

‘If You Can’t Beat them, Blog them’

Exploring the Internet for freedom of expression in Zambia



Master Thesis

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ABSTRACT

Advocacy for freedom of expression in Zambia has been part of the media debates in the country since the 1970s. A number of researches reveal that many incentives to promote freedom of expression and press freedom exist in Zambia. Little research however, has been done on the possible contribution of the Internet to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia.

This study therefore, is aimed at examining the role that the Internet plays in the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. To generate important results, the study has examined five thematic issues, namely; 1) the relevance of online publishing to freedom of expression; 2) advantages of the Internet vis-à-vis the mainstream media; 3) restrictions that hinder bloggers from communicating freely; 4) the future of freedom of expression in Zambia vis-à-vis the Internet; and 5) the relevance of the journalism curricula at university and college levels.

This study has adopted a mixed method approach as a research strategy. Principles of ethnography, interviews, questionnaires and document analysis have been blended to come up with the rich data presented in the study. Data from interviews and ethnography came from one-to-one talk and/or systematic participant observation with bloggers, participants of the blogs, editors of the mainstream media (public and the private radio, TV and newspapers) and a random selection of members of public from Lusaka, Zambia. Data from questionnaires and document analysis came from randomly selected individuals and documents that I thought possessed information that I wanted. The data from these research tools was assessed within the context of literature review and the analytical framework that was adopted from Habermas public sphere theory. The research was conducted in the months of June, July and August 2011 in Lusaka, Zambia.

Based on my analysis and research results, the study reveals some advantages that the Internet has in the promotion of freedom of expression. This study also highlights some factors that hinder the achievement of this aspect such as the poor curricula in university and college education and a lack of a reliable and fast broadband connection to enable people to blog fast and with ease.

By and large, my analysis reveals a weak or lack of political will to promote the Internet for freedom of expression as a major hindrance to the development of citizen journalism in Zambia.

Meanwhile, it has emerged that the Internet media combines sound, video, text, audio and has the ability to archive information making it a powerful tool for information retrieval and dissemination.

DEDICATION

First and foremost, this thesis is dedicated to my almighty God for his everlasting love.

Secondly, this hard work would not have yielded any tangible results if not for my parents continued encouragement and support. To you Kemson and Mary Bukowa, I bow before you.

Thirdly, to my baby Bernice and life partner and friend Joe, you are my sunshine and the reason why I smile. My girl and 'big-boy' I really love you!

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Finally, I dedicate this thesis to everybody who has been there for me through 'thick' and 'thin'.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBC TV- Central Broadcasting Company

ICT - Information Communication Technology

FES – Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

MISA- Media Institute of Southern Africa

MMD- Movement for Multi-Party Democracy

PF- Patriotic Front

UNIP United National Independence Party

UNZA - The University of Zambia

ZAMCOM - Zambia Institute of Mass Communication

ZESCO - Zambia Electricity Supply Corporation

ZICTA - Zambia Information Technology authority

ZIMA- Zambia Independent Media Association

ZNBC- Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Much research has been conducted on the state of freedom of expression in Zambia (see. (Kasoma, 1986), (Makungu, 2004) and (Chirwa C. H., 1997)). Much research has also been conducted on the efforts to promote freedom of expression and press freedom in Zambia (see. (Alfred W. Chanda, 1999) and (Banda, 1997)). Little research however, has been conducted on the Internet and how it can contribute to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. In this vein, this research aims at exploring and discussing the role that the Internet can play in the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. Emphasis will be put on five major themes:

- i. The role that the Internet can play in the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia;
- ii. The advantages that the Internet has compared to the mainstream media;
- iii. Restrictions that can hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely;
- iv. The impact that the journalism curricula at universities and colleges has in relation to freedom of expression. And;
- v. The future of Zambia's freedom of expression in relation to the Internet.

The research has adopted the theory of the public sphere as developed in the wake of Jürgen Habermas' seminal work as a theoretical guiding point.

1.2. Background to the study

“If you cannot beat them, blog them” is a statement primarily highlighting an alternative to the media struggles that Zambian Journalists go through in their day-to-day work. This statement is based on the assumption that blogs and on-line newspapers can be used to promote freedom of expression in Zambia. The Zambian media history can be said to consist of four phases: (1) pre-independence era (the period before 1964), (2) the period after independence (1964 to 1991) and (4) the multi-party state (1991 to date). I must also add that, journalism in Zambia is composed of three main players: (1) public Media, (2) private media

and (3) community/church media. It has been argued that the Zambian media is exposed to a weak or fragile framework for protection of freedom of the press. This is attributed to the legal issues that may be said to contribute to the suppression of media freedoms. (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2011:5) explains that, “The Constitution of Zambia provides for freedom of expression, including receiving, imparting and communicating information and press freedom”. These freedoms are however swallowed up by the lack of political will to implement them. The German development organization, Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung explains that these laws:

(...) remain largely only on paper since in practice there are claw back laws and other pieces of legislation like the 1931 Penal Code Cap 169 of the laws of Zambia, the Official Secrets Act and the Printed Publications Act Cap 161 of the laws of Zambia, among others which prohibit free access to information, freedom of expression and media freedom. Furthermore, whilst the country is a signatory to international accords that guarantee access to information, media freedom and freedom of expression like the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (1981), Windhoek Declaration (1991), SADC Protocol on Culture, Information and Sport (2000) there is no political will to implement and enforce these important freedoms. Instead, the government continues to tactically control the media, through maintaining past repressive laws that contravene people’s rights to information access and freedom of expression. (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2011:5)

It is important to note that this lack of political will, has contributed to the poor journalism standards in Zambia. (Chapter two (2) sections 2.3-2.3 gives an extended discussion on the influence of ownership (e.g. government) on journalism in Zambia).

1.3. Research questions

I have arranged the research questions for this study as follows;

a) Main Research Question

What impact do blogs and online newspapers have on the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia?

b) Sub Research Questions

- Is online publishing relevant to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia? If so why?

- What are the advantages of blogging compared to the mainstream media?
- Are there any restrictions that can hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely?
- What is the future of Zambia's freedom of expression with the coming of the new media such as blogging?
- What impact has the journalism curricula at Universities and colleges? (in relation to promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia).

1.4. Statement of the problem

The Zambian media has in the past recorded a number of cases of harassment. These cases have been reported in the private, public and the community media. It can be stated that journalists in Zambia have experienced forms of harassment that has limited their work. This cuts across all media types. For instance, journalists in the public media have resorted to constant self-censorship. This is understood as a 'safe net' resulting from the fear of loss of jobs and other reprisals. In the case of the private and community media there have been threats of closures of their institutions in cases when they become critical of government. For instance, in January 2011, *Radio Lyambai*, a community radio station which broadcasts from Zambia's Western Province (a region in the western part of Zambia), was forced to close and its equipment confiscated, because of a live phone-in program which was perceived as controversial and inciting people to rise against government (LusakaTimes.com, 14 Jan, 2011.). It is important to mention that this was as a result of the secession calls that groups in the province want to implement and which government is against. Further reference of harassment can be made to the incident of July 2011 where journalists from the privately run *Muvi TV* were attacked and beaten up. It emerged that the journalists were beaten up because of their critical stance against the MMD (then ruling party) (Zambianwatchdog.com, 18 July, 2011). Because of the above incidences, many journalists and ordinary citizens have established blogs and news websites. These have helped to add an alternative voice to the regulated or harassed media fraternity in Zambia.

1.5. Significance of the study

The importance of this study can in my opinion not be over emphasized. It is worth noting that this study will provide empirical evidence that can support previous theoretical developments and insights from qualitative research on the use of the Internet to promote freedom of expression. This study may also add to previous research highlighting the abuse of freedom of speech and expression in Zambia.

To add to its relevance, this research will focus on generating research findings that offer alternatives to the much regulated mainstream media in Zambia. The research will concentrate on the use of the Internet for promotion of freedom of expression. This will be based on the assumption that the Internet is a powerful tool for promotion of freedom of expression. This assumption gives me the confidence to conclude that, compared to the mainstream media the Internet is best suited for promotion of freedom of expression.

1.6. Objectives of the study

The research will seek to establish the role that the Internet can play in promoting freedom of expression in Zambia. The objectives of this dissertation can therefore be outlined based on my research questions as follows;

- (a) To identify means and ways that the Internet can be used to help bring about freedom of expression in Zambia;
- (b) To assess the pros and cons of the Internet in comparison to the mainstream media;
- (c) To discover restrictions that can hinder bloggers from enjoying their freedom of expression;
- (d) To ascertain the role of the journalism curricula at universities and colleges in relation to freedom of expression.
- (e) To establish the future of freedom of expression in relation to the Internet in Zambia.

1.7. Research Assumptions

It is expected that this research will draw up some concrete recommendations to promote freedom of expression in Zambia. The findings from the field research (conducted in the months June, July and August 2011) will be used to draw up these recommendations.

1.8. Structure of the thesis

The dissertation is structured with seven (7) chapters. Chapter one (1) gives a presentation of the background of the study, research questions, statement of the problem and a presentation of the contents of the research. Chapter two (2) discusses basic information on Zambia. Chapter three (3) gives a discussion of the theoretical framework and literature review adopted for this study. This chapter illuminates more on how the Public Sphere can be used in relation to promotion of freedom of expression. Chapter four (4) gives a presentation of the methodological aspects of the research. The blogging environment is presented in Chapter five (5). Chapter six (6) presents and discusses the results of the field work. Finally, chapter seven (7) discusses the implications, recommendations and conclusions drawn from the research.

CHAPTER 2: BASIC INFORMATION ON ZAMBIA AND THE MEDIA

2.1. Introduction

Zambia got its Independence from Britain on 24th October 1964. According to the national census conducted in 2010, Zambia has a total population of thirteen million, four hundred and sixty thousand people (13,460,000) (Central Statistical Office, 2011). It is a landlocked country located in the Southern part of Africa, bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to the north, Tanzania to the northeast, Malawi to the east, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia to the south, and Angola to the west. The country has a total surface of seven hundred and fifty-two thousand, six hundred and eighteen square kilometers (752,618 sq.km). Figure one (1) below is a map showing the location of Zambia in Southern Africa, its nine (9) provinces and its neighboring countries.

Figure 1: Map of Zambia showing its provinces and its neighbors.



Source: (ZambianTourism.com, 2012)

2.1. History of the Media in Zambia

2.2.1. Pre-Independence Period

The media in Zambia dates back to the pre-independence era when the country was called Northern Rhodesia. The first newspaper in Northern Rhodesia was started in the early 1900s by white settlers, while the first radio station was started by the colonial rulers in Lusaka in 1941. According to what Francis Kasoma (1986:25) writes in his book *The Press in Zambia: The development of national newspapers in Zambia 1906-1983*, “(...) radio was primarily established to serve Africans in Rhodesia”. He adds that the timing of the coming of radio during the World War II is marked as a revolution through radio. It is understood that the setting up of radio during the World War II was a blessing in disguise to the families of soldiers fighting in the war who could be informed on the news about their loved ones and the war in general.

By and large, the colonial government's¹ interests were to set up radio as a tool for educating and entertaining people. At the same time, it was an advertising tool for consumer goods such as groceries. It is worth noting that the media in the colonial era was used as a channel of communication by the colonialist to the colonized population. According to Kasoma (1986) the 'white papers' were instrumental for the agitation of the formation of a federation between Rhodesia and Nyasaland. However, the same media (white media) was used as a tool for the de-campaigning of the federation. Banda. F (2007) explains that the *Central African Post* was one such paper that was pro-native in its editorials. In this vein (Kasoma, 1986) explains that this was regardless of the fact that Alexander Scott (then owner of the *Central African Post*) changed his editorial policy to suit the colonial masters.

2.2.2. Post-Independence Era (1964-1991)

Similar to the colonial government, the Post- Independence era (1964-1991) perceived the media as a tool for communicating government information and activities to the people. It was also regarded as a tool for national building and unity. During the presidency of Kenneth Kaunda (1964-1991) Zambia followed a humanistic ideology. This meant that the media were used as a facility for political consolidation and an instrument for national development

¹ Zambia was part of a federal government called the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland that was composed of Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia and was in effect from the period 1953-1963.

programs. It is in this period that the media in Zambia with the exception of the *National Mirror* newspaper were owned and wholly controlled by the state. This period is interesting in Zambia's media history as the media were not only owned by the government (with the exception of the *National Mirror*) but were also a mouth piece for the UNIP² government. During this period the media 'parroted' whatever Kenneth Kaunda said. It was thought that Kaunda was the 'god' of Zambia (see chapter 5 section 5.4.1 for an explanation on this concept). This period is further significant because at the end of this period, some 'discontented Zambians' set up political parties to challenge the one party system of government that Kaunda followed. This period also saw the birth of private media organizations like the Post Newspapers (then called the *Weekly Post*) and the *Sun* Newspaper. These private newspapers as will be explained in section 2.2.3 were and have been instrumental to the democratic dispersion of Zambia.

2.2.3. Multi-Party Era (1991-to-date)

Zambia's political landscape from 1991 to date can be divided into four (4) phases. These phases are organized according to the presidency (the person in power). This time-frame signifies the fall of the one party state and the introduction of multi-party democracy. The phases are arranged as follows:

1991-2001 - Government led by Frederick Chiluba.

2001-2008 - Government led by Levy Mwanawasa.

2008-2011 - Government led by Rupiah Banda.

2011- to-date - Government led by Michael Sata.

Generally, these phases have a number of similarities. Firstly, it can be said that during the period 1991- to-date, the media have run under a multi-party system of government. This type of government means that the media has some degree of freedom to report 'freely' (though this is largely on paper (Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, 2011:5)). It can be stated that compared to the previous regime (the Kaunda government (period 1964-1991)) the media is freer to report on several issues. Secondly, this period also saw the liberalization of the economy. This meant that the major economic players in the country like the media, financial institutions and

² UNIP was the party that Kenneth Kaunda led and was in power from the period 1964 - 1991

the transport sector etc. were free to establish themselves as private entities. And many state enterprises except for the state media were privatized. It is during this period that the media grew in numbers. The country witnessed the birth of a number of private radio stations and newspapers that up to today are still important players in the democratization of Zambia.

Significantly, during the period (1991 to date) Zambia has seen the birth of *The Post Newspapers* (called the *Weekly Post* then).³ One may wonder why I am singling out this media. In answering this question, it is important to note that *The Post* has been an important player in the media fraternity in Zambia. My analysis reveals that *The Post* was significant in advocating for a change of government and removing from power Kenneth Kaunda in 1991, Frederick Chiluba in 2001, and Rupiah Banda in 2011. This is as a result of their editorials and columns that were usually critical of government. Take for instance an editorial published on the 17th Sep. 2011 that reads *Removing leaders without bloodshed*. This editorial was giving information on how people can change government and if the people voted out do not want to leave peacefully, what other methods can be used to ensure that they leave their positions. After a critical analysis of these editorials (available at http://www.postzambia.com/post-view_articles.php?topicName=Editorial&offset=220 (accessed on 20th September 2012)) one can conclude that the Post was set at making sure that the information that got out was to mobilize people to change government from the MMD to the current PF government.

Despite *The Post* newspaper being an important player in seeing to it that democracy prevails in Zambia, it can be argued that in recent months (Sep. 2011 to date), the once vibrant newspaper has been reduced to a government 'mouth piece'. This can be referred to the strong link that the newspaper management has established with the government in power (government of Michael Sata). This in my opinion has made the newspaper a 'weak voice' when it comes to criticism of government policies. It is important to remember that *The Post Newspaper* has been a strong supporter of the opposition parties in Zambia and since the PF (ruling party) has been in the opposition for a long time (since 2001), it can be stated that literally the newspaper helped the PF to come into power with its strong and critical editorials against the government (MMD in this case). It is my assumption that the PF President (Michael Sata) feels obliged to giving back in kind for the support rendered during his

³ By 1996, it had started publishing Monday to Friday. By 2000, it had gone daily, coming out all seven days of the week.

‘opposition days’ and the *The Post* Newspaper too feel obliged for the favors given to them as a private media under the PF government. It is interesting to note that within the period September 2011 and September 2012 a total of eleven (11) senior journalists from *The Post* Newspapers have been given diplomatic postings in Zambian missions and embassies abroad and state house affairs. These journalists include George Chellah (State House press aide), Eddie Mwanaleza (State House Photographer), Thomas Nsama (State House Photographer), Amos Malupenga (Information Permanent Secretary), Chansa Kabwela (Press Secretary-Malawi), Joe Kaunda (Deputy High Commissioner-South Africa), Sam Mujuda (Deputy High Commissioner-Botswana), Chibaula Silwamba (Press Secretary-NewYork), Patson Chilemba (Press Secretary-South Africa), Yvonne Shibemba (Press Secretary-Kenya) and Lambwe Kachali (Press Secretary-Belgium). The above moves by the Zambian President has greatly weakened *The Post Newspapers* as it is natural that the remaining journalists are also inclined to giving government favorable reports in the anticipation of being given government postings.

Further, because of the above, instead of the paper reporting on important national issues, it has resorted to reporting on petty issues such as one that appeared in the newspaper on the 12th and 13th June 2012, that read *\$36000 goes missing in Rupiah bedroom* and *Rupiah, Thandiwe differ over dollars* respectively. These stories asserted that Rupiah Banda (President of Zambia from 2008 to 2011) had a misunderstanding with his wife over money that went missing in their bedroom. In my opinion however, regardless of the fact that the money went missing or not, the paper was not to pay attention as it is a private issue. Instead the paper was to concentrate on national issues as it has done since its inception In the 90s.

Meanwhile, having shed some light on the similarities of the phase (1991 to date) it is also important to look at the differences present in this period. These differences will be explained according to the presidency as explained above.

a) Frederick Chiluba (1991-2001)

During the presidency of Frederick Chiluba, the media was primarily concerned with the promotion of multi-party politics that emerged in the 1990s. This period witnessed the liberalization of the media (as explained above) that had been the preserve of the government. According to (Chirwa C. , 1997) The Telecommunications Act of 1994 was introduced in this period. He says that this established the Communications Authority of Zambia (CAZ). This body (now called the Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority

(ZICTA)) was responsible for the supervision and control of radio communications, the approval of broadcasting sites, and the allocation of broadcasting licenses to private broadcast operators (Ndawana, 2009). This period also witnessed the development of private media operators resulting from a combination of financial pressures on state broadcasters and pressure from local and international lobby groups. It is therefore, true to say that the period 1991-2001 saw a proliferation in the media resulting into a change in the media landscape. It should also be mentioned that *The Post* played a leading role in the campaign against President Chiluba's plans to change the Constitution in order to enable him to run for a third term in office.

b) Levy Mwanawasa (2001-2008)

Having illuminated on the similarities and differences in the period 1991-2001, it can be noted that the political and economic developments recorded in Chiluba's era (1991-2001) continued more or less the same in Levy Mwanawasa's presidency (2001-2008). Contradictions however, have been recorded of the media landscape during this period (2001-2008). For instance, MISA Zambia in its press release (available at: <http://www.misa.org/mediarelease/2008archie/misacondolence.html>. (Retrieved on the 23rd April 2012))⁴ Issued after his death (Levy Mwanawasa) explains that "Mwanawasa would be missed because of developing many media friendly policies". Contrary to this assertion, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) reported on their website (see. <http://cpj.org/2003/03/attacks-on-the-press-2002-zambia.php> (retrieved on 23rd April 2012). that "Mwanawasa took a hard line against the press". Generally however, during the Mwanawasa presidency many journalists were harassed, imprisoned and/or censored. It is worth noting that the media during this period were not entirely free to write whatever they wished.

c) Rupiah Banda (2008-2011)

The same media situation continued during the leadership of Rupiah Banda (2008-2011). He (Rupiah Banda) took over reigns from Mwanawasa after his death on 19th August 2008 and more or less inherited similar traits from the previous government. One may argue that this is so because of the fact that he was Vice President during the Mwanawasa leadership.

⁴ During the writing of this thesis in April 2012, the direct link to the press release was available on this web link but as of october 2012 the link has been pulled down.

d) *Michael Sata (2011-todate)*

The current government of Michael Sata (Sept. 2011 to date⁵) in its election campaigns and first days in power employed a rhetoric that set a tone that favors media freedom. This was further evident in the calls for the implementation of the Freedom of Information Bill, which the government was trying to push forward. This bill if enacted will promote editorial freedom among journalists. However, since the election of the PF government this talk of a 'better media fraternity' has stalled and one wonders if it was not just an election campaign strategy.

Meanwhile, in the absence of implementing the important media reforms, the PF government has resorted to censoring or harassing media organizations that are seen to be reporting against their will. For instance, UNZA Radio (run by the University of Zambia) has had its broadcast radius limited to 500 watts because of airing debate programs that are critical of government (see. <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/09/05/unza-radio-faces-closure/>) further, one may criticize the Michael Sata's government on their stance to clamp down on any person or media that is seen to be speaking or reporting against their interest (see. <http://advocacy.globalvoicesonline.org/2012/05/20/zambia-president-sata-sues-citizens-media-criticizing-him/>).

In a snap shot therefore, the mainstream media in Zambia has become a weak entity when it comes to making government accountable. This statement is made in relation to *The Post* newspaper, which since its inception has been the leading media campaigner for governments to be accountable to its citizens. This statement also relates to the many media⁶ that have been censored or closed down as a result of reporting against the government. In this vein, it is natural that an alternative to this kind of media that can help to make government accountable is sort.

⁵ This thesis was concluded in the month of October 2012. Therefore in this thesis to-date makes reference to this period.

⁶Media organizations such as the *Zambianwatchdog.com*, *Radio Lyambai*, *UNZA Radio*, *The Post Newspaper*, and many more have either being threatened with closure or their journalists' have been physically harassed.

2.3. Ownership and political influence of media bodies in Zambia vis-à-vis freedom of expression

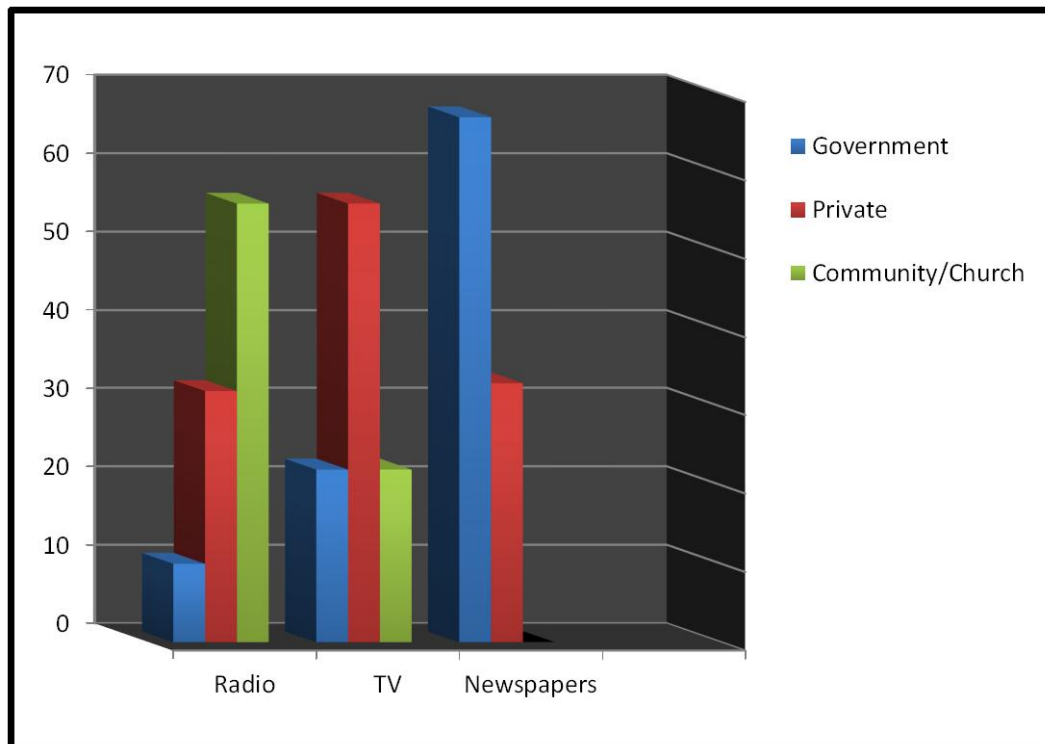
The media fraternity in Zambia is owned and controlled in three ways; 1) the government, 2) the private sector and/or 3) the community or the church. The *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)* (both radio and TV), *Daily Mail newspaper* and the *Times of Zambia* are fully owned and controlled by the government. The government run and controlled media are influenced largely by the state's direct control. According to (Banda, 2007) this control includes finance, human resource and administrative matters.

Apart from the media being in government hands, some media in the country are owned by the churches. These include *Radio Christian Voice*, the weekly newspaper *National Mirror*, *Radio Ichengelo*, *Radio Yatsani* and many others. Apart from these media owned by the church and the government some media are owned by the community or learning Institutions. These include *UNZA Radio* (University of Zambia Radio) and *Hone FM* (Evelyn Hone College). In addition to these, there are commercial media run by private individuals for commercial purposes. These media include *The Post Newspapers*, *Radio Phoenix*, *Breeze fm* and *Muvi TV* among others.

The most important issue when it comes to media ownership is that ownership (in the Zambian context) largely has a bearing on the editorial independence and generally the way journalists' cover stories. For instance, the government owned and run media is more inclined to reporting in favor of the government in power. On the other hand, the private media are more inclined to reporting in line with what the owner of the station wants. Therefore, ownership is more or less something that determines the independence of the media in Zambia.

Table 1. below shows a percentage breakdown of media ownership in Zambia. The table shows that Government is leading in numbers when it comes to owners of newspapers. The private media is leading when it comes to ownership of TV stations and the Community media is leading when it comes to ownership of radio stations. But it is important to keep note of the fact that when it comes to circulation in figures, listenership and viewership the government media is the largest owner of the media in Zambia. This is because they reach more people in urban and rural areas of Zambia. (Appendix iv shows a full list of media houses in Zambia and further reference can be made to figures 15 and 16).

Table 1: Table showing percentages of media ownership in Zambia



Source: author compilation

2.4 Media training and development in Zambia

Zambia has a number of media education providers. These schools offer degree and diploma courses. They include Evelyn Hone College, and the University Of Zambia Department of Mass Communication. Others are the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication (ZAMCOM), Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation and Greenwood Institute. Only the University of Zambia offers a degree program in Mass Communication.

2.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have discussed the basic information on Zambia and the media. Firstly, I outlined when Zambia got its Independence from colonial rule, its surface area and its neighboring countries. Secondly, I discussed the media history from the colonial rule to the present date (October 2012). Major similarities however of the media under the post-independence era (1991-to-date) have been outlined as the liberty of media organizations' to run under a multi- party system of government. The differences have being registered as the

ideologies that come with every new president elected. Thirdly, the chapter has outlined that the media is owned by the government, private and the church/community. Percentages of media ownership have been drawn with government retaining 67% of Newspaper ownership, 22% of Radio and 10% of TV ownership respectively.

CHAPTER 3: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study's analytical framework and literature review. The chapter is organized as follows. Sections 3.2-3.8 give a description of the study's analytical framework with a focus on Habermas' theory of the Public Sphere. Section 3.9 to 3.14 discusses the literature reviewed for this study. Section 3.15 provides a conclusion for the chapter.

3.2. The analytical framework

This research is centered on finding empirical evidence to support the assumption that the Internet is an ideal platform for promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. Assuming that this research will add significant information that can help to promote freedom of expression in Zambia, an important and interesting analytical framework must be used. To this effect, this study will adopt the public sphere ground breaking theory pioneered by Jürgen Habermas.

3.3. Understanding the Public Sphere Theory

If we understand the public sphere from the perspective of Gerard A. Hauser (1998, P.83-107) as presented in his journal article entitled *Vernacular Dialogue and the Rhetoricity of Public Opinion* it can then be explained as an area in social life where individuals come together to freely discuss and identify societal problems and through this platform important decisions are formulated that help to form public opinion. Furthermore if we understand it from the perspective of Habermas J., Lennox S. and Lennox F. (1974:49) it can therefore be explained as "something approaching public opinion can be formed". Habermas J. in his online article entitled "The Public Sphere: benefiting the Private & The Public" found at <http://goodwin.public.iastate.edu/honestdebate/Site/Habermas.html> (retrieved 10th October 2012) adds that for this to be achieved, a specific means for transmitting information must be used. It is my understanding therefore, that, if the public sphere amounts to public opinion,

and in order to formulate public opinion a specific communication tool is needed, then the Internet is best suited for promotion of freedom of expression. My analysis reveals that in order for public opinion to be formulated, people gathered must be able to agree on a specific matter. In my opinion therefore, public opinion is the collection of individual views and beliefs held by a group of people.

Public opinion formulation can be analyzed from two angles. On one hand, you need to have a group of people ‘gathered’ and information circulated freely. In this process, it is not the dissemination of information alone that matters (though it is unreservedly important) but the exchange of views between parties. (This is where the study of blogs and the Internet becomes interesting).

On the other hand, you need an un-restricted media or channel of communication. This channel must be tolerant (accommodating opinions), popular (accessed by many people) and easy to use. At this stage, the question, which one is best, suited for promotion of freedom of expression, the mainstream media or the Internet naturally would arise and the answer would have to rely mainly on the discussion, to what extent can each contribute to the promotion of freedom of expression? In answering this, reference can be made to the fact that, an ideal public sphere is composed of three important elements; free flow of information, free expression, and free debate (The World Bank, 2009). With this in mind, one must zero in on the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet vis-à-vis the mainstream media as illustrated in chapter six (6) sections 6.4.2 to 6.4.17.1.

Meanwhile, in relation to the above advantages and disadvantages of the of the Internet, it is important to make reference to the views of (Habermas J., Lennox S. and Lennox F. , 1974:49) who state that the media to be an ideal platform for a formation of a public sphere, “access must be guaranteed to all citizens”. One may however, wonder as to what the term “guaranteed to all” means? In my understanding, this can refer to a number of issues; 1) must be easily accessible, 2) an un-restricted (from authority) 3) tolerate to divergent views and open to a two-way communication system (open for debate).

Research has shown that TV, radio and newspapers are ideal platforms for a formation of a public sphere (see. (Habermas, Lennox & Lennox, 1974), (Habermas J. , 1989) (Diggs-Brown, 2012)) the Internet however, can also be said to be another platform where the public sphere thrives. If we live by the views expressed by Habermas and written as follows

“Citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an unrestricted fashion” (Habermas J., Lennox S. and Lennox F. , 1974:49) then it is safe to refer to the Internet as an excellent platform for promotion of public opinion formation. In the same light, (Habermas J. , 2006, P. 411–426) in his article which appeared in the journal *Communication Theory* (2006) reiterates the importance of the Internet for the promotion of the formation of public opinion as follows:

The Internet has certainly reactivated the grassroots of an egalitarian public of writers and readers. However, computer-mediated communication in the web can claim unequivocal democratic merits only for a special context: It can undermine the censorship of authoritarian regimes that try to control and repress public opinion. In the context of liberal regimes, the rise of millions of fragmented chat rooms across the world tend instead to lead to the fragmentation of large but politically focused mass audiences into a huge number of isolated issue publics. Within established national public spheres, the online debates of web users only promote political communication, when news groups crystallize around the focal points of the quality press, for example, national newspapers and political magazines.

By and large, If we understand the public sphere as a space where people come together, discuss and exchange views regarding public issues, and eventually form public opinion, then the Habermas public sphere theory is best suited for this study that highlights the use of the blogs and online newspapers for a promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia.

3.4. Adaptation of the theory of Public Sphere

This research is centered on the assumption that the Internet is an important component in the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. My analysis will show that, for freedom of expression to prevail in Zambia, some kind of openness in communication must be practiced. Therefore, if this openness in communication is to prevail then an ideal communication tool must be used. This tool must allow for people to exchange opinions, views and beliefs. Through this process public opinion as explained in section 3.3 is formulated.

It must be noted that the above view is based on what I (the author) think is the ideal scenario for freedom of expression to prevail in Zambia. Contrary to what is shown in the preceding chapters and as will be shown in the coming chapters, this scenario in the Zambian context is far from reality. Meanwhile, since information flow in society is an important component; one

can argue that an alternative to a restricted communication tool (mainstream media) must be established. Based on the research findings and results highlighted in chapters six (6) and seven (7) this alternative can be stated as the Internet. I am convinced that this is true because of the multitude of opportunities (as illustrated in chapters 6 and 7) that the Internet offers for the promotion of freedom of expression.

By and large, the public sphere theory in line with this research can be argued to be an important component for the formulation of an ideal platform where people exchange views and opinions. In line with the Internet being an ideal public sphere, a 30-year-old student from the Evelyn Hone College explains that:

The Internet has made it possible for me to have my own world where I can talk, play relax and work with anybody and everybody I come in contact with. The internet in short is a simplified electronic version of a progressive community of people.

In closing therefore, Habermas J., Lennox S. and Lennox F. in their journal article entitled “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article (1964)” (1974) provides two very important views as highlighted below;

- The public sphere provides for an environment where information access is guaranteed for all citizens and;
- The public sphere gives an opportunity for sectors of society to debate freely and come up with resolutions on various issues affecting them.

3.5. Specifying the analytical framework for this study

The analytical framework for this study is centered on one important assumption. This assumption is centered on the notion that the Internet (blogs and on-line newspapers) contributes to an ideal public sphere. This assumption is reliant on the many principles that the public sphere has as shown below:

Table 2:Principles in a public sphere

- Open access (everybody is able to use the media)
- Voluntary participation (everybody is able to use the media at their own will)

- Participation outside institutional roles (people can use the media as free citizens)
- The generation of public opinion through assemblies of citizens who engage in rational argument
- The freedom to express opinions
- The freedom to discuss matters of state policy and action
- The freedom to criticize the way state power is organized

Source: author compilation from information adopted from (Fourie, 2001.p.218)

3.6. How the Internet and blogs contribute to an ideal public sphere

The Internet is arguably one of the most important developments in the way we communicate. It has allowed for a platform where individuals can express their ideas and views without intimidation, censorship or harassment. Since the public sphere is described as a space where people come together as a public (Habermas J. , 1989) to discuss issues and ideas, it therefore makes sense to say that the Internet is an important tool for engaging people in debate over issues that are of importance to the smooth running of society. In this vein, the Internet provides a promising opportunity for an ideal public sphere in various ways as outlined below.

1. Internet makes it easier to get a message across to a large number of people:

When one says ‘public’ sphere the reference is obviously to an act of a group of people coming together. Therefore, if an ideal public sphere is to be formulated a specific communication tool that promotes or attracts a multitude of people must be used. If we say that the Internet is best suited for attracting a lot of people, then, it is interesting to explore ways and means that this is done. One way that this is a success is through the possibility of allowing people to communicate online without being identified (anonymity). This attracts those people who in a normal scenario would not want to go out with their views because they are either ‘too shy’ or their views are liable to legal action from the authority. Secondly, online publishing allows the authors to get the information to readers much more quickly (Neuberger C., 1998). What makes this point even more valid is the fact the Internet media

can even be updated several times a day. This attracts a lot of people coming back and forth to read the up-dated news.

2. The Internet makes it harder for governments to censor information:

Habermas J., Lennox S. and Lennox F. (1974) as stated earlier argue that citizens behave as a public body when they confer in an un-restricted manner. In the preceding sections it was established that the public sphere to be a success, people must be able to gather and share information freely. Therefore, if this is anything to go by; the Internet provides an excellent platform for exchange of views minus 'strict' censorship and harassment. At this stage, it is important to understand the word 'strict' and not get mixed up. In this vein, harassment and censorship of Internet content may occur but the real actions of closing the websites is the one that is difficult to implement (at least in the case of Zambia). Take for instance, the *Zambian Watchdog* (www.zambianwatchdog.com) that has been issued with threats of closures for many years but the action itself to close it by the authority has been very difficult to implement.⁷

3. Easier access to global information:

Many Zambians living or travelling in countries away from Zambia are offered the opportunity to be connected with issues in the country. What is further interesting is that these people are given the opportunity to participate in debate and/or offered the opportunity to author articles online. Wondering why this is relevant to a public sphere? Scholars such as (Habermas J. , 1989) have stated that the public sphere is a gathering of people discussing issues of mutual interests to form public opinion. These gatherings of people are composed of two or more people, and if numbers are to go by, the more the number of people, the better the quality of opinions generated.

4. Abundance of space to express your views:

Whereas debate in the mainstream media is dependent on the availability of column space and/or airtime, the Internet on the other hand, makes it easy to have an exchange of views among the audience. It is worth noting, that the frequency of expressing your views through

⁷ The Watchdog has in the past received a number of threats of closures and harassment of journalists for their critical stance against the government. For instance, the Watchdog editor in October 2011 was summoned by police on charges that were not disclosed to the media including the Watchdog itself. <http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/index.php/more-news/police-to-interrogate-watchdog-journalist-today/> (retrieved on 29th January 2012)

comments is not limited online as one can make comments and still respond to other comments on the same subject or story several times. This allows for debate and people have an opportunity to respond to their claims in case someone challenges or needs clarification on the issue.

3.7. The public Sphere and Information Flow

The public sphere theory is one of the approaches to a functioning democracy. The preceding sections have revealed that a ‘public sphere’ is where private people come together, discuss, exchange opinions and deliberate on issues to form public opinion. It has also been revealed that public opinion is important for influencing decisions. What has not been established, however, is how the public sphere influences public opinion formulation.

Therefore, the public sphere is a platform that involves not only gathering in physical meetings such coffee houses or salons (Habermas J. , 1989) but also forming online communities where people receive and send information and opinions that are of importance to influencing debate in society. This is the area where the Internet blogs and news publications come handy. In this vein, Arnold a., and Garcia H. (2011:2) explain that:

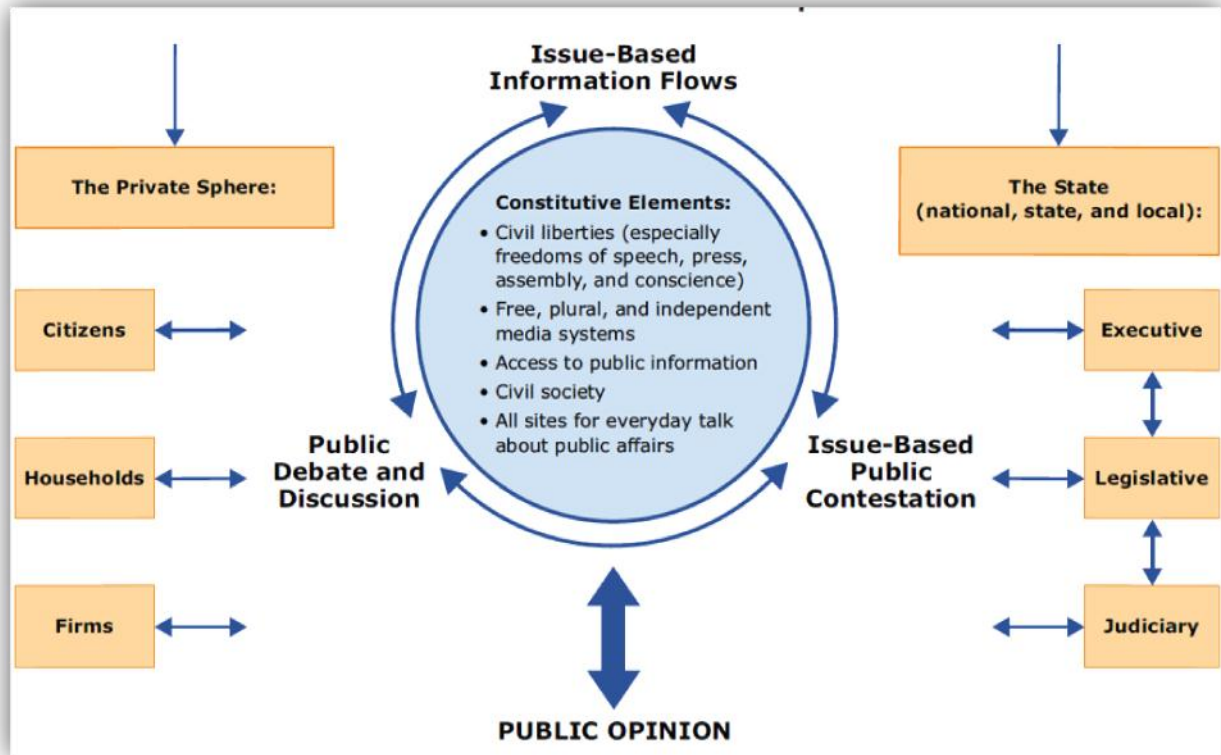
Without a functioning and democratic public sphere, government officials cannot be held accountable for their actions, and citizens will not be able to assert any influence over political decisions. Its requisites are free flows of information, free expression, and free debate.

They add that:

Citizens are stakeholders in the public sphere. Effective communication among the stakeholders promises to raise the citizen voice and thereby strengthen accountability. The public sphere, represented by information and communication processes, is the architecture of relationships and interactions among different political actors.

Figure 2 below gives a figure representation based on the views of Odugbemi (2008:30). The figure shows the many elements or players (presented in yellow) in a public sphere and how they interact with each other to form public opinion (presented with a big blue arrow). This public opinion is formed after a through debate and discussion of the constitute elements or topical issues (presented in a blue circle).

Figure 2: Example of formation of a public Sphere



Source: (The World Bank, 2009. p.6) as compiled by Odugbemi (2008:30)

3.8. Constituent elements in the public sphere

As illustrated in figure 2 above, there are a number of elements that form a public sphere. For the sake of this research, these elements will be broken down to five (5) key players. Namely; a) media; b) the public; c) the civil society; d) the private actors; and e) the government (Figure 3 below shows the relationship between these players in the public sphere and how the public sphere among the elements is formulated).

a) Media

My analysis shows that the media are the main actors in the public sphere. It is an important element because it is the ‘meeting place’ where people exchange views and opinions. In this vein, this research notes that the Internet is an important component in the public sphere as it

is a forum that has evolved and gives opportunities for people to ‘meet’ and discuss important issues.

b) Public

The public is the general citizenry that is interested in the well-being of society. These raise issues affecting them and the society. The public significantly benefit from the public sphere by communicating with government, which then tailors policies to suit the citizenry. As illustrated in figure 4 below, it can be stated that the public debate among themselves through the media and the media convey the information to government officials who then work towards implementing policies and programs to suit public demand.

c) State

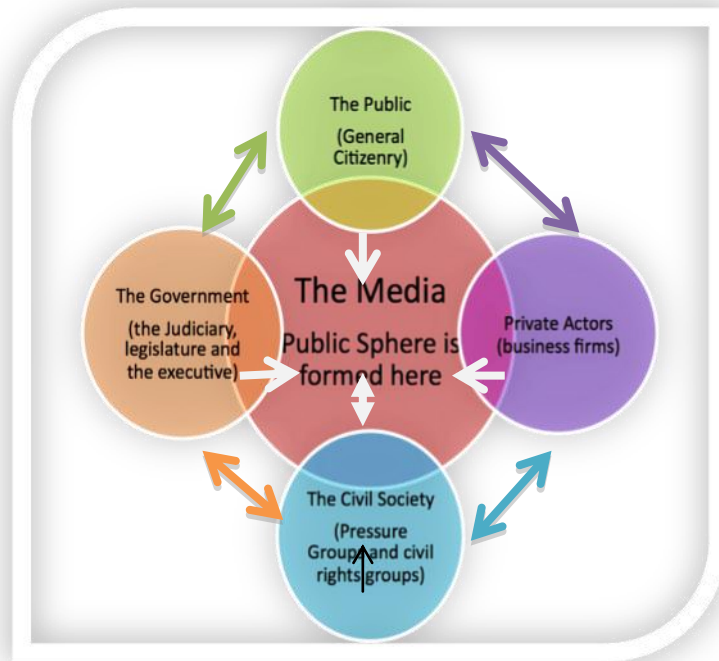
The state is the law making, implementation and enforcement body where all directives for development emanate from. The state listens to the voices of the public through debates carried in the media. The state then implements the calls by the public.

d) The private actors

The private actors are the section of the public sphere interested in flourishing of their businesses. These ensure that the government passes laws and regulations that favor a healthy business environment for their businesses. The public looks upon the private actors for the social responsibility to society through job creation and many other ventures. As illustrated in figure 4 below, the private actors interact with the general public and the civil society. These three entities debate among themselves and form public opinion, which is then conveyed to the government through the media. Through this process the government is informed on the wishes of the private actors.

All these above outlined factors are important in a functioning public sphere, but the media stands out as an actor where all the communication passes through (as illustrated below in figure 4). Debate and discussions are held through the media; because of this, the media must be free and open to all actors for a successive public sphere to be reality.

Figure 3: How the Public Sphere is formulated



Source: Author compilation

3.9. Literature review

The analytical framework, the research topic, questions and the study purpose have influenced the material and literature that I have chosen for this master's dissertation. I have restricted these study materials to issues surrounding the following wide topics; 1) the Internet and press freedom; 2) the role of blogs and online newspapers on the promotion of freedom of expression; 3) Habermas' theory of the public sphere; 4) restrictions that hinder bloggers from doing their work freely; and 5) materials based on the development and spread of online blogs and newspapers in Zambia. In this vein, I have reviewed the following sources of information: 1) selected online blogs and newspapers in Zambia (these selected blogs are discussed in chapter five (5)), 2) books and other materials in the program *Master of philosophy in media and communication* at the University of Oslo, 3) books, online journals and materials from university libraries in Norway and books and materials from media organizations in Zambia. I have also reviewed materials from the Internet and journals on freedom of expression and the Internet.

It is worth noting that there is too much information online on the topic “freedom of expression and the Internet” for instance when I made a ‘Google search’ on the topic “freedom of expression and the Internet” there were about ten million and nine hundred thousand (10,900,000) search results. When I limited the search to “freedom of expression”, I got about fifty-two million four-hundred thousand (52,400,000) search results. When I tried to limit it further by typing in “freedom of expression and the Internet in Zambia” I got a total of one million, nine hundred and ten thousand (1,910,000) search results. In this vein, I drew the conclusion that there is too much information online. This conclusion prompted me to be careful and select material only relevant to my study.

In view of the above explanation, I have decided to ‘zero down’ my literature review on the following topics; the concept of freedom of expression on the Internet, the Internet or the mainstream media; development and spread of blogs and online newspapers in Zambia; restrictions that hinder bloggers from doing their work properly; and Habermas' theory of the public sphere. These topics give a general picture of the whole dissertation.

3.10. The concept of freedom of expression on the Internet

The Internet is unreservedly one of the best innovations on the face of earth. It has improved the way people communicate and probably the way they conduct business. According to an article posted online from Cisco Systems, “the Internet has reached farther and faster than any previous communication technology” (Cisco, 1998). The Internet has not only improved the distance of communication, but it has also improved the quality of the communication that people exchange. In the same line, (Fisher W., 2001) in his essay on *Freedom of Expression on the Internet* states that:

The Internet offers extraordinary opportunities for speakers, anyone who wants to express an opinion about anything can make their thoughts available to a world-wide audience far more easily than has ever been possible before.

As exciting as this above discussion may sound, the Internet possesses some characteristics that may be important to take note of in this discussion. But before venturing into this topic (refer to table 3 for an outline of advantages and disadvantages of the Internet), it is important to consider the view of (Jørgensen R.F., 2000) who argues in his dissertation entitled *Internet and Freedom of Expression* that the Internet empowers freedom of expression

by providing individuals with new means of imparting and seeking information. This view is important to consider especially if one is looking at the extent to which people must have the right to participate in debate. My research reveals that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right. Significantly, if freedom of expression is a 'right' and everyone is entitled to it then it makes sense to say that there must be a channel of communication that must be used to help people communicate. For the purpose of this study, a proposal of the Internet as the best channel of communication for promotion of freedom of expression will be made.

In argument however, even if "everyone should have a right to participate in the information society" (Mijatovic D., 2010:10) attention must be put on the responsibilities that each individual is obliged to take note of. For instance, everybody using the Internet must respect for instance legal and child protection issues. According to (Adams J., 2010) in his article entitled "8 Legal Issues for Bloggers" some of the important legal issues to consider are defamation, intellectual property laws and privacy concerns. It is also important that children are protected always in Internet content. My research reveals that children must consent to having their identities (faces, names and addresses) published; if the children cannot make a decision on their own the consent of their parents or guardians must be sort.

All things being constant however, the concept of freedom of expression on the Internet is a twofold issue. On one hand, it offers unlimited opportunities for people to communicate with ease and to a multitude of people. On the other hand, it presents issues that if not addressed properly have repercussion for the Internet media content authors, editors and their subjects.

3.11. The Internet or the mainstream media?

A distinctive difference between the two (mainstream media and Internet) may be that the mainstream media includes channels of communication such as radio, TV, magazines and newspapers. The Internet media on the other hand, includes media such as such as blogs, Internet radio, and online news publications. For this purpose the Internet will refer to blogs and online news publications or newspapers. Some scholars contend that the main advantage that the Internet has, is that it gives an opportunity for individuals to enjoy their freedom of anonymity when contributing or debating on various topics (see (Rigby K., 1995)). It is naturally common that people may feel tied to express their minds freely on issues that may

be sensitive or because of shyness. In this vein, anonymity in comments helps such people to contribute freely without being ‘identified’.

The above discussion outlines an important advantage that the Internet possesses. However, Table 3 below shows more advantages and disadvantages that the Internet has. The table shows among other things, that the Internet is usually a free of charge media and also has the advantage of giving people the opportunity to contact the writers or editors of the content via emails. On the contrary, the table also gives some disadvantages such as, it is tiring to read a computer screen as opposed to reading a newspaper and it may take time to download a story as opposed to just getting a paper and reading straight away.

Table 3: Advantages and disadvantages of the Internet

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use is usually free of charge⁸ • Use of a wider spectrum of newspapers is possible (the user can open a lot of web pages at the time and just switch from one paper to the other) • Use of links to other sources (usually contain links to other sources of information e.g. other websites) • Automated searching (you can book mark pages) • Online News Papers delivers news faster than the hard copy. • Use of back copies (archived copies) • Use of foreign news papers that can be translated • Archiving of articles on the computer • Contact with editors via e-mail, chat, or social media. • Use of interactive games • Use of guest book/forum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online newspapers do not report on all subjects. (usually they are specialized on particular topics) • They do not convey the experience of reading a newspaper (e.g. holding a hard copy and smelling it) • Long download times • Online newspapers cannot be read while travelling (except if one has a smart phone or tablet with internet connection) • Reading the screen maybe tiring • WWW access costs money (if paying for access) • Too many links are confusing rather than helpful • It takes time to get used to using them • Needs electricity to power the computer or phone.

⁸ This is so if you access Internet from school, work or other free spots.

- Use of Google to translate stories in a foreign language

Source: Author compilation from information compiled by the website <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/> (accessed on 31st January 2012)⁹

3.12. Development and spread of blogs and online newspapers in Zambia

There are a number of blogs in Zambia. However, most of these blogs are used as personal blogs. It is a common practice to set up blogs that are more or less like personal diaries and one merely writes what they have achieved in a day or in a period of time. There are also news blogs that are more inclined to reporting current affairs or news stories (These are the focus of this research project). Suffice to mention, the use of blogs and online newspapers is building momentum in Zambia. According to the Global Voices quoting Brenda Zulu (an online media activist),

The Zambian blog sphere is growing. Two years ago one would struggle to find a regularly updated blog covering any meaningful issues. I am happy to report that this is now changing. New blogs are being created at a pace faster than I can count. And the good news is that what were personal entries are now being transformed into meaningful blogs that seek to encourage dialogue and trading of ideas¹⁰

In arguing in line with the above views, it is true that today the Zambian blog sphere is composed of regularly updated blogs. What is interesting about these blogs is that they do encourage debate and an exchange of views and ideas. (see. www.zambianwatchdog.com, www.lusakatimes.com, or www.thezambian.com) One question however, arises as to where these blogs and online news publications get their sources of stories? My analysis of the blogs and Internet News publications (see a detailed analysis of these blogs in chapter 5) reveals that most stories come from either individuals with interests in writing or from the blog owners or they are extracts from the mainstream media. A critical look at these three stories appearing in [lusakatimes.com](http://www.lusakatimes.com), [zambianwatchdog.com](http://www.zambianwatchdog.com) and [kalakikorner.blogspot.com](http://www.kalakikorner.blogspot.com) entitled *Contrary to views expressed by Civil Society, Government is transparent on information bill –*

⁹ During the writing of this thesis (January 2012) the direct link was accessible from this website. But as of September 2012 this link has been pulled down.

¹⁰ This Interview is available at <http://globalvoicesonline.org/2012/05/10/zambia-bloggers-form-zambian-bloggers-network/> (retrieved on 13th September 2012)

*Malupenga*¹¹, *Shame on Us Zambians*¹² and *The First Press Conference*¹³ respectively reveal that one is extracted from the mainstream media, the other by an individual writer with no ‘strings attached to the website’ and the last one is written by the editor of the blog (in this case Roy Clark). This diversity in sources of news makes the Internet media even more interesting. One may wonder however, if the news written by non-journalists can be trusted? In answering this, it can be stated that these stories are usually considered as opinions held by an individual and if freedom of expression is anything to go by, then it makes sense to say that a forum that allows for individual opinions is more than welcome. On the other hand, questions arising from blogs using news from mainstream media may arise in connection to whether the blog has acquired permission to use the stories on their website? Usually, these blogs do not acquire enough rights to use the stories and this brings about a debate on the copyright issues. Take for instance a story that brought an exchange of words between two editors from the *Zambianwatchdog.com* and the *ukzambians.co.uk* website¹⁴ concerning an accusation that the *Zambianwatchdog.com* publication copied a story without acquiring permission from the original author of the story (in this case Malama Katulwende from the *ukzambians.co.uk*). This raises important ethical issues when it comes to the authenticity of online publications.

Departing from the previous discussion, it must be noted that many Zambians are engaged in blogging as previously discussed but the majority of these people are mostly located in countries other than Zambia. This assertion is related to a number of factors namely: Lack of Internet access, time and lack of skills.

3.13. Restrictions that hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely

This research in chapter 6 section 6.4.3.2 gives a picture that the Internet media in Zambia is best suited for freedom of expression compared to the mainstream media. This is so because of the fact that the research results show that only one blog editor has been harassed or threatened with censorship. This picture gives me the leeway to conclude that the Internet is a

¹¹ <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/09/17/contrary-views-expressed-civil-society-government-transparent-information-bill-malupenga/> (retrieved on 18th September 2012)

¹² <http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/category/editors-choice/page/2/> (retrieved on 18th September 2012)

¹³ <http://kalakikorner.blogspot.no/2012/09/the-first-press-conference.html> (retrieved on 18th September 2012)

¹⁴ The story can be accessed from the website <http://www.ukzambians.co.uk/home/?s=ethic+blogging> (retrieved on 13th September 2012)

‘safe net’ for promotion of freedom of expression. But, in contrast with my assumption the Internet presents to a certain degree problematic issues that may make it not completely free from restrictions.

These restrictions can be outlined as follows: a) state control b) self-regulation d) market forces e) and audience pressures.

a) State control

The state exerts considerable influence on media freedoms in Zambia. This dissertation in a nut-shell has ‘pointed an accusing finger’ at the government as one of the authorities that limit journalists on the enjoyment of total freedom of expression. This assertion in this dissertation has largely been related to the mainstream media, but it must be noted that the Internet has not been spared from this limitation in freedom of expression (though it is at a lower rate as elaborated in chapter 6 sections 6.4.3-6.4.3.4).

To this effect the government has effectively tried to limit on Internet freedom of expression by issuing threats of legal repercussions, closures and harassment or imprisonment of those people found wanting¹⁵.

b) Self-regulation

Because of the government threats and harassment explained in section 3.12 (a) above, people are generally afraid to write their minds out on various issues. It is also worth noting that “self-regulation” comes in because of the fear of loss of jobs resulting from publishing information that may not be in line with what the authority deems ‘right standard’. Sometimes, this authority is not from government pressure alone but from the owners of the media establishments. Further, people are mindful of legal implications and other implications resulting from writing offensive material. This makes them to be conscience of what they write and this has an implication on the final material that is published.

c) Market forces

It is true that blogs like any other media are dependent on income from advertisers for their survival. My analysis however, shows that most blogs in Zambia are self-financed.

¹⁵ See the following links for more information: <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/09/11/government-asks-zicta-legislation-deal-internet-misuse/>, <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/02/24/government-clamp-illegal-internet-cafs-zambia/>, <http://www.mlfoe.org/Article/Detail.aspx?ArticleUid=81cf5548-ceb2-41e1-8d02-03abfc359862>, <http://zambianeye.com/?p=986>, and <http://www.balancingact-africa.com/news/en/issue-no-620/internet/minister-orders-watc/en>)

Nonetheless, market forces play an important part in the authenticity of stories and material published. This is as a result of the competition that the blogs have in relation to advertisers and the fact of attracting more readers of which the advertisers' base their advertising 'will power'.

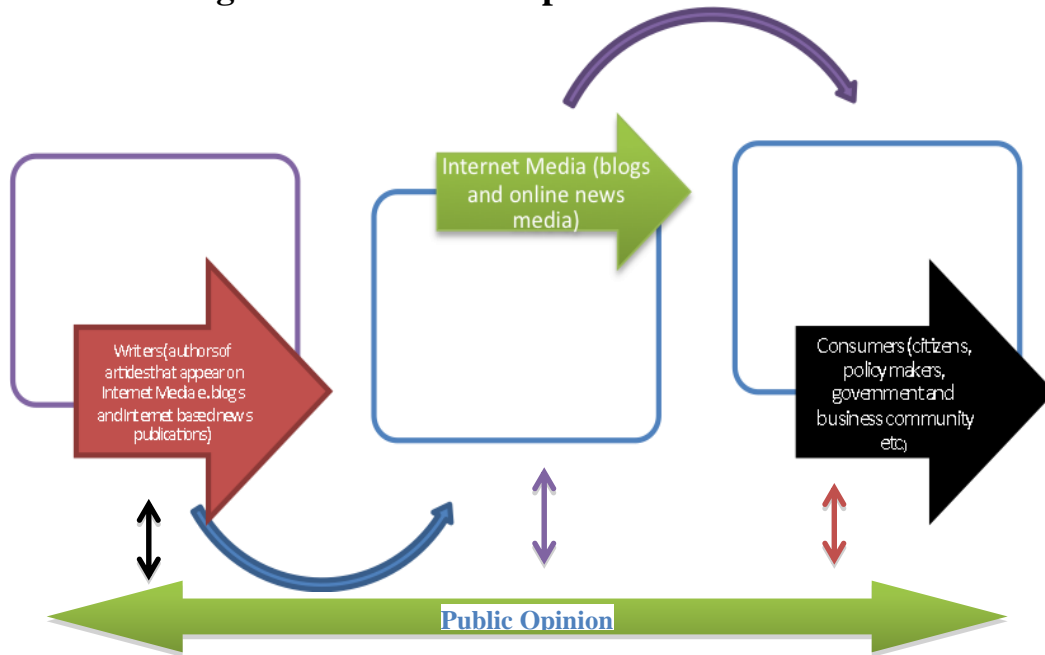
d) Audience pressure

Audience pressure is as a result of the reaction that the audience has towards a particular publication. Therefore, if a publication is to succeed it must stay true to its audience. This therefore means that the blog must give people stories and views that are important and relevant for that particular period. As stated in section (c) above this is an important consideration for advertisers when considering which website to advertise on.

3.14. The Internet and the public sphere

The preceding sections 3.1-3.8 has revealed that the public sphere is a platform where people come together to freely discuss and identify societal problems (Hauser, 1998, P.83-107). The Internet has proved to be an effective tool that attracts a number of people to meet and discuss issues and events. It has been stated that the public sphere is dependent on a free and open media, therefore the Internet allows for a platform where people can express themselves freely. Below is a simple graphical representation based on literature of the public sphere on the Internet. The figure below (figure 4) shows three (3) important players (writers, Internet media and consumers) in the public sphere that interact with each other to form public opinion.

Figure 4: The Public Sphere on the Internet



Source: Author Compilation

3.15 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have described the theoretical framework and literature review. This chapter has revealed a number of issues. Firstly, the public sphere is an important entity for the formation of public opinion. The chapter has established that public opinion is important in society for the design and implementation of policies. Through the formation of a public sphere, freedom of expression is embraced and upheld.

Secondly, this chapter has discussed the literature relevant for this study. It has been revealed that there is too much information online on this topic and therefore, the author has been forced to be critical of the information that is selected.

Finally, conclusions have been made that the Internet is an important entity in the formation of a public sphere; these views have been supported by Jürgen Habermas (2006) who gives credit to the Internet as an excellent media for exchange of views and ideas.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology of this study. The chapter is organized as follows: Section 4.2 discusses the study sample design and sampling techniques; instruments used and the motivation why they are selected. Section 4.3 discusses data collection methods by focusing on the interviews; questionnaires; ethnography; records and documents; and assurance of confidentiality. Section 4.4 discusses the methods employed in analyzing data with a focus on unitizing data; coding; categorization and discerning patterns; and identifying themes. Section 4.5 highlights how trustworthiness in the study is assured with respect to credibility; transferability; dependability and confirmability. Finally, Section 6 summarizes the chapter.

4.2. Study design

This study used the qualitative approach to investigate the conditions under which blogs and the Internet can help to promote freedom of expression in Zambia. Qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that individuals construct social reality in the form of meanings and interpretations, and that these constructions tend to be transitory and situational. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) explain that qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalist approach to its subject matter. Flick (1992) describes 'multi-method in focus as the combination of multiple methods, empirical materials, perspectives and observations in a single study that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation. Creswell amplifies qualitative research as follows:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports, detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting, (Creswell 1998: 15).

In this regard, this study employed a combination of interviews, ethnography, document analysis and self-administered questionnaires.

4.2.1 Sampling method and the sample

In this study, I used both purposive and random sampling. These methods rely on the judgment of the researcher in selecting the units to be studied, (Lund and Lund, 2010). The motivation for using purposive sampling is that it enriches data (Gay and Airasian, 2000) by enabling the person doing a study to experience a multitude of points of view on an issue being studied (Manning, 2000). In this vein, the researcher starts with the assumption that context is critical and purposely selects people to interview and/or events to observe, which are expected to provide a rich array of information, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:200). Nevertheless, purposive sampling has limitations. O’Leary (2004), for example, forwards two major weaknesses of purposive sampling: unintentional biasness and non-representativeness.

I chose the respondents based on their ability to furnish me with rich information relevant to the research question: *What impact do blogs and online newspapers have on the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia?* In this regard, I:

- Interviewed nine program directors and media representatives from *Hot FM, Muvi TV, Mubi TV, Joy FM, Sky FM, UNZA Radio, Hone FM, Phoenix FM* and *CBC TV*;
- Interviewed seven editors of blogs: *kalakikorner.blogspot.com; thezambian.com; ZambianWatchdog.com; Lusakatimes.com; www.zambian-economist.com; postzambia.com; and ukzambians.com.*
- Administered 40 questionnaires to bloggers and two questionnaires to media monitoring organisations: Panos Zambia and Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia Chapter.
- No interview was conducted with *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)* TV and radio – the state controlled media. In addition, there was no feedback from ZNBC on the questionnaire sent to the corporation. I however, took an initiative to extract relevant information from various documents deposited on websites and the Ministry of Communication and Broadcasting and the Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA);
- Interviewed 20 bloggers; and

- Observed 20 people during my ethnographical research.

4.2.2 Instrumentation

My research relied largely on data collection instruments to gather and record information. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 44-45) data collection instruments can be segmented into two categories: human and non-human instruments. Whereas the human instrument refers to the person collecting the data, non-human instruments refer to tools like interview schedules and the study diary.

Concerning the human instrument, Lincoln and Guba (1985: 39) stress as follows:

Only the human instrument is capable of grasping and evaluating the meaning of that differential interaction; because the intrusion of instruments intervenes in the mutual shaping of other elements and that shaping can be appreciated and evaluated only by humans, and because all instruments are value-based and interact with local values but only the human is in a position to identify and take into account those resulting biases.

Therefore, being the human instrument during interviews:

- I conducted each interview with the knowledge that each respondent is different. I made sure to follow and record all cues that I was shown in the course of my data research collection. These cues included body and facial expressions that seemed to tell me more on what I was researching. I also asked follow-up questions in instances where I needed a clarification on a matter.
- I made sure to record my interview proceedings using a tape recorder. This helped me to document the interview responses for analysis. This of course was after getting permission from my respondents if they were in agreement to be interviewed. It emerged that some respondents were shy to be interviewed on tape therefore I recorded the results in my study diary.
- I made sure to be as open-minded and flexible as possible in my interview proceedings. I also used a lot of 'small talk' to make respondents more at ease and possibly avail me more information.

With regard to ethnography, I:

- Made sure to get permission from the people I was observing to avoid portraying myself as a ‘stalker’. I got their trust by introducing who I was and the reason I was conducting the research.
- Got permission from the owners of the Internet cafes and the administrators of the computer laboratories that I used for my ethnography.
- Made sure to conduct interviews in cases where I did not understand during ethnography what the respondent was doing.

With regard to questionnaires:

- I made sure to phrase my questions in the simplest and clearest format possible. I did this to ensure that I made it easy for my respondents to understand what I was asking.
- I distributed questionnaires in person to those people that were willing to fill them in on printed-paper. I also sent a copy through email to those that preferred the emailed questionnaires. This was especially common for respondents that were either far away or un-available to collect the printed copies.

Regarding non-human instruments, I made use of interview guides, interview schedules and the computer to get information online and also for note taking. I also used the mobile phone and the email to make contacts with respondents and conduct email-based interviews.

4.3. Data collection

This section is a detailed explanation of how I used the research methods - interviews, ethnography, questionnaires and document analysis - during my data collection. The use of multiple sources increases confidence in the interpretation of data; helps to confirm the validity of study processes; and reduces biases that may arise from using one method (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000).

4.4. Interviews

I based the interviews with respondents on flexible open-minded interview schedules, which included semi-structured interview questions. These assisted me to collect more information from respondents than I had planned in the interview guide. I had an opportunity to study

people's body language, which I noted in cases of an interesting outcome. The interview guide enabled me to be more organized in my questions, whilst restraining myself from dictating my respondents.

4.4.1 Legitimacy to conduct the interview

Prior to the interviews, I distributed my letter of introduction¹⁶ from my research supervisor to all my potential respondents through email and in person. All respondents, except the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, consented to be interviewed. I availed my interview schedule to the respondents, booked for suitable interview-time and conducted the interviews.

4.4.2 Assurance of confidentiality

At the interview onset I explained to the respondents that the information I was collecting from them was for academic purpose and that I would treat the information as confidential. In this vein, I encouraged the respondents to be free and provide as much information as possible. Further, to ensure confidentiality I made sure to identify each respondent with a code. I also made sure to avoid any traces that would link me to any respondent.

4.4.3. Time and duration of each interview

Interviews were conducted during office hours and lasted for about an hour. The short interview time was because most of my respondents were busy.

4.4.4. Use of Consent Forms

To ensure that the respondents knew exactly what they were getting themselves into, I served them with consent forms¹⁷ that highlighted the purpose and role that the respondents were going to play in the interview process.

¹⁶See appendix (i)

¹⁷See appendix (ii)

4.4.5. Language used in the interviews

I used English as a medium of communication. However, there are some respondents that preferred that we speak in the local languages that included Bemba and Nyanja.

4.4.6. Recording Interview proceedings

I recorded most of the interviews on tape recorder. However, some respondents were shy to be audio taped hence I recorded the results in my note book/study diary.

4.4.7. Challenges

Though the interview process was an interesting and informative one, I encountered some challenges. For instance, I was tempted at several occasions to interject my respondents in instances when I thought the information being given was not true. I had this problem having read widely and worked in the media industry. I however, managed to overcome this by asking follow up questions to verify claims. I also encountered problems with some respondents that thought I was not a ‘genuine’ researcher but one hired by government to get information on their operations. This made it hard for some respondents to give me some ‘privileged’ information. For instance, one of my media organization’s representatives was very sceptical of me collecting information from him, he instead opted to make me promise him that my information was purely for academic purposes and even still it took us about fifteen (15) minutes just for him to be able to answer my research questions. I also encountered some problems with people that were not willing or were shy to talk to me in interviews. I mitigated this by issuing a list of interview questions that they answered at their own time. These questions were exactly the same questions that I asked in interviews.

4.5. Ethnography

My ethnographical research was based on participatory observation of respondents in Internet cafes at the University of Zambia and at Northmead business centre in Lusaka. The two locations were chosen because this is where most Internet cafes are established. I made sure I was as open minded and observant as possible to capture as much information as possible. I

read the respondents facial and body languages and observed what they were reading and the duration they did so. I recorded the results in my study diary.

4.5.1. Legitimacy to conduct the ethnography

Before, I began my observations I made sure to furnish my potential respondents with information on the research I was conducting and that it was purely an academic research. This helped me to avoid some risks that come with ethnography as the people you are observing may not be in agreement or may think you are stalking them or invading on their privacy (Riemer, 2008: 203).

4.5.2 Assurance of Confidentiality

I made emphasis on the confidentiality of my respondents. I achieved this by marking each respondent I observed with a number for instance respondents were marked as R1, R2 R3 and so on. I also made it known to everyone I included in the ethnographic research that the exercise was purely an academic undertaking.

4.5.3 Time and duration of the ethnography

The participant observations were carried out for a continuous period of one (1) month.

4.5.4 Language used in the ethnography process

I used English as a medium of communication. But the local Zambian languages were also used in some cases.

4.5.5 Recording ethnography proceedings

I recorded the proceedings in my notebook (study diary). These notes are the ones that are used for my analysis.

4.5.6 Challenges

I must state that to some extent the respondents felt intimidated by my presence. To minimise on this, I made sure to be as little noticed in the research process as possible. This is an important decision to take because the people being researched feel more comfortable to behave in a natural way when they are not observed. This decision therefore, made me more confident to observe the respondents without much risk of disturbing them.

4.6. Questionnaire Distribution

Questionnaire distribution was another important data collection method I used because it is a relatively cheaper and quicker method (Bryman, 2009:217). In addition, questionnaires were flexible in administration, especially where the circumstances did not allow me to conduct one-on-one-interviews. Prior to sending out the questionnaires, I was aware about the likely limitations of questionnaires: the researcher lacks the opportunity to probe the answers given; respondents lack the opportunity to prompt the questions; some questions are not answered in the questionnaire; and some respondents do not return the questionnaires back to the researcher. Therefore, to enhance the effectiveness of questionnaires, I structured clear and easy to answer questions, accompanied with a guide on how to answer the questions. I also ensured that I used closed ended and short question to ensure that I did not bore my respondents (Bryman, 2008:219).

4.7. Analysis of records and documents (with a comparative approach)

As stated earlier in the dissertation, document analysis is one of the important sources of data for answering the research questions. O'Leary (2004) describes document analysis as the collection, review, interrogation, and analysis of various forms of text as a primary source of research data. I analyzed several documents to explore the similarities and differences between online publishing and the mainstream media, and to expose the pros and cons of both systems. To do so, I organized information on blogs and Internet and made a comparative analysis of the online against the mainstream media.

4.8. Study diary

To ensure an orderly way of organizing appointments, schedules and notes from my field research I organized myself a notebook that I used to write down everything I saw, heard or came across. This book (study diary) helped me to:

- Write down all the interview schedules and appointments;
- Note down all the observations from ethnography (participant observation). This included information that I saw and heard;
- Note down the purpose for my study, the research questions and the frustrations and sorrows or joys that I came across. This helped me to stay focused during my data collection;
- Note down all my respondents, their addresses and their contact numbers; and
- Note down the research methods and their justifications. This helped me to organize myself better and focus only on the important research issues for my study.

In summary, Table 4 presents a summary of data collection tools with respect to respondents and research questions.

Table 4: Summary of Data collection tools and significance

Data collection Tool	Respondents	Research	
		<i>Objectives Covered</i>	<i>Questions Covered</i>
Questionnaires	Bloggers, Media Regulators and the mainstream media representatives	Objectives a-e	Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and main question.
Interviews	Blog Editors and Mainstream Media Representatives	Objectives a-e	Questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and main question.
Ethnography	Random selected Internet users in Internet cafes	Objectives a	Questions 2, 3 and main question.
Document Analysis	Published and Internet documents	Objectives a-e	Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and main question.

Source: author compilation

4.9. Data Analysis

I analysed the data manually by transcribing, coding, categorization into themes and subthemes, and made conclusions.

4.10. Transcribing the data

I transcribed by unitizing and coding the data collected through interviews (audio data), questionnaires and ethnography. Unitizing helped me to break the data into the smallest pieces of information that may stand alone as independent thoughts in the absence of additional information other than broad understanding of the context (Erlandson et al, 1993: 117). I unitized data on index cards that I coded in order to locate the original source of and the date the data was collected. Codes, according to Charmaz (1983: 186), act as devices to label, separate, compile and organize data.

4.11. Categorizing data into analytical themes

After unitizing and coding, I categorized the data into themes and subthemes this was used to ensure that I bring together into provisional categories those cards that apparently relate to the same content (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 347). I used broad analytical themes from my study questions.

4.12. Interpreting the data and drawing conclusions

Subsequent to systematic categorization of the data, I made simple computations and explored several data presentation methods. In the end, I made interpretations and conclusions.

4.13. Ensuring trustworthiness in the study

Studies associated with relatively small samples usually suffer from external validity (LeCompte and Goetz 1982). To solve this problem the researchers should assess the quality of their studies using trustworthiness and authenticity instead of validity and reliability (Lincoln and Guba 1994). Trustworthiness answers the question, “Are the findings worth paying attention to? (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 290).

In his publication on *Social Research Methods*, Bryman (2008: 377) explains that trustworthiness comprises four criteria: (i) credibility (similar to internal validity), (ii) transferability (similar to external validity), (iii) dependability (similar to reliability), and confirmability (similar to objectivity). Bryman further clarifies authenticity criteria as those which address the following issues of wider political impact of study: (i) fairness of the study in representing different viewpoints among members of social setting, (ii) ontological authenticity, denoting whether the study helps members to arrive at a better understanding of their social setting, (iii) educative authenticity, alluding to whether the study helps members to appreciate better the perspectives of other members of their social setting, and (iv) catalytic authenticity, referring to whether the study act as a force to members to engage an action to change their circumstances.

I have outlined below the steps I took to ensure the trustworthiness of the study.

4.14.Credibility

Credibility is an evaluation of whether or not the research findings represent a “credible” conceptual interpretation of the data drawn from the participants’ original data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

To try and uphold study credibility I observed the following:

- During the interviews, I occasionally rephrased the respondent’s views to make sure I captured their exact views on issues discussed. Further, I also asked follow-up questions for clarifications.
- I avoided asking respondents leading questions. For example, I avoided asking questions like, “Blogs are suitable for freedom of expression, aren’t they? This question may prompt answers like “Yes” even when the respondent does not necessarily mean to say, “Yes”. In this respect, Kvale (1996: 230) clarifies that leading questions result in unreliable study findings.
- After each interview, I gave each respondent the opportunity to listen to the audio recorder as a valuable time to validate the information or provide additional information or amend or clarify information already provided.

- During ethnography research I quietly observed my respondents activities and movements without interfering in the process. I also made sure to take down notes to avoid using my own subjective judgments when analyzing my results.
- After the interviews, I regularly contacted respondents to validate their views on issues that emerged from interviews or from the documents I analysed.
- I triangulated the data sources: (i) one-on-one interviews, (ii) participant observation – I observed Internet facilities and bloggers, (iii) self-administered questionnaires and (iv) document analysis. Lincoln and Guba (2000) maintain that within the same paradigm, mixing data-collection methods is sensible. Triangulation helped me to confirm the sources of data. For example, I triple-checked information obtained from interviews with the information collected from policy documents, participant observation and self-administered questionnaires. Similarly, I also clarified issues in policy documents with the respondents that I felt could tackle the issue.

4.15. Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which the findings of this study can apply or transfer beyond the project (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). It is the degree to which the findings can be generalized from the study sample to the entire population (Polit and Hungler, 1991: 645). In as much as the ultimate determination of transferability rests with future studies, this study has addressed issues related to: (i) Zambia's state of Internet and freedom of expression (ii) a wide selection of research respondents that included all media organizations both radio, TV and the online media (iii) personal biases detected in the study, (iv) possible influences created by respondents' official positions, and (v) respondents' attitudes, expectations, opinions, and emotions during the interview.

4.16. Dependability

Dependability is an assessment of the quality of the integrated processes of data collection, data analysis, and theory generation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In this vein, I promoted dependability of the study by engaging two peers with whom I had conversations, discussions, and question-and-answer periods. These peers monitored and assessed the methods I employed in this study and gave me feedback.

4.17. Confirmability

Confirmability, as explained by Guba and Lincoln (1985), is product check that helps assure that data, interpretations, and findings are grounded in the context from which they came. In this light, I kept a 'Diary' for logging important activities, schedules, and dates that otherwise might have been forgotten with the passage of time. Further, I maintained audio recordings, transcripts, field notes, and descriptions.

4.18. Chapter summary

In this chapter I have described the study methodology by focusing on the study design, data collection methods, data analysis, and trustworthiness of the study.

First, this study used a qualitative research approach. It employed purposive sampling. The sample was drawn from the providers of blogs, bloggers, media (radio and TV) and media regulators. In this vein, the respondents interviewed were nine program directors from different radio and TV stations, seven editors of blogs and 20 bloggers. Further, eight people surfing the Internet were observed each day. Further, 40 questionnaires were administered to bloggers and two questionnaires to media membership organisations or media monitoring organisations.

Second, this study triangulated data collection methods, namely one-on-one interviews, ethnography (where randomly selected Internet browsers were observed in Internet cafes), self-administered questionnaires, and document analysis.

Third, data was analysed manually by transcribing, coding, categorization into themes and subthemes. Then simple computations were made, several data presentation methods explored, interpretations made, and conclusions drawn.

Lastly, the chapter has illuminated that studies associated with relatively small samples usually suffer from external validity. Therefore, the quality of this study was assessed through trustworthiness and authenticity instead of validity and reliability. The four components of trustworthiness have been elaborated: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

CHAPTER 5: BLOGGING ENVIRONMENT IN ZAMBIA

5.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the Zambian Blogging environment. The chapter is organised as follows. Section 5.1 gives the historical snapshot of blogging in Zambia. Section 5.3 presents the dependent factors for blogging in Zambia. Section 5.4 describes the selected blogs. Finally, Section 5.5 gives the chapter summary.

5.2. Historical snapshot of blogging in Zambia

In this snapshot I have focused on features most salient to an understanding of freedom of expression through both mainstream media and blogging. I have focused on two historical periods: (i) 1972-1991, during which Zambia was a one-party-state under United National Independence Party (UNIP), and (ii) 1991 to date, during which Zambia reverted to a multiparty-state and introduced both privatization of state-owned-businesses and economic liberalization programmes.

5.2.1. *The one-party-state period 1972-1990*

Although blogging is a late 1990s phenomenon in Zambia, there are several issues of interest on freedom of expression through the mainstream media during the period 1972-1991.

Firstly, the period 1972-1991, during which “Humanism” was the national ideology, the mainstream media was state owned and controlled. The media comprised of two national newspapers, *The Times of Zambia* and the *Zambia Daily Mail*, one TV channel (Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation), and three radio stations under ZNBC. My examination of the contents of the 26 randomly selected newspapers – two newspapers from each year (one *Zambian Daily Mail* and one *Times of Zambia*) for the period 1972 – 1991, reveals that the aim of the mainstream media was to build the image of the ruling party, UNIP. The comments by Zambian citizens in the newspapers were typically social and not political in nature. On why Zambian citizens did not comment on political issues, a 72-year-old respondent elaborated as follows:

What can I say on freedom of expression through the media during the period 1972 to 1990?

We only wrote letters to the editor of Zambia Daily Mail and commented on marriages,

witchcraft, and other social issues that affected us at that time. Those who never loved their lives or who wanted the quickest way to the mortuary made comments on our national leader, Kenneth Kaunda. It was amazing that I, like any other Zambian, repeatedly chanted ‘*Lesa kumulu, Kaunda panshi*’ (meaning “God in Heaven and Kaunda on earth”). I believed that Kaunda was god. Since no one can wrestle with his creator, I personally never bothered to question Kaunda’s decisions. When I look back, I feel that I was indoctrinated.

Furthermore, both common TV and radio broadcasts were dominated by two phrases: “UNIP is the pillar of the nation”, and “His Excellency the President of Zambia, David Kenneth Kaunda”.

Secondly, although the Zambian Constitution talked about the freedom of expression, the Government did not put in place appropriate mechanisms. For example, no policy on freedom of expression existed during the period 1972-1991. Thirdly, access to the media, especially newspapers and TV, was restricted to urban areas. Besides, the topics covered by the media did not encourage people to express themselves. A 66-year-old respondent from Kalingalinga Compound in Lusaka explained as follows.

My daughter, the media nowadays encourages viewers to make contributions on various national issues. When I was a young lady, I remember that TV in Zambia simply aired movies about *Wonder Woman*, *Incredible Hawk*, and *Night Rider*. What expressions would I have made about Hollywood movies or its stars? In modern days, even if I don’t own a computer my children do read to me what the computers and cell phones are saying on the stories carried.

Fourthly, the typewriter and not the computer was the mainstay machine for producing documents. And because Internet is a late 1990s phenomenon access was not yet possible.

Fifth, many Zambians had low English reading and writing skills during 1972-1991. *The Times of Zambia*, *Zambia Daily Mail* and ZNBC used English as this is the official language. Although ZBNC TV sometimes summarized the main news in a few local languages, freedom of expression through the media required good reading and writing skills in English. A 58-year-old Kabulonga resident in Lusaka recalled as follows:

After Zambia got its independence from Britain, it was rare to find people around you who knew how to write English. Those children with reading skills could read the newspapers to parents or interpret the communication in the movies. I remember one day we were watching a comedy movie on TV. We did not understand the sentences made in the movie. But whenever we heard laughter in the movie, we also laughed. At one point, I asked my cousin

if he had understood the joke in the movie, and he told me to just laugh whenever I hear the laughter in the TV. Brenda, how did you expect us to express our freedom through the media if we could not even understand what was written in newspapers? In fact, I personally wanted those newspapers with a lot of pictures. I knew how to read pictures with accuracy.

In summing therefore, because the Internet is a post-1990s phenomenon blogging in its strictest sense did not exist in Zambia during the period 1972-1991. The mainstream media (Radio, TV and Newspapers), was the main source of news and a means for freedom of expression.

Having highlighted issues on freedom of expression in Zambia during the period 1972-1991, I will now proceed and consider the issues during the period 1991-2011.

5.2.2. Multiparty state period 1991-2011

When Zambia reverted to a multiparty state in 1991, the main message was to privatize state owned businesses and liberalize the economy. Although the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation has not been privatized yet, the period 1991-2011 is characterized by emergence of several private media in Zambia. In addition, the period is also characterized by a proliferation of online media in Zambia. These include TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers/blogs. Table 5.1 shows the Internet Based radio stations in Zambia.

The radio stations are concentrated in Zambia's capital city, Lusaka. Apart from ZNBC Radio 4, 2 and ZNBC Radio 1, all the radio stations are privately owned. The radio stations address issues ranging from news on Africa to religion and community news. One of the prominent programmes of the radio stations is the phone-in-programme that allows the public to express their views on a wide range of issues. A 43 year-old respondent from Kalundu Residential area in Lusaka explained as follows.

Unlike the Kaunda era, nowadays I am able to participate in phone in programmes and express my views. This year, for example, I remember making three phone calls on elections to one of the radio stations here in Lusaka. I gave my views on the person I thought was the right candidate for the post of presidency in Zambia. Personally, I am very happy about the way radios and TVs allow Zambians to freely talk about issues that affect us.

The period 1991 to date is also characterised with proliferation of various Internet based newspapers and blogging sites in Zambia such as: *EZambia Blog; iZambia; Lowdown; Nipeze; Nkani; the Post online; Sub-Saharan Informer; Times of Zambia; Zambia 24; the Zambia Daily Mail; the Zambian; Zambian Guardian; Tumfweko; the Zambian Watchdog;*

Lusaka Times; Kalaki's Korner; and ukzambians.co.uk. This study, however, has focused on only seven of these online newspapers/blogs, which are described in Section 5.3. These blogs and Internet based newspapers have been selected based on their popularity and consistency in updating their content.

Table 4: Radio stations that provide Internet radio access

	Name of Radio station	Location	Genre
1.	Radio Phoenix	Lusaka	Africa
2.	Zambezi FM Radio	Livingstone	Africa
3.	Flava FM	Kitwe	Love songs
4.	Ichengelo Radio	Lusaka	Africa
5.	Yatsani Radio	Lusaka	Catholic Christianity
6.	Yar FM	Kitwe	Community
7.	Radio Marathana	Kabwe	Christianity
8.	Q-FM	Lusaka	Africa
9.	Radio Christian voice	Lusaka	Christianity
10.	Hot FM	Lusaka	Music
11.	Parliament Radio	Lusaka	Politics
12.	Chikuni Radio	Monze	Catholic Christianity
13.	Mazabuka Community Radio	Mazabuka	Community
14.	Radio Liseli	Mongu	Community
15.	Radio Maria	Chipata	Zambia
16.	Radio Dove	Lusaka	Community
17.	ZNBC Radio 4	Lusaka	Ethnic news
18.	ZNBC Radio 1	Lusaka	Public
19.	Breeze fm	Chipata	Private
20.	Radio Dove	Lusaka	Community
21.	Radio Yangeni	Mansa	Community
22.	BBC Radio	Along the line of rail (main cities)	International News

Source: Author compilation

In the light of the above historical snapshot, it is clear that blogging is a massive tool for disseminating information and is a relatively new phenomenon to the way Zambians communicate ideas. Optimistically however, blogging will increase with the completion of the installation of the fiber optic cables for faster Internet speed and the proliferation of

mobile Internet accessibility¹⁸. It is encouraging also to note that many local Zambians access Internet content on mobile phones and from Internet cafes. This enables them to blog – keep online personal journals and comment on various issues ranging from health, economy and education to breaking news.

5.3. Dependent factors of blogging in Zambia

My analysis reviews that Zambians living abroad blog more than local Zambians. During my data collection, respondents felt that the locals and Zambians living abroad were differently empowered in terms of ICT skills, access to Internet, and disposable resources (money and time) to engage in blogging. In this vein, it suffices to group the factors that make blogging successful into three categories: (i) technological, (ii) economical, and (iii) educational.

Technologically, for example, the Internet statistics in Figure 1 shows that in 2011 only 6.4% (882, 170) of the total Zambian population (13,881,336) had access to Internet.

Figure 5: Zambians’ Access to Internet

INTERNET USAGE STATISTICS FOR AFRICA						
	Population (2011 Est.)	Internet Users Dec/2000	Internet Users 31-Dec-11	Penetration (% Population)	Users % Africa	Facebook 31-Dec-11
	13,881,336	20,000	882,170	6.4 %	0.6 %	177,820
Total Africa	1,037,524,058	4,514,400	139,875,242	13.5 %	100.0 %	37,739,380

Source (Internet World Stats, 2011)

5.4. Description of selected blogs in Zambia

5.4.1 *The Zambian Watchdog*

Established in 2008 and publishing from Germany, *The Zambian Watchdog* is an on-line only Newspaper aimed at keeping people updated with events by providing 24 hours news coverage. In my Interview, its Editor stressed that:

¹⁸ See (MTN Zambia, 2008) and (Lusakatimes.com, 2012). These initiatives have contributed to a fast growth in the way people communicate through the internet. Today, people are able to read news, use Facebook and even reply to emails on mobile phones. Most of all, people are able to engage in interactive debates on various news sites online using their mobile phones.

We provide a platform for Zambians to air their views on issues affecting them through the posting of comments on the stories covered. This is an excellent way of creating a society that participates in the news carried by the on-line newspaper.

The Editor further explained that:

Despite our good intentions we have been involved in a number of legal battles leading to journalists and editors either working under-cover or being forced into exile. This is despite the fact that the Zambian constitution provides for freedom of expression.

A close examination of the Zambian Draft Constitution, section 36 (1) one can clearly see that the constitution states that “a person has the right to freedom of expression” however, because of the Penal Code and other laws, it can be concluded that freedom of expression espoused by the Constitution comes under attack in the Penal Code, which is loaded with such terms as defamation of the president, contempt of court, and publication of false news in which an opinion can be deemed false news. Such provisions in the Penal Code can land bloggers or journalist in prison.

5.4.4.1 Physical Description of the Watchdog

The Zambian Watchdog is designed as a typical online newspaper designed in a blue theme background. The paper has a section called “Home” were the main page displays when clicked. The paper also has a sports, business, a section for special reports, exclusives news, miscellaneous news and news that the paper streams from other media organizations. The paper further has an opinion editorial and a verbatim statements page where statements that according to *The Watchdog* are considered verbatim are placed.

Figure 1: Physical characteristics of the *Zambian Watchdog*



Source: Author compilation adopted from the website www.zambianwatchdog.com

5.4.1.2. The comment policy

The *Zambianwatchdog.com* under its user terms and conditions has listed some of the terms and conditions¹⁹. These include the liberty of posting personal opinions, messages and ideas provided this information is not illegal, defamatory, infringing, and obscene or of advertising motivated message. Meanwhile, their “About us” page states that the website is run by private Zambian journalists. They add that their guiding principle is to “write news regardless of whom or what the subject is. We fear no one. We favour no one”.

5.4.2 The Lusaka Times

The *Lusaka Times*, established in January 2007 and published from Lusaka, is a privately owned online newspaper that presents news and views on Zambia and the world daily. The website’s day-to-day news content comes from Zambian sources like *Zambia Daily Mail*, *Times of Zambia*, ZNBC, Muvi TV and the Zambia News and Information Services (ZANIS).

¹⁹ (<http://www.zambianwatchdog.com/user-terms-conditions/> a web link accessed on the 28/02/2011 at 18:30:00pm)

It also has a number of people that are involved in gathering information that is published on the website. It is interesting to also note that the website gives an opportunity for Zambians interested in writing commentary or news stories provided they take responsibility of the content. Just like the *Zambianwatchdog.com* it is designed as a typical website with a blue and white background. On its “About Us” page the websites states that:

Lusakatimes.com is run by a number of people distributed around the world, working in an open source type of structure, purely driven by hobby and ambition to provide Zambians around the world with current news content based on facts and not speculation. Our day to day news content comes from known *Zambian* sources like *Zambia Daily-Mail*, *Times of Zambia*, *ZNBC* and *ZANIS*. These are the giants whose shoulders we stand on.

5.4.2.1 *Physical Description of the Lusaka Times*

The Lusakatimes.com has a “Home” page where all their stories of the day, including adverts, are displayed. The home page also has links to other categories of news such as sports; the archived stories; the political stories; the economy; rural news; and, lifestyle and health news.

The paper also has a link to features carried, and sections for general news and columns written by interested members of society. As stated above, the paper has adopted a blue display background with flashing advertisements running over the web page.

Figure 6: Screen short of Lusakatimes.com



Source: Author compilation from the website www.lusakatimes.com

5.4.2.2 Comments policy

Lusaka Times welcomes and encourages any person's commentary and debate²⁰. However, the paper encourages more political news and filters out all comments that are abusive, threatening, defamatory, and libellous or attacks. *Lusaka Times* reserves the right to edit or delete comments entirely. Any comments the editors deem inappropriate are removed from the site without explanation, prior notice and liability. Readers can also request the editors to delete comments the readers consider as defamatory.

Further, *Lusakatimes.com* maintains a non-liability policy for comments posted on the site. This is interesting however as the Zambian law requires all editors to be responsible for content published. Therefore, whether the editor states that they have no obligation to be responsible for content posted by people it can be stated that at the end of the day, it is still the publication that will be answerable to the authority. Meanwhile, the paper promises to uphold privacy and anonymity by not selling, distributing, bartering or transferring any of its reader's

²⁰ [www. http://www.lusakatimes.com/about/](http://www.lusakatimes.com/about/)

information to companies, organizations or other parties outside of Lusakatimes.com without the person's knowledge.

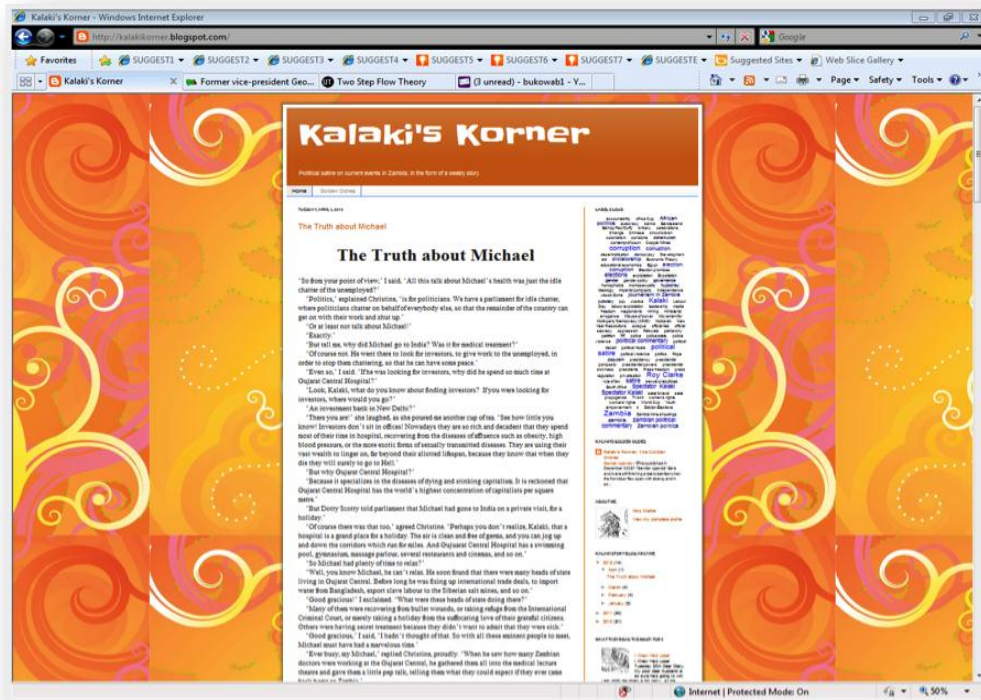
5.4.3 Kalaki's Korner

Roy Clarke established the blog *Kalaki's Korner* in 2009. The blog substituted the weekly column, which used to appear in *The Post* Newspaper during the period April 1996 to December 2009. In an interview (Clarke, 2011) he explained that he terminated the print version of this blog to facilitate prompt publication of information. The blog provides a weekly story of about 850 words, containing a criticism of local, current and political events, sometimes in the form of an allegory or parable or presenting some comic theorizing by the actors who discuss what is going on. According to Roy Clarke, the blog "thinly disguise" actual political figures and public institutions and political parties. He uses satire to try to focus on the central constitutional role of the press – as the 'fourth estate' and of making people accountable.

5.4.3.1 Physical description of Kalaki's Korner

The blog, *Kalaki's Korner* is designed in bright orange, green and yellow floral marks giving it a lively look. The blog has two categories one named "Home" and another named "Golden Oldies". The home category is where the author has his weekly stories displayed and on the Golden Oldies is where the author has the archived stories that people click if they want to read some of the stories written as back as 1996. Besides, *Kalaki's Korner* publishing under the URL <http://kalakikorner.blogspot.com/>, he has linked his blog to his Facebook profile where he posts links to the articles that appear on the blog. This page can be accessed at <http://www.facebook.com/#!/profile.php?id=100000860314144>. (Accessed 2nd April 2012)

Figure 7: Screen shot of kalakikorner.blogspot.com



Source: Author compilation from the website www.kalakikorner.blogspot.com

5.4.3.2 Comments policy

The blog Kalaki'skorner is open to comments. There is no statement or disclaimer on the site to regulate comments.

5.4.4. The Zambian

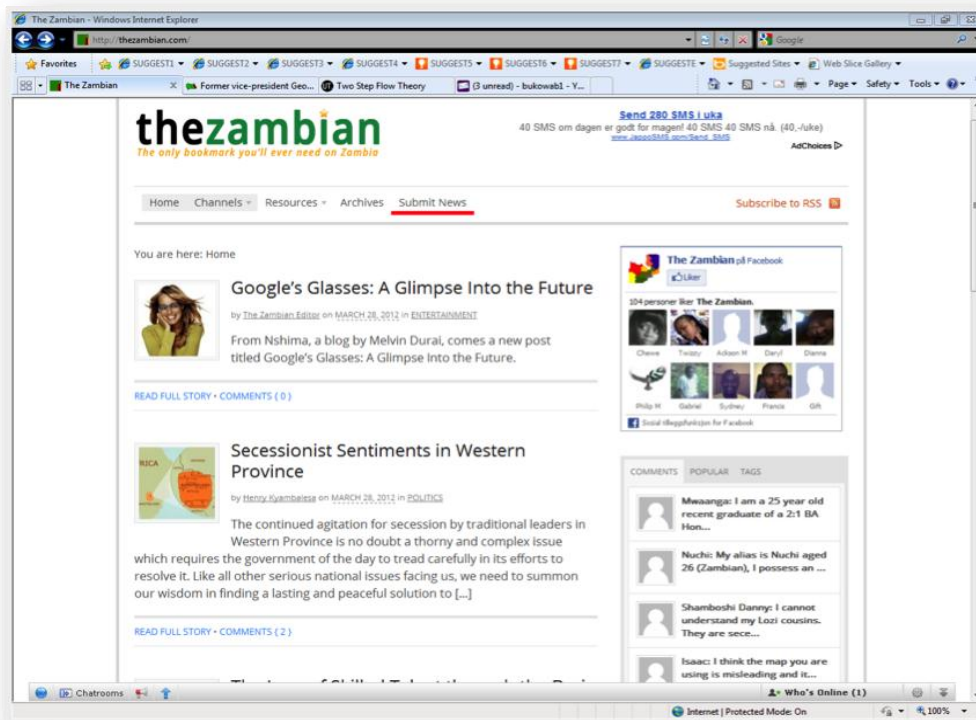
Thezambian was established in January of 1999, with the goal of serving the information needs of the Zambian community. According to the website TheZambian.com, all the work across the portal is the result of the voluntary efforts of various people with a passion for Zambia. This group of people call themselves *The Zambian Development Team*. The website also has a Facebook page with currently 179 fans.

5.4.4.1 Physical characteristics

The "Home page" contains four major headings: *Channels; Resources; Archives; and Submit News*. There are two mine headings as well: *Zambian on Facebook*, and *Advertisement*. One unique feature is that the Zambian constantly updates news, weather, time and currency

information to connect the events in Zambia with Zambians worldwide. Another feature is that the Chat, E-mail and message board facilities promote the interaction among the Zambian community worldwide.

Figure 8: Screen shot of thezambian.com



Source: Author compilation from the website www.thezambian.com

5.4.4.2 Comments Policy

Thezambian welcomes comments. Its motto reads, “a place to gather, discuss, share, and collaborate with Zambians across the globe”. The blog was established specifically for the Zambians and non-Zambians interested in business opportunities. Typically, people share information and ask queries, which are answered by anyone with expertise knowledge.

5.4.5. Zambian Economist

The *Zambian Economist*, established in February 2007, has moved from a “blogspot” URL to a self-standing domain. The blog is focused on the coverage of economic issues that are unfolding in the Zambia. The *Economist* publishes a range of thoughts and comments on a number of areas that include direct opinion pieces on events and reviews of books or other

published works. During the interview, the founder of the *Zambian Economist* commented as follows:

The Zambian Economist recognizes that opinions by nature can vary from person to person therefore to foster dialogue and maintain balance, they welcome responses and guest blog submissions from those directly affected through their website or through their email. The Economist provides a non-political platform for exchanging ideas on the many issues facing the nation” the website has a readership of around 20,000 page viewers a month. In terms of geographical coverage, whilst most of the access is abroad, people within Zambia access more than a third of traffic and this has been rising as use of Internet expands in the country.

The founder further elaborated as follows:

In terms of access, the *Zambian economist* has over 1000 fans via their Facebook page. The paper also has over 300 subscribers who receive regular emails via their Feed burner Subscriptions making the site or blog an email based blog. This method has allowed the *Zambian* to keep in touch and allow people either to get posts in a batch or daily. The paper recently launched two twitter services (one for specific issues of interest and the other for news/blog update services both linked to the website). The combined subscription to these has now reached over 900 people.

5.4.5.1 *Physical Description of the Zambian Economist*

The *Zambian economist* has a home page and a politics corner where people comment on the political environment prevailing in Zambia. The site that started as a blog also has links to other pages of the *Zambian Economist's*, sources of information as well as the other stories available on the site. A “book reviews” page looks at books of interest to the readers. The reviews cover a broad spectrum of issues usually relevant to the issues facing Zambia. According to the website the *Zambian economist* has a commitment to promote Zambian Literature.

The Politics Corner Page aims at informing Zambians on the political developments in the country. It provides up-to-date key documents, links and contacts of key political parties. The website also has a page called “Leading Voices” which is a page that looks at providing key players in the country with notes that can help them with information on some of the important issues facing the country. The purpose of the notes is to stimulate debate and ensure

logical and impartial critique that plays a leading role in shaping public debate. Finally, the *Zambian economist* has a page that provides the reader an opportunity to read the constitution. The page is called the Constitution Bill page. This page also provides contact details for the publishers and people can contact them for any questions.

The unique part of this website is the fact that unlike other websites that are so much into copying stories from the media at home that is radio and TV the economists is more into writing their own stories based on the economic situations in the country.

Figure 9: Screen shot of [Zambianeconomist.com](http://www.zambianeconomist.com)



Source: Author compilation from the website www.zambianeconomist.com

5.4.5.2 Comments policy

The *Zambian Economist* states its disclaimer as follows:

The *Zambian economist* is a private website produced and maintained in the founder's own time, and reflects solely the personal opinions of the founder and invited guest contributors. Statements published on the *Zambian Economist* do not represent the views or policies of employers, past or present, or any other organisation with which the founder or invited guest contributors may be affiliated. Any view, opinion or information submitted in the comments section is the sole responsibility of the respective contributor or visitor to the site. These do not in any way represent the views of *Zambian Economist* nor can we be held responsible for them.²¹

5.4.6. The Post Online

The Post Online is an Internet based version of Zambia's leading private owned daily newspaper. The newspaper has earned its place among various publications in Zambia with its critical independent editorial policy. With the motto "The paper that digs deeper", *The Post* has become a leader in the providing of information making it gain more credibility compared to other publications whether privately or publicly owned. After being published as a newspaper, *The Post* newspapers launched its online publication with the aim of offering individuals living outside the country with an opportunity to read and know about developments in the country and outside the country on a daily basis. Its readership is broad with readers ranging from politicians, academicians, to any member of the public.

5.4.6.1 Physical Description of The Post Online

The Post Online's main Page provides a drop down that provides links to other pages of Post Zambia. The "Home page" provides the link to the main story as well as other feature stories. A "home News Page" provides the reader with Zambian news only. The online journal also provides a "Business page". The "business page" provides information on latest developments in the Zambian Economy as well as business analysis. The "Sports page" offers information and news about Sports within the country as well as throughout the world. "Columns Page" is the place where people's opinions are published. A Lifestyle Page looks at various trends that affect social life in Zambia as well as the world.

The Post Online "World Page" is solely dedicated to providing information on the developments taking place in the world. It publishes information that ranges from politics, science and education to issues that affect development. On the "photo page", readers are provided with an opportunity to see news and features in photo form. There is also a video page, which allows readers to watch news events.

²¹ The disclaimer is found online at: <http://www.zambian-economist.com/>

Figure 10: Screen shot of *The Post Online*



Source: Author compilation from the website www.postzambia.com

All the pages on the Post Zambia’s website give the reader an opportunity to leave a comment on an issue they feel they can comment on. However, this seems unlikely because of the paper’s policy to ‘screen’ whoever can comment on the site and this makes it very difficult for bloggers to participate through commentary.

5.4.6.2 Comments Policy

To the extent permitted by law, *The Post Online* says it does not accept any responsibility for any statement in the content. The Post advises readers not to rely on any statement published on *postzambia.com* without first taking specialist professional advice. For the avoidance of confusion, *The Post Online* is not being liable for any loss caused. Further, The Post gives no warranties of any kind concerning *postzambia.com* or the content therein.

The Post emphasises that individual advertisers are solely responsible for the content of advertising material, which they submit to *The Post Online*, including ensuring that it complies with relevant legislation. The Post accepts no responsibility for the content of advertising material, any error, omission or inaccuracy therein.

5.4.7. UKZAMBIANS

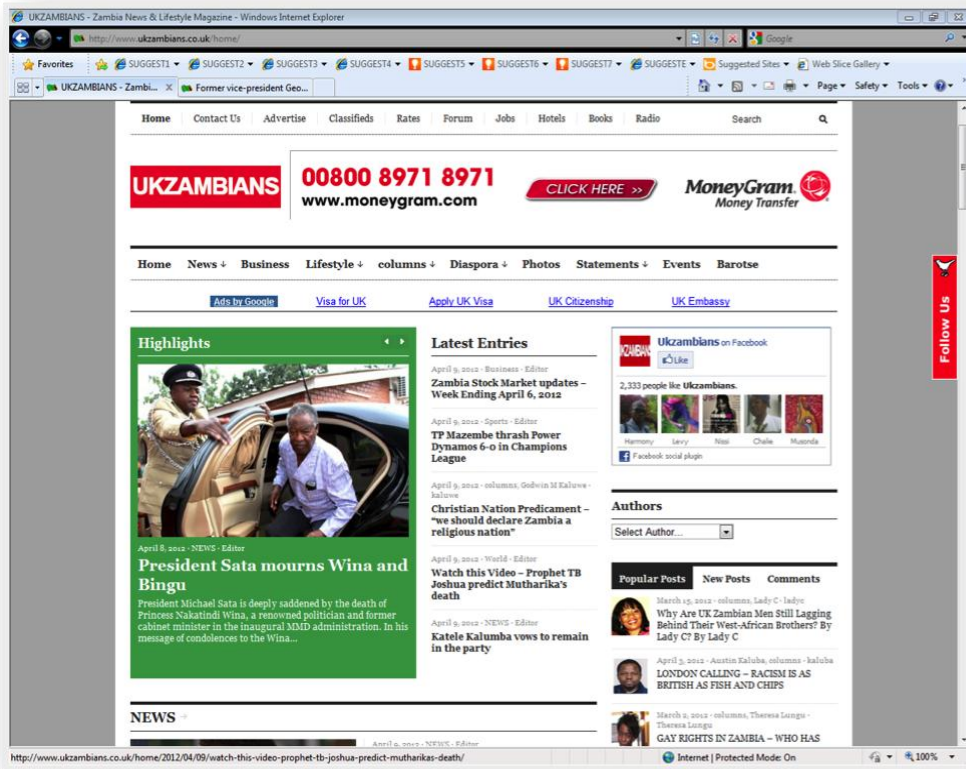
UKZAMBIANS website publishing under the URL: www.ukzambians.co.uk is an online lifestyle magazine hosted in the United Kingdom aimed at publishing content in a wide variety of topics with an interest in the blog reviews, breaking news, trend pieces and opinion-focused posts. The publication focuses on material that is timely, focused, interesting and opinion focused. ukzambians.co.uk writers are composed of people from a wide spectrum ranging from politics, sports, features to general lifestyle. The Bloggers have a diversified demographic composition. People are from all walks of life as long as they are able to understand and express themselves in English.

5.4.7.1 Physical Description of the ukzambians.co.uk

The ukzambians.co.uk website comprises of a “Home page”, which features links to latest stories making headlines or feature articles. The “Home Page” also features sections for display adverts. The home page is also the page that the paper has all the basic information its advertisers and links to other categories of news such as sports and also there is a link for the archived stories. The journal also has an “awards” page contains the various awards received by the people in various categories. The Column Page provides the readers an opportunity to air their views as well as write their opinions. There is a fair representation of opinion ranging from politics, social, economy to general themes in the country. The ukzambians.co.uk “Economy Page” provides financial and market related information with an analysis of the Zambian Economy.

The page focuses on areas that affect the Zambian Economy with readers having an opportunity to offer their analysis. *Interviews Page, Jobs, Lifestyle, News, Photos, Sport* and *what's on* are other pages that are on the ukzambians.co.uk. The online Journal also provides information on Zambian culture, student life and tips on life in the UK, travel information, information on the Magazine produced, and links to *Google, BBC, Yahoo, Facebook* and *Twitter*. Readers can post their comments on to the website or can follow and comment via Twitter or Facebook.

Figure 11: Screen shot of ukzambians.co.uk



Source: Author compilation from the website www.ukzambians.co.uk

5.4.7.2 Comments policy

The website in its disclaimer highlights as follows:

While ukzambians do their best to maintain the high quality of the information displayed on this site, we cannot be held responsible for any loss due to incorrect information found here. All information is provided free of charge, 'as-is', and you use it at your own risk! The contents of all 'Comment' messages should not be construed as advice and represent the opinions of the authors, not those of ukzambians or its affiliates. ukzambians does not authorize or approve this content, and reserves the right to remove items at its discretion.

(ukzambians.co.uk, 2012)

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has described a selected number of blogs and Internet based newspapers in Zambia. Firstly, the historical snapshot has been presented on those features most salient to an understanding of freedom of expression through both mainstream media and blogging by

focusing on two historical periods: 1972-1991, when Zambia was a one-party-state, and 1991-2011, when Zambia reverted to a multiparty-state and introduced both privatization of state-owned-businesses and economic liberalization programmes. In the former period, media comprised of two national newspapers -*Times of Zambia* and the *Zambia Daily Mail* - one TV channel and three radio stations. Blogging in its strictest sense did not exist in Zambia during 1972-1991. However, mainstream media, which was state owned and controlled, were the means for expressing one's freedom.

The latter period, 1991-2001, is characterised by emergence of several private mainstream and online media in Zambia. These include TV stations, radio stations, and newspapers/blogs. The online newspapers and blogging sites in Zambia at the end of 2011 included: *Ezambia* Blog; *iZambia*; *Lowdown*; *Nipeze*; *Nkani*; *the Postonline*; *Sub-Saharan Informer*; *Times of Zambia*; *Zambia 24*; *the Zambia Daily Mail*; *the Zambian*; *Zambian Guardian*; *Tumfweko*; *the Zambian Watchdog*; *Lusaka Times*; *Kalaki's Korner*; and *ukzambians.co.uk*.

Lastly, the chapter has described seven of the aforementioned blogs in terms of their physical characteristics, issues they cover and their comments policy. These give a snapshot of the variety of blogs and Internet based newspapers in Zambia

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

6.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the study results of this research. The chapter is organised as follows. Section 6.2 gives a presentation of the main research question and the data collection methods and tools. Section 6.3 gives a simple organisation of the structure of the chapter. Section 6.4 discusses the six (6) sub-research questions, the data collection tools and their findings. Section 6.5 presents and discusses the main research question and their findings. The conclusion for the chapter is placed in section 6.6

6.2. Presentation of the findings - Main Research Question

What impact do blogs and online newspapers have on the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia?

My sources of data for addressing this question were four fold:

(i) Interviews with bloggers and editors of blogs, the mainstream media editors and the media regulatory authorities. (ii) ethnography/participant observation with people randomly selected from Computer Laboratories at the University of Zambia Main Campus and at Internet cafes situated around the Northmead area in Lusaka. (iii) Questionnaires distributed randomly to a selected number of people and finally (iv) a document analysis of policy documents on the ICT and the media in Zambia.

I adopted a mixed method approach to make sure that I had both qualitative and quantitative data to support my claim that blogs and online newspapers can help in promoting freedom of expression in Zambia.

6.3. Organization of my research findings

To help me answer my main research question, I have arranged this chapter in a way that I have presented and then discussed my research findings. In addition, I have presented the findings for my sub-research questions first after which I have presented and discussed findings for the main research question. It is my opinion that the five sub-research questions are important to discuss first as they form a basis for answering the main research question.

6.4. Presentation of findings (Sub- Research questions)

6.4.1 Question 1: Is online publishing relevant to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia? If so why?

6.4.1.1 Presentation of findings

To help me answer this question, I formulated research questions that were answered through questionnaires and interviews. This question was mainly answered by (a) editors of blogs, (b) mainstream media representatives and; (c) the bloggers.

In regard to questions directed at editors of blogs, I formulated interview questions as shown below:

- (I) How does online publishing contribute to freedom of expression in Zambia?
- (II) How do you define freedom of expression in relation to your work? And;
- (III) What are the advantages of the new media in comparison to the mainstream media?

6.4.1.2 Presentation of Results

This research has revealed that the blog sphere in Zambia contributes to freedom of expression by allowing people to access, contribute and disseminate their information and debate without hindrance or censorship. As one editor of a blog explains:

We, as an independent blog have contributed significantly to a media platform that allows literally everybody to speak out their mind. We pride ourselves for allowing people to use whatever language they can carry out a conversation in. Remember! we are a non-profit website whose core- purpose is to bring up a different type of media that allows people not to

be consumers alone, but also producers of journalistic content whether it is professionally written or not.

In view of the second interview question, my analysis reviews that freedom of expression is interpreted differently by different editors as shown below:

Editor 1: “Freedom of expression is the ability to allow people to write whatever they feel is right”;

Editor 2: “it is the right to receive, disseminate and discuss ideas”;

Editor 3: “it is the freedom to speak freely on anything provided it does not affect other people’s liberties”;

Editor 4: “it is the right of journalists to write and disseminate information without any harassment”;

Editor 5: “it is the liberties of any human being to speak freely on any topic of their choice”;

Editor 6: “it is the freedom to allow people access public information”. And;

Editor 7: “freedom of expression is exactly what we do, that is, allowing anybody and everybody to contribute freely about anything even irrelevant information so long as the people expressing it are convinced it is true”.

Freedom of expression in a nutshell is the right to express one’s views and ideas freely, without any harassment, intimidation and/or censorship. However, this is only practical under the condition that these liberties do not infringe on other peoples freedoms. Putting in mind the above, it is important to take into consideration the view of (Naik, 2003) who elaborates as follows:

New technologies, such as the Internet, and satellite and digital broadcasting, offer unprecedented opportunities to promote freedom of expression and information. Actions by the authorities to limit the spread of harmful or illegal content through the use of these technologies should be carefully designed to ensure that any measures taken do not inhibit the enormous positive potential of these technologies. Obviously, limitations on such technologies will be a fine balancing act between defending the freedom of expression and information and ensuring protection from abuses.

While, the above is true it is important to take note of the point that a ‘freedom’ is only valid when it does not infringe on the freedoms of another person. This is a defining point for the

development of a society where ‘freedom of expression’ of each and every member of that society is respected and/or upheld.

In addition to the above observations made by (Naik, 2003) and the blog editors that participated in this study, this research finds that the blog sphere possess advantages that are significant to the development of freedom of expression in Zambia. These advantages are outlined and explained as follows:

- (i) Absence of a defined geographical barrier: this is an important attribute considering the fact that the Internet can be accessed anywhere around the world and at any time of the day.
- (ii) Quick access and immediate dissemination and feedback of content. And;
- (iii) Better opportunities for debate and a strong sense of confidentiality in these debates: the Internet allows people to participant with anonymous identities.

6.4.1.3 *Presentation of findings (bloggers)*

In regard to questions directed at bloggers, I formulated questions that were targeted at finding out;

- (I) What attracts people to blogs; and
- (II) What advantages are derived from online media compared to the main stream media.

6.4.1.4 *Results*

This research reveals that the majority of bloggers are attracted to blogs because blogs are:

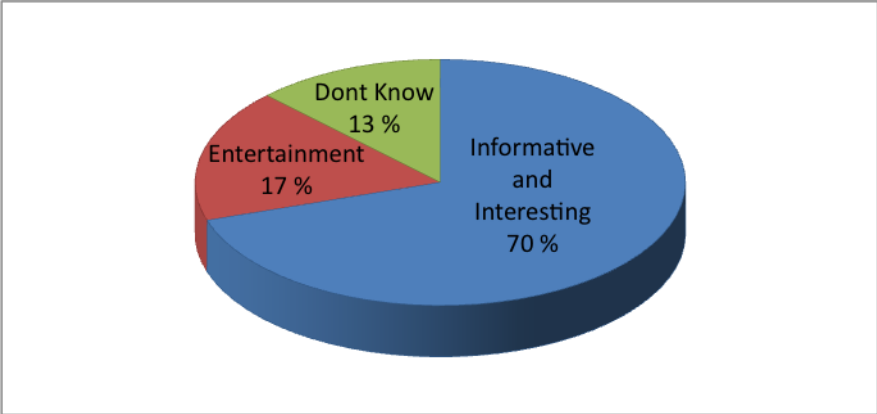
- (i) interesting
- (ii) informative; and
- (iii) interactive

Of the total research sample population of 60 people (a breakdown of the sample population and the sample is presented in chapter 4 section 4.2.2), the majority (42 people) representing 70% stated that they are attracted to blogs because, blogs are informative and interesting. 17% (10 people) of the respondents stated that they are drawn to blogs and online news sites for

entertainment purposes such as music and videos and 13% (8 people) of the respondents expressed ignorance at the reasons why they blog.

In this vein, I drew conclusions that, the respondents that ‘don’t know’ or those that expressed ignorance as to why they blog (see figure below) are motivated to do so out of a desire to follow what others are doing.

Figure 12: Bloggers and their interests



Source: Author compilation

Meanwhile, in view of the advantages derived from the Internet media, these respondents (elaborated above in figure 12) are of the view that “blogs and online newspapers offer a platform to access news and information, debate and a platform to express their views”. A 50-year-old University of Zambia lecturer elaborates as follows:

My friend, the Internet is a ‘saviour’ to me. I now have the opportunity to access my news stories quietly while sipping my Tea. The best part of all! I can read and contribute to the news platforms simultaneously without anybody knowing my identity. Brenda! You know I love privacy so this for me is a plus. And who says I can’t, author my own articles? With TV Brenda, you only see the beautiful faces reading news without having a chance for your input, but with the Internet my dear, I am my own newscaster, writer, and editor in my own right

Table 5: Summary of findings – (questions directed at bloggers)

Interest in Blogs	Advantages of Blogs and Online Newspapers
<p>It is a platform for people to access, disseminate and debate information without limitations</p> <p>It is an excellent platform for accessing current affairs as stories can be updated several times in a day</p> <p>It is an excellent idea to socialize with like- minded people on issues that affect you</p> <p>It is an interesting and informative platform. (Interesting in the sense that one has the opportunity to read what others think on a topic and at times these thoughts are filled with humor)</p> <p>It is a platform that makes it possible for one to be able to access all the formats i.e. video, text, pictures and sound. Hence if one is interested in one and not the other they have the liberty to do so.</p> <p>It is a platform that gives opportunities for people to debate and express their ideas freely.</p>	<p>Provide freedom of expression in the sense that non journalists are usually given space to write and debate on stories.</p> <p>It is a fast platform for access of news and information</p> <p>It is a platform that provides an immediate feedback when it comes to debate</p> <p>It is a relatively cheap medium for debate as you don't need a phone to call or send an SMS to participate in the debate but one can participate instantly with a click of a button</p> <p>It is platform that makes it easy for one to anonymously participate in debate</p>

Source: Author Compilation

In regard to questions directed at the mainstream media representatives, I asked the questions: Do you consider the new media a better forum for freedom of expression. If so why?

6.4.1.5 Results

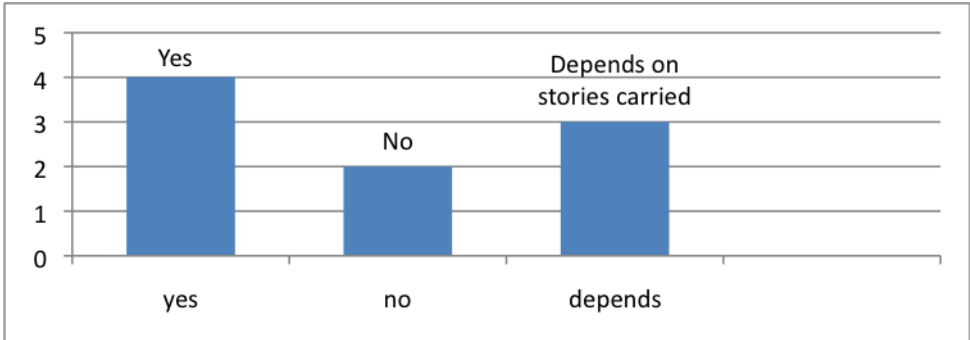
Of the nine (9) interviews conducted with media representatives, four (4) of them said ‘yes’ they consider the new media a better forum for freedom of expression. Two (2) said ‘No’ and three (3) of the nine (9) respondents said it ‘depends on the quality of information being reported’.

Those that said ‘yes’ expressed fear that their work in the mainstream media is usually censored by either self-censorship, the institutions they work for or by the government. This category of people said they prefer the new media as it is a platform that is not commonly subjected to censorship. They said they find participating on the blogs and online newspapers an interesting and interactive process as opposed to the mainstream media where space,

protocol and advertisers dictate how much time is allocated to a particular debate. However, those people in the interviews that said ‘No’ explained that blogs and online papers have a tendency of reporting inaccurate or misleading information. They noted that this is because there is no mechanism for fact checking or limiting what people post as news.

These respondents also said they feel the new media is a recipe for anarchy because some debates are not moderated before going online. Those that said it ‘depends on the stories being carried’ were of the idea that both media (mainstream and Internet Media) can either be good media for freedom of expression or bad. They added that the content of the stories and the circumstances surrounding the generation and disseminating of the stories is an important factor to consider.

Figure 13: Summary of finding from Mainstream Media Representatives - Is the New Media better for freedom of expression?



Source: author compilation

6.4.1.6 Discussion of the findings

My analysis reveals that online publishing is relevant to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. It is therefore true to say that the Internet has revolutionized the way people communicate. Instead of waiting for the morning paper to be published, people are now able to log into news websites and access both latest and archived information on an issue. As an editor of a blog elaborates:

Gone are the days that people in Zambia needed to wait for the newspapers to publish their editions, the radio and TV to broadcast their news bulletins and ‘word of mouth’ to be circulated. People can now get updated information and news at just a click of the button (though we have a slow network connection, but it is better than nothing). Brenda, you know

how expensive our newspapers are (unless you live with someone rich and willing to share with you). Look at this situation, I enter the office, sit on the desk and click!!!! There comes 'Post online' for free, imagine... for free! Come On, isn't this thing called Internet just divine?

Conversely, the Zambian mainstream media is filled with professional journalism making it difficult for ordinary citizens to have a voice to air their views. Banda (2007) in his text on journalism in Zambia, elaborates that this is a major contribution to the dwindling 'citizen journalism'. He adds that 'citizen journalism' if upheld is an important recipe for democracy to prevail.

6.4.2 Question 2: What are the advantages of blogging compared to the mainstream media?

To help me answer this question, I formulated research questions that were answered through questionnaires and interviews. In addition, I reviewed selected research and policy documents relevant to this study. Like in the previous sub-question (Question One), the questionnaires and interviews were of great importance to answering this question. I conducted seven (7) interviews with editors of blogs and disseminated forty (40) questionnaires to bloggers.

6.4.2.1 *Presentation of results*

To help me gather data I asked two questions one directed at bloggers and the other directed at blog editors. In this vein, in regard to questions directed at bloggers I asked the question; what are the advantages of blogging compared to the mainstream media? And In regard to questions directed at the editors of blogs, I asked the question; what advantages does blogging have in comparison to the mainstream media?

6.4.2.3 *Results*

My research reveals that respondents are of the view that blogging as a phenomenon for freedom of expression is important because it allows for interactive debate. My analysis reveals that blogging is an un-stoppable medium for promotion of freedom of expression. Below is a table representation of the findings of my research on sub-research question two (2)

Table 6: Advantages derived from blogging

Excellent medium for Free Expression
Fast and Efficient for receiving and disseminating information
Good Interactive medium where ideas and news can be debated and discussed
Limited or no censorship (Internet censorship is expensive)
Excellent medium for getting links to other sources of information
Excellent medium for earning more money through advertising

Source: Author compilation

6.4.2.4. Discussion of the findings

My research findings and discussion of this question has been divided in various sub-themes as follows:

1) Blogs and online media present stories from mainstream media.

As the blogging phenomenon expands, copyright concerns become quite important. According to Scocco (2007) technology makes it really easy to copy, modify and share information. My analysis shows that blogs and online media have been criticised to contain ‘plagiarised’ information from other media organisations such as radio and TV. This is a retrogressive move for the authors and publishers that have put in resources and time to produce the materials. At the same time one may argue that it is a great opportunity for people that are unable to access the mainstream media for stories to do so. Take for instance, views from three respondents with three different viewpoints on the use of information from other media sources:

Respondent 1:

The Internet reduce the importance attached to copyright laws, anybody can wake up and copy your work and paste it on their site as news, this is retrogressive for the mind that has come up with the work and what is painful is they copy in the name of fair use.

Respondent 2:

So what if somebody copies one or two of your stories? They are merely providing a platform to air your views; this is not bad at all!

Respondent 3:

The Internet is one of the great man-made instruments that have the power to ‘lead or mislead’ blog editors’ copy from radio, newspapers and TV and the mainstream editors also copy from blogs. All three are equal; the problem comes in when the source of the stories is not telling the truth and that is when people go to prison.

ii) Provide links to multiples sources of news where people can verify or provide feedback on the stories

In comparison to the mainstream media, blogs provide an excellent medium for access of other sources of news. For instance, znbco.zm as shown below contains links to radio 4, 1 and radio 2. It also has links to the BBC, CNN, Soccernet and Zambiantourism.

Figure 14: screenshot of ZNBC.co.zm showing links and access to other sources of information



e of links

Source: author compilation

iii) Fast and easy way to publish news anywhere and everywhere

Today, news coverage goes beyond geographical boundaries because people are able to publish their stories easier, faster and the stories can be accessed anywhere in the world.

iv) Interactive media

Blogs and online newspapers have received all the attention because of their ability to allow users exchange their views and opinions on various issues affecting them.

v) There is a possibility to archive, organize and categorize stories into themes and sub-themes.

Blogs are an interesting phenomenon because they allow editors and bloggers to store up stories and later make them accessible to readers.

vii) Confidentiality in the comments.

Blogs allow people to pass their comments on various stories anonymously.

viii) Ability to archive information and access it later

The Internet allows readers to download and store stories and make reference to them at a later date.

6.4.3. Question 3: Are there any restrictions that can hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely?

This question was answered through interviews and document analysis. In regard to interviews, I asked respondents the question; have you been subjected to any censorship or legal limitations, if so, what was your experience?

6.4.3.1 Presentation of results

Out of the seven (7) blog editors that I interviewed, only one (1) editor has been harassed. This editor (who has been harassed) states that the news website was threatened with closure by Zambia Information Communication and Technology authority (ZICTA)²². The editor further states that the editorial team has being threatened with arrest or harassment on several occasions.²³

6.4.3.2 Discussion of results

As stated above only one (1) of the editors has been threatened with harassment or legal actions (though threats of closures and harassment from government are the order of the day).

²² ZICTA is an ICT regulation authority in Zambia.

²³ Reference must be made to the following examples of threats, harassments and limitations in freedom of expression: (Zambianwatchdog.com, 30 Oct, 2010), (Lusakatimes.com, 24 Feb, 2012), (Luskatimes.com, 18 Nov, 2010) and (UKZambian.co.uk, 2010)

This presents a positive picture of the Internet media as a forum that has a relatively high degree of freedom of expression.

6.4.4. Research Question 4: What is the future of Zambia's freedom of expression with the coming of the new media such as blogging?

6.4.4.1. Presentation of results

To help me answer this question I undertook a thorough document analysis and review of blogs and online newspapers. Despite the fact that Internet connectivity is still in its infancy in Zambia, there is hope that this technology will bring about a proliferation of freedom of expression in Zambia.

Having said this, there are a number of blogs and online newspapers in Zambia. These online forums are privately run and set up mainly to fulfil personal interests. These see themselves as contributing to the democratic governance of the country by acting as watchdogs (An Open Society Foundation, 2010, P.9).

To be able to answer this question (research question 4) it is important to make a thorough discussion of the mainstream media in Zambia. This discussion will include a) newspapers, b) radio and c) TV.

(a) Newspapers

There are a total of three main newspapers and two minor ones. The main newspapers include the *Daily Mail* and its sister papers the *Sunday Mail*, the *Times of Zambia* and its sister paper the *Sunday Times of Zambia*, the *Post Newspaper* and its sister paper the *Sunday Post*. These newspapers play a significant role in adding to the diversity of media organisations in Zambia. Suffice to mention that, the smaller newspapers (such as the *Monitor and Digest*, *New Vision* and the *Weekly Guardian*) too, have been significant in acting as watchdogs for the development of freedom of expression. Below is a table representation of newspapers in Zambia. The table shows the circulation figures, the language they are published in, the frequency in publication and the ownership of the newspapers.

Table 7: Newspapers in Zambia

Title of publication	Language	Frequency of publication	Circulation	Ownership
Times of Zambia	English	Daily	9 000	Government
Zambia Daily Mail	English	Daily	8 500	Government
Sunday Times of Zambia	English	Weekly	16000	Government
Sunday Mail	English	Weekly	13000	Government
The Post/ Saturday Post	English	Daily	47000	Private
Sunday Post	English	Weekly	47000	Private
Monitor & Digest	English	Weekly	2000	Private
Weekly Guardian	English	Weekly	5000	Private
The New Vision	English	Weekly	6000	Private

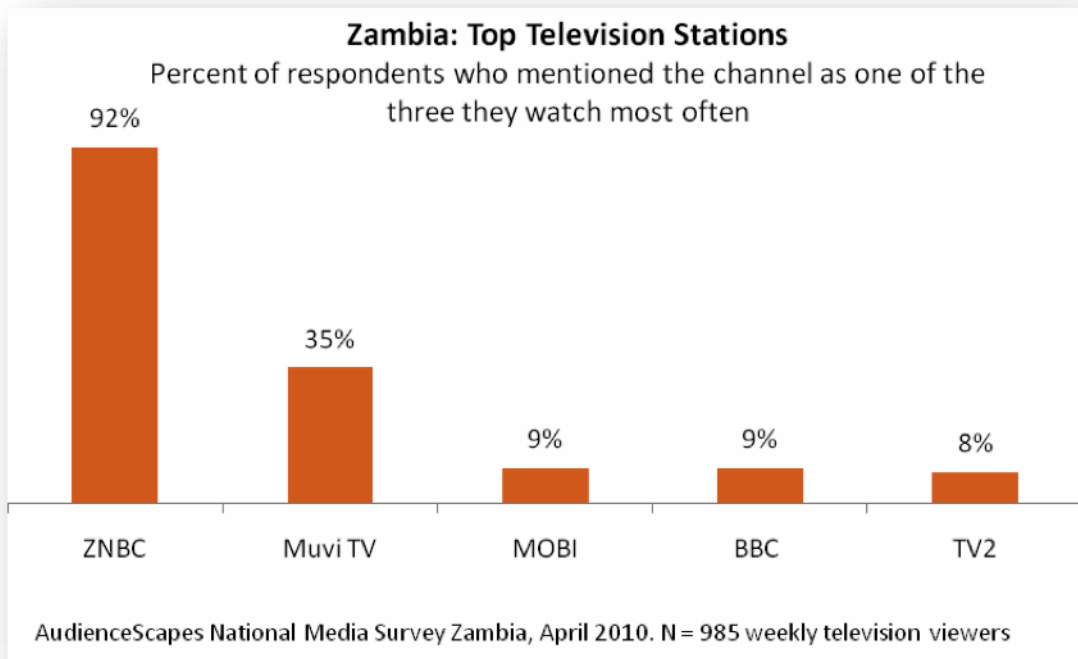
Source: Author compilation

As noted above, all the major publications in Zambia are in English. This may pose a challenge when it comes to the at least 20% of the people that cannot read or write in English. (<http://www.hmnet.com/africa/zambia/zambia.html> (retrieved on 13 august 2012))

(b) Television

There are a total of six (6) TV channels in Zambia (all based in the capital, Lusaka). These are *Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Muvi TV, Mobi TV, Central Broadcasting Corporation, Trinity Broadcasting Corporation, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)* and the paid channel *DSTV*. Figure 15 below shows a breakdown of TV viewership in Zambia. The figure shows the top five (5) TV stations in relation to viewership.

Figure 15: Breakdown of TV viewership in Zambia




Source: (AudienceScapes, 2010, P.16)

Meanwhile, my analysis reveals that television sets are expensive for many people in Zambia. Upon a thorough research I have found that a standard 28 inch TV set is sold at one million-eight hundred thousand kwacha (344 US Dollar)²⁴. This price is expensive considering that Zambia, is a country where the minimum wage is K500 000 (102.459US Dollars) per month. Because of this many people are unable to afford TV sets. In addition to the expenses of buying TV sets at this price, there are other added costs such as TV licence fees (in the case of ZNBC) of 3000 (0.614754 USD) kwacha every month and the cost of electricity which ranges from K152.00 to K408.62 as shown below in table 7. TV as a form of information dissemination therefore despite offering both audio and video communication is an expensive medium for freedom of expression in Zambia.

²⁴ All kwacha to dollar conversions are based on the information from the website xe.com (retrieved on 8th august 2012).

**Table 8: Energy Consumption Rates in
Zambia**

ZESCO LIMITED			
REVISION OF ELECTRICITY TARIFFS			
<p>Notice is hereby given that ZESCO proposes to revise its electricity tariffs from 1 November 2012. The notice is being put in accordance with the requirements of section 8 sub-section 2 of the Electricity Act CAP 433 of the Laws of Zambia. The fixed, energy, and demand charges will be as given below. The bills based on the new charges should, therefore, be received by our customers in November 2012.</p>			
		Current Tariffs	Proposed Tariffs
1. METERED RESIDENTIAL TARIFFS (Capacity 15kVA)			
R1-Consumption up to 100kWh	Energy Charge/kWh	K152.00	K152.00
R2-Consumption above 101 to 300kWh	Energy Charge/kWh	K250.70	K343.46
R3-Consumption above 301kWh	Energy Charge/kWh	K408.62	K559.81
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K14,629.31	K20,042.15
Pre-paid	Energy Charge/kWh	K278.33	K381.31
2. COMMERCIAL TARIFFS (Capacity 15kVA)			
C1-Consumption up to 700kWh	Energy Charge/kWh	K266.13	K330.00
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K47,753.13	K59,213.88
3. SOCIAL SERVICES TARIFFS			
Schools, Hospitals, Orphanages, Churches, Water pumping, Street Lighting	Energy Charge/kWh	K239.40	K284.89
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K41,515.95	K49,402.79
4. MAXIMUM DEMAND TARIFFS			
MD1-Capacity between 16 - 300kVA	MD Charge/kVA/Month	K11,690.53	K14,846.97
	Energy Charge/kWh	K168.08	K213.46
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K114,497.08	K145,411.29
MD2-Capacity between 301-2000kVA	MD Charge/kVA/Month	K21,871.21	K27,776.44
	Energy Charge/kWh	K143.45	K182.18
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K228,992.72	K290,820.75
MD3-Capacity between 2001-7500kVA	MD Charge/kVA/Month	K39,717.06	K52,426.52
	Energy Charge/kWh	K127.23	K167.94
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K551,563.44	K728,063.74
MD4-Capacity 7500 – 10,000kVA	MD Charge/kVA/Month	K39,938.12	K52,718.32
	Energy Charge/kWh	K104.97	K138.56
	Fixed Monthly Charge	K1,103,125.30	K1,456,125.40
<p>NOTE: The above tariffs are:- (a) Exclusive of 3% Government excise duty (b) Exclusive of 16% Value Added Tax (VAT)</p>			
		 BESTTY PHIRI DIRECTOR - CORPORATE AFFAIRS & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	
10 th August 2012			

Source: author compilation from information accessed from ZESCO

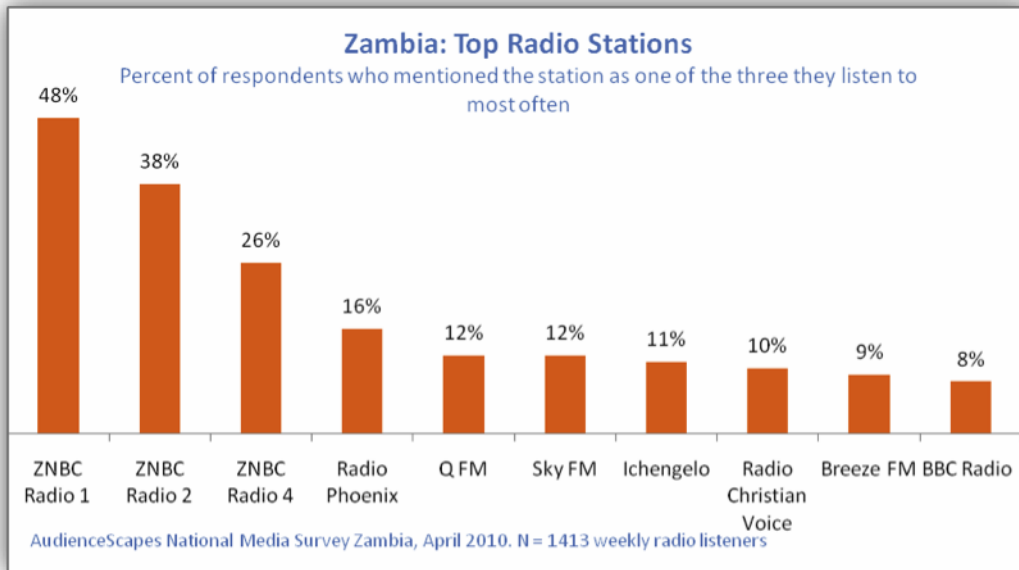
(C) Radio

Radio is the most widely used medium in Zambia with 87% of households owning a radio set. Of this number 94 per cent are in urban areas and 84 per cent in rural areas. Despite these figures the majority of listeners are subjected to listening to ZNBC (radio 1, 2 and 4) as it has the largest radio listening ratios compared to other private stations. According to (AudienceScapes, 2010) 78% listen to one (1) of the three ZNBC radio channels. There are however, a number of other private and community broadcast radio stations that have limited reach but contribute significantly to the media fraternity. My analysis therefore concludes that these stations are of great importance to the communities that they are based in. Take for instance; UNZA Radio (managed by the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Zambia) airs a daily phone-in show every weekday from 7:15am to 09:00am. This show discusses issues affecting the University of Zambia and surrounding areas. Another example is a show run by a private station located in Lusaka called Radio Phoenix that airs a similar program that airs every Tuesday and Thursday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. This show discusses political and social issues in the country. There are several other stations that air similar programming. It is safe to state therefore, that the private radio broadcasting sector is an equally important factor in promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia.

Meanwhile despite, radio being one of the most widely used media in Zambia, it falls short of the advantages possessed by the Internet as it does not allow for a space where debate and exchange of views is carried out without limitations. In this vein debate on radio through phone in programmes is limited to a few minutes and one cannot have the liberty to archive stories for future use (though it is possible through making recordings but a bit difficult to implement)

Below is a figure presentation of radio listenership in Zambia. The figure shows a breakdown of top 10 radio stations in terms of listenership.

Figure 16: Breakdown of radio Listenership



Source: (AudienceScapes, 2010, P.3)

6.4.4.2. Does the Internet/blogs hold the key to freedom of expression?

Discussion of results

In light with the forgoing sub-themes, blogs can be said to contribute to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. As a 30-year-old blog editor sums up my findings:

Blogs are a force to reckon with. You know... freedom of expression is centred on the level of interactivity of content and how much one is able to express themselves without handles. In my work as an editor of blogs and Internet content, I have discovered that these communication tools are an excellent forum for expression of views. It is not a mistake that technology has evolved to allow us to express our views directly and instantly, but it is a chance for us to develop stronger, faster and reliable ways to exchange information. Look at Facebook for instance, I can link my blog to my Facebook page and millions of people will access my stories. What is even more exciting is that Facebook has gone mobile therefore every 'Jim and Jack' can access my stories without necessarily needing a computer. What could be better than this?

6.4.5. Research Question 5:

What impact has the journalism curricula at universities and colleges? (in relation to promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia)

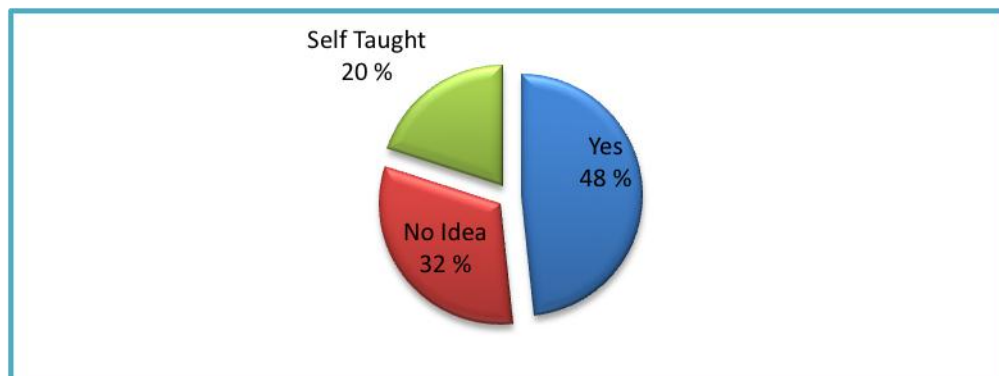
6.4.5.1. Presentation of results

To help me collect information for this question, I deliberately asked all my respondents whether they had any training in Internet media. My main aim in this section was to find out if the curricula in colleges and universities included the new media education. In this vein, I asked my respondents if the new media gives an opportunity for anyone to be a journalist. I viewed my respondents as possible journalists who can write simple journalistic content in blogs.

My analysis revealed that 48% of the respondents are of the view that the curriculum is good and includes new media education. 32% said they have no idea if the curriculum at the school they attend or attended was good for freedom of expression and 20% said the curriculum at the schools they attended or are attending does not include even a bit of new media education. These said they learnt how to use the new media through their peers, or they taught themselves.

Below is a representation of my findings. The figure shows findings on the question whether the curricula at universities or colleges have an impact on the promotion of freedom of expression? and whether it is inclusive of new media education?.

Figure 17: Is the University and College curricula sufficient for promotion of freedom of expression



Source: Author Compilation

6.4.5.2 Discussion of results

My research results as shown above in figure 17 give a picture that many people are of the view that the new media education is sufficiently taught in schools and Universities. However, my analysis reveals that the University of Zambia in particular is lagging behind in teaching students on the Internet media and as such, there must be a deliberate policy to design a program that is aimed entirely at educating students on the new media and its potential significance to freedom of expression.

6.5. Main Research Question:

What impact do blogs and online newspapers have on the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia?

The previous section has presented and discussed the sub-research questions. I have presented the research findings and then discussed them. My analysis shows that blogs and online newspapers are an important contribution to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. After discussing the merits that online media have in comparison to the mainstream media, I can conclude that it is more difficult and technically expensive to censor or limit the flow of information through blogs and on-line publications. Though the Internet is still in its infancy, this research has established that the online media is a necessity to the realisation of a bright future for freedom of expression. This is because it allows people to meet (online) and

discuss ideas and immediately get feedback on the matter. My analysis has established that this is especially made easy by the technology that allows people to comment and contribute on stories anonymously.

6.5.1 Discussion of finding (main research question)

This research is centred on finding evidence to prove the hypothesis that the Internet can contribute to the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. Williams (2010) elaborates that the Internet is an important medium that is eroding the distinction between the producers, the consumers, the elite and the society at large. Evidence from this research shows that, anybody with access to Internet and basic Internet skills can be a producer of media content. My analysis reveals that the majority of bloggers have no skills in online media but are still able to participate in debate, write and post stories online. This goes to show that with the 'new media' anyone is a potential journalist.

It is therefore true to say that the Internet allows for development of citizen journalism were the minimum pre-requisites are an Internet connection and very basic Internet skills.

The mainstream media (radio, TV and newspapers) has a wide number of listeners, viewers and readers respectively in Zambia. However, my analysis also reveals that the Internet has the potential to be accessed by a large multitude of people in Zambia. It is true that radio is the cheapest mode of information dissemination, TV combines sound, video, audio and pictures and finally newspapers are the most practical for storage of information as one can read and keep the newspaper away and refer to it at a later date. But the Internet has a combination of all the above mentioned attributes. Further, the Internet is able to combine sound, video and audio. This information (Internet information) is able to be stored away and accessed at a later date. And depending on where you access it from it is a cheap medium. As a 24 years-old respondent explains:

The Internet is an interesting phenomenon because it allows me to read, watch and listen to news whenever I like. It also allows me to entertain myself by listening to music, watching movies or even just reading other interesting things. So what am I saying? With the Internet media there is never a dull moment I always find something interesting to do. You know I can

stream online *the big bang theory* or just listen to some *TUPAC* music whilst scrolling through the blog pages. All this is done at the cost of nothing²⁵.

In addition to this, the Internet allows for people to be ‘whoever’ they chose to be through the technology that allows people withhold their identity. This research shows that people communicate better when they are not identified (chapter 7 shows exactly how this is achieved). Quora (2012) adds that a lack of anonymity in comments could make “someone with a controversial or honest answer be reluctant to share it because of the potential backlash it could ignite and the implications that might be made of the person”. This reveals that anonymity helps people to speak their minds on issues, and the Internet in this view does this very well.

The limitation with this view however, is that because it is difficult to establish identity online, people may take advantage and engage in practicing what Gupta (2012) terms as acts promoting exploitation and personal harm.

Despite this fact, online news publications could be said to be gathering momentum. TV and Radio gives you a presentation of only one screen shoot and audio at a time respectively, Internet media however, displays a number of stories at once and one has the choice of clicking on whichever story they perceive as worth reading, listening to or downloading. One may however, argue that the printed newspapers do display a number of stories at once, but my research shows that for one to be able to read these stories they need to flip from one page to the next, but with the Internet one just has to click and the story is displayed.

In wrapping, this research has demonstrated that censorship and harassment is much reduced when it comes to online publications as opposed to the mainstream media. Of the total number of bloggers interviewed only one has been threatened or censored by the authority (see 6.4.13) this may go to show that online media is less likely to be controlled.

6.6. Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have presented and discussed the main research question and the five sub-research questions. My analysis reveals that the Internet is an important tool for the promotion of freedom of expression. It has emerged that blogs contribute to the development of

²⁵ It is important to remember that this respondent has access to the Internet from the University broadband therefore they don’t have to pay for its access.

Zambia's freedom of expression fight. The research has also outlined some relevant and major differences between the mainstream media and the Internet. Most importantly, however, this chapter has discussed in detail the assumption that the Internet is an important tool for promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. It has emerged that the Internet media combines sound, video, audio and an ability to archive information making it a powerful tool for information retrieval and dissemination. Conclusions have been made that despite being in its infancy, it is in fact an important tool for freedom of expression.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses study conclusions, implications and recommendations. The chapter is organized as follows. Section 7.2 and 7.3 give a summary of theoretical and research conclusions respectively. Section 7.4 presents some policy and practical implications of this study. Section 7.5 discusses implications of this study on the media and citizens. Study limitations, recommendations and a proposal for future studies have been discussed in sections 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.9 respectively.

7.2. Theoretical conclusions

The ‘public sphere’ as explained by (Habermas J. , 1989:176) is made up of “private people gathered together as a public and articulating the needs of society with the states”. Working under this explanation, it can be concluded that when people come together and discuss issues, public opinion is formulated. In the *Oxford Handbook of Canadian Politics* (Soroka, 2010. p.263-280) explains that public opinion is fundamental in bringing about policy change. It is thus important to state that the Internet is one platform that has facilitated in allowing people ‘meet’ and discuss issues of mutual interest thus bringing about policy change.

This research has revealed that the ‘public sphere’ is an important entity for democracy to prevail. The World Bank in its article *The Public Sphere* appearing in the publication that presents its “Communication for Governance and Accountability Program” illuminates that “a properly functioning public sphere that allows for free information flows and equal participation in deliberation will provide real opportunities for successful and good governance” (The World Bank, 2009:6). My conclusion in this matter therefore is based on the assumption that, since the Internet provides a platform where people can ‘meet’ and discuss ideas and consequently resulting into formation of public opinion, blogs and online newspapers are an excellent forum for achievement of freedom of expression.

As much as the public sphere is an ideal concept for achieving positive public opinion; which in turn is essential for a functioning democracy, it is important to consider also that the ‘public sphere’ has the potential of achieving ‘hostile’ public opinion, which can be a threat to society. According to the World Bank:

Hostile opinion can build underground and may eventually erupt to disturb the political order. Through mobilizing public opinion, opposition groups may be able to gather substantial support and frame reform proposals that a government may be forced to heed. In the worst case, divisive groups may fracture the public sphere, causing political chaos or even violence (The World Bank, 2009:6).

It is my opinion therefore, that if the public sphere is not used to achieve positive results such as influencing policy change or promoting the free flow of ideas in society, it is a threat to people. Nonetheless, the public sphere and public opinion is an important requirement in a functioning society where information is disseminated equally. The Internet therefore, has made public opinion formation even more practical.

7.3. Conclusions – Sub-research questions

7.3.1 Question 1: Is online publishing relevant to a promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia? If so why?

The preceding chapter (chapter six (6)) has addressed a number of issues. Firstly, although the Internet is in its infancy in Zambia, it has significantly contributed in allowing people to access, contribute and disseminate information with little or no hindrances.

Secondly, the term ‘freedom of expression’ is interpreted differently by different people. In this vein, this research reveals that the most important element in every ‘freedom’ is that an individual’s freedom of expression must not infringe on another person’s liberty to express themselves freely.

Thirdly, this research has illuminated important advantages and disadvantages that the Internet possesses. The research has shown with notable examples that the Internet possesses these advantages such as its ability to be accessed anywhere in the world and at any time of the day. It has also shown that the Internet is an interesting, informative and interactive media.

In the light of the above summary of the findings on the study question one (1) (*Is online publishing relevant to a promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia? If so why?*), it is important that I state my proposition as follows:

Study proposition No.1: the Internet is a significant tool for promotion of freedom of expression, provided that these freedoms do not infringe on other peoples freedoms.

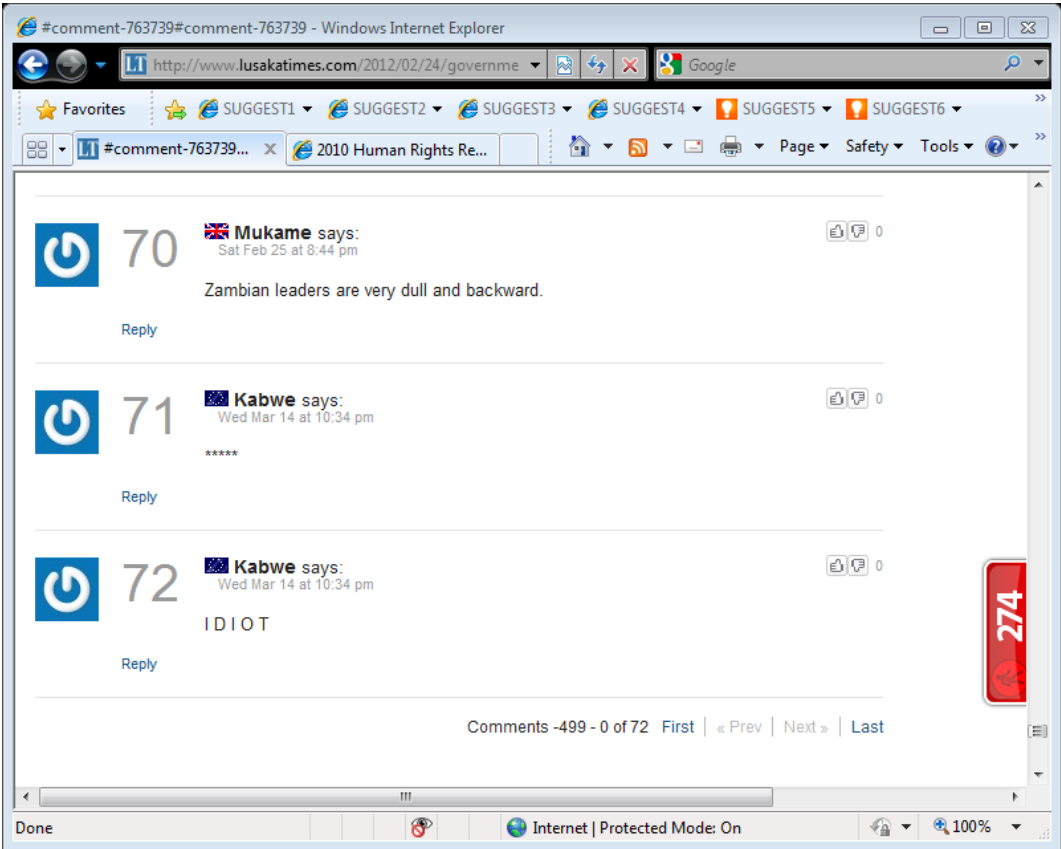
With reference to the above ‘study proposition’, study results, and discussions, this study suggests that the blogosphere in Zambia is an important tool for the development of citizen journalism. According to (Revis, 2011), in the article entitled “How Citizen Journalism Is Reshaping Media and Democracy” ‘citizen journalism’ is a backbone to the development of a participatory democracy.

Further, this research has revealed that blogs and on-line news publications are an important recipe for the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. Firstly, it has been established that blogs allow people to express themselves without much limitations and censorship. Secondly blogs allow people to be their own ‘producers’ and ‘editors’ and even ‘consumers’ thereby promoting an information society where ideas and views are disseminated and shared freely.

Meanwhile, this research also reveals that besides blogs and on-line news publications being an important ‘recipe’ for freedom of expression, they are at the same time a worrying phenomenon as misleading information may be circulated amongst people. It can be argued that this is so because unlike the mainstream media where there are strict gate keeping techniques, online media and blogs in particular allow for a free flow of information where people can write anything they like without many hindrances. In addition to this, blogs may be a serious threat when it comes to issues of online bullying, racial hatred or hate speech. One may however wonder how the Internet media is particularly porous to misleading information or ‘verbal’ harassment? In answering this, it is important to consider the fact that the Internet allows for people to be their own producers of media content as elaborated in the preceding paragraph. This is an important characteristic as far as freedom of expression and the media are concerned. However what is worrying is the lack of any gate-keeping techniques that gives people the liberties to write anything they wish minus taking into consideration the repercussion of some statements. In this vein, however, one may argue that the Internet media itself is not entirely to blame as it has a mechanism of screening words and

information that may be deemed offensive. Take for instance; Figure 17 below that shows an example of an Internet media that has screened a comment from a blogger called Kabwe who has written an offensive word. On the second attempt however, Kabwe has written the same word but this time in capital letters and it has not been detected.

Figure 18: An example of screening on Internet media



Source: Author Compilation

In view of the above, the whole debate on ‘verbal harassment’ online is an issue that lies entirely on the users of Internet content. It is not practical that the online media producers and editors can take the blame for ‘irresponsible’ comments coming from its users. This is where the topic on “disclaimer” and “house rules” becomes very important. For instance, an example of house rules can be referred to a statement posted in Norwegian on the website of the Norwegian newspaper VG available at www.vg.no (accessed on 1st September 2012) that is translated and reads as follows:

Here we invite you to come with information, arguments and viewpoints. We require your full name - it's more interesting for others to read what you write. We do not want harassment, threats or hateful messages on VG Nett. Fake profiles are banned. Keep an unbiased and

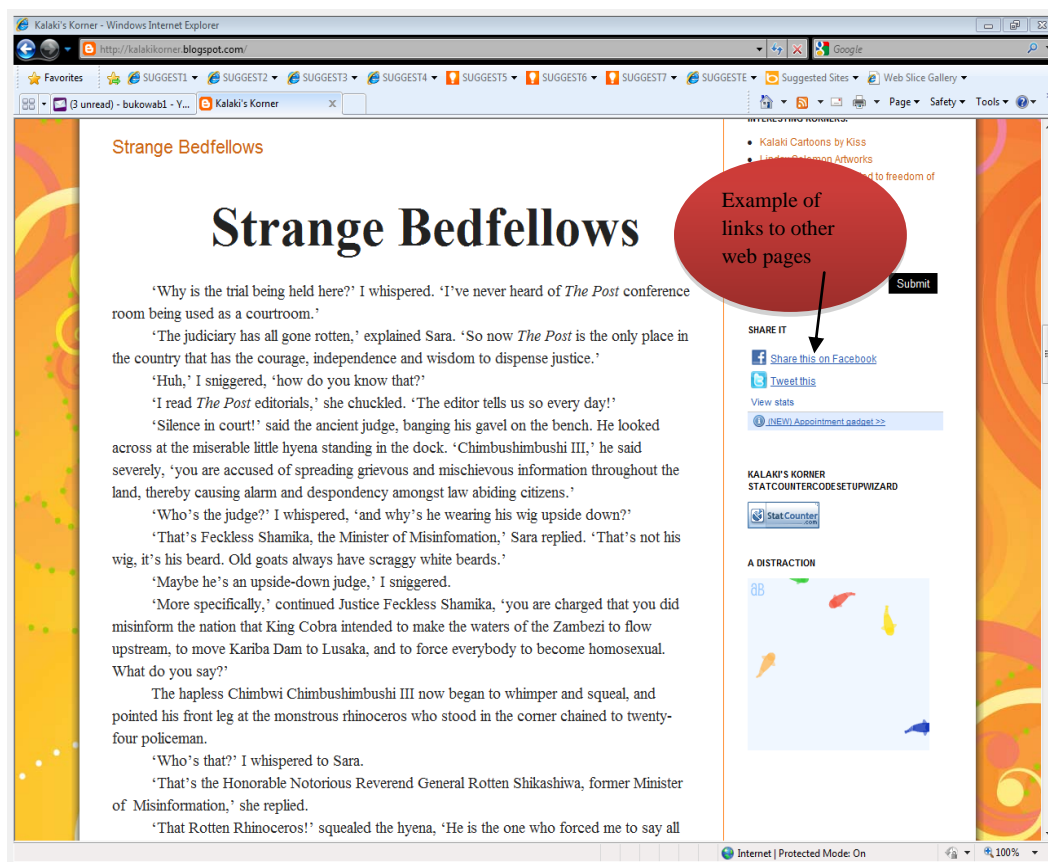
respectful tone, remember that many people read what you write. Regards Espen Egil Hansen, Editor Digital .

7.3.2 Question 2: what are the advantages of blogging compared to the mainstream media?

The preceding Chapter (6) has illuminated important issues related to research question (2). Firstly, blogs and on-line publications provide an ideal public sphere where people can meet and discuss issues of mutual interest. Secondly, the Internet provides a platform that accommodates links to other websites. Thirdly, blogs can be shared on social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. This helps in expanding the potential audience for the information.

Below is a graphical example based on the blog “Kalaki’s Korner” and shows how other webpages and sources of information can be presented.

Figure 19: Screen shot of the blog kalakikorner.blogspot.com



Source: author compilation

With the forgoing summary of findings on research question 2 (*what are the advantages of blogging compared to the mainstream media?*) I should state my study proposition number two (2) as follows:

Study proposition 2: the Internet provides a number of advantages compared to the mainstream media, but this is no justification to completely sideline the mainstream media in the fight for freedom of expression

From the study results, discussions and the above summary and study proposition (2), this study suggests that in Zambia, the Internet is only a force to reckon with if the mainstream media is also fully embraced.

7.3.3 Question 3: Are there any restrictions that can hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely?

Concerning the restrictions that hinder bloggers from expressing themselves freely, this research has shown that Internet censorship is not very common in Zambia. The research in chapter 6 sections 6.4.3-6.4.3.2 has revealed that out of the seven editors that participated in this research only one (1) blog has been subjected to harassment or intimidation.

At this point it is important that I state my study proposition as follows:

Proposition 3: a free and vibrant blogosphere is beneficial only if it practices ‘responsible journalism.’

Based on the results and the above summary and proposition, this study suggests that the Internet media must not be misused to propagate hate crimes, incitement to violence, plagiarism, and insults (as explained in section 7.31 above). Instead, these media channels must be used to promote debate and tolerance of every person’s opinions and views.

7.3.4 Question 4: what is the future of Zambia’s freedom of expression with the coming of the new media such as blogging?

The study has highlighted on various issues. It is important to state that despite the mainstream media having wide reach, it has got limitations when it comes to promotion of freedom of expression. Firstly, TV, radio and newspapers are dominated by government run and controlled mainstream media houses. In this vein, the state is the biggest media owner in the country. This means that the audience is subjected to views of government. Secondly, the

research has revealed that Newspapers are written in English, which makes it difficult for people that cannot speak and/or write in English to comprehend. Finally, this research established that most of the main TV, Radio and Newspapers are based in the capital Lusaka.

Before making conclusive statements in relation to study question 4, let me state my study proposition 4 as follows:

Study proposition 4: the future of Zambia's freedom of expression is dependent on a development of stronger, faster and reliable Internet service provision infrastructures.

Conversely, government must be seen to promote stake holders that come up with initiatives to increase Internet services to the grassroots through for instance Internet cafes (see an example of lack of government will in development of Internet service provision at <http://www.lusakatimes.com/2012/02/24/government-clamp-illegal-internet-cafs-zambia/#viewreplies> (Retrieved on March 20, 2012)).

Based on the results, discussion of results and the problems highlighted in the above summary, this study suggests that a lack of government political will and initiative aimed at promoting growth in Internet service provision has greatly contributed to the slow development of citizen journalism in Zambia.

7.3.5 Question 5: What impact has the journalism curricula at Universities and colleges in relation to promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia?

In relation to the impact the new media training has on the quality of Internet content (information posted in blogs), this research has revealed that there is no specific link between the quality of stories and the new media education. It is assumed however that media education if embraced in Zambian schools, colleges and Universities, it would greatly help in the development of vibrant blogs and Internet newspapers. At the same time, this research has shown that anybody can be a producer of Internet media content provided they have basic Internet technology and skills. In this vein, I can state my study proposition concerning this matter as follows:

Study proposition 5: to fully develop the Zambian blog sphere, new media infrastructure, skills and education must be included in schools.

Based on the results, discussion of results and the proposition highlighted above, this study suggests that urgent need for an inclusion of new media education, skills training and technological infrastructure building is needed in schools, colleges and Universities.

7.4. Possible policy and practical implications of this study

This research has implications that hopefully can help in promotion of the role that blogs and online newspapers can play in the promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. The study has generated results and information that could be useful in various ways.

7.5. Implications for the media fraternity and free expression in Zambia

The notion that the Internet in Zambia must be a driving force for freedom of expression is beyond doubt. However, the question to consider is: to what extent must the Internet contribute to freedom of expression? This research suggests that for the Internet media to be a success, serious considerations must be taken into account. These include:

- a) Internet media owners and editors must work together with the mainstream media in promotion of freedom of expression;
- b) Internet media must uphold high standards of 'basic' journalistic values such as accreditation of sources, avoid sensationalism and ensure fact checking before publishing articles; and
- c) Internet media must promote citizen journalism by allowing as many people as possible to participate on the forums.

7.6. Implications for citizens

The people in Zambia must be aware of the role they can play in contributing to freedom of expression in Zambia. Zambians need to be knowledgeable in the basic Internet writing and publishing skills. This research therefore suggests as follows:

- a) Citizens must strive to be equipped with the basic Internet skills. These skills must be used to set up individual blogs and websites.
- b) Citizens must embrace individual initiatives such as the establishment of community Internet cafes.

7.7. Study Limitations

The first limitation of this study is that the extensive and complex phenomenon of “freedom of expression” has been studied from a rather narrow empirical perspective of a small population of Lusaka. This has made it difficult to draw a general conclusive picture (in relation to Zambia) as far as the ‘human’ sample population is concerned. (An extensive discussion on the respondents and the sampling method and the sample composition is presented in chapter 4 section 4.2.2)

The second limitation is that data collection through interviews was limited to the short period from June to August 2011. This period proved hard for most mainstream media and other government departments to avail me persons that I could interview. In addition to having returned to Norway from Zambia, it was not possible for me to make follow-up visits to these institutions for more data collection or clarifications. I had to depend on communicating with my respondents using the phone, Facebook, twitter and emails.

Finally, this study is based on limiting the research to blogs, mainstream media and citizens. Collecting views from the government or the ministry in charge of Information and broadcasting and how they view freedom of expression on the Internet would no doubt have been a fruitful starting point.

7.8. Recommendations

Based on the study conclusions, implications, and limitations, I make the following recommendations:

- a) Government must work to strengthening and improving the Internet access in Zambia.
- b) There must be a deliberate policy of introducing civic education centered on teaching citizen journalism in schools, colleges and universities.
- c) Government and other stake holders must help bloggers by providing financial and material assistance (if needed) in helping to establish blogs and news websites.
- d) Government must support individuals who come up with initiatives that can help to develop citizen journalism such as setting up of Internet cafes.
- e) The business community must promote individual blogs and news websites through advertising in these forums.

7.9. Future studies

This study has unveiled important issues surrounding the role of the Internet in promotion of freedom of expression in Zambia. It is my hope therefore that this study does not end here. To this effect I recommend that:

- a) Future studies should extend this project by including more media organizations or possibly making it a national wide study.
- b) Future studies must extend this research from just looking at the role of the Internet to including more initiatives such as youth media, Internet radio and the social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.
- c) Whereas the focus of this study was on the bloggers, editors and the mainstream media editors, it is my dream that future studies include the civil society and the government (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting). In my view, these people and institutions are important to include as they work in the communities (in the case of civil society organizations) and implement policies (in the case of government) therefore making them strong opinion leaders.

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Appendices

Appendix i: Sample of an introductory letter used during research



UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

To Whom It May Concern:

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Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2011

Letter of Recommendation

Ms. Brenda Bukowa is a Master student in the Department of Media and Communication at the University of Oslo. I serve as her supervisor, and I find that she has chosen a very interesting and relevant topic for her dissertation namely **“If you cannot beat them, blog them: exploring the cyber space for freedom of speech in Zambia”**.

Obviously in order to undertake such a study it is essential that Ms. Bukowa has access to information that will provide her with as much background knowledge as possible.

I hereby ask you to be so kind as to help Ms. Brenda Bukowa in acquiring the assistance that she may need during her field-work in Zambia between June and August 2011.

Yours Sincerely

Helge Ronning

Professor
helge.ronning@media.uio.no
+47 90 02 35 61

Appendix ii: Sample of a letter of consent used during Interviews



UNIVERSITY OF OSLO
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

Informed Consent:

Master's Project on Blogs and Online Newspapers and how they can promote freedom of Information In Zambia

By this, I agree to be interviewed by Master's Student Brenda Bukowa and to let her make use of my statements in her research Dissertation.

Signature.....*[Handwritten Signature]*.....

Date.....*20/06/2011*.....

Appendix iii: Media concentration in Zambia

Type of Ownership	Media Type - Radio	Media Type – Television	Newspapers	Total #
Private	Radio Phoenix Q FM 5FM Hot FM Sky FM Joy FM Yar FM Hone FM UNZA Radio Christian Voice Flava FM Breeze FM	Muvi TV Mobi TV Multi-Choice Copperbelt Broadcasting Services	The Post	Radio - 13 Television - 5 N/papers - 1
Community / Church	Yatsani, Yangeni Maranatha, Zambezi F M , Radio Maria, Radio Chikuni, Radio Ichengelo Mazabuka Community Radio, Radio Chikaya, Radio Lyambai, Radio Mano, Oblate Radio Liseli, Petauke Explorers, Mphangwe Community Radio, Vision Community Radio Macha, PASME Community Radio Station, Radio Yangeni, Radio Musi-O-Tunya, Mkushi Radio Station, Solwezi Radio, Luangwa Feira Community Radio, Radio Mwinilunga, Luapula Radio, Kasempa Radio, Mpika Community Radio, Lukulu Community Radio Station, Suwilanji Community Radio Station and Radio Mabiya FM	Yatsani TV Trinity Broadcasting Network		Radio - 20 TV - 2 N/P- 0
Government	Radio 4 Radio 2 Radio 1 Parliament Radio	ZNBC TV TV2	Times of Zambia Zambia Daily Mail	Radio- 5 TV - 2 N/P- 2

Appendix iv: Interview Schedules

a) Questions directed at mainstream media editors

1. What is freedom of expression in relation to your work?
2. Do you consider the new media a better forum for freedom of expression?
Is so why?
3. Do you have any individual, organization, or government that funds your organization?
4. If yes, how objective are you in relation to reporting about their activities?
5. What policies if any do you follow in your coverage of events?
6. If not, how do you cover your events especially political stories?
7. Are you free to fully publish anything that your reporters deem news worthy?
8. Have you received any censorship or limitations from authorities before?
9. If yes, what was your experience?

b) Questions directed at editors of blogs

1. Does your online publishing activity contribute to the fostering of freedom of expression?
2. If yes in what ways have you contributed to the fostering of freedom of expression in Zambia?

3. Have you at any time being subjected being subjected to any censorship or legal limitations hindering you from publishing freely either from the law or the government?
4. If yes, what was your experience?
5. How do you interpret freedom of expression in relation to your blog newspaper?
6. Do you receive any financial support from any individual, organization or government to sustain your blog or blog/online newspaper?
7. If yes does this support affect the way you cover stories about these organization?
8. Do you have any policy in place that outlines how you should operate?
9. If yes what are these policies? what advantages (in relation to press freedom) can you highlight that your online publishing has in comparison to the mainstream media (broadcast and print media)?
10. Who are your audiences?
11. How many bloggers do you have on a daily basis or on a story published?
12. Do you have any implied audience when you write?

c) Questions directed at participants of blogs

1. What attracts you to participating on this blog?
2. What types of stories are of particular interest?
3. How do you see the comparison of the new media in terms of freedom of expression?

4. What do you see in relation to the mainstream media?
5. How much time on average do you spend on blogging?
6. Do you have a chance to freely express your views on this forum without any limitation?
7. What advantages are in this kind of media forum as opposed to the mainstream media?
8. Do you find the stories and discussions on this forum interesting and important?