Critical reflections on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical conversational rhizome on twitter. A case study of Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets.

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Abstract

The researcher focused on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical rhizome on twitter. The study explored the deliberations that were taking place on Jonathan Moyo's twitter page @ProJNMoyo's selected tweets. The researcher used the public sphere theory with close reference to the virtual public sphere, the network society theory as well as the deliberative democracy theory. The theories helped the researcher by setting the aggregates on how to give evaluations and judgements to the selected tweets in order for her to come up with well informed and guided findings. The researcher used qualitative research and also made use of purposive sampling as well as convenience sampling. The research also analysed data using critical discourse analysis as well as hermeneutics of interpretation. The data was then presented in thematic and narrative approaches .The study revealed that twitter is rhizomatic and that it is through its rhizomatic nature that democratic deliberations are made possible .The rhizomatic nature of twitter also showed that twitter deliberations are not just clickitivism .The study also revealed that twitter usage in Zimbabwe is mainly centralised to those who are financially stable.

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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The study is influenced by the fact that social networking sites have become undeniably popular with a lot of researches concluding that social media might positively affect citizens' participation in civic and political life. It is in the backdrop of these conclusions that this research investigates how Twitter as a social media platform promotes democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe. The study will also look at how twitter is internally democratic and how it interfaces with other forms of media. This chapter gives the background of the research highlighting its key areas of concern which include the research problem as well as its objectives.

1.2 Background of study

The developments in the Information Communication Technology (ICT), sector have seen a tremendous engagement of citizens to social media platforms. Social media has by and large fostered dialogue about its role as a tool for political mobilisation towards democracy. Morozov (2011) argues that political pundits, academics and journalists have embraced social media as an undeniable force for good, claiming that democracy is just a tweet away.

It has been contended that the emergency of the internet has enlightened the communication arena by giving the public an opportunity to look for information, distribute information to a large audience because of the decentralised manner of the internet which permits many-many communication (Best and Wade 2009; Shirky 2011)

The increasing adoption internet built new technologies has ushered in new spaces for civil engagement and has enlarged the public sphere, (Bassert 2003). He further argues that the adoption new media technologies has created a public sphere that is less academic, inclusive and less elitist. The rapid growth of Twitter as postulated by Liu and Weber (2014), has made it become one of the most widely adopted platforms for online communication. Besides using it for relationship formation and maintenance, many people also regularly engage in discussions about controversial issues. Liu and Weber (2014) concur that this increasing

adoption of Twitter for online deliberation inevitably creates a perfect environment for open and unrestricted conversations. The technological transformation has enabled individuals around the world to hold new dimensions of communication networking in order to air their intrests, values and advance their projects (Cowhey and Aronson 2009).

Twitter was launched in 2006 and has become a popular social networking and microblogging site. Users communicate via "Tweets" which are short posts limited to 140 characters, also allowing for embedded media links. Twitter users "Twimbos", as they are affectionately known in Zimbabwe's tweeter community, can "follow" or basically subscribe to the updates of other users, some of which include conventional media sources. The use of conventional media sources, embedded media links show the intertextuality of twitter. Tweets can be categorized using "hashtags" which users post by topic or type.

The internet and surrounding digital technologies provide a public space, they do not necessarily provide a public sphere, Papacharissi (2002). He adds that greater access to information, enabled by online media, does not directly lead to increases in political participation, or greater civic engagement, or trust in political process. This is the thrust of this study as it seeks to understand the extent to which twitter deliberations are democratic.

Among the different types of social media, the social networking site (SNS),twitter is considered unique because it allows users to display a network of connections openly (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Unlike (SNS)s that emphasize privacy controls Papacharissi (2002) argues that twitter users have public profiles that do not require bidirectional confirmation of connections. Which means unlike on online social networking sites like Facebook, the relationship of following and being followed requires no reciprocation. A user can follow any other user, and the user being followed is not indebted to follow back.

1.3 Problem statement

Against the above background, the problem statement is the extent to which twitter allows democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe.

1.4 Research objectives

Harris (2003) argues that research objectives are the ones that set the focus and purpose of the research with the fundamental questions that will be addressed. The researcher understands that research objectives serve to narrow the problem statement and will be linked to the study's findings. Research objectives will be useful as they clearly indicate specific results that will be achieved in the study's overall findings. This research seeks to:

- identify how twitter is configured to allow democratic conversations /debates
- evaluate the effectiveness of twitter as a tool for democratic conversations and its contribution to national democracy
- recommend improvements that twitter can employ to increase its democratic effectiveness

1.5 Main Research question

What is twitters contribution towards democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe?

1.5.1 Sub research questions

- How does information diffuse via twitter?
- How are people connected on twitter?
- What are the technical difficulties associated with using twitter as compared to other social networking sites.?

1.6 Research assumptions

Research assumptions are statements by the researcher that certain elements of the research are understood to be true, these are so basic that without them the research problem would not have existed Jenkins (1996), Leedy and Ormrod (2010). The study assumes that the researcher will access all her archival documents without difficulties and that these archives will not have been destroyed, thus deleting. The researcher assumes that the sample to be chosen will be representative of the population of study. For the purpose of this study, the researcher assumes

that Jonathan Moyo's tweets will be a clear representative of the twitter community in Zimbabwe.

1.7 Significance of study

The study seeks to add to the body of existing literature on the use of twitter as a platform that offers democratic deliberation. The research also seeks to probe the assertion that the internet has provided an alternative public sphere to Zimbabweans, a country within which the government has maintained a tight grip on freedoms of expression (Mphofu 2013;Moyo 2008).The study is important because twitter is a social media platform that has not received much scholarly attention in the case of Zimbabwe, much attention has justifiably been given to facebook and whatsapp. Twitter has managed to mobilise Zimbabweans to participate on issues of governance, it helps citizens to speak directly to those in power. The study also brings out the importance of twitter as a form of alternative media, fulfilling a social responsibility in the society by being a democratic participant medium which is scarce in the Zimbabwean print and broadcasting media landscape. The study is also important to the researcher since it is a fulfilment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Science (Honours)Degree in Media and Society Studies at the Midlands State University. It also provides the researcher with a clear understanding of the area of study. It is also important to the University as it will be added to the institution's library resources and be used by other researchers.

1.8 Delimitations of study

Harris (2003) defines delimitations as those characteristics selected by the researcher that define the boundaries of the study. This study focuses on Twitters role in building up national democratic conversations. The study focuses on the rhizomatic nature of Twitter deliberations in Zimbabwe, paying particular attention to Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets and the responses they attracted.

1.9 Limitations of study

Time is an important limitation to this study, research topic in itself is broad, the prerogative is to conduct the research and present findings within a short period of time for academic

purposes. Another limitation is the absence of readily available statistics on the number of Twitter users in Zimbabwe. The researcher also faced challenges in gathering literature that directly focuses on her research thus twitter deliberation and democracy.

1.10 Structure of study

Chapter 1 is an introduction that presents the research objectives, research questions, justifications for the study as well as a brief background to the key concerns of the research. Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter. Chapter 2, presents a theoretical framework as well as literature review. In this chapter, the researcher engages with academic articles that have extensively written and published articles that seem to correlate with the researcher's study. In chapter 2, the researcher also focuses on already existing theories that aid their discussions. This justifiably gives credence to her discussions as it shows she is not a loner in the topic. The interaction with already existing knowledge authenticates the researcher's views as she is not yet an authority to make sound assumptions. The researcher used Castells network society theory, The virtual public sphere as well as the democratic deliberation theory. Chapter 3 articulates the methods and methodologies employed in this study. Chapter 4 discusses how ownership and funding patterns of twitter affect twitter usage in Zimbabwe. Chapter 5 looks at the presentation of data and the analysis of the findings of this research project. Chapter 6 is the closing chapter and it evaluates and concludes the study, giving recommendations suggesting areas for further research.

1.11 Conclusion
This chapter gave an introduction of the research topic and all the other areas of interest to the study. It also highlighted twitters intertextuality as well as how it is internally configured. This chapter highlighted what some of the top twitter profiles in Zimbabwe tweet about and as well as the nature of their conversations. The research is investigating the contribution of twitter towards democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe. The next chapter looks at the theoretical framework and literature review. It links the study's key tenets with already existing literature as well as theories done by other scholars that are in tandem with this study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

The dissertation has to this end introduced the main concerns of the study, providing the objectives and the research problem. This chapter reviews literature and also gives a theoretical framework that is pertinent to this study. In this chapter, the researcher engages with existing literature narrowing down on what they say about deliberative democracy on twitter. Studies that analysed the use of twitter as a "public sphere" served as a guide to this research. The arguments presented by the scholars reviewed and the theories addressed will be linked with the concerns of this research. Since this study is conversant with and framed by theoretical perspectives, the researcher focuses on the virtual public sphere theory, the network society as well as the deliberative democracy theory.

2.2 Literature Review

Literature review in essence presents and weighs research ideas with what other writers have done and what already exists. The researcher engaged with literature so as to support her thoughts. Literature review helps the researcher to demonstrate her knowledge about relevant and related scholarly traditions that influence and support the democratic deliberative potential of twitter. An extensive engagement with literature has made the researcher to consider views by (Gunter 2000; Branston and Stafford 1999), who share a common thread that seems to string together the fact that extensive literature review, which is published information on a particular subject area within a certain time period, serves as a bedrock of identifying gaps from previous researches. Literature review redefine and refine research questions by entrenching them in larger traditions of inquiry, (Patton 2002) cited in (Gretchen et al 2006). There is extensive literature paying particular attention on deliberative democracy, social media and twitter as a new public sphere.

The researcher made use of online journals as well as textbooks. The researcher used textbooks for literature review, she accessed these from the University library. The researcher accessed SAGE, an online database of journals that store scholarly articles. The researcher used this source of information because all articles published in the SAGE journals go through extensive

peer review and proof checking, this will help in giving credible information not just for the purpose of this study but for further studies. The researcher also used GOOGLE SCHOLAR, an online search engine that enables searching for print and online scholarly articles. Using 'deliberative democracy' as a search term on SAGE database as at (05-10-16) brings out 120 results.

The researcher had to engage herself to an extensive, rigorous and time consuming task of selectively choosing a journal article necessary for her study by analysing the article topic. The topics read did were not giving enough information that could allow the researcher to a t a conclusion on what the article is about. The researcher had to narrow down her search to specific journals by reading the abstracts of the articles. The researcher also had to refine her search terms by adding more specific terms like on deliberative democracy, she would just type democracy and results for different types of democracy would show. SAGE, however had some journals with useful information that demanded paying in order to open them. This limits the researcher to other journals and leaving out some information that wold have been very important for the study.

2.2.1 Information Communication Technologies in Zimbabwe

Information Communication Technology (ICT) is a diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, store, manage and disseminate information, Manenji and Marufu (2016). Since the turn of the millennium there has been a technological revolution which has had significant effects on economic, social and political contexts of almost every society. Large parts of the global population undeniably now have access to a vast and diverse array of information which as Yzer and Southwell (2008) puts it, allows the theoretical possibility of an integration of different perspectives in opinion formation. Zimbabwe National Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework (2005) defines ICT as a broad term referring to technologies that are used for collecting, storing, analysing and exchange of information in various forms through various media.

Developments in the information communication technologies have led audiences to become pro-consumers of media content. New communication Technologies have a bearing on the circumstantial parameters under which human interaction occurs and do afford previously rare

opportunities, Yzer and Southwell (2008). However, Yzer and Southwell (2008) go on to posit that these technologies do not fundamentally alter human needs and desires.

Zimbabwe has made laudable progress in adopting and harnessing new communication technologies. Ndlovu (2009) acknowledges the digital gap that exists between Zimbabwe and the west. He brings into light the country's slow pace in adopting wider range of technologies in the area of computer accessibility, internet, electricity issues as well as the effects of brain on the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) sector. Ndlovu (2009), pays particular attention to issues of legislation and capital requirements of the ICT sector. The trajectory of ICT developments in Zimbabwe from 2009 up to date however make some of the assertions by Ndlovu (2009) rather dated. There is growing number of internet service providers in Zimbabwe. The introduction of the E-government, Electronic Government (EGovernment) is the use of information and communication technologies in public administrations ,combined with organisational change and new skills to improve public services and democratic processes and to strengthen support to public policies,(EU Journal accessed 20-10-16).The Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) initiative by the ministry of Higher and tertiary education is also another move by the Zimbabwean government to conscientise its citizens on technological development at grassroots level. Gambanga (2016).

The cyber-crime bill as well as the ICT policy are justifiably strides made to conscientise Zimbabweans on ICT conduct. As clearly articulated in the introductory page of the draft bill, it is a bill for an Act to criminalise offenses against computers and network related crimes. The Bill can interchangeably be referred to as the computer crime and cybercrime. The draft bill as provided by the ministry of ICT Courier and Postal Services state that the bill is meant to "*consolidate the criminal law on computer and network crime, to provide for investigations and collection of evidence for computer and network related crimes, to provide for the admission of electronic evidence for such offences and to provide for the matters connected with or incidental to the foregoing* ".

Zimbabwe has recorded a massive smart-cellphone usage 90.3% Gambanga (2015). Cell-phones are now widely available in every busy street corner in almost every town, second hand

cell-phones are affordable at considerably very low prices. Internet service providers also provide free internet at designated areas. The combination of accessible smart phones and easy access to the internet is another stance to show how Zimbabweans are exposed to ICT usage. Thus, Zimbabweans can actively be part of the global community through the various social media platforms like Facebook, Skype, Instagram, Twitter among many others. The recent developments with regards to new communication technologies in Zimbabwe have a bearing towards the major concerns of this study, thus the extent to which the adoption of twitter as a communication technology promotes democratic deliberations

2.2.2 The rhizomatic nature of social media

 Definitions of social media generally focus on sharing, participation and cooperation. Social media increases our ability to share, cooperate with one another and to foster human collaboration and collective action, all outside the framework of traditional institutions and organizations ,(Shirky 2008, Van Dijk 2013).These two scholars seem to conclude that social media can be justified as online facilitators of human interaction that promote connectedness as a social value.

A rhizome according to Technopedia (2012) is a stem. A rhizome is in fact an underground, horizontally growing stem. The vascular bundle can be compared to a group of cells that act like a drinking straw and pull up water to be used in different parts of the plant. Rhizomes are also important reproductive structures. The rhizome is able to invade the area near the parent plant and then send up a new shoot, thus expanding the area of the clone. Key features of rhizomes include horizontal underground growth, which may or may not be highly branching, production of roots from rhizome nodes and the production of clonal plants from rhizomes.

For the purpose of this study, botanical rhizomes (aforementioned), will be analogised to social media in order to understand how social media deliberations sprout out into the real world. Rhizomes cut across boundaries imposed by hierarches and order, leading to the multiplicious of thoughts which move in any direction and connect to different other lines of thinking, acting and being, ceaselessly establishing connectedness between organisation of power and circumstances relative to social struggles, (Deleuze and Guattari 1987; Letche 1994). These scholars seem to agree that a rhizome is a network, with a perfect network offering maximal connection between points. This argument is important for the study as social media sites offer

a fair share of connectedness for audiences. Users of twitter, facebook, myspace, skype can bypass geographical barriers, time to connect with other users. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) present a series of rhizomatic principles and these include the fact that rhizomes are nonlinear, anarchic, nomadic, deterritorialized, multiplicious and have elements of heterogeneity.

 The multidirectional and nodal nature of social media can also be a resemblance of social media being rhizomatic. There is no single exit or entry into twitter street, one can always be redirected from a social media platform to another because of social media's interconnectedness. One can sign in to a facebook platform via twitter or vice versa. The circularity and interconnectedness of these social media platforms justifiably shows its rhizomatic nature.

The non-hierarchical structure and dispersed nature of the internet coupled with its seemingly unquenchable networking frontier system helps social media to live up to the standard of the principle of a rhizome, Hamman (1996).Social media lives up to Deleuze and Guattari (1987)'s description of a rhizomatic system, the duo posit that rhizomatic systems are finite networks in which communication runs from neighbour to any other ,with individuals interchangeable and defined only by their state at a given time. Hence social media's ability for users to put up pseudo names. The rhizomatic nature of social media is also evident in the fact that audiences are able to share their knowledge through social media platforms to each other, and on occasion their efforts are chosen by journalists on the internet or in the traditional mass media and become disseminated further to wider publics.

Although twitter has been widely adopted across the globe, Zimbabweans have not fully embraced this social media platform. Twitter is not Zimbabwe's favourite social media platform, for a lot of people in Zimbabwe, the internet is synonymous with Facebook. Kabweza (2011). The researcher believes that not quoting Kabweza (2011) verbatim would be an academic miscarriage as she might not clearly elaborate on what he meant.
*"so a website that does something that at first sight looks like Facebook (following people sharing their opinions and experiences), and does it poorly, is not worth spending their internet bandwidth on. They usually just open an account, tweet once and go to Faceboo*k," Kabweza (2011).

2.2.3 The Internet and Deliberative Democracy in Zimbabwe

Deliberative democracy can be defined as a form of government in which free and equal citizens justify decisions based on a process in which they give one another reasons that are mutually acceptable and generally accessible, (Gutnamm and Thompson (2003) cited in Flew 2005). For online discussions to be democratizing, they must be characterised by reciprocity, (Mitra 1997 and Schmitz 1997) cited in (Papacharissi 2002). This implies that democratic deliberations are closely knit with reciprocity, they are dialogical and rest upon the give and take phenomenon. Deliberations across different and diverse points of views can build mutual trust and understanding. Advocates of cyberspace promise that online discourse will increase political participation and pave the road for a democratic utopia, Papacharissi (2004).

The internet has provided an alternative public sphere where Zimbabweans within and outside Zimbabwe can air their opinions. Moyo (2008) posits that Zimbabweans have turned to virtual spaces for them to share their ideas and opinions without fear of reprisal or cohesion.The internet justifiably provides universal access, unrestricted agenda and unrestricted communication.

The Zimbabwean government is notorious for its lack of tolerance of divergent and plural views. This character trait according to Gatsheni-Ndlovu (2003) can be traced back to the African Nationalism movement which did not tolerate of external and internal criticism as well as divergent views. The advent of internet based communication can justifiably be said to have broken the strong hold on the communication arena which the nationalist held tight to under the tag of upholding nationalism.

Virtually conducted deliberations may not always conform to the Habermasian ideal deliberation structure. Of paramount importance is the reciprocal dynamics that it can generates, reinforcing the parameters of civic culture and the impact this may have on the larger political situation, (Dahlgren 2005). This is valuable for this study as the debate on online deliberative democracy is at the core of this study. The values and commitments espoused by these groups are largely very democratic, and can be seen as a counter to some of the very undemocratic values associated with the prevailing neo-liberal order, Dahlgren (2005). Internet technology allows group interactions amongst diverse and geographically dispersed

participants, raising hopes for increased representation towards exercises in deliberative democracy, (Davies and Noveck 2006). Meanwhile , Bargh, McKenna and Fitzsimmons (2002) , cited in Davies and Noveck (2006), asserts that participants are able to reveal their true selves online than in person ,they concur with Stromer -Galley (2003) cited in Davies and Noveck (2006) who posit that a number of people feel comfortable to discuss political disagreements over the internet than face-face because it is more comfortable and less dangerous.

The Internet allows for engagement of large numbers of users in the full expression and the exchanging of opinions, while providing relatively affordable public access to large storage devices data that is retrievable. Participation is not limited by geographical borders and time restrictions (Coleman and Blumer 2009). Yet, as Papacharissi warns, the democratising potential of new technologies frequently rests on the individual's predisposition to be politically active and on the political infrastructure that is in place (Papacharissi 2004).

For Habermas, the rational public sphere relies upon discursive spaces where social problems are registered and, according to some authors, the Internet can be viewed as an exemplary medium for facilitating such arenas (Dahlberg 2001) cited in Črnič and Prodnik (2015).The ability of online platforms to post messages simultaneously while in anonymity not only undercut social hierarchs and increase levels of sharing ideas but also reduces anxieties about expressing an individual's frank opinions especially when they are likely to be unpopular.

Deliberation entails civility and respect. Even thou online anonymity has the potential to encourage marginalized views to be heard, it may also reduce the salience of social norms and encourage such 'antinormative and disinhibited behaviour' as 'flaming,' insults, or aggressive verbiage (Postmes et al., 1998) cited in (Baek et al 2011), therefore basing on Baek et al (2011)'s position, online deliberations may produce negative emotions, prevent understanding, and prevent consensus.

Therefore, it is justifiable to note that the internet has become an important tool in engaging citizens in decision making processes. For the purpose of this study deliberative democracy Chapell (2008), on twitter by the Zimbabwean twitter community manifests itself through the level of arguments, the speech, the topics discussed as well as how these interface with the politics of the day in the real world. Some scholars are of the view that the internet encourages passivity and has transformed users to information junkies. The internet promotes passivity

that is made stronger by programmed interactivity, Brook (1999). He further argues that the internet might have the potential for advancing democracy but the culture associated with information technology promotes passive consumption. Therefore in light of Brooks arguments ,Jonathan Moyo's tweets ought to be a soliloque.

The internet is often been blamed for creating and fostering class divisions. Internet access does not directly translate to internet's provision of democracy (Bus 2012). Class divisions exist in terms of skills associated with using these technologies. For example, having internet access that is free but lacking the knowledge on how to go about the Twittersphere, like how to log in to communicative platform. Another example would be owning a smartphone but lacking the knowledge of using it. The internet as asserted by McCracken (2003) narrows users minds and inspires them to be obsessed with worthless information He also posits that the internet cheers conformity and sameness by producing users who are consumerism, triviality and control fanatics. Justifiably, MacCracken (2003) is asserting that the internet way of life is obsessed with nonsensical experiences. The fact the internet therefore is not interested in rational discussion would also justifiably translate to the facts that the internet is not concerned with national interests, hence democracy. In the same stance, the study seeks to fulfil some of its research questions and objectives by assessing whether Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets are in way linked to issues of democracy.

The rational public sphere relies upon discursive spaces where social problems are registered and, according to some authors, the Internet can be viewed as an exemplary medium for facilitating such arenas (Dahlberg 2001). Habermas (2009) acknowledges that the revolution in digital communications could relate strong normative ideals of the deliberative model of democracy to the present day. He argues that computer-based communication can only have democratic merits for a specific context. He asserts that political communication within national publics at present seem to have within its capacity, the ability to benefit from online debates only when groups which are active on the Web refer to real processes, such as election campaigns or current controversies, for example, in an attempt to mobilise the interest and support of members. Habermus (2009) further asserts that the networks of media and of news agencies online still form the infrastructure of the public sphere which is populated by

politicians and political parties, lobbyists and special interest groups, public interest groups, intellectuals, and NGOs, amongst others.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework helps the researcher to find out where her study fits, in theories that have been propounded by other scholars. The researcher has found inspiration from three theories thus, the public sphere theory, the researcher looked at the theory from the organic public spheres to the digital public sphere. Castell's network society theory as well as the deliberative democracy theory.

2.3.1 The Public Sphere Theory

The public sphere theory was propounded by Jugern Habermus and was based on political participation in a bourgeois public sphere which came into being around the 1700.Habermus understood this sphere as a forum to mediate between the private concerns of individuals in their economic and social life. Habermas investigated on the public sphere that emerged during the enlightment era, as well as the American and French revolution, paying close attention towards how this promoted political debates and deliberations. Habermas (1989) postulates that the bourgeois public sphere was characterised by individuals who would gather to discuss issues of common interest and to organise against the oppressive systems that were there. Kellner (1989) argues that these discursive arguments were characterised by freedom of expression, assembly, speech, and to freely participate in political debates and decision making. Such an arena is evident when looking at how twitter deliberations are tackled, there is justifiably freedom of expression and assembly, thus by just creating a twitter account and following a community of your choice. Citizens can say that which they would not have been able to say in the mainstream media.

Deliberations on twitter can be critical of the state, Fraser (1990) states that the public sphere is the site for the production and circulation of discourses that can be critical of the state. She further argues that the public sphere is not a forum for market relations, but rather a site for deliberating and debating. The public sphere thus serves as an intermediary arena of political

communication in which public opinions and influence on political decisions are identified, debated, amplified and consequently passed over to the political system through what Habermas (2009), has termed "communicative power". The consensus-achieving power, is an important characteristic of deliberation and can only be fashioned in non-coercive communication, thus can only develop from structures of undamaged inter subjectivity found in undistorted communication (Habermas 1996). However, the communicative power in which public opinions contest cannot solely 'govern', but can at most influence the way administrative power is used, (Habermas 2009).

Habermus (1989)'s core tenets on the democratization of the public sphere is justifiably linked with emphasis on political participation, as he believes it is the nerve system of a democratic society leading to self-development. Regardless of the public sphere's configuration with freedom of expression, the prevailing discussions conducted by the bourgeois in the sphere are intolerant of the lawful authority exercised by the modern democratic state.

However one should note that while Habermus's ideal public sphere principles can be conceptualised to fit in to the characteristics evident in the new media, there is yet a need for another structural transformation to the public sphere. Audiences through internet based technologies have the potential to create personal communication networks which can profoundly contribute to deliberations in society.

2.3.1.1 Re-visiting the Public sphere

Habermas's concept of the public sphere has been criticised for excluding women, slaves as well as the non-propertied. Thusu (2010) posits that the current state of the publics sphere has changed from that of the 18th century, noting that the 21st century public sphere has broken physical spaces and has led to the formation of cultural institutions and informal networks of public opinion through technology. The rise of internet has provided people to form virtual communities that would expand to forums of democratic political participation. Dahlgren (2005) terms it the 'Cyber transformation' of the public sphere.

The internet has brought with itself a new form of public sphere, known as the digital public sphere, Gerhards (2009), while Matacinskaite (2011) calls it the Internet public sphere and

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Papacharissi (2010) refers to it as the virtual sphere. This sphere allows for citizen engagement and deliberations on issues of governance and other matters of their concern virtually. Papacharissi (2010) argues that the internet is a virtual reincarnation of the public sphere.

The internet public sphere is open to everyone Gerhards (2009), the digital public sphere is open and allows citizens to participate enabling diverse views on a particular topic, empowering audiences to evaluate and argue. There is popular inclusion, ample opportunity to discuss diverse issues resulting in sharing of opinions, increasing interactivity of audiences in reaction to media messages, (Matacinskaite 2011;Gerhards 2009). Retweets, replies as well as comments are some of the twitter facets that can increase interactivity of audiences. Twitter allows its users to pass opinions and deliberate on given topics. The virtual sphere according to Papacharissi (2010) is characterised with rational debate, just like Habermus's ideal public sphere. The value of the public sphere lies in its ability to facilitate uninhibited and diverse discussions of public affairs while agreement and rational deliberations are desirable outcomes although goals may not be routinely achieved,(Papacharissi 2010;Papacharisi 2002) .

The emergence of internet based communication patterns has enable civic engagements to make a historic move by going virtual. Benkler (2006), asserts that the internet enables more inclusive, broader and a more closely knit public sphere. He further argues that the internet not only entrust additional information at the disposal of concerned citizens but rather alters public debates empowering online deliberations. Hence this study seeks to give critical reflections on the contribution of twitter to democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe.

Although rationale debate in Habermas's ideal public sphere is also evident in Papacharissi (2002)'s virtual sphere, Papacharissi (2002) argues that there is no digital public sphere but a public space that provides the expanse which allows the public sphere to convene, he argues that it does not guarantee a healthy public sphere. Papacharissi (2010) asserts that the internet cannot be a public sphere but rather a public space because the digital public sphere is only enjoyed by a few who have access. Fraser (1990) argues that the public sphere has always been exclusionary, this exclusion for Fraser (19920 is rooted back to Habermas's public sphere where women, slaves and the non-propertied class were excluded. Papacharissi (2002) posits that inclusions in the public sphere is a privilege that citizens of a democracy enjoy, a privilege

that in previous incarnations of the public sphere in the Greek and Roman republics was not afforded to those who were not citizens.

This contribution is important for this study in the sense that Zimbabwe's economy is constantly dwindling and ordinary citizens cannot afford a single decent meal a day let alone get money to purchase internet bundles. This would mean that those who have access can only enjoy the privileges of joining twitter deliberations.

Papacharissi (2002) argues that greater access to information, enabled by online media, does not directly lead to increases in political participation, or greater civic engagement, or trust in political process. This research seeks to fill in the gap on the comment by Papacharissi (2002) that online expression of audience does not always result in discussion of greater substance and it does not have direct effect or direct change on the subject matter. This assertion will be closely scrutinised with reference to Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets also paying close attention to the tweet' manifestations in the real world of politics in Zimbabwe.

2.3.2 Network Society

The network society theory is largely accredited to Manuel Castells. He defines network society as a society whose social structure is constructed around networks, which are activated by communication technologies which are digitally processed and micro-electronics based. He focuses on the role of communication in a society connected by mass communication networks in web spaces. Castells (2006) states that a network society is not just a modern society defined by technology but also qualified by political, economic and cultural factors. He further argues that people's lives have been dominated by what he calls flows and that these flows have led to the rapid growth of social networking sites such as Twitter, Skype, Two, Facebook in the global society. Castells (2009) argues that the internet has been hailed as a potential way to break away from the vertical information flow seen in the media.

Network society has created invisible paths for information and communication Van Dijk (2006), through new media, thus computer networks, digital broadcasting, mobile telephony as well as the internet. Watts (2003) asserts that in network society, conformity may spread too fast because social contagion of ideas spread fast. For example, when looking at how twitter is

rhizomatically integrated, users have the potential to rebroadcast their tweets to many people at the same time and vice versa. Castells (2009) postulates that the network society theory rests in empirical argument on production, experience and power. Jonathan Moyo.as the owner of the twitter accounts which has tweets under study is justifiably the holder of power as he can influence issues to be deliberated about. Cardose and Castells (2005) assert that digital networking enables networks to overcome their historical limits.They further argue that the network society transcends boundaries and manages to incorporate various people around the globe to one place where they can deliberate.

Technology has by and large transformed most aspects of social life, thus space and time, it has enabled people to meet in web spaces for deliberations of their choice. Twitter is one such platform that allows people to discuss issues of their interest bypassing the framing and agenda setting models of traditional media. Hassan (2004) comments that the network society is the transformation of the realm of communication where people's minds receive information and form their views by processing signals from society at large.

The network power is one of the most important forms of power in Castell's analysis. The network power brings out the power in the capacity to set up and program a network. Twitter can safely be categorised as a form of network power as it gives its users power to explore the unexplored discourses in the traditional media, (Castells 2009). Issues to do with governance, human rights, corruption among many other issues important for democracy are deliberated upon on this platform and Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets can serve as examples. This theory can also be discussed along with the social networking theory as they have tenets that the researcher justified to be complimentary. The main questions that social network theory seeks to answer are: why do individuals interact, how do they interact and what the theory views social relationships in terms of nodes and ties. Nodes are the individual actors within the network and ties are the relationship between the actors. There are many kinds of ties between the nodes and the social network theory is used to determine the social capital of individual actors. Social capital is a sociological concept which refers to the value of social relations and the role of cooperation and confidence to achieve positive outcomes. The term refers to the value one can get from their social ties.

The unit of analysis in network analysis is not the individual but an entity consisting of a collection of individuals and the linkages among them Wasserman and Faust (1994). The theory emphasizes that how an individual lives depends largely on how that individual is tied into a larger web of social connections. Paying close attention to this theory ,it is justifiable to assert that twitter users under study constitute an ego centric tie and they depend on each other for social change. Castells (1997) cited in Curan and Gurevitch (2000) argues that it is not that the media controls politics of the day but the social forums that make up networked societies offers space which is conducive for the political discussions that cannot be offered in the mainstream media.

2.3.3 Deliberative Democracy Theory

The idea of deliberation redirects one to rationally motivated consensus. Deliberative democracy theory is a political theory that underscores the need for deliberation to decision making, it does not emphasis on the outcome of the decision, rather it focuses on the quality of the process. Deliberative democracy theory ushers in ethical concerns into the issues of decision making, with its main call being increased fair citizen participation in democratic decision making processes. The theory was largely influenced by John Rawls and Jugern Habermus. For (Habermus 1989), fair procedures and transparent communication has the potential to produce sincere and consensual decisions by citizens. Whilst Rawls posits that reason rather than political power justifies a society's political structure that is fair and secures equal rights for all members of the society, hence fair procedures governing the deliberative course are what authenticates the outcomes, (White 2011)

Democracy referring to "rule by the people for the people". Theories of development have generally concurred that communication is of paramount importance to achieve democracy. Chapell (2008), defines democratic deliberation as uncoerced, other-regarding, reasoned, inclusive and equal debate. He further argues that democratic deliberations should entail inclusiveness, thus deliberative democrats seek to include all relevant members of the community in the decision-making process, thus collective knowledge. Deliberative democracy should not only be inclusive of persons, but also of ideas. Apart from its potential to enhance the liberty and autonomy of individuals, collective knowledge can also strengthen participatory and deliberative democratic practices against the prerogatives of technocratic

elites and the growing dominance of experts in every corner of life,(Benkler 2007;Surowiecki 2004) cited in Lievrouw (2011).

Deliberative theorists thou many, agree on the conception of a government that is ruled by the will of the people, (White 2011). As postulated by White (2011), deliberative democracy theory emphasizes the need for the government to take into account citizen's thoughtful and informed views about political issues. Dahlberg (2007) and Kies (2010), seem to be agreeing on the prerequisites for deliberative communication. They concur that any deliberative platform should be formally inclusive, free from the interventions of the state or cooperate interests. They also suggest that it should be able to fulfil communicative equality among all possible participants, it should have sincerity as much as possible, should be empathetic and respectful, reasoned in the sense that arguments are framed in terms of why certain claims should be accepted.

They add that the deliberations should be reflexive thus, thoughts in the general population circle ought to be balanced, comprehensive and self-intelligent. An essential state of thought presupposes, to start with, that members take up contemplated positions concerning the legitimacy of those parts of social life that have gotten to be problematised and, second, that members' own particular legitimacy cases are in the meantime presented to the corresponding discerning testing of others required in the talk (Dahlberg 2004).

In addition, as Cohen (1997) clarifies, members are required to express their explanations behind propelling recommendations, supporting them, or condemning them. The point of consideration is the acknowledgment of a proposition on the premise of better (or more terrible) contentions. In this way, the main part in thought must have the constrain of a superior contention and not the use of force or some other outside intimidation (Cohen 1997). Argumentation must be tended to those present in the exchange as well as to all others possibly influenced by the cases under thought. Contentions must be all inclusive that is, adequate for a widespread gathering of people – and not particularistic, nor should they be satisfactory just for the "virtual open" which is available in a particular civil argument (Dahlberg 2004).

Critical reflections on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical conversational rhizome on twitter. A case study of Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets.

The notion of deliberative democracy is basically constructed around the idea that democracy revolves about the transformation of preferences rather than simply preference aggregation (Elster 1998), and owes a great deal of its impetus to the political theory of Jürgen Habermas. Creating a deliberative system of democracy points towards connecting decision-making procedures with a preceding deliberation of the arguments, consequences and benefits. The demand for better deliberation as argued by Bohman (2002) is a mandate for further rational political order in which making decisions involves the public use of reason. In light of this position, the authenticity of arguments should be determined by free and equal citizen's judgement. Deliberative democracy puts communication at the centre of politics. Fishkins (2013) states that respectful and constructive dialogue rather than cheap point scoring should triumph. For deliberation to be credible, it must be neutral and balanced. Participants must be demographically, politically and ideologically diverse. Discussions must be civil and informed. Democratic politics should as stated by (Rawls 1971, p. 234) cited in Cohen, be ordered in ways that provide a basis for self-respect, encouraging the development of a sense of political competence that contribute to the formation of a sense of justice. Chapell (2008) notes with concern that Deliberative democracy could be used as an instrument to curb prevailing social injustices and political exclusion by affording those who are currently disadvantaged a voice and requiring the rest of society to listen. Deliberative democracy could allow all citizens to present their perspectives, beliefs and interests to others in a forum, thereby enabling citizens and groups to find out more about each other.

Deliberative democracy is also aimed at making citizens more other-regarding, more concerned about the interests of others and less selfish Dahlgren (2005). This captures the intuition that in politics citizens should take the needs and interests of others into account when they form their preferences and contribute to making decisions, thus collective action and empathy should be practised in order to achieve deliberative democracy. During deliberation citizens will learn about the perspectives, beliefs and interests of others to a much greater extent than they would be able to under more adversarial forms of democracy, Dahlgren (2005).Deliberation could thus serve as a powerful means of increasing political inclusion and counteracting existing differences of power in society. Chapell (2008), concurs with Cohen who argues that for democratic deliberation to be successful it needs to be reciprocal, dialogical.

2.4 Conclusion

The researcher has discussed the literature and theoretical framework that inspired her study. The researcher managed to link theories to her study bringing out the importance of the public sphere in understanding the concept of democratic deliberation. The public sphere theory managed to incorporate its key critics like re-visiting the public sphere. Scholarly contributions towards the public sphere debate were an interesting area of research. The next chapter is focusing on research methods and methodology which explains how the research was planned, conducted and accomplished.

CHAPTER THREE: Research Methods And Methodology

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the research methods and methodology which have been used to gather information on the relevance of twitter as a democratic deliberative platform. Research methodology in its basic sense is a way to systematically solve a research problem. Manoharan (2012) notes that research is an organised and systematic way of finding answers to question. The study has to this end captured research questions, objectives, significance of study, delimitations and limitations of the study. The researcher has also managed to engage scholarly works through literature review, shading light on the usefulness of twitter as a democratic deliberative platform. This chapter explains the process of research and it addresses research questions. The chapter also discusses how data gathering and collection was done as well as how the data was analysed and presented. The researcher used qualitative and pseudo-quantitative research techniques. For analysing data, the researcher used critical discourse analysis and hermeneutics of interpretation. For data presentation the researcher used thematic and narrative.

3.2 Research Methodology

Research methodology is the way of producing and analysing data bringing out whether theories can be accepted, tested or rejected. Williams (2011), defines research methodology as a way to find out the results of a given problem on a specific matter that has been referred to as the research problem. Research methodology includes sample selection, data presentation, data analysis, data collection, research design, population as well as the unit of analysis. It is justifiable to note that the methods employed for data gathering gives readers an opportunity to decide on the credibility of the research findings. The researcher used qualitative and pseudo-quantitative research as the study seeks to find out whether twitter in Zimbabwe offers democratic deliberation, paying particular attention to Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets.

3.3 Research design

A research design is a plan on conducting a research. Mouton (2006) notes that a research design is a blueprint regarding how one intends to conduct the research focusing on the end product as opposed to research methodology which focuses on the research process and the kind of tools as well as procedures to be used. This research made use of qualitative methods in gathering, analysing and presentation of data.

Lune and Berg (2013) states that qualitative research focuses on understanding the experiences, perspectives as well as thoughts of participants. With this stance, qualitative research explores meaning, purpose and realities of participants. As part of the research design, the researcher used netnography to scrutinised Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets. Netnography is basically the contraction of internet and ethnography. The tweet's manifests in the real world of politics were also looked at. The researcher looked at comments, replies and retweets, associated with Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) assert that qualitative research involves studying things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense or to interpret it in terms of the meanings people bring to them. The researcher used netnography which brings out the natural responses to Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets. For the purpose of this study, the researcher used hermeneutics of interpretation and critical discourse analysis.

The researcher used case study research design. A case study is an organized inquiry into an event or events,with the aim of describing and explaining a concept of interest Bromley (1990).For the purpose of this study, Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets that he has posted on his twitter page @ProfJNMoyo as well as the responses the tweets attracted will be the occurring event.

3.4 Population

For the purpose of this study, the population is Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets and their audience responses. The audience are important as they are the ones providing the basis of the democratic deliberative potential of twitter. It is through audience responses to Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets that show the reciprocal nature of twitter, hence its deliberative potential. The researcher's population is Jonathan Moyo's 5 selected tweets from his twitter page as well as the comments, replies and retweets the tweets attracted The population also extends to other forms of media,thus how they comment on issues to do with the 5 selected

tweets and comments. This extension is important as it helps give critical reflections on the deliberative democracy capacity of twitter in Zimbabwe.

3.5 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis is basically that critical aspect under study. Lune and Berg (2013), assert that the unit of analysis is the major entity that ties units under study together leading to the definition of beliefs, attitudes, opinions, knowledge and abilities towards a certain issue or topic. The researcher's unit of analysis is Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets on his twitter page and the responses the tweets attracted. Fourie (2009) asserts that it is in the unit of analysis that a sample is drawn from. The unit of analysis is crucial in this study as it consists major entity that is analysed in the area of democratic deliberations on twitter.

3.6 Sampling

Anderson (2012) states that sampling is the act of choosing representative of the population on the parameters of interest and only at the level of precision needed by the researchers. Sampling is therefore the process of selecting units from a population of interest so that the results from the sample can be representative of the population of interest. The researcher studied twitter, particularly those activities occurring on Jonathan Moyo's twitter page. The researcher selectively gathered tweets from those posted on the entire page since its inception. The researcher specifically concentrated on the deliberations that were happening on the selected tweets. The researcher specifically chose this criteria to create a sample in order for her to establish the levels to which the discourses on Jonathan Moyo's tweeter page may lead to deliberative democracy.

3.6.1 Sampling Techniques

Sampling techniques are the means or manner in which the process of selecting units from a population of interest is conducted. The researcher used convenience sampling as well as purposive sampling techniques.

3.6.1.1 Convenience Sampling

As the name implies, the sampling method is convenient to the researcher. This is the least costly to the researcher in terms of time, effort and money however it is the last rigorous technique Higginbottom (2004), involving participants who are readily available and easy to contact. Koeber and McMichael (2008) state that this techniques' major pitfall is that the subject matter under study is likely to be familiar, the researcher might be tempted to generalise on the findings beyond this narrow population. He further argues that a researcher using convenience sampling should be careful not to overgeneralise findings. This sample becomes convenient in the sense that the analysis is based on two platforms of deliberation, thus the virtual sphere represented by twitter and organic sphere represented by national political discourses in Zimbabwe.

3.6.1.2 Purposive Sampling

This technique implies selecting elements of the research on the basis of knowledge of the population and the aim of the study. Thus the method also entails selecting participants who possess certain traits or qualities. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) posit that in purposive sampling, subjects are selected for a reason tied to the research. Therefore, this researcher selected tweets and the feedback they attracted which is a form of deliberation. The study seeks to give a critical appreciation of how twitter enables democratic deliberations.

The method however has its demerits, Hagan (2006) argues that there is lack of wide generalizability since the researcher would be knowledgeable of the elements selected. The researcher specifically selected elements that were necessary for her study, thus five tweets from Jonathan Moyo's Twitter page.The researcher acknowledges that there might have been some bias in purposive the selection of tweets.

3.7 Methods of data collection

Gilbert (2011), posits that the internet may be recognized as a source for gathering data although representativeness and meaning can rely heavily on the person who created the website and in this study, meaning may rely on the values and opinions of the tweet's author,

thus Jonathan Moyo. The study relied on secondary and primary sources of data gathering. The study used archival as well as non-participant observations for data gathering.

3.7.1 Archival Research

Archival information is that information which is present in existing records or archives. McBurney and White (2009) describe archival research as a research conducted using data that the researcher had no part in collecting. The researcher's core task therefore is to analyse the data accessed from the archives. Corti (2004) asserts that archival research is the locating, evaluating and systematic interpretation and analysis of sources found in archives. The researcher used archival research as Professor Jonathan Moyo's twitter page already has the selected tweets and the responses, both on the Twittersphere and in the organic sphere. The researcher selected her tweets from Professor Jonathan Moyo's twitter page and saved them in her laptop, she also went through to the Midlands State University Media and Society Studies studio and searched for newspaper articles that were written in the month of July in search of whether issues discussed on twitter were also discussed elsewhere.

This research's source archive for information is a twitter page. Therefore, the type of archival research used in this study is online archival research. She used netnography which encompasses the merging of ethnography and the internet, Gary and Bowler (2010) .Netnography can sometimes be referred to as virtual ethnography. The researcher did so by accessing all her samples online. The researcher downloaded the @ProfJNMoyo tweets using her personal laptop and stored them for the purpose of this study.She downloaded quiet a number of these tweets and them selected the one she deemed relevant for the sake of her study.

3.7.2 Observation

Observations were used to get instant updates on the responses given to the selected tweets. Although the researcher joined tweeter and had to follow Jonathan Moyo in order to get instant notifications of his tweets, retweets. The observation is highly non-participant as the researcher did not contribute in terms of retweets, comments or replies to the selected tweets. Through observation, the researcher was also able to take note of tweets that did not get any comments at all as well as those that attracted attention through feedback. Flick (2008) asserts that

observations enable the researcher to get at the inner experience of participants, determining how meanings are formed through culture rather than just testing variables. Observations in this study are important as they allow the researcher to understand patterns of responding. Observing both the Twittersphere and other forms of spheres for this study is important as it allows the researcher to take note of the deliberative or otherwise of tweeter discourses. Observations enable the researcher to also read between the lines, thus for the purpose of this study take note of how issues on tweeter manifest in real world. To establish how communities on tweeter (virtual) are organised in real world communities (organic), this observation is necessary in order for the researcher to establish the democratic deliberative potential of tweeter. This observation is also important because scholars mentioned in previous chapters concur that online deliberative to be deemed democratic they have to make an impact outside the virtual community.

3.8 Data analysis methods

These methods are instrumental in interpreting the meaning of the gathered data. The methods used in this research are critical discourse analysis, content analysis and hermeneutics of interpretation.

3.8.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is a type of secondary data analysis used to analyse text, including interviews, transcripts, newspapers, books, manuscripts and web sites to determine the frequency of specific words or ideas. Berg and Latin (2008) cited in Lune and Berg (2013) define content analysis as a careful detailed systematic examination and interpretation of a body of material in an effort to identify themes, biases and meanings. This study paid critical attention to patterns of language used in communication exchange as well as the social and political contexts in which these communications occur. The researcher looks at how the deliberation on the selected tweets is conducted, the contents of the responses. The researcher used content analysis to make sense out of what was being mediated by social interactions on twitter. The researcher applied this method as it enabled her to understand and interpret the tweets under study .

3.8.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis is aimed at studying and analysing written and spoken texts to reveal the discursive sources of power, dominance, inequality and dominance. Briggs and Cobley (2002) posit that discourses are linked to ideology and representations and involve ways of using language so as to produce meaning about a subject. Critical discourse analysis is important to this study as it includes the analysis of language, which enabled the researcher to grasp the meanings behind the text and use of language in the selected tweets as well as the comments, replies and retweets they attracted. This study will examine how the power exercised through discourse on twitter is evident in the real world's exercising of power, discourse and power.

This research gives critical reflections on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical conversational rhizome on twitter focus on Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets on his twitter page. The study looks at how the Zimbabwean twitter community engage in twitter deliberations, making close reference to how the deliberations contribute to the notion of rational discussions by examining their trends in responding as well as the language used Fairclough (1995).

Critical discourse analysis is important in this study because it seeks to aid with critical knowledge that makes it possible for individuals to emancipate themselves through self-reflection (Wodak 2008). This study rests upon the argument that the emergence of new media technologies, specifically social media has ushered in a new paradigm on freedom of expression in the Zimbabwean communication landscape thus allowing citizens to be involved in public opinion formation.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) takes a tri-dimensional approach, thus it looks at discourse practice, text and social practice (Fairclough 1995). This research will make use of tweets from the lances of both text and language. Woodak (2008) asserts that in CDA can be assessed from two dimensions, thus intertextual and textual analysis. The study makes use of intertextual analysis on the deliberations evident on @ProfJNMoyo twitter page, thus looking at how pro-nsumers draw text from socially accessible resources that constitute the nature of deliberations, (Fairclough 1995).

3.8.3 Hermeneutics Of Interpretation

Hermeneutics of interpretation is a method of data analysis which can be traced from semiology. In basic explanations, this method of analysis argues that for one to understand the whole, understand the part, to understand the part understand the whole. This method was used to understand difficulty texts in history including the bible. Thiselton (2009) states that hermeneutics explore how we read, understand and handle texts especially those written in another context of life different from your own. Thiselton (2009) further posits that this method requires one to be conversant with historical, political, social and economic context to understand a phenomenon. The researcher used this method of data analysis to assess the rationale behind the tweets by Jonathan Moyo, retweets, replies and comments they attracted.

3.9 Data Presentation Methods

After the collected data, has been analysed, the findings were then presented qualitatively and quantitatively. This researcher preferred descriptive and narrative data presentation methods as they allowed the researcher to explain and describe her findings as identified. Data has been documented thematically and narratively.

3.9.1 Thematic analysis

This can be understood as the presentation of data qualitatively, giving a theme to a set of findings. Gilbert (2011) asserts that thematic presentations explain that the themes used are a reflection of what has been researched and not imposed by the researcher. The archival data was also helpful to the researcher in coming up with themes .Bruan and Clarke (2006), posit that thematic approach is usually undertaken when the data being sampled is descriptive and explanatory. The researcher used this method in presenting what led Jonathan Moyo to tweet in a certain manner and how the tweets led to the comments, replies and retweets at the same time the comments and tweets coming as a result of deliberation in other spheres and in turn culminating to other deliberations outside his tweeter page.

The researcher made use of the Braun and Clarke (2006)'s six phases of thematic analysis as the benchmark for this study's presentation of data. They duo concurs that the first phase is

whereby the researcher writes down the findings and takes notes from the ideas being presented. Using this first phase, this researcher downloaded the selected tweets from @ProfJNMoyo twitter page. The researcher then scanned the tweets and identified the relevant aspects towards the issue of democratic deliberation.

The second phase is the generation of codes, the researcher organised data into topics (Miles and Huberman 1994). She went through the relevant aspects to her study that she identified on the first phase and put them into categories, for example tweets that suited the deliberative democracy prerequisites as asserted by Dalghren in chapter 2 constituted their topic whilst those that did not constituted another different topic.

The third phase is where the researcher searches for themes for the tweets that have been categorised in the second phase, the themes will include relevant as well as some irrelevant ones (Braun and Clarke 2006). The third and fourth phases could have been conducted simultaneously as the procedures are almost similar, however this researcher separated them for the sake of clarity.

The fourth phase is the reviewing of the listed down themes to identify the ones that answer the question of twitters' deliberative democracy extends. This process was one of the toughest stages of the six stages as some of the themes seemed relevant but did not answer the research objectives and questions. Some of the themes generated were used by the researcher as recommendations for future research.

The fifth stage is the defining and naming of themes. These themes are the ones that will be used in chapter 5 to present the findings of the entire study, whilst the last stage is producing a report. For this stage the researcher presented her report as findings on the deliberative democracy potential of twitter deliberations on the twitter handle @ProfJNMoyo.

3.9.2 Narrative

Narrative presentation of data entails a sequence of events culminating into the next event. Gillespe (2006:91) cited in Fourie (2009) posit that a narrative is a sequence of events that are linked casually in time and space. This method was used by the researcher to build up on

purposive sampling by paying attention to the production and analysis of qualitative data by focusing on different individuals engaging in public opinion formation through narrative accounts of their opinions on selected tweets by @ProfJNMoyo twitter handle.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are a standard of accepted behaviour within a given setting. Ethics a social construct and they differ from setting to setting. Baran (2000) defines ethic as well-founded standards of rights and wrongs that prescribe what humans ought to do in terms of rights, obligation and benefits to the society. The researcher should therefore make sure she is accurate. offers balanced and clarity to all the findings. Gilbert (2011) is of the view that the researcher's accuracy should not be compromised, it should be a driving force behind the creation of new knowledge, the prime objective being to search for the truth. Patton (2002) asserts that emotionally engaged researchers must continually evaluate and construct their behaviour so as to have balanced results and in this case the researcher has to be neutral in how tweeter offers democratic deliberations in Zimbabwe. The researcher should be accountable, taking into consideration that plagiarism is a serious academic offence. The researcher used data that was publicly available, thus tweets publicly posted and did not any ethics on sample privacy. She used @ProfJNMoyo tweets that were publicly posted and justifiably meant for the consumption and use of any person who would find them useful.

3.11 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the strategies that the researcher used in this study so as to come up with results that are representative of the situation on the ground. The aspect of the respondent population has also been articulated. The researcher has managed to capture methods of analysing data, thus critical discourse analysis, content analysis as well as hermeneutics of interpretation. The next chapter will discuss how ownership and control patterns of twitter affect its usage in Zimbabwe. It looks at the political economy of twitter usage in Zimbabwe.

Chapter Four: Political economy of twitter usage in Zimbabwe

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the political economy of Twitter usage in Zimbabwe. Political economy analysis when applied to the media, concerns itself with macro-questions of media ownership and control. This is supported by Vincent Mosco in Boyd-Barrett and Newbold (1995). He defines political economy as the study of social relations, particularly power relations, that mutually constitute the production, distribution and consumption of resources including communication resources, but in its more ambitious form, it is the study of control and survival of social life. It is justifiable to assert that political economy also refers to applied topics in economics implicating public policy, such as monopoly, market protection as well as government fiscal policy. This chapter also discusses issues to do with access to twitter, use of twitter in Zimbabwe as well as how education levels, economic wellbeing and technology among other factors affect twitter usage in Zimbabwe. This is done in close reference to the case study of Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets on his twitter page @ProfJNMoyo.

4.2 Historical background of Twitter

The establishment of twitter was influenced by Flicker.com, a photo sharing website whilst other considerations involved in the creation of twitter may also have come from Dodgeball and Friend-stalker, (Jonhson 2013, and Picard 2011). Twitter is an invention of programmers Jack Dorsey, Evan Williams and Biz Stone who worked at Odeo Inc. in San Francisco, a podcasting company, as a means of reinventing a collapsing company and as a way to send texts on their cellphones, (Jonhson 2013).

There are no readily available statistics about the number of people who are signed in on twitter in Zimbabwe. However according to Socialbakers (2016), the top ten most followed twitter accounts in Zimbabwe are Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo, Open Parliament @OpenParlyZW, Alex Magaisa @Wamagaisa, Ranga Mberi @RangaMberi, Sir Nige @SirNige, Chris Charamba @Chrisposure, David Coltart @DavidColtart, Cynic Harare @CynicHarare, Curate Zimbabwe @CurateZim ,Your Mobile Network and @Econet_Support @Telecel_Zim . From

the list of the most followed twitter accounts in Zimbabwe it is clear that the microblogging site is used by very prominent people in Zimbabwe. They possess very strong curriculum vitaes and these individuals' following traits rank among commercial companies like Econet and Telecel. These characters are justifiably people of note and this generally gives an impression that twitter in Zimbabwe is an elite street, it is not where the 'have nots' of society can walk in.

Technology is not innocent; it is ideologically invested (Bhaktin 2015). These pieces of technology, or rather tools of globalisation seem to be designed in support for freedom of expression and free flow of information beyond the constraints of government regulation. In most cases, they are pushing a neoliberal agenda, an attitude which renders the triumphing march of a free market enterprise globally. Just like any business enterprise, twitter has to make profits, it was justifiably established in pursuit of profit making. The interests that it serves are not necessarily the interests of those who use it as a communication platform. From a political economy perspective, the inventors of twitter might have introduced it not necessarily with the purpose of deliberative democracy as its primary goal but for profit as an important motive.

There is widely available research that seem to agree on twitter's potential to overthrow governments. These researches show that if the masses join to fight for the same cause can achieve anything. This can be evident in the Arab springs which research points to have been fuelled by social media, among them twitter, Khamis and Vaughn (2011). The protests that happened in Egypt and Tunisia have been termed the twitter revolutions as the protesters used twitter to mobilize protesters by posting tweets which are embedded with images and videos of what was happening in other parts of the country. These protests saw the stepping down of the Tunisia and Egyptian presidents.

Closer to home, in South Africa there is research that shows how students at the University of Capetown spearheaded a protest using a hashtag called Rhodes must fall #Rhodesmustfall .The campaigns which began in March 2015 were mainly concerned with the removal of British Colonialist Cecil Jonh Rhodes' Statue from the University of Capetown main campus. Bosch (2016) argues that the Rhodes must fall campaign has led to many other student-led political movements. Bosch (2016) is of the view that some movements that have erupted from the

Rhodes Must Fall campaigns are calling for widespread transformation of the university as well as the removal of artworks on campus that seem to be seen from the campaigns lances a s promoting institutional racism The Rhodes Must Fall movement has seemingly led to the establishment other twitter protests like the #FeesMustFall .Bosch (2016) argues that while the Rhodes must fall was only at the University of Capetown, the #feesmustfall is a nationwide student led protest campaigns. The debates about the removal of the Rhodes statue are a clear testimony that social networking sites are central to the organisation of successful campaigns.

Given the forementioned successful twitter protests, there is seemingly a great deal of fear in the Zimbabwe's government that twitter may be used in the same manner it has been used in other countries. Authorities in this country seem to have fear that twitter protests in Zimbabwe maybe a replica of the Arab spring or the protests in South Africa. This can be evidenced from Psychology Mazivisa, a ruling government apologist's words that Mugabe cannot be tweeted out of power. "Beware these men of cloth, not all of them are true preachers of the Bible. I don't know whether they are serving God. They spell God in reverse," Mugabe said at a funeral for a senior government official, the first time he has publicly addressed the #ThisFlag movement, Quigley (2016). Mugabe has often been quoted saying that Zimbabwe will not experience an Arab Spring.

4.3 Twitter As A Communication Platform In Zimbabwe

Twitter is not a charitable organisation and therefore seeks to make profit, this can be evident through its internal make up, it is deliberately designed to exclude others. It is typical of the Greek -Agora but differ in terms of characters involved. Twitter has limited characters ,140, it is also very individualistic, which is also typical of capitalists from a political economy point of view. Individualism manifests itself by having an individual directly controlling or manipulating his or her mouthpiece, thus the personal twitter account. A twitter profile can choose to follow or not to follow another person. They can only follow those with same interests as theirs.

Regardless of the fact that twitter bundles across the leading network service providers in Zimbabwe namely Netone, Telecel and Econet is sold at $1 for one week, which is relatively the same price with Facebook and WhatsApp weekly bundles, twitter is not Zimbabwe's

favourite social media platform (Gambanga 2015). The It is justifiable to assert that economic capability is at the core of most individuals in Zimbabwe's preference of a technology. For example, those in the informal sectors are overburdened with concerns of their day to day living. They are weighed down with thoughts on how the technology can help them earn a living.Some can not even afford a stable meal a day and let alone get a dollar to buy twitter bundles which have no economic value to them.Gambanga (2015) supports the above argument when he asserts that twitter is too serious and exhibits signs of only being a site that is predominantly now being used as a political space regardless of the fact that users can personalise their accounts .He further argues that most Zimbabweans only joined the microblogging site because it was uncensored and could give them a dose of social and political issues affecting their lives(Bus 2012). The level of arguments on twitter are pitched in such a way that it would not make sense to a commoner. It is not just anyone who can walk on twitter street, it is those who are financially muscled and educated enough on communication skills, hence summarising arguments.

There are instances when the Zimbabwean government has taken stiff measures on the public when they seemingly in the government's lances use the internet and more specifically social media that is a potential risk to national safety and social stability. During the #tajamuka protests the government through POTRAZ, a telecommunications regulatory board released a warning to citizens that their mobile sim-cards are registered with them and therefore it can see all information being circulated on their mobile phones. Soon after the warnings, the government introduce the Cyber Crime Bill. The minister of Information Communication Technology Postal and Courier Services Hon Supa Mandiwanzira issued a statement that the cyber bill was not targeted at the social media movements, however one can read between the lines and assume that the bill was meant to stifle these social media protests.

Access to information is a basic human right as articulated in the Zimbabwean Constitution. Twitter use in Zimbabwe does not favour the old age, these characters often resort to rural areas as they age and they rarely access internet hence twitter platforms. It is also just not an issue of having a gadget that enables one to go on the internet but rather knowledge on how to use twitter. This knowledge lacks in most people in Zimbabwe.

Twitter has a limit of 140 characters, as accounted for by Jonhson (2013),160 characters was the message carrier limit and the founders wanted to leave room for a username and ad to resort to 140 character limit. Limiting twitter in 140 characters only favours those with brevity of expression, who can effectively say summarise their views in a short, precise, interesting manner so that you can attract followers. Different traditions, with deep seated values, people don't get to the point immediately, they beat about the bush. Some cultural communities deliberately have value in many words, Ong (2002) Using limited characters is by nature exclusionary and labour intensive, thus in the effort needed for one to summarise a point. Oral communities only got introduced to writing as a way of colonisation, Ong (2002).

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o (1981) in his book, Decolonising the mind postulates that English language was used as a form of colonisation. He asserts that language was the most important channel through which control captivated and held the soul prisoner. He further argues that for the colonialists, language was a way of spiritual subjugation whilst the bullet were a means of physical subjugation. Language according to Ngugi (1981) is not a mere thread of words but rather a suggestive power well beyond the direct and vocabulary meaning. Thus, language and literature were taking us further from ourselves to other selves, from our world to other worlds and this phenomenon is justifiably still evident with the adaptation of social networking sites like twitter that have all configurations set in English. Individuals can send tweets that are written in their vernacular language as long as they meet the 140 character limit but the instructions from how to send a tweet, retweet, like, are all configured in English. The use of English directly alienates the greater public in Zimbabwe who have deep sited values in word expression and vernacular language usage. This class of people in Zimbabwe are in the majority, therefore if twitter excludes the majority then naturally it supports the minority.

4.4 Mission Statement

 Twitters mission statement is *"To give everyone the power to create and share ideas and information instantly, without barriers,"* (Twitter.com). The mission statement seems to sympathise with those who are marginalised in the ownership of the means of production, thus it promises them a platform that they can instantly and without barrier communicate, speaking back to authoritarian regimes. This kind of sympathetic mission statement is rather too ambitious. However, one can give it credit because it promises the involvement of people from

all walks of life regardless of social status, thus proving itself to an ideal public sphere. Twitters mission statement suggests the microblogging site can be used as a mouthpiece to speak back.

The stance however of giving power is to a justifiable extend not innocent. Giving of power would assume that twitter is the all-powerful means of communication and it is now generously donating power, this makes it the capitalist and the audiences become the subjects, it subjectifies its users. The notion of giving power ascribes users to an already well define use of twitter. This manipulates twitter users to only use the platform not how they would want to but how twitter wants them to. This can also be linked up to the deliberate internal build- up of twitter. The retweets, mentions, reply and comments are justifiably not the only functions that twitter can allow, but these were carefully selected by twitter so as to advance its ideologies. Curan and Gurevitch (2005) argue that media creates meaning as an exercise of power while enhancing their ideologies.

Twitter's non-accountability to how people use or abuse it is a cause for concern in light of its mission statement. The Zimbabwean government had no idea of the deliberation about movements like the #Tajamuka that were organised on twitter. What the Zimbabwean government had to deal with were the protests in the street. Twitter cannot be held accountable for the destruction of property, loss of life, the fear and despondency imparted on citizens by these protests. Twitter therefore in this instance becomes a tool for mass destruction which nobody can deal with.

Twitter's mission seems to suit developed country's political positions. The fact that in Zimbabwe during the shutdowns when the internet was pulled down, twitter was also affected, questions the authenticity of the question of barriers in their mission statement. If it were for America, maybe the internet would have been pulled down.

4.5 Ownership and funding mechanisms

Twitter is co-owned by Jack Dorsey (@Jack), Evan Williams (@Ev) and Biz Stone (@Biz).It is headquartered in USA San Francisco. Of twitter's 29 international office listed on its website, it does not have any office in Africa. Its International offices are in Amsterdam, Bangalore, Berlin, Bogota, Brussels, Cologne, Dubai, Dublin, Hamburg, Hong Kong, Jakarta,

London, Madrid, Melbourne, Mexico City, Milan, Mumbai, New Delhi, Osaka, Paris, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Singapore, Sydney, Seoul, Tokyo, Toronto, Vancouve (Twitter 2016). This is rather problematic as this structure encourages a top to bottom movement of ideas. Twitter might just make use of the feedback it gets from countries that it is has offices in. The media in any form or nature are largely capitalist, they are enterprises that seek to make profits. Political economy is justifiably the study of power relations between capitalist enterprises and public intervention in the production distribution and consumption of media products, Curran and Gurevitch (2000). The question raising these suspicions is why Twitter has no physical offices in Africa.

The fact that twitter is owned by people who are from a developed America might support the argument that twitter was developed under the influences of elites hence its mission statement. It does not matter itself with commoner's interests, thus developing countries, it is targeted at advancing the ideologies of the country of its origin. Twitter will at the end of the day not worry itself with how other users out of countries where it has its offices access it or even the service improvements they would want. If it were a case of sending feedback through online services, then why would it have offices in different countries in the first place.

Twitter is a private company and according to Jonhson (2013), its sources of revenue are not clear. Twitter makes its profit Sans-frontier, it has no boundaries on where it reaps. Some unsuspecting Zimbabweans do not realise how much they are making for twitter. People do not ask for the economic value associated with the time, effort spent on tweeting and do not ask anyone to pay for the content but just get gratification. Twitter accumulates its capital per-click (Fuchs 2009).Targeted online advertising enables twitter advertising companies to present more than one advertisement to users, the more the targeted advertisements, the higher the chances of individuals clicking on them. Mosco (1996) supports this notion when he states that the media do not just generously provide the audiences with entertainment and information but are careful to stick to their core mandate of profit making by selling audiences to advertisers.

Twitter makes money by manipulating personal details that unsuspecting 'twimbos' would have innocently shared whilst in the process of signing up for twitter. Twitter's $4.5 billion value is said to come from its ability to exploit its base of hundreds of million users (Jonhson

2013). Twitter gives you an option to choose the sections that interest an individual, these options coupled with signing up details will help twitter target how to advertise, type of products to advertise. They capitalise on those freely and unsuspectingly provided demographics. Jonhson (2013) also comments that twitter makes money by licensing its stream of tweets to Microsoft, google and yahoo, that means from a political economy perspective, twitter manipulates its users by making profits out of their personal tweets and does not pay them for the tweets. Twitter just like any other corporate social media platform, makes profits through the help of targeted advertising. Fuchs (2013) is of the view that targeted advertisements can be construed as a form of surplus production. Twitter monitors users' through an assessment of their user generated data, in form of online behaviour, thus the pages they follow, like, their type of tweet.

Engulfed in the excited that social media allows freedom of expression which is uncensored lies the breeding space for capitalists. Individuals have been robbed of their spare times, time to socialise with face to face interactions has been substitute with online networking (Castells 2005). Leisure time has been distorted, play which is an expression of eros has been destroyed, play is today's surplus and capitalists capitalise on it. (Fuchs) Boundaries between playing and working have become indistinct.

The microblogging site, twitter, shows its manipulative traits by justifiably enhancing a consumerist culture McCracken (2003). He argues that the internet (twitter included), narrows people's minds and promotes an obsession with worthless issues and does not in any way advance the call for democracy. When an individual posts a tweet, it is just so normal that the person becomes anxious about who is to respond, what type of responses has a tweet attracted, that way, while others are busy looking for way to rule, this 'twimbo' spends his time engaged on twitter. This addiction may also be stimulated by twitters list of trending topics. Trending tweets normally have a larger community discussing about it. By engaging in these type of conversations, a 'twimbo' does not actively participate in areas that would empower him, in this instance the capitalist twitter would have capitalised on the consumerist behaviour of the 'twimbo', this move is bemoaned by Fuchs (2013), who asserts that surveillance on social media platforms has led to the commodification of pro-nsumers. Political economy assumes that capitalists find gratification by getting a hold of the mind before the labour.

Twitter does not pay tax to countries it is operative. All the profits it realises through selling its audiences to advertisers gets to its own pocket. This is typical of capitalism which is a way of making profits.In Zimbabwe all registered companies are required to pay tax through the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority.Twitter does not pay this tax but it can be understood as a commercial communication service provider.

4.6 Links with other organisations

Twitter does not operate in a vacuum, inspired by capitalist motives, it allows its content to be merged with other social network sites, these among them include Youtube, Facebook, LinkedIn. The merging allows an individual to just post content on Twitter and whatever they have posted will also be visible to these their profiles on these other social media platforms. This link saves time and labour for social media users as they won't have to physically post their views on these other social media platforms. The media has power to influence our interpretation of reality as well as guide our perception of reality and as such this process is being done as collaborative effort from Twitter and its links with other social media platforms.

4.7 Publics

Publics are an integral part of any organisation. They are important in an organisation's decision making process. Publics can be in form of shareholders and stakeholders. These can be those who have shares in the company, audiences and advertisers. Twitter has physical offices in more than 29 cities around the world. Twitter also has a tab that is dedicated to user feedback, thus showing how it keeps its publics close.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed ownership and funding mechanisms and how they influence the production and use of twitter. The chapter has thus discussed how twitter as technology is innocent and as an organisation is not a charitable. The chapter also discussed how twitter cannot be held accountable for any disruptions or developments whether at micro or macro levels of human survival

Chapter five: Data Presentation and analysis

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation and discussion of research findings. It presents research findings gathered using data gathering methods highlighted in chapter three. The researcher used virtual ethnography and non -participant observation to gather data. The researcher has attached Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets so as to thematically and narratively engage with them. The findings will be presented in a manner which enables people who read it to interpret the meanings behind the data, thus they have been presented in themes. The findings present the manner in which Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets contribute to democratic deliberation. The research findings are being discussed under four broad themes.

5.2 Rhizomatic nature of twitter and other social media platforms.

Figure 1 retweets, sharing and likes ,showing twitter's rhizomatic nature

The picture above shows a snipped image from Jonathan Moyo's twitter page. The image shows a combination of two tweets by Jonathan Moyo. The researcher has chosen to put them together in order for her to clearly show her findings. The image shows eight hashtags that were mentioned by the tweets' author. The hashtags have been presented as media links.From the left hand direction to the right hand direction in chronological order, the image also shows a reply tab which users use to reply to the tweets of the people they follow. The image also

shows the retweets and from the evidence on the picture, the tweet has attracted fourteen retweets. The next tab is the liking tab, this is where users click to show that they like the tweet, in this instance the tweet attracted fifteen tweets. The last tab is a 'more' option. This is where users can share the tweet as a direct message, they can also copy the tweet link and use it for their own purposes. The 'more' button also allows users to embed the tweet. It also gives users an option of mute, report or block the tweet.
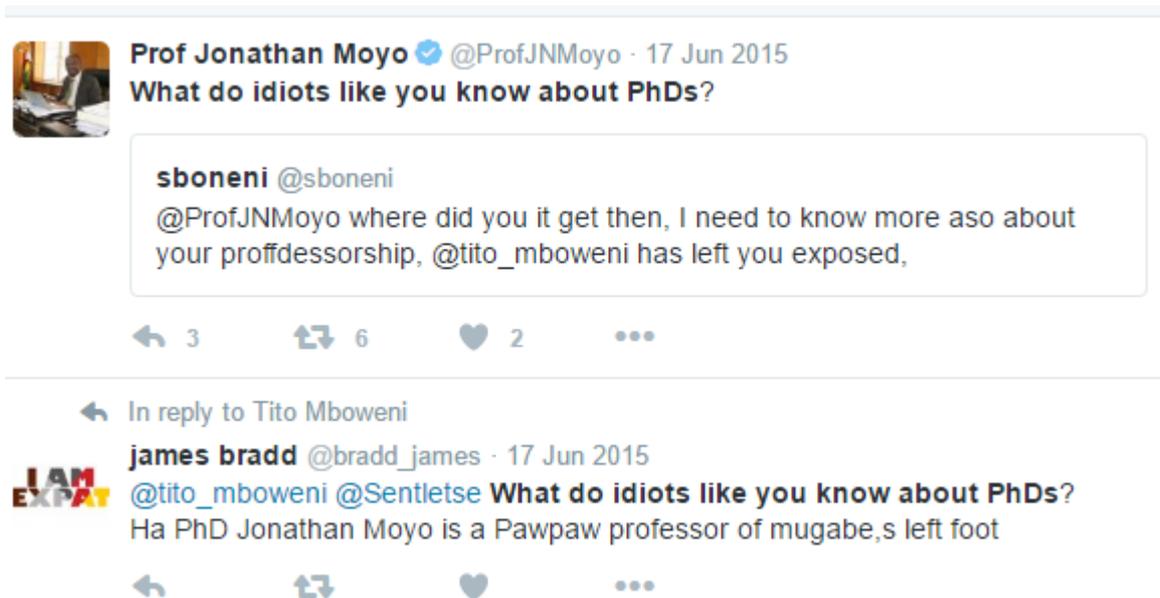

Figure 1.1 the rhizomatic nature of tweeter through replies

Fig 1.1 adds to the existing discussions about the rhizomatic nature of twitter by showing how replies can also be a way communication that is not linear. The replies show how twitter has the potential to bypass geographical boundaries, boundaries imposed by hierarchy and time to connect with other users making it a typical rhizome Deleuze and Guattari (1987), thus mentioning Tito Mboweni from South Africa. Twitter has been analogised to a rhizome which has the potential to steer up conversations. Giving reference to Professor Jonathan Moyo's tweet in fig 1, one can see that there are fourteen retweets, and fifteen likes. The fourteen retweets are rebroadcasting Jonathan Moyo's tweet to their followers who are very much like to be different from his followers. For example, of the fourteen retweets, one retweet is being done to a different audience who can in turn retweet it to a set of his followers who are not in any way linked to Jonathan Moyo's twitter page. The tweet will hen attract a lot of audience even of those who do not follow @ProJNMoyo. The second tweet was written in a manner of using hashtags and mentions.

Discussion

Critical reflections on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical conversational rhizome on twitter. A case study of Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets.

Jonathan Moyo's tweets have attracted a considerable number of attention from his followers. For the purpose of this study, the vascular bundle, which pulls up water to be used in different parts of the plant can be likened to mentions, retweets and hashtags. These tools increase individual interaction. Retweets as argued by (Boyd, Golder, and Lotan 2008), act as a form of endorsement, allowing individuals to rebroadcast content generated by other users, thereby raising the content's visibility. Kwak et.al (2010) postulates that the number of retweets for a certain tweet is a measure of the tweet's popularity and in turn of the tweet writer's popularity. This shows how twitter allows for the wide spreading of information instantaneously. For deliberation to be democratic, all eligible participants must be informed and take part, (Dalhgren 2001). This would in turn help in making informed decisions and enable everyone to contribute towards public opinion formation.

They also argue that the retweet mechanism empowers users to spread information of their choice beyond the reach of the original tweet's followers. Mentions function differently, allowing someone to address a specific user directly through the public feed, or, to a lesser extent, refer to an individual in the third person Honeycutt and Herring (2008). From these arguments, it is justifiable to note that retweets and mentions (@), serve corresponding purposes, collectively acting as the chief apparatuses for public user-user interaction on Twitter. Hashtags (#) allow users to interpret tweets specifying the topic or intended audience. Retweets, replies as well as comments are some of the twitter facets that can increase interactivity of audiences. Twitter allows its users to pass opinions and deliberate on given topics.This ability to facilitate interaction that is not linear shows the nodal twitter' rhizomatic nature .This increases the possibility of greater participation of people from different and diverse areas. This also suits the standards of a virtual sphere as argued by Papacharissi (2002).

The potential of Jonathan Moyo's tweets to stray from his twitter page to other pages of the people he has tagged with hashtag links shows the way information diffuse on twitter, hence this qualifies twitter to be a rhizomatic platform and as suiting characteristics of rhizomatic information flow. Therefore, tweeter can be analogised to the vascular bundle in a rhizome which enables the spreading of shoots 'tweets'. Upon one's click to the hashtag links provided by Jonathan Moyo, they are automatically redirected to the twitter page of that person. In this instance by clicking the hashtag #mawarire, one will be redirected to Mawarire's twitter page

or any other information about Mawarire that is available online. This shows the network society flows and how individuals are networked online. This networking shows the interconnectedness of social media platforms. The interconnectedness when unaffected by economic or governmental issues could serve as a platform for democratic deliberation.

5.3 Deliberative Potential Of Twitter To Facilitate Democracy
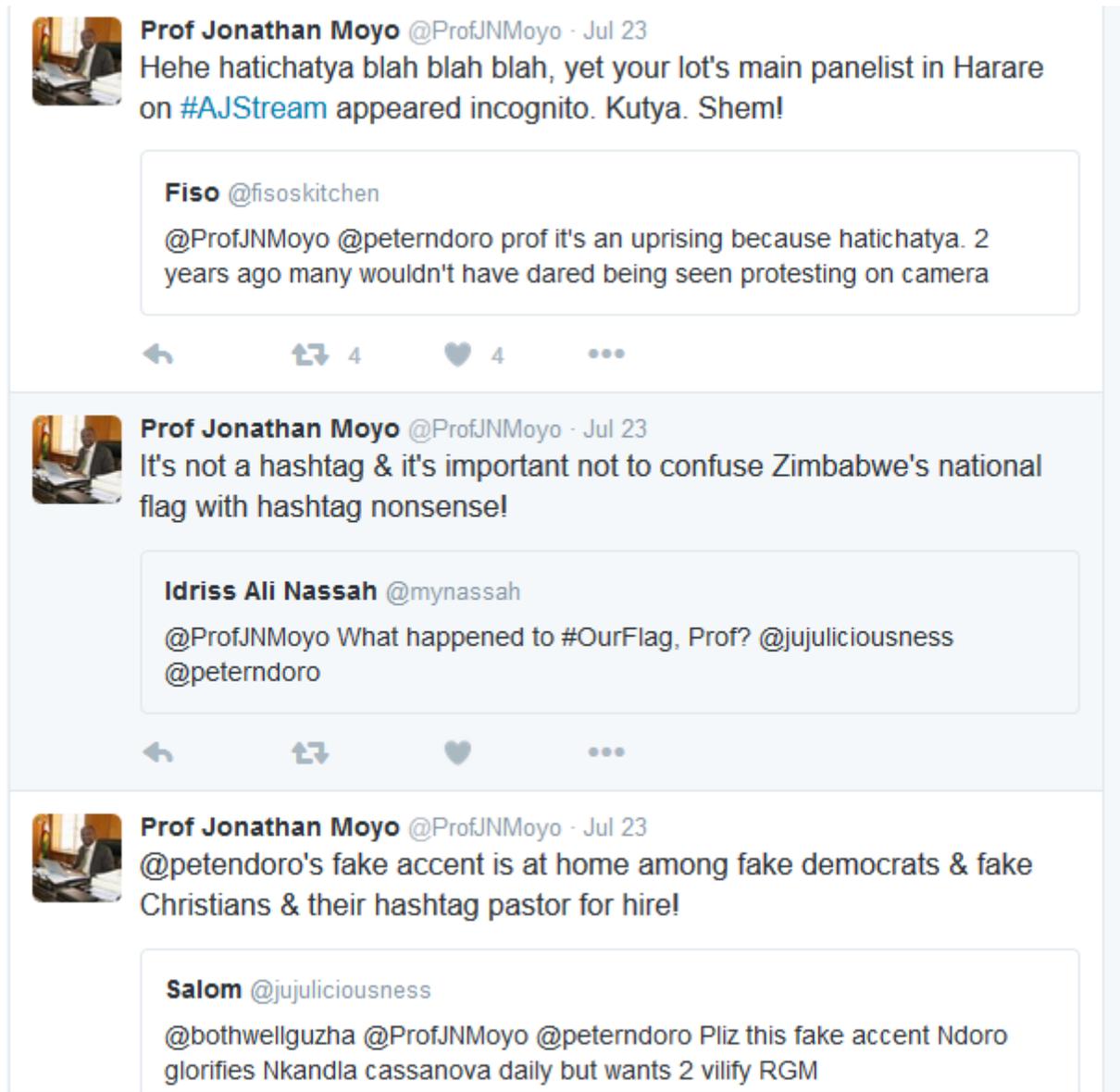
Figure 2 a stream of tweets showing the nature of deliberations on twitter

Fig 2,shows a stream of tweets and their responses .From one of the replies, @fisoskitchen asserts that people are no longer scared of protesting on camera, whilst @ProfJNMoyo is of the view that the protests are staged ,by calling them fake. Jonathan Moyo seems to be de-

associating the Zimbabwe national flag with the hashtag name for the protests which @fisoskitchen is talking about.

Discussion

Twitter gives people the opportunity to deliberate on issues that they would not say in the real world due to governmental regulation. Twitter gives the ordinary citizen power to play the watchdog role of the media, constantly giving checks and balances of those in power. Twitter enables citizen journalism where every individual can disseminate newsworthy information.

Twitter has enabled the exchange of views by individuals, this can be evidenced from one of the responses which reads "*its an uprising because hatichatya, 2 years ago people many wouldn't dare protest in front of cameras*". This conveys democratic deliberation by citizens through the use of twitter as a virtual public sphere (Papacharissi 2002), that is free from interference of media laws and government officials. Twitter makes freedom of expression guaranteed for the citizens of Zimbabwe who operate under a suffocated media environment that has limited access of information as well as freedom of expression, speech and assemble. This brings out the relevance of Castells (2006) network society which posits that online deliberations break historical barriers to communication. These include physical barriers that only permit communication to be concentrated in a physical area. Zimbabwe uses POSA a media law to prohibit unauthorised assembly of more than 5 people. Twitter makes it impossible for the government to intercept communication made on the Twittersphere. In Zimbabwe, twitter makes it impossible for the government to effectively put to use the Interceptions of Communication Act, which legalises the interception of communication by government agencies for security purposes. This will help in achieving deliberative democracy as citizens participate freely.

Twitter offers a freedom of expression as it cannot be monitored by the government ,it gives people an opportunity to speak directly to the interested parties. However ,the researcher discovered that it is not just anybody in Zimbabwe or in the diaspora who can participate in twitter deliberations. The trends of responses ushered towards @ProfJNMoyo's tweets is from characters who are in the elite club, the likes of Obert Gutu, Wamagaisa among others shows that the level of arguments generally become pitched and as such no commoner can make sense out of those arguments. The researcher used critical discourse analysis to concur with

(Gambanga 2015) who asserts that twitter is complicated and too serious. Thus explaining the finding that only those of note are constant responders to Prof Jonathan Moyo's tweets. He argues that twitter as a real-time platform requires some form of mastery and needs one to stay connected through trending issues. He further argues that even though people personalise their accounts twitter remains a political site and is too serious for critical analysis of varying topics.

The tweets in fig:2 show the reciprocal nature of twitter deliberations. For Dalghren (2001), democratic deliberation can only be achieved if the discussion is dialogical. Democratic deliberation theorists are of the view that democratic deliberations must be reciprocal. Therefore, it should be noted that if a person in a network society does not actively interact, they distort the possibility of twitter to be a platform that offers democratic deliberations.

Twitter can also be understood as a platform that exhibits agenda setting as well as the use of opinion leaders. For a topic to be debated, there has to be someone who would have introduced it, opinion leaders Katz and Lazersfield (1944).Therefore in this instance, @ProfJNMoyo is the owner of his twitter page and can choose to post a topic in a stunt he would want discussed, but due to the rhizomatic nature of twitter, people can always find ways in which they can reintroduce the post. Thus the influenced by opinion leaders, those who respond to @ProfJNMoyo's tweets are influenced by these opinion leaders. Given the fact that Jonathan Moyo is a professor, member of parliament and minister of higher and tertiary education, his discourses are largely pro-government and any response that seems to oppose his political perspective risks being labelled as anti-government. @ProfJNMoyo has notably never posted any ideas conflicting with government ideas, he can as organic intellect for the ruling party ZANU PF. However even in the face of such notable hierarchies that exist in the real Zimbabwean political community, twitter does not observe them. In most instances, Jonathan Moyo is questioned not in a manner that first observes protocols would in the organic sphere.

5.4 Twitter As Public Sphere

Founded on the ideas of freedom of expression, twitter heavily infested with incivility and lack of rationality. There is a lot of name calling and hate speech. The picture below shows some of the words used by @ProfJNMoyo in his tweets. He uses words like fake, pretender, spineless,idiot,mgodhoyi and plastic in addressing people in a public sphere. This is justifiably

a move meant to undermine the other people who are sharing different views from that of Prof Jonathan Moyo. According to Webster's dictionary, civility is civilized conduct; especially courtesy and politeness. Civility is polite act or expression. The picture below shows how Prof Jonathan Moyo is ridiculing the #thisflag manifesto. He is belittling them in a supposed bid to make them feel that what they are doing is nonsensical and they need to redirect their efforts. #This flag is a hashtag pioneered by Pastor Evan Mawarire to mobilise Zimbabweans in protesting against the government. Jonathan Moyo, in fact called #This flag owner plastic and spineless,

Figure 3 tweet on the use of uncivil and irrational words

The tweet below also exhibits unpolite words .Jonathan Moyo used venecular language to say some extremely obscene terms.He used Ndebele language which is one of the main languages in Zimbabwe.The researcher will describe the tweet separating words and using them as single entities.'Uyahlanya' means you a crazy, in the form of madness.'Wena' means You whilst mgodhoyi refers to an unhealthily skinny dog.

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Oct 16
Uyahlanya wena mgodhoyi!

Perrier LaPaDite @lapadite_
@Wamagaisa @Hon_Kasukuwere reminds me of the big stomached King Lobengula who signed the Rudd Concession

↩   ⟲ 19   ♥ 24   •••
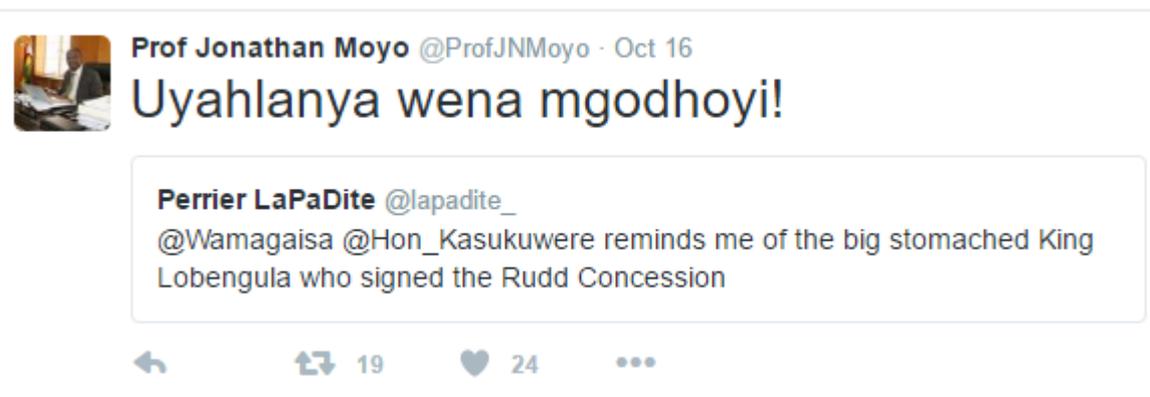
Figure 3.1 an example of uncivil words

The tweet in fig generated nineteen retweets and twenty-four likes. This means the tweet was rebroadcast to followers of nineteen different twitter profiles, this means of the nineteen profiles that retweeted , if in case each profile has a thousand followers, these all have the potential to see the message and even retweet it to their followers. The nodes of where the tweet can reach are just unimaginable.

Discussion

Defined as general politeness and courtesy, civility has always been considered a requirement for democratic discourse, civility is valued as an indicator of a functional democratic society, Papacharissi (2004). Discussions on the meaning of citizenship, democracy, and public deliberation highlight civility as a virtue, the lack of which carries detrimental implications for a democratic society, Papacharissi (2004). The use of irrational words may justifiably intimidate people from meaningfully contributing to public opinion. Whether we use it to bridge friendships, stay informed, or express ourselves. Twitter offers us a unique way to stay connected with the world around us.

However, one does not need to look very far to experience the darker side of twitter. News reports of cyberbullying, gang violence, criminal activity, and suicide fuelled by twitter are shocking and troubling. Being called an Idiot, spineless, directly affects individual's self-esteem to meaningfully contribute towards public opinion. Being referred to as a sick dog, can also arouse emotions of feeling disrespected and individuals can either then keep quiet or also trade in those types of irrational words. In light of these discussions therefore the use of

language that is not rational and there is a great deal of lack of civility. Referring to someone as spineless, is to a larger extend a way of looking down upon them and even if the person was going to meaningfully contribute towards public opinion they would have been embarrassed. These words are demeaning, and they belittle someone's self -esteem. Therefore, a trading of such words distorts twitter's potential for a public sphere. The debates prove that the debates on twitter are not centred on courtesy and politeness, they are not other regarding.

Scholars who are sceptical of online discourse's potential to lead to democracy warn that technologies that are not universally accessible and those that frequently induce fragmented, nonsensical, and enraged discussion far from guarantee a revived public sphere, Papacharissi (2004). This theme focuses on twitter as a public sphere discussing from the lances of civility and rationality on twitter and guided by the assumption that if twitter has the potential to revive the public sphere, it ought to promote civility. He further argues that loyalty to civility ensures that deliberations are directed by democratic principles, not just proper manners.

Twitter, founded on the ideas of openness and free speech, pulses with venom, much of it from pseudonymous accounts, Browne, and Giachritsis (2005). Twitter has had revolutionary impacts upon the ability for expression, ideas and political movements to spread and connect across the internet. Twitter has integrated itself into many aspects of our lives. One cannot discuss civility without considering the much-debated visions of the public sphere and civil society, Papacharissi (2004), it is in this guideline that the researcher links the virtual public sphere theory to the civility of twitter.

However, Schudson (1997) cited in Papacharissi (2004) shares parallel views of civility with those of Papacharissi (2004), he argues that deliberations are often too civility-driven, and frequently needs to be more robust, rude, and self-absorbed, propounding that democracy might need to be terminated from the auspices of civility. Schudson (1997) posits that public discourse is not the soul of democracy, for it is rarely egalitarian, may be too large and amorphous, rarely civil, and ultimately offers no magical solution to problems of democracy. Papacharissi (2004) however posits that civil conversation may indeed be the soul of democracy, provided that we do not impose stringent rules on discussion, and expect a discourse that is so polite and restrained. Civility standards should promote respect for the

other, enhance democracy, but also allow human uniqueness and unpredictability. Offensive verbal exchanges and verbal manipulation have frequently endangered the cohesiveness of online communities (Stivale, 1997).

5.5 The Link Between Twitter And Citizenship

The picture below seems to be suggesting that politicians are political actors who are there to defend the status quo of their political parties. The picture shows a tweet in which Jonathan Moyo responds but not answering the question asked. His response seems to suggest that he is aware of the reasons why people have taken to #Thisflag campaigns but he just feels they have not done enough. He demeans protests that were conducted by Zimbabweans in Canada to a roadside picnic. Peter Ndoro is talking from an ordinary citizen's point of view whilst Moyo is justifiably speaking in the shoes of the government. The way Moyo demeans the uprisings in Canada as a road side picnic and as not representative of Zimbabwe uprisings suggests that he is clearly aware of the sour relations between America and Zimbabwe and does not want Zimbabwe to be associated with anything carrying an American tag. Peter Ndoro on the other hand is seemingly talking in a way that empathises with the ordinary Zimbabweans who are affected by the causes of #thisflag movement. Peter Ndoro seems to be saying that the government has been paying a deaf ear to all their calls, hence he says *"how many must rise at home and abroad before authorities finally listen"*. There is suggestively a notion that Zimbabweans are not described by territoriality, some are citizens but are abroad, thus the diaspora community is speaking back to government.
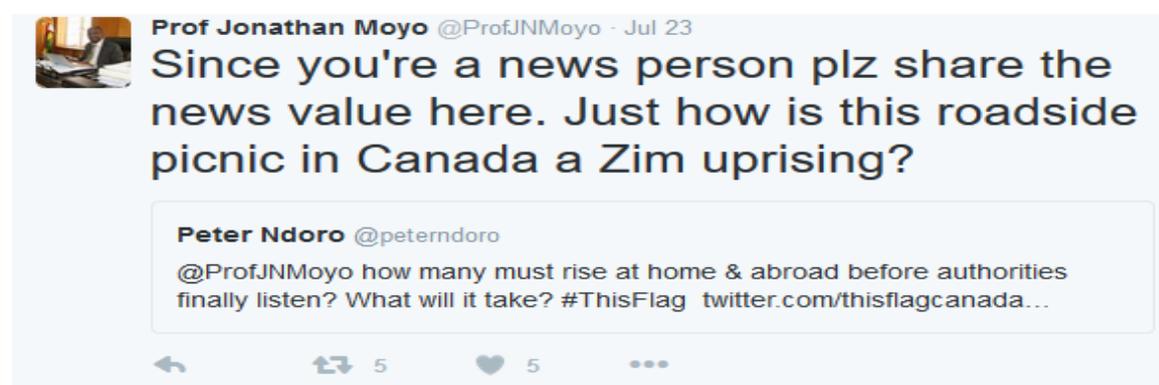
Figure 4.deliberations on the social media uprisings

There seems to be contestations between the civic society and the government in trying to win the minds of the ordinary citizens. Peter Ndoro is discussing as an intermediate between the

government and the ordinary people. He seems to be sympathising with the ordinary whilst Moyo seems to be sympathising with the ruling government. The way the conversation is structured seem to suggest that Moyo wants ordinary citizens not to be flattered by the uprisings discourse whilst Ndoro is urging ordinary citizens to increase their number in these protests.

The Zimbabwean government has never had a soft-spot for civic organisation as anything that challenges the status quo of the ruling government is said to be coming from its colonial masters therefore its destructive in nature. Civic organisations especially those that are in any way linked to America and Britain are believed to puppets for regime change. The civil society becomes a key player in the public sphere as it is the organized expression of the values and interests of society. The relationships between government and civil society and their interaction via the public sphere define the polity of society.

Fig also shows the type of tweets that Jonathan Moyo retweets. These are justifiably in tandem with his political ideology.

DISCUSSION

Discourses on twitter seem to be undemocratic in the sense that as alluded to by Habermus, for online deliberations to be democratic there is need for participant to put aside their social status and engage in conversations rationally. Evidence produced above seem to suggest that Jonathan Moyo is using twitter as an ideological state apparatus. Citizens have questions and are directing them to Moyo because he seems to be standing in the shoes of the government. There is a clear distinction between the two individuals here, thus Moyo and Ndoro, therefore twitter cannot qualify to be an ideal public sphere but a space that allow deliberations to take place. Moyo is for the government and hence as postulated by Habermus, an ideal public sphere has no government influence actually as Fraser (1990) puts it, the public sphere is critical of the government .This sphere has characters who are sympathising with government yet it should

be a platform that allows ordinary citizens to contribute to public opinion formation and at the end influence policy.

The findings seem to suggest that Jonathan Moyo is the ruling government's organic intellectual who has been strategically assigned to the twitter desk in a bid to protect the image of the ruling government by responding to the issues raised and in most cases introducing motions that he knows affects ordinary citizens and knows that he has the best answers or them.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The researcher relied on qualitative research which as asserted by Lune (2013) gives in-depth information that helps in understanding the perceptions surrounding Prof Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets and how thy respond to them. The researcher used desktop research which provided readily available data for analysis. The data henceforth just needed processing and critical discourse analysis of Professor Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets. This study has brought to light the idea that, in the face of Zimbabwe's media laws that stifle freedom of expression, twitter can be used to say the unsayable, with individuals democratically deliberating on issues of their concern. Twitter is being used as a tool for providing checks and balances to those in power and explicitly commenting about them without fear of being arrested.

6.1 Conclusions

The research sought to give critical reflections on the contribution to democratic deliberation of a typical conversational rhizome on twitter. The rhizomatic nature of twitter has been clearly elaborated and proved that online twitter deliberations are not just about clicktivism but they have a top down effect. Citizens engage in political discussions that affect them offline. These include issues to do with corruption, corrupt government officials, incompetent government representatives. These issues are discussed on twitter without fear of freedom after expression. Thus, twitter has been revealed as a platform that empowers citizen journalism as well as freedom of expression.

The research showed that twitter deliberations are an extension of deliberations that would have been done offline but due to Zimbabwe media laws, such debates cannot be broadcast. Twitter therefore provides safe platforms for deliberation.The study has revealed that technology has connected people, creating what Castells (2009) calls a network society. This is a society in which flows of communication are created and maintained through the internet. This form of

interconnectedness has enabled Zimbabweans even those in the Diaspora to participate in debates on issues concerning the ordinary Zimbabwean. The network theory was also used to show how twitter operates as a market of ideas which one can access and participate only through the internet, the theory also helped in bringing out how technology enables free flow of information and freedom of expression. Twitter however benefits those who have brevity in expression due to its 140-character limit. This limit jeopardises its capacity for democratic deliberation. This is so because the research has shown that for deliberations to be democratic, everyone regardless of class or status should participate in the deliberation.

Twitter has been revealed as a counterhegemonic public sphere (Winter 2003). Prior to the study, the researcher assumed that people's political background influences their perceptions towards political debates. Even as they tweet, individual's political positions were evident, with Prof Jonathan Moyo supporting the ruling government and the majority of the responses he received are clearly from people who are not ruling government sympathisers.

The research showed that political discourses are the major elements of twitter deliberations in Zimbabwe. Discourse is a game of power, it creates the world, it says something about the person saying it and it sets parameters on the say-able and unsayable (Focault 1995). Twitter gives power to consumers of media content to pro-nsumers. Van Dijk (1998) posits that political discourses are ideological and form social cognition, this can be seen in the deliberative patterns on Jonathan Moyo's selected tweets. People get so emotionally attached to political conversations, this shows a strong sense of political affiliation.

Twitter deliberations can lead to democracy as these deliberations have shown to be emanating from personal verdicts and political experience. Political discourses emanate from daily practices of individuals who later on form discursive practices evident in their everyday life, (Fairclough 1995). Deliberations on twitter have actually made the Zimbabwean government to put in place a cyber-bill justifiably to monitor these online deliberations. This shows that twitter deliberations can in fact lead to national democracy.

The research also discovered that twitter usage in Zimbabwe is only limited to urban areas where there is electricity and relatively higher chances of internet usage. Those in the rural

areas thou affected by some of the issues that will be deliberated on twitter cannot afford to be part of the deliberations. Thus, twitter usage in Zimbabwe is geographical location centred. This structure curtails twitters ability to provide democratic deliberations.

6.2 Recommendations to journalism and media studies training institution

They should incorporate the teaching of new media technologies as this is seemingly a growing trend in the 21st century communication. Journalism and media studies training institutions should also include modules that deal with social media, especially twitter. They should teach students how they can effectively use these social media platforms to market their content

6.3 Recommendations On ICT Policy In Zimbabwe

The ministry of Information Communication Technology (ICT) Postal and Courier Services in Zimbabwe should engage itself extensively on twitter. With the widely published protests that rocked Zimbabwe, the ministry should find means also actively participate in these debates. The participation would give them an opportunity to speak back to people's economic grievances shared via twitter.

The ministry of ICT Postal and Courier Services in Zimbabwe should laisse with responsible authorities and make internet services available to all geographical locations in the country. Rural areas are the largely marginalised areas in terms of internet access. This access can help in increased democratic participation even in organic sphere political discourses. If citizens can engage in deliberations o twitter they get to find other people's views about their political candidate and when voting time comes, they can make informed decisions.

6.4 Recommendations for further research

The topic of twitter contribution to deliberative democracy is an interesting one as it encompasses a wide range of issues including participation, discourse and power among others. I would recommend future researchers to investigate on how twitter deliberations can be used to answer questions of factionalism and name calling as tools for political campaigning. Future researchers can also look at what withers some of the rhizomatic discourses on twitter.

6.5 Conclusion

The researcher has arrived to the end of the study with the last chapter giving evaluations and recommendations for the entire study. An evaluation and overview of the research questions and objectives has been to this end been tackled. The researcher has also given recommendations to Midlands State University, Twitter as well as the ministry of ICT Postal and Courier Services in Zimbabwe as well as to those who would want to further research on twitter deliberative democracy. Twitter deliberation is under researched area in Zimbabwe and more people are recommended by the researcher to look at this interesting and critical area of study as far as Zimbabwe politics is concerned.

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APPENDICES
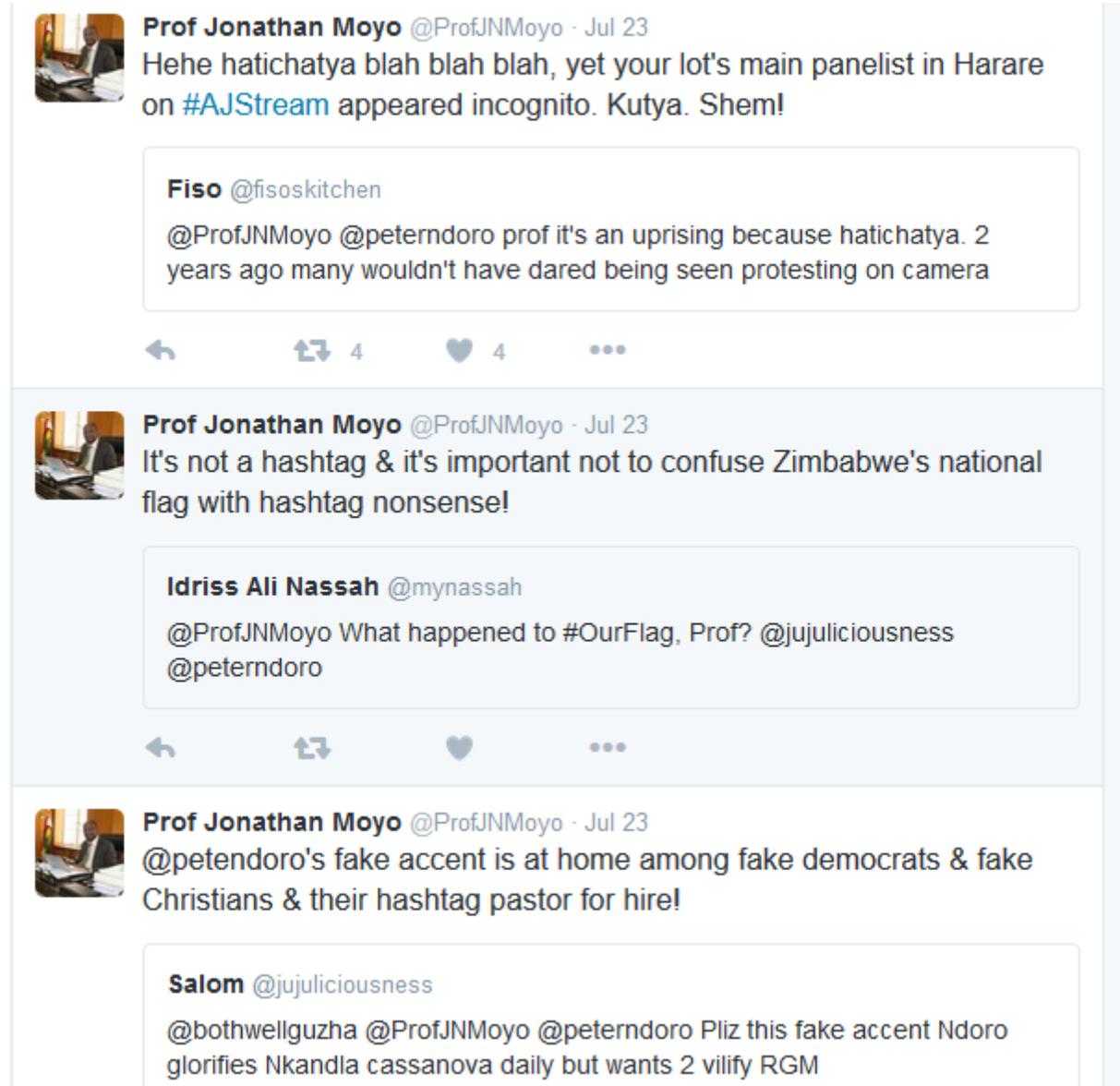
Appendix 1

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Jul 23
Hehe hatichatya blah blah blah, yet your lot's main panelist in Harare on #AJStream appeared incognito. Kutya. Shem!

> **Fiso** @fisoskitchen
>
> @ProfJNMoyo @peterndoro prof it's an uprising because hatichatya. 2 years ago many wouldn't have dared being seen protesting on camera

↩   ♻ 4   ♥ 4   •••

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Jul 23
It's not a hashtag & it's important not to confuse Zimbabwe's national flag with hashtag nonsense!

> **Idriss Ali Nassah** @mynassah
>
> @ProfJNMoyo What happened to #OurFlag, Prof? @jujuliciousness @peterndoro

↩   ♻   ♥   •••

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Jul 23
@petendoro's fake accent is at home among fake democrats & fake Christians & their hashtag pastor for hire!

> **Salom** @jujuliciousness
>
> @bothwellguzha @ProfJNMoyo @peterndoro Pliz this fake accent Ndoro glorifies Nkandla cassanova daily but wants 2 vilify RGM

Appendix 2

Appendix 3

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Oct 16

Uyahlanya wena mgodhoyi!

> **Perrier LaPaDite** @lapadite_
> @Wamagaisa @Hon_Kasukuwere reminds me of the big stomached King Lobengula who signed the Rudd Concession

↩   ⟲ 19   ♥ 24   •••

Appendix 4

Prof Jonathan Moyo ✔ @ProfJNMoyo · 17 Jun 2015
What do idiots like you know about PhDs?

> **sboneni** @sboneni
> @ProfJNMoyo where did you it get then, I need to know more aso about your proffdessorship, @tito_mboweni has left you exposed,

↩ 3   ⟲ 6   ♥ 2   •••

↩ In reply to Tito Mboweni

james bradd @bradd_james · 17 Jun 2015
@tito_mboweni @Sentletse **What do idiots like you know about PhDs?**
Ha PhD Jonathan Moyo is a Pawpaw professor of mugabe,s left foot

↩   ⟲   ♥   •••

Appendix 5

⟲ Prof Jonathan Moyo Retweeted

Race Jones @Shugnice · Jul 18
I mean white people have plagiarized the work of Black people since the beginning of time. America is a rewrite.

↩   ⟲ 201   ♥ 261   •••

Apendix 6

Prof Jonathan Moyo @ProfJNMoyo · Jul 23

Since you're a news person plz share the news value here. Just how is this roadside picnic in Canada a Zim uprising?

Peter Ndoro @peterndoro

@ProfJNMoyo how many must rise at home & abroad before authorities finally listen? What will it take? #ThisFlag twitter.com/thisflagcanada...

↩ ⇄ 5   ♥ 5   •••