being observed. In the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* rules and surveillance impacting more on how the housemates behaved.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a conclusion of the study and gives recommendations as well as offer conclusions to the research findings. The previous chapter presented an analysis of the findings of the study that were encountered during the research. An introduction chapter which provided background to study, problem statement, research questions, objectives and significance of the study has already been provided. Literature and a theoretical framework pertinent to the study have also been highlighted. The research methods and methodologies which gave a detail of how data will be collected and analyzed were also brought to light. A historical background of M-Net, who are the official broadcaster for *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* has also been dealt with. Recommendations given in this chapter are in relation to the research problems highlighted in chapter one.

6.2 Summary of the study

The study sought to explore reality and performances in the case of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* mainly focusing on the participants and how they tend to bring about what is termed “reality”. The researcher concluded to say at the end of the day what we term reality may as well be acted, or moved into performances. This happens due to the rules that are imposed on the participants that lead to the shaping of behaviours. The same change of behaviours leads to the use of language “vulgar” as a sign of expressing power as the participants are often taken as passive. Interesting to note is that the researcher managed to cancel out the findings of Lemi (2009) who asserts that reality TV came with voyeurism, while he does not mention that reality TV also came with change in behaviours as was suggested by the researcher. For Lemi reality TV mainly comprises of voyeurism whilst the researcher concludes to say the whole idea of reality has been distorted there is no longer what we call reality it has now been turned to performances were the everyday lives of individuals are detected for them . Making reality become a misnomer.

The researcher then concluded to say a reality show should speak for itself, there must not be external influence such as scripted acts that eventually distort the whole idea of realism. Then

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

if that happens we call it reality, at the end of the day the researcher noted that realities have never been real.

In observing realism in reality shows mainly focusing on *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015* the researcher made use of the theory of realism which was the main theory in the study as it assumes that the camera is objective and neutral in so doing records events as they are, it also assumes that no editing of events is needed. In order to understand how they go about creating reality the researcher made sure to understand the realist techniques that were used. This theory was pertinent to the study at the study was focusing on how realism is portrayed. The researcher also made use of the framing theory in understanding how the participants were depicted and what sort of frames they were placed in. In understanding all this the researcher came up with the conclusion that what we term as “real” is actually moved to performances through the use of acted scripts and camera angles.

All in all to come up with all this the researcher had gathered information through qualitative research methods making use of archival research. In order to analyse the collected data semiotics and hermeneutics of analysis were used so as to determine the relationship between reality and performances in reality TV.

6.3 Recommendations to the media fraternity

Learning from other media houses is not a problem, how then you intend to incorporate what you have learnt to resemble your community or certain group you are targeting is what is important. The audiences being the most special guests in a television programme or show should be given what they can be able to relate to in terms of reality but in the process participants should not be forgotten as they are also equally important.

The study indicated that when we talk of reality it is not always the sense that we are talking of something real. Reality can be as well be manipulated by those creating the show by either creating rules or even camera the way it is placed. In such a scenario therefore the recommendations that can be given to the media are that they should avoid by all means to create day to day activities for their participants beforehand in a reality show, so that they would void distorting the whole idea of reality. Reality TV mainly basing on participants is an under researched area hence the researcher recommends that when looking at reality TV participants

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should be considered as important as well and should be treated as active, their feelings and weaknesses should be taken into consideration.

Participants and audiences are equally important in a reality show as they both contribute to the success of the reality show, hence should be given the same treatment and put into consideration about what takes place. Recommendations that can be given to the media fraternity with regards to equal treatment is that for both the audiences and the participants they should be given a voice rather than to be treated as passive.

In the study, it is identified that participants subconsciously find themselves contradicting what the script on their day routine would have said. The reason being they would have signed up to be in a reality show has no scripts. In such a case for future reality shows the researcher recommends that when they say it is a reality show they should stick to the reality show format and not divert to being an acted film. Reason being if they do that they are distorting the whole idea of it being a reality show.

6.4 Recommendations to M-Net

Since M-Net is the official broadcaster of *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble* and being a borrowed version of the reality show *Big Brother UK*. The reality show still maintains the UK format, less effort is done to give it a South African flavour hence there is need to improve on such things. Learning from other foreign formats is not a problem but how then you blend it to suit the format of the show to resemble culture is the most important.

Language being dynamic, M-Net being owned by an Afrikaner it tends to withhold their values and beliefs. They have their own channel which features Afrikaans language but does not display any subtitles while the rest of the channels are in English. The few Zulu channels display English subtitles. Hence a recommendation to M-Net is that it should be fair and unrestrictive in the distribution of media messages so as to accommodate every language and culture.

6.5 Areas of further study

Reality television is an interesting field to study. Given the time and resources, the researcher would like to further look into the how the participants then carry themselves at the end of the

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

show. When they are no longer in the Big Brother house, as to how their behaviours have changed if they are not confined in a room.

6.6 Conclusion

The researcher has come to the conclusion of the study with the last chapter availing the conclusions and recommendations of the study. Through evaluations of the research questions and objectives, findings obtained have conveyed how reality is brought about by those in the show as they are influenced by rules. The researcher has also given recommendations to other media fraternity and M-Net with regards to how reality shows should be and why participants are supposed to be allowed to express themselves.

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Appendix 1



Figure 1 Housemates being given the rule book.

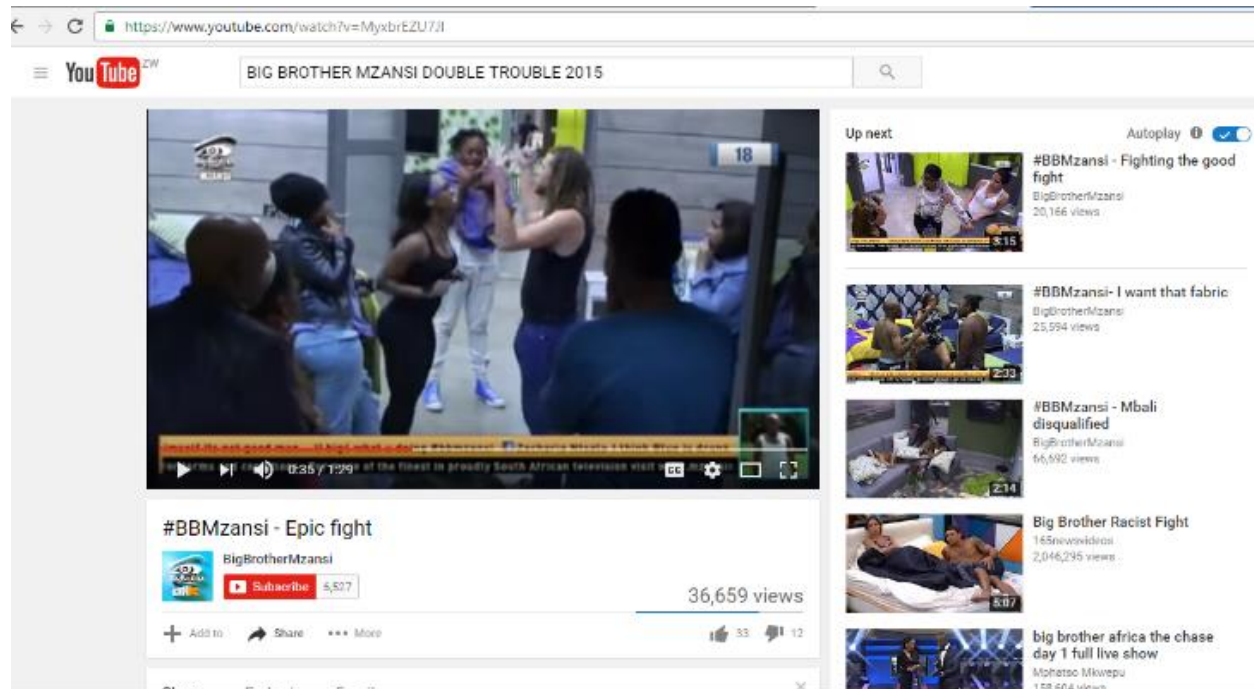


Figure1.1 Housemates Khali and Mathias fighting

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.

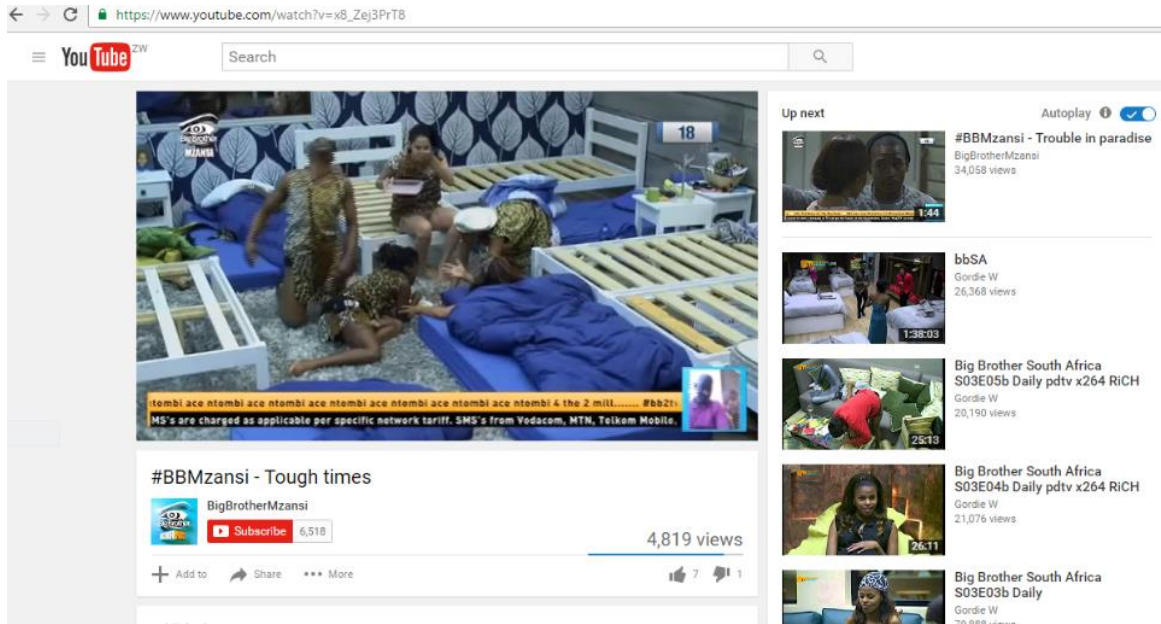


Figure 2 Housemates acting as caveman and women

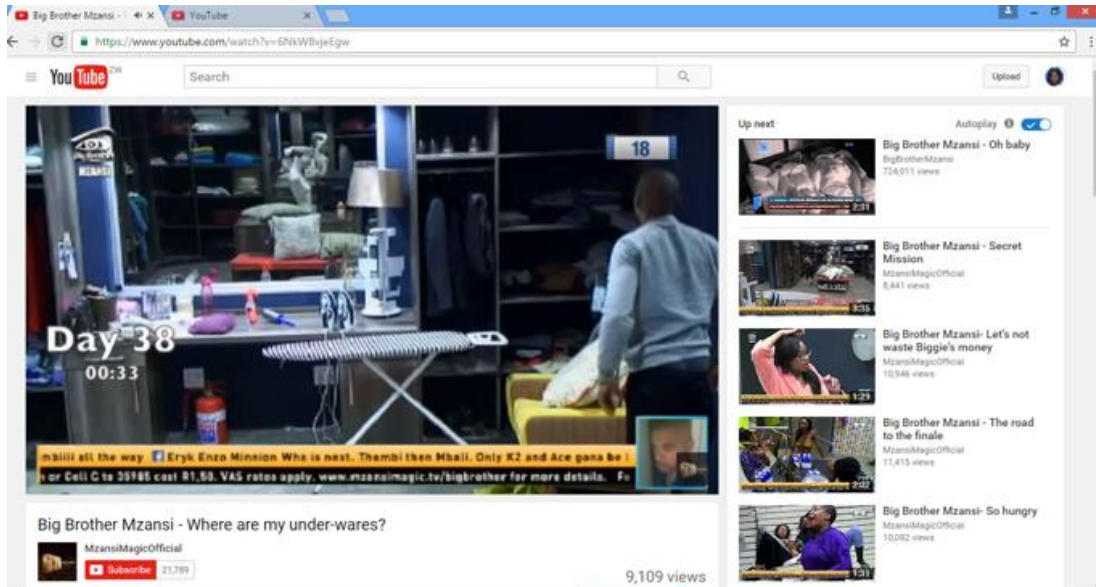


Figure 2.1 K2 looking for his under wares time displayed

Exploring performances versus reality in “reality” shows. In *Big Brother Mzansi double trouble 2015*.



Figure 3 K2 and Blue ding from the camera

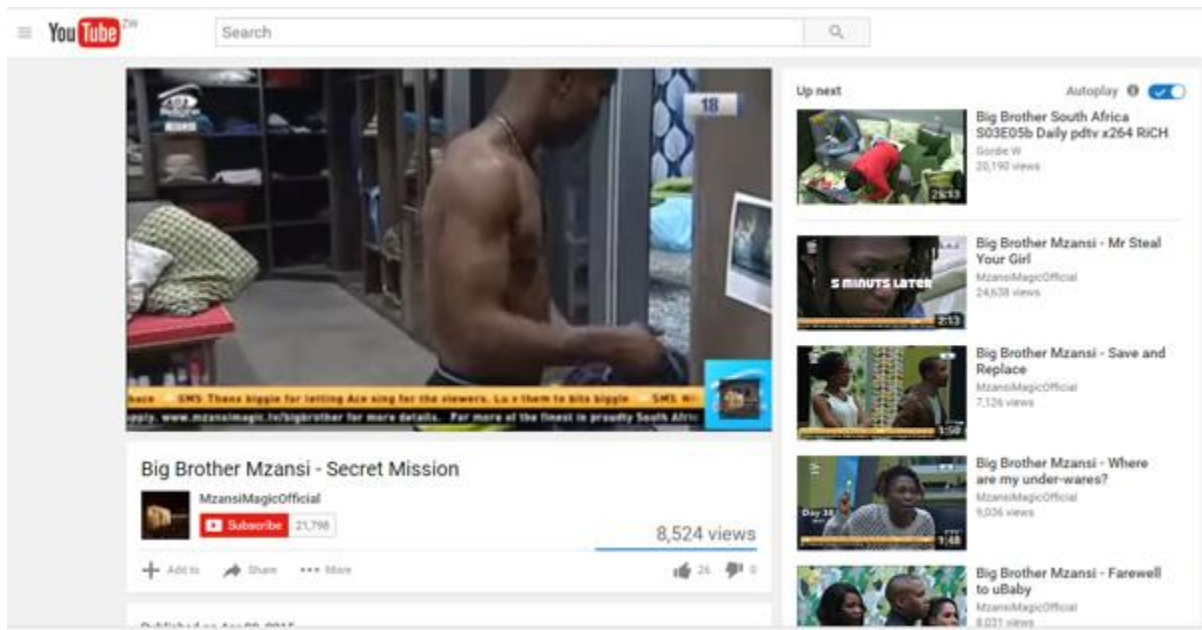


Figure 3.1 Secret mission, Ace steals Tembi's gown and swaps sugar for salt