Midlands State University

Established 2000

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF MEDIA ND SOCIETY STUDIES

Social media, a Handtool for News gathering? A case study of the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye*

BY

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY   IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE BACHELOR OF SOCIAL SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE

IN

MEDIA AND SOCIETY STUDIES

MIDLANDS STATE UNIVERSITY

GWERU, ZIMBABWE

YEAR: 2015

Declaration Form

I... declare that the work the work I have submitted is my own effort and has not been previously submitted to any other university for an award of a degree. I certify that all the material in this dissertation which is not my own work has been acknowledged.

Signed...

Date...

Dedication

All I am or even hope to be I owe to my mother Rosemary Kaonza, who taught me the beauty of humility and diligence to inexhustability question the confidence with which we hold acceptable viewpoints, to be indiscriminately curious. I dedicate this dissertation to her and the journey for education continues as you area an inspiration.

Acknowledgements

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Abstract

The main aim of the research is to examine the dynamics of using social media as a source for news in mainstream media. The research will also seek to highlight the potential threat to journalists' ethics such as objectivity, bias and fairness as a result of sourcing out information from various social media platforms such as Facebook pages, Twitter, Instagram and Whatsapp. The use of social media as a source for news by mainstream media newspapers especially those operating from the private media is as a result of the polarised nature that the media operates in, and at times forced these journalists to source out information from social media. The use of social media platforms has seen journalists accessing information at ease, and these various platforms have been viewed as a democratic tool that has changed story narratives. *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* have enjoyed the use of social media, although at a limited rate as they can easily access information from public bodies.

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Acronyms

AIPPA   -   Access to information Protection and Privacy Act

AMH   -   Alpha Media Holdings

ZANU PF   -Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front

MDC-T   – Movement for Democratic change

SAPA   –South African Press Association

AFP   – Agency France Press

VMCZ   –Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe

MISA   – Media Institute of Southern Africa

MDLF   - Media Development Loan Fund

MMPZ   - Media Monitoring Project of Zimbabwe

UNESCO   - United Nations Organisation for Education Science and Culture

M&G   - Mail and Guardian

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Journalism is a long-established profession prevalent in society in the vast majority of the world. The rise of social media over the last ten years has seen a significant influence on the way in which news is reported and digested by all parties within journalism, with traditional journalists taking on a developed role utilising social media as both a way to deliver and to promote their work. Several studies have been conducted on what the rise of social media does to journalism, and from the perspective of various positions within the industry. However, there has been little in-depth qualitative research into what journalists themselves actually feel about their professional interaction with social media. The study investigates the journalist's perspective on the impact social media on their profession and on how they perform their role.

The introduction of online networking in Zimbabwe has definitely changed the media scene as well as opening doors for writers to hotspot for news from the different social networks that are accessible to them. Whilst to some the birth and growth of social networks and online networking has turned into a mishap as far as online networking being the principle motivation behind why most neighbourhood daily papers are closing down to newsrooms it is a "source" in newsgathering. The use of social media as a source of news has realized another time in the act of news coverage. This has been a consequence of the rise of new Information Communication Technologies (ICT's). Accordingly, this has represented another test and moulded news-casting in another measurement and has seen the use of online networking as hotspot for news for journalists honing in standard media. The continued use of social media as a hotspot for news for journalists in Zimbabwe has changed story patterns, story accounts, and morals. The use of these pages as a wellspring of news has been exaggerated due to the spellbound environment that standard media works in. This has presented new flow included in the generation of news.

The research likewise concentrates on correspondent's objectivity and ethics and tries to highlight the potential risk to writers' morals, for example objectivity and unbiased attitude when sourcing out for news on social networks. Its principle point is similarly to figure out why the standard media in this case the *Newsday* and the *Southern Eye* resort to looking for

news from online networking rather than the conventional method for searching for news. The study investigates the appreciated use of different social media platforms by the two daily papers. It is composed as a contextual analysis (case study) and tries to investigate the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* keeping in mind the end goal is to research how the two use online networking further bolstering their good fortune and to see whether the data that they get from online networking is reliable or not.

The study is purely qualitative and is guided by three theories which are social construction of technology, democratic participant theory and the theory of social media. It focuses on how the two newsrooms use online networking in news gathering. Interviews will be used as a method of data collection and will be analysed using content analysis.

1.2 Background of the study

The introduction of online networking in the course of the most recent ten years has seen a noteworthy impact in transit in which news is accounted for and processed by all gatherings inside of news-casting, with conventional reporters tackling a created part using social media as both an approach to convey and to advance their work. A few studies have been directed on what the introduction of online networking does to reporting, and from the point of view of different positions inside of the business. Be that as it may, there has been little top to bottom subjective exploration into what writers themselves really feel about their expert communication with social media. This study explores the journalist's point of view on the effect online networking has had on their calling, and on how they perform their part. Banda et al (2009) are of the perspective that the presentation of social media in Africa has driven and moved the occupation to crisp and diverse stages that achieves, realizing both useful and unconstructive improvements.

The motive behind the study comes from the impacts achieved during the course of my work related learning at *The Zimbabwe Mail* , where I understood that a large portion of the stories were taken from online sources that frequently used social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram ,Whatsapp only to mention a few. Alpha Media Holdings (AMH) is a privately owned media organization which is owned by Trevor Ncube at the period between 2000 and 2009 was publishing two dailies namely *The Standard* and *The Zimbabwe Independent*. The company soon realised that with the absence of privately owned

dailies there was a gap in alternative news source. *Newsday* was launched on the 24th of June in 2011 whilst *Southern Eye* was launched on the 3rd of June in 2013. The two were launched amid pomp and fanfare as the nation celebrated the liberalization of the press sector to accommodate privately owned publication through the issuing of the licence to operate both the two newspapers by the Zimbabwe Media Commission. Ncube justified the launch of the two newspapers claiming that the two newspapers will celebrate our diversity. *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* provide national coverage so as to cater for various audiences by geographical regions. The hard copy of the latter (*Southern Eye*) was earlier this year shut down due to financial constraints and is now an online publication whilst the *Newsday* is both found online and on hardcopy.

Moreover, the establishment of the *NewsDay* and *Southern Eye* newspaper came at a time when Zimbabweans were beginning to adopt and largely get used to the use of the internet and social media. A study on the impact of the use of social media in newsgathering therefore seemed appropriate to address the question on how the two local newspapers took advantage of the introduction of the social media. The study is influenced by social changes that occur in the media world as journalists seem to have abandoned the traditional way of looking for news and are now participating in desktop journalism. Ruhanya (2013) postulates that in Zimbabwe, the development of ICTs is no longer a new phenomenon. He adds that social media can substantially enhance democratic participation as the country has almost reached 100% mobile telephone coverage. This development has opened up new opportunities for journalism and for ordinary people to practice citizen journalism. Citizen journalism is whereby the community also participates in the dissemination of information through social media platforms such as Whatsapp, Facebook Wechat etc.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The research seeks to investigate the dynamics involved in the use of social media as a source for news for journalists in mainstream media. It tackles the thoroughness involved in verifying sources and the credibility of social media as a source of news. The study mainly focuses on exploring how *Newsday* and the *Southern Eye* are using social media in gathering news.It explores the impact of social media in the lives of journalists and also the mainstream media. It seeks to find out how the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* use social media

such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Blogs, Hotmail, Wechat and so on as a source in newsgathering and also how credible and authentic social media is as a source of news. The research explores the opinions of journalists on how social media has had an impact on their profession and how they perform their role.

1.4 Main Research Question
1. How has social media affected the way in which journalists receive, gather and distribute news?

1.5 Sub questions
1. Which particular platforms are used by journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* when sourcing for news?
2. What are the benefits of using social media, when sourcing for news?
3. What impact has social media had on the process in which journalists perform their job?

1.6 Research Objectives
1. To explore how journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* use social media as a way of newsgathering.
2. To find out how sourcing for news from social media has benefited journalists.
3. To investigate the reliability of social media platforms as a source of news for journalists in mainstream media.

1.7 Assumptions
-The two newspapers resorted to using social media as a means of gathering news because most breaking stories that make headline news most of the times come from what is posted online.

-Since the two newspapers are private publications the organisation has no government interferences or any laws that prohibit the publications on printing any information that is pro the ruling party.

-If the two media houses use social media as a source of news then the information that they publish should be true.

- Citizen journalism is an alternative source of information to mainstream media

1.8 Significance of the study

The study makes a significant contribution to literature on the discourse of new media and how it is used by journalists to source for news. It also elucidates on how the alternative/ new media is used to get good lead stories by the two newspapers. A number of scholars have produced valuable material on the issues of new media and how most journalists worldwide are using them as a source for news (Graham (2013;Moyo 2011; Trueman 2009;). The research is basic as it looks to comprehend the utilization of online networking in the print business. The idea of the validness of the news accumulated online ought to be problematized furthermore explore whether sourcing for news from online networking is the best methodology to go with to better counter the new media that is coming in as a test to the conventional method for searching for news. However in spite of the fact that the coming in of online networking has been a weakness to numerous media houses yet one may say it is leverage to reporters. Most media houses have learnt to acknowledge or grasp the coming in of online networking. These days most writers are presently found of these social stages even the editors are currently found on these social platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Blogs only to mention a few as a method for tolerating the coming in of new innovation.

Above all the research seeks to fill in the knowledge gap that articulates the point that although a lot of literature has been done on new media a few scholars have managed to write a lot of literature to articulate the fact that social media and traditional media are two sides of the same coin. Both the two co relate and complement each other. There are instances whereby journalists get stories from the various platforms on social media and also how some information on the social media platforms are extracted from the hard copy newspaper and posted on various platforms such as Whatsapp Facebook, Istagram, Hangout etc. The study also seeks to bring to light that although there has been much talk about social media, there hasn't been much qualitative research about what reporters themselves feel about their occupation interacting with social media. This study seeks to show the extent of the impact of social media on journalists over how they gather news and thus helps traditional journalists to make a decision on whether to take up social media or resist it.

1.9 Scope of the study

The study concentrates on a time period that starts from January 2015 to August 2015 as this is the time when online networking utilization by reporters at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye*

was on its peak and is also sizable measure of time to indicate how the two newspapers get their stories from social media. It is however imperative to highlight the study did not begin on this date as this would not be a sizable measure of time but instead would confuse the researcher. The research was conducted in Bulawayo with the *NewsDay* and *Southern Eye*'s journalists and editors. The researcher picked the two publishers as a contextual analysis in light of the fact that its use of social stages is more proclaimed when contrasted with the use of social media platforms by other daily paper contenders such as the *Chronicle, Daily News and Sunday News.*

1.10 Limitations

Sourcing for data from journalists and editors from these media houses was regarded with suspicion as a few writers were not willing to uncover the way that they will be taking part in desktop news-casting and didn't have any desire to be deemed as lazy. However the fact that the research focused on journalists from one organization disadvantaged the research as it generalised the findings as there was no other organisation to compare it too. Also the fact that the research is only limited to two organizations does not mean that all the newspapers use social media for newsgathering hence the findings may also be generalised as stated above. The theories that are used in the study which are the social construction of technology and democratic participation theory have got their weaknesses in that the first gives power to the audience that means that everyone can now be a journalist meaning that some people can tend to post malicious information about someone on the social platforms. The latter also gives power to the audience again and it becomes problematic to have everyone on a platform to express their views hence some information or ghost characters are created on social platforms e.g Baba Jukwa may cause mayhem in the country. The method that is used for data collection are interviews thereby making this method of data collection problematic in that some journalists were not forth coming either be it on the telephone or face to face interviews.

1.11 Structure of the study

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the research that comprises of objectives that will help with the findings of the study whilst chapter 2 looks at the existing literature that has been done

before together with the conceptual framework that comprises of theories that help in understanding the main aim of the research. Chapter 3 consists of the research methodology that was used to come up with the findings of the research. Chapter four discussed the political economy of the organisations under study whilst chapter five comprises of the findings of the research and presentation of data. Chapter 6 presents the recommendations and concluding remarks of the whole research.

1.12 Conclusion

This chapter gave the outline of the study bringing to the spotlight how social media has helped journalists in gathering news and the phenomenon of hotspoting from social media in the era of social networking sights has been aided by the proliferation of the ICT's. The researcher was thus motivated to investigate the various platforms that are used when sourcing for news and if they have benefited journalists or not.

Chapter 2: Literature review and conceptual framework
 Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter integrates and synthesizes what has already been written about or researched by various scholars both local and international on social media. Brennen (2013:26) states that literature reviews ought not just give readers s a comprehension of what exploration has been done, around there, yet ought to additionally portray how the new research venture fits into the more extensive field of the study and why seek after that study". It is from this angle that such will upgrade one to approach the study with more distinct fascination, subsequently growing new thoughts. The review for literature under this research will subsequently look to interface the study to what different researchers have composed concerning the utilization of online networking by journalists as a hotspot for news and how this has apparently modified the traditional way of gathering news. It also aims to explore the question of how dependable social media as a source of news and also try to figure out the different ceremonies that are done when gathering news on these social networking discussions.

2.2 The Use of New Communication Technologies by Journalists

The emergence of new communication technology has changed the way journalism is being practised in Africa and Zimbabwe. These social media platforms have however posed challenges and has also shaped a new dimension in the practice of journalism. Most journalists have since made use of these communication technologies in building up their stories hence destroying the tradition way of news gathering. Scholars like Esipisu and Karith (2007) are of the same view that journalists have now resorted to social media platforms as their main source of news, "the intensive uptake of communication technologies has somehow driven traditional journalism to adapt to these changing trends or face being eliminated" This show shows how much the new media technologies have affected journalism as a profession. Even journalists from both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* have since adapted to this new era.

In line with looking at how journalists are using these new communication technologies, it will be worthwhile looking at the local trends that are involved in the reception of these new communication technologies, as there is now a keen rising interest in using communication technologies. A scholar like Mabweazara (2010) through his ethnographic study asserts that there has been a rise in the usage of the new communication technologies by the Zimbabwean journalists from both privately owned newspapers and state controlled. Hence, his study mainly focuses on the way Zimbabwean journalists use various social media platforms in their day to day execution of duties when gathering news, thus showing that these new communication technologies have taken effect.

More so Dahlberg (2004) is of the view that the practice of journalism is approved in specific institutional conditions within organisational settings that have particular technological conditions. These in turn enhance or improve the practice of journalism. However, the arrival of cyberspace impacts on the factors which shape journalism particularly the ethics. Even though some scholars like Mabweazara have also done research on the same area of new communication technologies. The research shows how there has been a rapid uptake of new communication technologies (social media) and how journalists from different media houses in this case the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* and how they tend to act differently in sourcing out information from traditional media and social media, an aspect that was overlooked in Mabweazara's (2010)study. The uptake of new communication technologies nevertheless requires journalists to act differently and shift from the traditional forms of media in an endeavour to accept new communication technologies as it has an effect on general standards that guide the profession because of the new culture that is associated with it. These standards include the believed principles that are used in sourcing out a story that in the long run is published by the media house. It is however worthwhile to find out how journalists from the mainstream act differently when sourcing out information from various social platforms. This has a direct bearing on the uptake of new communication technologies that are being used by journalists to publish stories, and in turn shape ethics of a new emerging culture of journalism.

To further support the above assertion, Nyamnnjoh (2000) is of the view that Africans have fused their traditional ways of communicating with external influences like technological developments so that they can move forward to meet international standards. Thus in their

endeavour to meet these standards that have seemingly been set by first world country's, journalists are actively involved in using social media as a source for news. The adoption of new technologies also comes with the way this has had a direct influence on values, standards and for the practice of journalism in relation to use of various social sites.

The research also shows how journalists working under the setting of communication technologies are attentive to the best way to tell a story that suites the editorial policy. This has largely had an impact on the way communication technologies have had a bearing on the practice of journalism, and on the way journalists act differently from social media. It is from this aspect that the uptake of communication technologies has also seen a change in the production process of news as readers are now part of production process, bringing about a new phenomenon termed citizen journalism. Thus this has witnessed a shift from the traditional ways of story making, were there a linear form of communication. Scholars such as Esipisu and Karith (2007) are of the view that the extensive uptake of communication technologies has somehow driven traditional journalism to adapt to these changing trends or face being eliminated. However, Moyo (2007) counter argues and is of the view that consumers of news can now be part of the production process of news, as the journalist can actively interact with consumers of news, thus affecting the production process.This however affords the journalists to have an opportunity to have a plethora of ideas that arise from the participation of the readers. It is in this aspect that the uptake of social media by journalists in Zimbabwe has posed a challenge for the practice of journalism and has changed the way they act towards the new technologies.

Nyamnjoh (2005:19) states that because "Africa is part of the world, and because its backwardness is less the result of choice than of circumstance, ordinary Africans are determined to be part of the technological revolutions of the modern world, even if this means accessing the information superhighway on foot, horseback, bicycles, bush taxis and second-hand cars, or relying on lifts and the generosity of the super endowed in the latest sports and fancy cars". It is also in line with the adoption of government ICT policy in 2005 that sought to achieve a knowledge based society by 2020. The ICT policy (2005) mandate accelerating 'the development and application of ICTs in support of economic and political developments'. This has seen the rapid adoption of new communication technologies by mainstream media.

2.3 Impact of Social Media on journalism Ethics

Just like any other profession journalism has its own ethics as well. Ward (2011) defines ethics as being disposed towards good conduct in society and through ethics certain values and interpretations are decoded in society that we live in. With the rise of new communication technologies journalistic ethics have since been affected both positively and negatively. Scholars like Dueze (2003) are of the same view, he identifies three ways in which internet and social media has changed the journalist's line of work which is: its enhancement of a democratic culture, provides an array of resources, and brings about a new type of journalism. This however has a direct bearing on the ethics on journalism, as they are subjected to a new culture of journalism.

With this rise of social media journalists are bound to adjust, thus they should come up with other ethics to improvise so that they can source their news from the cyberspace and be able to authenticate the stories. Chari (2013: 179) is of the same view as he posits that "The emergence of social media has posed a threat at the same time changing traditional ethics that were adhered to during the traditional media era". Thus with this in mind, ethics bring out fair human interactions and practices in light best human practices. In this aspect, journalism ethics in the wake of new communication technologies have been affected thus journalists have to adapt. Journalists should entail good judgement during the process of news gathering from the cyber space so that an audience consumes unbiased news. For journalism to be accepted by an audience, it must however be practised ethically in an endeavour to win the hearts of many. It is from this perspective that practising journalism ethically will construct legitimacy from an audience, at the same time rallying the trust of the audience in the process of consumption of story narratives formulated during the news making process in the use of social media.

When practising journalism ethically the reporter source relationship should be well maintained and with the rise of social media such a relation has since vanished, hence journalist now just gather news from the cyberspace which would have been posted by other individuals. Chari also supports this notion as he highlights that the New communication technologies thus internet and cellular phones were changing the reporter-source relationship in a profound way. Because of this, the bond between journalists in the mainstream and their sources was slowly diminishing because of the emergence of new communication

technologies. Chari further highlights the challenges that journalists face when using online media sources as they have a direct beckoning on ethics for those practising in mainstream media. In light of this, journalists and editors using the internet and social media as a source for news are prone to breach traditional ethics that include the use of unidentified or non-existent sources, plagiarism, and this has destroyed the newsworthiness of the story.

Further more Chari (2013), examines ethical challenges that journalists in Zimbabwe are being faced with when using the internet, email and cellular phone in their day to day operations in gathering and constructing stories. The emergence of social media has posed a threat at the same time changing traditional ethics that were adhered to during the traditional media era. He further acknowledges the negative and positive implications that are faced by journalists that also affect the quality of media products that are a result of gathering news using new communication technologies and the internet for those operating in the mainstream media. Also in line with this, Deuze (2003) identifies ways in which internet and social media has affected the journalist's line of work. This however has a direct bearing on the ethics on journalism, as they are subjected to a new culture of journalism.

The study furthermore shows the way in which new media has destroyed creativity and at the same time undermined the culture of fact checking and thoroughness involved when it comes to creation of stories that are to be published in the mainstream. However, the research further looks at ethics that are involved around the sourcing of news from social media platforms, the changing trends that are being faced by journalists in the wake of social media platforms that are being used in the construction of news stories. This was largely after mainstream media, in this case the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* use social platforms as sources of information that in turn were published in the mainstream. Thus, as the world transgresses into a more digitalized world, news rooms in various parts of the country are adapting to a new trend of sourcing news on social media platforms, it will be worthwhile to take note of issues such as fact checking that do not expose journalists to litigation, bias and objectivity.

Moreover, the research looks at the way new media has ushered in a new terrain of journalism practice. This has also had an effect on the way traditional values based on the assumption that the journalist practising in the mainstream is the original producer of content, while the consumer, that is the audience is the permanent consumer which are subjects that

are up for debate and are a gap filler in the study carried out by Chari. With this in mind, traditional values such as truthful storytelling, fairness and balance accountability remain important to the profession but have become altered because of the emergence of new media outlets that provide journalists with information that they in turn publish for news consumption. To further support this, newspaper columnist Pathisa Nyathi's (MMPZ, 2002:19) observation illustrates this and states that 'the polarisation in our society today is best depicted in the press. Basically the press is either pro-government or anti-government. Sometimes objectivity is sacrificed on the altar of expediency in order to be true to their chosen position…If you buy newspapers from one divide; you will get half the story'.

Furthermore, the research looks at the aspect of communication policies and media laws in post 2000 Zimbabwe that altered ethical values for the practice of journalism that were spearheaded by the Minister of Information and Publicity. The struggle for hegemonic control in this era saw ethics being altered and saw the emergence of a new dimension of the practice of journalism. As Moyo (2010) notes one outcome of the post 2000 media and communication policies in Zimbabwe has been the erosion of the practice of ethical journalism, and has also left the profession being directed by those who have then political and economic power in the country. The emergence of Facebook and political blogs has inevitably changed journalism ethics and further enhanced the reporting of partisan politics.

2.4 Social Media and Newsgathering

In the old days according to the editor of the *Newsday* in Bulawayo Bhebhe, says that a reporter was given a lead or went out to find a story but nowadays many stories are received third hand (sometimes even fourth or fifth hand) through Facebook posts or Tweets, blogs or Instagram posts so that by the time a story is assigned to the reporter, the story in some form or another is already out there in the social media universe. The reporter now has to take that into consideration and find some angle to the story that is not yet being talked about. Even scholars like Afaque (2006) supports that view as he posits that a lot of tips or leads these days are from the internet or what's "trending" in social networks like,Twitter, Facebook ,Blogs Whatsapp, Viber, Mxit, Linkedin etc . This therefore shows that journalists now are practising desktop journalism by just taking stories from the social media.

This is radically changing the industry's concept of what a scoop or breaking news is. Journalists are forced to accelerate the traditional journalistic process because people now want real time information. People want the information as soon as the journalist or the media outlet receives it. So to sit on a story until it is complete is to risk being out-scooped by competitors or even worse to be dubbed slow by the public. It is now a necessity to give the audience bits of information at a time, as soon as the information is available. No media outlet can afford to wait. Traditionally, media outlets compete to out-scoop each other but today if they hold on to a story too long, they run the risk of being out-scooped by amateurs such as bloggers and citizen journalists.

The rise has of social media has changed how journalists gather news, they now don't look for stories but instead stories look for them. Scholars like (Ingram 2012, Stansen 2010 and Rodriguez 2001) are of the same view. They assert that assert that journalists no more search for news. Online networking is modifying the way data goes inside and between systems of every one. The research looks at how the introduction of the various social media platforms has helped the journalists in terms of newsgathering or in fact it has come as a misfortune to them. However it is of great importance to note that the growth of the internet and emergence of social media has seen news travelling faster and instantly as it happens. Social media has become a vital source for journalists hence enhancing newsrooms to publish the information they get whether it's political or social. The emergence of social media and mobile technologies has been the driving force in terms of dissemination of information.

Social media has turned into an upgraded column that is used to distribute news and data that can be used by writers to distribute social and political issues, something that was not present in the mainstream media as sources now and again did not discard such delicate incredible political data. It is in accordance with that one may understand that the development of new media and correspondence advances have been key drivers of data that is utilized by journalists as a hotspot for gathering news.

UNESCO (2011) notes that new media has enabled civil society, young people and communities to bring about massive social and political transformations by self-organizing, and engaging global youths in the fight to be able to freely express themselves and the aspirations of their wider communities. The organization argues that new media has created media freedom and freedom of expression when people express views, journalists source

information. News is seen to be as timely and needing instant relay. In the coordinated terrorist attacks launched by an Islamist terrorist group, known as the al-Qaeda upon the United States of America, the first news of the terrorist bombings were told through social media. Despite its successes, citizen journalism has been highly criticized and labeled as killing real journalism. The internet surpassed newspapers as the main news source in 2010 and thousands of journalists have been laid-off as newspapers close around the USA (Aljazeera, 2011).

Baumgartner and Morris (2009:3) note that the motivations of social media use are not rigid. They postulate that individuals use social media for the purposes of seeking information, expressing opinions and debating issues, for entertainment purposes or simply as a way of staying connected with friends and acquaintances.The research creates a superior comprehension of how the two newspapers pick the credibility of the stories that are accumulated from these social platforms .It will likewise uncover the different sorts of stories that have stood out as truly newsworthy that have been assembled from the online networking stages.

The study being done if of significance as it will look to call attention to how journalists at the *Newsday* and *The Southern Eye* use online networking stages in newsgathering and the advantages that have accompanied the time of informal communities. Various researchers have delivered profitable material on the issues of new media and their affinity to make a coordinated and imparted level stage to establishments on articulating option open issues of concern. Mhiripiri and Mutsvairo (2013) give an intricate point of view on how new media in Zimbabwe have presented progressive stages of correspondence and pondering, albeit not as radical as those subsequent to the Arab spring.

Technophilic perspectives on new media, say that digital and social media have allowed media to circumvent some of the obstacles that previously prevented them from fulfilling public expectations, which include being an agent of representation, promoting public debate, providing information and acting as watchdogs. With the advent of technology, journalists can gather views from public utterances on social networking platforms. On a similar note Larsorsa et al (2012) postulates that there is nothing amiss about gathering views from online sources. He further elaborates and says that *"Journalists use of Twitter for news-gathering*

and reporting have become a normalised aspect of professional practice according to academics."

As the uptake of social media in news organizations gains momentum, it has become common belief that ways of receiving and sharing information have been transformed. One of the major attributes to social networking is its high level of interactivity (Ludtke, 2009). This interactivity has allowed news media to crowd source information and ideas and exchange questions with the publics, keeping them engaged and enhancing their participation in news production. Social media therefore has become an agent of representation. Prior to the emergence of social media, readers were passive recipients but have now become active participants. The communication is no longer linear but has become a two way conversation. Stassen (2008) sees social media providing opportunities for rather than bringing misfortune to traditional media. He suggests that social media has allowed journalists to interact with audiences rather than the "arm's length" relationship that existed in traditional mass communication. However, Rodriquez (2001) argues that new media shows an open door for journalists. McChesney (1990) agrees with the adjustments in the media scene arguing that there is a radical change in the media scene due to the internet.

Sparkles, cited in Curran and Gurevitch (2000), also counter argues that daily newspaper owners have, all things considered, chose that the internet provides opportunities and difficulties to which they have to react with a percentage of the open doors being "self-evident". He refers to diminishment of expenses and less physical engagement. He cites reduction of costs and less physical engagement. He argues that the online daily paper offers proprietors the possibility of generous expense diminishments and gives the likelihood of new readers without hindrances of physical separation. Thusly, media's part of giving data is made clear. Mpofu (2012) notes that the liberalization of the telecommunication sector in Zimbabwe led to the proliferation of internet cafes and led to the product innovations by mobile service providers. Chari (2013) further developed Mpofu's concepts as his angle of study focused on new communication technologies in the newsroom with regards to journalism ethics. He further states that "The way in which news is being conceptualized, gathered, and produced and disseminated is changing the context of new communication technologies and that the use of new media technologies in newsrooms revolves around the adoption of social media".

Dueze cited in Chari (2013) is of the view that new media has transformed the print industry because of the technological possibilities it offers and allows for interactivity between the audience and content producers. The angle of the study will be to look extensively at social media and how it is used by the two newspapers in newsgathering Both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* are examples of newsrooms that have seen the potential of social media usage as they have multiple social networking accounts as part of their Digital Fist Strategy.

2.5 Social Media as a reliable source of information and news

The mass media has been for a long time been considered as a source for news and a platform were information can be disseminated to the public from the state or from the public. Moyo (2011) posits how Zimbabweans used other forms of communication such as mobile cellphones, mobile radios as well as the internet through what is termed as blogging as a way of expressing their voices hence bringing in the assumption that the media sometimes gets information from social media. The public can now take part in disseminating information through what is termed citizen journalism which is being practiced through various social platforms such as Whatsapp, Blogs, Twitter, Linkedin, Skype hence making it a source for news.Various scholars have written a lot of literature on whether social media is a reliable source of news or not due to the fact that journalists now source for news online hence raising the question of reliability. There many platforms that are there that make it easy for journalists to source for news in the comfort of their offices that provide news for reporters, for instance Facebook, Whatsapp, Twitter and Instagram just to mention a few.

According to Broersma and Graham (2013) there are various social platforms such as Twitter or Whatsapp which are used by journalists in four ways, which are the fact that it can lead them to new stories, helps them find sources and information, provides them with quotes, and is useful for verifying information by using the wisdom of the crowd. Mhiripiri and Mutsvairo (2013) highlight on exactly how e-newspapers and blogs replicated acute balanced stories and descriptions which were usually that were often nominated and replicated by the political opposition parties to undermine the Zimbabwean President. Examples such as *Kubatana.com* and *NewZimbabwe.com* are some of the websites that are used for communication purpose and a source by other journalists. Another reason why social media can be classified as a reliable source is that journalists can now follow celebrities and

get to have exclusive stories on what he or she would have written on her blog or twitter account and can get to follow up on the scoop. The era of the new media as above stated creates a forum whereby the public can now interact and share their views henceforth by doing these journalists now have a wider door of getting information.

Kurt (2010;340) postulate that there is false information that is usually posted on social media that is untrue hence questioning the reliability of the social media platforms that are available. He also adds that journalists need to exercise caution when deciding to lift views from social media because fake accounts are bound so they need to check the authenticity of the user account they are quoting to avoid being left with egg on their faces. Donavan et al (2007) also agree on the assertion by Kurt (2010) that a lot of fakeness is floating online and especially on social networking platforms. The same requirement goes for basing stories on information received via social media it must always be verified before being foisted upon an unsuspecting reading public.

The Internet, so fundamental to the adequacy of online networking, has brought the world and its occupants closer together, and the field of news, where there had been such remarkable separation between supporter or writer and peruser, has likewise discovered itself more natural. The research takes a gander at the routes in which online networking affects the way in which newsrooms work. It will centre both on its influence on the functional ways that news gathered from social media and also the authenticity of the news that has been extracted from the various social platforms and also the reliability of social media as a source.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts and is used to make conceptual distinctions and organise ideas. This study benefited immensely from borrowing various media theories and concepts for guidance to ensure that the study is a sound piece of academic work. The study revolves around social media as a theme, social construction of technology and also the democratic participant theory. The theories serve to generate understanding the role of technology in the proliferation of citizen journalism and whether the new concept constitutes an alternative to traditional media.In essence, the theories that were used in this study will explain how journalists use social platforms to

search for news and how social media are used as sources of information in the mainstream media.

2.2.1 The Social Media Theory

Social media is defined by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) as "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user- generated-content. They further define Social media as a term that is used to describe the type of media that is based on conversation and interaction between people online. Social media are media designed to be disseminated through interaction, using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques.

Social networks are considered as valuable tools in gathering information, but they can also create communication chaos when professionals do not correctly use them. This also validates the research in that journalists need to improvise on their ethics when gathering news from the social media. Hence they are prone to getting unauthentic information which in turn causes chaos or disorder. One of the main benefits of online platforms in the networking option through which participants can build communities and share knowledge based of mutual interest. In this sense social media eliminates geographical distances and creates an electronic world where we get the chance to meet everyone. Journalists have taken advantage of the virtual world where each person seems more approachable, in order to gather information and identify reliable news sources.

Like news, social media is now an integral modern method of communicating with one another (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010:60).According to Poell and Borra (2011) they go on to state that in fact, it could be argued that social media itself is a form of broadcasting news, albeit a particularly technologically advanced one (given the ever-developing platforms and tools that users are able to employ).

Social media has many uses such as communicating and also seeking for news. Like news social media has become an integral modern method of communicating with one another (Kaplan and Haenlein). In fact it could be argued that social media itself is a form of broadcasting news. The birth of social media as a phenomenon is its effect on traditional ways of broadcasting news across all manner of mediums. An example is that on television news, presenters will often end a segment on a particular subject by reading out certain comments obtained from twitter from viewers.Editors and journalists can now follow

celebrities or some well-known people on Facebook, Twitter, Blogging and Instagram so as to get information about their whereabouts and their day to day activities.

There are various uses for social media platforms such as that it is used for communication , gathering news , it can also act as a public sphere, it can be used for spreading information whilst it has advantages it can also have it disadvantages as well. Banda (2010) postulates that journalism operates within a network of relationships with the public in which the public are both sources and consumers of information. The relationship between the public and journalists has been made to exist because of social media. More so the social media has enhanced the reporter source relationship since the reporter can now interact with the source easily.

Social media is portrayed as the new source for journalists being one of the widest network methods of newsgathering. Respondents describe social media not only as a way to communicate and keep connections with stakeholders and peers from the media industry, but also as a well-developed system of sharing knowledge and building communities by disseminating information. Social media can be used as a marketing tool, specifically mentioning the opportunity for personal branding on new media networks like Twitter, Facebook, Whatsapp etc .The importance of social media is clearly visible through the emphasis on regular social media use, with most of the respondents being active users of social media platforms in order to communicate with their target group and also gather news from various social groups. This type of newsgathering and disseminating stories has become an integrated part of online journalism, fostering access to information and becoming a particular form of broadcasting (Kaplan and Haenlein 2012).

With the onset of social media there has been a shift towards its use as the powerful alternative platform of public communication as Poell and Borra highlighted. Essentially, theorists believe, there has been a shift away from news existing to provide information, to the ability for everybody to have an opinion on news, with certain theorists even arguing that the profession of journalism as we know it is in decline (Kaplan and Haenlein 2012).

2.2.2 Democratic Participant Theory

The democratic participant theory suggests that the mass media should be open for ordinary citizens to participate in matters pertaining to their governance and welfare. This then validates the topic being researched in the sense that it is through these social media

platforms that people can freely discuss about matters of their government. Hence journalists then get the audience's view through the social media. The theory was propounded by McQuail (1987). It is a follow up to the development media theory and the social responsibility normative theory. This theory came about due to increased criticism of the dominance of the main mass media by private or public monopolies. Roelofsel (1996) posits that this theory is primarily a reaction against commercialization and monopolies in privately controlled mass media, and against centralization and bureaucratization in public broadcasting. The practical realization of this theory is encountered primarily in developed societies." This theory has implications of citizen journalism having a potential to create a free market of ideas where diverse opinions and views can be freely expressed.

The democratic participant theory emphasizes the following: Multiplicity of the media, the small-scale use of media; media's local nature, de-institutionalizing the media, the reciprocal role of communicator and recipient, horizontal communication and interaction and involvement. McQuail (1983:97) states that, the democratic-participant theory has to do with the right to relevant information and the right to answer back. The idea that citizens may become sources of information on the "blogsphere" further illustrates how tenets of the Democratic-participant theory are relevant to this study.

The democratic participant theory supports the democratization of the media by calling for the opening up of media space to multiple and diverse channels and sources of information. The theory also advocates for the involvement of citizens at local level in the process of gathering and disseminating information. However, although the media can perform this task of pluralism in society, the theory calls for the development of small media that are directly independent of state or commercial control, were individuals can participate and bring out their views without these being filtered. It is in line of study that even the public can now participate in social platforms and share news and be democratic through various online platforms that are available to them.

Goodman (1994:25) is of the view that the democratic participant theory "originates partly from the commercialisation and monopolisation of privately owned media and as partly as a response to the centralisation and beaurcratisation of print or broadcasting institutions" In this way, it attempts the fair coverage on the needs, interests of active receivers in society that include minority groups in society and be responsible to their needs in society. Thus, small

scale media are deemed interactive and participatory. The democratic participatory theory however advocates for the participation of those small scale groups that are left out by mainstream media.

Due to the fact that social media has brought about many opportunities for the public to take part in various platforms to some it has come to the rescue as a tool for democracy and freedom of expression for the public and for journalists. Whilst in the country there are stringent laws that govern news rooms many media houses have taken to social media to write news freely which has in turn has given birth to civic journalism. Civic Journalism is a form of interactive journalism, where the newspaper actively enlists and engages people from all walks of life in the creation of the stories and reports it develops. There are various social platforms such as *zimjournalists* online that have given journalists freedom of expression and share diaries. This shows how social media has assisted journalists in news gathering.

Democratic-participant theory advocates media support for cultural pluralism at a grass-root level. Media are to be used to stimulate and empower pluralistic groups. Unlike social responsibility theory, which assumes that mass media can perform this function, democratic-participant theory call for development of innovative, `small' media that can be directly controlled by group members. If they cannot afford such media, then government subsidies should be provided to them existing small media should by identified and funded. Training programs should be established to teach group members how to operate small media. Social media helps the public in being democratic hence the creation of citizen journalism. Everyone can now be a journalist as they can now post anything that is currently happening. An example is the xenophobia attack videos that happened earlier this year in South Africa whereby a video was circulating on social platforms of foreigners that were being burnt. By so doing even an ordinary human being can just capture an image and disseminate it without him or her being a journalist by profession.

Democratic-participant theory was proposed in recognition of new media developments and of increasing criticism of the dominance of the main mass media by private or public monopolies. From the 1960's onwards call could be heard for alternative, grass-roots media, expressing the needs of citizens. The theory supports the right to relevant local information, the right to answer back and the right to use the new means of communication for interaction and social action in small-scale settings of community, interest groups or subculture. This

theory challenged the necessity for and desirability of uniform, centralized, high-cost, commercialized, professionalized or state-controlled media. In their place should be encouraged multiple, small-scale, local, non-institutional, committed media which link senders to receivers and also favour horizontal patterns of interaction

This theory argues that surviving remnants of ethnic groups be given access to media and allowed to revive or stabilize their culture. The term democratic-participant expresses a sense of disillusionment with established political parties and with media system, which are seen as having broken faith with the people. Berger (2011) postulates that the theory is the key enabler of citizen journalism in that these new platforms (especially blogging opportunities or cellphone cameras) are readily available to individuals. Glaser (2006) writes that 'The idea behind citizen journalism is that people without professional journalism training can use the tools of modern technology.' This reflects the context in the USA where it may perhaps be per- missible to assume that 'citizen journalism' and even 'citizen journalists' emerge spontaneously once the means of mass communication become available to people outside the media industry. But what is also important is that even having access to media production facilities does not necessarily mean that people have the skills or desire to make use of these opportunities – for any kind of content output, let alone journalistic content.

2.2.3 Social Construction Of Technology

The theory was propounded by Biker and Pinch (1997). It argues that technology does not determine human action but rather human action shapes technology. It also argues at the way technology is used and cannot be understood .The theory propounds that technology does not determine human action but humans determine technology People are now making technology that now suits them. An example is of a mobile phone seeing that it has various uses in one. A mobile phone can take pictures and record videos and also has softwares that allow for the editing of videos and pictures. However, this shows how social media have become a necessary tool in news gathering in the sense that long ago journalists would have to go to an event with a camera and also a video recorder but nowadays they can just carry their mobile phones and they can multi task. They can even receive videos from people that can in turn be news. There is now minimum need to go into the field because the journalists can now get footage of what transpired at the event through the use of video that might have been posted by the people.

The theory propounds that audiences are not victims anymore but are users of technology. This theory is also known as technological constructivism meaning constructing that which suits you. It is basically a theory of technological innovation .Opinion leaders can be seen as intermediaries between the media (as sources of information and propaganda) and individuals hence a two-step flow of communication from the media to interested individuals and from them to family, friends and acquaintances (multi step theory).Theorists argue at the way in which technology is used and cannot be understood without understanding how technology is embedded in its social context. The theory looks at those that seek to understand the reasons for acceptance and rejection of technology which looks at the social world.

The theory seemed appropriate in this case as it squashes the theory by Mcluhan about technological determinism that is known for its message that says the medium is the message meaning that people tend to believe more information that comes from certain media than the other. Livingstone (2006) states that audiences and users of social media are increasingly active, selective, self-directed, producers as well receivers of texts whilst on the other hand Ross and Nightingale (2003) speak of online audiences as users, producers and consumers of the media. In her content analysis of blogs Bowman and Willis (2010) say that with online media there are many ways that the audience is now participating in the journalistic process, because of the coming in of new media digital networking enables all participants to be users as much as producers of information and knowledge.

Sociologists who criticise the theory such as Freidson (1953) emphasize the role of group relationships in media selection and influence processes, pointing out the social nature of the experience of the members of the audience. The theory's weakness is that since the technology that is being made comes from the capitalist who in turn make the latest technology keep making money out of the public in a way that it tells people what is in fashion the technological gadgets that are in the in thing. Social construction of technology (also referred to as SCOT) is a theory within the field of Science and Technology Studies. It also advocates of SCOT that is, social constructivists argue that technology does not determine human action, but that rather, human action shapes technology. They also argue that the ways a technology is used cannot be understood without understanding how that technology is embedded in its social context. SCOT is a response to technological determinism and is sometimes known as technological constructivism.

The fact that the theory mainly gives power to the public which in turn promotes citizen journalism is a worrying factor because everyone will be a journalist as people might post even misleading information that may in turn be published by news organisations not knowing that its wrong information. The theory is essential in this study that will be carried out because it makes it easier to understand how the society has constructed its own technology thus looking at journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* and how they make use of the new media in newsgathering.

2.2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the literature review under various themes together with the theoretical framework in line with the research under study. These theories and concepts presented can be used in the outcome of the research as these are some of the findings of scholars on the topic under research. The chapter highlighted theories such as the democratic participant theory, the social construction of technology and the theory of social media which will guide the research.

Chapter 3: Research methods and methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter basically discusses the research methods that were used to suit the purpose of the study as various methods of data gathering and data presentation were employed. The population from which the data was drawn in this chapter together with the ethical considerations that were followed by the researcher in her endeavours to gather information.

3.2 Research Methodology

The research showed the various research instruments that included sampling techniques, research design, and procedures that were used to carry out the research. To meet the objectives of this research, primary as well as secondary data were essential in meeting the objectives of the study. Primary data was collected through the use of various interviews such as face to face, telephone and emails as they were essential when sourcing for information of the various techniques that were used by reporters when sourcing for information from the various social platforms The research comprised of articles that were from a specified time frame of January to September 2015. The study used purposive sampling and the data gathering methods that were used were mostly interviews and content analysis. The data analysis technique which was used for analysing the data that collected was thematic analysis with the collected information being presented in forms of a pie chart and bar graphs.

3.3 Unit of Analysis

The term unit of analysis refers to the smallest units investigated. Du Plooy (2005) postulates that the term the units of analysis involves an individual or groups of that accumulate information that explains their abilities, opinions, attitudes, beliefs and or their knowledge of a particular topic or issue. As mentioned in chapter one the time frame of the study will comprise of articles that start from January –September 2015 and 10 articles from both *The Newsday* and the *Southern Eye* were analysed. In the study the unit of analysis were the articles that were sourced from social media and also published by the two newspapers and also the other unit of analysis were the views and comments of the editors and journalists and

also personnel from the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe on   using social media as a newsgathering tool. They were analysed as a means to try and meet the demands of the main question hence the unit of analysis will help the study in coming up with deducable conclusions.

3.4 Research Universe/Population

The researcher identified the target population as the journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye*. Other people that were interviewed were staffers from the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe (VMCZ).Interviewing staffers from VMCZ was of great importance as the researcher wanted to find out the ethics that should be observed when searching for news online. Including VMCZ in the study was of great importance as their central goal is to advance and promote the media to be moral with the capacity to add to a democratic media that encourage growth and improvement of autonomous, pluralistic, and free media. The reporters that were interviewed enabled the investigator to meet the objectives of the study which were finding out the reliability of these social media platforms as a source for news, the process that journalists undertake when fact checking and how journalists act differently when they deviate when using social media. From this perspective, Ray and Modul state that a universe is defined as the total subjects or items. The universe comprises of articles and columns which made it to the paper and were published that where extracted from any of the media from a period of January to September 2015.

3.5 Sampling

According to Brink (1996), a sampling method is the process of selecting the sample from a population in order to obtain information regarding a phenomenon in a way that represents a population of interest. Sampling is also a process of selecting units such as people or organisations from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen for the purpose of the study the researcher will use purposive sampling since the research is focusing on two newsrooms form the same media house

3.5.1 Purposive Sampling

Kerlinger (2010) explains that purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling, which is characterized by the use of judgment and a deliberate effort to obtain representative samples by including typical areas or groups in the sample. Purposive sampling was used in this research to get rich information for in-depth analysis of the core issues being studied. This sampling method was also chosen because reporters and editors are busy people as they usually chase after news stories and try to meet deadline. Sampling enables the researcher to study a large population through a small group if the sample is representative. This means the sample chosen by this researcher can be deemed adequate to satisfy the requirements of the research. The sampling technique was relevant to this study in that the area being researched needed people who are knowledgeable on the issue who can provide the necessary information that can help the research. As above stated the people that had the knowledge about the topic at hand were the journalists themselves, the editors and the personnel from VMCZ on the issue of ethics. The researcher purposely interviewed journalists and editors at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* to get their views and thoughts on how social media has helped them or not when gathering news. Staffers from VMCZ were also purposively interviewed so as to see how online networking impinges on the ethics of journalism as a profession.

The online editor for the *Southern Eye* was interviewed as his comments were needed as he sometimes runs the organization's Facebook, Twitter and Whatsapp pages.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

There are various ways to gather standard information from all sample subjects. Bell (1999) defines research as the tools used for collecting information and the data needed to find solutions to problems under investigation. For any research to be successful it rests within the accuracy of the data collected.

3.6.1 Interviews

Oppeheim (2012) defines an interview as conservation between the interviewer and interviewee for the purpose of eliciting certain information from the interviewee. Interviews are important to the research as a means of gathering qualitative data such as journalists' opinions on the importance of social media in their lives and also the benefits that have come

with social media. Before beginning each interview the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondent and assured the respondent that all information collected would be treated in strict confidence and would be used for academic purposes only.

The interviews were recorded using a mobile phone and then transcribed at the end of the session. This had the advantage of allowing the researcher the opportunity to concentrate on the interview without having to be distracted by having to write down notes. Bryman (2001:317) argues, "It is important for detailed analysis required and that the interviewees answers are captured in their own terms".

 The duration of the interviews lasted between 5 minute to 10 minutes, depending on the respondents' knowledge and willingness to respond to the issues raised. The interviews and data processing were done in a week because of limited time. The researcher conducted both formal and informal interviews. The use of informal interviews gave the researcher the flexibility to move away from a laid down set of questions which would in normal circumstances yield inadequate and unreliable data.There are various types of interview that comprise of in depth interviews, email interviews, face to face, semi structure interviewed but for this study the researcher will use face to face interviews.A series of interviews were he conducted with journalists that will also look at the participant's beliefs about the change in audience interaction. Interactivity with the audience, and the rise of the citizen journalist, as well as the journalist's preferences for working with social media, were all investigated and implemented as part of the study.

Face to face interviews were carried out as they are one of the most open forms of communication for qualitative data collection. As the questions posed in the data collection for the research are designed to facilitate a detailed enquiry into journalist's opinions and beliefs on certain matters, interviews are the ideal qualitative method to use. The research design took into consideration the main research questions that required a level of disclosure only capable through in-depth questions on how journalists use social media in news gathering. Several interviews were conducted with individuals involved with the news broadcasting industry. These helped shed light on how experts perceive the influence of social media on their profession, with inductive coding being used to construct the questions for the interview guide. Every section of the interview guide aimed to bring into light information relating to the answering of the research questions. It provided a strong

framework to use in order to remain focused on the research intentions, and was able to be refined over the initial interviews to create a stronger guide.

The coding of the results allowed for the structuring of both that section and the discussion that followed in line with the research questions. Face to face interviews were used so as to gain wealth and knowledge and that this type of interview tends to be more comfortable as the interview was in sync and was adjusted as a result of significant issues that emerged in the course of the interview. The interviewees were selected according to their professional experience and positions in the newspaper organisations.The researcher also used telephone interviews to find out information from key personnel from voluntary media houses in this case the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe on their perceptions on the use of social media as a source for news, and how this has altered traditional journalism ethics. The researcher used telephone interviews as they were cheaper for the researcher because there were no travelling expenses that are involved. Thus telephone interviews targeted the right individual in getting information that is necessary for the research.

3.6.2 Content analysis

Mays and Pope (2006) define content analysis as a systematic technique for categorizing data into themes and then counting how often each category or theme occurs in order to identify dominant findings and thereby make some generalisations.Thus content analysis is important in providing new insights and there is an increased understanding of certain phenomena of practical actions. Content analysis provided the reading of texts, images and symbolic matter that was produced in the mainstream media by journalists and editors who use social media as a source of news. Content analysis was used in this study to assist in finding out about the rituals that journalists undertake when using social media as a source for news from both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye.* Also stories that were got from social media and were published in both the newspapers will be analysed to further fulfil the objectives of the research.

Content analysis was used to analyse the data in the study as it can be used with any type of communication applicable in a particular area of study. The researcher chose content analysis for analysing the data that was collected because it is free from response bias and is done without the subjects' awareness. It is recorded and can be done at the researchers' convenience. It is appropriate for analysing open ended responses and can be used with

existing data for achieving the objectives of the research. It was also advantageous in that predictions were made without participant observation being used.

Content analysis was essential in the study because it helped generate themes that are intrinsic in the data presentation and analysis so as to come up with findings. The content that was analysed comprised of stories that were constructed from social media. Various stories were got from Twitter, Whatsapp , Facebook and Instagram and made headline news that sold the paper especially political stories that were published that included the tweets that were made by the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Prof Jonathan Moyo.

3.7 Methods of Data Analysis

This is the procedure of deliberately applying factual and sensible systems to depict and show and assess information. Kelner (1995), different information investigative strategies give a method for drawing inductive surmising's from information and this recognizes the signal of interests present in the data. The data that will be gathered will be analysed using content analysis and thematic analysis whereby the data for the later will be portrayed in themes and also content analysis that will help in analysing stories that were got from online media.

3.7. 1 Thematic Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) are of the view that thematic analysis is a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes within data, organising and describing data set in rich detail. The data that was gathered was analysed using thematic analysis as it helped come up with the conclusion for the research. Seven themes were used in the study so as to make the findings of the research more understandable. The advantage that thematic analysis comes with is that it provides a means of organising and summarizing the findings from a large, diverse body of research. Thematic analysis is flexible as it allows for use in various subjects including the media. It is also efficient because it is well suited for large data sets and thus allows emergence of themes from the data for easy analysis. Thematic analysis helps the researcher to get a clear picture of the content of a text.

3.8 Methods of data presentation

The findings from the research were presented in a form of a pie chart and a bar graph for the quantitative aspect of the research. These visual aids will help in determining which particular platform is it that is used by the two organisations in sourcing for news. A narrative approach was used for the qualitative aspect of the research. The narrative emphasizes in understanding the advantages that have come with online networks in newsgathering.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Ethics are the rules of conduct that govern a person's behaviour or the members of a professional body. Before the researcher collected any information from anyone from either of the two organisations she had to gain permission from the organisations to under the study so that she could be allowed to carry out the research. The researcher had to gain consent to carry out the study as she had to be honest about the intentions of her study. The researcher noted that she had to consider the confidentiality of the information that she was given which included delicate organisational data which could put the organisation in disrepute. The other ethics that the researcher had to abide by were the need of accuracy and to be honest and not to falsify the findings to suit the interests of the study. Traditional ethics of news-casting(journalism) include a commitment to honesty, exactness, wisdom strength, equity, balance, objectivity, absence of bias and open responsibility (Haque, 2007). The researcher had to prioritize the issue of privacy because some journalists acknowledged the use of social media as a source of news so the researcher had to acknowledge the issue of secrecy because some journalists were filled with fear of victimization so the researcher had to keep some information to herself.

3.10 Conclusion

The chapter focused on giving a description of the research methodology that was used to gather data. Qualitative research methods were applied so as to provide data that is easily interpreted and which answers underlying questions. The population under the study was also highlighted in the chapter and the sampling techniques used as a selection criteria for the population was also discussed. Various data collection methods were discussed and interviews were selected as the methods of data collection. Methods of data presentation were

discussed in the chapter and these will be used in chapter 5 when the findings will be made public. Ethical considerations which the researcher had to observe were detailed in the chapter.

Chapter 4: Political Economy of the Newsday and Southern Eye

4.1 Introduction

The study thus far has covered the background of the research, the theories that guide the study and also the literature that relates to the topic that is being studied. The previous chapters have also covered the objectives and the methods that will be used in gathering the data that is needed for the thesis hence this chapter will mainly highlight the political economy of the two organisations together with its ownership patters and its funding mechanism. Political economy is a word that is used to study the various acts of production, buying and selling relations with the laws, customs and governance. The organograms of the two newspapers will be included in this chapter as it is of importance in understanding how the structure of the organisation may affect the making and publication of some issues. The *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* are two newspapers that are under Trevor Ncube's stable called Alpha Media Holdings (AMH) and are both privately owned newspapers.

4.2 Group Vision statement

The group's foundational vision expresses that it will look for, reality, deliver the truths and offer relevant and analysis where fitting (Using a tone) non-judgemental, fair, objective reasonable, investigate the officials and hold the powerful responsible in the interest of (their) audience, (whom they) aid to present with integrity, offering news coverage that is credible, factual, solid, reliable and absolutely straightforward.

In current vision however expresses that it tries to be the leading daily newspaper and a provider for news in the country as far as readership is concerned, revenue, advertising and circulation (Media alternative) site hits and mobile subscriptions.

Due to the fact that one of their vision statements is so that they can make profit one might conclude and say that people or in this case the organisations might do anything to make the paper sell so in this case both the two newspapers might write half-baked stories that they get from the internet that will in return sell the paper. The fact that the organisation is profit oriented means that the stories that are thereby sourced on social media are questionable and are sometimes those that diminish the ruling party in order for the paper to be sold.

4.2 Group Mission Statement

The group mission statement notes that the organisation is to utilize multimedia platforms to deliver credible and fair news and information to the general population that is in a reasonable and professional manner. The organisation tries to inform the general population, which the organization strives to do in a professional manner and goes for maintaining press opportunity , human rights and cultivating democratic values. The group mission statement is mainly influenced by the possession patterns and also the funding that are there to fit the policy of the company.

The mission statement of both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* notes that the company is to use multimedia platforms to convey trustworthy and reasonable news and information to the overall public that is in a sensible and professional manner. The organisation tries to inform the general population , which the organisation tries to do in a professional way and goes for keeping up press opportunity , human rights and cultivating democratic values. The mission statement is often influenced by the ownership patterns of the organisation. Due to the fact that Trevor Ncube is the one that owns the stable his thoughts and opinions on some things matter as he is the owner of the company .Also the funding mechanism and the policy company is also influenced by the mission statement as well. The fact that the mission statement is influenced by the funding mechanism makes one wonder about the type of stories that are sourced from social media and published, if the stories tend to attack the ones that fund the organisation they are not published hence going against the mission statement which talks about the credibility of the news and the information that is published.

4.3 Group Objectives

The main objective of the *Newsday* and *The Southern Eye* is to create a discussion with Zimbabweans about the issues that matter in the nation furthermore to empower most extreme interest so that the Newsday and its online support reflects differing viewpoints as possible.

The researcher finds the meanings of issues that matter in the nation problematic. She tends to question the objectivity of the organisation as a whole as the term sounds ambiguous. Whatever they mean by this term will be put under investigation too in attempting to make

sense of the diverse stories that the paper sourced from online networking and who it focused on.

4.4 The Group Editorial Policy

The editorial policy of the two organisations is influenced by the ownership and control patterns. The two organisations falls under Alpha Media holdings which include other newspaper such as *The Zimbabwe Independent* and *The Standard*. The editorial policy of both the two newspapers is similar to the other two newspapers and they are anti-government as they are owned by an individual Trevor Ncube. Boyd Barret and Newbold (1995) define an editorial policy as guideline of objectives that are evident in all organisational newsrooms. These allow journalists to know what can be deemed as newsworthy. In this case positive news about the misconduct of any ZANU PF member is newsworthy. Apart from politics all stories that can sell and maximise profits for the paper are mostly appreciated by the organisation. The organisation is very active in writing stories that put members of the ruling class in a negative way. It is against this backdrop that the study is based on the types of stories that are extracted from the social media and what type of stories are published in the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye.*

4.5 The *Newsday* and *Southern Eye's* Ownership and Control Structure

As previously stated both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* are private newspapers owned by Trevor Ncube .It is a private company that was launched in June 3, 2013.The paper as a strong competitor against the public media as it constantly portrayed members from the ruling party in a negative way . The papers aim to provide "credible and relevant news for the people of the South". However with this mission statement in mind, questions arise over the assertion that private newspapers are against the ruling party seeing that it is an organisation that it owned by an individual. With this being said one can argue and say that since the stable is owned by the individual that person may use the paper to further his own ideologies hence the issue of one sidedness comes into play.

Ncube also has shares in the South African weekly, the Mail & Guardian, which has one of Africa's largest news websites, the M & G Online. The ownership patterns of the organisation should be scrutinised as one can note that Trevor Ncube has been portrayed as a person who

is against Zanu Pf. The fact that he runs his own newspaper should be problematized as his ideologies can be easily spread seeing that he owns a publishing house.

Newspapers under this stable have been deemed to be of the opposition seeing that they are instances whereby *The Herald* and *Newsday* have got the same story but the story will be written in different ways and even when it comes to photographs the picture of his Excellency Robert Mugabe that is tagged with the story will be a picture of him looking old and frail as someone who is not fit to lead. AMH clearly does not serve the interests of the government. *The Newsday* is made up of five desks which are the political, business, entertainment and arts, sports and courts stories sometimes there are columnists that help complete the structure of the organisation. The *Southern Eye* is also made up of five desks which are similar to the ones at the *Newsday*.

4 .6*Newsday*: Work Roles

NewsDay has a number of departments that range from Editorial, Transport, Marketing and Advertising, Production, Technical, Circulation and Accounts. In order for the company to achieve its goals, all these departments need to work in unison so that the company operates swifly.

Below is a brief description of each department and its major functions within the paper

.

The Chairman

The position of being the chairman of any organisation is the most prestigious position. Trevor Ncube occupies this position and he is the administrator for every one of the four daily papers. He is the centre organizer of AMH, henceforth in laymen's dialect he is the organization's owner. The fact that he is the owner of the company gives him power to be able to use his organisation as he pleases. It is common knowledge that Ncube is Anti ZANU PF hence the type of stories that are published by the organisation is questionable and also the editorial policy as well.

The Editor

The editor for the Newsday in Harare is Wilson Mudzu whilst in Bulawayo is Nqobani Ndlovu. They both occupy the highly esteemed position in the newsroom and they have, though to a certain extent, the influence in the editorial policy of the newspaper. Generally the editor is responsible for the administration of the paper. He has the final say on whether the story can be published or not. It is he editor's job is to create and sustain a team. In the final analysis producing a newspaper is teamwork that involves a number of professionals among them the editorial staff and photographers. The Editor is responsible for the daily operations of the paper. He is responsible for all issues which might affect the paper, from production to circulation and sales. He is the face of the paper and has the duty to enforce all company policies. Critics may postulate that that the role of gatekeeping that is given to the editor leaves a lot to be desired. Most of the times the editor is the one that employs people hence he or she can employ people that they want and will help in furthering the ideologies of the company. Both the two editors play a pivotal role in the day to day running of the organisation as they have much influence in the company.

The Deputy Editor

This is the editor lieutenant, the editor's right hand man who in any case can step in the editor's shoes if the editor is not around. At the *Newsday* he is second in rank together with the manager after the editor. Njabulo Ncube who has been in the media industry for over twenty years assumes this duty. He is also active even in the presence of the editor as they consult each other on decision making. The deputy editor takes after the editor as he also performs the duties of the editor. The deputy editor can perform the duties of the editor and can oversee all the desks and publish stories that sell the paper and advertisers as well. He also can make sure that the editorial policy is followed hence his impact cannot be under estimated.

Desk editors

In a normal newsroom setup there are desk editors. These include News, Business, and Entertainment, Features and Supplements and Sports Desk editors. Their duty in the newsroom is to head those desks, supervision of reporters, assigning them and coming up

with story ideas. Their duty is to supervise journalists hence helping them to come up with stories for the paper. If a journalist has a story he or she then gives the story to the desk editor who in turn report to the main editor. Most of the times the desk editors share the same sentiments with the editors as they are expected to share the same vision with their editors. They choose the stories that they think will sell the paper and bring profits to the paper, hence they play an important role in the in the production of news under each and every desk. At the *Newday* there is only news and sports editors and all other desks do not have editors, the deputy editor also acts as desk editor of those desks.

Reporters

There are the journalists that go out to find stories they are the main reason for success at the organisation. These go out into the field to source for news and write stories. They look for stories that will sell the paper thereby they have to write the story in a way that will be appealing to the reader. They are the first to gate keep some information seeing that a reporter might go for a conference but might decide to leave out some information of the events that happened at the conference. An example is that the organisation avoids writing negative stories about the people that fund them so as to keep good relations with the people that advertise with them. Gurevich et al (2005) postulates that journalists practice self-censorship by ignoring some stories that may go against the editorial policy of the organisation and hurt the companies that fund them. In this case if there are stories on social media that may hurt their advertisers or funders the newspapers might ignore them and deem them as not newsworthy.

4.7Funding Mechanism for the Newsday

NewsDay is co- funded by United States of America based organisation, the Media Development Loan Fund and Vusumuzi Investments.

The shareholdings of the Newsday are illustrated in the table below

Vusumuzi investments	61%
MDLF	39%

> *NewsDay* is published by *NewsDay* Publishers (Private) Limited and 100% of the shares of *NewsDay* Publishers (Private) Limited are held by Zimind Publishers (Private) Limited. One Hundred percent of shares of Zimind Publishers (Private) Limited are held by Alpha Media Holdings (Private) Limited. Alpha Media Holdings is 61% owned by Vusumuzi Investments (Private) Limited and 39% owned by the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF). Vusumuzi Investments is a 100% Zimbabwean owned company." (http://www.newsday.co.zw/article/2011-09-05-newsday-in-full-compliance-with-zimbabwean-laws;2011)

This means that *NewsDay* is funded by a Zimbabwean based company and adheres to the country's indigenisation law which stipulates that major shareholders should be from within the country. The question of the funding mechanism of the organisation comes into play as "he who pays the piper dictates the tune". The injection of money by some people into the organisation can be questioned as well. The patterns of ownership of the organisation might pose an argument over whether it has influence over the content that is published. However like any profit making media entity, Newsday to a greater extent rely also on advertising revenue and hardcopy sales to a lesser extent. Herman and Chomsky (2002) in their propaganda model outline how advertising is the second filter that affects the operations of the media firm and determines whether a company can survive and sustain itself in a market that is by cut throat competition for advertisers. Most companies go through greater lengths to please advertisers to the extent that they turn a blind eye to the wrong doings of the company that will be funding them hence this has a negative impact on the credibility of the stories that are published as the statement says "do not bite the hand that feeds you.

4.8 Links with other organisations

Newsday has cordial relations with the oppositional party particularly MDC-T and this has led to the newspaper being biased towards the political party. They tend to portray them as victims of political onslaughts by Zanu PF. There are times when the organisation relies on business organisations and sources seeing that this will lead to the organisation being one sided as they end up being biased towards those that fund them. It is public knowledge that *Newsday* has had bad relations with the state owned press which often results in them rejoicing when one organisation falls under demise. *Newsday's* Facebook page is heavily influenced by AMHs links with other organisations in terms of content and this leads to the notion that the page may be used to further express discontent against the government, which is what Managanga (2012) terms as an attack of government officials without logical

arguments .The assertion that *Newsday* gets news from social media cannot be dismissed seeing that most of the political stories that are got from social media tend to negatively portray politicians.

4.9 News sources

Reporters at the work hand in glove with court officials and sometimes the politicians so as to get stories that can be diarised. With the advent of social media journalists now use them as a source of information together with citizens that post information on various social sites.

4.10 About the *Southern Eye*
4.10.1 Work Roles

Chairman

As above stated the chairman is Trevor Ncube as he is the owner of the media house that *Southern Eye* falls under. The issue of ownership has a major influence over the content that is published by the newspaper. What the owner wants is what the owner gets.

Editorial

The editorial department comprises of journalists who write stories for the newspaper. It is the section that is expected to write supplements. The chief sub editor is the one that has major decisions to make. He is the one that decides which stories get published. The editorial section is responsible for writing stories categorised according to arts and entertainment, courts, politics, *Southern Eye* cares, supplements. This section comprises the editor, assistant, group associate, deputy chief sub, features and supplements, chief sub, sports, business and other editors as well as reporters.

Marketing and advertising

This department increases the bulk of the company's revenue. This department liaises with

potential advertisers to ensure they place advertisements in the newspaper. Since the newspaper is now an online publication all advertisements are now found online with frequent slots that change screening various companies that advertise online. Usually the organisations that advertise with the newspaper are usually not attacked by the newspaper agencies because they tend to benefit adverts from them. The fact that the main objective of the company is to create a discussion with the people makes it possible for people in this department to market their paper and make sure that the paper is known across the country by both the locals and companies that will in turn place adverts in their paper. It then becomes a disadvantage when the newspaper is not well marketed because it will not attract readers let alone companies that in turn place an advert with the paper hence most newspapers shutting down due to the failure of this department.

Production

This department is responsible for the design and layout of the newspaper. The paper has to be user friendly and people should be competent to be able to operate the newspaper and get to read their stories easily.

Accounts

This department is responsible for all the financial transactions in the company it disburses funds towards the procurement of resources for the day-to-day operations of the company.

Advertising

The department always gets bookings from advertisers. And players in the business circles prefer using *Southern Eye* because of diversity of advertisements and this helps to make business viable and to reach everyone. A wide advertising platform in the form of all the newspapers it publishes. The newspaper offers a choice of display and classifieds advertising.

Display advertisements range from a small corner to a full page in either colour or black and white. The classifieds are usually black and white but colour ones can be provided at an extra cost even on the internet. This department generates more revenue of about 65 percent for the company. In moving with the information age, the department also has online advertisements, which also generates money for the organisation.

Marketing

Kottler(2000) states that marketing is a social and managerial process by which organisations satisfy the needs and wants of consumers through exchanging goods, services and materials of value. That is when companies determine what products or services may be useful and of interest to customers and the strategy to use in sales communication. Munn marketing, a subsidiary of Alpha Media Holdings and also *Southern Eye* made the organization's product that is the newspaper known and subsequently increasing sales. This is achieved through sourcing adverts which is the company's main source of revenue, looking for more subscribers through approaching different organisations/ institutions like banks, schools, government offices and individuals.

4.11 Core Values

To be a listening media organisation that deals with and reflects the issues that most concern those we serve.

To help Zimbabweans to talk to each other without fear or favour and through robust engagement help ensure a tolerant society by encouraging the celebration of our diversity.

In view of the core values, they sound problematic as it is not clear as well and cannot be established what they mean when they will reflect issues of those that they "serve "the question becomes who do they serve is it the public, the owners or political parties?

4.12 *Southern Eye's* News Focus

The news contains political, business, sports, gender, health, arts, entertainment as well as news analysis. Their objective of not being biased is questionable .They do not demarcate a line or an extent to which they go on being biased. These questions will however be addressed in the findings of the research. Herman and Chomsky (1988) note that the mass media "serve to mobilize support for the special interests that dominate the state and private activity. Thus the study seeks to establish the extent to which this assertion is true in light of the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye.*

4.13 Organisations Core Business

The core business of the *Southern Eye* is too also newspaper publishing and commercial printing just like the *Newsday*. Before the hardcopy of the *Southern Eye* was shut down its offices were in Bulawayo but now that it is now an online publication it can be found on the internet making it global.

4.14 Funding Mechanism

The funding mechanism is the backbone of any organization. According to Picard (1989) funding mechanism is the most determining factor of the editorial policy of any media organization. *Southern Eye's* funding mechanism is dependent on online subscriptions made by companies or advertising that is done online. Unlike other media organizations such as the state owned *Herald*, *Chronicle, Sunday News* among others *Southern Eye* does not enjoy government funds or any external funds from other organisations or nongovernmental organizations.

However, the reliability of *Southern Eye* on advertisements compromises the content as the paper cannot report negatively about the organisations that advertise with the paper. Sinclair (1987) argues that advertisers have direct influence on the content of the media by giving their business to those which provides them with ideological compatibility and favourable editorial treatments. This is also observed by Mayer (1968) who asserts that the media can become a faithful and harmless watchdog which can compromise the interests of the public to satisfy the interests of the advertisers. He argues that because of the superior need for money to stay in business, media institutions have a tendency to protect their advertisers from public scrutiny and criticism.

Southern Eye's wide and intensive news coverage makes the paper reach a wide and a variety of targeted and untargeted audience in turn generating funds through accessing advertisements from big organizations like OK Supermarket, Econet, Telecel, Net One, Delta beverages and also political parties such as MDC, ZANU PF which used to regularly get advertising space.

Bagdkian (1983:98) noted that, "advertisers are concerned and interested in the mass media that attract consumers and communicate content that is amenable to consumption." *Southern Eye's* wide coverage and big readership base has linked the organization with big companies

that regularly advertises with the newspaper and leading to the sustainability of the newspaper on advertisements in terms of funding.

However, although the paper might be self-reliant, being free from political interference, the fact that it is funded by advertisers compromises its objectivity. As argued by Curran and Gurevitch (1978), the media depends on advertisers for survival. Thus advertisers are the media licensing authority. This therefore makes the media biased towards certain organisations and individuals as they try to avoid biting the fingers that feeds them.

4.15 Organisations goal

Like any other businesses, media houses are profit motivated institutions, thus the major goal of the organisation is to make profit. The profit or the 'bottom line' is brought to the organisation by major departments which are the editorial and marketing. The editorial team is responsible for making the final product that will be published on their website. Producing news that sale the paper is one of the key objectives for this department for the organisation to achieve its goal which is profit making.

The marketing department is responsible for making the product known to the market. In the case of AMH, Munn marketing who are the distributors of the company's four newspapers also plays an equally pivotal role for the organisation to achieve its goals. They make the products known to the public, hence increasing the number of readership.

The organisation's goal of making profit is mainly achieved through advertising. It is also the role of these two departments (editorial and marketing) to bring more advertisers to the paper. The editorial team can only achieve this by producing news that appeal to the public so that the paper gets a good size of readership because advertisers prefer using the channels of communication that reaches out to a multitude of people (who happens to be their target). The marketing department is also responsible for persuading corporate entities and advertising agents to place their advertisements in the newspaper.

With the competitive nature of the print media in Zimbabwe, it is the organisation's goal to thrive for Excellency and become one of the most popular and biggest media houses in the country.

The two departments work together in the survival of the organization as they work to beat deadlines. The editorial team is responsible for the making of news, hence the goal is to write newsworthy stories in time and submit them to desk editors so that they get edited and approved by the editor before passing on to the subeditor to be aligned on the pages. Whilst on the other hand the marketing department gathers the cash cow of the organization thus the advertisements to the sub editor in time for designing and the volume of advertisements determines how many stories are to be used on the internet page.

The information and technology department (IT) also play a big role as it deals with the network and ensures that the internet is readily available to the editorial every minute.

4.16 Links with other organisations

As a public organisation AMH is connected with all sections of the society especially the newspaper division since it communicates with various publics through its news publications. It is among the biggest and well-known media houses in Southern Africa.

Since both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* are daily newspapers with the later currently being the widely distributed newspaper in the southern part of Zimbabwe, people prefer to turn to the paper to cater for their diverse communication needs ranging from advertising, publicity, printing, publishing to circulation.

Southern Eye among other AMH publications such as *Newsday* played a major role in covering the Presidential elections that were held in 2013. Giving the nation news on the ground and keeping them updated. Newspapers are not only profit making capitalist enterprises but also get involved in politics, having links with some political organisations or politicians. Politics is one of the factors which affect all facets of life be it religious, economic or social. The need to inform people about the politics of the day takes centre stage in all the news items. Like any other media organisations in the country, *Southern Eye* is also more or less of a political battlefield.

There is also a strong link between *Southern Eye* and other AMH publications such as *Newsday, The Standard,* and *The Zimbabwe Independent* whose editorial policies are the same. The organisation shares stories with other publications within AMH. *Southern Eye* can also shop stories and pictures from news organizations like Reuters, Agency France Press

(AFP), South Africa Press Association (SAPA), Associated Press (AP) and other foreign agencies like Bloomberg, through the Internet.

The paper also has a foreign news segment where they take international stories from media powerhouses like CNN, Reuters and AFP.

4.17 Conclusion

This chapter comprised of the political economy of *The Southern Eye* and the *Newsday* which has been termed by Moscow (2009) as the study of forces that impact on production, distribution and consumption of resources. The researcher noted that the ownership and control patterns of an organisation affect the content that has been established. The fact that Trevor Ncube is an anti Zanu Pf member and is the owner of the two newspaper means that he is able to manipulate the kind of articles that his newspaper published and also the funding mechanism of the companies would mean that the journalists won't write stories that go against those that fund them.

Chapter 5: Findings and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

Against the research objectives highlighted in Chapter One, this chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study. The gathered data is discussed in comparison to the objectives of the study aimed at drawing a conclusion. Charts, tables and graphs will be used in this chapter as aids for translating complex statistical data into a form which can easily be grasped. The use of diagrams will also make it easy for conclusions to be made.

5.2 How Social media is being used by journalists

The research is done in the context of the proliferation of ICTS in the country, seeking to find out how journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* use social media in newsgathering. This section explores how the two newspapers use Facebook, Instagram, Whatsapp and Twitter when sourcing for news online. Through analysis of content on the *NewsDay* and *Southern Eye's* Facebook and Twitter pages, the researcher noted that *NewsDay* uses these social media sites for various purposes, which have been summarized in the table below

Table 1.1 Uses of Facebook , Twitter, Instagram ,Whatsapp by the *NewsDay* **and** *Sourthen Eye*

Activity	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Whatsapp
Gathering news	✓	✓	✓	✓
Providing information	✓	✓	✓	✓
Engaging readers to debate on issues	✓	✓	✗	✓

Content analysis showed that both the *NewsDay and the Sourthen Eye* used social media to disseminate information. Facebook was used to reach audiences despite their differences as information sent out in this site was not specific to any particular people. Unlike the *NewsDay's* sister paper, *Zimbabwe Independent*, whose target audience is a niche market, the *NewsDay* through its posts on Facebook targeted anyone. This is in line with Dicken-Garcia (2008)'s view that the internet, unlike other forms of media, has no targeted audience or community as a primary audience and thus enables users to use the internet as per their interests to gratify their vast needs.

Twitter, on the other hand, was used to reach audiences such as journalists, politicians and ordinary readers who continue to grow interest in Twitter. Information provided by social media included news on politics, entertainment and social issues. A lot of stories that were sourced from twitter made headline news and the research found out that most stories that mainly came out of twitter were mostly political stories. This is shown by the tweets made by the Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Professor Jonathan Moyo when he was attacking the former RBZ governor Tito Mboweni.

More so the above "twitter" war made headline in the *NewsDay* showing that journalists are using the social media as a news gathering tool. Even some *NewsDay's* journalists like Richard Muponde admitted that they are using the social platform to gather their news.

I use Facebook to share information sometimes to look for story ideas that I can diarise. Also, because social media is the in-thing now, nothing is stopping us as journalists to take advantage. Social media is handy and encourages interactivity with the audience. Now that we can provide information to a mass audience that is united through the internet, it makes our job easier because we know we have a wider audience, said Muponde.

Furthermore, Nduduzo Tshuma, another journalist, said he was excited with how the social media has changed the way news is being shared.

Recently before social media was introduced we used the traditional way of looking for news whereby a journalist would go out and look for news hence this was time consuming but nowadays with the help of the various social platforms we can now get news in our office, said Tshuma

Another editor even reinforced on this issue on how the social media has assisted journalists

in news gathering:

In as much as most of you people would argue that the social media has promoted desktop journalism, we should also consider that it has become handy for our journalist because at times they were failing to meet the deadlines but now it has improved, said the Editor.

According to the various interviews that were done with journalists at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* the findings were that both the various platforms that are available have helped the two media houses in a huge way when gathering news. This is shown through the use of add-on reporting by citizens, where they provide information, pictures and videos that are added on to a story written by a journalist. Here, citizens' views become a major part of storytelling. Content analysis revealed that there was interactivity which often was a build-up to crowd sourcing information so as to write a comprehensive story that would appear in the newspaper on the following day. Journalists were asked if sourcing for news from social media benefited them and which various platforms they use when gathering news. The pie chart below provides a breakdown in terms of percentages of the use of various social sites by the both newspapers.

Fig 1.1 shows the pie chart provides a breakdown of the various social media platforms that the Newsday uses when sourcing for news online.
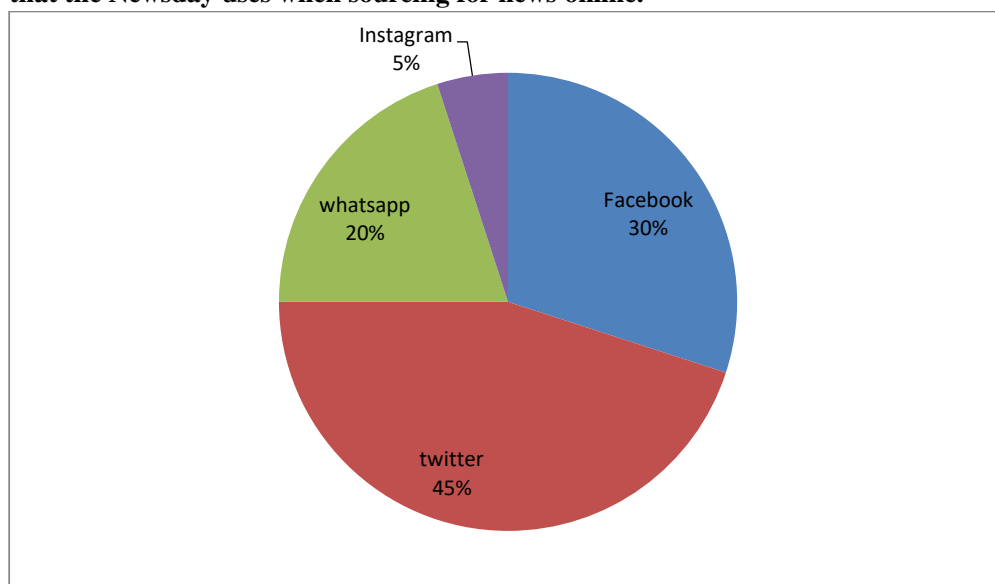
The pie chat above shows a break down in terms of percentages of the various social media platforms that are used by the *Newsday* when online sourcing. According to the research that was carried the results showed that the most social media site that was used when online sourcing was Twitter which can be witnessed by the several news articles that headlined the paper from the period of January 2015 to September 2015. The pie chart also showed that the second social site that was mostly used by the journalists at the *Newsday* were Facebook followed my Whatsapp and lastly Instagram as they also contributed in the gathering up news that made the paper.

The below bar graph will also highlight the various social media platforms that the *Southern Eye* uses when sourcing for news online and the preferred platforms that the journalists use when online networking.

Fig 1.2Usage of social media platforms by the Southern eye

Various social media platforms
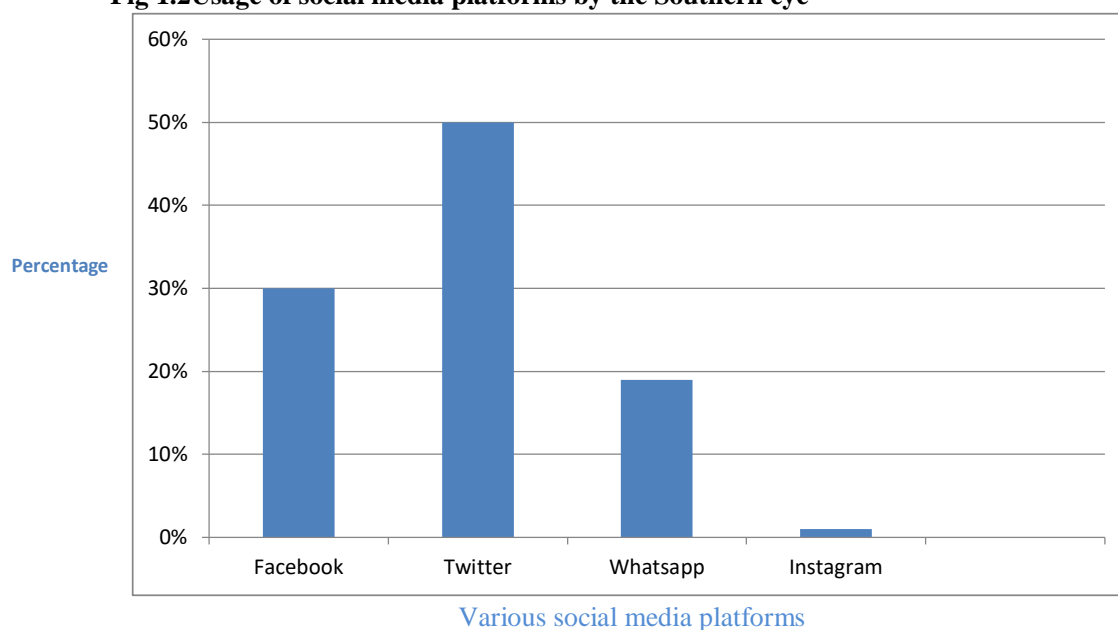
In terms of using social media to crowd source information, during the interviews that were carried with *Newsday* photographer Aaron Ufumeli said the *Newsday's* move to use social media to compile information from citizen journalists complemented photojournalism.

Social media is important because I can post pictures and readers can click and save pictures they have enjoyed thus keeping a long lasting memory and paperless technology unlike in the print newspaper where photos will have to be cut out. Besides, a single photograph tells a thousand words. said Ufumeli

He even went on to highlight on the fact that social media has greatly assisted photo journalists in the sense that they cannot be everywhere at the same time to capture those "juicy images" but people will be there and they are the ones who capture those images for us and we get them through the social media platform.

Silas Nkala, a court reporter at the *Southern Eye* said Twitter was essential as it allowed for open -source reporting. He said:

The digital world has changed the media's lifestyle. Now when we are online, we can seek comments from political, economic and other experts. Twitter is usually the platform for this because it has more experts than people seeking to create relationships. On Facebook readers who have come across a newsworthy incident often inbox to us as journalists so that we can make a follow up .

The researcher found out that when gathering news the use of add on reporting by citizens comes into play as they provide information, pictures and videos that are added on to a story written by a journalist thus citizens' views become a major part of storytelling. Content analysis revealed that there was interactivity which often was a build-up to crowd sourcing information so as to write a comprehensive story that would appear in the newspaper on the following day. Journalists were asked if sourcing for news from social media benefited them and which various platforms they use when gathering news. The above assertion about citizens being a source for information when gathering news links with the social construction of technology that asserts that the people nowadays are the ones that construct technology that better suit their needs. The technology that they construct can do a lot of things at the same time hence encouraging participation in between the audience and journalists.

The technology that is being used is now meant to suit the requirements of the users hence the introduction of social media that helps journalists as a source and also can be used by the public for various purpose which includes sometimes sharing stories that journalists can follow up on.

Senior reporter at the *Southern Eye* Nkala said experts were mostly talked to via their direct messaging or their inbox so as to avoid disclosure of information to competitors such as the *Daily News, the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation* and *Zimpaper*s, who are also on this

social network.Content analysis also showed that journalists at the *Newsday and Southern Eye* use social networks to source for news online itself as a newspaper and to also publicise its parent company AMH. This is shown through its constant reminder of audiences to follow the newspaper and read its website and also the use of Facebook and Twitter to access other newspapers within the parent company.

According to Atton (2002), alternative media has been organised primarily to steer debate, raise discussions and to enable wider social participation in the creation, production, and dissemination of content than is possible in the mass media

5.2 Impact of the social networking sites on journalism as a profession
Amongst all journalists and editors that were interviewed the general agreement was that in all the two organisations under study they enjoyed the full use of social media as a source of newsgathering. The Interviewees ascertained the fact that social media has benefited them in a great way and have changed how newsrooms work. Social networking has had a notable impact on the journalistic profession as some now deem it as encouraging laziness within the journalism profession.

The respondents were of the opinion that social networking makes life easier as they can now get news from online sources especially political news which however encourage citizen journalism which sometimes helps journalists look for news. The respondents overwhelmingly agreed that social media together with citizen journalism has had the potential to provide multiple sources of information. Mainstream media in Zimbabwe largely rely on the executive, government officials, prominent business persons, leaders of large corporate bodies and other influential individuals as sources of information.

It was duly noted by the researcher that the impact of social media encouraged desktop journalism and has seen a slow decline on journalism as a profession. In an interview with one of the journalists, the journo clearly showed that social media has impacted both positively and negatively on journalism as a profession.

In as much as social media has helped us to gather news easily and quickly so to say, but we should also note that it has affected our profession as well, it has since promoted desktop journalism something that's against our journalistic ethics: said the journalist

More so some of the personnel interviewed also noted that social media has impacted positively on journalism in the sense that, the advent of social networks signifies a departure from the traditional way of gathering news (which often marginalised others) by giving a voice to the marginalised groups in society. They concurred that social networking sites had the capacity to increase feedback and interaction between the media and the audiences through its openness to anyone thereby enhancing the media's role in serving the interests of the public.

Veranda Langa a journalist at the *Southern Eye* said that social media has managed to have a great impact on their profession in that it has brought about laziness in journalists.

Various social media platforms have brought about desktop journalism which is more of encouraging passiveness within journalists because nowadays some stories can be got form social networks such as whatsapp and the story might be published in the paper besides the fact that sometimes the facts might not be correct, said Langa

Nevertheless in as much as social media has threatened journalism as a profession it also lacks the necessary authenticity.

The respondents acknowledged that through sourcing for news online citizen journalism facilitated more interpersonal communication, one to one and many to many rather than the top down communication which is typical of mainstream media in Zimbabwe. In the same light, Dahlgren (1996:70) observes that, "Information sharing going on in cyberspace tends to increasingly bypass the classical role of journalism. The hierarchical, top-down mass communication model of journalism is being challenged in this new media environment." Professional journalists in mainstream media, acknowledge that citizen journalism is taking root as an alternative branch of journalism. They also believe that citizen journalism has attributes that have a capacity to improve the journalism profession such as increased opportunities for feedback and interaction. The audience now has the power to participate and post what they want thus going hand in glove with the democratic participant theory that postulates that there is now multiplicity of different various platforms that can be used for sourcing or disseminating information. Under this theory the public can now take part in expressing their views through the social platforms that are present and also the theory has given the journalists power also to post what they want on social media without any stringent laws that govern them.

Ankur (2010) argues that social media suffers from lack of trustworthiness and believability, which is undermining the media's potential and purpose. He further on says that social media cannot be trusted and that journalists should stick to the traditional form of gathering news.

Social media has its advantages and its disadvantages but according to the interviews that were carried out the advantages seem to outweigh the latter as social media has been labeled the greatest source by many journalists.

5.3 The importance of Social media as a news making tool

The escalation of social media has enhanced the work of journalists in a profound manner, also bringing about the centrality of this phenomenon as an important news making tool. However, the centrality of the internet and new communication technologies as a news making tools has also been witnessed by the rampant uptake of new communication technologies that have enhanced journalists to access various social networking sites that include Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Instagram and has also seen this new sensation as an emancipating tool in news-making. More so this goes hand in hand with Mabweazara's study which asserts that journalists do behave differently when it comes to traditional media ethics as well as social media an aspect that has a direct effect on the traditional media ethics and values. Therefore from this research the researcher discovered that form the rapid increase of new communication technologies, journalists should deviate from the traditional way of new gatherings in order to accept or accommodate the new communication technologies which are now affecting journalism as a profession.

Nevertheless one of the journalists from the *Southern Eye* agreed that journalist should accommodate these new communication technologies but should also be careful with the stories they get from these social media platforms. He even praised these social media platforms as a tool for communication as it gave them the ability to gather certain crowds through this cyberspace to engage them in a debate so that they give their stories credibility for publication. .

The researcher further discovered that in the traditional way of gathering news there is the reporter source relationship but with the coming of the new communication technologies, it has since become a two way flow of communication which authorises the journalist to carry the story ahead even though it may be considered cynical. Furthermore Nqobani Ndlovu the

NewsDay editor in Bulawayo clearly pointed out that the use of social media as a source of news depends on the number of followers per platform say Facebook, thus the more followers the page has the more newsworthy the story would be. Hence the fact that there is more engagement with members of the public, this however endorses the story as newsworthy for public consumption as there is much engagement by readers. This is shown by the story published by the *NewsDay* titled "Jonathan Moyo fuels twitter war" published on June 28 2015 which was about Professor Jonathan Moyo lashing at Tito Mboweni calling him Uncle Tom and a charlatan, which had gone viral on one of the social platform

This story was written by Xolisani Ncube and Richard Chidza, they even gave credit to the social platform as a source for news. This shows how journalists react to the different stories posted on the social media platforms some take the stories thus threatening the traditional ethics and values.

More so scholars like Peters (2005) asserts that journalists should be careful when sourcing out information from the social media platforms for they are prone to get the wrong information. Nevertheless some scholars like Schudson (2000) states that the overreliance of the social platform by most journalists only promotes elite access to news, and social platforms cannot be relied on as a source for news. Thus, this can be summed up to say that those who do not have access to this platform may not add a voice, thus posing a threat to the bias information that is published on newspapers, although also crediting the use of social media as a source of news.

Mano (2005) asserts that the nature of news production in Zimbabwe has been characterised by the differentiated nature of politics. However the uses of communication technologies have further enhanced this culture in journalism, thus further eroding the values and ethics at concern. However even though there is an increase in the use or the communication technologies by private media another journalist interviewed Luyandohlobo Makwati acknowledged that journalists do not just take information they get on social media but they go an extra mile to confirm the stories.

VMCZ Executive Director Loughty Ncube stated that this rise in the usage of social media as a gathering tool has since posed a threat to the traditional norms and values of journalism.

Social media has been used by many people for various uses such as entertainment, rumour mongering and sensationalism and for newsrooms as a source for news. Social media is now vital in the journalism profession as some say it saves them time in this economic downfall that the country is currently facing. Ncube further more went on to suggest that there should be ways to regulate social media platforms to avoid false information being posted which will mislead the people. He further highlighted that publishing stories basing on the comments made by people was not ethical. He further suggested that there was need for regulatory measures to limit journalists from crossing the line.

The above stated theme can be linked with the theory of social media that postulates that social media has a lot of uses and has come as an advantage to most people in their day to day duties. The theory states that social media has many uses such as communicating and also looking for news. Kaplan and Haenlin (2010) further elaborate on the assertion that social media have become an essential modern method of communicating with one another.

5.4 Social Media as democratic tool

The use of social media as a source for news has enhanced democracy and liberation for reporters in many different ways. Various media platforms have boosted reporters to mingle with readers who tend to post their various opinions on social media platforms without being afraid of victimization. This has however in turn in a way helped journalists to come up story angles, and sometimes they are also dependant on stories that they get from the many opinions that are extracted from the members of the public. Like one journalist from the *Sourthen Eye* Winstone Antonio noted, that social media platforms has linked them to serious news makers such as the ruling party politicians, opposition parties, celebrity pastors, captain of industries, prominent business people and any other opinion leaders in society. He revealed that this has allowed them to follow these news makers from a bird's eye view, and whatever they post can be subject to being newsworthy.

From this perspective, the use of twitter hence following Prof Jonathan Moyo, the social media platform was deemed newsworthy due to the level of literacy he has. Therefore many journalists resorted to following him as what is evidenced by his various tweets where he attacked various political heads both local and international. A story that was published by *The Newsday* titled "**Jonathan Moyo fuels twitter wars**"on the 28th of June.

However, reporters acknowledged that although they rate the use of various social media platforms as emancipating they still believed that the traditions way for looking for news was the correct way of sourcing for news Thus, from this perspective, there was concern on the new phenomenon of citizen journalism. Another reporter from the *Newsday* articulated that citizen journalism has drowned the code of ethics for journalists as these people practising citizen journalism are not properly equipped in terms of academics and skill which are key to responsible journalism.

More so another interviewed personnel suggested that these social media platform have since been more of a public sphere, were by people would discuss about the order of the day without fear of victimisation. This has been the case because when joins these social platform he or she can use pseudo names thus giving that person the privacy and security needed. Hence the social media has become a democratic tool somehow. Even one of the journalist from the *Southern Eye* agreed that social media has become a democratic tool.

"It is through these platforms that we get to see people`s truest feelings because they will be using pseudo names so they know they are safe so yes somehow the rise in the usage of the social media platforms has promoted a little bit of democracy in terms or airing out views"

Another journalist the *Newsday* illustrated that diverting away from traditional means of news sourcing indeed provided democracy on the fact that the journalist had close ties with readers, but at the same it was tool that promoted laziness on the part of the journalist in their endeavour to access information that was credible for the consumption of audience, and not much research was done to ensure that a story had facts that were thorough, thus in a way eroding the journalism norms and values that seek to inform, educate the citizenry. However, the Programs Officer for VMCZ Faith Ndlovu said the use of social media as a source for news was liberating for journalists, although there was a need to regulate social media. She also stressed the need to look at the ways in which journalists accessed information freely from these social media platforms.

To some to be democratic means freedom hence in the above stated theme social media as a democratic tool means that the various platforms have brought democracy within the people.

With democracy the theory of the public sphere comes into play. It would be interesting to note that some scholars like Richards (2006) articulates that, an ideal public sphere brings about democracy. This goes without saying that it is through these social media platforms that most citizens are free to express how their selves be it socially, economically or politically without fear of being victimised.

With the birth of social media the some people can now use pseudo names and pretend to be someone else. An example is one character that caused turmoil in the country named Baba Jukwa who used to post information on Facebook about the ruling party that used to make major headline in newspapers. The advent of social media has given everyone both the journalist and the people freedom to speak freely just that what is stated in the democratic participant theory that gives power to the freedom of speech and expression. There are a number of social media platforms that the media can get news from just like what the theory pushes forth which is the lot of media space to various and diverse channels and sources of information.

5.5 Opportunities offered by social platforms that help media play its normative roles.
Based on the findings, it is essential to note that both the *NewsDay and the Southern eye* to a larger extent fulfils its normative expectations. This is so because in the process of providing information, it informs the public about the happenings of the day so that they can make informed decisions and also gathering the news online as it benefits them in a big way. Various posts have made it available for journalists to get stories that make the newspaper's headline. The table below shows how social media has offered vast opportunities in news gathering.

Table 1.2. Opportunities Offered by Facebook and Twitter, Whatsapp, Instagram

OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED BY FACEBOOK AND TWITTER	PROVIDING INFORMATION	BEING AN AGENT OF REPRESENTATION	BEING A WATCHDOG	TO PROMOTE PUBLIC DEBATE
Instant/fast	✓	✗	✓	✓
Interactive	✓	✓	✗	✗
On the go technology/ 24hrs	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decentralized/virtual	✓	✓	✓	✓

Less costly	✓	✓	✓	✓
Multimedia	✓	✓	✓	✗

From content analysis, the researcher realised that Facebook and Twitter, being instant and fast mediums of communication, have enabled *NewsDay* to adhere to the news values of immediacy, thus providing information as it happens. An example is the tweet of comments that were made by the Minister of higher and tertiary education Prof Jonathan Moyo that made headlines in various newspapers.

June 19, 2015 **Mboweni demands Moyo apology** *..FORMER South African Reserve Bank governor Tito Mboweni has demanded an apology from Information minister Jonathan Moyo after the Tsholotsho North MP called him an "Uncle Tom" and a "charlatan" during a heated argument on social media.*

The post is a clear indication that media as a fifth estate needs not wait for the following day to reach the audience. The post enhances *NewsDay'*s drive to be a leading news provider (AMH, 2011). In line with Siddiqui (2012), who in Chapter Two argues that social media's ability to disseminate news fast and instantly has helped journalists and organisations to break stories online, it is essential to note that social media fulfils its informative role by providing news to online readers instantly. The above post, which attracted 1941 comments and 21 shares, shows the attention which online readers have on posted content. On the go technology as referred to in Chapter Two, is a 24 hour service that has allowed unlimited access to information available anytime and anywhere. However, in contrast to Siddiqui's views, the researcher noted that Twitter was not used by *NewsDay* to break news instantly and fast, but rather to share already published information. This is why most of the posts had links to the website or were pictures of the front page stories of the newspaper.

Interviews done by the researcher showed that journalists at the publications believed that social media had benefited them a lot because they could now get news instantly in the comfort of their own homes, or offices which was fast and kept them informed as well. AMH *Southern Edition Editor in Chief* Vincent Kahiya said "Now we can get news faster because we now live in the digital era whereby information is at the tip of our fingertip because nowadays we can now they can get news from the internet as it happens".

Nduduzo Tshuma, a news reporter, said "The life of the newspaper has moved online and because virtual communities have been established online, communication is now via the

internet and occurs in real time" . *Sourthen eye* staffers said the multimedia aspect of social media assisted publication to disseminate information, mirror society and be a watchdog.

Mokwetsi said *NewsDay* used software programmes such as Storify to aid in newsgathering.

*"These programmes help us to curate stories. This way, social media helps us crowd source and get story ideas".*he said

Nduduzo Tshuma a journalist at the *NewsDay* said social media was effective as mobile phones were usually the last thing that people see before they sleep and the first thing they hold on to when they wake up. "Having internet broadband has brought significant changes to news dissemination. Twitter for example allows readers to share and retweet stories. This implies that stories will be read by many people"

 In an interview, Assistant Group online editor for the *Southern Eye* John Mokwetsi said various social networks such as Facebook ,Twitter, Instagram, whatsapp were essential as they helped the newspaper to expand its readership and represent previously disenfranchised groups and also help them in newsgathering. He said:

More people are on Facebook and Twitter especially the youths. Social media has given youths a platform to engage in dialogue. In the age of newspapers, they seemed uninterested but now they are the major stakeholders. Social media has a wider reach and because of this it drives traffic to our website as well, the newspaper has a readership of 20 000 a day whereas on Facebook we have 105 344 likes and 17 028followers on Twitter.

Furthermore, the opportunity of being instant and fast enabled both the *NewsDay* and *Southern Eye* to create conversations and debate, thus introducing interactivity. Social media has broken the conventions of traditional media by being an interactive sphere where readers become active rather than passive recipients, thus disregarding the model of the hypodermic needle theory which purported that media was a one way form of communication.

 NewsDay photojournalist Aaron Ufumeli said journalists were using social media for open - source reporting, added that interactivity in social media was allowing *NewsDay* to provide information which had been accrued through direct messaging and inboxes on Facebook and Twitter.

" We can talk to ministers via inbox and direct messaging. This has made our work easier. It is unlike conducting a telephone interview where sometimes you fail to talk to a source

because they refuse to give their phone numbers. You see on Facebook and Twitter usually, you can just send a message even when you are not friends or following each other. This is better."he said

The above sentiments showed that the rise of the media as the fifth estate had allowed news dissemination and news access patterns to change. As cited in Chapter Two the fifth estate has emerged as a result of the emergence of the internet and the use of social media. Here, a network of journalists and citizens journalists source and distribute information and develop a synergy with the fourth estate in this news ecology (Newman et al, 2010). The development comes in light of that social media allows journalists to source and disseminate information independently without political or editorial pressures. However, the study found that social media was not without its disadvantages.

Although helping to provide information, *NewsDay*'s social media pages hardly touched on important economic issues. Issues on the economy were hardly posted about, meaning readers were deprived of information that was essential for their security. Sparks (2000) argues that information provided by the media should be of public interest not just be interesting to the public. In addition, *NewsDay*, through its use of Facebook and Twitter to promote its parent company and itself, conforms to marginalisation of alternative views and gives the notion of giving less emphasis on public interest and more on profit and interests of owners and advertisers (Nyathi, 2012). *NewsDay* therefore fails to fully perform its normative expectations because of the need to increase its prestige and profit. The fact that most newspapers are profit oriented makes it difficult for them to perform its role seeing that most of the times some newspapers tend to put false headlines so as to make the paper sell.

5.6 Social networking sites as a source for information
The more prominent number of individuals who were interviewed reported that they have access to the net and make use of social media as a source of news and also the various media platforms that are available to them. Every one of the three quarter century (75%percent) of respondents pointed out that they depended on online networking sites for gathering information for their stories. The study uncovered that writers from the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* use social media as a source of news and that they are exceptionally mindful when checking online sources.

The need to deliberately confirm online sources continued to be prioritised in the vast majority of the meetings that were directed. In spite of the way that the emphasis in the

newsroom is to compose stories as fast as could be expected under the circumstances, respondents uncovered that nearby consideration still must be paid to guarantee that stories were right and exact. A journalist commented as follows

Most of the times information of perhaps stories that have been got from social media must be double checked so as to ascertain that they are well written and have the correct facts so that we publish the right information and not run the organisations name on the ground due to incredibility and the company will have a bad reputation:

Some reporters indicated that that they liked to use the traditional way of looking for news rather than base on online sourcing because through face to face interviews or via phone they could ask questions or get a clear picture or explanation on the things that they don't understand.. However columnists from both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* reported that they make utilization of different sites each day to get current world issues as one interviewee illustrated;

The web gives me background information similar to the case in the Arab revolutions , pictures and recordings were accessible on social sites, which permits me to evaluate what's more, compose dispassionately as opposed to take composed reports from the interpersonal organizations.

Table 1.3 data of respondents' who use social media when sourcing for news online

Method	Total respondents	Use of social media as a source	Never use social media when news gathering
Interview	20	20	0
Total percentage	100%	100%	0%

The results of the content analysis of the stories that were got from social media revealed that despite most journalists from the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* having to use social media platforms they also fell short of the social responsibility theory which is concerned with catering for the need of the public information wise. It is never wise to feed the public wrong information. The continued use of various social media platforms as a source of news makes it easier for journalists because it makes it easier for them to operate because the information

is easily available on the internet as is less time consuming. Begrav (2003) asserts that the continued use of social media as a source of news has made it easier for reporters to be everywhere at the same time seeing that some newspapers can report on various incidents even though they weren't there. A journalist from Zimbabwe can report on the happenings of the Bokoharam which took place in Nigeria yet they were not there but social media has made it easy to report on various incidents without the need of them being there.

The rise of citizen journalism has also had an impact on the reportage of news because everyone is now a journalist and some people can spread wrong information hence the need for journalists to be careful when adopting stories that come from social media. There are instances as previously stated that there will be happening in other countries just like the world cup or the Olympics journalists can report on that without any need of being there hence social media becomes a source of information seeing that one can report on the stories without that person having to be there.

5.7 Reliability of social media as a source of news

 Almost a quarter of the respondents expressed that online networking constituted a negative impact largely because of its lack of professionalism. Out of all the twenty journalists that were chosen to do the interviews and the two editors for the newspapers ten which was about 25% of the respondents felt that social networking encouraged laziness within journalism and caused a threat to convectional journalism due to   lack of professionalism and institutional frameworks such as ethics to guide the operations of citizen journalists. Two, which is eight point six percent (8.6%), of the respondents, were in between and one representing four point three percent (4.3%) felt social networking was a threat to formal journalism. Fifteen of the twenty interviwed (65%) interviewed felt social networking helped them in gathering news. Of those interviewed, four (17%) were in between and four (17%) felt citizen journalism is not a threat. The general feeling expressed by the respondents is that citizen journalism is a threat to formal journalism as it allows for participation by the audience. From the data in Table 4.1 below seventy seven percent (77%) of the respondents are of the view that citizen journalism is a threat to formal journalism. Ten percent (10%) of the respondents felt that online networking was not a threat to formal journalism. Thirteen percent (13%) of the respondents were in between as they gave credit to both forms of journalism.

Table 1.4. Using social media as a source is a threat to formal journalism

Method	Total Respondants	Social media is a threat	Social media is not a threat	In between
Interview(Face-to-Face)	20	6	11	3
Total	20	6	11	3

The research findings reveal that due to the birth of social media getting news is now easy as the world is now in the digital era .The introduction of social media has in a way helped journalists in Zimbabwe because they don't need to travel anymore or make any phone calls to go and look for news but all the information they need they can now get from the various platforms that have been brought about by the birth of social media and the access to ICTs that comprise of computers and cameras and also mobile phones. All journalists from the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* confirmed that that they had access to the internet as each and every journalists has his or her computer As a result the time a journalist has access to the internet is improving and may act as a springboard in using online content produced by citizen journalists as a source for information. Of the total number of interviewees, 85 percent (85%) said they used the internet on a daily basis in their field of study, 15 percent (15%) used the internet occasionally for work purposes. Use of the internet by interviewees is shown in table 4.3 below;

Table 1.5 data on use of internet by respondants

Use internet daily	Occasional use of internet
85%	15%
17 respondents	3 respondents

Overally all respondents met concurred that ICT's made their work much less demanding and enhanced the nature of their work by widening their sources of information.

The availability of social media has been a great advantage in this economic crisis because journalists do not have to travel anymore going to places because some of the information that they need is in their fingertips as they can now source information in the comfort of their offices. The researcher noted that about three quarters of the stories that were got from social media were indeed true and had managed to sell the paper. A very few stories have been hoaxes according to the editor of *Newday* in Bulawayo. The birth of social media has been welcomed by most media houses and they have managed to create a global village. Most of the respondents that were interviewed were around the demographic age of 25-40 years as they were the most with the knowledge on how to use social media when looking for stories hence one can say that they had a keen interest in technology. The age group has the motivation to try out new digital technologies .this however allows them to be well equipped and have enough knowledge on how to source for news online and also that the age can be used to have a disposable income that makes them accessible to various digital technologies such as computers and mobile phones that allow internet browsing and support the SNSs.

The fact that the two newspapers are privately owned newspapers make it difficult for the two papers to be objective seeing that the paper is set on pleasing the interests of the owner. The paper has been highly criticised for being the opposition's paper which is against its editorial policy. The findings also confirm the assumptions of the study which is the fact that the two newspapers resorted to using online media as a source of news because most of the stories that sold the paper within the time period of the research were got from social media platforms. The production of news at the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* was largely influenced by its news sources who are as a matter of fact its owners as they tend to publish their own ideologies that they want to perpetuate.

5.9 Conclusion

The chapter reveals the varied results that were obtained from the investigation showing us how social media is being used as a source of news and how it has benefited both the *Southern Eye* and *Newsday* in their day to day operations. The findings reveal that social media is indeed a hand tool for newsgathering. Various social media platforms have been used by reporters at both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* as a source and various other uses.

The use of social media as a source of news is slowly and gradually being adopted by many news organisations as there is a greater inclination to computerised media as social networking sites have become more influential in the sourcing and dissemination of information. Institutional journalists have come to embrace the use of the internet in the sourcing of information as the blogs offer more varied opinions when it comes to opinionated issues.

Chapter 6: Summary, Conclusions and recommendation

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sums up the study and gives suggestions in light of the findings and the data that has been analysed in the previous chapter. The study sought to find out if journalists use social media when newsgathering. The recommendations that have been stated in this chapter is in connection to the research problems that have been listed in chapter one together with the findings of the research. As stated above the recommendations that will be listed will also comprise of recommendations on the different social platforms and how sourcing for news has affected the way in which newsrooms work. This will be founded on what voluntary media bodies proposed amid interviews that were conducted with journalists.

6.2 Summary

The primary theme of the research questions was to figure out the different dynamics that were included when online networking. And how the two newsrooms use the various media platforms when looking for news. The first chapter of the study basically introduced the research on what it was going to be about. The chapter touched a bit on the history of social media and also the background of the two organisations. It went on to tackle the statement of the problem which was to investigate the dynamics that were involved in the use of social media as a source for news. The study was guided by the research questions that were crafted by the researcher together with the objectives that the study ought to have explored. The time limitation of the study was also stated which was January – September 2015 as the researcher believed that this was the time when the usage of social media was on its peak for the two organisations. The first chapter gave the complete overview of the research bringing into light how social media has helped journalists gather news. It went on to look at how the era of social media has been aided by the proliferation of the ICTs.

The second chapter looked at the literature that was written by different scholars on social media and newsgathering. Various themes were extracted from what the various scholars had to say about the use of social media as a news source. Both the scholars that were for and

against the title of the study were included so as to have an argument that could yield results on whether online networking is the way to go for journalists. Three theories were also used in the same chapter which were the social media theory, democratic participant theory and social construction of technology theory which aided the better understanding of the research question.

Chapter three talked about the various methodologies that were used to collect data and also the sampling method which was purposive sampling that saw the researcher purposively choosing journalists, editors and personnel from VMCZ to provide adequate information that would satisfy the requirements of the study. The data collection methods that were used were interviews and the methods that were used to analyse data were content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis meant that the researcher had to analyse each and every article published by the two newspapers that had come from social media. Chapter four comprised of the political economy of the organisation and the organisational analysis whereby the researcher had to analyse the ownership and funding patterns of the organisation and its impact on the organisation or of the content that was being produced by the media house. The researcher deduced that since AMH was owned by Trevor Ncube who is anti ZANU PF hence, the content that was published would be one sided and the other conclusion was that the funding mechanism of an organisation had an impact on what was published as the saying goes "he who pays the piper dictates the tune".

One of the major chapters of the study was chapter five as it had the findings of the study as the researcher found out that social media was used as a source of news by journalists at the *Sourthen Eye and Newsday*. The chapter sought to bring to light the ways in which reporters' source information from the various social media platforms and the authenticity of the information that has been sourced. The chapter also looked at the opinions that journalists have about social media and the impact that social media has had on their profession and also it comprises of what the executive director of VMCZ Loughty Dube had to say about the usage of social media as a tool for gathering news. All in all the study was therefore guided by various research questions so as to come up with an all-inclusive and a well attributed conclusion on the dynamics that are involved when sourcing for news.

6.3 Conclusions

The continued use of social media as a source for news by the mainstream media has been received with mixed feelings by journalists, editors and voluntary media organizations that mainly are involved in 'regulating' the operations that are conducted by the media. However, the major themes that they were identified by the researcher were the usage of social media as a source for news, the reliability of social media and the impact of social media on the journalism profession and also the ethics that are involved in using social media as a source for news. Also other themes that were discussed were the uptake of new communications by news organizations and social media and its challenges of democracy in Zimbabwe. These themes however were essential in establishing whether the practice of journalism has subverted the ethics involved in sourcing out information using social media. However, much debate was mainly on the fact that social media has encouraged desktop journalism and enhances laziness in journalists. Also some thoughts can be towards the fact that the reason why these newsrooms resort to online networking is because of the stiff laws that the government has put on various media houses that make it difficult for them to gather information hence making it difficult to operate.

On the greater part, the media bodies that were interviewed in the research were of the view that social media had made it easier to journalists to source for news and had democratized the news gathering process, easily made information readily available, and it was easier to reach these political figures unlike in traditional media. In this essence, they however expressed concern on the use of social media as source for news as sometimes the issues that were written on were merely blown out of proportion. Journalists who responded were of the view that the stories that they got were mainly from following the outspoken Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Jonathan Moyo on twitter. The researcher noted that the various social platforms that were used for news gathering impinged on media ethics. Online networking was therefore lamented because some of the information that journalists got from the social networks were false and could not be verified.

Other reporters from the *Southern Eye* acknowledged the fact that although they get other stories from various social media platforms some information that they got was biased and sometimes was a hoax. However, other journalists from the *Newsday* credited the use of

various social pages in particular twitter did not impinge on ethics such as being objectivity, bias and fairness. For the research to be completed the researcher would have done any justice by not stating the challenges that she faced during the course of the study. Journalists and editors are very busy people so the researcher had to constantly book appointments to interview the journalists and even through the use of telephone interviews seemed hopeless seeing that the telephones would go unanswered. The issue of journalists not being forthcoming to a student about whether they used social media was a bit of a challenge as some journalists treated her with suspicion but after their editor spoke to them they became more forthcoming and the researcher's worst fears were put to rest.

6.3 Recommendations to the *Newsday and Southern Eye*

The findings of the study have impelled the researcher to make the following recommendations to the two media houses in order to improve on the quality of the stories that they produce.

Both the *Newsday* and *Southern Eye* should implore a project that targets citizen journalism that blends in because both citizen journalism and the mainstream media need to make use of the numerous opportunities that the practice offers. An example are that both the two newspapers should consider mixing both the professional and citizen journalists under one roof. In these hard times that the country is facing the mainstream media outlets are stretched for resources which does not allow them to cover as many areas in the country and incorporating citizen journalism into their operations could help ease the burden.

The two mainstream media houses should try to stick to the traditional way of looking for news even in the hard times because some of the times the information that they get from social media is sometimes unreliable so hence the need to double or better yet triple check. The two newspapers need to invest more in ICTs in order to fully profit from the information that the internet brings to them. This recommendations comes after the researcher noted that social media is promoting laziness within journalists.

Social networking sites are better utilized when there is a link to authenticate the story for instance twitter gives an option of a link that sometimes carries a video clip that helps confirm whether the story is original or not. Case in point the demise of Muammar Gaddafi was conveyed with video clasp to verify the story which was being done.

6.4 Recommendations to VMCZ

In light of the expansion of online networking that has seen columnists use online networking as a hotspot for news, it is vital that media are wary about the way they source out data from these online networking stages. Due to the way that some media houses have resorted to searching for news from social media platforms I recommend publishing houses ought to come out with different training programs and workshops that will assist correspondents with getting information from these platforms. By so doing this will thus help them to conform to the conventional media ethics that will likewise be in line with social media.

In any case, I also recommend that voluntary media bodies that were utilized as a part of this study to encourage the programs at media associations in the country. It is difficult to ignore the revolution that has come with social media and one cannot deny that nowadays information is now accessible on the internet. Information is now on anyone's fingertips seeing that nowadays people have mobile phones that some use to extract and disseminate information. Because of this it is therefore fundamental that associations, for example, MISA and VMCZ to closely monitor the ethics of journalists. This should however be possible through the utilization of more research on the occurrences of reporting and social media.

6.5 Recommendations to the Ministry of Information and Publicity

It will likewise be advantageous for government, in this viewpoint The Ministry of Information and Publicity to investigate laws, for example, AIIPA that drive reporters into utilizing alternative sources thereby forcing them to end up publishing incorrect information . This has altogether seen the decay of morals. Reporters have a right to information.

6.6 Areas of further study

This research was based on social media as a hand tool for newsgathering, paying particular attention to Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp and Instagram. The study focused mainly on how the journalists use the different social media platforms for newsgathering and whether sourcing for news online has benefited journalists or not. Although the study has to a larger extent focused on how journalists use social media when gathering news further areas of

study can be done on the fact that sourcing for news online and sourcing for news the traditional way complement each other because they both get news from each other. A study on whether social media gets news from the hardcopy of newspaper or vice versa should be carried out. As a matter of fact due to the fact that gathering news from social media and the traditional way of looking for news is similar research should be done on the similarities between the two and also the differences between the reportage of mainstream media and reportage of articles on social media.

6.7 Conclusion

This chapter gave the conclusion of the research that was under study. The researcher gave recommendations that can possibly reduce the deteriorating state of media ethics because of social media. However, recommendations were also made to Ministry of Information and Publicity on the laws that prohibit journalists from accessing information from public state bodies. The research also articulated the matter at hand which is the fact that most journalists have indeed welcomed social media as a source of news and has made it easier for media houses to operate on their day to day duties. It has to a larger extent benefited journalists seeing that most of the stories that are published in the two papers, made huge headlines that in turn sold the paper.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 (a) The organogram for the *Newsday*
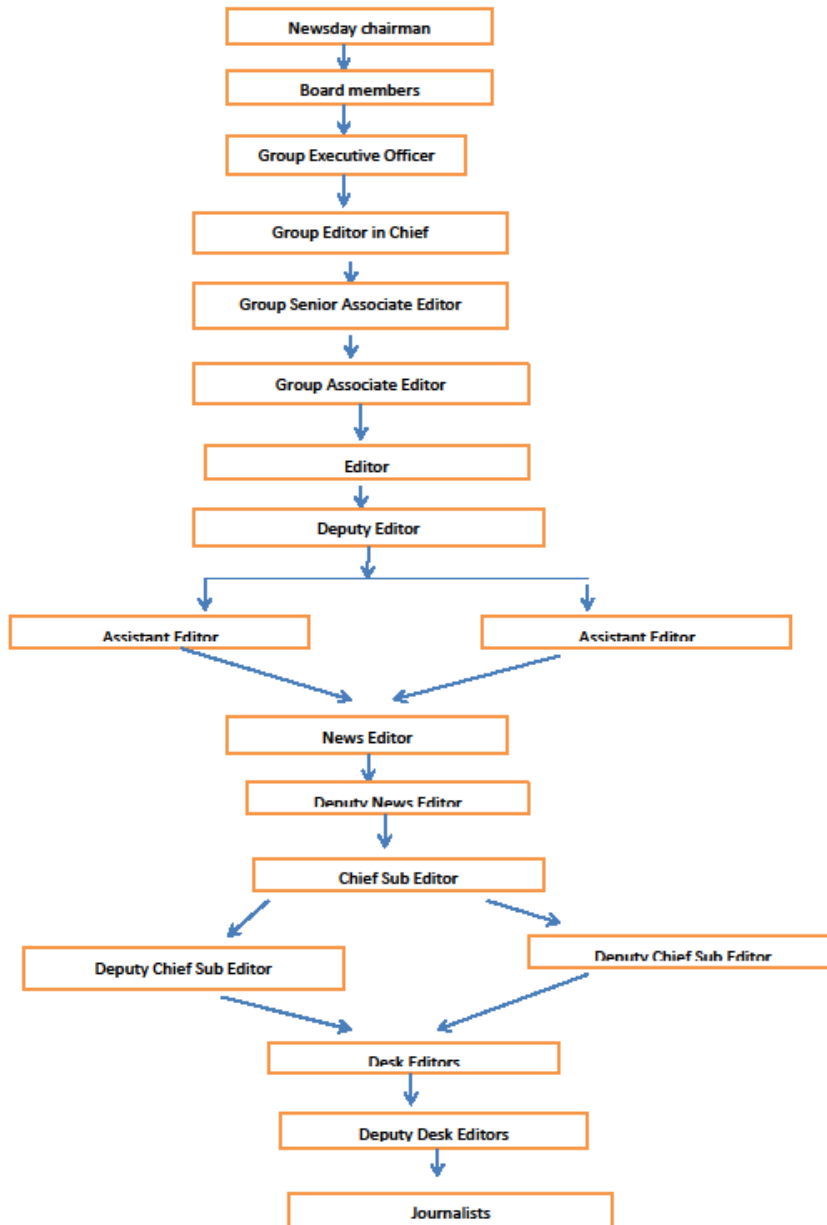
Appendix 1 (b) Organogram for the *Southern Eye*

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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│       Editor in Chief       │
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              ▼
  ┌─────────────────────────┐
  │         Editor          │
  └─────────────────────────┘
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              ▼
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   │      Deputy Editor      │
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    ┌─────────────────────────┐
    │      Chief Reporter     │
    └─────────────────────────┘
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              ▼
    ┌─────────────────────────┐
    │        Reporters        │
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Appendix 2 (a) - Interview Guide for *Newsday and Southern eye Journalists*

1. Is social media a hand tool for newsgathering?

2. How has social media helped you as a journalist when sourcing for news online?

3. What are the various social media platforms that are used when sourcing for news?

4. How has the coming in of social media benefited journalists when gathering news online?

5. Does online networking have an impact on the profession of journalists at the *Newsday* or *Southern Eye?*

6. What are the major challenges that you face in accessing social media?

7. What benefits are accrued through use of social media?

8. Does social media assist the newspaper to disseminate news?

9. Is social media filling the information gap left by traditional media?

10. What opportunities is social media presenting for traditional media?

11. How has the birth of citizen journalism affected the way in which news room work?

12. Are the same ethical principles guiding traditional media relevant online? Should we have the same ethical expectations of social media participants, who are not journalists, as we have of journalists?

Appendix 2 (b) Interview Guide for the editors at *Newsday* and the *Southern Eye*

1. How has sourcing for news online affected the way in which newsroom work?

2. What is the criteria used for choosing the stories that are newsworthy that are sourced from online platforms?

3 What type of stories is it that the newsroom gets from online media?

4. How reliable is the reportage of social networking sites?

5. How are social media enhancing the practice of journalism for media practitioners in their day to day news making practices?

6. How does the use of social media influence the nature, form and extent of story narratives published in the mainstream media?

7. How reliable are social media as a source for news?

8. What are the formalities that are conducted when using social media platforms?
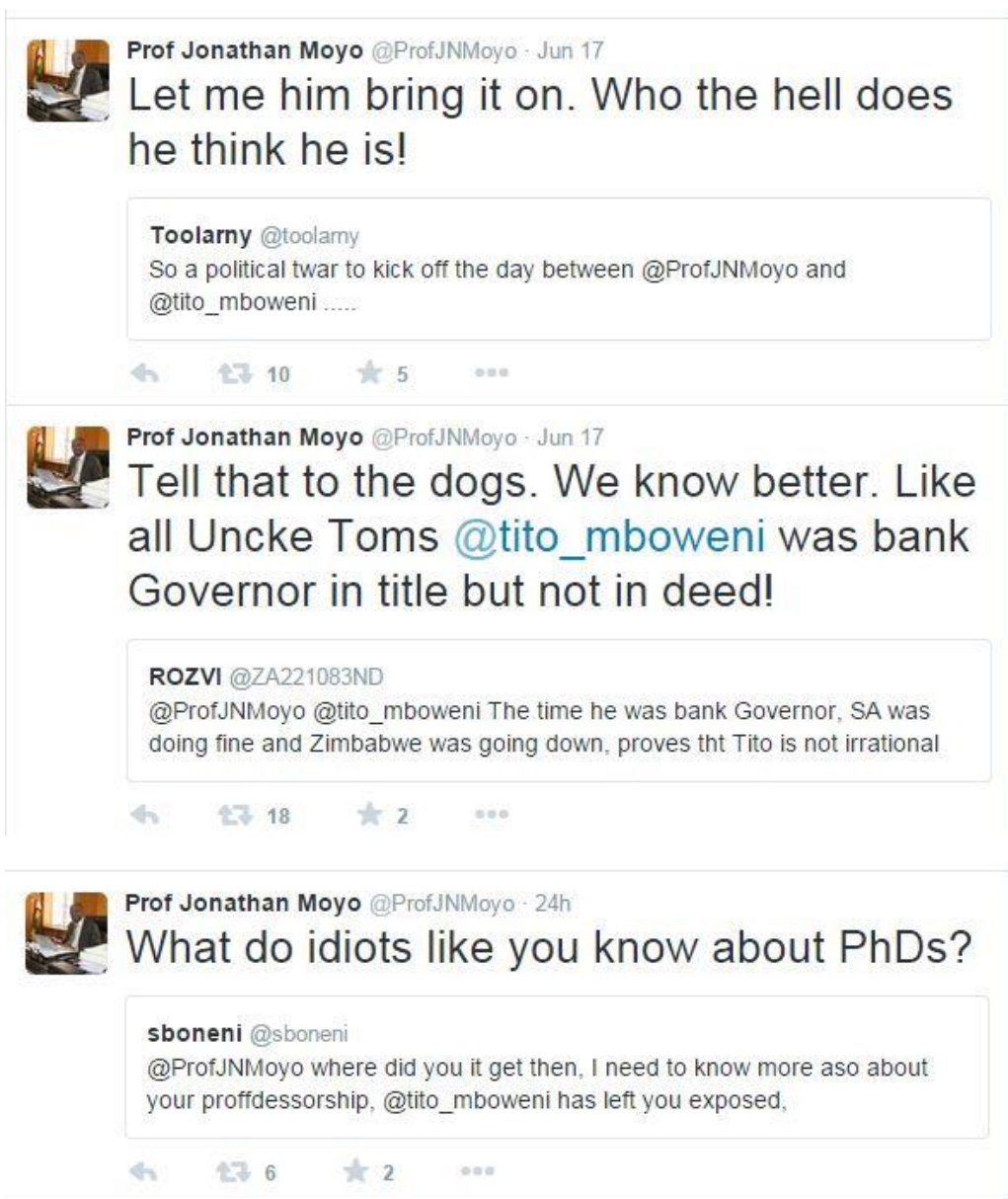
Appendix 2 (c) Interview Guide for the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe

1. What are your perceptions with the use of social media as a newsgathering tool?

2.How has it altered traditional journalism ethics?

3.What is the influence of social media on the journalism profession?

Appendix 3: Stories that were extracted from social media by the *Newsday* and *Sourthen Eye*

NEWSDAY

Prof Moyo attacks 'Mnangagwa successionists' on Twitter

May 28, 2015 in News
✉ ⋙Follow
inShare1

Information Minister, Jonathan Moyo has taken to microblogging site, Twitter to attack people he described as "shocking self-styled pro VP Mnangagwa successionists" whom he accused of "reproducing Gamatox epithets against erstwhile Cdes!"

By John Mokwetsi, Online Editor

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · 3h
Claims that @HeraldZimbabwe publishes anti-Zanu PF articles are idiotic & a gross abuse of journalists whose serve their country selflessly!

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · 3h
It's shocking self-styled pro VP Mnangagwa successionists are reproducing Gamatox epithets against erstwhile Cdes!
newsday.co.zw/2015/05/28/moy …

↩ ⟲4 ★4 +👤 ••• View summary

Moyo's tirade on social media was provoked by a story published by NewsDay on Thursday, where Goodson Nguni, the leader of the Zanu PF-aligned Federation of Non-governmental Organisations, made a string of allegations against Moyo. Nguni's allegations include accusations that the former Zanu PF critic had an elaborate plan to tarnish the image of President Robert Mugabe and his deputies.
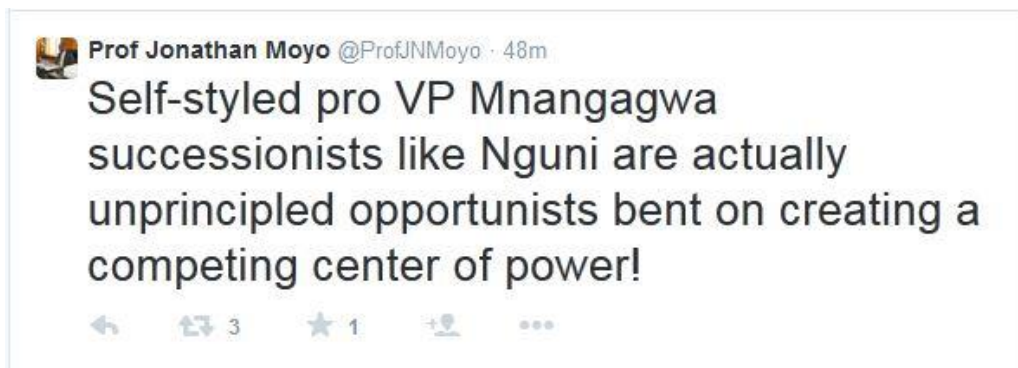
He was was reacting to a story in The Herald on Wednesday claiming he leaked to NewsDay issues discussed at last week's Zanu PF politburo meeting.
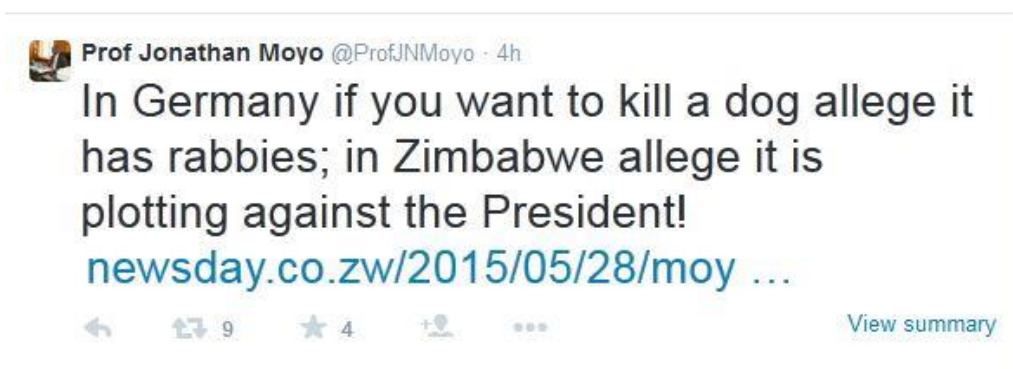
This was after the paper published a story on Monday, where Zanu PF insiders alleged Mugabe had disclosed that President Robert Mugabe owed fired Mashonaland East provincial chairperson, Ray Kaukonde $30 million.

Moyo, who has been accused of using State media to fight succession and factional wars that are seemingly causing discontent within the ruling Zanu PF, said in one of the tweets: "Claims that @HeraldZimbabwe publishes anti-Zanu PF articles are idiotic and a gross abuse of journalists whose serve their country selflessly!"

Muvhango actor Vho-Mushasha has died

Legendary Muvhango actor Sammy Moeti, better known as Vho-Mushasha has sadly passed on.

The Citizen

According to Muvhango's Facebook page, the actor passed on Monday night after a long illness.

Moeti, who played the character of Vho-Mushasha, was known as the healer and sangoma to the people of Thathe and the royal Mukwevho family on the show.

"Its with great sadness that we announce the passing of Mr Sammy Moeti who used to play Vho-Mushasha. A man who brought us great entertainment and amusement. He passed on last night after a long illness. Our most sincere condolences go out to his family. May your soul rest in peace," the show announced on Facebook.

Messages of condolences have been pouring in for the late actor.

No funeral and memorial services arrangements have been announced at this point in time

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Podcast

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Recently married Ba Shupi exposed by love interest on Whatsapp

Aug 13, 2015

HARARE – Recently married musician Baba Shupi (real name Peace Ndlovu) is counting the cost of his escapades on messaging platform Whatsapp after screenshots were leaked of him apparently hitting on a girl identified as Nickie.

Love birds . .. Ba Shupi and wife Wadzi

Baba Shupi is best known for the hit song "Godo" performed with rapper Desmond 'Stunner' Chideme.

Although the dreadlocked musician married his manager Wadzanai Gumbo last year in December, this did not stop him from hitting on Nickie and demanding to see some sexy pictures from her.

The girl asked the musician to convince her that it was really him on the other end of the phone to which Baba Shupi obliged by texting his name and sending a selfie.

Unconvinced the girl asked Baba Shupi to send another selfie, this time sticking his tongue out pointing to the sky. The musician gullibly agreed to this.
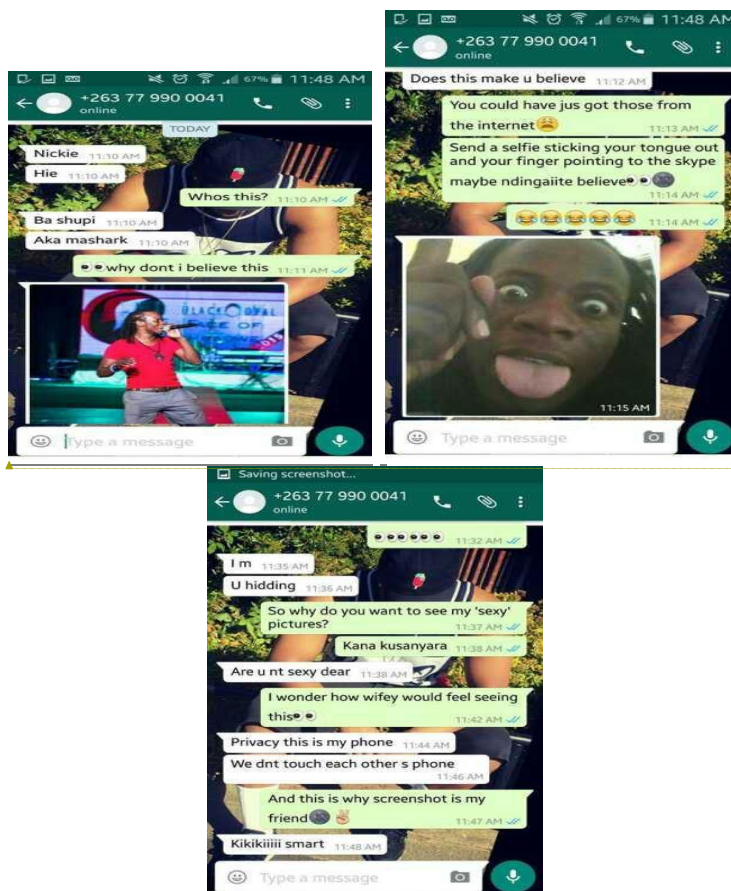
Armed with this evidence the girl then berated Baba Shupi for asking for her sexy pictures when he was recently married.

"I wonder how wifey would feel about this she asked?

"Privacy this is my phone, We don't touch each others phone," Baba Shupi replied.

Nickie then ends the chat by boasting "And this is why screenshot is my friend."

Below is how the conversation between the two unfolded.