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Enhancing Rural Development in Mberengwa North through Community
Radio. Case of YA FM

By

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of Science Honours Degree in Media and Society Studies.

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Declaration

I, **Munyaradzi Gumbo (R132718H)** do hereby sincerely declare that this dissertation is my own original work that has not been previously submitted to any other university. In writing this work, I duly complied with ethical issues and laws governing intellectual property.

Dissertation Title: Enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North through community media. Case of *YA FM*.

Signed.....

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Certificate of Supervision

I hereby certify that I personally supervised this dissertation in accordance with Department Regulations and the University General Regulations.

On that basis, I confirm that this dissertation is examinable.

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Dedication

To my friends Yvonne, Takura and Malvern hope and faith keep us strong. I believe that one day you will also submit your own thesis.

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Abstract

This study examines the role of *YA FM* in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North district. The research sought to identify and review the major contributions that were brought by *YA FM* in the development of rural communities. The main focus of this research was to identify programmes related to rural development and how these are stimulating development in rural areas. Despite some challenges and personal agendas, *YA FM* has managed to design programmes that have positively influenced the livelihoods of the marginalised people in Mberengwa district. These programmes cover areas such as political, business, health, edutainment, agriculture, legal and social issues among others. Most of these programmes feature experts and professionals who are well-versed with topics under discussion on a particular day. These programmes address matters of interest to the community thus participation of audience is among the methods being used to enhance development. Listeners can participate through phone-ins, text messages and social media platforms (WhatsApp, Twitter and FaceBook). A qualitative research paradigm was used for the study where focus groups, in-depth interviews and direct observation were used to gather data and content analysis was used to analyse data. The interpretation of the data gathered was anchored on development and media theories propounded by various international scholars.

Key words: Community development, Communication, *YA FM*, Rural areas

Acronyms

AMARC	World Association of CR Broadcasters
BA	Broadcasting Act
BAZ	Broadcasting Authority Zimbabwe
BSA	Broadcasting Services Act
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FBC	Federal Broadcasting Corporation
FM	Frequency Modulator
ICTs	Information Communication Technologies
IMPI	Information and Media Project Inquiry
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MNC	Multinational Corporation
MP	Member of Parliament
PPA	Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act
RBC	Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation
RZ	Radio Zimbabwe
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UNDI	United Nations Department of Information
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
<i>YA FM</i>	Youth and Adults Frequency Modulation
ZACRAS	Zimbabwe Association of Community Radio Stations
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZBC	Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation

ZI-FM	Zimbabwe Frequency Modulation
Zim-Asset	Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socio-Economic Transformation
Zimpapers	Zimbabwe Newspapers Group

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study examines community radio (CR) as a tool for rural development drawing on case study of *YA FM*, a commercial broadcasting station in Zvishavane urban. Communication is increasingly becoming popular among development agencies who recognise it as a powerful tool for development (Fraser and Estrada (2001). The majority of people in developing countries such as Zimbabwe live in rural areas where there is scarcity of information. Mberengwa is one such district where radio is the only medium that almost everyone relies on for information. The African Charter on broadcasting (2001) stresses that for the majority of African communities, radio remains the main and reliable source of public information and communication. Due to its unique capabilities, radio is the most powerful broadcast medium in Africa. It transcends barriers of illiteracy and allows the audiences to listen to programmes while doing some activities. CR is considered the most appropriate medium for development because it offers people resources to enhance their capabilities.

Development implies many things. It is a process that involves structural changes and attitudes thus development involves growth in the economic sector, reduction of social injustices and total poverty alleviation. It goes beyond the material and financial status of the people. However, development in community can only be attained if the members of the community work together with development agencies (Sarvaes, 2008), as such communication is the basis to attain development. This study use *YA FM* as case study and analyses the role of the station in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North district.

1.2 Background of the Study

From the dark days of colonial Rhodesia, regime control of public media especially in the broadcasting sector remains one of the most persistent sources of ruling party supremacy in the country. Radio broadcasting during the colonial era in Southern Rhodesia started in 1933, though the first professional broadcasting began in 1941 (Ndawana *et al*, 2015). Zimbabwe experienced a lot of commotion and imbalances in service delivery during this period. The Broadcasting Act (1957) gave the government power to gain monopoly over broadcasting media, with the Federal Broadcasting Corporation (FBC) being the sole licenced service

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provider (Zhuwarara *et al*, 1997). During the colonial era, public media in particular was pro-white and was acting as government mouthpiece. Windrich (2010) asserts that, the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) set the ground for media crackdown. Between 1965 and 1977, Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (RBC) was transformed into a one-party broadcasting propaganda machine. Zaffiro (2001:8) argues that during the colonial era “all opposition voices ceased to appear on radio and television”.

At independence, RBC became Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC). The Mugabe regime inherited not only the obsolete equipment but a broadcasting system marred with media censorship, which hindered the people from being well informed. For the first 20 years of independence, the government used the old Broadcasting Act (BA) inherited from the former colonial regime. The law was later declared unconstitutional after a private company, Capital radio challenged the government in the Supreme Court of Zimbabwe (Mhiripiri, ND). This meant that anyone was allowed to broadcast, thus Capital radio began its operations in Harare. However, the victory was short lived as the police raided the station and confiscated its equipment, though they had no law supporting them.

Following the Capital radio incident, the government hurriedly passed a new legislation using the Presidential Powers (Temporary Measures) Act. The Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) of 2001 permits the establishment of three-tier ownership system (publicly owned, commercially owned and community owned media). For Ndlela (2005:89), the government enacted a “new broadcasting law that theoretically promoted a three-tier broadcasting system, in practice a status quo of monopoly prevailed”. The Act sets up the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe (BAZ) as a statutory regulator and a board responsible for enforcing the regulations. Through the use of BSA, Chiweshe (2003) says that the government managed to control the country's only radio and television stations, using them for partisan political propaganda, while opposition political parties and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are routinely denied access to the airwaves.

The BSA made it impossible for the private players to venture into the broadcasting sector (ZACRAS, 2014). The IMPI Report (2014:63) says, “The requirements for registering a media organisation are restrictive”. The board sets exorbitant fees in order to reduce the number of applicants and this indicate that the government is reluctant to grant licences to any interested parties (Chiumbu, 2002). For Mhiripiri (ND), the government’s failure to

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licence community stations might be a strategy meant to retain the channels of spreading propaganda. Chiumbu and Moyo (2009) note that by the beginning of 2002, BAZ received seven applications and no licences were granted. It is against this unjust background that Zimbabwe Association of CR Stations (ZACRAS) was formed. However, only commercial radio stations have been licensed while a number of CR initiatives still await licensing.

Though BAZ granted radio licences to several individuals and organisations, critics suggest that these licenses are biased towards the government. The ownership of these stations is dubious as companies granted licences are aligned to ZANU PF, for example Diamond FM to Zimbabwe Newspapers Group (Zimpapers) and *YA FM* to Ray of Hope media group, a company owned by Munyaradzi Hwengere former ZBC chief executive officer (CEO). The IMPI Report (2014:54) states that, “The licencing of new radio stations... has been perceived as unfair as the shareholders of the organisations that were awarded were viewed as sympathetic to the ruling party.” Thus broadcasting media systems in Zimbabwe are characterised by diverse media houses speaking with one voice.

Nevertheless, the installation of *YA FM* in Zvishavane urban enabled adjacent districts of Zvishavane such as Chivi and Mberengwa to benefit from programmes related to rural development. Though registered as a commercial radio, *YA FM* is inspired by the aim of supporting the mining community residing along the Great Dyke. There is much feedback from the audience and programming ensures the needs and desires of the listeners. The station is operating as a public sphere - an arena where grievances of the formerly marginalised voices can be heard. Thus, the operations of *YA FM* are considerably influenced by those of an ideal CR station. Important to note is that, the owner of *YA FM*, Munyaradzi Hwengere was born and bred in Mberengwa as such he is ploughing back to his home community. Given this analysis, the study considers *YA FM* a community radio masquerading as commercial radio.

The research is anchored on the background that the majority of African population lives in rural areas as such causing problems for development projects (Tucker, 2013). Radio therefore has the power to reach these rural dispersed populations; people who might not have a platform to meet and discuss matters of life. Also, considering the multi-lingual nature of Zimbabwe, a CR can address people in their vernacular languages. Media systems in the

country also marginalise rural people, giving them scanty coverage. In these contexts, a CR is the primary source of information through which rural development can be attained.

The background to this study also lies in the notion that, rural development can occur when people are well informed and included in the development process. CR has been identified as a tool that can foster development through giving its target audience relevant information which concern their situations (Wabwire, 2013). CR provides techniques that promote access and participation (Ndawana, 2015). It encourages people to work together, coming up with solutions to solve problems affecting their community (Al-hassan *et al*, 2011). Indeed, community broadcasting can develop its community of interest by considering the needs of target audience and giving them access to information which addresses specific problems in the community.

1.3 Statement of Problem

Mberengwa district is one of the districts in Zimbabwe which did not have a radio broadcasting station specifically targeting the district. The installation of *YA FM* in Zvishavane urban enabled adjacent districts of Zvishavane such as Chivi and Mberengwa to benefit from programmes related to rural development. It is therefore in this regard in the interest of this study to explore how *YA FM* enhanced rural development in Mberengwa district in particular.

1.4 Significance of the Study

While studies of CRs in Zimbabwe have been carried out, these mainly focused on radio stations that target the whole nation and the challenges such stations are facing. Chiweshe (2003) asserts that the media laws in Zimbabwe turn the practise of gathering and dissemination of information into a privilege and therefore restricts and controls all media activity in the country. This study is significant in that it explores how a CR can be used by the rural dwellers to foster development in their community. The study uses *YA FM* as case study and Mberengwa North as the target population.

The previously researched areas were mainly targeting the urban communities, hence this study is significant because it brings new knowledge on the role of CR in rural development in Zimbabwe. For Wabwire (2013) many people who live in the rural areas are isolated from

information which can change their lives. In this context, the study is significant in that it explores the significance of local radio in enhancing social change and development in a rural community.

Since independence, the people of Mberengwa never had a medium specifically targeting their district. It is therefore in the interest of this study to interrogate how the people of Mberengwa North in particular have received *YA FM* as a tool meant to develop their community. The research is unique in that it focuses on Mberengwa an area that has never had enough media coverage and a subject of representation and, or bad publicity by the mainstream media.

Since the study focuses on interrogating the role of CR in enhancing development in rural areas, the findings would therefore help to provide a guideline or direction to the CR managers. These will help them to formulate programmes that gratify their target audience.

The study aims to produce new information that might influence the government and other media stakeholders to focus on supporting media outlets, particularly the community media. The notion is that maybe one day they will recognise the power of local radio in enhancing development, thus they can open airwaves for community radio broadcasters.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

- To examine the role of *YA FM* in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North.
- To closely assess the participation of rural audience on *YA FM*.
- To review the effectiveness of *YA FM* in gratifying needs of Mberengwa community.
- To identify limitations, challenges and constraints that inhibit *YA FM*'s effectiveness to enhance development in remote communities.

1.6 Main Research Question

- What role is being played by *YA FM* with regards to community development in Mberengwa North through programs related to development?

1.6.1 Sub Research Questions

- Which programs are specifically designed to enhance rural development in Mberengwa communities?
- Are the people of Mberengwa aware that there is a platform available for them to air their grievances pertaining issues related to development?
- In what ways has the radio station encouraged participation of its listeners?

1.7 Assumptions

The study centres on the assumption that if effectively used, *YA FM* can be a powerful instrument for social development in Mberengwa district. The assumption is anchored by the findings of various African researchers (Chapman *et al*, 2003; Osunkunle, 2008; Al-hassan *et al*, 2011 and Wabwire, 2013) who researched on the role of community media in rural development in their respective countries. The findings of these scholars provide a basis for this paper, since their researches focused on rural development through CR. Most of their findings shows that, CR is a powerful tool for rural development. For instance, Al-hassan *et al* (2011) find out that Simli radio, a CR in Ghana has played a pivotal role in improving awareness and knowledge of solutions to community development. Indeed, if CR is to be used in Mberengwa the same way it was used around Africa, the poor lives could be transformed.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on programs related to rural development covering the period September 2015 to date. The period under study is influenced by the fact that it is the year in which *YA FM* started operating. The study also focuses on Mberengwa North only, though the whole district is benefiting from the station. Also, the focus is on the broadcasting sector, particularly a CR though there are some sources of information in the district.

1.9 Limitations of the Study

The study focuses on researching about the development role carried by *YA FM* in Mberengwa North. It involves focusing mainly on programs related to such developments as agriculture, education, health facilities, gender inequalities, social problems, poverty and infrastructure development among others. The attention is also on the programmes that target the rural people even though the station targets a wider audience both in urban and rural

areas. However, even though the study focuses on Mberengwa North, the findings may be applicable to other rural communities in Zimbabwe and beyond operating under a similar situation.

1.10 Summary

The chapter managed to introduce the main focus of the study and also to give the background situation that prompted this research, that is to say Mberengwa district never had a medium specifically targeting the district. It is therefore in the interest of this research to bring about developments brought about by the CR. Radio is the dominant and most important mass medium in Africa hence the installation of *YA FM* in Zvishavane can brought about social change on the lives of the poverty-stricken habitants of Mberengwa. The following chapter will review various scholarly works upon which this study is anchored.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

While the previous chapter focused on introducing the study and the background that prompted this research, the purpose of this chapter is to scrutinize other writers' assessments, opinions and findings that are related to enhancing rural development through community media. The first part of the chapter reviews works of various scholars allied to the study and this is accomplished through the use of a thematic approach. The second section of the chapter focuses on the existing media theories related to the study.

2.2 Literature Review

Literature review is a process of gathering, interpreting and critically evaluating existing information allied to your study (Cooper, 2008). Schaefer (2006) asserts that when reviewing literature, it is important for the researcher to use relevant information. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to examine the features of community radio in an African context, to interrogate the relationship between CR and rural development, to examine the power of CR over the global media and to scrutinise the importance of public access and participation as basis for development. Though the themes might not have a mutual understanding, it is upon which this research is anchored. The researcher reviewed other scholarly works in order to be familiar with exiting knowledge. This enabled the researcher to identify the gap that exists and to be certain that the research questions have not been answered before.

2.2.1 Features of a community radio in an African context

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“To qualify as a CR, the ownership and control of the station must rest squarely, and unquestionably, with the community it claims to serve” (Ibrahim and Adams cited in Fraser and Estrada, 2001:4). The overall concept is that ownership should be in the hands of the community. The African Charter on Broadcasting (2001) defines a CR ‘as station owned and controlled by non-profit organisation’. This structure of ownership and management is suitable for providing community membership, management and participation (Van Zyl 2005). The view is that since the station is community owned, many individuals who work at the station will be volunteers hence they do not anticipate to be paid for their labour. However, this is different in an African rural setting where people are poor and jobless as such they expect to be paid for their labour. In this context, voluntary involvement might be a challenge thus the station will need external funding to meet the salary bill. Nevertheless, community involvement can come in different forms and to conclude that people can always expect to be paid for what they do, in this case contributing to the development of their society is rather too harsh.

A community radio is “fully controlled by non-profit entity and carried on for non-profitable purposes” (Fraser and Estrada, 2001: 27). This implies that this type of medium is mandated to serve its community of interest at the expense of profit making. Nevertheless, though non-profit-making, a CR needs funding for it to survive and this can come from Non-governmental organisations, donors, sponsorships, advertising and membership fees (Fraser and Estrada, 2002). Fairbairn (2009) and AMARC (2009) assert that being a non-profit making entity does not imply that a station has to be poor but rather the profits generated should be ploughed back into the community or invested into the development of the station. However, in reality most CR stations are poor, and in the context of *YA FM*, the station depends on the membership funds and advertisements for sustainability. Unlike some CRs worldwide who depend on volunteers, the broadcasters at *YA FM* are workers who receive salaries thus the station needs funding for sustainability.

CR stations are owned, operated and driven by the communities they serve (Osunkunle, 2008; Kumar, 2004 and Wabwire, 2013). Tabing (2002:11) asserts that a “CR can be managed or controlled by one group, by combined groups, or people such as women, children, farmers, fisher folk, ethnic groups, or senior citizens”. The implication of the statement is that the community of interest have a role in participating in the daily production

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of programmes and financing the station. But in Africa, very few stations are self-sustaining thus when donor funding ends, they struggle to survive Madamombe (2005).

The word sustainability is a subject of various interpretations. Brundtland Commission cited in ZACRAS (2014:2) defines sustainability as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." From a CR perspective, ZACRAS (2014) asserts that sustainability is the ability of CR management to operate, expand and maintain a radio station in the long run. Bowman (2011) is of the view that an organisation that is sustainable in the long run and unsustainable in the short term frequently faces shortage of cash and if it is vice versa, that organisation can have enough cash but as time goes on inflation will cause the value of assets to diminish. As a result, the quality of content and services will be affected resulting in the station failing to meet its purpose of existence. From this assumption, CR should define its own purpose of existence that is to serve the marginalised people.

As indicated above, a CR relies on a wide range of sources for funding (AMARC, 2009). Fraser and Estrada (2001) asserts that a CR can receive funding from donors but it is important not to divert from its role to serve the community interest and ended up doing the will of the funders. They further assert that a CR should avoid receiving funds that compromise the editorial policy of the station. Madamombe (2005) notes that receiving donors might be limiting but it does not imply that the station should surrender all the decision powers to the funder. Therefore, a community radio should avoid being misled by the will of the donors or sponsors.

From the above, it emerged that a community radio is a station owned and controlled by the people. This kind of ownership is ideal in allowing development since those that need development will be involved in identifying their own problems. Researches in Africa and abroad have been carried out and these looked at community radio stations that ownership and control squarely lies in the hands of the community. This research however, focused on analysing the role of a commercial radio operating as community radio, implying that ownership and control is in the hands of the owner and not the community. Thus, the research investigated whether a community radio can foster development in a community even when the people are not fully involved in the activities of the radio station.

2.2.2 Developing communities through community radio

In relation to CR, the term ‘community’ can be defined as a geographical area the radio station is operating. A community is a group of people sharing a mutual concern or specific interest (Al-hassan *et al*, 2011; Teer-Tomaselli & De Villiers, 1998). Specific interests are things such as language, ethnicity, gender and religion to mention only a few. McQuail (2010) asserts that a geographical place usually determines a community. Thus, in defining a community, two specific things to note are: geographical place and common interest. Cohen (1985) asserts that in a community, usually members share things in common; and these distinguish them from the people in another community. Thus, communication is instrumental in allowing the members of a community to possess these things in common.

People in a community are dispersed thus the need for a medium that can address everyone (Tucker, 2013). Chiumbu *et al* (2014) argue that radio is the most accessible and affordable mass medium to broadcast and receive in especially in Africa. Radio is the first choice medium in rural areas because of its flexibility, low cost and it transcend illiteracy barriers as it broadcast in vernacular language (Ndawana *et al*, 2015). Considering exclusions of information distribution in Zimbabwe, radio is such medium that can foster communication in rural areas since it is accessible in remote rural areas such as Mberengwa. But, what type of radio in terms of ownership and control?

CR plays an important role at the grass roots level for rural development. Al-hassan *et al* (2011:2) asserts that,

...CR, to a large extent, if effectively organized, performs three main significant functions at the grass root level for rural development. Firstly, it promotes issues of agriculture, gender equality, education, trade and commerce, disaster, weather, natural calamities, poverty and social problems... Secondly, it enhances the capacities of local people to work together to tackle a range of social problems, including poverty and exclusion through radio. Lastly, it contributes to nurturing of the creative talents of the community and providing a forum for a diversity of opinions and information.

As suggested by the above quotation, CR is the ideal medium for development in rural communities such as Mberengwa. If effectively used, Fraser and Estrada (2002) asserts that a CR can contribute in changing the livelihood of people and developing the community.

The media should be a platform where citizens can safely participate in discussion and debates (Ndlela, 2005). The role of the public media has to be weighed in relative to freedom

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of expression. People should participate in political discussions and openly express their political beliefs without fear of any repercussions. However, the public media in Zimbabwe, from a Gramscian point of view are forces used to spread dominant discourse and reinforcing the hegemonic perspective of the ruling as such curtailing freedom of expression. A CR therefore should provide access to oppositional interpretations and values.

Rural communities are generally given scanty coverage in the mainstream media except when there is a big event going on or disaster (Ndlela, 2005). In many cases, the public media report negatively about the rural people (stereotypical representation) which in turn makes them feel inferior and hopeless. Commenting on the Kenyan situation Wabwire (2013) says, a CR is a way out from the existing dominated situation because people will have the power to manage their own problems without impositions and dominance. For Fraser and Estrada (2001), a local radio can help in reducing the issue of discrimination and divisions thus promoting human rights in the society. If one is to analyse the mass media's coverage of Mberengwa, the findings will be dominated with stereotypes and framing. Thus, *YA FM* should counter-attack this tradition by reporting positively on issues concerning the district, hence empowering and giving people self-esteem to work towards the development of their community.

A CR breaches the gap between the ordinary citizens and the government. Community radio stations are seen internationally as forces for enabling the development of communities (Osunkunle, 2008). Important messages about the government and relevant information related to policy formulation are usually dispatched to people through the media. Manyozo (2007) observed that, government development plans are well supported by the involvement of a properly informed public. The government as sole provider of social change and development in the community and the nation at large cannot do it alone (Kumar, 2004; Osunkunle, 2008; Al-hassan *et al*, 2011). They argue that this is the point where CR as instruments of change and development comes in. The government can bring necessary development programmes and provide basic services through the community media and allows feedback from the public.

The above identified community media as key instrument to development. As such, the installation of *YA FM* in Zvishavane enabled adjacent district such as Mberengwa to benefit from programs that are related to development. Though community radio studies have been

carried out in Zimbabwe, some targeted the media laws that govern the broadcasting sector (Ndawana, 2015) while others were interested in interrogating the challenges and prospects for community radios in the country (Mhiripiri, ND). This study is therefore unique in that it focused on Mberengwa, a community that has never had enough media coverage and has been re-represented by the public media. The installation of *YA FM* therefore enabled Mberengwa to be positively reported on, thus contributing to development through raising of awareness and educating the public.

2.2.3 The power of local approach

Global media have become a powerful tool used by the elites to control the masses and has been established as a profit entity where the voices of the ordinary citizens are marginalised and subdued (Mahmud, 2006). For Mhagama (2015) the role of the controlled media is taking dominance worldwide and the common people are being left out in the decision making process that can change their lives. The poor have the least access to take part in the development process of their communities. Tabing (1998) cited in Fraser and Estrada (2001:5) says,

An effective strategy for the community radio station is to present what cannot be offered by any other radio station; that is, local content with a local flavour... The local radio station must dwell on its reason for existence – local events, issues, concerns, and personalities. If a local radio can do an exhaustive reportage of what goes on its community on a regular basis, there is no way a regional or national broadcast outfit could compete for listenership.

Fraser and Estrada (2002) are of the view that, global media provide irrelevant information while a CR focuses on the local issues using local languages, thus globalised media cannot compete with community media. For Fraser and Estrada, the issue of local approach by the community media make it dominant over the global media. Community media facilitates a counter balance to face the problems brought about by the global media hence it works as an alternate medium where the voices of the media/information poor can be heard.

By definition, global media are commercial entity, meant to attract many audiences for their advertisements (Fraser and Estrada, 2001). As noted by Herman and Chomsky (1988), global media are interested in attracting many audiences so as to sell markets (readers) to buyers (advertisers). They argue that advertisers are patrons who buy and pay for the media content as such media programmes serve the needs and interests of advertisers. Through

advertisements, Sengupta and Frith (1997) note that Multinational Corporation (MNC) has created uncontrolled consumerism which in turn damages indigenous culture in developing countries. Fraser and Estrada (2001) are of the view that global media use well-trying and tested formats in which entertainment is the key criterion for selection thus their programming lack variety. Wabwire (2013) asserts that due to its agenda to serve advertisers, themes reflecting development are marginalised by public broadcasters. These characteristics of global media show that they can hardly meet development needs of rural communities. Thus, unlike the global media, a CR should localise its content and prioritise public interests.

From the above, it emerged that global media provide irrelevant information concerning rural people. For Orwell (1984) cited in Fraser and Estrada (2001), media consumption is dominated by western culture of the rich consumer society. Orwell is concerned about the poor who consume information of the rich societies yet their reality demand them to focus on local issues. His concern is, many poor people spend most of their time consuming wrong information from global media which cannot bring solutions to their problems. For him, the poor find comfort in an illusion which they can never have or compete with; they live in a fantasy world thus many imagine living the western life ending up afraid to face their own reality. A CR is therefore the way out of this scenario since it localises its programmes. It gives the people relevant information concerning their lives hence bringing them out of the imaginary world to face their reality and find solutions to their own problems.

The element of proximity is the most powerful characteristic a CR have over the global media. For Tabing (1998) cited in Fraser and Estrada (2001) a CR should have an exhaustive coverage of what transpires in its community of interest on a regular basis, thus taking the limelight from the mainstream media. Fraser and Estrada (2002) asserts that, a community media should take advantage of its closeness to the audience. Many listeners are eager to know about the people around them and also to be aware of events happening to their fellow citizens next to their place of abode. Through this local approach, a CR can be effective in enhancing rural development in its community of interest since it will be mandated to save the will of the people in that specific community. Giving the people of Mberengwa the opportunity to speak on some programmes related to their community will attract many listeners from the district because they will be interested to hear their own voices on the radio.

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People in the rural communities value their tradition and they are mainly concerned with protecting their culture. Schaefer (2006) defines culture as “the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects and behaviour of a particular group of people”. However, the global media is playing a greater impact in reshaping the culture of societies. Giddens (2001) argue that the global media affects or reshapes our daily life and economy. Sociologists such as Haralambos and Holborn (2008) considers the global media as form of cultural imperialism. In what they dubbed the ‘culture industries’, Frankfurt School theorists (Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997) saw the products of the culture industries (global media) as spreading the ideology of the capitalist societies.

In this context, culture as something that is dynamic and socially transmitted, it needs to be preserved. Schaefer (2006) posits that members of a society preserve their distinctive culture through literature, art, video recordings and other means of expressions. For Fraser and Estrada (2002) a local station should reflect and promote local identity and culture and this can be achieved by focusing mainly on local issues. Community culture can be conveyed through dances, theatre, music and poetry. Thus, a CR is vital in preserving the culture of a society.

However, while some scholars criticize the influence of global media on minority cultures, others view the globalisation of the media as increasing awareness internationally and is therefore helpful (Fraser and Estrada 2001). The basis of the argument is that both global media and community media complement each other that is, the weaknesses of the other are the strengths of the other. They argued that if global media and community media are to be used at the same time, each forms important roles which the other cannot thus leading to the development of the community. United Nations Department of Information (2001) asserts that the globalisation of the media and the advances in information technology has created a global village and this can create enormous opportunities for the masses in rural areas, considering that these advancement can break national boundaries.

The above discussion looks at the power a community radio has over global media. It shows that the closeness of community radio to its audience gives it much dominance over the global media. However, community radios also face challenges to compete with new technologies such as mobile phones which are slowly becoming main sources of information for the people in rural areas. This study therefore looks at how *YA FM* has exploited the new

media to enhance its coverage of events taking place in the rural areas. Though a similar research has been carried out (Chuma, 2013), this looked at the role of both new media and community radio in conflicting situations. Thus, this study looks at how the new media are being used by a radio station to enhance rural development.

2.2.4 Public access and participation as basis for development

The notion of public access and participation has gained popularity among media scholars who view communication as the tool for social change and development, (Mefalopulos, 2003; Madamombe, 2005 and Wabwire, 2013). The belief is that including people in issues concerning their lives, poses a high participation probability. This concept of public inclusion however, cannot be easily attained considering that the media systems in Zimbabwe that is the mainstream media are confined in urban areas. Also, the media reflect the general assumption that rural people are backward, thus their voices are not expected to be heard on the media. Thus, a CR is different from other broadcasting media because it seeks to facilitate social change and to improve the living conditions of its audience (Fraser and Estrada, 2001).

Information is a prerequisite for development. Ojiambo (1999:2) assert that, information can only be beneficial to its recipients if it is 'relevant, timely and appropriate' and also if the medium being used is 'appropriate and affordable to the user'. For Ojiambo, there is need for a two way communication, or otherwise all the efforts will be in vain. Megwa (2007) asserts that, the information being disseminated should raise questions, while receivers are encouraged to give feedback, rather than just raising awareness of a problem and educating only. A CR is one such kind of tool that can be used in rural areas since it possesses the attributes of a medium described above.

The Windhoek declaration, (1991) and the African Charter on Broadcasting (2001) claimed that public access and participation in community media is vital in creating a just global public sphere. A community media see its audiences as participatory and this is in contrast with the public and commercial media model which Tabing (2002) called the "Profit, Propaganda, Power and Privilege." For Kumar (2004) public access and participation in the media, particularly CR is important in a contemporary society where social injustices are rampant. His argument is that the mainstream media sets the agenda for the publics which marginalises the ordinary citizens and discriminate them from accessing relevant information that can be of value in their poor lives. Media consumption has been developed to be a

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privilege for the elites and a dream for the poor people. This has resulted in the creation of social classes, which Al-hassen *et al* (2011) named the “information rich and information poor”

CR can help in building a participatory environment in the community, which can lead to people’s governance (ZACRAS, 2014). A local radio can facilitate and give the public access and promote their participation in the decision making process at community level, thus creating a society conducive for participatory governance (Chiumbu, 2010). Osunkunle, (2008) notes that a CR can play a watchdog role of promoting accountability and transparency thus creating enormous opportunities for development and poverty alleviation. For Fraser and Estrada (2002) a CR plays a watchdog role that makes politicians and authorities to be more accountable of their public duties. The oppressed normally have no way to air their grievances especially when the authorities take advantage of them, but a CR gives them access to air their concerns. Mberengwa district lags behind in terms of infrastructure yet the district is richly blessed with a vast of minerals. *YA FM* should provide a platform for people to challenge the unequal distribution of resource which causes poor development progress in Mberengwa.

In a study on Simli Radio, a CR in the Tolon-Kumbungu and Savelugu-Nanton Districts of Ghana, Al-hassan *et al* (2011) found out that the station has played a major role in livelihood improvements. Simli radio improved awareness and knowledge of solutions to community development. The finding of the study also shows that problems such as culture, rural development, education and agriculture were solved through Simli radio. According to Ngugi (2015) Simli radio achieved to develop its target communities because it used a strategy of communal listenership which gave the audience chance to participate on daily basis. Thus, the findings on Simli supports the notion of Fraser and Estrada (2001) that CR gives a voice to the voice less and allows the sharing of information and knowledge among the marginalised rural poor. The achievements of Simli radio shows that if a CR allows public access and participation, it will manage to develop its community of interest.

While studies of enhancing rural development through community radio have been carried out, these were done in African countries that have community radio stations. In Zimbabwe, no community radio station has been licenced as such many studies focused on interrogating the role of community newspapers in their specific communities (Mushuku and Taruva,

2013). Post-millennium Zimbabwe saw upheavals in the country's media sector which resulted in closure of some community media houses and the rise of pirate radio stations. Thus, many studies carried that are related to community media specifically target these areas. This research therefore focused on examining the role of community radio in enhancing development an area that lacks enough research in the country.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This section focuses on the identification and interrogation of some theories of development and mass media that help in understating the concept of enhancing rural development through CR. A theoretical framework is existing knowledge propounded by other scholars (Turowa, 2009). This research draws on Daneil Lerner's modernisation theory, Paulo Freire's participatory communication and public sphere by Jürgen Habermas. Concepts within these theories will be examined related to contemporary development researches within Zimbabwe and internationally. The aim of reviewing these theories is to provide a conceptual framework suitable to analyse the research questions.

2.3.1 Modernisation Theory

The modernisation paradigm is a broad concept which has been approached from various perspectives by several theorists. Theorists such as Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and Parsons approached the theory from a sociological point of view; while McClelland uses a psychological approach; Rostow on the other hand took the economic approach and final Learner approached the theory from a mass communication perspective. For McClelland, development is a linear evolutionary process that should follow a series of stages which every society has to go through in order to be developed. Daniel Lerner was among one of the first authors who invented the term 'modernisation' and made it central in examining non-industrial societies. Lerner (1973) cited in Payne and Phillips (2010:63) says the term modernisation was originally used to describe a, "process of social change whereby less developed societies acquired characteristics common to more developed societies". The modernisation theory assumes that for less developed to develop, they had to abandon their traditionalism, superstitious beliefs and values so as to embrace western characteristics and values such as Christianity, education and technology. Thus modernisation is the transition and drastic transformation that a traditional society has to undergo in order to become modern.

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The theory is about Third world societies following the development footsteps of Europe and America. However, Matunhu (2011) criticise the theory saying that innovation and technological growth in the West became self-sustaining because they were embedded in the capitalist system and since developing countries did not undergo these economic transformations, they were left undeveloped. The theory therefore looks at traditional society as a series of negatives, stagnant and unchanging, a society that is not innovative, non-profit making and not growing. Hence, one can argue that, it is an economic theory that is rooted in capitalism.

For modernisation theorists, the term modern meant western. Lerner (1973) cited in Payne and Phillips (2010:63) argues that modernisation began when a country's rural population started moving from the country side to cities. The growing population density in cities then brought about urbanisation which led to demand for schools, mass media and other democratically organised institutions. He further argues that, as literacy and media consumption increases, the general levels of economic and political participation also improves. Lerner also assumes that exposure to western media texts can help to improve the living ways of the people in developing countries. His basis is that modern man relies on media for information rather than family and the exposure to media content can inspire empathy that is the ability to view life out of the current situation. Thus, Lerner views the media as multiplier and enhancer of modernisation process

Rostow is said to have given the modernisation theory its most concrete and best known form in his five stages of development. The first stage is the 'traditional society' or 'pre-modern' stage at which society is very primitive. The economic system at this stage is stagnant and dominated by agriculture with traditional cultivating forms implying that the whole process of farming is backward. The second stage is the 'pre-condition for take-off' where the means of investment get higher and initiate a dynamic development. This economic development is an offspring of the industrial revolution. This stage also involves the establishment of financial and educational institutions. Education is considered a pre-requisite for development and literacy is said to be the basic personal skill that triggers the whole modernisation process.

The third phase is characterised by a dynamic economic growth and it's regarded to as the 'take-off' stage. Economic growth is self-sustained growth and it does not require external

investment or input. The fourth stage is the 'drive to maturity' which is characterised by economic and technical progress which results in social and economic prosperity. New forms of industries like neo-technical industries emerge, for instance, electrical and chemical industries. Rostow argues that the drive to maturity starts about 60 years after take-off. The fifth and final stage is the 'age of high mass consumption' which is characterised by prosperity for the majority of the society. People living in this society are offered variety and abundance of choices and Rostow argues that the West belongs to this category.

However, the theory overlooks the problems and possibilities of development partly depend on nation's international position, for instance, the historical experience of colonialism and the removal of surplus from the periphery have led to the underdevelopment of the periphery; a process known as the development of underdevelopment which is further explained by dependency theorists. Thus, it has to be noted that by the late 1960s, as a result of the failure of the modernisation programs, a Marxist dependency school arose to challenge the modernisation theorists. The dependency theory is a critique of the modernisation theory which states that a relationship of exploitation exists between the West and Third World where development in developed countries is a result of the underdevelopment in the periphery. Other Marxist theorists such as Immanuel Wallerstein also came up with theories like the "world system approach" to prove that the modernisation paradigm had fallen.

The theory is linear in nature as it promotes the unidirectional flow of information, hence considering the masses as passive. The theory fails to take into consideration local peculiarities such as cultural values, beliefs and norms. It also underestimates the challenges faced by less developed countries on the route to modernisation, which include ethnic and religious conflict, the rise of terrorism, military and dictatorial regimes and economic stagnation. It has to be argued that the concept of developing societies is a social, political and cultural construction. Europe and North America are constructed as the centre or core and these are constructed in such a way that they represent the highest level of civilisation and most developed economies. Foucault (1970) cited in Fraser (2009) argues that the word 'development' on its own is biased and discursively constructed. Furthermore, the modernisation theorists ignore the possibility of alternative paths or approaches to development such as the participatory and human rights to development.

2.3.2 Participatory Communication Theory

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The modern development philosophy argues that any development efforts should start or include those who need the development rather than the top-down approach where development is imposed by the elites or outsiders (George, 1993). Wabwire (2013) asserts that community development is not a packaged product that can be delivered to passive audiences but rather the community should participate in the identification of problems and find solutions of the problems. Communication has been recognised by development agencies as a relevant tool for development (Manyozo, 2006). Bordenave (1994) cited in Mhagama (2015:57) says, participatory communication is “that type of communication in which all the interlocutors are free and have equal access to the means to express their viewpoints, feelings and experiences.” The definition reinforces the view that if poor people are included in development process of their community, they can express how they view the world and development patterns (George, 1993). Freire (1993) places a strong emphasis on communication where the poor become conscious of their own reality and gain confidence to solve their problems and change their environment. Through participatory communication, communities have the power to enhance their social lives and transform their daily living conditions.

Participatory communication as a theory and practice is often defined differently by many scholars. For Kassahun (2012) some scholars define participation as the mobilisation of the masses in order to eradicate social injustices and unjust hierarchies of power, information and knowledge, while others define it as the inclusion of people in development projects specifically targeted on their communities. Despite scholarly differences in their perception of participatory communication, there is a wide agreement in the notion that lack of participation and communication are among the main causes of project failure (George, 1993; Sarvaes, 2008 and Kassahun, 2012). Mefalopulos (2008) posits that if communication is used from the beginning of a development project, people’s commitment and motivation grow stronger. He further argues that if everyone in the community rallies behind the project, they can do whatever it takes for it to be a success. As such, participation plays a greater part in community development.

Participation has been viewed by some scholars as a major development tool because it instills the important sense of ownership (Manyozo, 2006; Tufte and Mefalopulos, 2009; Ndirangu, 2014 and Mhagama, 2015). The assumption is that people usually disregard new ideas if they are imposed on them (Ndirangu, 2014). Tufte and Mefalopulos (2009) assert that inclusion of

community members is therefore the relevant development alternative because it establishes unity among the ordinary to work together. Participation increases self-esteem and it enhances the individual's abilities in working with other people (George, 1993). This in return will contribute positively to the creation of a motivated society and societal changes that are often referred to as development. The inclusion of the subject can thus positively contribute to community development.

Participatory communication involves the ability to recognise the power of communication as a tool for social change and development (Servaes, 2008). For Mody (1991) cited in Mefalopulos (2003) it intends to trace back the original meaning of the term community, where the whole community share a mutual understanding. The purpose of communication is to create a common understanding, or to share information and knowledge (Mefalopulos, 2009). From this perspective, sharing implies the equitable distribution of what ever being shared, thus communication involves an equally two-way flow of information (Ndirangu, 2014). Thus, the emergence of the mass media, in this case CR could reduce the concept communication from top-down approach (one-way) flow of information to a two-way (down-top approach) where participation and communication are the key elements.

The ultimate goal to empower people to solve their own problems and influence their future is anchored in participation (Kassahun, 2012). Narayan (2006:5) says, "Empowerment is the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate and negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives". The definition, shows that participation is the key element of empowerment. Thus, the implication of this concept is that participation for empowerment focuses on giving power to the powerless and a voice to the voiceless (Madamombe, 2005). Participation is when local people and stakeholders are involved in the creation of projects and policies designed to change their lives. The approach believes in the power of inclusion and see it as a catalyst for development. From this point of view, the concept of participatory communication has been linked with CR, as the instrument for social change.

Over the years, CR as instrument for social development has gained popularity among scholars who view the medium as available and accountable to rural communities (Osunkunle, 2008). Kassahun (2012) asserts that CR is the most significant instrument for the effectiveness of participatory communication. In many rural areas, poverty is not only a

sign of lack of resources but it indicates lack of awareness (Wabwire, 2013). Rural people are not aware of their own role in the fight against poverty and this is mainly because they do not have sources of information. Thus, the provision of CR helps in the alleviations of poverty because people have the power to deal with strongholds that hinder them from developing.

The advances in information and communication technologies (ICTs) can also provide an environment whereby a CR can expand its resources, allowing many rural people the opportunity to participate (Mhagama, 2015). Tacchi (2011) cited in Mhagama (2015) asserts that the advantage of using ICTs is that they allow the traditional receivers of development messages to be involved, asking question and even creating their own messages without being influenced by outsiders. A mobile phone in particular is suitable for this. Chuma (2013) asserts that the ever growing mobile phone ownership and the increasing reach of networks could be important for CR in Africa. Through phone-in programmes, the rural people can call the CR to express their grievances and opinions and seek clarification on some issues that they do not understand. This enables rural people to be a part of development projects and to participate in developing their community.

However, some scholars suggest that the theory has some loopholes. For Ngugi (2015), the theory overlooked the fact that the underdevelopment of Third World countries is not lack of information and knowledge only, but there are some factors that cannot be solved by communication alone. He further asserts that, participatory communication approach tries to give power to the voiceless, ignoring the fact that these people are marginalised by developed countries. Hannides (2011) asserts that participatory communication is rooted in theory and not in practice as such it is difficult to see its relevance in development. Nevertheless, many scholars view participatory communication as an instrument for development but the problem is that the theory overlooks some factors that hinder development in rural areas. As such, if these factors are to be addressed, they will contribute a lot to rural community development.

2.3.3 The Concept of the Public Sphere

The concept of the 'Public Sphere' was originally elaborated by Jürgen Habermas in 1962. Fraser (1990) asserts that in Habermas' sense the idea insinuates a space where citizens can meet and discuss their common affairs. Thus (2006:55) says Habermas defined the public sphere as,

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an arena, independent of government (even if in receipt of state funds) and also enjoying autonomy from partisan economic forces, which is dedicated to rational debate (i.e. to debate and discussion which is not “interests”, “disguised” or “manipulated”) and which is both accessible to entry and open to inspection by the citizenry. It is here in this public sphere, that opinion is formed.

Fraser (1990) posits that, when social institutions and the society are failing to meet the needs of the masses, people will respond by coming together in a discussion forming a public sphere. In his book, Habermas talks of a bourgeois public sphere which was an arena for private interests, concerning the everyday life in a civil society and the government power. In latter day society, the media, in particular the community radio is one such form of an arena where people can meet and discuss issues affecting their lives.

Habermas contrasted the historic public sphere of liberal democracy with private forms of direct political control in a capitalist society. His book mainly focuses on analysing the origins of historic public sphere and the transition of the public sphere in a contemporary era with capitalism dominating the society. This new form of public sphere is characterised by monopolisation of the mass media by big corporate organisations and their ever growing powerful financial positions (Ndlela, 2010). Habermas views the use of economic muscle to control the media as a form of media censorship which does not only control the editorial policy but also denies the ordinary citizens to participate in the production of information that concerns their everyday lives.

Habermas’ public sphere has been articulated in most cases for informing the media in both democracy and development processes (Bosch, 2011 in Chuma, 2013). For Chuma (2013), the public sphere is a concept that generally relates to a media system that provides space to critical thinking and oppositional voices by the general citizens. This form of interaction will result in the generation of information about the government officials thereby the state activities will be subject of public criticism (Fraser, 1990). In this case, Fraser further highlighted that the public sphere connoted an arena where citizens meet and discuss issues concerning their lives without any restriction.

However, the concept received criticism from some media scholars who accused it of being too idealistic, thus it cannot be found in real life. Feminist scholars also criticised Habermas for excluding women. For Fraser (1990:59-60), regarded the public sphere as a ‘public sphere’. She argues that in ancient society, possession of a penis gives someone the authority to speak in public hence it marginalises women. Fraser equated the public sphere to a training

ground where the bourgeoisie class will meet and view themselves as the most important class in the society, hence they use the public sphere to prepare and make themselves fit to govern the society. Thus, the problem is not that Habermas idealises the public sphere, but he failed to consider other non-bourgeoisie and non-liberal public spheres that compete with the bourgeoisie public sphere.

Moreover, Fraser (1990) stated that the emergence of a bourgeoisie public sphere was not coincidental but rather it was a masculinity ideological notion that serves to legitimise men dominance in the society. Hartley (2002) asserts that Habermas' theory is too elites, a public sphere should involve everyone in the society regardless of their economic weakness. The theory catered for those who are literate and privileged. Thus the public sphere takes a Gramscian perspective that is it influences the masses through consent - a shift from the repressive domination to a hegemonic rule (Fraser, 1990). The point is that politicians secure forces of change in the society so that there will be able to control everyone, hence maintaining their political domination without using any force. From this perspective, the bourgeoisie public sphere is a compromised terrain as it cannot give a genuine and vivid picture on the limits of actual existing democracy.

2.4 Summary

This chapter managed to review works by different scholars related to this research topic. The key question of this study is around enhancing rural development through community radio. Therefore, as a result of the reviewed literature, the researcher identified that many scholars view community media as the major tool to enhance development, basing on the experiences of different communities around Africa and Asia. However, from the reviewed literature, particularly in Zimbabwe, none focused on researching the role played by *YA FM* in stimulating development in Mberengwa district. As such, this study focused on reviewing the activities of *YA FM* and how these are contributing in developing the community. Conceptual and Theoretical frameworks underpinning the study were also highlighted and this section focused on theories of communication, development and media ownership in a capitalist society. The following chapter looks at research methods and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher managed to review various scholarly works that are related to the research topic. Literature review and theoretical framework informed the selection of research questions that the study addresses especially the role played by *YA FM* to enhance rural community development in Mberengwa North. In order to understand how a CR enhances rural development, a case study approach was preferred as method that could do justice to the research topic. The current chapter focuses on research methodology. Miller and Brewer (2003) asserts that research methodology is fundamental to the construction of the various forms of data gathering. Methodology refers to a set of guidelines to be followed

during the research process. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss in detail, the population sampling procedures, how data was collected, how data was analysed and the presentation of data.

3.2 Research Design

In the case of this research, which is to measure the significance of a CR, *YA FM*, in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North, the qualitative research approach is the main design used. This research design can produce adequate data that effectively address the research topic under study. Research design, according to Yin (2011:75) “are *logical blueprints*”. Yin (1994) cited in Mhagama (2015) asserts that research designs allow researchers to have an exhaustive investigation of the research topic and this is through the use of pre-specified procedures. A research design is therefore a blueprint that clearly specifies the data gathering methods and procedures for analysing data. Its main purpose is to avoid a situation whereby the findings of the research fail to answer the research questions. Yin (2011) says a research design is interested in what questions to research, what data are significant, what data to collect, how to analyse the researched data and how to present the findings.

As indicated above, this study is well-versed with qualitative research. However, quantitative methods will also be included and these use numbers, statistics and data is presented numerically. For a research to reach a conclusion, there is a great need for numbers hence quantitative research methods will be used to compliment qualitative methods. This allows for a wider and more comprehensive scope of research as they supplement each other where there is inadequacy. Scholars also believe that qualitative methods helps the researcher to have a better understanding of quantitative research findings.

Qualitative research method permits the researcher to have a detailed and in-depth evaluation of issues related to the study (Macnamara, 2006). It focuses on the why and how part of the decision making. This study aimed to evaluate the role of *YA FM* in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa, as such qualitative methods were vital instruments of findings answers of the proposed research questions. For Gunter (2000), qualitative research contributes important insights and valuable information that might have been missed by other research methods, hence it can be used to complement quantitative research methods. It helps the researcher in understanding how and why some outcomes were attained rather than

focusing on what was achieved. The advantages of qualitative research are that it is flexible, allows diversity in responses and the researcher can adapt to new developments during the research process.

For the sake of this research, three qualitative research methods were used for gathering data. This paper depend on focus groups, in-depth interviews and observation. However observation was used to a lesser extent. The topic under study is exploratory, explanatory and descriptive in nature thus the mentioned methods are relevant in meeting the goals and demands of the research and are useful in providing accurate information. This research uses a case study approach which in many cases is appropriate for how and why questions (Yin, 2011). As such, the chosen data gathering methods were suitable for providing a platform to find answers for these types of questions. The data collection instruments helped the researcher to collect relevant data and have a deep understanding of the role played by *YA FM* in rural development and livelihood improvements.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The unity of analysis for this study are the adult people from Mberengwa North and radio personnel at *YA FM*. The station was established to cater for the people living in the mining towns and rural communities. It is located in Zvishavane town in Midlands Province. The station started broadcasting in September 2015, thus the period of concern for this study is from September to date. Gunter (2000:64) says, “The unit of analysis is the entity that is counted in a content analysis.” It can be either communities, families, groups, organisation, articles, programmes, or a theme. The unity of analysis can be described as things or anything that the researcher intends to observe, explain and evaluate its characteristics. In social sciences, researchers mainly focus on studying individuals so as to understand their characteristics or behaviours.

3.4 Sampling

In any research conducted, communities, organisations and individuals are studied. In most cases, the probability to study everyone in a community or organisation is almost impossible due to financial constraints and time. As such, researchers gather data from a sample or portion of the population and generalise it to the whole population. For Lohr (1999:3), a sample is “representative in the sense that each sampled unit will represent the characteristics

of a known number of units in the population.” In this case, sampling can be defined as a statistical practice concerned with the selection of individual observations intended to yield some knowledge about population of concern particularly for the purpose of statistical inference (Mytton, 1999). There are two categories of sampling methods and these are probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling is any form of sampling that uses random selection of units, thus every member of the population has the same probability of being selected (Giddens, 2001). In non-probability sampling the chances of being chosen in a sample are not know.

3.4.1 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is a technique which basis sample selection on the purpose of the study and the researcher’s judgement. Its techniques in most cases are used in qualitative researches. Teddlie and Yu (2007:77) define purposive sampling as “selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based on specific purposes associated with answering a research study’s questions.” For Yin (2011), the main purpose for choosing a specific sample or portion is to have the participants that can produce relevant, accurate and enough data. The aim is to identify respondents who have direct experience which is relevant to the phenomena of study. Yin further states that given the need to taste opposition explanations, it is important to deliberately interview participants who might have different opinions or contrary evidence to your topic of study. This is important because it allows the researcher to have balanced information, as such avoiding bias or some form of bias in the study. Thus, purposive sampling is about selecting those that the researcher considers to be information rich.

In this study, purposive sampling was used because the researcher was mainly interested in programmes that enhance rural development, rural audiences of the CR and *YA FM* personnel, thus anything else outside this set parameter was considered irrelevant. The rural population that the researcher targeted are those that have radio receivers at their homes and the opinion leaders in the society. In most cases, rural development projects target women thus the researcher mainly focused on interviewing women who are involved in any project(s), though men were also part of the sample population. At the radio station, the radio manager was the main target of the questions asked because he is responsible for the daily activities. However, some few radio personnel were also interviewed. Attention was mainly given to presenters who are responsible for programmes targeting rural development. The

researcher also listened to programmes that target rural communities so as to find data on how the audiences are participating or involved.

3.5 Methods of Data Gathering

The researcher used qualitative research methods for gathering data. Methods of data collection are instruments used by a researcher to collect information from the sample population or respondents. These methods are usually influenced by the type of research and the targeted unit of analysis. Methods of data gathering can be divided into two types and these are primary methods and secondary methods. Primary research methods are first hand data collection methods, specifically done for a particular topic of study. Haralambos and Holborn (2008) argues that primary research methods include questionnaires, interviews and participant observation among others. Secondary methods focuses on finding data on available literature related to the study. However, as indicated earlier this study used three primary research methods, which are focus groups, in-depth interviews and observation.

3.5.1 Focus Group

Focus group is a form of qualitative research method in which the researcher brings together a small number of subjects to discuss the topic of interest. Gunter (2000) says, “The methodology involves bringing together a group or series of groups of individuals to discuss an issue in the presence of a moderator.” A focus group aim to describe and understand perceptions, interpretations and beliefs of a sample selected so as to gain understanding and data of the study topic from the participants’ perspectives. What can be noted from these definitions is that, a focus group involves bringing participants together to discuss a specific topic so as to generate data. The other characteristic noted is the interaction between the moderator (researcher) and the group (participants).

The group size usually is deliberately kept small, so that its members do not feel intimidated, allowing them to express opinions freely. The moderator usually chairs the discussion. The duty of a moderator is to keep the group intact that is, to lead the discussion and keeps the conversation flowing. For Gunter (2000) the role of the moderator is to make sure that the issue at hand is being discussed and to ensure that a wider range of aspects of the topic are explored. In conducting the discussion, the researcher should encourage interaction among participants. The group members should be encouraged to communicate, exchanging ideas and to comment on each other’s opinions and experiences.

Yin (2011) suggest that focus groups are mainly used as forerunners of the study to detect some new ideas that can be investigated using other methods. Group discussions are vital in that they produce some insights that can be obtained through the interaction found in a group setting. Through verbal interaction, members of the group can remember some past experiences which are crucial, thus contributing with relevant information.

Two focus group discussions were carried out within one day. The first group was made up of six participants of which four were women and two men. This discussion was conducted at Mberengwa turnoff shopping centre. The second group, which consisted of eight participants (four females and four males) was conducted at Mberengwa shopping centre. The participants were chosen basing on the assumption that there are opinion leaders in their society and also considering the positions they have in their communities. The participants were also selected using the criteria that they belong to Mberengwa North district, they represent a local community organisation, committed to their community and active listeners of *YA FM*. On overage, each group discussion lasted for more than forty minutes. These groups were deliberately kept small to avoid a situation whereby some participants would fail to contribute or express their opinions freely. Focus groups were only applied to Mberengwa North community.

3.5.2 In-Depth Interviews

Another data gathering method used in this study is in-depth interviews. Gunter (2000) describes this data gathering technique as a method that involves two people that are, the interviewer, a person who asks questions and the interviewee, a person answering the questions. Interviews are usually done through face-to-face, telephone and e-mail. In-depth interviews are interviews that use the same principle as focus groups, but they differ in that participants are interviewed on individual basis. This method of data gathering is relevant in a situation whereby the researcher wants to ask open-ended questions. In most cases, an in-depth gathering of information is done on few people.

The use of interviews to collect data is advantageous in that the researcher has control over the whole process and the interviewee's chances of responding are high. During the interview process, the researcher can clarify vague questions to the respondent. Moreover, the use of open-ended questions can allow the respondents to explain more on their own experiences; going deeper with the topic at hand. Interview questions are usually prepared before going to

the field to avoid wasting time and a situation whereby the interviewer will forget some important questions. Usually, the same questions are asked across all interviewees thus the findings can be analysed and compared easily.

Several interviewees were held, both at *YA FM* and in Mberengwa North. Two officials (station manager and projects co-ordinator, three journalist and five presenters at the station were interviewed to find out how they design and gather information for their programmes. Two other staff members (traffic controller and studio technician) were also interviewed to find out their opinions and views concerning the operations of the station. In Mberengwa North, nine individuals who were selected using purposive sampling technique were interviewed face-to-face. The researcher was mainly interested to gather information on whether these people are benefiting from *YA FM* and also to find out if they are participating on the development programmes that target their community. Also, the researcher intended to find out if the people of Mberengwa North are pleased with the way *YA FM* represents them.

3.5.3 Direct Observation

Observation was also used as a technique to gather data. For Gunter (2000), unlike other primary research methods which gather information verbally, observation collects data through non-verbal behaviour. Yin (2011) posits that this data gathering technique is about looking carefully and listening attentively. Observation in the field of social sciences involves watching people carefully in order to discover certain information about their behaviour. As a data gathering method, observation is divided into two types that are; participant observation and direct observation. Gunter (2000) argues that participant observation requires the researcher to be a part of the community or culture being studied. In most cases, this method can take months or years because the researcher has to be accepted as part of the community or culture for the observations to be natural. The second type is direct observation. Direct observation is the way of collecting data by watching behaviour and events in a natural setting. This method is different from participant observation in that unlike participant observation, the researcher does not typically try to become part of the society being observed. The duty of the researcher in direct observation is to watch rather than taking part. Furthermore, direct observation does not require many months or years to be completed; it can only last for days or few weeks.

This study employed direct observation as a method of data gathering. The researcher listened to *YA FM* programmes for a period of two weeks in order to identify certain programmes that target rural audiences and to observe if these programmes enhance rural development. Attention was also given on phone-in programmes to find out if the people of Mberengwa are actively participating in generating and sharing information. Direct observation played a crucial role in the study because the researcher managed to understand the programmes being aired and how the audiences of *YA FM* use the media for their own benefit. The researcher was also interested in observing the time allocated to programmes that are related to rural development.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Deciding what to compile as relevant information is an integral part of any study. The data gathered need to be reviewed and refined so that it can answer the research question. This section of the chapter reviews the methods of data analysis applied in this research. The research applied both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis. Data analysis is the process of combining or utilising data gathered to answer the research question. For Yin (2011:177), analysing data involves five stages which are, “compiling, disassembling, reassembling (and arraying), interpreting, and concluding.” Quantitative content analysis was used to evaluate time allocation of programmes related to enhancing rural development and programmes that allow audience participation. However, the study was well-versed with qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis is a process of analysing a vast amounts of information obtained from different sources. The methods used in this research paper are: quali-quantitative content analysis and hermeneutics of interpretation.

3.6.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis can be defined both as a quantitative or qualitative method of data analysis. Krippendorff (1980) cited in Gunter (2000) defines content analysis as research instrument used for making replicable and valid references from data collected to answer the research question. For Kerlinger (1986) cited in Gunter (2000) content analysis is the study and analysis of information in a systematic, objective and quantifiable way so as to measure

variables. From these definitions, content analysis is a process of analysing texts or documents using either quantitative or qualitative means of data analysis. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) cited in Macnamara (2006) argues that content analysis can be categorised into ‘humanist and behaviourist traditions’ as such it analyses data using both approaches. Media researchers advocate that content analysis is a method used in understanding meanings of text while integrating the two approaches of data analysis. Text can be inform of books, journal, documents, programmes, discussions or interviews. In this study, the researcher made use of various programmes on *YA FM*, articles available on the station’s website and also analysing notes taken during field research.

3.6.1.1 Quantitative Content Analysis

According to Berelson (1952) cited in Gunter (2000) content analysis is a research technique for making inferences systematically, objectively and quantitatively by identifying message characteristics. Neuendorf (2002) cited in Macnamara (2006) posits that content analysis is quantitative only. In her definition, Neuendorf strongly argues that content analysis is a process of summarising data using scientific methods. For Macnamara (2006), content analysis collects data such as size and frequency of media messages, volume of mentions and issues or topics mainly covered by the media. Quantitative content analysis is mainly interested in measuring the topic under study and presents the findings using statistical data. Thus quantitative content analysis can be generalised to the whole audience. In this research, Quantitative content analysis was used to evaluate time allocation of programmes related to enhancing rural development and programmes that allow audience participation. The researcher was also interested in identifying the language mainly used for programming.

3.5.1.2 Qualitative Content Analysis

“Qualitative content analysis refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas and themes and how these are combined in a media text” (Deacon *et al*, 1999 cited in Tsarwe, 2014:293). Qualitative content analysis examines media content and its likely interpretation by the audiences that is, it recognises the polysemic nature of media text (Macnamara, 2006). In essence, proponents of the approach assert that cultural background is the determinant factor of message interpretation as such, audiences do not passively accept media text. Thus, the

approach is interested in content, context and receivers; not content only. Newbold *et al* (2002) in Macnamara, (2006:5) observes the weaknesses of quantitative content analysis in identifying the context of the message in which meaning can be derived, thus qualitative approach which is explorative should be adopted. Therefore, integration of the two approaches seems to be the ideal option. The author of this paper used exploratory analysis to identify the themes and topics which are occasionally repeated.

3.6.2 Hermeneutics of Interpretation

In simpler terms, hermeneutics is the art of interpretation or making sense of the events taking place. It has its origins to the interpretation of the Bible and or the Torah (Wallace *et al*, 2003). For Yin (2011:310), hermeneutics is,

The aspect of a study that involves interpreting the event(s) being studied to deepen the understanding of the political, historical, sociocultural, and other real world contexts within which the event(s) occur(s).

Scholars such as Gunter (2000), Lincoln and Denzin (2003) and Pickering (2008) are of the view that hermeneutic approach seeks to find in-depth meaning and interpretation in a text, and to understand the basis of the interpretation. The approach posits that, without understanding the grounded meaning, it is difficult to find the truth and meaning. For White (1996) in Pickering (2008), the method is concerned with the significance of the event rather than what happened. In this case, it is not only about understanding the message, but the contextual background in which meaning is based.

For Wallace *et al* (2003), hermeneutics deals with two ways of interpretation. These aspects include the problem of analysing a text; looking beyond the surface meaning and the problem of verifying the analysed meanings that were produced. Heidegger (1962) in Wallace *et al* (2003:590) discusses two main issues in interpreting a text. The first is how interpretation is influenced by another interpretation. For Wallace, people make presuppositions and prejudices and these influence the way we read texts – our readings of the current texts are influenced by readings of the previous text. The second issue is the ‘paradoxical concept’. This issue is based on the fact that when reading text, people breaks it into component parts: words, sentences and paragraphs. For Heidegger (1962) in Wallace *et al* (2003:590), to understand text components, firstly, we must look at the text as a whole. Thus, in this case, to have a clearer understanding of the text, one needs to break it down and re-built it again.

Therefore, hermeneutics of interpretations is essential to the analysis of data gathered in this research. Through the use of hermeneutics, the researcher had a chance to analyse the whole operation system of *YA FM*. In this context, programmes are analysed with a high specific end in mind that is enhancing rural development in Mberengwa. The researcher was also interested in identifying how corporate ownership influence media content. The method also allows the researcher to trace some cultural backgrounds and life experiences of Mberengwa masses that are relevant to the study. These experiences are relevant because they influence the way these people decode messages or texts.

3.7 Methods of Data Presentation

Information about the research findings can be presented in various ways. Data presentation methods should make it easy for the people to understand what has been found that is to say, the reader should make sense of what is being presented. The best way of presenting data rather depends on the audiences, purpose of the study, data collection and data analysis methods applied (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The paper mainly used qualitative methods of data gathering and data analysis, thus data presentation methods applied are qualitative. Since the research is descriptive and explorative in nature, data is presented thematically. However, the study also used quantitative data analysis methods, hence quantitative methods of data presentation such as tables and charts were also applied. Thomas and Harden (2008) posits that when presenting data, the researcher should avoid using presentation methods that overstate and, or exaggerate the evidence. The researcher should present the findings that can be supported by the data gathered, thus selected methods are considered relevant for this study.

3.7.1 Thematic Analysis

For Braun and Clarke (2006:6) thematic analysis, “is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data.” Attride-Stirling (2001) posits that thematic analysis is unearthing leading themes from textual data. Braun and Clarke (2006) notes that a theme captures important aspects of data which are relevant to the research topic. They also argue that it is the duty of the researcher to judge and determine a theme. This is based on the assumption that for a theme to be considered a theme, it is not the case of it appearing in many data items. For Braun and Clarke (2006), the ‘keyness’ of a theme depends on the notion that it captures the reliable information about the whole research topic.

Braun and Clarke (2006) identify six phases involved in thematic analysis and these were applied in data presentation of this study. However, some of the phases were already applied during data analysis process. The first phase deals with becoming familiar with the data collected. This is the stage whereby the researcher got to understand notes taken during focus groups and interviews. This stage is important because it gave the researcher an in-depth understanding of information and the opportunity to generate meaning and salient issues in the text.

This therefore leads to the second phase which deals with ‘generating initial codes’. Scholars such as Braun and Clarke (2006) and Thomas and Harden (2008) postulate that at this phase, data should be combined according to related codes so as to develop a list of broad domains. In this case, the researcher identified relevant main issues that were mainly discussed during data collecting period and categorised them according to their domains. By going through the findings, the researcher was able to identify outstanding issues that are meaningful and that can avoid redundancy.

Phase three identified by Braun and Clarke (2006:20) is, ‘searching for themes.’ Unlike the previous phase which was interested on identifying codes, the current phase deals with discovering the themes. This stage involves taking the preliminary list (codes) and developing them into themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001). These themes can be categorised into main and sub-themes, depending on how frequently the issue recurs. In this study, the researcher categorised the themes depending which issues appears the most. The researcher was mainly interested in selecting themes that were common in both focus groups and interviews.

After identification of themes, the next stage is reviewing themes. For Braun and Clarke (2006), stage four involves a thorough analysis of the selected themes. They further argue that, at this phase, the researcher should focus on identifying themes without enough data to support them, themes that can be collapsed into each other to form one theme and broad themes that can be broken into more themes. For Attride-Stirling (2001) this stage is mainly concerned with reducing data into more controllable and significant that encapsulates the whole information collected. The validity of a theme, in this case was considered according to information or data available to support it. Therefore, the themes that have enough data to support them were given precedence. This criterion for selection provided the basis to focus on popular themes which succinctly answer the research question.

The fifth phase focuses on defining and naming themes. For Attride-Stirling (2001) step five is a process of summarising the main themes and characterising them accordingly. Braun and Clarke (2006) pointed out that at this stage, the researcher has to identify main points of each theme and to write a detailed analysis in relation to the topic of the study. The names given to these themes should be punchy and straight forward, that is, the reader should understand the theme by just reading its name. In this study, the researcher was considerate in the selection of themes, the main aspect was to avoid paraphrasing of the data. The researcher was concerned with identifying the main interest parts of the theme and how these are interesting.

The last step is producing the report. The main aim of phase six to take the summarised themes and combine them to make a complete story in relation to the research questions, objectives and theoretical framework underpinning the research (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The story here should be told in a way that convinces the reader, as such it should be logic, coherent and conscious (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The researcher should avoid repeating the same information on different themes. Thus, this is the final process where the researcher had to link the findings to the study.

3.7.2 Tables and Pie Charts

The findings of the research are also presented statistically using tables and charts. Tables can be used to present or summarise both qualitative and quantitative data. The advantages of using tables to present data are that they are simple to draw and self-explanatory. The researcher used tables to present programmes which have two or more variables. Another presentation instrument used are charts. This method present data pictorially the thus reader can quickly understand the meaning of message being conveyed. There are two form of charts which are pie chart and bar chart. A pie chart is mainly used to present the frequency distribution of qualitative data. In this case, the rate in which a variable occurs is proportional to the number of degrees in pie chart. On the other hand, a bar chart is used to present quantitative variables. However, the findings in this research are presented using tables and pie charts. After drawing the tables and pie charts, conclusions were drawn from the data collected during the field work.

3.8 Summary

This chapter highlighted the research methods and methodology. It gave a clear analysis of how samples were selected, how data was gathered, analysed and presented. The qualitative methods which were mainly applied in the study provide necessary, relevant and enough data required to answer the research questions. However, quantitative methods were also used to complement qualitative methods. The following chapter focuses on the political economy of the organisation that is *YA FM*. The main concern is centred on ownership and control and how these influence the performance of the station.

CHAPTER FOUR: POLITICAL ECONOMY

4.1 Introduction

The foregoing chapters have examined the introduction to the study, literature review and theoretical framework which anchored the research. Focus was also on research methods and methodology used to study the relationship between *YA FM* and Mberengwa North community. In the current chapter, the study takes a new turn. The main focus of this chapter is to have a deep understanding of the organisation under study. The researcher will be examining the organisational structure paying a particular attention to ownership and control. That is, political economy of *YA FM* and how this influence activities of the organisation, or how corporate ownership affects what the media or cultural industries disseminate. Through political economy, the researcher has the power to critically examine the media organisation and the concepts it advocates.

4.2 Political Economy of the Media

The concept of media ownership and control deals with the ways the communication industry is structured by unequal distribution of resources and issues of power relations. Golding and Murdock (1977) in Strinati (2005:121) adapt a Marxist approach to the study of the media. They argue that production of meaning is embroiled in capitalism, thus the ideas of the owners dominate the thoughts of the subaltern class and domination is meant to maintain the class system in the society which only benefit the capitalist. For Kleahn (2005), the theory interrogates the extent to which different views are suppressed by capitalist control of the mass media. He further argues that the economic structures are designed in such a way that the capitalists have powers to control the media while legitimising their norms and values. Hall (1997) posits that those in charge of any social institution influences what to be produced and the ideas of the dominant class can only be disseminated through the mass media. The ordinary citizens on the other hand, have their voices suppressed and cannot be heard. In this case, the mass media are an instrument used to spread the ideology of the bourgeoisie society and they are political actors who aim to set an agenda.

Media ownership and control in most African countries are rooted in politics and the media aim to legitimise the prevailing political discourse while suppressing the opposing views. Chiumbu (2002) asserts that many African governments control the flow of information thus they are reluctant to open airwaves to other interested parties. The Zimbabwean government is among the governments that are reticent to open the airwaves. The IMPI Report (2014) asserts that the awarding of radio stations in Zimbabwe is perceived unfair as those that were

granted licences are sympathetic to the ruling class. Thus, the awarding of commercial media can be seen as an extension of the dominant discourse. Ownership and control of the media is therefore embedded in hands of the ruling class who have powers to award licences. From this point of view, the communication industry can be considered to be a part of the economic structure which is closely linked to the political structure.

4.3 Historical Background of YA FM 91.8

Ray of Hope trading as *YA FM* is a registered commercial radio station with the Broadcasting Authority of Zimbabwe in terms of the Broadcasting Services Act (2001). However, the station has a community of interest that it targets thus it has been received as a CR station rather than a commercial though there are traceable elements of a commercial radio station. The company received its licence in March 2015 and started operating in September the same year. BAZ granted licences to several companies and individuals to operate around the country. However, the licences granted are perceived to be biased towards the ruling government as the companies and individuals that were given these licences are allied to the ruling party (The African Review, 2013; IMPI Report, 2015; MISA, 2015). Nonetheless, the operations of *YA FM* has bridged a gap between ordinary people (miners and rural communities) and information.

YA FM started operating with a sole mandate of giving a voice to the miners. The station is broadcasting from Zvishavane, a mining town in the Southern Region of Zimbabwe. Ndawana (2015) stipulates that CR gives voice to the voiceless and acts as an ambassador of the information poor, giving them relevant information concerning their lives. Kumar (2004) identified radio as a significant instrument for community development, livelihood improvement and participatory communication. Wabwire (2013) notes that CR should allow the public to actively participate in development processes of their communities. The establishment of *YA FM* has filled a gap provided by the mainstream media which are based in the main cities, marginalising small towns and rural communities. As such, *YA FM* is the first radio station which targets mining communities in Zimbabwe. Also, it is the first licensed radio station to broadcast from a town or city other than Bulawayo, Gweru or Harare. It broadcasts for 24 hours a day with six slots for news bulletins, music and various programmes.

Enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North through community radio. Case of YA FM.

When granted its licence, the station was only allowed to cover a forty kilometre radius. However, its reach has been long improved and now it can cover as far as 130 kilometres. This improved reach saw communities such as Mberengwa, Chibi, Mashava, Shuringwi and Filabusi among others benefiting from the medium. Due to its coverage reach, *YA FM* has been nicknamed, ‘*The Pulse of the Great Dyke.*’ Indeed, the station is the centre or source of information for the people who lives in the southern part of the Great Dyke. *YA FM* currently enjoys a monopoly of its audience within the 130 kilometre radius it reaches. The station is available on 91.8 FM that is in the 130km radius of Zvishavane. It is also available on cyberspace via tune in and also on the station’s website to listeners in and out of its range.

The primary target audience of *YA FM* are Shona speakers. However, Midlands Province is a multi-lingual province as such the station also broadcast in Ndebele and English. Most *YA FM* listeners are rural dwellers from aforementioned districts. These districts still lag behind in terms of infrastructure and development. Also, they receive low rainfall hence farming is not the major economic activity they rely on. As mentioned earlier, *YA FM* target audience resides along the Great Dyke as such many of them practice artisan mining. Mining therefore becomes the main source of income for many families. More so, illiteracy rate is high and poverty is widespread in these rural districts.

In Zimbabwe, the government is reluctant to open the airwaves. Ndlela (2010) is of the view that, since independence, the Zimbabwean government has done some changes in the broadcasting sector only to advance its interest. The post 2000 Zimbabwe saw the government curtailing any unfavourable expression in the broadcasting media. Chiumbu (2010) asserts that many African governments control the flow of information thus they are reluctant to open airwaves to other interested parties. Despite forces from different actors, the Zimbabwean government has managed to maintain its monopoly in the broadcasting sector by awarding commercial and CR licenses to individuals allied to the ruling party. In this case, the government has indirectly made it plausible that it curtails multiplicity and miscellany as advocated by the African Charter on Broadcasting (2001).

Through the new radio stations, people are likely to receive same range of discourses as the mainstream media. The point serve to illustrate that, media ownership and control lies in the hands of the few and these are the rich people. In the case of Zimbabwe, media ownership is embroiled in politics or power struggles as such the ruling party only receives favourable coverage from the media. *YA FM* on the other hand is aligned to ZANU-PF as such its

programmes and operations serve to advance and legitimise the government's policies and blueprints such as the Zim-ASSET. With the country's general mining policy being to sustain development of the country's mineral resources, *YA FM* has taken a stance that advances this policy as such, it is the mouthpiece of the government.

Thus, the awarding of licenses is a move meant to deceive and silence the ordinary citizens and civil society, but the issue of a monopolised broadcasting sector still prevails. Be that as it may, Mararike (1998) postulates that the historical overview of the Zimbabwean media indicates that media freedom will remain a pipe line dream and all media serve particular views and interests, especially of those who control the means of production.

4.4 Organisational Structure

YA FM like any other company has a well-formulated hierarchy. All the organization members serve a specific and specialized task. This implies that no individual will intrude into the working domain of other staff members. *YA FM* corporate governance is modelled around and is consistent with internationally accepted corporate governance principles. The station's staff is made up of people who have little knowledge on broadcasting, especially presenters and journalists. Almost three quarters of the staff are students on attachment. Due to lack of experience, students cannot say much thus they can be easily manipulated in following orders without questioning.

At the top of the organisation's organogram, is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Munyaradzi Hwengere, a prominent ZANU-PF activist and former CEO of ZBC (the only television station in Zimbabwe used to spread the propaganda of the ruling class). Hwengere owns and controls *YA FM* as such the station serves to legitimise his agendas. The station was officially launched by Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa and since then it has become a strong voice for Mnangagwa's Lacoste faction of ZANU-PF. Due to his link with the government, Hwengere has failed to strike business deals with Multinationals like Mimosa Mining Company after he expressed support towards the Mugabe regime. For instance, Mimosa withdrew its sponsorship on the programme, *Lets Go Zero Campaign* and this might have been influenced by the fact that the station management is pro-ZANU-PF thus causing conflict of interest between sponsors and the owner.

In order to maintain the hegemonic nature of the station, Hwengere appointed Collin Nikisi to be the station manager. Nikisi is a former ZBC personnel as such he is well-versed with the

editorial policy that govern the Zimbabwe public broadcasting system. All staff members at *YA FM* report to the station manager who controls the daily activities of the radio station. This implies that the news editor, Lesley Zibonele Moyo works closely with the manager. The appointing of Nikisi as manager was mainly influenced by his background, thus he is influential in maintain the hegemonic status of the ruling government. His experience at ZBC combined with that of Hwengere is crucial in making sure that the information being disseminated does not tarnish the image of the government.

The Editor together with the news staff are responsible for gatekeeping information. Gatekeeping regulates the flow of information (McCombs and Shaw, 2004). These scholars further assert that gatekeeping in media is usual based on the principle of news value and the editorial policy of the organization. Thus, gatekeepers control the public's knowledge of reality by deliberately withholding some information and letting some stories aired. The editor at *YA FM* is responsible for making schedules for the news and current affairs. The station's editorial policy is best upheld by the news and current affairs department through the news bulletins and also current affairs programmes.

4.5 Mission Statement

A mission statement is a broad expression which reflects the overall purpose for the existence of an organisation, related to the values and objectives of the major stakeholders (Cornellisen, 2004). The mission statement of *YA FM* is, "to promote trendsetting programming that promotes business, development and engages the mining communities." The station, as reflected by the programmes, strive to be a leading voice on issues pertaining to the welfare and wellbeing of miners in the Great Dyke. The station is a tool used by development agents to inform people about available development projects. Some programmes are meant to educate farmers and giving them farming tips. Thus, the nature of some programmes to a large extent is in accordance with the organisation's mission statement.

However, as government mouthpiece, the station's mission statement is in line with government's blueprints and policies. The Zim-Asset blueprint is anchored on indigenisation, empowerment and job creation. A closer look on *YA FM's* mission statement shows that the statement was drafted in line with the government's economic blueprint. The mission of *YA FM* include promoting businesses. The Zim-Asset is anchored on sustainable economic empowerment whereby creation of business opportunities is the main thrust. More so,

development is one of the main focus areas of the plan. The station on the other hand advocates for programming that can bring development to its target communities. Also, the station aim to engage the mining communities around Zvishavane. In April this year, ZANU-PF youths were given gold claims by the government thus empowering the citizens as stated in the blueprint. In this case, one can note that the mission statement of *YA FM* was created based on the provisions of the Zim-Asset. Thus, the awarding of radio licences to individuals allied to the government was a deliberate move meant to spread the views and interest of the ruling class while suppressing oppositional voices through regulatory system that deny them broadcasting licences and access to airwaves.

4.6 Vision

A vision is the perceived future aspirations of an organisation. Cornellisen (2004) postulate that a vision illustrates what the organisation wants to achieve in the long run and it energises the staff members to work towards achieving the same goal. *YA FM*'s vision statement is, "to be the leading voice for a developed, empowered and united mining community by 2025." Currently, the station is slowly becoming the leading voice in the Great Dyke. Just like its mission statement, *YA FM*'s vision statement stresses its roots from the government policies which advocate for an empowered society. Empowerment is part of ZANU-PF's manifesto which the ruling party used to win elections in 2013. From a Gramscian perspective, the ruling class makes sure that their own values and norms become normal among their subjects thus maintaining the prevailing status quo. For Gramsci, hegemony champions its own values so that they become accepted by the society without the use of force. Thus, there is need to create certain alliances with strong forces within a society who can assist in cementing the leadership. These force will therefore create consent on behalf of the government. In this case, *YA FM* is being used by the government to dominate the thoughts of the subordinate groups, hence this ideological domination serves to legitimise the Mugabe regime.

4.7 Core Values

In delivering its services, *YA FM* is guided by the following core values: professionalism, honesty and relevance. As such, ethical consideration on daily activities at the station is of paramount significance. Professionalism as a core value advocates for radio personnel to strive not to mix their work and personal life. However, as stated above, *YA FM* is a force being used by the Mugabe government to maintain its status quo. The issue of advancing the

blueprints of the ruling government shows some lack of professionalism. In its own sense, professionalism advocates for an empowered personnel who make decision without external influences that is the staff should appear neutral. The point is that, *YA FM* staff members should equal represent everyone's views and norms in the society despite any political or religious backgrounds, giving them equal chance to participate – that's professionalism. The fact that the radio station operates on behalf of the government and is not representing the needs of the society equally raises more question than answers as far as professionalism is concerned. For instance, ZANU-PF big wigs like the Vice President Emerson Mnangagwa and Governor Dr John Magudya were invited to a live interview at the radio station, yet no oppositional representative was ever invited. In this case, political parties are not given equal opportunity as the ruling party, thus the production of meaning can be seen as exercise of power (Curran and Gurevitch, 2000).

Honesty- the core value places its emphasis on fair representation of community culture, language and community aspirations with pride and dignity. Considering proximity of *YA FM* to its target audience, it is important for the station's reporters to accurately present their audiences because misrepresentation of facts can cause damage or harm in the community. Radio is a powerful communication tool which should be used to serve community needs rather than self-motives (Fraser and Estrada, 2001). The programming on *YA FM* is mainly centred on programmes that develop the mind, soul and body, neglecting the infrastructure. Despite being richly blessed with minerals, Mberengwa and many other districts in the Great Dyke still lag behind in terms of infrastructure development. The government of Zimbabwe advocates that minerals should benefit their communities but this is not the case in Mberengwa where the ordinary citizens are poor and the roads are dusty, marred with potholes. Schools and hospitals on the other hand lacks equipment. Thus, the station avoids infrastructure development programmes because they indirectly expose the failure of the government to meet its promises that minerals should benefit the local people. In this sense, *YA FM's* credibility of being 'honesty' is highly questionable.

4.8 Objectives

Objectives are specific steps that allow a company to meet its set goal(s), (Odiorne, 1981). The objectives of *YA FM* can be best understood by relating them to the organisation's name, '*Ray of Hope*'. Firstly, the organisation strives to inform the public through the news bulletins

and current affairs. To achieve its objectives, the station offers news bulletins and current affairs programmes concerning the people in and around its range. The station's editorial policy states that 60% of its news bulletins will be local stories, 30% national stories and 10% stories from African and the rest of the world. However, looking at how the station covers current affairs, one can note that they gate-keep some information. For instance, the demonstration in Harare where the masses were demonstrating against the government were not covered. As such, the notion of 'informing' is not relevant when it comes to anti-ZANU-PF messages or information.

Secondly, the station aims to educate its target audience through programmes. For Fraser and Estrada (2001), one of the core tasks of a CR is to educate its audiences. For Macky (2009) in Ndirangu (2014), a CR should have programmes where they invite Members of Parliament (MP) and local people to discuss issues concerning the state, market and society, thus running citizen education programmes. The point serves to illustrate that underprivileged people often lag behind in terms of knowledge and regulations that govern the society and this can be attributed to the lack of proper forums to inform them (Ndirangu, 2014). Mhlanga (2010) states that a CR is responsible for addressing the knowledge imbalances that exist in its community of interest and to give a voice to marginalised communities. For Mwajabu (2001), a CR should represent its audience by standing up and fight for their rights through awareness programmes. Thus, creation of awareness should be of paramount significance. However, the station under study lacks programming that stands for human rights and where there is subordination by the government, they remain silent. This is mainly influenced by the saying, 'you cannot bite the hand that feeds you.' Therefore, the issue of political economy of the media plays a role in hindering the people their right to be informed.

Thirdly, the organisation strive to entertain its audiences. According to the station's editorial policy, music and talk should have equal frequency distribution. The production team is responsible for enacting content that entertain the audience, giving first preference to local artists from Zvishavane and its neighbouring districts. However, there is an imbalance as pro-ZANU-PF songs can be played while opposition songs cannot. Thus, Golding and Murdock (1977) in Strinati (2004:121) postulate that the media is concentrated in the hands of the few capitalist and they serve to legitimise existing views and norms. Through songs, the station is a tool used to spread the philosophy that ZANU-PF is the only suitable party that is eligible

to govern Zimbabwe. Suppression of opposition music is therefore meant to decamping opposition parties, hence ownership patterns influence content.

4.9 Funding Mechanism

In principle, a CR serves a specific community of interest, thus it is owned and controlled by the community, (Fraser and Estrada, 2001). For Madamombe (2005), though a CR can get financial aid from advertisers, the responsibility to fund the station is on the target audience. Golding and Murdock (1997) cited in Curran and Gurevitch (2000:73) assert that media economic structures are designed in a way that the bourgeoisie uses the communication industry to legitimize the prevailing discourses while suppressing oppositional views and norms. In this case, those who fund the organization have the authority to control or influence what to be disseminated.

YA FM is owned and controlled by *Ray of Hope*, thus the media group is the main source of income for the radio station. In this context, the media group has the power to influence the operations of the station. Considering the historical background of some group members, especially Hwengere who happen to be a former ZBC CEO, *YA FM's* credibility to serve the community can be put under scrutiny. According to the IMPI Report (2015), companies or individuals who were awarded commercial radio licences are allied to the ruling class, thus these stations are extensions of the dominant discourses. Because the funders of *YA FM* are sympathetic to the ruling elite, the station might be obliged to legitimise the views of those in power at the expense of its audience. Therefore, in this line of argument, the radio station can be seen as part of the economic structure which is closely linked to the political structure.

It is argued that, in Africa, radio wins the elections (Ndlela, 2010). Thus, the Mugabe regime only award licences to individuals who are politically correct or who are pro-ZANU-PF so as to curtail political competition mainly in rural areas. For instance, since early 2000, a number of CRs have been awaiting licences. These include Radio Dialogue, CR Harare (CORAH), Tsakani CR, Mabikwa CR and Chivero CR among others. Mhiripiri (ND) posits that Radio Dialogue in Bulawayo since 2001 have everything under control, ready to start operating, but being stopped by the license issue. The question is, why BAZ is selective on granting its licenses? In this case, chances are high that *YA FM* is being funded by the government as such the aim of the station is to legitimise the status quo.

Advertising and sponsorships also play an important role in generating income for the station. For Herman and Chomsky (1988) advertisers are patrons who buy and pay for the media content as such media programmes serve the needs and interests of advertisers. They assume that media organisation are dependable on advertisements for financial aid, thus their performance is directly influenced by advertisers. According to the propaganda model, the media sell audience to advertisers. Curran and Gurevitch (2000) talks of ‘advertisers as latter-day licensing authorities.’ Advertisements are therefore part and parcel of any media institution. Due to the influential role of advertisers, Fraser and Estrada (2001) contend that given the character of a community, careful thought should be given to type of advertisers that would be accepted. Thus, their argument is local businesses should be given first preferences. For sustainability, *YA FM* accepts advertisements. However, most of its advertisers are local providers from Zvishavane and Mberengwa. In this case, the station’s editorial policy and mission statement might not be influence by the advertisers since these are only interested in making their businesses popular.

4.9 Summary

The chapter managed to give a critical overview in terms of ownership and control of *YA FM*. Tracing the historical background of the station, the researcher managed to bring to light some loopholes that can hinder the station to fully meet the operations of an ideal CR station. The owners of the station are allied to the government as such policies that govern the station reflect or advances the interests and views of the ruling government. The station’s mission statement and vision which advance government policies were also scrutinised. The chapter also managed to review the funding mechanism of the organisation and how this influence media content. The following chapter will attempt to answer the research questions and objectives. Mainly, it focuses on data presentation and analysis.

CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher discussed the organisational structure of *YA FM* and how ownership and control influences media content. The chapter managed to interrogate the objectives, mission statement, core values, vision and funding mechanism of the station and how these affect programmes and information being disseminated. The station's policies are influenced by the ruling government as such there is lack of equal representation of the people in the society. This chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation. As stated in the previous chapters, the main purpose of this research is to examine the effectiveness of *YA FM* in enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North community. The chapter discusses various themes developed from the data gathered during field research. The researcher is mainly interested in analysing information that have developmental themes. The chapter also discusses the positive changes that were brought about by the community station and the level of participation of the people of Mberengwa. Thus, the chapter answers the research questions and objectives. Therefore, this chapter will be divided into main sections, comprising of main themes developed from the data gathered.

5.2 Public Access to *YA FM*

The concept of public access can be seen as making the broadcasting services available to the audience (Wabwire, 2013). For Wabwire, the audience should not receive information only, but also have access to the studio. The studio should be available to the people either for serious information or for socialising purposes, thus being a nerve centre for interaction. Apart from this, the station should allow volunteers and interested parties to visit the station and share their ideas. This section will specifically look at the location of the studio and listenership patterns paying a particular attention to its reach and availability of radio receivers. Firstly, the section focuses on interrogating the validity of the name, '*The Pulse of the Great Dyke*' concentrating more on the station's location.

5.2.1 The Pulse of the Great Dyke

The Great Dyke is richly blessed with various minerals such as gold, emerald, platinum, iron, asbestos, chrome and tantalite among others. It stretches from Matebeleland South, cutting across Midlands Province to Mashonaland Central. Zvishavane urban is the nerve centre of

the host mining communities in the Southern part of the Great Dyke, as business flourish in this small town. Adjacent districts of Zvishavane such as Mberengwa, Chivi and Mazvihwa all depend on Zvishavane for banks and other business activities. Thus, the town is, 'The Pulse of the Great Dyke'. *YA FM* is located in Zvishavane urban hence it is at the centre of the mining communities. Therefore, the name, The Pulse of the Great Dyke implies that the station is the centre of information for the people who resides along the Great Dyke. Most of the people who lives in the town are from the surrounding rural areas, hence they lead a rural life and semi-urban lifestyle.

Mberengwa North is located 40 kilometres from Zvishavane urban. This implies that in terms of studio accessibility, people from Mberengwa had to travel to Zvishavane to have access to the studio. However, considering the financial background of many families in Mberengwa, it is difficult for one to prioritise using a studio. *YA FM*'s programmes co-ordinator, Taurai Mbaya stated that:

Unfortunately, our rural audiences have a challenge of using the studio for their own advantage mainly because the station is located far away from their villages. However, our doors are always open to anyone with a story to tell. We give equal representation of our audiences despite their background or origin. Once in a while we invite children, especially those who watch presenters through glass windows to come inside to feel the natural environment (Personal interview September, 26, 2016).

The participants of both focus groups expressed the desire to have their views and problems aired on the station. However, because of the station's location, they cannot meet the transport costs involved. Some of them also claimed that they are not aware of the accessibility of the station to its audience, whilst some professed ignorance about the existence of the radio station.

The programmes co-ordinator further explained that the location of *YA FM* was selected after considering aspects such accessibility, signal propagation and availability of power. The CR was started in order to engage the mining communities in Zimbabwe, as such the Great Dyke is one such community without a voice. Thus, to meet the needs of many people in the community, the station had to be strategically positioned such that all the minority groups will benefit. However, the level of benefit favours a few people in Zvishavane urban. Most of

the audiences who reside in rural areas have a limited access in terms of visits due to hindrances mentioned above. Nonetheless, considering the mission statement of the station, it is placed on an ideal location suitable to meet the demands of the target audience - Great Dyke.

5.2.2 Listenership Patterns in Mberengwa

The listenership pattern of *YA FM* is significant to the study because it helps to understand the radio station's impact in the Great Dyke. Also, understanding listenership is important because the researcher get to know the favourite radio station the people of Mberengwa North tune in. Significant to note is that, *YA FM* was established in a community where Radio Zimbabwe (RZ) was the dominant medium. The station's programmes co-ordinator explained that:

It's been a year since we started operating and the reception we received so far is exceptional. We receive messages from people in various parts of the Great Dyke such as Shurugwi, Filabusi, Mberengwa and Mazvihwa saying they enjoy listening to *YA FM*. When we started operating our license allowed us to reach a 40km radius but this has been long improved and we can now reach the people in our 130km radius (Personal interview, September 26, 2016).

The overwhelming reception was also influenced by the proximity of the station. The mining community in Zimbabwe, especially those in the southern part of the Great Dyke never had an opportunity to hear their voices on air as such they were pleased with the launch of a radio station in their place of abode.

Table 1: Share of Radio Listenership in Mberengwa North

NO	Name of station	Station Type	Listenership (%)
1	Radio Zimbabwe (RZ)	Public Broadcaster	20
2	Power FM	Public Broadcaster	10
3	National FM	Public Broadcaster	5
4	Sport FM	Public Broadcaster	5
5	ZI-FM	Commercial Broadcaster	0
6	Star FM	Commercial Broadcaster	0

Enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North through community radio. Case of YA FM.

7	<i>YA FM</i>	Commercial Broadcaster	60
8	Diamond FM	Commercial Broadcaster	0

From the table above, it emerges that *YA FM* has managed to lure more audiences in Mberengwa. Responses were collected from the community members through in-depth interviews and focus groups, as such the sample population represent the whole community. The station manager also believes that despite the challenges faced during the early days, the station has managed to build a firm foundation. His argument is based on the fact that they receive calls from audience, saying they enjoy running in.

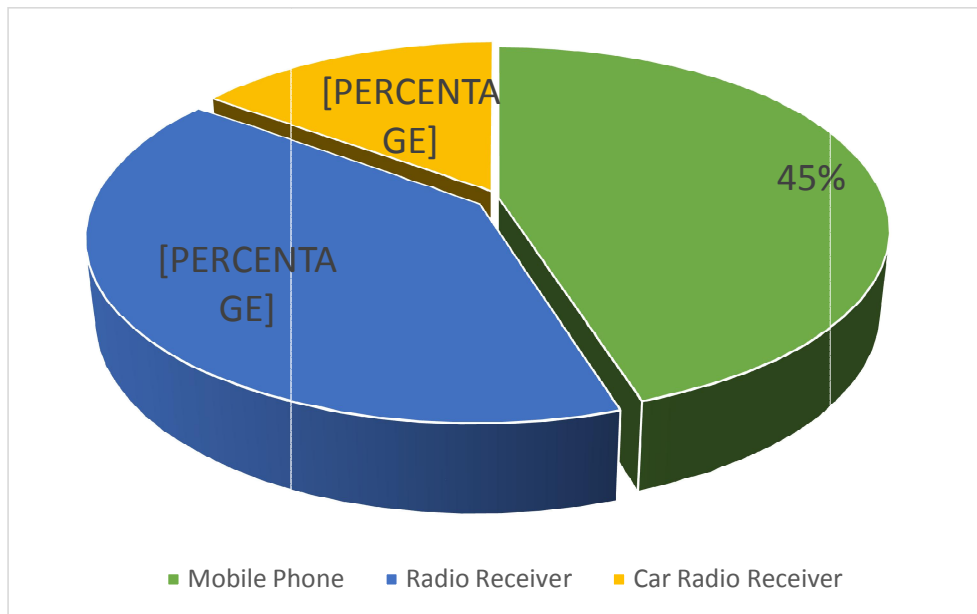


Figure 1: Form of Radio Receivers used in Mberengwa North

The findings of the above pie chart are based on the data gathered during field research. They represent the forms of receivers used by the respondents of both focus groups and interviews. The above pie chart shows that the form of radio receivers used by the majority of people has shifted to the use of new technologies such as mobile phones. The advantage of using mobile phones is that one can tune in even when doing duties outside the house, as such audiences cannot miss their favourite programs mainly because they were not at home when the program started. Traditional radio receivers however are still popular though they are mainly used by elder people whilst mobile phones are popular among the youths.

Figure 1 also shows that there are some audiences who listen to *YA FM* while driving. In most cases people who own cars in Mberengwa are business people and artisan gold miners.

Usually, these people can have access to radio channel using different forms of radio receivers. Also, the data gathered it emerges that online streaming is not popular mainly because the radio signals in the community are strong thus opting to listen online will be a waste of resources. However, there might some people in the diaspora from Mberengwa who might be listening to *YA FM* online. Be that as it may, there are some people who only have access to the radio station during the day when they are relaxing at shopping centres, listening to other people's radio receivers.

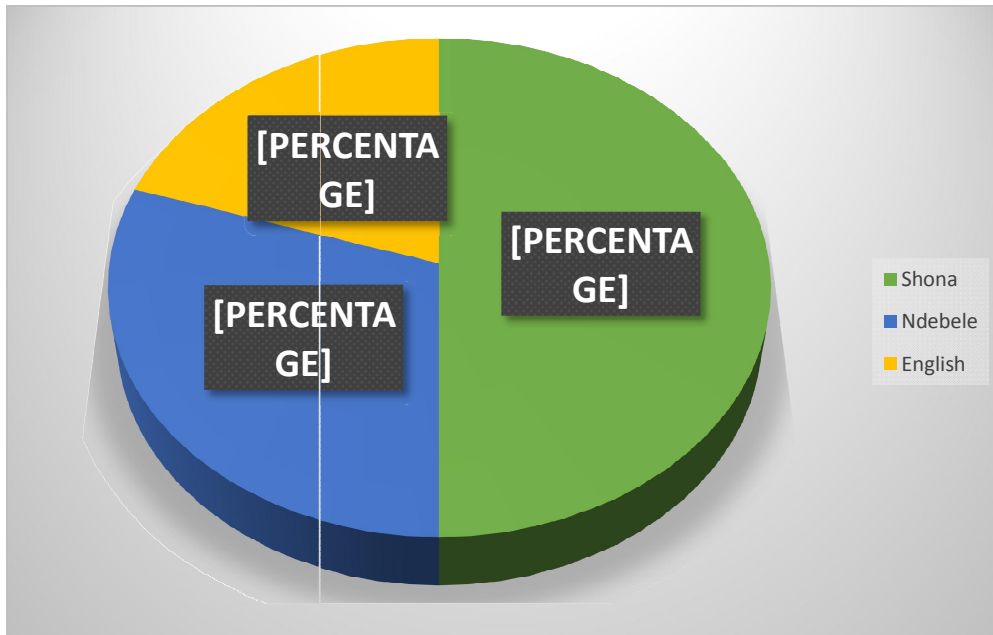


Figure 2: Languages used to broadcast to Mberengwa audiences

The percentages above are based on the station's editorial policy. Understanding the main languages used by the station is crucial because the researcher get to know if information is reaching the target audience without exclusions. The target population of *YA FM* consist of minority groups who speak languages such as Sotho, Shangaan and Venda. However, the main languages are Shona and Ndebele, though Ndebele speakers are in Filabusi, Gwanda and some parts of Mberengwa.

According to information gathered using the focus groups and interviews, most of the participants acknowledge that the languages being used by the CR meet their expectations since almost everyone in the district can understand Shona and some understand Ndebele. As a result, the station has managed to usurp a number of audiences from the public broadcasters. The station manager also contends that the use of local languages is mainly to

reach the target market without exclusions and also to celebrate local cultures. English is an alternative language used occasionally especially on news bulletins and some daily shows or programmes. The programmes co-ordinator explained that, many people in Zimbabwe understands English as such using it complements Shona and Ndebele.

5.3 The role of Audience Participation in Development

The notion of having access to the community media without involving the people is not enough hence provision of both aspects is essential. Thus public access and participation complement each other. Participation is viewed as one key element that can be used to attain development in a community (Mefalopulos, 2003). For, Fraser and Estrada (2002) a CR is a public sphere where people can meet, define their problems and come up with possible solutions to solve these problems in ways that can lead to livelihood improvement and development. However, participation should also encompass aspects such as designing of programmes and contents decisions. The main thrust of this section is therefore to assess how *YA FM* has done this.

5.3.1 Programme designing at *YA FM*

Prior to its launch, *YA FM* embarked on an online campaign meant to create awareness, to generate ideas and perceptions of the target audience. The campaign was conducted for three months before the station started operating. The intentions of the campaign was to gather solid and valid information about the people in the Great Dyke. The gathered information was therefore used as a guide line to come up with programmes to broadcast on the medium. During the campaign, mining companies were encouraged to send their applications for programmes. As such, from a participatory point of view, the early days of *YA FM* created a positive future where involvement of audience in the planning stage is considered relevant. However, though a positive move, the campaigning method marginalised some audience since it was done online. Also, by then the station was targeting the people in its 40km radius thus the majority of the people who reside in the surrounding rural areas of Zvishavane were discriminated as not part of the target audience. Nevertheless, the notion that *YA FM* involved its target audience in the planning stage of programmes cannot be disputed.

When designing programmes, the programmes co-ordinator explained that audience involvement is the major criteria they use. He said that radio personnel, especially the presenters go on a field research where they meet audiences and discuss about the current

Enhancing rural development in Mberengwa North through community radio. Case of YA FM.

programmes and areas that need improvement. He further explained that station presenters and journalist often visit rural areas and in many cases when there is function taking place or a unique achievement done in the area. The programmes co-ordinator said that:

At *YA FM* we encourage our listeners to write or visit us with questions, problems and ideas they think can help to meet societal needs. In many cases, those who contributed with exceptional ideas we invite them to the station to present their ideas and contributions to the whole community. Also, our off air activities are not only limited to gathering information regarding our programming, but we also focus on looking at success stories in the communities. We then broadcast these stories to encourage other listeners in the various districts to work towards developing their communities. For instance, if a specific community, let's say in Mazvihwa has done something exceptional, we go there and do interviews, gathering more information on how they have done it. This will therefore contribute to development of other districts such as Mberengwa because the people will be motivated by the success of their neighbours (Personal interview, September 26, 2016).

Contrary to the idea that *YA FM* involves its audience when designing programmes, the research can establish that rural areas are isolated or marginalised. From the focus groups and interviews conducted, it emerged that most of respondents never met any personnel from *YA FM*. The respondents lament that there are some things they would want to hear but they do not have access to the radio station. Although Taurai Mbaya said that the studio premises are always open to people with stories to tell, the participants complained that transport costs to travel to Zvishavane are high hence they cannot do so. Some participants even claimed that trying to participate is a waste of time because they believe that their efforts will be turned down. As a result most of the programs on the radio station are designed by radio personnel with information gathered from people in Zvishavane urban, thus marginalising rural communities. However, involvement is crucial at all stages, as it encourages audience and gives them self-esteem.

By and large, programme designing at *YA FM* is done mainly by the station's management. The participation of listeners in designing programmes is minimal considering that no

community representatives sit in the decision-making meetings. Therefore, audience do not take full part in designing what they expect to hear on the radio. The researcher discovered that, *YA FM* has not formed listeners clubs where audience can meet and discuss community issues which they want to be aired on the medium for others to hear. Around Africa, Radio Listener's Clubs (RLC) have proved important in promoting audience participation, as such the creation of clubs in Mberengwa can also contribute in increasing the participation level of the audiences. Nevertheless, though programmes are created by management, they do cater for the audience and they also allow listeners to participate on air.

5.3.2 Appropriating New Media to Enhance Participation

In relation to the role of radio in Africa, the rise of new media technologies has posed a threat to the common mantra that radio is the medium for Africa. Ownership of mobile phones which have access to internet has drastically improved over the past few years in rural areas. This improvement increased the sharing of information among the people due to the fact that mobile phones allows for citizen journalism. However, this advancement in technology on the other hand is an advantage to traditional media firms who can exploit the capabilities of new media. Interview with *YA FM* programmes co-ordinator indicated that in addition to sending journalists in the field, the station also benefit from phone ins and text messages sent by the audience.

YA FM envision an empowered, united and developed mining community by 2025. This vision statement therefore implies that, the station is mandated to give audience information that is significant to their current situation and this can go a long way in developing, uniting and empowering the mining community. The popular saying, 'miners unmuted' on *YA FM* implies that the station views its mission as being voice of the voiceless. Therefore, in an endeavour to empower, unite and develop its target audience, *YA FM* has produced various programmes covering a wide range of topics. Most of these programmes have a local taste and are generally development oriented. The topics covered in the programmes can be categorised as follows: political, business, health, edutainment, agriculture, legal and social issues among others. Through listening to *YA FM*, the researcher discovered that certain programmes fall in either one of the above categories.

With all the above range of topics being discussed on the radio station, chances are high that almost everyone's needs are being covered. Despite targeting a specific community, it is

important to remember that individuals have different needs and wants thus what gratifies someone can be irrelevant to other people. *YA FM* has diverse and dispersed audience as such variety of programming allows many people to benefit. Thus, producing a wide range of programmes allows the station to retain its followers. However, as the station manager said:

It is not enough to say we represent people when the voices of those people that we claim to represent cannot be heard. Our wish as an organisation is to have a community that is empowered and developed. Giving audience the chance to air their concerns is therefore our main tool to achieve the organisation's vision statement. We design our programmes in such a way that they allow our audience to interact thus, the advent of new media technologies has given us the opportunity to enhance audience participation. (Personal interview, September 26, 2015).

From the above, it emerged that the station management is audience oriented. The researcher therefore selected a few programmes that focus on development and that allow public participation, especially on air participation. Through focus groups and in-depth interviews, the researcher discovered that access to studio is limited for audience in Mberengwa North due to reasons mentioned earlier, thus they can participate through phone-in-programmes. Many of the participants have access or own a mobile phone hence on air participation can be achieved and this can be done through phone calls, text messages and social media platforms (WhatsApp and Facebook). However, use of text messages and social media can result in the presenter gatekeeping some information or not being able to understand the meaning in some text thereby considering them irrelevant. Nonetheless, participation through on air programming cannot be disputed. In the interest of this study, below is a discussion of selected few programmes that are development oriented and that allow listeners to participate. Important to note is that all the chosen programmes allows audience to participate through phone calls, text messages and social media, especially WhatsApp.

5.3.2.1 The Chollar Bag

The Chollar Bag is a wellness programme which airs during weekdays from 9.00am to 12.00pm. The program covers a wide variety of topics ranging from finance, health and tackles trending issues in the society. As such, these topics are shared across the weekdays. Mondays focus on financial issues especially on how to empower rural women with projects

that can benefit them financially. Tuesday is a gentlemen's day. The programmes co-ordinator said that, "Tuesday is the only day where the Chollar Bag tackles issues that focuses on the empowerment and health related issues of men" (personal interview, September 26, 2016). On Wednesdays, the Chollar Bag is interested in covering health issues that affect women in rural areas. Thursdays are throwbacks on matters discussed during the course of the week, while Fridays focus on tackling trending issues. According to the programmes co-ordinator, The Chollar Bag is mainly interested in developing "the mind, body and soul" (personal interview, September 26, 2016).

As indicated above, the main topics covered on the Chollar Bag target women living in rural communities and these mainly talk about empowerment issues and health problems that rural women face. Through the Chollar bag, women in rural areas have the opportunity to ask questions meant to gain more knowledge on the subject being discussed on that day. Usually, an expert who is well-versed with the topic being discussed on a particular day is invited to the studio so that listeners can get the opportunity to ask questions. For instance, on September 21, 2016 the topic under discussion on the Chollar Bag was on the use of contraceptives and how effective they are. As such, a sexual health expert, Eugenia was the co-host or guest speaker. Health information is important in developing any community because one should stay health in order to contribute on the development of the community.

Women participants and respondents of both focus groups and in-depth interviews expressed their gratitude towards the station for allowing them to interact with health personnel. Basing on the fact that in rural areas there is a shortage of health workers and facilities, having a chance to communicate with someone especially an expert is important to many women in Mberengwa. Participants also reported that having a professional advice is important because they gain knowledge on how to overcome some health challenges they face on daily basis. Of significant to note is that, the programme broadcast in Shona thus many people can understand the message being communicated and through phone calls, listeners can express their views very well without challenges. The participants likes the programme because of the help and tips they get.

On the other hand, the Gentlemen's club gives men equal opportunity as women. The club covers areas ranging from health, finance and business among others. For instance, issues of breast cancer affecting man are tackled, thus raising awareness on the health problems that can affect man. Also, experts such as the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor, Dr John

Mangudya and Arthur Marara, an author and lawyer are invited to the shows, sharing relevant knowledge to listeners. This method therefore allows audience of *YA FM* to engage in conversations with influential people in the country, thus they can get motivated. In this way, *YA FM* audience in Mberengwa have the opportunity to gain relevant information that can be used in the development process of their community. Through discussions on the radio station, audience can acquire new skills that are relevant in improving their livelihoods and community development.

5.3.2.2 The Blast Furnace

Talk time on the Blast Furnace airs during the week from Monday to Thursday. It is a talk show in which the presenter select a topic concerning the community and gives it up for discussion to audience. As the name suggest, the topics discussed on the programme are mainly current affairs which are trending locally or nationally. These stories usually affect the whole community or country thus, they are relevant to enhance rural development in Mberengwa because people get to be informed of the current status of their country. Well informed people can make right choices and decisions for their future. They can plan for tomorrow knowing what to expect rather than being told of some changes after making decisions. Example of topics covered on The Blast Furnace are the Bond notes issue and bogus local government officials (corruption). The programmes co-ordinator stated that YA take (Blast Furnace) is specifically designed to raise awareness and also to encourage the general public to say out their thoughts on matters that have an influence in their day-to-day lives. Participation of audience is open to everyone with an idea, hence *YA FM* is an arena where people discuss common affairs. Most of the participants on focus groups said that they enjoy listening to the programme because it provides them with information of important things happening in their country. Also, the time in which the programme starts (7:00pm-8:00pm) is ideal to many listeners since there will be done with their daily activities.

5.3.2.3 Fufu's Diary

It's a talk show where the audience get to interact with each other discussing cultural matters that are now considered irrelevant in the society. The programme specifically targets women matters. For instance, on September 19, 2016, the topic on the diary was an open discussion about menstruation. The main reason why this topic was chosen is that menstrual periods are a taboo subject in some communities, especially in a rural society. As such, discussions of these topics benefit the young girls without anyone to discuss with, concerning the issue.

Also, the role of an aunt is no longer considered in many societies thus the station has taken that step to fill the gap.

Socially, the modern society is characterised by individualism and disintegration of families. Many children no longer have anyone to talk to on matters that are crucial in their social wellbeing, thus the station has taken the duty to counsel and guide youths in its target communities. The show is open for discussion to anyone with ideas to share hence older people get to share or answer questions that might have been asked by other listeners. In this case, *YA FM* is playing an important role in promoting the cultural norms and values that are being eroded by modernity.

5.3.2.4 Tsika neMagariro

‘Tsika nemagariro’ means culture. Thus, the programme is about the culture of the people in the Great Dyke. It is co-hosted by Sekeru Munda an elder person from the community. It broadcast in Karanga, the popular language among *YA FM* listeners hence, firstly the programme promotes the language of the Karanga people in Mberengwa and many other districts in *YA FM*’s sphere of influence. The Karanga language is often marginalised by the mainstream media thus people from these districts found it difficult to participate on the public broadcasters due to the inferiority of their language. Secondly, the discussions of the history of the people in the Great Dyke enables listeners to interact and share some cultural practices normal neglected by many societies nowadays. The use of an older person to co-host the programme is because he is well-versed with the norms and values of the people. Older people who participated in interviews and focus groups commend the programme suggesting that it enables audience to be reminded of their roots. Also, they indicated that the use of Karanga language to discuss Karanga culture is crucial since this promotes their culture.

5.3.2.5 Zviri muParliament

It’s a programme that discusses everything concerning laws and the government. The programme informs its audience of the new government policies and amendments of existing laws and policies. Considering the educational background of many people in Mberengwa, the station helps audience to understand these laws by explaining them in simpler terms and giving listeners advice on how they can use these policies to their own advantage. The programmes co-ordinator stated that, they designed this programme after realising that many

people in the Great Dyke lacks solid information and knowledge of laws that govern their society. Thus, the programme is meant to educate and inform the people. Due to lack of knowledge, many people in the rural fail to express their full potential because they are not aware of their rights. As such, giving this people information can help many people to express their talents and reach a full potential in their endeavours.

5.3.2.6 Dandaro

‘Dandaro’ is a Shona term which when directly translated means ‘vacant time.’ The programme was designed to dwell specifically on marital and bedroom matters. It is a social awareness programme meant to teach both married and unmarried people about marriage and what to expect once one got married. As mentioned that the role of the aunt is losing its aura, young girls got to be married without being well-informed on what to expect in marriage thus many marriages are failing. As such, teaching people on what is expected of them is significant because they know how to behave and how to take care of their families. Participants expressed their love towards the programme saying that they benefit positively from the advices and stories being shared by audience who participate.

5.3.2.7 The Motivation

The Motivation is a gospel show meant for the Christian community. Christianity is one of the dominant religion in Mberengwa district. A Christian guest speaker is usually invited to the studio to discuss a certain topic in the Bible, to preach the word of God or to share gospel songs with audience. This can be a local pastor or a local gospel artist. After that, the platform will be open to listeners who might have contributions and questions on areas they want clarification. Discussions of religious matters are important because they encourage people to live a peaceful life which is favourable to development of the community. During the programme, audience are allowed to request for their favourite gospel songs that they would want the presenter to play for them. In the case that the guest speaker is an artist, usually songs played on the show on that day belongs to the artist. This programme is entertaining as well as motivational. Thus, the co-host helps the audience on how they can improve their spiritual life, motivating people to live a Godly life.

5.4 News Bulletins and Important Public Messages

News bulletins are meant to inform people of what is happening in their community. According to the station manager, the news bulletins on *YA FM* specifically target the mining

community, thus they report on the issues happening locally. However, they also cover national and international news that they think can have an impact in transforming the poor lives of their audience. This is in line with the company's editorial policy which states that 60% should be local news, 30% national stories and 10% rest of the world. According to information gathered using direct observation, the researcher discovered that local and national news are presented in detail while international news are briefly presented. They present their news on hourly basis using Shona, Ndebele and English, though each language is used on a specific hour.

Interviewees in Mberengwa reported that the station indeed broadcasts news concerning their community. Data gathered through direct observation also indicated that the station broadcasts news that concern the rural audience and also it gives the rural people chance to air their grievances. Through news bulletins, listeners from Mberengwa have the opportunity to directly challenge the government officials to take action on matters that are hindering progress in their respective villages. For instance, *YA FM* recorded a woman from Mwembe in Mberengwa saying,

...we have a transport challenge to carry people who are not feeling well to Mnene or Msume hospital because no one wants to damage his/her own car on these dusty roads. Public transport service providers shun this route not because there is lack of business but the problem is the poor roads. Most of the time we end up carrying sick people to hospital using scotch-carts or wheelbarrows and usually they end up dying on the way. What we want is our Members of Parliament that we selected to intervene and develop these poor roads (*YA FM* News Bulletin, October 12, 2016).

From the above it emerged that the station personnel visits people in rural areas gathering news and information to be broadcast. Also, on the same day, the radio station aired business people from Mberengwa complaining about the poor electricity supply in their respective business centres. Challenging government officials is important because this reminds them of their duty to develop their respective constituencies. As such, by giving the people the chance to air their concerns and grievances, *YA FM* is playing a crucial role that can lead to rural community development.

In an interview with the station manager, he said, "...we encourage our audience to send important messages to our email address, call our mobile number or use WhatsApp to tell us news in their community so that we can broadcast for everyone to hear." In this case, everyone with a story to tell have the opportunity to share it using the sole medium available to them. Encouragement of audience to tell their stories and grievances is important because it brings a sense of belonging and identification for audience. However, in an interview with the news editor, he stated that they gate keep some information because the station is being operated professionally and basing on the station's editorial policy, some messages are not fit to be disseminated. Thus, not every news or story sent by the audience can see the daylight. Nonetheless, respondents in Mberengwa applauded the inclusion of the rural voices on *YA FM* news bulletins.

The news bulletin on *YA FM* also include broadcasting of events happening in the country which concerns the audience. For example, the station recorded Minister of Sports and Recreation, Makhosini Hlongwane talking about investment potential in Mberengwa (*YA FM* News Bulletin, October 12, 2016). The Minister encouraged companies and various people to invest their businesses in Mberengwa as the area has a great business opportunity. In this case, *YA FM* audience from Mberengwa got encouraged that their district is also seen as having potential to develop. Due to the fact that people in Mberengwa feel less-considered by the government, it is important for the station to broadcast positive information from the government officials targeting Mberengwa district.

Also, they give anyone either government officials, local council or civil society the opportunity to appear on air informing the public of any important messages. These messages vary from health awareness, development projects, and current affairs. According to the to the programmes co-ordinator, "the station is being used by NGOs to communicate messages to their dispersed audience and this has reduced them work since they usually moved from one village to the other doing announcements." According to focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, the station is closely working with development agencies that target their community and this proved crucial in alarming them in events taking place in their community.

5.5 Challenges facing *YA FM*

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The wider nature of *YA FM* audience poses a challenge for the station to equally meet the needs of its target audience and to give an equally coverage of the events in every community. Despite targeting a wide community, the station relies on its few staff members to gather news and any information from audiences. This clearly shows that they cannot afford to cover everything happening in the Great Dyke. The programmes co-ordinator indicated that encouragement of audience to participate through phone calls and social media is meant to make all the target communities to have their stories broadcast on the station. This method was implemented after realising that they cannot afford to fully meet the demands or reach all communities with their limited personnel. However, not everyone has access to a mobile phone hence some stories are unheard.

The radio station also faced transmission problems after baboons tampered around with the optic fibre cables and the station was forced to go offline. The incident happened few months after the station started operating and it went viral on the internet. The station manager however commented that the incident was actually a blessing in disguise because since then, they received many calls from Zimbabweans in the Diaspora asking if the station is available online. As such the baboon incident popularised the station. Also, occasionally the station goes offline due to the antenna generator failing to auto-start when there is power cut. As a result, the station technicians will have to go uphill to manually start the generator.

The station also faces financial challenges to full meet the day-to-day requirements in running its activities. For instance, some staff members left the station due to salary problems. Thus, the station now rely on hiring internship students who in most cases work for free. However, this has negative connotations because usually programmes are designed around a certain presenter, thus when that presenter leaves the company, the programme also disappears. Important to note is that students work for a year, hence hiring becomes the norm of the organisation. This is also a disadvantage on the side of the audience who might have created a bond with certain presenters, hence this can lead to the station losing listeners. Consistency is crucial in the success of the station thus the need to retain available personnel who can enormously contribute to make the station sustainable in the long run.

As indicated earlier, it is a challenge for rural audience to visit the radio station due to financial constraints, thus their participation is limited to on air programmes. The station is located in Zvishavane urban 40km away from Mberengwa North turnoff. Thus considering the financial backgrounds of many families in Mberengwa, it is rare to find someone

prioritising to visit a radio station. Also, many families in Mberengwa live way below the poverty line thus, only a few, if any can afford to make contributions to the station. Most of the elder participants on the focus groups rely on vending and farming, thus they live a hand to mouth life which is not ideal to prioritise giving financial aid to a radio station. In this case, the financial burden squarely rests in the hands of the management who can come up with strategies on how to raise funds for the long survival of the medium.

5.6 Overall Discussion

The data presented indicate that *YA FM* has implemented methods that enable participation of its audience as such this goes hand in glove with developing the community. As stated in Chapter two, development is not something that cannot be imposed by an outsider, but rather those that need development should be given the opportunity to define their problems, come up with possible solutions and implement those solutions. For instance, allowing audience to share information using the platform can go a long way in the social development of the society. Previously, development agencies used to move from one village to the other addressing people but with the advent of *YA FM*, they can now reach everyone at the same time. Also, giving listeners chance to challenge government officials, demanding what is rightfully theirs is vital in promoting infrastructure development.

The findings suggest that radio and mobile phones are the main avenues through which people in Mberengwa district can send and receive information. The notion of appropriating new media technologies is therefore one of the main methods used by the radio station under study to enhance participation of its audience, especially those in rural areas who have challenges to physically access the station. The appropriation of mobile phones has played a significant role in attracting and retaining audience. Thus, this is crucial for enhancing development in Mberengwa since many people have access to information and knowledge relevant to improve livelihoods. There is an increase in the number of people owning mobile phones in Mberengwa and most of them are utilising these resources to their own advantage. Therefore, the new media technologies are slowly becoming the mass media of the future, replacing the traditional ones.

For a radio station that is registered as a commercial broadcaster, *YA FM* should be commended for representing the marginalised voices of the people in the Great Dyke. The programmes co-ordinator says that their vision is to empower the mining community as such

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representing the marginalised subalterns of Mberengwa and any other district is their first priority. The comment therefore indicate that the station is committed to prioritise its audience rather than being profit-oriented. However, at the same note, one can also suggest that being audience-oriented is a move which indirectly targets maximising profits. This is so if one takes into consideration the notion that media houses sell audience to advertisers (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). From this perspective, it is clear that *YA FM* is hiding behind empowering its audience yet their main agenda is to have more audience to sell to advertisers. Nonetheless, profit oriented or not, the station has filled the gap created by public broadcasters who have developed a tendency of portraying Mberengwa district negatively.

The findings also suggest that *YA FM* focuses on women empowerment. The station's personnel is mainly made up of women and they constitute almost 75% and many of them are presenters. In this sense, the dominant voices on the radio are women. From data gathered through observation, the researcher also realised that there are many programmes that target women than those specifically designed for men. Also, the voices of the participants that contribute the most are women and this is supported by the station's editorial policy which states that, reporters and journalist should mainly seek the voices of women for interviews. Rural districts such as Mberengwa have a culture of silence and apathy among women, but the coming of *YA FM* is proving to be vital on giving women a voice. Traditionally, exclusion of women in activities that has direct influence in their lives is a normal practice. However, in conjunction with women empowerment activists, *YA FM* is slowly becoming a force to reckon in raising the status of many women through giving them the opportunity to speak and to be heard in the society.

Apart from giving women a voice, *YA FM* is also an arena where youths can socialise. Usually, the mainstream media marginalises youths thus they end up forming their own subculture, challenging the dominant discourse that is the voices of young people are irrelevant in building a society (Hall and Jefferson, 1993). According to the station manager, young people are creative but they only lack that opportunity to showcase their talents, as such the station's employment policy target to empower youths by employing more young people to be presenters and journalists. Youths who participated on focus groups and in-depth interviews commended the station pointing out that it gives them the opportunity to be heard and air their grievances. Some of them suggested that the Great Dyke Avenue, a programme

targeting youths is informative and educative as it gives them relevant information on the challenges they face in the community.

5.7 Summary

The chapter managed to analyse data on the activities of *YA FM*. This study set out to establish the role of community radio in rural development. Thus, this chapter captures the findings that the researcher considers to be development-oriented and the challenges that the radio station is facing. The chapter managed to give a detailed analysis of data gathered and this was done through thematic approach. This chapter also managed to analyse methods used by *YA FM* to enhance rural development. Participation of audience emerged as the major tool being used by the station to include audience in the activities of the radio station. The findings also discussed limitations that inhibit the station to fully meet the developmental role in the rural areas and financial constraints being the major block. However, the discussed programs above are not the only development-oriented programmes but they at least give a picture of the types of programmes on *YA FM*. The following chapter will focus on conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This research set out to examine the role of community media in enhancing rural development. In order to obtain answers for the research questions outlined in the first chapter, *YA FM* was used as a case study and Mberengwa North district as the study population. The previous chapter focused on data presentation and analysis. The findings revealed that audience participation in development activities concerning their community plays a key role in bringing positive change among the people. The foregoing chapter also discussed the challenges facing the radio station and its audience to fully meet the development aspect of the rural community and financial constraints emerged as the major challenge. This chapter focuses on presenting the conclusions drawn from the research and recommendations for improvements and further study/research.

6.2 Conclusion

Despite being registered as a commercial radio, *YA FM* is serving as one of the communication channels in Zimbabwe that target to empower and give a voice to the marginalised mining community, hence to some extent the station is operating as a community media. The media systems in Zimbabwe are mainly urban based thus rural people lack enough coverage on activities concerning their districts. For Ndawana *et al* (2015), many families in rural areas have access to a radio receiver due to its unique capabilities such as affordable, transcend illiteracy barriers and accessible in the most remote areas. As such,

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radio is the important source of information in most rural areas such as Mberengwa. The installation of *YA FM* in Zvishavane enabled adjacent districts to benefit from programmes that are development-oriented.

Developing rural communities such as Mberengwa are not only excluded from media information but also from ideas, and services that can improve their livelihoods (FAO, 2001). The publicly owned media has dominance over societies and the common (poor) people are denied access of taking part in the decision making process where they can express their ideas and views (Chiumbu *et al*, 2014). *YA FM* therefore is being used as an alternate media where the poor people can have discussions that are important in changing their livelihoods and is also being used to air grievances. Radio is interactive, allowing complex issues to be weighed and discussed through back-and-forth discussion, thus it is ideal for rural community development.

People in developing communities have different perceptions about their situation though their situation requires them to work together and have a collective perceptive of the reality on the ground and the options on how to deal with the situation (Fraser and Estrada, 2002). This can only be achieved if people have discussions which enables them to analyse their problems, identify possible solution and mobilise appropriate personnel to take the action. A CR is therefore the right medium to use because it offers the forum for that to happen. Also, the minority who might be against the majority view can be reached and changed through the medium. In other words, a CR can bring a community together and make the people to have a same understanding that is to develop their community. In this regard, the research findings revealed that, *YA FM* is working closely with its audience giving them the opportunity to discuss matters affecting their lives, thus the station is the arena for discussions that bring common perceptions and understanding.

The research findings also indicated that *YA FM* is working closely with marginalised groups in the community such as women, youths and other community members. The station has provided a platform for such people to air their grievances and participate in the community affairs that are influential in their lives. These groups are victims of segregation and discrimination especially in rural settings where they are not allowed to attend important meetings of any issues in the family and community at large.

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The researched data also indicated that *YA FM* is producing programmes that focus on gender and health issues. These programmes raise awareness on the need to live a health life which is suitable for enhancing development since health people can perform their duties to the maximum. Other programmes which focus on political, educational, mining, farming issues and empowerment stimulate rural development by providing relevant information on how to develop businesses. They also raise awareness on how to understand these issues and shading light on the policies that govern the society.

The news bulletins on *YA FM* has also greatly improved the flow of information among the rural people Through bulletins, the people of Mberengwa have the chance to air their concerns and challenge the government officials for not taking responsibility in the well-being of the community. This therefore stimulate development in that, holding these officials accountable is crucial in forcing them to take an action. Also, public messages are being disseminated through the radio station. Previously, development agencies could go door-by-door addressing people but the installation of *YA FM* allows these to address their target audience at once through the radio station, as such this is a development on its own.

The findings also indicated that *YA FM* has appropriated the new media in its operations through encouraging the audience to send news top the radio station. People from adjacent districts of Zvishavane can participate through phone-in-programmes and through social media such as WhatsApp and FaceBook. The invitation of health experts to share ideas also emerged as one of the tools used by the radio station to stimulate development in rural areas.

Be that as it may, the findings also indicated that *YA FM* is facing challenges to produce quality programmes. Among the challenges is financial problems thus the radio station loses some of its valuable personnel. The challenge is also forcing the station not to be fully involved in all activities taking place around the Great Dyke. Moreover, most presenters and journalist at *YA FM* are students doing their work related training as such many of them lacks experience. Also these students usually leave the station after one year of service thus most of the programmes that they presented will end on their departure.

6.3 Recommendations

For the nature of work being carried out by *YA FM*, a lot is needed to achieve its mission statement that is, “to promote trendsetting programming that promotes business, development and engages the mining communities.” It is therefore important for the station to develop the

methods already implemented so as to fully meet its development and empowerment vision. Below is a discussion of suggestions that can be used to ensure that the station enhances development effectively.

6.3.1 To YA FM

During the data gathering process, the researcher found it difficult to come up with a sample population of active listeners of *YA FM*. The challenge, however was influenced by the fact that *YA FM* has not created Radio Listener's Clubs which advocates for active listeners of the community radio. Around Africa, scholars who have studied community development through community radio found out that listener's clubs play a crucial role in stimulating public participation (Chapman *et al*, 2003; Osunkunle, 2008; Al-hassen *et al*, 2011; Kassahun, 2012; Mhagama, 2015). Forming these clubs could enable the radio station to meet and understand the needs of its audience. Listener's clubs can allow interaction at grassroots level without impositions and dominance of outsiders. They also provide an opportunity to teach the audience on what constitutes participation in the media and how to participate so that they can clearly understand their role.

More so, *YA FM* should carry out a research or survey to ascertain the number of its followers. During the research period, the researcher discovered that the station has no statistical data of its listenership. The programmes co-ordinator indicated that they rely on phone in programmes, text messages and social media followers to tell that their listenership is exceptional. However, up to date statistics are crucial to know if the people are tuning in and also to know the dynamics of their audience.

Furthermore, *YA FM* should look for some form of funding from NGOs, donors and companies whose agendas are related to stimulating rural development. This could reduce advertisements as they can get enough money to meet operational costs thus, more time will be given to sponsored development-oriented programmes. As indicated in chapter four, the media tend to serve the needs and interests of advertisers (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). This has negative connotations as far as public service is concerned. Thus for *YA FM* to fully meet its developmental role, it should shun away from advertisers. However, donors and sponsorships which come with terms and conditions should be avoided too as these can infiltrate the station's operations and activities.

Current affairs programme should provide a clear picture of what the government is intending to do in the community. Also, when designing programmes, listener's preferences should be taken into consideration. All programmes should allow participation and feedback from the audience as this is essential in stimulating development. Moreover, *YA FM* should introduce programmes that cater for children and disabled people whose needs are poorly catered for in the society.

6.3.2 To the government

Community radio has been identified by development agencies as a tool for rural development. Thus, the government of Zimbabwe should open up airwaves and grant licences to interested parties in the community broadcasting sector. The BSA should be reviewed or replaced by a new broadcasting policy. The broadcasting regulator should be free from government, thus it will represent the whole country. Also, government officials or any political party members should not be eligible to apply for board membership. This could go a long way in promoting transparency, hence minimising a situation whereby members of the ruling party being the only ones who receive licences. Also, the government should reduce its application fees for community media since these are not interested in making profit.

6.3.3 For further research

For future purposes, the researcher recommends a study into sustainable community radio in rural areas. In Zimbabwe, no community radio has ever been registered to operate from rural areas as such the study will focus mainly on the potential of a radio station to sustain itself in a rural setting. Other areas also include researching on the role of community radio in promoting good governance and audience research in the areas where a community radio is operating. This research on audience will provide information on why some people prefer to listen to public broadcasters rather than their local station.

6.4 Summary

The study established that *YA FM* which is registered as a commercial broadcaster has taken a community radio role by focusing mainly on allowing public access and participation. The station incorporates everyone in its range thus being the main source of information for the mining community. The study managed to discuss the main theoretical aspects underpinning this research and these played a crucial role in the analysis and presentation of data. The

political economy of the organisation under study was also closely scrutinised so as to understand the background under which programming on *YA FM* is anchored.

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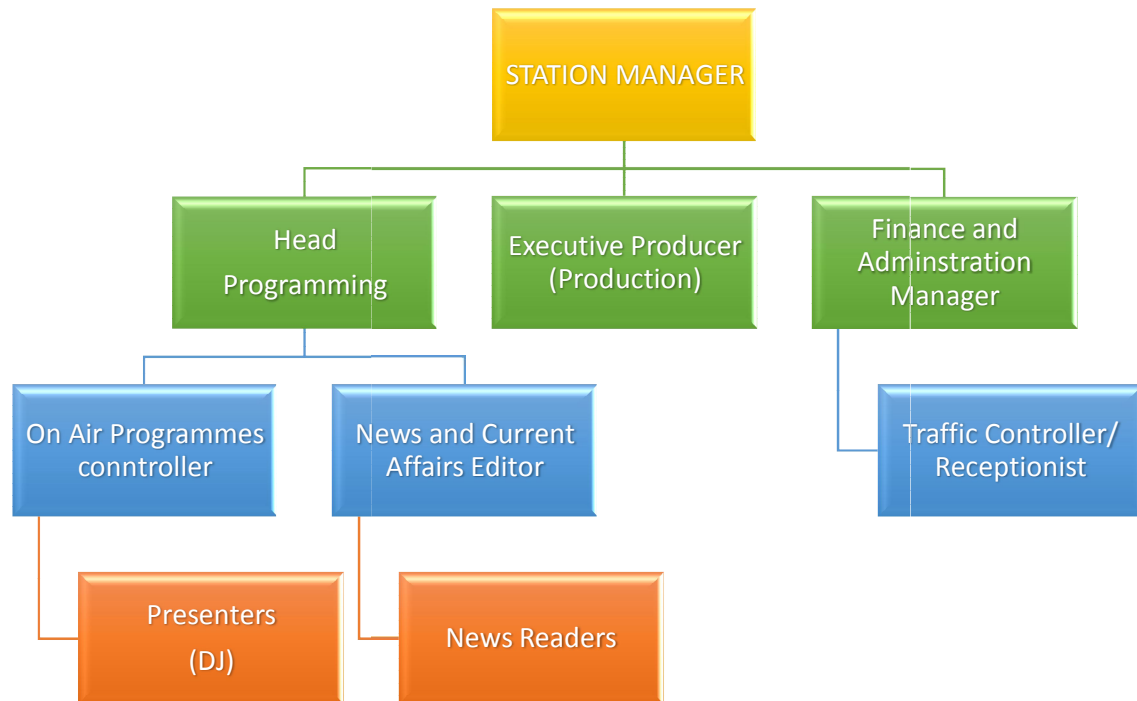
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Appendix 1

YA FM Organogram



Appendix 2

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Programme schedule on YA FM

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
12a m							
1am							
2am							
3am							
4am							
5am							
6am	YA	YA	YA	YA	YA	YA express	The
7am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	6:00 am -	motivation
8am	6:00 am - 9:00 am	6:00 am - 9:00 am	6:00 am - 9:00 am	6:00 am - 9:00 am	6:00 am - 9:00 am	10:00 am	6:00 am - 10:00 am
9am	The	The	The	The	The		
10a m	Chollar	Chollar	Chollar	Chollar	Chollar	The mill	The Sunday
11a m	Bag	Bag	Bag	Bag	Bag	10:00 am - 12:00 pm	retreat 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
12p m	Fun Cargo	Fun Cargo	Fun Cargo	Fun Cargo	Fun Cargo	YA Top20	The Sunday
1pm	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	12:00 pm - 3:00 pm	12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	expression 12:00 pm - 3:00 pm
2pm						The connection	
						2:00 pm - 3:00 pm	

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3pm	The Gold Rush	The Gold Rush	The Gold Rush	The Gold Rush	The Gold Rush	Match day live	Match day live 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	3:00 pm - 6:00 pm	3:00 pm - 5:00 pm	
4pm							
5pm							
6pm	Sports Half Hour	Sports Half Hour	Sports Half Hour	Sports Half Hour	Sports Hour	The housing office	The recline 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
	6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	6:00 pm - 6:30 pm	6:00 pm - 7:00 pm	6:00 pm - 9:00 pm	
	YA Zone	YA Zone	YA Zone	YA Zone			
7pm	6:30 pm - 7:00 pm	6:30 pm - 7:00 pm	6:30 pm - 7:00 pm	6:30 pm - 7:00 pm			
	The Blast Furnace	The Blast Furnace	The Blast Furnace	The Blast Furnace	Q on Friday		
8pm	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm		
9pm	The Late Night	The Late Night	The Late Night	The Late Night		The countdown	
10pm	8:00 pm - 12:00 am	8:00 pm - 12:00 am	8:00 pm - 12:00 am	8:00 pm - 12:00 am		9:00 pm - 12:00 pm	
11pm							

Appendix 3

Research questions that guide interviews for YA FM personnel

1. Would you kindly tell me your name and position/ role at the station?
2. What is your editorial policy?
3. Who owns the station and what is the finance policy of the station?
4. How do you perceive the role of community radio in educating and empowering the community for social change and development?
5. What kind of development programs your station is covering?
6. What is your coverage area in Mberengwa district?
7. Can you elaborate on how you cover local, national or international issues?
8. Where do you get information and who are your sources?
9. Do the audience contribute in the designing and production of your programmes? If yes, in what ways? If no, why?
10. How do you see the differences in terms of any form of development before and after the establishment of this radio station?
11. Is there any contact between the station and the local government? If yes how?
12. What do you rely on as your source(s) of funding?
13. What mechanisms do you use to engage the community actively in all the programs?

Appendix 4

Focus groups and In-depth interviews guide

1. Would you kindly tell me your name and occupation?
2. Do you listen to the YA FM radio frequently? Why?
3. What type of programme(s) do you like to listen?
4. Have you ever participated and expressed your views and ideas as a community member to this community radio programs?
5. Have this radio programs changed your life style and behaviour in any way? Could you explain more?
6. In what ways do you participate in radio station programmes?
7. Do you think YA FM considers the interest of the Mberengwa community? How?
8. Does the station serve as a voice of the community?
9. What do you think are the strengths and weaknesses of YA FM?
10. What do you suggest about the programs of this community radio in general?
11. Do you think the government is interfering in the operation of YA FM?
12. How do you observe the changes of the community before and after the establishment of this community radio?