Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations:

A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm.

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Radio has always and still remail one of the most useful, available, and affordable medium. Radio has remained relevant and continue to build communities through its programming. This is not different from the South African public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC). The study investigates the public participation within the SABC radio stations using *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm as a case study. One of the roles of the media, especially a public service broadcaster such as the SABC, is to create and promote a platform for fair public engagement. It is on this platform that citizens behave as a public body, and are able to engage with one another freely, that is, with the of freedom of assembling together as a collective, associating themselves with other people or social groups and the freedom to express their opinions about matters of general interest. It is for that reason that the study explores the public participation in SABC using the above-mentioned shows as a case study, focusing on the extent in which the shows allow public participation, how it allow public participation and the extent in which the public, the radio presenters and producers influence programming of the shows.

The South African based study is located in Durban and Johannesburg because Ukhozi FM and SAfm are located in Durban and Johannesburg. This qualitative study employs a content and thematic analysis to collect and analyse the data collected through in-depth interviews of the radio presenters and producers and through collecting buying the data from the SABC. The researcher used a purposive sampling to sample both the respondents in the study and the month, April 2019, for recording of both shows. The study employed the public sphere theory to make sense of the study. Jürgen Habermas 's defines the public sphere as a realm within society in which people can bring forth ideas which can be accessible to many people. The theory helped in understanding the realm established by the shows and to evaluate the type of public sphere. The study, through the help of the public sphere theory, revealed that the two shows formed a virtual public sphere. The study also revealed that there is public participation within the SABC radio stations particularly the shows in question in this study and have formed not only a virtual public realm, but they do allow a physical public sphere which was originally argued by Habermas when he observed the bourgeois society. The radio stations have not only created a virtual public platform, where the public engaged through social media and through traditional ways of participation such as call-ins, but the public has an influence, to a certain extent, toward the programming of the shows through public participation. The data also revealed that the radio presenters, producers, and the radio

management have an influence not only in programming, but they also have influence on who gets to participate either as a guest or from the public. This happens when they decide who to participate as a guest during the planning of the show and it happens when they choose whose WhatsApp voice note to play on air, which Tweet to read, whose comment to read from Facebook and whose call to answer. The study, like many radio audience, public service broadcasting and radio public participation studies, pointed out that the virtual public sphere created by radio such as the SABC radio stations needs to constantly check and balanced between self-regulation and censorship. It also revealed that social media and the internet has not killed radio but it has enhanced the virtual public sphere.

Key Words: Public sphere, Public participation, SABC, Public Service Broadcasting, SAfm, Ukhozi FM

List of Figures and Tables

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANC – African National Congress

BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation

BCCSA - Broadcasting Complains Commission of South Africa

BRC - Broadcasting Research Council of South African

CCMS – Centre for Communication and Media Society

CODESA - Convention for a Democratic South Africa

DA – Democratic Alliance

IBA - Independent Broadcasting Authority

"ICASA – Independent Communication Authority of South Africa"

"IEC - Independent Electoral Commission"

LSM - Living Standards Measure

MEC – Member of Executive Council

MMA - Media Monitoring Africa

NPO - Non-Profit Organizations

NVP - Network Voice Protocol

NRF – National Research Fund

NP - National Party

UKZN – University of KwaZulu-Natal

UNESCO – United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

SABC – South African Broadcasting Corporation

SPBC - Support Public Broadcasting Coalition

SACP - South Africa Communist Party

FXI - Freedom of Expression Institute

Contents

Chapter One

Introduction

This chapter provides a background and context of the study, which explore the public participation on the South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radio stations using *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm. Media platforms, such as radio, are considered amongst the most powerful tools of communication available, and they enable the creation of a public arena in which citizens can share information amongst themselves. Media help promote social change, drive social campaigns and it can foster debate around societal issues. The media create platforms for communication and public participation within societies (McLeod, *et al*. 1999). McLeod *et al* (1999: 316) argued that media, especially in local areas, sponsor and advance the publicity of events occurring through what is known as civic or citizen journalism. They present an opportunity for ordinary citizens to question public officials and to present their views (Mcleod, *et al*. 1999). In some parts of the world, similar to South Africa, there are community forums opened for engagement by and for the community and the media assist in taking their issues to either both national and international scales. The media, such as radio, create a public sphere which Jurgen Habermas (1989) referred to it as "a realm within social life in which public opinion can be formed and which is accessible to all". Ukhozi FM, through *Sithakela Isizwe,* and SAfm, through *The View Point*, has created a virtual public sphere which Habermas (1989) argue that it is as a result of democracy and people should be allowed to freely interact to each other publicly in such platforms.

Background of the Study

One of the tasks of the media within the civic state, such as South Africa, has been to promote public participation (Ndlovu, 2003). Thomas Muswede (2016: 167) argued that the SABC's mandate is to encourage the development of South African expression by providing, in the eleven official languages, a wide range of programming that reflects South African attitudes, opinions, ideas, values, and artistic creativity. This suggests that the SABC should offer a plurality of views and a variety of news, information, and analysis from a South African point of view to advance the national and public interest. The media also play an important role in building national identity and to foster nation-building and civic solidarity (Bornman, 2013). Elirea Bornman

(2013), echoing Jurgen Habermas (2001), perceives national consciousness as a modern form of social solidarity, the product of the development of new forms of communication, especially mass communication.

Despite the achievements and the usefulness of the media, especially the SABC as indicated above, the South African public continue to question the credibility, fairness, impartiality of the virtual public sphere created by the SABC. Individuals, organisations and political leaders continue to criticize the SABC, pointing out the SABC's failure to adhere to the public broadcasting framework (Mbindwane, 2015; Muswede, 2016; Daegan, 2017). In June 2018, for example, the Democratic Alliance (DA) filed a formal complaint, hearing date: 11 April 2019, against SABC to the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA). The DA's KwaZulu-Natal Chairperson Mr. Zwakele Mncwango filed a report complaining that Ukhozi FM on a slot which is meant to communicate Government's work in KwaZulu-Natal Province (and was paid for by the province) was used by the African National Congress (ANC) MEC to criticize the DA without the SABC granting the DA an opportunity to respond during the programme. During the programme Ukhozi presenter, Siya Mhlongo, posed a question to a Natal MEC pertaining to a political debate. The slot, which was meant to be used to communicate Government's work in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal, according to the complaint, was used by the MEC to exonerate herself. Thus, for personal purposes and not as part of the communication to the public as to the work of the Provincial Government (ICASA, 2019). South African journalists, working in broadcast and the print media, have received criticism by many political parties such as the ruling party and ordinary people for not reporting fairly in their work and failing in their watchdog roles (De Beer *et al,* 2016). "The biggest problem with the South African media, especially journalists, is trying to fulfill the role of being watchdogs of the public and having too much opinion in their reporting at the same time" (De Beer *et al,* 2016: 38). This suggest that those who are charged with information dissemination unfortunately are immersed in partisan politics even to the point of indulging in factional politics. With a highly politicized media, as indicated above, it can lead to a lack of ideal objectivity in many discussions and public engagement. It is against this background that the present study investigates whether the spaces opened by Ukhozi FM through *Sithakela Isizwe* and SAfm through *The View Point* have either

facilitated or failed the public whose interest is to take part in the public realm formed by the media (Raid, 2014).

The Purpose of the Study

It is for the above-mentioned reasons that the researcher wants to investigate public participation within the SABC radio stations using Ukhozi FM and SAfm as a case study. As indicated above, one of the roles of the media, especially a public broadcaster such as the SABC, is to create and promote a platform for fair public engagement. "It is on this platform that citizens behave as a public body, and are able to confer in an unrestricted fashion, that is, with the guarantee of freedom of assembly, association and the freedom to express and publish their opinions about matters of general interest" (Habermas et al., 1974:1). The researcher finds it important, therefore, to study the relationship between radio and the public, the public interaction on radio and how radio interact with their listeners. Investigating public participation and interaction within the SABC will help make sense of the claims mentioned above. Investigating the shows' content will help understand the content produced by SABC radio stations and the public engagement during the shows. The researcher studied closely the public participation of the public through a content analysis from the recordings of the shows and interviews with presenters and producers of the two shows. The study also seeks to understand how public participation influences radio programming, particularly in talk shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*.

Research Questions

The primary question of the study is whether the SABC radio stations, especially the above-mentioned programmes, provide a platform to create a virtual public sphere by enabling the public to discuss issues of public concern and if so;

1. 1.1 Does the public participate on the platforms created by *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm, and

    1.2 How do the public participate in the platforms created by the two shows?

2. How is listener participation encouraged by *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* presenters and producers?

3. How do the producers and presenters choose who to participate, through the platforms created by the shows?
4. How can the public's interaction influence radio programming and the extent in which it happens?

The Need to Study SABC Radio Stations

The role of a public broadcaster is defined by Ruth Teer-Tomaselli (1998), in a paper aimed at tracking the paradox across the re-launch and transformation of the SABC in the late 1990s, as the provision of a universal service of excellent programming, while maintaining public legitimacy through an editorial independence. Clive Barnett (1999:12) echoed Teer-Tomaselli (1998) that the role of a public broadcaster, such as the SABC, is to provide fair, equitable and accessible programming. According to Pieter Fourie (2003:149), "public service broadcasting is the provision of an impartial space for free expression and open debate". Herman Wasserman and Arnold De Beer (2005:45) further argue that "the role of a public broadcaster is broadcasting for the interest of everyone and appealing to the tastes of the nation, regardless of how diverse the nation might be, it is broadcasting that accommodates minority groups and provides good programming rather than focusing on increasing the number of people listening". Public service broadcasting is also allowing the public to play a role in shaping the programmes (Fourie, 2003a). The most important element that defines public service broadcasting is its ability to be universal in its accessibility and to address audiences as citizens, not as consumers (Fourie, 2003b). "This element is feasible today because public service broadcasting works in a world where there is less technology limitations on the number of broadcasting channels and a world where technology offers the prospects of ever-greater choice and freedom of expression" (Fourie 2003:148). The question, therefore, is whether the SABC is accessible to its audience and is the audience allowed to participate.

According to the DA statement, ANC president Cyril Ramaphosa had abused his status as South African president to broadcast a party-political message to the nation. *The Citizen* Newspaper reported that president Ramaphosa gave feedback on the ANC's two-day *legkotla* in Gauteng. The DA complained that President Ramaphosa had also shared other ANC-centric messages which were interpreted as being campaign messages for the 2019 South African national elections (*The Citizen,* 2018). The DA argued that SABC's behaviour was a departure from the norm by allowing such a message that was not from government. The DA pointed out that the SABC showed biasness because their leader Mr Mmusi Maimane does not get such coverage from the SABC.

The SABC has, in several occasions, violated the mandate of a public broadcaster in its broadcasting. In 2016 it tried to censor public protest visuals on SABC Television news, arguing that it's trying to protect its journalists from violent strikes and that decision had led to a formal complaint to the ICASA by the Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), the Support Public Broadcasting Coalition (SPBC) and the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) (News24, 2016). This violation of the code of conduct, by the SABC, puts more emphasis on the importance of this study. The dropping of professional standards by the SABC, especially radio, was witnessed by millions of listeners who were left with an eerie silence for approximately an hour as their favorite SABC radio stations, such as SAfm, Radio2000, Metro FM, 5FM, went quiet on the 1st of September 2019. Listeners expressed their feelings, on social media, about how disappointed they are on the SABC (Tjiya, 2019).

The above criticisms of the SABC are amongst the reasons this study investigate the extent to which the SABC radio stations allow public participation and create a fair and untainted virtual public platform in which people are allowed to engage with each other through the radio stations. The study also investigates the influence of the public participation in radio programming, especially on talk radio shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* and how the radio stations influence the public engagement. The study investigate how public participation is encouraged in this radio stations and how the radio stations control the public participation. The study also evaluates the extent in which the public has influence in the programming of the two talk shows.

The study used a qualitative research design, employing a content analysis of *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* recordings and in-depth interviews with the producers and presenters of the shows. From the content of the two talk shows, the researcher paid attention to what the two talk shows discuss, what influence the choice of issues/topics to be discussed and the extent in which public participation has influence in the programming of the shows. The researcher collected data through buying a month recording of the two talk shows from the SABC, which will be discussed later in chapter four.

Contextualizing the Study

This section provides definitions of key concept and key words that are used in the study. Key words that are not defined in this section are defined in different sections of the study.

Public Participation

According to Quick and Bryson (2016:1) "public participation in involves the direct involvement or indirect involvement through representatives of concerned stakeholders in decision-making about policies, plans or programs in which they have an interest". Public participation in the media is when ordinary people who are neither guest/actors nor media professionals are involved and participate in the media (Thornborrow, 2014:3). The concept of ordinary citizens taking part in talk shows, radio phone-in shows, or reality television shows is not something new. Audience and public participation broadcasting scholars refer them as 'Ordinary People' (Thornborrow, 2014: 3). The definition provided by Thornborrow (2014) above defines what is public participation in this study. The above definition "distinguishes them from other categories of participant: those who are employed by the media network as hosts or presenters; other media professionals, including journalists and politicians; and those who are labelled as 'experts' and who often represent institutions or organizations of one sort or another" Thornborrow (2014: 3).

Sithakela Isizwe

Sithakela Isizwe is a talk show, which at the time of the study it was presented by Mr. Sipho Mbatha, aimed at educating, informing and entertaining listeners by engaging in and discussing issues of social importance and transforming destructive stereotypes and patterns within different

South African communities. The show tackles different topics every day, between Mondays to Thursdays. The show has different features such as *Sithakela Isizwe Ngolwazi* which entails discussing and debates on issues, with invited guests, with topics ranging from health, mental health, the economy, abuse, obesity, nutrition, relationships, etc. The show also has a feature called *Sithakela Isizwe Ngezokungcebeleka*, which focuses on entertainment news from South Africa and beyond, every Thursday. On Tuesdays, the show discusses stories from the African continent, on a feature called *Ezase Africa*, to keep abreast with social issues affecting other African countries. Every Monday to Thursday, from 21h00 – 22h00, the show has a segment on education related issues, on a feature called *Sithakela Isizwe Ngezemfundo*. There are also government features during the educational slot. Between 22h00 to 23h00, varying on the different days, there are music programmes such as *Uyadela Makhasane* and *Cothoza Mfana*. There are also public service announcements, funeral announcements, Islamic service and a family building programme called *Ikhaya Lethu* (Ukhozi FM 2019).

The View Point

There are many similarities between *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*. They are both aired on Monday to Thursday at 20:00 in the evening. *The View Point*, on SAfm, at the time of the study was presented by Mr. Songezo Mabece. As the name suggest, *The View Point*, it is a show that engages listeners with social justice issues, economic issues and political issues. Like *Sithakela Isizwe*, this show has experts as guest contributors who discuss issues with the presenter and listeners use social media, email, and call-ins to participate in the discussions. The difference between these two shows is that *Sithakela Isizwe* is aired in isiZulu on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* is aired in English on SAfm (SAfm, 2019).

Location of the Study

The study is located in Durban and Johannesburg as it studies two SABC radio stations that are based both in Johannesburg and Durban.

Thesis Structure

The research will be organized as follows:

Chapter one introduces the study to the reader and provides an overview of what the study is all about. The chapter introduces the reader to the purpose, aim, objectives and research questions of the study. In this chapter the researcher also conceptualizes the study and provide definitions to key concepts.

Chapter two is a review on different literature related to this study. The literature reviewed in this study validated the study and provided a clear argument on radio, radio in South Africa, various forms of radio in South Africa and radio in the digital age. This chapter revealed that there was a gap for this study and that the study fits into the already existing scholarly work.

Chapter three provides a theorical framework for the study. The chapter brought together different arguments on the public sphere theory and why it is relevant in this study. The public sphere theory was a relevant in studying public participation in radio stations and it is through the theory that the researcher was able to evaluate the virtual public sphere created by both shows.

Chapter four provides a breakdown of the methodology used in the study. The methodology chapter consist of the data analysis method, sampling method, research design, and data collection. The study is qualitative and uses a purposive sampling method with data that is collected through in-depth interviews and through buying recordings of the two shows from the SABC.

Chapter five presents the visual and verbal data which is collected through recording both shows and in-depth interviews with the producers and radio presenters. The data is presented in two folds; there is verbal data from the in-depth interviews and data visual data from the recordings of both shows.

Chapter six offers an analysis of the key research findings. The study used a content and thematic analysis for analyzing the findings. The literature and the theoretical framework, enabled the researcher to provide a concrete analysis on what the data is showing.

Chapter seven concludes the study and share contributions made by the study, the literature, and the theoretical framework of the study. It also highlights limitations of the study and point out areas of further research for other scholars.

Chapter Two
Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter of the study provides and explores work from different scholars in the field of radio. The study's objective is to investigate the public participation in the SABC Radio Stations, using Ukhozi FM and SAfm amongst all the SABC radio stations and *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* shows as case studies. The researcher finds it important to unpack the history of radio, especially its history in South Africa. This will provide a clear indication of the developments and changes that have taken place in this medium. As part of the history of radio, especially in South Africa, the researcher finds it important to briefly visit the South African media regulation, especially radio in order to get an understanding on how radio is regulated and what effects the media regulation has on public participation. It will briefly elaborate on the history of the SABC because the study is based on SABC radio stations. Literature on the virous forms of radio stations in South Africa will be unpacked for the benefit of comparing the different forms of radio stations, hoping to evaluate their audience engagement. It is important to this research to study closely the literature on radio broadcasting today, its usefulness and how it has developed from what it was from its inception. Unpacking literature on radio today gives an idea of what radio is and helps in evaluating whether SABC radio stations, especially SAfm and Ukhozi FM, are what radio should be. The study also takes a closer look into radio in the age of information technology, paying attention to the future of radio in the age of the Internet and technology. Lastly, the chapter unpacks the structure of a talk radio show and evaluates whether *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* meet the category of a radio talk show.

The History of Radio

The amount of literature and the work undertaken by different scholars around radio validate this study. Different scholars have done extensive research on different aspects of radio. For example, as O'Sullivan and Lewis (2006) have tried to answer the question sounding the future of radio, whether radio is still relevant and have studied radio audiences, which gives an interesting background on why studying radio audience is very important. "Radio has become a vehicle for change, a platform to motivate people, an environment where ordinary citizens can have a voice" (Rubin and Step, 2000:636). Rubin and Step (2000) put forward a similar argument to that of

Dennis McQuail (2002) on how radio programmes, such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, are instrumental in building people's lives day and helping them build relationships with one another. "Such radio shows allow people to shape their own society and to influence culture and norms" (Rubin and Step, 2000:637). This suggest that radio has been instrumental and is still instrumental in educating people on different aspects of social and everyday life. Mzandile Dladla (2003) studied the role of radio post-apartheid between 1994 – 2002, focusing on sports using Ukhozi and Umhlobo Wenene FM as a case study, and concluded that radio between that period promotes unity regardless of the diverse cultures in South Africa. Today's radio has programmes designed for educating different age group and represent any group in the society. Tanja Bosch (2007) highlights how inclusive today's radio is, when providing a descriptive account of how Bush Radio had a programme for gay people. Ukhozi FM is a good example on educational programmes for young people. In the recent event of the Covid-19 pandemic, many countries were lockdown, public, commercial and community radio stations played a huge role in the education space (Mhlanga and Moloi, 2020). According to Mhlanga and Moloi (2020:5) many South African radio stations, especially the SABC, partnered with the South African Department of Basic Education to educate learners. SABC radio stations, such as Ukhozi and SAfm, were used to provide virtual learning for primary and secondary education (Mhlanga and Moloi, 2020).

"There has been a great transition in radio, especially with the advancement of technology and social media. The public, through social media and technology can participate in radio shows" (Shirky, 2011:28). Today's radio has created a two-way type of communication, through which the public is able to communicate with the presenter and the presenter responds to the listener at the same time. "This has been enabled by technology such as telephones, cell phones, emails, and social networks" (Shirky, 2011:29). It is therefore empirical to study how such advancement has enhanced public participation on radio. The advancement in technology makes it very important to compare the public participation on radio back then and now.

To understand the way radio has transitioned and the role it plays in today's society; it is important to unpack its history because it provides an understanding of what is radio and how it came into being. The invention of radio was pioneered by Guglielmo Marconi, through the help of notes left by Hienrich Hertz and James Clerk Maxwell (Lule, 2013:254). Lule (2013:254) argues that "Guglielmo Marconi is often recognized as the founder of radio, but he used the biography of

Hienrich Hertz, who had written and visited experiments on early forms of wireless transmission". He then replicated Hertz's experiments, with success in the ability to send transmissions from one side of his attic to the other (Sturmey, 1958:16). This suggest that he didn't start the invention from stretch but through the used of ideas and experiments left by other people (Coe, 1996:4). According to Sturmey (1958:16) "radio is not an entity, a thing in itself; it is simply the use of electromagnetic forces travelling in space". These electromagnetic forces were first discovered by Clerk Maxwell in 1864 and later in the 1880s Heinrich Hertz took over to further conduct experiments from Maxwell's equations (Burrows, 1962). It was through further developments from different Engineers working together that radio was discovered and fully functional in the early 1900s (Burrows, 1962).

The success Marconi achieved in making wireless technology popular, created the assumption that it was meant to allow the telegraph to function in areas that could not be connected by cables (Abboo, 2009; Crisell, 1986). This was not the case as the telegram pioneered by Marconi was different from broadcasting. However, this type of radio was made as a device for marine ships to communicate with each other or with land stations. According to Coe (1996:5) the main aim of creating this device was a person-to-person type of communication and it was until further developments and research on the medium which made it possible to broadcast and send messages to a large group of people (Coe, 1996:5). The person-to-person communication element of radio contributed to further developments of what radio is today, but the telegram and broadcasting remain two different ways of communication. Today, radio is amongst mediums that are most use and useful for the public.

Radio, like any other modes of communication, has distinct characteristics. Andrew Crisell (1986:4) in the book "Understanding Radio" pointed out characteristics of radio as a mode of broadcasting where messages can be sent to many receivers at the same time. "The relationship between the sender of the message and the receiver is so close, but it is only oral" (Crisell, 1986:4). As much as this means of broadcasting enables the sender to send messages to many people beyond the limits of geographical barriers, Crisell (1986:4) critically pointed out that "the message received by the receiver can be misunderstood". A misunderstanding could be as a result of the difference in languages, especially with in South Africa. In South Africa it would be difficult for a listener to hear the presenter of Ukhozi FM why they are none Zulu speakers. This is totally not

a reflection on how good or bad is the radio presenter, presenting that certain show, but it is due to language barriers. As a result, listeners are most like to tune into another radio station if they can hear the language. The language barriers are predominant is South Africa because the country has eleven official languages. However, Kapatamoyo (2007:216) put forward that South Africa is unique when it comes to the issue of languages because most South Africans can converse in more than one language, which makes it difficult for one to argue that listeners are most likely to switch off the radio or tune into another channel. It is for that reason that the researcher finds it important to study public participation on two public radio stations which broadcast in English and isiZulu, as English and isiZulu are the most spoken languages in South Africa (BusinessTech, 2019)[1].

The role that radios continue to play in people's lives validates the reason for studying its audience and participation. Radio unlike television and other media platforms is available in different formats (Kivikuru, 2006:12) and it is available even for people in remote areas'

> *"Radio is the number one mass medium in South Africa and it is still relevant for both the young and the older generation. For most of the adult audience, radio is and has always been the main source of information, while for the youth; it is mostly a source of education and entertainment"* (Kivikuru 2006:12).

Kivikuru (2006) further argues that radio is still relatively the biggest medium compared to radio and television in terms of its reach, the amount of informative programs and its ability to foster change because of its convenience even in cars, and digital devices such as cell phones. The above arguments therefore emphasize the need for a study that focuses on audience participation because it will seem to be pointless to broadcast if there was not anyone listening.

History of Radio in South Africa

The South African history of radio in this study gives a preview of radio in South African, especially the establishment of the SABC Radio stations. The researcher hopes that the history of South African radio provides an outlook of the milestones of South African radio, within the context of public participation. The history of broadcasting in South Africa can be clearly understood when separated by years and events as they have occurred in the broadcasting industry (Horwitz, 2001). Radio studies in South Africa can be understood when separated in three main

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[1] https://businesstech.co.za/news/business/319760/these-are-the-most-spoken-languages-in-south-africa-in-2019/

periods; pre-apartheid, apartheid era and post-apartheid (Dhanasar et al., 2018). According to Dhanasar et al. (2018: 10), radio has been one of the most popular and influential forms of media in South Africa due to its availability in different platforms, the reach, cost, and the interactive nature of the medium. South African radio, like other media platforms, is well known for its role it played in nation building, educating and entertaining citizens over the past decades (Fourie, 2003).

The South African Railways in Johannesburg established the first South African radio station on December 29, 1923. The following year, the Scientific and Technical Club in Johannesburg occurred. It was the same year that The Cape, Durban Organization and Peninsula Broadcasting Association started a similar service (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). All the organization had to function separately because of the limited areas they could cover, and they were all frustrated by shortage of funds. As a result, "the Schlesinger organization, which had permission from the Government, formed the African Broadcasting Company in 1927, which incorporated the three broadcasting organizations" (Scannell, 2001). The lack of funding for broadcasting influenced the Prime Minister, General Hertzog, to mandate an inquiry into all parts of broadcasting. Through the inquiry the SABC was established under Act No. 22 of 1936, which made an emphasis that broadcasts should also be made in Afrikaans language since all programmes were presented in English (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008). The English and Afrikaans services, currently known as SAfm and Radio Sonder Grense (RSG), were for many years known as Radio South Africa and Radio Suid-Afrika. "In 1950, the Springbok Radio was introduced, and it became the most popular amongst the SABC's services, but the rise of television in the late 1970's resulted in a huge decline in listenership and the station closed at the end of 1985" (Teer-Tomaselli, 2008).

The rise of television in the 1970s did not kill the sound of radio entirely, South Africa still enjoyed the sound of radio, which is still available in many parts of the country even today (Dhanasar et al., 2018). It is informative, entertaining, and a vehicle for change and service delivery. "People can listen to all three types of radio stations and with the aid of technology and the internet, radio has a potential of reaching millions of South Africans and beyond" (Chiumbu and Ligaga, 2013:41). Radio offers more than broadcasting today; citizens can not only listen but participate through different platforms. In an article published on proceedings of the 1995 International Conference during the 100 Years of Radio ceremony, which explored the history of radio, Excell

and Excell (1995) argued that the combination of the basic discovery of electromagnetic radiation made the evolution of radio one of the great achievements of human endeavor.

The history of radio positions radios as one of the oldest media in South Africa and it gave an indication of where radio is coming from. It is through the history of radio that one can understand the importance of studying radio. The above section on the history of the history of radio in South Africa is brief and is meant to give an outlook of the milestone of radio. When one studies the history of radio in South Africa, the history of the SABC always appears. It is for that reason that the reason that the following sections focuses on media regulation and the brief history of the SABC, especially radio within the SABC.

Media Regulation in South Africa

The most recorded media regulations in South Africa were during the apartheid era (Fokane, 2003). It is important, for this study to explore the South African media regulation. It provides a clear indication of how the South African media has been regulated, especially after apartheid. It also shows the extent in which the media regulations have allowed the public to have a voice and participate in different radio stations. It is through taking a closer look into the processes of regulation of the media that the researcher will be able to show show the effects regulations have in participation of the public. It is useful to the study to find out whether the South African media regulations speaks of regulations on public participation.

South African Media Regulation After 1994

Media, such as radio, was regulated by the Independent Broadcasting Authority which later became the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa, before 1994. The end of the apartheid government in South Africa and the change in power resulted in a great deal of change in the media (Madamombe, 2005). The media gained in terms of freedom, and new regulations for different media platforms were introduced. This enabled the public to exercise freedom to play a greater role in the production and use of media products. Barnett (2004) argued that as policy formulation and control of the media changed, people had power over what was being represented in the media and the majority were represented, democratically, in policy reviews and making of the media.

The introduction of new government in 1994 brought great changes in the broadcasting landscape, especially after the South African government established a new broadcasting legislation and amended the Broadcasting Act No. 73 of 1976 (Ngubane, 2006). The act gave rise to the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act No. 153 of 1993, which later became the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA). "This statutory body's powers over the regulation and licensing of the broadcasting system removed the SABC's *de facto* power to issue licenses to other broadcasters, which stripped the SABC the powers of being both a player and referee in the regulation of broadcasting" (Ngubane, 2006: 44). The IBA (and later, ICASA), was charged with defining three classes of broadcasting activities, namely, 'public', commercial ' and 'community 'broadcasters. The regulator was also mandated to "provide a charter for the South African Broadcasting Corporation Ltd; to establish the Frequency Spectrum Directorate in the Department; to establish the South African Broadcasting Production Advisory Body; and to establish a human resource capacity in policy development" (Broadcasting Act, 1999).

The objective of this Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (No. 153 of 1993) was to create and develop a broadcasting policy for public's interest and to contribute to democracy, the development of society, gender equality, nation building, provision of education and strengthening the spiritual and moral fiber of society (ICASA Act, 2000)[2]. The policy was also expected to ensure, improve, and reinforce the cultural, political, social, and economic fabric of South Africa. The study finds it important to find out whether this act makes provision for the public participation on public broadcasters such as SAfm and Ukhozi FM.

The policy also spoke to the 'de-regulation 'and 're-regulation 'of broadcast stations (both television and radio) outside the ambit of the SABC. Some of the SABC's radio stations were sold to private consortia, while other 'greenfield 'licenses were established (Teer-Tomaselli, 2005). These moves encouraged ownership and control of broadcasting services through participation by persons from historically disadvantaged groups. "The policy was also expected to ensure diversification of programming, views and information and provide different entertainment and education programmes" (Louw, 1993). The legislation paved the way for a clear description of roles and responsibilities in relation to policy formulation, regulation, and the provision of

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[2] https://www.icasa.org.za/independent-communications-authority-of-south-africa-act-2000

broadcasting services (Lloyd, 2013). The regulator also devised the basis for future public policy goals such as the migration of broadcasting services from analogue to digital networks and the regulation of converged networks (Lloyd, 2013). The above arguments, in this paragraph, suggest a pavement for change where the public will benefit in the broadcasting sector. It is therefore important to find out whether the SABC has created that pavement in this study.

Broadcasting in South Africa is curently regulated by the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa (ICASA), after the merger between the IBA and the South African Telecommunications Regulatory Authority in 2000 (Telecommunications Act, 2000)[3]. This was established by the Independent Communication Authority of South Africa Act, 2000 No. 13 of 2000. ICASA showed the interest of the public by giving licenses to more than a hundred community radio stations, more than five commercial television channels and more than forty commercial radio stations in 2012 (Saarf, 2012)[4]. These radio stations today cover different cities and towns, and most importantly, broadcast in local languages. It is important to evaluate whether the regulator has also managed to serve the interest of the public from political parties and commercialization of the broadcasters. Lloyd (2013) argued that "the role of ICASA is to reinforce the clause in the South African constitution which states that broadcasting must be independently regulated to avoid interference, and to ensure fairness and diverse views". The ICASA Amendment Act No. 3 promulgated in 2006 further amended the regulator's ways of doing things in the broadcasting and media industry (Moyo and Hlongwane, 2009). It is meant to be a tool for a holistic enforcement and compliance of structures to reflect convergence between networks (Moyo and Hlongwane, 2009). The beginning of the ICASA Amendment Act No 3, together with Electronic Communications Act No. 36 of 2005, has amplified ICASA's functions in many areas, such as investigation, inspection, complaints handling, dispute resolution, adjudication, regulation, and conduct of market review studies (Moyo and Munoriyarwa, 2021).

Even though the SABC, including the broadcasting industry as a whole, the difference between radio and television, the different services, and the formats of shows that were aired before 1994

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[3] https://www.icasa.org.za/legislation-and-regulations/acts
[4] http://www.saarf.co.za/rams-technicalreports/technicalreport-2012A/data%20files/Main%20Contents/RAMS%20Tech%20Full%20Report%202012A%2020-24.pdf

compared to what is available now, there is a huge different in terms of access, programming and audience participation. However, it is still very necessary to study whether ICASA and the SABC has drawn a clear policy on public participation on radio. The issues of who gets to participate leaves many questions, such as, is the public participation left to the broadcaster and its programming team's discretion to allow the public to participate or not? The extent in which this could results in agenda setting.

A Brief History of South Africa Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)

The history of radio in South Africa is incomplete without visiting the history of the SABC. It is also important to explore the SABC's history because the study uses two SABC radio stations as a case study, which makes it very important to engage with research work about the SABC. For the purpose of this study, which focuses on public participation and programming, the section will focus on the introduction of radio on SABC in English and Afrikaans, the development of the English services radio as a multi-genre within the ethos of public broadcasting service. It will then focus on development of radio Bantu and the English service becoming SAfm. The section will also pay attention to the transformation of the SABC from its inception up to date.

According to Nwaneri, Mann, van Niekerk and Dieperink (2014:348) the SABC was established in 1936 after the Broadcasting Act 22 of 1936 was passed. Initially, there were two official broadcasting languages, English and Afrikaans and the indigenous people of South Africa were not considered in broadcasting until 1940. It was until June 1961 that a full FM programme service, such as Radio Bantu, was introduced (Nwaneri *et al*, 2014). The English and Afrikaans speakers were dominating groups within the media both, print and radio since the establishment of Union of South Africa in 1912 and the National Party (NP) victory of 1948 (Somerville, 2018). These were the two groups that predominately owned the media especially print media. With the victory of the National Party of 1948, it was clear to the National Party government how the media can be used as a tool for political gains. According to Somerville (2018: 5) "the victory of the NP with the support of the burgeoning Afrikaner press in 1948 showed the potential of the media as part of the political, cultural and economic resurgence of Afrikanerdom". However, in 1923 there were already small commercial English radio stations which were already operational and were self-funded targeted on English speakers who were living in the cities (Somerville, 2018).

The failure of the above-mentioned privately owned radio stations to keep their operation, after the Nationalist Party declined their subsidiary request, gave the Nationalist Party led by Prime Minister J.B. Hertzog an idea to approach the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to help South Africa in establishing a public broadcasting service (Somerville, 2018). Between 1934 and 1936 a public broadcasting service was established and the SABC was formed. It is for that reason that different scholars argued that from the moment of commencement, the SABC had strong ties to the BBC model of broadcasting (Teer-Tomaselli, 2004; Currie and Markovitz, 1997). The battle between the English and Afrikaans programmes within the SABC is one that is visible in the early days of the SABC. According to Nwaneri *et al*, (2014:348) the Afrikaners used the SABC to promote their own culture, which was observable from their choice of music and the banning of songs and books, and blacklisted writers and journalists and they forced broadcasters, publishers, writers and reviewers into scheming with their vision of a racialized national culture.

The fight for transformation within the SABC is not something new and because it has always been a state own institution, it has always been easy for the ruling party to use it for their own political gains. "From 1960–1980, the SABC consciously attempted to reflect the national interest in its programming policy, but there was no attempt at integrating the various cultures to be found in South Africa. Instead, the programme policy served an ideological purpose by helping to maintain cultural and racial divisions, in line with the government ideology of the time", (Nwaneri *et al*, 2014:349). However, the fight for inclusive and non-racial SABC started bearing fruits in the late 1980s; the SABC was now broadcasting using eleven languages on radio. The SABC, as a brain child of the BBC, the English service within the SABC managed to make its way (McCracken, 2014). According to McCracken (2014: 909) the English Service was visible in the SABC during the apartheid era, with its drama and comedy programming. Subsequently, broadcasting for 'natives' started in the 1940 as an emergency measure to dispel disruptive rumors concerning the progress of World War II and South Africa's role in the conflict (Hamm, 1991:148). The introduction of Radio Bantu, which will be discussed in detailed later in this chapter, did not mean that SABC was transformed at the time. However, Hamm (1991:149) argued that "the Afrikaans Service was given 'absolute equality' with the English Service and the SABC established its own news service, but there were still exchange programmes with various European broadcasting services, daily reports from the United Nations General Assembly and a series of international programmes prepared by UNESCO". The above arguments suggest that the

development and transformation of the SABC happened over time, from its inception, before apartheid, during apartheid and post-apartheid. The researcher finds it interesting that there is no evidence of public participation on radio during the above-mentioned periods within the SABC. This, however, could have been a result of the nature of radio and lack of technology that enabled public participation.

Even though the SABC had already been under the state and established as a public service broadcaster in the early 1940s, broadcasting was not entirely inclusive of every population in the country as the SABC moved from being a public service broadcaster to a state broadcaster during the apartheid era (Hamm, 1991: 156). However, the SABC moved back to a public service broadcaster in 1990 just before the first democratic elections in 1994 (Hamm, 1991). As a result, the Independent Broadcasting Act of 1993 was established which gave birth to an independent regulatory body which regulated even the SABC (Jjuuko, 2005). South Africa witnessed a slight change in the public service broadcasting, with the attempts to transform the SABC in the early 1990s (Jjuuko, 2005). The introduction of a democratic government established the idea of building national reconciliation which resulted in the role of the SABC being reviewed as well. This meant that the SABC's broadcasting became inclusive of all races (Currie and Markovitz, 1997; Tomaselli, 1998). The transformation of the SABC corrected the social and gender imbalances that existed within the organization. Today, the SABC prides itself as being independent and impartial, having women in different positions apart from presenting (SABC, 2020).[5] This statement, however, can be analyzed as a public relations presentation since it is not backed-up by scholarly evidence.

Over the years, the SABC has played a critical role in the promotion and facilitating of the government's transformation process. The SABC's role was to spread the gospel of reconciliation and democratic nation building soon after 1994 (Ryan, 2000). This meant that the SABC had to provide equal representation throughout the country. Today, the SABC is seen to carry the public service broadcasting mandate, which is to broadcast for public interest. However, this public broadcasting must be checked from time to time, because of the ever-changing broadcasting environment.

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[5] https://www.sabc.co.za/sabc/sabc-on-enforcing-editorial-independence-and-impartiality/

The SABC's transformation with organizational changes, as indicated above, occurred "parallel to the commercialization process that had been brought to other parastatals such as the South African Posts and Telecommunications and the South African Transport Services" (Horwitz, 2001: 122). To begin the SABC's organizational transformation, the government created the Viljoen Task Team in 1990, to enquire into the "future of broadcasting in South Africa" (Horwitz, 2001: 127). However, the Task Team was criticized as it consisted solely of white men. Hence, in opposition to the Viljoen Task Team, the Jabulani! Freedom of the Airwaves Conference took place in 1991 in Netherlands (Horwitz, 2001; Teer-Tomaselli and Tomaselli, 2001; Currie and Markovitz, 1997). The idea of a public service broadcaster that is autonomous of the state control was championed at the Jabulani Conference. This conference was important in the history of the SABC because the discussion around the transformation of the SABC took place and gave birth to the idea of three levels of broadcasting: public service, commercial, and community broadcasting. According to Horwitz (2001: 133), recommendations included the provisions that the public service broadcaster must cater to all tastes and be independent of the government of the day, advertising must be cut back, the "Christian National" bias of the SABC must be removed, all indigenous South African languages must have access to broadcasting, and education must become a genuine orientation of South African broadcasting.

Another important and transformative conference in the transformation of broadcasting was the Free, Fair and Open Conference of 1992, which was organized by the Campaign for Open Media and the Centre for Development Studies (Horwitz, 2001). In this conference it was proposed that broadcasting transformation be negotiated at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1993, to remove any unilateral decision-making by the government on broadcasting (Horwitz, 2001). As a result, out of four of the CODESA phases, the importance of independent broadcasting was recognized, and subsequently the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) Act and the IBA were established in 1993 (Teer-Tomaselli and Tomaselli, 2001).

The above brief history of the SABC, amongst many things that form part of its history, gives an idea that the SABC has come a long way. There has been a great deal of transformation and growth.

The public service broadcaster is over 84 years old in broadcasting (SABC, 2020)[6]. When this study was conducted, the SABC had 21 radio stations in nine South African provinces, broadcasting in all eleven official languages (SABC, 2020)[7]. In the case of this study, two of the 21 radio stations will be discussed briefly on the next section. These are Ukhozi FM and SAfm, which are amongst the biggest radio stations within the SABC. The reason for choosing these two radio stations amongst other SABC radio stations is discussed in the methodology chapter. However, discussing them briefly below also gives an idea of the transformation of the English Service to SAfm and Radio Bantu to Ukhozi FM and the demographics paints a picture of who is listening to this radio stations.

Radio Zulu Becomes Ukhozi FM

Ukhozi FM was initially know as Radio Bantu and Radio Zulu and the radio station dates back to the first Zulu broadcast during the Second World War in 1941 (Gunner, 2000). The radio station is well known for its three minutes 'news bulletin about the war, a broadcast at the Durban studios by King Edward Masinga who was the first Black broadcaster to read news (Mhlambi, 2008). These broadcasts were in Afrikaans and English. Mhlambi (2008) explains that "Mr. Masinga convinced Hugh Tracey, an ethnomusicologist who was based in Durban working for SABC that Zulu people needed to know about the war in a language they understood and Masinga got to interpret the news in IsiZulu". In the 1960's the duration of the Zulu broadcasts became thirty minutes after the creation of the Radio Bantu stations. Radio Bantu gave rise to vernacular programmes, which were categorized according to the different language groups in South Africa; thus, the Zulu programme was referred to as Radio Zulu. The content on Radio Zulu was the same as it was during the three-minute broadcast, but the apartheid government continued to place restrictions on the content (Seery, 2012). Both Gunner (2000:224) and Seery (2012) agreed that "while the apartheid government'sagenda was to use Radio Zulu as a political pawn, nonetheless it had already begun to create a new and not controllable space for cultural space for urban listeners".

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[6] https://www.sabc.co.za/sabc/
[7] https://www.sabc.co.za/sabc/radio/

Today, Ukhozi FM is one of the largest radio stations on the planet, as reflected on Ukhozi FM website, and one of the leading in Africa with its high weekly listenership (Ukhozi FM, 2020)[8]. It is a South African radio station, broadcasting nationwide and available for live streaming to the world (Ukhozi FM, 2020)[4]. The station's main studios are in KwaZulu Natal, Durban, but it also has its studios in Johannesburg. As indicated above, the station accommodates different audiences, from young to old, in all parts of the country and beyond. Lethiwe Nkosi (2014), in a study of Black women in post-apartheid South Africa nation-building and radio, argued that the station, Ukhozi FM, was unmatched in its friendliness to its listeners, and that through its platform, it has created a connection with its listeners that has kept them glued to their cultural identity even in a modern world context. This suggests that Ukhozi FM has carried the mandate of being a public broadcaster. "It has been critically applauded for its useful content that is delivered with poise and deftness, affirming the cultural identity of its listeners, and its focuses on edutainment and infotainment as a guiding philosophy" (Nkosi, 2014:6). Ukhozi FM offers an interactive environment for its listeners, giving them access to news, current affairs, talk shows, music, drama, sport, education, weather, and traffic, with much emphasis on local content (Ukhozi FM, 2020)[4]. Mainly, the station's priority is to offer a foundation built on uplifting its listeners, giving them power, comfort, escapism, connectedness, and most importantly encouraging listeners to observe their culture. Ukhozi FM continues to maintain its number one spot as the country' most loved and listened radio station (Nkosi, 2014:10). Even though Lethi Nkosi's study was published in 2014, it is still relevant today because Ukhozi FM, at the time when this study was published, was still the most listened radio stations within the SABC and in South Africa (BRCSA, 2021)[9]. Gunner (2017) argued two years after Lethi Nkosi's study, that Ukhozi FM has radically changed in the 'new dispensation 'of post-1990 South Africa yet has maintained the creative and resistant identity forged in the apartheid years under the name Radio Zulu, as a result, it has extended the station's appeal in the uncertain new millennium. The researcher finds it important to pay a closer look at Ukhozi FM audience demographics because the study explores public participation in these radio station.

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[8] http://www.ukhozifm.co.za/sabc/home/ukhozifm/aboutus
[9] https://brcsa.org.za/interim-radio-data-overview-q1-march-2021/

Ukhozi FM Audience Demographics

As mentioned above, Ukhozi FM is currently one of the most listened radio stations in the country with estimated listenership of over 7.6 million people (BRCSA, 2020)[10]. It is known for its recent isiZulu slogan *"Luhamba Phambili"* which is loosely translated as "its leading". It can be listened by everyone who understands isiZulu.
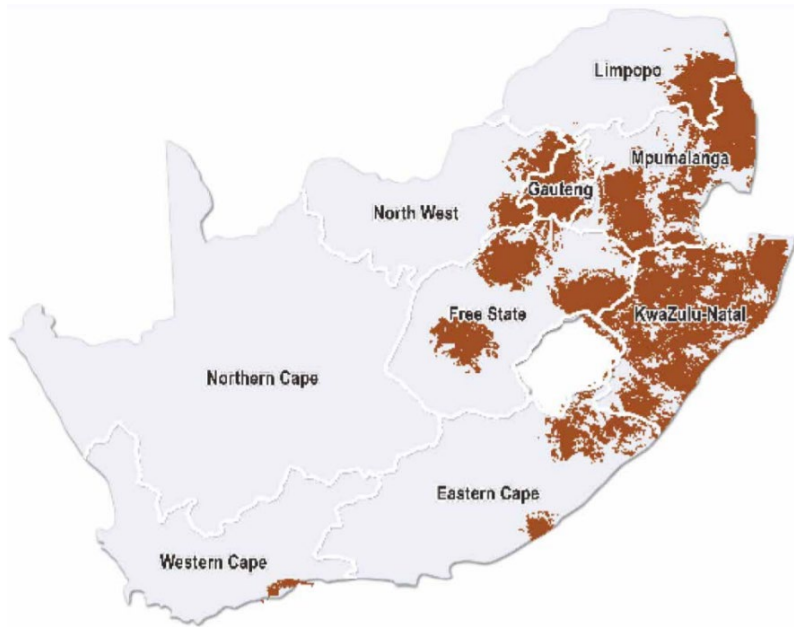
Figure 2:1 shows Ukhozi FM coverage and footprint in South Africa, which is indicated by the color brown (SABC, 2020)[11]

With Ukhozi FM's 7.6 million listenership per week, as projected by the BRCSA (2020), the July 2020 SABC rate card shows the following demographics about Ukhozi FM:

Figure 2.2 Ukhozi FM Audience Demographics

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[10] https://brcsa.org.za/brc-ram_listenership-report-apr19-mar20/

[11] https://www.sabcgroupsales.co.za/commercial/?p=2023

A Bar Graph Showing Ukhozi FM Audience Demographics
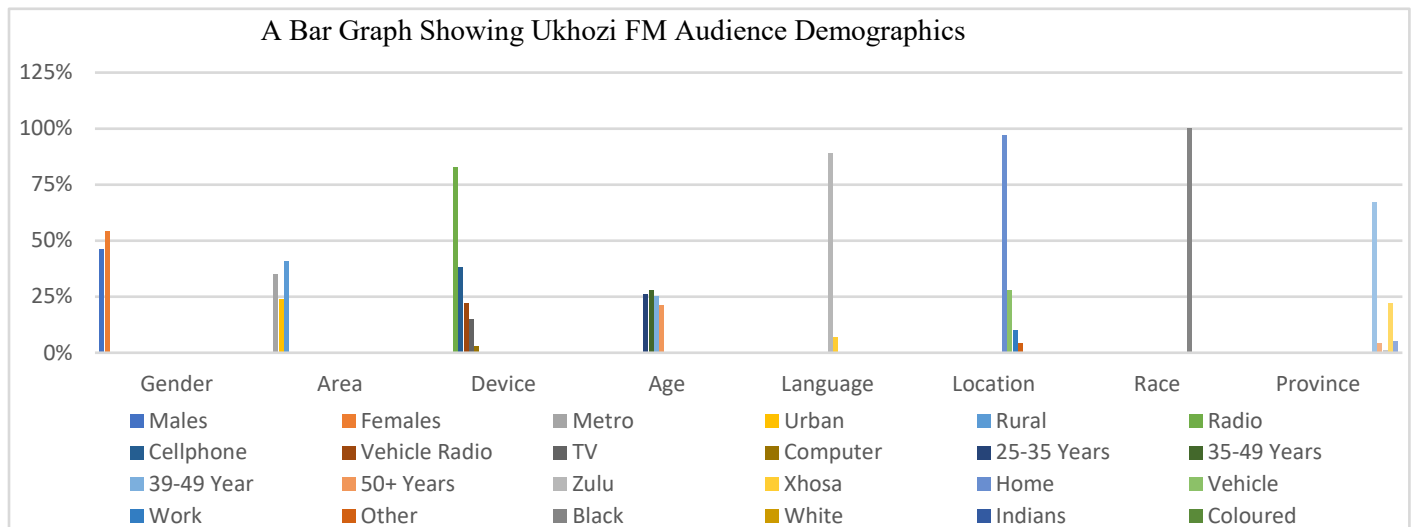
The above bar graph shows that Ukhozi FM consists of 46% male listeners and 54% female listeners, of which 35% resides in Metro cities, 24% in Urban areas and 41% resides in rural areas. An amount of 83% of the listenership listen through a radio set, 38% through a cellphone, 22% listen on a vehicle radio, 15% listen on a Television set and 3% listen through a computer. The radio station consists of 26% of people between the age 15-24 years, 28% between the age 25-34 years old, 25% between the age 35-49 years old and 21% from 50 years upwards. The radio station has two main languages, isiZulu (89%) and isiXhosa (7%). Ukhozi FM is listened at home (97%), at work (10%), in vehicles (28%), at work or universities (10%) and in other places (4%). Its listenership consists of 100% Black people and 0% on all the other races. It is listened in Eastern Cape (4%), Gauteng (22%), KwaZulu-Natal (67%), Free State (1%), and Mpumalanga (5%) (SABC, 2020)[5].

The above audience representation gives an idea of who listens to Ukhozi FM across the country. It is important to indicate that the above demographics opens a window for one to learn more about the audience demographics of Ukhozi FM. The researcher finds important to get a picture of who listens to Ukhozi FM since the study is about public participation. It is important to understand whether the above demographics has any influence on the public participation and to what extent

does it influence the public participation. The next section gives a brief background of SAfm and its demographics.

The English Service Becomes SAfm

SAfm is one of the popular public service broadcasters owned by the SABC. Before it became SAfm, it was the English Service which was established right after the SABC was established (Besham, 1999). It is very important to consider the historical background of SAfm in order to understand it's transformation to what it is today and its programming. Besham (1999: 95) argued that SAfm originated as the 'A Programme 'and was later renamed 'The English Service'. According to Teer-Tomaselli, Tomaselli and Muller (1989: 103), SAfm, which was then the English Service, was a white dominated radio station which did not hide that they served dominant and privileged groups within South Africa.

Teer-Tomaselli (1995:587) further argued that during the mid-1980s during the states of emergency, the SABC broadcasting was linked with the government broadcasting philosophy which was based on the principles of national security. However, Teer-Tomaselli (1995) also put forward that it was during those years, 1986 to be exact, that the radio station changed from The English Service to Radio South Africa as an inclusionary strategy to ensure that the radio station remained relevant even after 1994. Apart from the above-mentioned reason, there were a number of reasons why the radio station was restructured. There was a huge restructuring of the radio station. At the time, it was seen as having the largest radio station budget within the SABC stable, however, it served the smallest population (Stenhouse, 1995). According to Stenhouse (1995:5), quoting the then- Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Head of Radio Services, Govin Reddy, and Station Manager Jack Mullen, the change in its name was a response to public outcry because the station enjoyed, for years, overwhelming institutional support and resources, while at the same time it was running at a loss, and it was not demand-driven by a lot of English audience needs. Today SAfm, according to the station's profile, SAfm is currently the national news and talk radio station leading the nation's conversation. It prides itself with the slogan "The more you listen, the more you'll know" and their frequency is between 104-107 FM nationwide (SAfm, 2020)[12]. It is the SABC's national English language public radio station with its headquarters at Auckland Park

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[12] http://www.safm.co.za/sabc/home/safm/aboutus

in Johannesburg. SAfm is popular for its "full spectrum" radio station; news, information, music, art, drama, children's programmes, sport, and it was also the first station to introduce 'talk' format and current affairs programming (SAfm, 2020)[4]. However, it moved away from "full spectrum" broadcasting to news and information, dropping drama and cutting back on music in favour of a live, 'talk show' format. In 2006, the ICASA instructed SAfm to re-introduce both drama and children's programming (SABC, 2020)[7]. Nonetheless, it is true that the while the informational character of the station has been enhanced over the years, the entertainment   aspect has been significantly downgraded. Currently SAfm draws its audience from Living Standards Measure (LSM's) between 7-10 (the wealthiest section of the South African population) with its core listeners between ages 35-49 (SAfm, 2020)[4]. In its own words, SAfm is "unswerving with the SABC's vision of broadcasting for total citizen empowerment, the role of SAfm is to lead the national conversation, engage in debate and discussion, be a progressive and positive influence, be responsive to listener's expectations, affirm and empower listeners and effect positive change and transformation in South Africa" (SABC, 2

SAfm Audience Demographics

SAfm is one of the nationwide listened-to radio stations in South Africa, as indicated above. Their LSM is between 7-10 which means that their audience has the best living standards, earn the highest salaries, consume the selected media and are most likely to appear as the target audience on many a marketing plan (SAARF, 2020)[13]. Their listenership varies but their core listenership is between the age 35-49.

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[13] http://www.saarf.co.za/LSM/lsms.asp
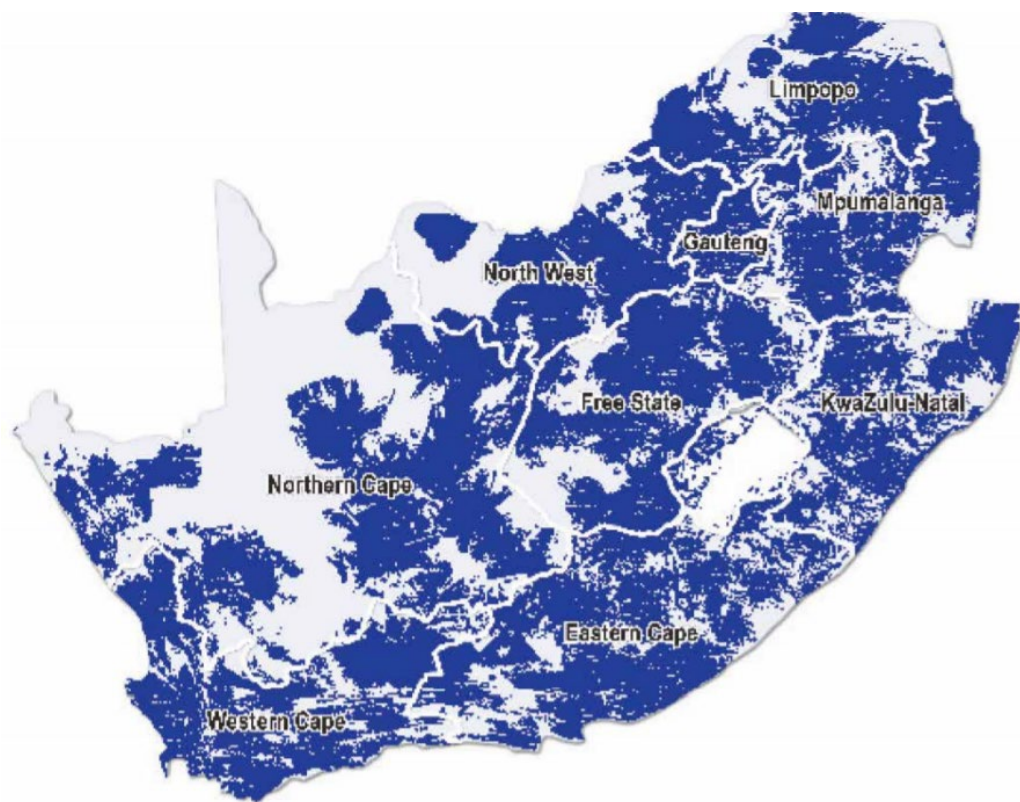
Figure 2:3 SAfm coverage and footprint in the South Africa, which is indicated in blue (SABC, 2020)[5].

According to the SABC sales kit published in 2014 SAfm is classified as the Fortune 4, with a target audience that is affluent and discerning across South Africa. The Fortune 4 radio stations includes Lotus FM, Radio 2000, RSG FM (SABC, 2020)[14]. The audience demographics of these radio station portrays it as radio station that mainly focuses on offering news and information, lifestyle, drama, sport, and an entertainment platform, but targets a "mature and responsible audience that has a positive perspective on life" (SAARF, 2020)[9]. This includes people who are in leadership positions, visionaries, entrepreneurs, professionals, managers, and executives of distinction that contribute immensely to the country's economy and are generally high net worth individuals. The SAfm website portrays the station as a station known for its ability to drive South Africa's development and transformational agenda, "offering credible and balanced news and information and is committed to equality debate on a wide range of issues and subjects by means of interviews and talk shows" (SAfm, 2020)[4]. The above description of SAfm's audience give an

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[14] http://web.sabc.co.za/digital/stage/advertising/radio/Radio_Sales_kit_GP_mail.pdf

indication that the public participation and contribution will be different. The research finds it important to find out the difference in audience participate between the two radio stations.

According to the Broadcasting Research Council of South African's (BRC) radio audience report of April 2019 to March 2020, SAfm enjoys a listenership of 192 000 per seven days, showing a drop compared to 193 000 in 2018 - 2019 (BRC, 2020)[15]. Within the SAfm's 192 000 listenership per week, as projected by the BRC (2020), the July 2020 SABC rate card shows the following demographics of SAfm as indicated in Figure 2.4
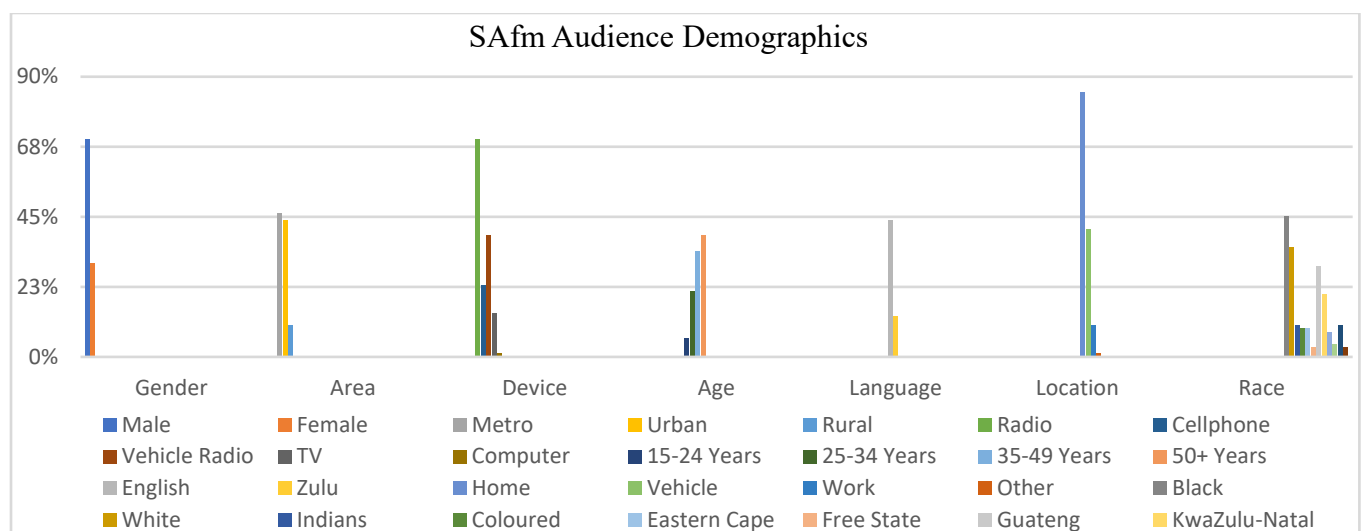
Figure 2.4. SAfm Audience Demographics.

The above bar graph shows that the radio station consists of 66% male listeners and 34% female listeners, of which 49% resides in Metro cities, 36% resides in Urban areas and 14% resides in rural areas. 72% of the listenership listen through a radio set, 24% through a cellphone, 41% listen on a vehicle radio, 10% listen on a Television set and 1% listen through a computer. The radio station has 26% of people between the age 15-24 years, 26% between the age 25-34 years old, 29% between the age 35-49 years old and 19% from 50 years upwards. The radio station has two main languages, Afrikaans (58%) and English (35%). SAfm is listened at home (89%), at work (15%), in vehicles

[15] https://brcsa.org.za/brc-ram_listenership-report-apr19-mar20/

(35%), at work or universities (15%) and in other places (7%). Its listenership consists of 80% Coloured people, 10% Black people, 8% White people, and 2% Indians or Asians. It is listened in Western Cape (95%), Eastern Cape (2%), KwaZulu-Natal (1%), Free State (1%), Mpumalanga (1%) and Northern Cape (1%) (SABC, 2020)[5].

Similar as of Ukhozi FM, above audience representation gives an idea of who listens to SAfm across the country. It is important to indicate that the above demographics opens a window for one to learn more about the audience demographics of SAfm. The researcher finds important to also get a picture of who listens to SAfm since the study is about public participation.

The brief history of both radio stations indicates the milestones that has been travelled and the impact both radio stations have made to ordinary South Africans. It also paints a clear picture that these radio stations have reasonable significance in South Africa. The demographics of both radio stations also show who is listening to the radio stations, from where, their race and how they listen to these two radio stations. It is important to note that both radio stations are highly listened to by people when they are at home. This suggest that listeners for both radio stations can participate. This gives *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* listeners an extra advantage because they are both aired later in the evening.

Types of Radio Stations in South Africa

There are different types of radio stations in South Africa (Onsukunle, 2013). Engaging on literature about different types of radio stations is important for this study. It helps differentiate the types of radio stations found in South Africa. The study explores the different types of radio stations for the purpose of comparing the participation, structure, and programming of the different types of radio stations. The Broadcasting Act 4 of 1999 classified three types of radio stations in South Africa, namely the public service radio stations, commercial and community radio stations (Broadcasting Act, 1999). There is also internet-based radio station that have been established and have become popular lately.

Public Radio Stations

Public radio stations, normally known as national public service radio stations, are radio stations whose main purpose is to broadcast to the public without making profits (Abboo, 2009). "They

are normally funded by the state through taxpayer's money, by public subscription or through licence fees, but they can make revenues through air sales and hosting events" (Brown, 1996). Some of the South African examples of public radio stations Lonene FM, SAfm, Umhlobo Wenene FM and many more. In South Africa, every official language has its national radio station, which mostly broadcasts in the dominant language of that province (SABC, 2021)[16]. Alexander in Dhanasar et al. (2018:11) defines public radio stations, in a South African context, as radio stations that have a public broadcasting mandate and are owned by the SABC which is governed by the South African government. The idea of the 'public', according to John Downing (1992:260), lies awkwardly next to the notion of collective signification. Collective signification would entail ethnic consciousness and is raised with a view to serve as a catalyst for nation building, which adds into the discourse of political legitimacy gained through parliamentary representation, as in the case of South Africa. The fundamental sense of 'public 'entails openness or something common, whose antonym is 'private', 'secret 'or 'restricted '(Downing, 1992, 260). It is for that reason that the SABC is categorized a broadcaster whose interest is the public.

The mandate of a public radio stations in South Africa, like in many countries, is to broadcast for the public. A public broadcaster is set apart from other types of broadcasters by its characteristics that are based on the belief that broadcasting is for nurturing the society, not to make money. The main elements of public broadcasting are and should always include the rejection of commercialism, the diverse programming that is available to everyone in the community, the proper structure of governance, which is the South African government in the case of South Africa, and the maintained high and quality standards of programming that is centered around the public (Tomaselli, 1996:127). The above characteristics of a public radio station suggest that a public radio station's role is to service the public. Brilliant Mhlanga (2011:50), when analyzing the public radio broadcasting and cultural pluralism in South Africa, put forward that in public service broadcasting citizens should be encouraged to participate through decentralizing the public broadcaster into ethnic regions as a way of embracing ethnic diversity, which then allows the public to participate. However, while this normative value ensures acceptance, Mhlanga (2011) argued that in the SABC, citizens remain unable to influence programming, which is managed from SABC headquarters. Even though Mhlanga's (2011) argued points still have premises in the

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[16] https://www.sabc.co.za/sabc/radio/

SABC, a lot has changed from 2011 when he made his analysis. In his analysis of regional ethnic radio stations such as Radio Tsonga FM (now Munghana Lonene FM) and Radio Venda FM (now Phalaphala FM), he suggested that there is a lot of work to be done, since the notion of public service broadcasting in where the public is at the centre of programming and participation, was still a myth (Mhlanga, 2011: 51). Liz Gunner (2017), in an article about Ukhozi FM and new identities on Radio in South Africa, pointed out that there have been manychanges within the SABC radio stations, especially Ukhozi FM. Gunner (2017) expressed the opinion that Ukhozi FM promotes ideas of community both at a local and internal level. This suggests the inclusion of the public on their programing and promoting public participation.

Commercial Radio Stations

Commercial radio broadcasting has a rich history. After the World War I, several small independently owned radio stations began operating using technologies that were developed during the war (Lule, 2014). Many of these stations developed regular programming that included religious sermons, sports, and news (Lule, 2014). Businesses such as stores, which often had their own radio stations, first put radio's commercial applications to use through broadcasting adverts of their products to their customers. This was the first time that radio showed its commercial potential. However, these stations did not advertise in a way that the modern radio listener would recognize (Lule, 2014). These advertisements consisted only of a genteel sales message broadcast during the day, with no hard sell or mention of price (Sterling and Kittross, 2002). Advertising on radio was originally considered an unacceptable invasion of privacy because radio sets were present in the home and spoke with a voice in the presence of the whole family, including children (Sterling and Kittross, 2002). According to Sterling and Kittross (2002:124), the social impact of radio was huge such that within a few years advertising was readily accepted on radio programmes. Radio stations together with advertising agencies started producing their own radio programmes named after their products, as commonly seen today. Radio stations such as East Coast Radio, a self-proclaimed leading commercial radio station, is sponsored by Suncost Casino among other entities. Even though adverts were accepted, they ran only during the day, but as economic pressure increased during the Great Depression in the 1930s, radio stations began looking for new sources of revenue, and advertising became a normal part of the radio soundscape (Sterling and Kittross 2002). Things have not changed in recent years in South African radio, especially commercial radio stations. In 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic, many radio stations received financial boost

from government in a form of advertising and departments buying airtime for educational purposes (South African Governemnt, 2020)[17].

The above global history on commercial broadcasting was a foundation to commercial radio stations 'profit driven element, and as a result, they are not usually owned by the state, but get funding mostly through selling airtime and advertisement (Dhanasar et al., 2018). However, in South Africa, the Broadcasting Act makes allowances for 'public-commercial 'stations that are wholly commercial in nature but remain part of the SABC's portfolio (Broadcasting Act, 1999). Metro FM and Five-FM are examples of this types of radio stations. "Their programming is different from public radio stations, they are not primarily informative, but they are popularly known for playing music" (Rothenbuhler and McCourt, 1987). Their broadcasting caters for everyone, but they are not people centered such as public broadcasters. This necessitates contextualizing the discourse within South Africa, to have a deeper knowledge of the history of commercial broadcasting and how far it has come.

The notable introduction of privately-owned commercial radio stations in South Africa was after 1994 Teer-Tomaselli (2019). This was done on the competitive bases, where individuals and private companies were given an opportunity to own their own radio station. The Independent Broadcasting Authority (later known as the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, ICASA,) broke the monopoly of the SABC and created an opportunity of privately own radio stations. The introduction of commercial radio, according to Teer-Tomaselli (2019:227) is not something new. Springbok Radio, introduced in the 1950s, is a notable example of a commercial radio station because of the financial crisis within the SABC and they idea of drawing different listeners.

As indicated above, commercial radio operates differently from public broadcasting service radio stations. The notable difference between commercial and public radio stations is the profit driven content and programming. Music makes up most of its content and it is favorable to the public (Teer-Tomaselli, 2019:233). This suggests that even though public participation could be allowed, their focus is revenue generation. The profit driven element of this type of radio disqualified it

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[17] https://www.gov.za/speeches/basic-education-and-sabc%C2%A0launch%C2%A0coronavirus-covid-19-tv-and-radio-curriculum-support

from being used as a case study in this study. The research included a section about commercial radio stations to point out the differences between the different types of radio stations and their programming. The researcher is interested in investigating public participation; therefore, a public service broadcaster was the most suitable choice because most commercial radio stations place their interesting in programming that will generate revenues.

Community Radio Stations

Community radio is South Africa's third type of radio, which offers a third model of radio broadcasting in addition to commercial radio and public service broadcasting. The history of community radio is one that is interesting to engage. Gretchen King (2017:20), when studying the history and global story of community broadcasting, defined community radio stations as participatory media institutions that are largely volunteer run. Historically, King (2017:21) points out that globally, community broadcasting is divided into four time periods; the experimental era between 1900s–1940s, the wildfire era between 1950s–1960s, the solidarity era between 1970s – 1980s and the resurgence era between 1990s–today. The above-mentioned historical outline of community radio locates South African community radio stations in the resurgence era from 1990.

Before community broadcasting became what it is today, it began through individuals broadcasting at their various homes before there were infrastructure set-up for community radio (King, 2017:21). Community radio stations serve geographic communities and community interest. They broadcast content that is designed for a local, and specific audience (Tabing, 2002:9). Community radio stations are operated, owned, and influenced by the communities they serve. They are generally Non-Profit Organizations (NPO) and provide a mechanism for enabling individuals, groups, and communities to tell their own stories, to share experiences and, in a media-rich world, to become creators and contributors in the media (Sawlal, 2014). In many parts of the world, including South Africa, community radio acts as a vehicle for community building, social change, and community development (Olorunnisola, 2002:132).

This type of broadcasting, also known as rural radio, has been in existence in South Africa for more than 25 years (Mtimde et al., 1998). It is known as the voice of the peasants and ordinary citizens, found in communities and broadcasts within limited reach (Bessette, 2004). It was

formally categorized during the shift in political power and the formation of the ICASA a from being the IBA (Olorunnisola, 2002:131). It is famously known for being able to broadcast for people at the grassroots level and it allows people to participate, and discuss matters affecting the community (Bessette, 2004). Olorunnisola (2002:131) further argued that the Independent Broadcasting Authority, after 1994, was tasked to put community radio stations on their priority list when issuing broadcasting licenses. As a result, the first community radio station, in KwaZulu-Natal, to receive it license was Radio Maritzburg (Olorunnisola, 2002). Their mandate was to reflect and promote local identity, character, and culture by focusing principally on local content, give a voice and sharing of opinions on the air through its openness to participation from all sectors and remote participation through providing an independent platform for interactive discussion about matters and decisions of importance to the community (Adhanom, 2004:41).

Different examples of South African community radio stations, found in KwaZulu-Natal, include Inanda FM, Highway Radio, Zululand FM and many more. The researcher finds the participatory element and the idea of giving a voice to the community very important. It is for that reason that the study on public participation in public radio stations such as those of the SABC is important because they hold a similar mandate as stipulated in their license (Olorunnisola, 2002). As indicated above, unpacking community radio stations in this section was solely meant to illustrate the different types of radio stations and their mandate in order to bring clarity to the type of radio station studied in this study.

Internet Radio Stations

Radio today is available through the internet. Internet radio broadcasting is broadcasting through programmes that play on the internet pre-recorded and stored online or streaming the broadcast live over the Internet (Krishnan and Chang, 2000). Internet radio was formally established in April 1984, although it existed in the early 1970s when Steve Casner produced an early specification for Network Voice Protocol (NVP), and it was used for academic conferencing (Robinson, 2018)[18]. Even though internet radio broadcasting has changed over the years, Robinson (2018) put forward a similar definition to that of Krishnan and Chang (2000), of internet radio broadcasting being a one-to-many scheduled live-linear programmed audio content stream delivered over Internet

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[18] https://www.streamingmediaglobal.com/Articles/Editorial/Featured-Articles/25-Years-of-Internet-Radio-Part-1-127220.aspx

Protocol (IP) addresses and accessible from the internet. This definition is not entirely relevant today because internet radio stations also have all the programming elements that the other type of radio stations have. A good example is a South African based internet radio station called Massiv Metro (Massiv Metro, 2020)[19].

As mentioned above, today some internet radio stations broadcast over the air waves and over the internet simultaneously, but there are increasingly many radio stations that are internet only (Krishnan and Chang, 2000). Internet radio programming is slightly different from other types of broadcasting; it is mostly less talk but more music, that is why it appeals to micro-communities of listeners focused on special music or interests (Riismandel, 2018)[20]. Internet radio, however, is not limited to audio, one can view photos, graphics, text, and links, as well as interact live. This allows participation from the audience, and it makes it easy for the stations to attract both listeners and advertisers (Krishnan and Chang, 2000). For example, a listener who hears an advertisement for a laptop may order that laptop through a link on the internet radio broadcast website, which makes the radio station, advertisers and listeners interact at the same time.

Commonly, all four types of radio stations have news bulletins and different talk shows. They are all interested in informing and keeping the public aware about issues or news happening around them. They all have programming that speaks to the public. Some radio stations, such as community radio stations, rely on big radio stations such as Ukhozi FM to report certain news in order to confirm credibility. They have weather and traffic updates after each news bulletin. They all allow public participation and have programming that keep the public engaged. This makes it important for the study to unpack literature on radio broadcasting today, which will be covered on the next section.

Radio Broadcasting Today

Radio broadcasting is unique. We cannot see its messages because they consist of noise and silence, but it is from the sole fact of its abstract distinctive qualities and the way in which the audience connect with radio personalities without seeing them that makes it unique (Crisell, 1986:3). Radio broadcasting is not something relatively new. As mentioned earlier, it dates back

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[19] https://massivmetro.com/about/
[20] http://www.radiosurvivor.com/2018/09/17/internet-radio-is-older-than-you-think/

to the late 19th century, when Marconi in 1895 first started broadcasting radio transmission using a wireless telegraph (Lule, 2013). Radio in simple terms is communication using radio waves, same as those used in telephones and television (Lule, 2013). As mentioned above, the invention of radio was solely aimed at person-to-person communication, but through the advancement of technology, radio broadcasting to a larger audience was achieved (Sterling and Kittross, 2001: 447). According to Lule (2013:256), wireless technology made today's radio possible.

Mass media such as newspapers had been around for years before the existence of radio (Dhanasar et al., 2018). Radio was initially considered a kind of disembodied newspaper, although this idea gave early proponents a useful, familiar way to think about radio, but it discredits the reason radio was created and the power of radio has as a medium. Newspapers had the potential to reach a wide audience, but radio had the potential to reach almost everyone. Neither illiteracy nor even a busy schedule impeded radio's success, one can cook and listen to the radio at the same time. "This unprecedented reach made radio an instrument of social cohesion as it brought together members of different classes and backgrounds to experience the world as a nation" (Lule 2013:272). The technology required to build a radio transmitter and receiver became easy, and the knowledge to build such devices quickly got to the public. Amateur radio operators quickly crowded the airwaves, broadcasting messages to anyone within range was developed and people were able to listen to radio anywhere (Lule, 2013:256).

Radio's existence, even in the digital world, a world full of social media and different platforms for news, entertainment, and educational programmes, echoes the importance of radio today. Even in the age of technology and mass media access, radio continues to be a voice for many people both in rural and urban areas (Shahid, Khan, Khan and Umair, 2021:39). In a recent study published in the *Global Media and Social Science Research Journal* revealed that over 76% participants indicated that radio is still relevant in the digital era (Shahid, *et al,* 2021:47). Radio has evolved from being a tool for either state propaganda or used as an instrument of protest by the public, as it was with radio stations such as Bush Radio in the early 1990s (Bosch, 2006: 249). Radio stations such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm aspire to provide a public broadcasting service that resonate with the listeners at home. Unlike during the apartheid government, SABC radio is not controlled by the state and the people want to contribute (Bosch, 2006). According to Bosch (2006: 250), in a paper on the history of Bush Radio, some people did not like radio because it was all

about the apartheid propaganda, the state using radio, television and newspapers as its propaganda machine. Radio is still a useful tool to shape people's minds and a vehicle for engaging on societal issues as it was used by both the apartheid government and political parties such as the ANC and the South Africa Communist Party (SACP) during the apartheid era (Davis, 2009). Stephen Davis (2009: 349) argued "that leaders within the ANC and SACP generally agreed that radio was an essential component of armed struggle, even if they disagreed about how best to put its perceived potential to good use".

Radio in the Digital Age: The Future of Radio

The rise of technology seems to challenge radio in the modern media landscape (Undurraga, 2016). Technology and the mass media access media products such as news, entertainment, educational programmes suggest that there is no future of radio in the digital era (Shahid, *et al,* 2021). This has posed a question of whether radio holds any relevance in the digital age. The availability of media outlets on the Internet, smart phones and portable devices have made it almost impossible for one to sit and listen to radio. Scholars such as diverse as Russell Winer (2009) and Tomas Undurraga (2016) agree that in the early part of the 21st century, the media landscape has been intensely affected by the introduction of new media, mainly digital media. Technology has made it easier for people to listen, watch and read news, and get updated on issues around them through the Internet and social media. Bosch (2010:266) has argued differently from Winer (2009), suggesting that the rise of technology is not a threat but works in favour of both broadcasters and the public. Technology has even changed the traditional radio programming because citizen, through social media, can drive radio producers and presenters to even change the topic and speak about what is trending on social media (Hailu, Khan, Pittchar and Achatum, 2017). In the case of news gathering, people have assumed the role journalists; they report news through social media through live videos on social media such as Facebook and Twitter even before journalists report events (Kim and Lowrey (2015:306). "South African journalists, via community media and sometimes even tabloid newspapers, have long incorporated the idea of civic or community journalism, framing news in a way that facilitates people thinking about solutions, not just problems and conflict" (Bosch, 2010:269).

Technology has affected the level of listenership in a good way in some radio stations, but it has reduced the amount of airtime bought by companies for advertising (Winer, 2009). "Most radio

stations, especially community radios, depend on money accumulated through selling airtime; however, this becomes difficult in the new media age because companies use social media for advertising" (Winer, 2009:110). The rise of technology plays an advantageous role for radio stations, since it has enhanced how presenters and producers work (Pavlik, 2012). In an article on visualizing a non-visual medium through social media, Ferguson and Greer (2018:126) argue that radio was for many years a hidden medium; now in the digital age of social media, radio presenters are able to see their listeners and vice versa. Going against this grain, some social media platforms such as Instagram allows radio presenters to be live while presenting their shows in a medium in which one was unable to see the presenter while presenting (Ferguson and Greer, 2018).

The above synergy between technology and radio suggest that technology plays a huge role in enhancing the public engagement. It also confirms that radio is still relevant in the digital age despite the entire rise in new media. According to Jo Tacchi (2000:291), radio has become the ultimate media survivor, despite being questioned and doubted. Like many traditional formats from pre-digital days, radio has been able to evolve in the modern media landscape. Radio is still finding its way even when there are questions about its future in the digital age. The interest in radio studies recently, indicated by Tacchi (2000:290), may be one indication that radio is here to stay. Radio now has, through the Internet, some new delivery platforms. Radio is available in podcast, which is perhaps one of the important listening environments because people can listen to a certain show even when they have missed the live show (Hendy, 2000:219).

Such technology could be the reason radio is still relevant and stable. It has remained a tool, both in many parts of the world and in South Africa, for enhancing public choice, democratic participation, and interactivity (Hendy, 2000:218). Political parties continue to use radio for their election campaigns in South Africa and public broadcasters such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm allows discussions beyond just an interview with a guest (Southall, 2005). Technology and the Internet make radio stations, such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm, available online anywhere in the world. Through technology, a listener of a certain show can listen to it even outside South Africa through the Internet. There are cellphone software applications today that give one the opportunity to listen to many radio stations at any given time (Ferguson and Greer, 2018). The very same cell phones are the same devices that listeners use to comment and participate on radio programmes.

From the above arguments, it is clear that radio has advanced greatly even in the digital age. This suggests a better chance for public participation because the public is not restricted to only participate using emails, phone calls or being live in studio. This means that radio presenters and producers should not have a problem with public participation and the number of people who want to participate. This is because radio presenters can always make time to read comments from social media even when they do not have enough time to allow call-ins.

Radio Talk Show: *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* as an Example of a Radio Talk Shows
Talk radio is a representation of the public and their opinion; it is a platform from which private citizens can discuss their opinions on social issues (Barker, 2000:151). It is a radio format involving discussions about certain topical issues and consisting almost entirely of original spoken words content (O'Sullivan, 2005:719). Through talk shows people can discuss issues touching their daily lives. It is a radio platform in which the public have an opportunity to address societal issues.

> In different shows, the space allotted to callers to forward their views is mapped out in different ways. For instance, some shows expressly address themselves to one issue per broadcast and the caller's role is to have a say on that issue while the host acts as a moderator, relating contributions together and drawing out differences and similarities between them (Hutchby, 1996:486).

The most popular talk radio is South Africa is Radio 702, which was established in the early 1980s. This Johannesburg-based radio station started as a music station until 1988 when it moved to a talk radio format (Broadcast Media, 2014)[21]. However, there are a number of old and new talk radios in South Africa, which includes Cape Talk, 5FM, Highveld Stereo FM, Algoa FM, East Coast Radio, Good Hope FM and many more. Many South African radios consist of all the formats, from being a music radio, talk radio, news radio and many more. The advancement of technology has allowed radio station to be inclusive of all different formats. SAFM, for example, is mainly a news radio, but it has educational programmes and it broadcasts beyond just news (SAfm, 2020).

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[21] https://broadcast.media.co.za/talk-radio-702/

A radio talk show programme consists of different items, topics, live shows, and pre-recorded shows (Barbour, 2001). Barbour (2001) argues that while a radio talk show programme suggests a mixture, this mixture is not always made up of different topics. It can focus on a special topic or area; for example, politics, crime, development, economics, or football and the mixture will be items related to the same topic. Pennington (2000) echoes Barbour (2001) by suggesting that talk show programmes are a programme/s covering a variety of different items. "Rather like a published magazine, the programme will have longer and shorter pieces, and might include a regular round-up of consumer news, an interview, a discussion, an in-depth feature, a short 'filler ' item" (Pennington, 2000: 9). Normally radio talk show is broadcast at a particular time on a particular day of a week or a month (McQuail, 2006). In the light of this definition, *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm qualifies as a radio talk show programme because *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* is aired at the same time, Monday to Thursday. Barbour (2001) and Pennington (2000) argue that there is not huge difference between a radio magazine's format and a talk radio programmes, a radio magazine format includes time for talks, discussions, and interviews. Their argument further clarifies any misunderstanding and confusion that one would have when classifying the two formats.

Expressing and debating societal issues in radio is not something new in South Africa. As indicated earlier in this section, talk radio dates back to the 1980 when the first allowed the first radio that would allow and promote the rainbow nation, the debates on issues affecting the public (Modise, 2020)[22]. Talk radio is a format that allows the public to participate, and it should not be confused with radio news. It consists of discussions about current affairs issues and in a democratic country such as South Africa, listeners are allowed to participate (Geller, 2012). Today's technology has broken the limits; people do not only call in to the station during the show, but they are able to use social media to engage in the discussions.

Usually talk radio programmes are broadcast live; there is the host and sometimes guests in the studio as well as listeners at home. Radio talk show programmes are generally broadcast to a specific, but not limited, audience (McQuail, 2006; Barbour, 2001; Pennington, 2000). According to Geller (2012), talk radio shows should maximize audience interest and allow the listeners to express themselves freely. With the above definitions of talk radio and its nature, it is important

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[22] https://www.702.co.za/articles/388745/taking-a-trip-down-memory-lane-of-702-s-40-years

for the researcher to find out whether shows such as *Sithakela Isiszwe* and *The View Point* apply this format. Francis Lee (2014), in the book "Talk radio, the mainstream press, and public opinion in Hong Kong", narrates that there are variations of talk radio, but they include conservative talk, 'hot talk', liberal talk (increasingly known as progressive talk) and sports talk. In a talk radio show issues that are discussed they also vary from local, national, and international issues. The researcher finds it important to find out if the discussions and topics collaborate the categories described above.

McQuail (2006) notes that a radio talk show programme consists of a name and one or two presenters who direct the whole programme. In the beginning, the titles of the day's programme are announced by the presenters after the signature tune. A good radio talk show programme is characterized by having a good presenter, someone who is able to present the show to its simplest form so that all types of people can understand (Pennington, 2000). The presenter, according to Pennington (2000), should be someone who does not patronize listeners and someone who can break down complicated issues into a simple form so that even uneducated people in deep rural areas can be able to understand issues that are discussed in the show. Pennington's (2000) argument indicates that a radio talk show presenter should be able to articulate the issues of the day, and communicate fluently with his/her audience, as well as studio visitors; someone who is able to challenge interviewees and contributors 'views, if it is necessary, but should not do it with vindictiveness. This type of programme should also put its emphasis to audience or public participation. The programme should give the audience an opportunity to participate and make them feel involved.

A radio talk show enhances public sphere, a concept that will be defined and explained in detailed in the theoretical framework chapter, because it allows and covers a regular series of current affairs issues and concerns of the public. One of the characteristics of a radio talk shows is that it is designed for everyone and mostly it has a broad general appeal (Ilie, 2006). Radio talk show programmes are either 'live 'or 'prerecorded 'broadcasts, although live programmes also contain a number of pre-recorded voices (Pennington, 2000). The duration of a radio talk show programme varies, *Sithakela Isizwe*, for instance, takes only three hours every Monday to Thursday. Another characteristic of a radio talk show is that it has a signature tune, which is an attractive piece of music which is played as an intro and during the programme (McQuail, 2006).

Conclusion

The literature explored in this chapter gives meaning to the study. It also validates the importance of the study through the relevance and links of different subject covered in the chapter. The literature on the history of radio and the history of radio in South Africa compared to the literature on radio today, radio in the digital age and the future of radio indicated an interesting pattern, showing huge developments from when radio was invented to what it is today. The radio milestones, shown by scholars above, paint a picture that radio is here to stay. Radio has been part of people's lives and continues to play a huge part in bringing social change. This makes it very important, therefore, to investigate the public participate in a public service broadcaster, hence, the study focuses on big radio stations such as Ukhozi FM.

It was evident that through technology and social media, public participation occurs in all the different types of radio stations. Even though commercial radio stations are not mandated to provide a voice for the public, as compared to public service broadcasters and community radio stations, all the radio stations allow public participation. This shows a huge change in the programming of all types of radio stations. This suggests that the public has always and will always be at the centre of radio programming. The importance of radio talk shows within radio programming was evident from different scholar's argument about the level of public participation in all types of radio stations, especially public services broadcasters such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm.

The next chapter unpacks the public sphere theory as a theoretical framework of the study. The public sphere theory, as a theoretical framework, is a relevant theory to a study about the public participation in radio.

Chapter Three
Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The theory of public sphere is the lens employed, in this study, to make sense of the key aspects of the study. The researcher finds this theory appropriate to be used as a theoretical framework because the study involves two public, but government owned, radio stations and it studies two programmes in which a public sphere seems to have been established in which the public is involved and can interact, as indicated in the previous chapters. Both *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* are shows from two public broadcasters which have to uphold their public broadcasting service mandate and create platforms for the public to participate.

The public sphere theory was pioneered by Jürgen Habermas through his early work transcribed in his book "*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*" (Habermas, 1989). The concept of public sphere, according to Jürgen Habermas (1989), is a realm within social life in which public opinion can be formed and which is accessible to all. The engagement within the public sphere is blind to class positions and the connections between activists in the public sphere are formed through a mutual will to take part in matters that have a general interest. This definition promotes the idea of democracy and inclusion; a classless sphere where individuals can engage one another without feeling the pressure of trying to fit in. Seyla Benhabib (1992) in Finnegan and Kang (2004) observed that the public sphere comes into existence whenever all citizens affected by general social and political norms engage in a practical discourse. "Habermas, describing the early bourgeois public spheres, argued that they were formed by mainly educated propertied men, and they conducted a discourse not only exclusive of others but prejudicial to the interest of those excluded" (Calhoun, 1992: 3). It is important, in this study, to compare the public sphere argued by Habermas in Calhoun (1992) with the public sphere created by radio shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*. It is important because scholars such as Seyla Benhabib, Nancy Fraser and Geoff Eley in Calhoun (1992), responding to the *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, argued that the early public sphere was exclusive in terms of both class and gender, and therefore had limited participation. As early as 1990, Nancy Fraser (1990) questioned the issue of woman exclusion in the early public sphere. The public sphere at the time was occupied by the older elite public as constitutive of the whole relevant citizenry, education and property ownership

were criteria for admission. This was not viewed as restriction to those who were not educated and who owned no property, but it was interpreted as mere legal ratification of the status achieved economically in the private sphere (Calhoun, 1992: 3).

In this chapter, the researcher delves into the historical background of the public sphere to understand the historical concept of this theory. The chapter also examines the theorization of the theory in order to unpack scholarly discussions and views on the theory. The rise of new media and technology suggest the extension and a replacement of the original public sphere, which is the reason why the study also discusses the virtual sphere and the public sphere. The researcher also finds it important to discuss the role of Internet and social media in creating a virtual public sphere. The chapter also brings forth the relevance of the theory and its critics in order to critic or evaluate *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*. The chapter further discusses the public sphere and public radio stations because of their public service broadcasting duties and their role to the public which is similar to that of the public sphere.

A Brief Historical and Definition of Public Sphere

The public sphere is both a historical and a critical idea. It is important, though, to indicate that the historical account given here is meant to only highlight the background of the theory and does not give a chronological order of events that took place in the establishment of the concept of the public sphere. The researcher draws arguments about the public sphere from different scholars who, in their work, have engaged deeply with this theory. "Aristotle situated the public sphere within city-state polis as related to the public life of the political community, as opposed to the private realm of the household" (Nagle, 2006:32). Public sphere, as public life, constituted in spatial-temporal setting of marketplace where citizens as equals gathered to discuss matters of common concern in polis. The concept of the public sphere defined above is similar to today's different media platforms created for the public who come from different walks of life to gather and discuss community issues such as service delivery, in the case on South Africa (Bosch, 2011: 76).

The concept of the public sphere was known as the *publicus* in the Roman ruling system. Romans referred to *publicus* as an important dominion of a collective body of citizens in contrast to *privatus,* as denoting to the domain of the private household (Habermas, Lennox and Lennox,

1964: 51). The difference between *publicus* and *privatus* in Roman political construction continued into the middle age as the rational for separating the King or Feudal Lords' representations from oikodespotes/paterfamilias. In the Middle Ages, the King or Feudal Lord represented himself before other people; the King or Feudal Lord was the only public representation, and all others were spectators (Habermas, et *al*., 1964). "The public sphere was represented by only the King's public representations, but with capitalist economic advancements and the rise of the bourgeoisie society the meaning and context of public sphere changed in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century" (Habermas, 1989:89). The public sphere became a representative of publicness as an independent domain in relation to the state and private life. Habermas (1989:52) further argued that the creation of knowledge network institutions such as libraries and universities, as well as the establishment of different newspapers gave rise to the publicness because it provided the means through which private thoughts could become public. The same way as the South African public has the right to freedom of speech and information, the new public sphere created by the bourgeoisies was open to everyone. One amongst the most important value of the public sphere was the opportunity created for public reasoning and engagements. The communicative use of the public reason began within the early bourgeois reading public sphere; constituted by a group of individuals in response to literary books they were reading. "This group of individuals met in places such as salons and coffee shops which then became the centre of their debates" (Habermas, 1989: 60).

This public communication was governed by rules in the process of exchange of points of view on issues of political concern. The important features of this communication were that the public had the same interest, which means they were held by one goal despite their different background. It is in the researcher's interest to find out whether *Sithakela Isiszwe* and *The View Point* participants exhibit the sense of belonging and oneness through the public sphere created by both shows. The public sphere required active participation from the public, but access depended on one's communicative skills and knowledge (Arendt and Canovan, 2013:53). This, therefore, leaves a gap for scholars to study further the effects of new media and the Internet in shaping today's public sphere (see Papacharissi, 2002). This also suggest that even though the public sphere could be effective but due to digital divide in developing countries or underprivileged communities there will be people who could be excluded in such public sphere. The researcher assumed that the public used social media, calls-ins, emails, and live studio contributions to participate in the shows.

This is discussed in chapters four and five of this thesis. In practical terms, especially in a society that has the necessary access to technology and the Internet, this gives a fair chance to almost everyone who is interested in participating in the public sphere created by the two shows. This increases the researcher's interest in finding out how the SABC, through the two shows in question in this study, creates a fair chance of public participation for its audiences.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth-century public spheres had converted to vehicles for civil society to communicate matters of public interests (Taylor, 1995). The public sphere has evolved over the years. It first began in the political and social life of Britain and later it was introduced within the European bourgeois constitutional states as a way of safeguarding state authority via informed and critical discourse of the people (Keane, 1995). The public sphere in civil society is encouraged by exchanging of meanings and points of views towards deliberative and associative democratic process of decision making (Arendt and Canovan, 2013). In viewing the public sphere as the first arbitrator between citizens and state, the above-mentioned view give emphasis to the prominence of public sphere to rules and functions of modern democratic political systems. It has played an important role today, especially in South Africa, as it has in many African countries. Jendela (2011: 438) argued that "the enablement of participation, in the media, is a significant resource in the political landscape because of the exclusionary nature of politics on the continent". It is important to note that the public in the public sphere can be anyone from ordinary citizens to politicians and public office officials. However, the public sphere is supposed to be free from any intimidation from any government. Jendela (2011: 442) echoes the above statement by concluding that talk shows have become public spheres in which people's thoughts and views are not only heard but also debated. It is precisely this democratic and non-governmental influence character of the public sphere that confers an aura of independence, autonomy, and legitimacy on the public opinion generated in it (Fraser, 1992 in Fitzgerald and Housley, 2007: 151).

The Virtual Public Sphere

The public sphere has evolved over time. Drawing back from the historical background of the public sphere, as indicated above, it was referred to as a *publicus*, an important dominion of a collective body of citizens in contrast to *privatus,* which denote a domain of the private household (Habermas, 1989). Again, in the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, there was a change in the public sphere, it was now a representative of publicness as an independent domain in relation to

the state and private life. At this time, the most important value of the public sphere was the opportunity created for public reasoning and engagements (Habermas et al., 1989:58). This gave birth to what the public sphere observed in the two shows studied in this study. Amongst the differences, in the above timeframe of the public sphere, is that the public physically met compared to what the public sphere is today. Today, the public has an option of meeting online and they are not in the same place. Habermas (1989) traced the development of the public sphere in the 17th and 18th century and agreed that there was a decline in the 20th century. However, the rise of the internet and new media changed the public sphere, which has now revolved into a virtual public sphere.

For this section, the researcher finds it important to visit some of the definitions of the public sphere developed by different scholars. Amongst definitions within the literature, the most simplified definition of the public sphere is that of Greg Goldberg (2011:741) where he defines the public sphere as a site of social activity comprised of rational discourse which constitute the informal constitution of the public will. In new media scholarship, scholars such as Yochai Benkler (2006), Homero Gil De Zúñiga, Eulàlia Puig-I-Abril and Hernando Rojas (2009), Luke Goode (2009), Robert McChesney (2004), Kaye Sweetser and Lynda Kaid (2008) and Jonathan Zittrain (2008) agree with the above definition on that the development of a networked public sphere is framed as an extension of an already existing public sphere to an online platform, a restoration of the dying public sphere, and this has been made possible by the digital network technologies. A virtual public sphere is a cyberspace which is both public and private. It provides a new platform for private individual to interact in matters of public concerns (Papacharissi, 2002). Wendy Su (2015:1) defines a virtual public sphere as a realm independent from the state and big corporations. Interestingly, scholars such as Mark Poster (1995) and Zizi Papacharissi (2002) had argued differently that the virtual public sphere is not going to be the new public sphere for a number of reasons such as that "rational argument, reminiscent of a public sphere, can rarely prevail and consensus achievement is not possible online, specifically because identity is defined very differently online" (Poster, 1995 in Papacharissi, 2002: 18). However, they have acknowledged that the virtual sphere would enhance democracy and dialogue, but not in a way that we would expect it to, or in a way that was experienced in the past. Communication scholars such as Colin Sparks (2005) and Papacharissi (2002 in Su, 2015) argued that despite the uncertainty that comes with the internet in creating a virtual public sphere, the internet through the aid of communication

technologies has revived the public sphere into a virtual public sphere which can hardly be manipulated by the state.

The virtual public sphere provides avenues for personal expressions. It promotes citizen activity especially through social media, providing information and tools that may extend the role of the public especially in the social and political arena (Papacharissi, 2002: 10). The researcher has applied this concept to radio programmes broadcast by the South African national broadcaster, the SABC, with the purpose of finding out the extent to which the SABC has created a virtual public sphere, and whether this constitutes an alternative in providing a voice for the public. The argument brought forward by Papacharissi (2002) suggests that people can meet on the Internet and discuss issues of public interest. The Internet provides a platform for engagements amongst ordinary citizens especially those who have access to the Internet. This, therefore, suggests that talk shows on public radio stations such as those of the SABC have created platforms where people can engage and discuss different societal issues. This also suggests that the public virtual sphere does not only bring ordinary people together, but it has allowed freedom of expression.

The virtual public sphere does not only provide a platform for debate, public participation, and a gathering of private individuals to interact, but it provides a space almost free from government intervention and censorship (Brandenburg, 2006). The discussions that the virtual public sphere provides in shows such as the *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* is characterized by the possibility of accessing diverse opinions without or with limited constrains. This makes it possible for members or participants in the virtual public sphere to explore the underlying arguments and agreements to make sound decision on the issues in contention or in discussion (Brandenburg, 2006). This, therefore, suggest that the virtual public sphere has the power to hold those in power accountable.

The Public Sphere in the Age of the Internet - a New 'Virtual Public Sphere'
The virtual public sphere is not possible without the Internet and social media (Langman, 2005: 45). Social media powered by the Internet is a category of online discourse where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network at a prodigious rate (Asur and Huberman, 2010). Social examples include Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Twitter, and many more interactive platforms. Social media, for many people, is easy to use. Its speed and reach are fast changing the public

discourse in society and setting trends and agendas in topics that range from the environment and politics to technology and the entertainment industry (Asur and Huberman, 2010). Writing about the Internet and the public sphere, Brants (2005: 143) argued that the Internet has provided an extraordinary opportunity for citizenship. "The inherently nonhierarchical character of the Internet would enable bottom-up initiatives from individuals and groups that are traditionally not interested in or often ignored by politics and politicians" (Brants, 2005:143). In an American study on the usage of social media from 2005 to 2015, findings indicated that there are many people using social media, and this number includes adults. The study shows that in 2015 there were nearly 65% American adults who uses social media (Perrin, 2015). In South Africa, between March 2019 March 2020, statistics indicated that there are 23 million social media active users, with 41.88% on Facebook, 24.01% on Pinterest, 19.12% on Twitter, 11% on LinkedIn, 11,39% on Instagram, 2.9% on YouTube and 0.3% on Tumblr (Global Stats, 2020). [23]

The above statistics show that the Internet and social media plays a huge role in people's lives. The number of people active on social media indicates the potential of social media platforms, such as Facebook, to create a new virtual public sphere in and outside of radio parameters. In developed countries, the Internet is fast, accessible, affordable, open thus allowing a great deal of public participation (Brants, 2005: 144). Liwag-Lomibao (2016: 627) writing about the 2016 Philippine elections and the Internet as a virtual public sphere argued that the internet served as a tool for political lobbying and educating for overseas Philippinos. It was through the internet that they engaged in the political landscape in their country. Social media has become normalized in South Africa and there is a small difference between people in rural areas and urban areas who do not have an account on Facebook (Goldstuck, 2018).[24] People use social media to meet virtually, to discuss, engage and contribute to critical issues in the society. Radio stations, such as those of the public broadcaster, provides a topic of discussions and frame the discussions through questions for the public to answer. Some of these topics comes from issues that are trending on social media, which is an indication that social media plays a critical role in the virtual public sphere.

It is important to note how the internet, especially with the aid of communication technologies such as social media, has revived the public sphere as Papacharissi (2002) has alluded. The internet

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[23] https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/south-africa
[24] https://citizen.co.za/lifestyle/science/2030220/sa-has-taken-to-social-media-like-never-before/

seems to have gone beyond what radio stations can do in terms of creating a virtual public sphere. In a world where freedom of speech is guaranteed Otto, Froneman and Fourie (2007: 29) argued that the internet might be the appropriate alternative space for participation, especially in a democratic state such as South Africa.

Critiques of the Virtual Public Sphere

While the above arguements shows that the Internet and social media enhances the virtual public sphere some scholars argue differently. Papacharissi (2002) acknowledges the role played by the virtual public sphere, especially on radio, however, her concern is with the issue of access. The online platforms, according to Papacharissi (2002), provides a platform that benefits those who can have access to means/data for connecting on social media and the virtual public sphere. For those with access to computers, the internet is a valuable resource for participation, but access to the internet does not guarantee increased sound discussions within the virtual public sphere. Hosting discussions such as political discussions on a virtual space excludes those with no access to internet and that does not ensure a more representative and robust public sphere (Papacharissi, 2002). Even though Papacharissi's study (2002) is over a decade old, one cannot deny the digital divide in South Africa.

Poor (2005 in Bosch, 2010) agreed with Papacharissi (2002) that although the internet allows access for many people, it is most likely to be unequal. The internet has made it easy for people to communicate, especial through social media but, Poor (2005) argued that there will still be issues of digital divide and virtual public spheres will face similar the problems to that of Habermas's bourgeois public sphere and become corrupted by commercialism. The researcher, through the data on advertising during both shows, hopes to find out whether the amount of time given to the public to participate, especially through social media platforms and call-ins, was influenced by what Poor (2005) argued about above. It would be interesting to investigate the influence of commercials in a public service broadcaster such as the SABC since its mandate is public service. The commercialization of a public sphere has a huge impact in derailing the mandate of not only the radio station but the show itself. It would be detrimental to observe how companies, through their advertisements, disrupt a talk show such as *Sithakela Isiszwe* and *The View Point* because this is when the public get to discuss or listen to issues that affects them.

According to Pieter Fourie (2003:149), "public service broadcasting is the provision of an impartial space for free expression and open debate". It is also broadcasting for the interest of everyone and appealing to the tastes of the nation, regardless of how diverse the nation might be (Fourie, 2003: 149). The next section provides a detailed explanation on public service broadcasting and the public sphere, but it is important to note that public service broadcasting is broadcasting that accommodates everyone and provides good programming rather than focusing on increasing the number of people listening and making profit from advertising. "Unlike commercial radio stations that are mainly profit driven, they are not usually owned by the state, and they get funding mostly through selling airtime and advertisement" (Bosch, 2014: 902). Public service broadcasting should be all about liberating rather than restricting the public to take part in shaping and building of the shows (Fourie, 2003). The most important element that defines public service broadcasting is its ability to be universal in its accessibility and to address audiences as citizens, not as consumers (Fourie, 2003).

It is also important to note that in a virtual public sphere it is also hard to control the discussions and give a fair chance to everyone. Access to the radio easily gets out of control due to the number of participants that it can allow. The issue of identity on the virtual space is a challenge. Some people do not use their real identity when they create their profile on the social media platforms (Kortjan and Solms, 2014). Therefore, it makes it hard for producers and presenters to safe guide the platform. There are also times where a listener asks to remain anonymous which is something that cannot happen in the public sphere advocated by Habermas.

Public Service Radio Stations and the Public Sphere

Public service broadcasting is broadcasting primarily for the public. It can be radio, television, or any other electronic media outlets (Scannell, 1990). The main mission of a public service broadcaster is speaking to citizens and engaging with them (Witherspoon and Kovitz, 1987). Different scholars such as Scannell (1989), Teer-Tomaselli and Tomaselli (1996), Murdock (2004), and Fourie (2003) highlighted that the model philosophy of a public broadcaster should entail a comprehensive universal geographic accessibility and availability to almost everyone, not leaving behind people in rural areas. This is meant and it also suggest that the that the gap between people in the rural areas and those in urban areas should be closed. This almost gives almost everyone an equal chance to be involved in societal issues and matters of discussion using the

public service broadcaster. "Public broadcasting service and broadcasters should have a universal appeal to the public; they should not be exclusive but should be opened to everyone" (Mpofu et al., 1996). Public service should have features and programming that attract the public, inviting them to engage. The programmes of a public service broadcaster should also accommodate everyone, regardless of their different cultures, or race (Donders, 2011). Syvertsen (2003) argued that public service broadcasters do not only need universal appeal to their public, but they also need to convey attention to minorities. In public service broadcasting the voice of the minority should be heard and their opinion should be taken into consideration (Syvertsen, 2003). Syvertsen (2003) added that the obligations of public service broadcasters are to produce programmes that are socially and culturally valuable. Public broadcasters should contribute to national identity and sense of community, distance themselves from vested interests, but should promote the interests of the public (Fourie 2003).

Radio and the public sphere date back in the early nineteenth century following the First World War when radio emerged as the public medium and the large-scale emergence of woman into the public sphere of politics and production (Lacey, 1996: 18). According to Lacey (1996: 27) radio was established as a means of communication situated directly in the public sphere, with the art of listening defined by collective reception of broadcasts in the public halls. The way radio operated, during the early days, was a potential public sphere which was defined by Habermas (1989), as public opinion outside the state to defend the public interest and to advocate, through open discussions, progressive changes in the state policies (Lacey, 1996). The public sphere created by radio shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, is an old concept. Radio, in its early days, became not only a social but a sociable phenomenon. As more families started to afford to own a radio set, families and family members gathered in groups around the radio set for evening entertainment and to listen to discussions (Lacey, 1996). The above argument is similar to what radio, especially public service radio, is doing today through its virtual public sphere. People physically and virtually come together, wherever they are, to listen to radio through different devices. The difference, today, is that the public is now able to participate during the discussions through social media and call-ins.

Radio stations plays a critical role in creating and providing a public sphere. Public, commercial and community radio stations have created and continue to provide a platform where the public

confer on issues of public interest. With technological advancement radio stations have provided virtual platform in which private citizens can engage and interact easily with each other and with radio presenters. It is on this platform that radio stations are expected to listen to public opinion, have live interviews with different experts and allow the public to shape their programming. Public broadcasters, especially those that are owned and funded by the state, have a different mandate as compared to commercial radio stations. As indicated above, public service radio stations such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm are meant to serve the public.

The arguments about the public service broadcasting above suggest the importance of the public service broadcasters, such as the SABC, to live up to the standard of a public service broadcaster and monitor the public sphere created by their shows. This is necessary because, in so many ways, the public service broadcaster pose as a public sphere through its definition and characteristics. It also enables different virtual public sphere in its talk shows. Larsen (2014: 67) pointed out that scholars such as Paddy Scannel (1989), Peter Duelund (2002) and Nicholas Garnham (2003) share a similar view on that public service broadcasters, especially in democratic countries, pave a way for a public sphere. There are similarities between a public service broadcaster and the public sphere in that they all aim to create a platform, for people, that is free from the state. They are both aim for a realm in which public discourse can occur with the public having a voice even though the state tries to interfere (Larsen (2014). Both the public sphere and radio are nothing without the public and if the public plays a vital role, this suggest that it is then important that public participation be at the center of both the virtual/public sphere and radio programming. It also provokes the idea that the SABC radio stations be public driven when it comes to their programming. The public should be given a chance, especially in talk shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, to shape their programming through giving them a chance to suggest some of the topics.

Critiques of the Public Sphere

The public sphere theory has its merits in many counts and in helping one understand the concept of publicness. It is a theory that promotes the idea of ordinary people having a voice outside the state (Keane, 1995). John Keane (1995: 2) making reference to the seventeenth and eighteenth century normative ideal of the public sphere, argued that the theory suggests that the public can

invent their own identity outside the confines of the state. However, a number of scholars have argued differently from what Habermas argued about the public sphere.

Universal Auditorium Assumption

As argued earlier in this chapter, the public sphere is a realm in which the ordinary people can gather freely and engage with one another on matters affecting them outside the influence of the state and its institutions. It promotes the idea of open access, participation, and social equality (Habermas, 1989). The conception of the public sphere concept puts emphases on its claim of being open and accessible to all. Indeed, the issue of accessibility is the integral part to the meaning of public sphere and public's participation. However, in the public sphere of Habermas' time woman were excluded from official political participation, precisely based on ascribed gender status, while men were formally excluded only by property qualifications (Fraser, 1990). This is also applicable in the South African context. Some public platforms are not entirely opened for everyone or every gender. Studies suggest that women continue to be under-represented in newsrooms across the country, as many newsrooms are still male dominated (Geertsema, 2008). The full participation and access of woman is still limited, not only in South Africa, but in Africa as a continent (Porter, 2003). Many women are still sidelined in discussions, in community forums and in the media, where there are fewer women contribution compared to those of men (Geertsema, 2008). Maxwell Mthembu (2018: 78) unpacking woman participation in traditional public sphere of the Kingdom of eSwatini, argued that woman must follow certain rules before they participate in the public sphere.

The above arguments suggest that as much as the public sphere is a platform for ordinary people to engage on matters that affect them, it still excludes certain people. The study hopes to find out, from the recording of both shows, if the exclusion of certain people is visible within the public sphere created by the SABC. The researcher is aware that due to access to airtime to call in, data for internet access and the unavailability of radio or television signal in certain areas, many people could be excluded, but it is important to find out if the SABC, though its shows, allow and encourage the public to participate.

Exclusion of Certain Groups

Responding to the question of 'whether the internet can recreate a public sphere that perhaps never was, foster several diverse public spheres, or simply become absorbed by a commercial culture', Papacharissi (2002: 23) concluded that so far, the internet presents a public space, but does not yet constitute a public sphere. This conclusion suggests both the democratic potential of the internet and the work required to realize this potential, expressing a cautious optimism now prevalent in public/virtual sphere scholarship. Several influential critiques of public sphere scholarship have been made, which remain applicable to scholarship of the virtual sphere. Nancy Fraser (2007: 19) places critiques of the public sphere into two categories: legitimacy critiques and efficacy critiques. Legitimacy critiques point to the public sphere's lack of inclusiveness, particularly of groups historically excluded from institutions of power. One cannot vouch for *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* for providing inclusiveness in the public sphere created by the shows. However, the researcher's interest is to find out if both shows ensured the universal inclusiveness and if an equal chance was given in relation to gender, race, or geographic location. The efficacy critique points to the public's inability to communicate its interest to institutions, and to institutions 'inability to realize the public's will Fraser (2007: 20). Most critics of the public sphere have either argued that it never truly existed, because social groups were excluded, and public contributions were minimized; or that it does exist but has not been successful at institutionalizing the public's interest. In this study, the researcher's assumption is that the public sphere exists but with is interested in investigating the extent in which contributions from the public were minimized by either advertisement or the live discussions taking too much time for the public to have a chance to have their input.

Public Sphere and the Contemporary Societies

Several scholars, such as Paddy Scannell (1989); Ayala Cohen (1989); John Dryzek (1990) and James Fishkin (1991), acknowledge undoubtedly the amount of work done by Habermas in putting forward the notion of the public sphere in contemporary democratic societies. However, scholars such as Benjamin Page (1996), Michael Schudson (1997), and John Thompson (1995) argue that Habermas' work is based on outdated ideals of public discourses that puts more emphasis on face-to-face dialogue, while ignoring that the contemporary society has mediated deliberations. People from different walks of life, through the internet or media platforms such as radio, can come together without physically meeting to deliberate on matters of their common needs. The

functioning of the public sphere in a contemporary society, scholars such as Jodi Dean (2001: 624), who argued for the public sphere in a political setting argued that access and publicness is key to the proper functioning of the public sphere. The issue of publicness links greatly with the issue of universal access as the key to a well-functioning public sphere in the contemporary society. This suggest that a talk radio show such as the two shows studied in this study should encourage access and allow the public freedom to access to information.

Commodification of the Public Sphere

Scholars such as Howard Rheingold (1994); Peter Dahlgren (1995) in Pieter Boeder (2005) criticized the public sphere for being a platform in which mass media, especially electronic communication media, has overtaken the authenticity of the public sphere by turning the media content into a commodity. Genuine issues of public concerns and discourse has turned into publicity for more readership in the case of online public sphere, for more listenership and viewership in the case of radio and television (Boeder, 2005: 4).

Another criticism of the public sphere is the classical argument in mass media research of commodification, the way electronic communications media already have pre–empted public discussions by turning media content into commodities (Boeder, 2005). The consumer society has become the accepted model both for individual behavior and political decision making. Rheingold and Plotkin (1995:11) argued that consumerism poses a threat to the public sphere. Discourse has been manipulated and changed into a platform for publicity. As a result, publicity, through the media, changes people's perceptions and their beliefs (Stuart, 2009). What dies in this process is the rational discourse at the base of civil society.

The Relevance of the Public Sphere Theory

The above critiques of the virtual or the public sphere do not suggest that the theory is not relevant. The theory can still be used as a lens to many media related studies including this study. Scholars, such as Dahlgren (1995), have pointed out that today's society does not allow large gatherings of people to hold discussions as initially proposed by Habermas (1989). It is through the public sphere created by shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, with the aid of the virtual platforms, that a large number of people can come together to discuss issues that matters to them. It is still a relevant lens to investigate the public sphere created by many public radio stations, such as those

of the SABC. It provides a framework in which one can understand how a public sphere is meant to be and how it should work. Scholars such as Hallin (1994) have also expressed their concern about the commercialization of the public sphere that contradicts the aim of the public sphere, that is why they call for preservation of the public sphere through continued professionalism.

The public sphere theory has evolved, incorporating electronic means of engaging in the public debate (Thompson, 1990). The same principles of the public sphere of public gatherings in halls are applicable to the public sphere established and present in public radio stations. The advantage is that the accessibility of the public sphere is opened to many people. This suggests that the public sphere is still important for modern societies such as South Africa. It is a forum in which the public gather and discuss without any restrictions (Gerhards and Schafer, 2009). Jurgen Gerhards and Mike Schafer (2009:3) acknowledged the gatekeeping of the public sphere and selection of participates by radio presenters and producers, which constrains public participation and the participatory nature of the public sphere. However, the rise of social media and technology strengthen the public sphere. The public do not really need broadcasters to give them an opportunity to join the debate, they continue to engage one another even after the show has ended for that day. It is for that reason that Terje Rasmussen (2007:4) argued that the Internet should be considered as a public sphere itself. The move of the public sphere from town halls and salons to the Internet, especially with the aid of the communication technologies as highlighted by Santos, Louçã, and Coelho, (2019), has made this theory more relevant in studying the media platforms. Most media platforms such as radio stations have incorporated the virtual public sphere to allow public participation and the public sphere theory becomes the framework in which the public sphere should operate.

The public sphere theory is relevant in studying the SABC as a state-owned public service broadcaster because today's public sphere has decentralized power from few individuals, as noted by Peter Dahlgren (1995, in Boeder 2005). In prior years before the democratic government ushered in during the 1994 elections, this was the situation of the SABC. used to be before the democratic government. The decentralization that has come with the Internet and social media has given an opportunity to almost everyone to be part of a public sphere virtually. When studying public participation in a public service broadcaster such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm, it is very important, therefore, to find out the extent in which the broadcasters use its power to dominate and

control the public sphere it has created through its programming and stuff. Even though scholars such as Katerina Strani (2014:31) admitted that the public sphere theory has evolved over the years and Habermas himself had to reconceptualize his work, but the theory is still a practical lens to a study such as this one. The theory allows media scholars and the researcher, in this study, to deeply investigate how the producers and the radio presenters in both Ukhozi FM and SAfm handle the public sphere.

The public sphere theory continues to offer useful insights for the public sphere in today's democratic discussions created by public broadcasters such as Ukhozi and SAfm. These insights give the much-needed theoretical framework to understand structural transformation in today's public sphere (Susen, 2011:52). The influence of broadcasters and interference, however, is a concern and calls for a constant evaluation of the public sphere because the public sphere provided by today's media should give access to public participation and allow for reasoned public dialogue.

Similarly, today's public spheres such as the one created by *Sithakela Isiszwe* and *The View Point* and many other platforms play a vital role in informing the public, sharing important and interesting information to the public and they have lately been seen as a platform where political parties and politicians can share their ideologies (Hungbo, 2011). Jendele Hungbo (2011: 438), unpacking the politics of representation in two South African talk shows, do not only agree that talk shows allow a great deal of audience participation but argue that talk shows create a political arena where politicians can engage with the audience. However, in such public sphere, the public should be knowledgeable about the subject discussed.

Conclusion

Habermas (1989) believed that the media should give voice to the public. Deane (2005:178) added that the role of the media, as it has been particularly pointed out by Habermas, is a useful tool in forming a crucial constituent and catalyst for the existence of the public sphere. The theory is relevance in the study because, as Habermas (1989) has outlined that the public sphere is formed when private people come together in the public. Issues covered by *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* involve private individual citizens or an organization representing a group of people who came together to form a public sphere. Citizens are expected to participate during the shows and the shows have become a sphere where people can meet to discuss critical issues to them. The

researcher hopes this theory will be a great tool in understanding the public sphere created by *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*.

The contemporary public sphere is regarded, according to Habermas (1989), by the weathering of its critical roles and capacities. In the past, publicity was used to subject people or present political decisions to the public. Today the public sphere is recruited for the use of hidden policies by interest groups. For Habermas (1989), the principles of the public sphere are weakening in the twentieth century. The public is no longer made of masses of individuals but of organized people that institutionally exerting their influence on the public sphere and debate. It is for that reason, as indicated above, that the researcher finds the theory as an important lens to analyze the public sphere created by the above-mentioned shows. The next chapter, the methodology chapter, explains the methodology employed in the study in collecting and analyzing the data for the study.

Chapter Four

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter outlines and explains the research methods employed by the researcher, as well as the logic behind selecting these methods. It also presents and describes the research paradigms, the research design, sampling method, and data collection techniques and data analysis procedures. It provides a road map on how the researcher reached the findings, which answers the research questions. Lastly, the chapter explains issues of validity, reliability and ethical considerations involved in the study as an integral part of research. The study, as indicated in the previous chapters, investigates the extent in which the SABC radio stations, as a public broadcaster, allow public participation and create a fair and untainted public sphere in which the public is allowed to engage during any discussions opened by the radio stations. It investigates the influence of the public participation in radio programming, especially on talk radio shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point,* and how the radio stations facilitate public engagement. Sub-questions include the way in which public participation is encouraged in these radio stations through programming and how the radio stations control the public participation, and further, the extent in which the public has influence in the programming of the two talk shows.

Research Design

A research project needs a road map for it to show what it intends to achieve and how it intends to achieve it. The name of the road map is called a research design, and "a research design is a planned structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems" (Kerlinger 1986: 279). It is also described as "a blueprint or detailed plan of how research is to be completed" (Thyer 1993: 94). "This plan can be accomplished by rationalizing and balancing variables, so they become measurable, choosing a sample of interest to the study, testing for hypothesis from all the data that have been collected and analyzing the results" (Thyer 1993: 94). The research design allows the researcher to answer questions "validly, objectively, accurately and economically" (Kumar 2011: 94). The research design also outlines how the information collected can be analyzed and how the findings will be interpreted. At each step, the researcher offers a rational justification for selecting each method. The chosen methodology, discussed below, will help in answering the research questions and meet the objective of the study.

The Qualitative Approach

The study adopted a qualitative research approach in trying to acquire an in-depth appreciation of public participation in SABC radio stations such as SAfm and Ukhozi FM (Neuman, 2011). Unlike quantitative methods, qualitative approaches "present a picture of the specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship" (Neuman, 2011: 39). Therefore, the results should be an accurate glimpse of the subject matter investigated in this study. Qualitative research also refers to research that seeks to understand how people make sense of phenomena that affects their lives (Blanche et al., 2006). It views the researcher and the researched as two equally important components of the same situation (Sarantakos, 2012). This approach is recognized through its features, such as precise description, analysis, and interpretation (Neuman, 2011). In qualitative research the emphasis is on conducting detailed examinations of specific scenarios that arise in the natural flow of social life (Blanche et al., 2006). "It is through qualitative research approaches that a researcher can explore a wide range of the social world, including issues of everyday life faced by people, the understanding, experiences, and imaginings of our research participants, the ways that social processes, institutions, discourses or relationships work, and the significance of meanings that they generate" (Mason 2002:1). Tetnowski and Damico (2001) also put forward that the purpose in qualitative research is to investigate how a particular sociocultural action or phenomenon occurs. This type of research method is suitable for the study because in this research, the researcher is an outsider, not an SABC employee nor a public participant, seeking to understand the world of programming and public participation within the SABC radio. The subject studied in this research fit the category of qualitative studies because of its non-empirical element, and this approach allows content analysis and textual analysis methods, which the researcher aim to use in the analysis chapter.

As the study employs a qualitative approach, an approach that involves different types of designs, such as phenomenological, ethnographic, grounded theory, case study and biographic method (Crisell, 1986), in this research, the researcher adopted a case study approach, and this are *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm. A case study method is one that allows the collection of comprehensive descriptive data, which are usually qualitative in nature (Tellis, 1997). It may provide information on the unique features of individuals. It is a relevant approach to the study because the research uses content analysis to analyze the public participation and the responses of the participants of the study. A case study approach is also relevant because

the researcher studies public participation in SABC radio stations and the SABC has many radio stations and many talk radio shows within each radio station which will be difficult for the researcher to study the entire SABC radio stations given the amount of time to finish this study. Using content analysis to analyze data on a qualitative research approach makes it easy to examine words or phrases, themes within a wide range of texts from both shows and participants. In this study the researcher studied both responses from participants and analyzed content recorded from *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*. The researcher believes having participants and analyzing content of the two shows will produce the necessary data to answer the research question and there will be enough themes generated from the data. The interviews from participates of the study helped in giving a comprehensive description of issues such as public participation, the public sphere and how the public and the SABC employees influences the programming of both shows. Through this method, participants gave a more detailed response about what the researcher would not have acquired if the research only used content analysis. It also helped the researcher in making sense of the content from the recordings of the shows as indicated in chapter five, data presentation, of the study.

Advantages of Qualitative Approach in this Study

The key elements of qualitative methodology approach are treating people more than just numerical symbols and statistical figures, losing the subjective nature of human beings (Sarantakos, 2012). The advantages of qualitative methodology in this study are demonstrated by the following characteristics of the methodology: the method allows the researcher and the research to employ research procedures that produce descriptive data and allows the researcher to be critical in the data analysis. It allows the researcher to study realities of the study from inside instead of outside and the researcher approaches these realities without preconceived ideas and pre-structured models and patterns. "This gives the study an opportunity to produce any results without predictions. It allows the research to use purposive sampling and it captures reality in interactions and meaningful interpretations of human actions" (Sarantakos, 2012:120).

Data Collection Method

Data collection is a way of gathering and measuring information on specific variables in an established systematic fashion, which then allows one to answer related questions and evaluate outcomes (Sapsford and Jupp, 2006). The data for this study is divided into two and it was collected

in two ways. The first data was collected through buying recordings of *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm from the SABC. The recordings of both shows were from the beginning of April 2019 until the 30th of April 2019. There were 90 hours of recordings recorded from the entire month from both shows. The two shows are aired every weekday from Monday to Thursday, with *Sithakela Isizwe* between 20:00hrs to 23:00hrs and *The View Point* between 20:00hrs to 22:00hrs.

The recordings were stored on CDs and the researcher transferred them in his personal computer to avoid any irregularities that might occur. Collecting this data did not require ethical permission from the University Research Office because the content is on the public domain, as long as one does not use it to generate income. The researcher only bought them from the SABC because it safer to buy them than to try and record the show or download them online from the SABC podcast. The researcher was cautious of cases where the SABC did upload the entire show on a particular day. I was also the convenient way to collect the data, given the amount of time to finish this study.

The second type of data collection was done through in-depth interviews. There were nine interviews that were conducted, six from the *Sithakela Isizwe* team on Ukhozi FM and three from *The View Point* team on SAfm. Out of eight participants from *Sithakela Isiszwe* only six agreed to participate on the study. As indicated on the consent form, individuals participated voluntary, and they had the right not to participate. This, however, did not affect the outcome or the data collection process because the two participants who declined the request to participate were producers and the researcher found that the number of interviewed producers were sufficient to produce data that could be analyzed. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, all interviews were conducted online via a Zoom call to comply with the South African Government's health requirements and to adhere to the research ethical requirements. The researcher booked each participant for an interview during their convenient time, and they were all sent the proposal and consent form to sign before they were interviewed. Interviews were from 15 – 30 minutes long and they were all recorded for transcription purposes.

Sampling

It is not possible for researchers to study an entire phenomenal. As a result, it is important for researchers to carefully choose a in any research study because "it is hardly practical, efficient, and ethical to study whole populations" (Marshall, 1996:522). Research studies use a sampling method because of limited time, people's availability and some section of the participants might not be of great significance in informing the study. Research methods should be defined by the research question, not by the preference of the researcher (Marshall, 1996). The aim of sampling is to "draw a representative sample from the population, so that the results of studying the sample can then be generalized back to the population" (Marshall, 1996: 522). "Sampling assists in focusing the study on specific characteristics of interest and is effective in the sense that the samples are studied more quickly than a larger population group" (Fink, 2003:3).

The researcher selected a purposive saturated sampling method in the study. Purposive sampling, in qualitative research, means intentionally selecting a population or participants to meet the needs of the study (Boeije, 2009). Coyne (1997) in Boeiji (2009) argued that the cases or samples are purposefully selected because they can teach us a lot about the issues that are of importance to the research. In purposive sampling, samples are chosen with purpose for the researcher to explore the research question (Marshall, 1996). The process in purposive sampling involves the researcher being able to identify the relevant subjects who are relevant to the study (Sarantakos, 2012). The study has two samples, and they are all sampled through purposeful sampling method explored further below.

On the first part of the study's sample, the researcher sampled all the radio presenters and producers of both shows. The researcher believes that the producers and radio presenters of both shows will provide great insight and can help bring more understanding to the study, which will also help reach the objective of the study. This means that there were eleven participants in total. Eight participants were from Ukhozi FM and three were from SAfm. As indicated above, out of eleven sampled participants there were only nine interviewed participants. There were four producers from Ukhozi FM and two producers from SAfm, two radio presenters from Ukhozi FM and one radio presenter from SAfm. The researcher specifically chose all the producers and presenters who work in these two shows because they have relevant contribution more than someone who do not work on the two shows. The researcher is aware that other employees such

as the programmes manager and station manager of both radio stations understand what happens in these shows, respectively, but continued to choose only the radio presenters and producers who work in the two shows because of their direct involvement in the day-to-day preparation and presenting of the shows. The researcher understands that the producers and presenters of these two shows have a high chance of remembering something that happened in the past shows more than someone who do not work for the shows. Therefore, they will be in a better position to answer the questions.

The second sample of the study, which is also sampled through purposive saturated sampling, is the recordings of both shows in order to analyze the content covered and participation in the shows. The researcher has purposefully chosen April 2019 to record both shows, because it was a month before the South African National Elections and the researcher expects more content that will allow the public to engage, as this was a time where there were a lot of expected discussions. The researcher found it challenging to study the entire year and instead, selected April with the above reason as one of the main reasons. The entire shows were recorded every Monday to Thursday for a period of a month. The entire show was recorded starting from 1 April until the 30th of April 2019. There was nothing left out unrecorded during the chosen month; everything during the entire show was recorded. The total data collected amounted to four weeks, giving the researcher a total number of fifty-four (54) hours of data from *Sithakela Isizwe* and thirty-six (36) hours of data from *The View Point*.

The data set consists of ninety hours of the two show's recordings in total, providing sufficient material to yield interesting and insightful results. The rationale in choosing a month for collecting the data is to give the researcher enough data to make sound conclusions about the shows. The four weeks was a sufficient time length to enable the researcher to identify trends and easily understand the shows. This also gave the researcher enough data to also investigate how commercials during the show could reduce the amount of time given to public participation.

Data Analysis

Qualitative analysis entails segmenting and reassembling the data in the light of the problem statement (Boeije, 2009). It is very important for a researcher to find the best and most accommodative way of analyzing the data. Data analysis determines the outcomes of the study and

enables the researcher to have results. The study used qualitative approach as a framework in analyzing the data of the study. Qualitative analysis method is unlike quantitative data analysis, which places its importance on issues of validity and reliability by making sure measurements are stable and consistent and that there are no errors or bias present either from respondent or from the researcher (Dawson, 2002). Qualitative data analysis acknowledges that participants can be influenced in the research process. Participates in this study, for example, were given the proposal of the study as part of the request for them to participate in the study. This means that they had knowledge about the study although they did not have the questions before the interview which could have had an influence on their response. In this approach, the researcher can conceptualize the data in his or her own preferences and experiences to the study.

Qualitative data analysis is unique and personal to each researcher. The study uses both content and thematic analysis methods in analyzing the data collected through recording the two shows. The content analyzed in the study consist of recordings (and their transcripts) containing news reports, discussions, interviews, and participation from the public as well as many different categories. The content was grouped into themes that emerge from both the responses from the participants and the recordings. The two methods well suit the study because the researcher was able to analyze the actual content of the recordings and tried to understand how the public participate during the show and the influence the radio presenters or producers have on the public participation. Among the objectives of the study is to examine how the public participate and which platforms they use. Content analyses allowed the researcher to identify the different platforms the public use for participation. Within the text from the recordings or the interviews, themes were derived which enabled the use of thematic analysis to analyze the themes of the content from interviews and from the recordings. The content analysis and thematic sections below provide details on how the data will be analyzed using thematic and content analysis.

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a research analysis method in which ideas, meaning, and expression in a text are studied through examining patterns in elements of the text, such as words or phrases (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). Researchers employ content analysis to closely examine messages individuals receive through diverse media including books, articles, magazines, speeches, television, commercials, and internet pages (Babbie, 2013). Content analysis as a method helps in

making inferences by objectively and systematically finding specified characteristics of messages (McNabb, 2002). "This method offers a wide range of uses as it may be applied to almost any form of communication" (Babbie, 2013: 286). Content analysis assists researchers study the presence of certain words and phrases in a text, allowing the researcher to make interpretations about rationale of a writer or a particular audience which a programme was designed for (Babbie, 2015).

Through content analysis the researcher will be able to analysis a number of messages carried by the recordings of the show. This messages, from the recordings, includes topics that were featured on the show, the social media platforms that were used by the public to participate, the number of guests who participated in the show and the number of public individuals who participated on both shows. It is through content analysis methodology that the researcher will be able to analyze what is said by the participants from the in-depth interviews, through identifying common responses from the participants, what they said and the relationship between what they said (Vaismoradi et al., 2013). The researcher will analyze, from the recordings, content such the relationship between the guests and public participation, the relationship between days of the week and public participation, public participation and the platforms used, and the relationship between the topic/discussions on the shows and the public participation. The researcher will then analyze the link between what the respondents said and what transpired from the recordings, see chapter five for more details. The researcher finds this method most suitable in analyzing the content from the recordings of both shows.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis gives an accessible and theoretically flexible methodology to analyzing qualitative data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The study used a thematic analysis because it is a method that pays attention to describing both the implicit and explicit data, through a thorough process of identifying, analyzing, and reporting pattern (themes) within the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). This method moves beyond merely recounting the data but recognizes both the unspoken and obvious ideas within data (Guest et al., 2011). This method of analyzing data involves two processes, the mechanical and the interpretive component, both inextricably linked (Hardy and Bryman, 2004:93). The mechanical process refers to "the physical activity of reading and rereading the data in search of key words, trends and themes that will help shape the analysis before any analysis takes place" (Hardy and Bryman, 2004:93). In this study this, it involved

listening and transcribing the responses from the participants of the study. The interpretive process of the analysis occurs when researchers immerse themselves in the data, looking for the unarticulated meaning to it, based on the broader picture presented by the findings (O'Connor, 2015).

The researcher listened to all the recordings to identify all the participation and how the public participated within the recordings. In each CD, there were recordings for each day, and the researcher listened to all the content in each recording, but only recorded the number of public participations within the shows, as indicated on table 4.1 below. From the recordings, themes around public participation, platform for public participation, the relationship between days of the week, guests and topics covered by the show, were identified and analyzed thematically. This is the same thing with the interviews from the radio presenters and producers, themes were created from the questions asked during the interviews and their responses were grouped into themes and analyzed. Themes such as social media and public participation, participation framework for guests, participation framework for guests, programming, and the SABC and the virtual public sphere, were identified and patterns from respondents will be identified and analyzed. The table below shows an example of how the data from each CD was transcribed and how the public participation from the recordings was obtained:

Table 4.1 - Showing an Example of Data Presentation from Recordings for Analysis for both shows.

Item	CD Date & Time Duration	Topics of Discussion	Was there any participation	Platforms of Participation Face-Book	Twitter	Call-in	Email	Live
1.	01/04/19 30 seconds	Land Expropriation	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
2.	02/04/19 45 seconds	Voting	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

The table above shows how the researcher prepared the data from the recordings for data analyses and the table form part of the tools used to analyze the data. From the first recording to the last recording, the public participation items were numbered from one to the last number continuously, and it continues to the next recording once each recording has finished. This was done to avoid confusion on the analysis chapter, and to prevent the repetition of items and to make it clear which item number is the researcher referring to in the data analysis chapter. When the researcher refers to public participation items, he referred to a listener calling-in to the show or when the presenter plays WhatsApp voice note, read comments from any of the social media platforms they used on that day. As indicated on the table below the shows item number, which is the public participation during the show. This public participation is number from one to the last participation of all the recordings. The second column indicates the date of the recording, which will be the date of the show, and the duration in which call-in, WhatsApp voice note, or comment lasted.

The third column shows the topic of discussion in which the public was allowed to participate. The fourth column indicates, with a NO or YES, whether there was public participation on that topic of discussion. The firth column indicates the platforms in which the public used for participation. The above table, which will be found on the next chapter, enables the researcher to analyze the data, especially thematically. It is easy to create theme from the table above together with the responses from all the participants in the study.

The researcher finds it important to also analyze how adverts/commercials aired on both shows could possibly be a reason for the lack of public participation or the smaller number of public participations during both shows. It is for that reason that the researcher recorded one week from the already recorded recordings of both shows with the hope that one week will provide a picture of the number of adverts aired per show and the amount of time given for each advert. the researcher selected one day in each week in April 2019. For both shows, the researcher selected, Monday for the first week, Tuesday for week two, Wednesday for week three and Thursday for week four. This was done in order to give a representation of each week of the month. The researcher is aware that this was a small sample but hopes to get a picture of what advert were aired and how much time was allocated to each advert on that particular day.

Research Trustworthiness

In the study the researcher ensured credibility of the research using research methods and information which makes the research dependable. Validity in research is attained by using research methods that have been tested before and have proved to work (Roberts et al., 2006). In the research credibility and dependability was maintained in the following ways:

Credibility

A credible study is one which reflects the real phenomena as portrayed by the research participants (Mouton and Babbie, 2001). In the research, the participants 'views from the recording and issues are presented in the findings as they are; they are also analyzed, giving quotations from the participants (Dutta, 2008). Even though the study has participants, which the researcher can sometimes influence through probing questions, in this study the researcher ensured that all the participants were unaware of the questions before the interview. All participants had to open their video during the online interview for the researcher to ensure that they are giving their true and honest contribution towards the study.

Dependability

" Dependability refers to the degree to which the reader can be convinced that findings did indeed occur as the researcher says they did" (Durrheim and Wassenaar, 1999:64). Spending more time transcribing, the tools of data analysis such as the table and the data analysis method mentioned above provides dependability in the study. The researcher has also interviewed people who can contribute meaning fully because they are the ones dealing with public participations in their shows.

Limitations

This study involves government owned public radio stations, Ukhozi FM and SAfm. As a result of there were difficulties in receiving ethical clearance, however, the researcher managed to get ethical clearance and permission to interview stuff members, even though some declined the invitation to participate. The data collected in this study contains both recordings where there was public participation and those that there was no public participation. As a result, the researcher realized the need for more than one month of recordings to get sufficient data. The study also looks

at public participation without involving the public as participants in the study and this is due to the number of people listening to both shows which makes it difficult for the researcher to choose a participant from millions of people.

Conclusion

This chapter clarified the research methods employed by the researcher, as well as the logical behind these methods. It also presented and described the research paradigms, the research design, the sampling method, data collection and data analysis procedures. It also visited the objectives of the study to ensure that the data collection methods, design, and data analysis has a link, and they correspond with the objectives. Lastly, this chapter explained issues of validity, reliability and ethical considerations involved in this study. The following chapter will present the research findings and the analysis thereof.

Chapter Five

Data Presentation

Introduction

Chapter two, literature review, presented clear arguments from different scholars on the issues of radio, public radio stations, talk shows, the history of SABC and gave a background on the two radio stations used as a case study in this study. The theoretical framework in chapter three also provided a clear understanding on what a public sphere is and how radio, especially public radio such as the SABC radio stations, has created a platform such as that of Jürgen Habermas. Arguments from different scholars on the public sphere gave a framework to some of the elements that could be incorporated into *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* in order for the radio programmes to function as a virtual public sphere. It provided a lens in which one can evaluate the public sphere created by both shows. The methodology in chapter four made this chapter possible through providing a method on how to collect the data presented and later analyzed it in the next chapter. It is through the methodology chapter that the researcher will have enough data to answer the research questions of the study.

The study's objectives, as indicated in chapter one, is to investigate the public participation in SABC radio stations, using Ukhozi FM and SAfm as case studies. In investigating the public participation, the study investigates the relationship between radio and the public, how radio promotes public participation and how the public influence programming as they participate. As indicated early in the study, the SABC has been accused of being tampered with and used as a tool to serve certain individuals and political parties. These claims suggest that the SABC officials play a role through programming in accommodating these claims (Ndlovu, 2019)[25]. It is for that reason that the researcher finds it important to also investigate the influence of the SABC officials in the programmes, the choice of topics for discussions as well as the choice of participants in their shows. Building on the theoretical basis provided in chapter three, the theoretical framework, together with the data from the recordings of the two shows the researcher will be able to evaluate whether the two shows have created a virtual public sphere.

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[25] https://theconversation.com/why-south-africa-needs-to-fix-its-troubled-public-broadcaster-124032

This chapter present the data collected through in-depth interviews with the radio presenters and producers of *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* and through recordings of the two shows. The data is divided into two parts. The first part is a verbal data presentation from the interviews and the second part are tables showing the public participation in the two shows. The chapter presents the verbal data presentation in themes and highlight the overall contributions of the respondents thematically. The data from the recordings of the two shows is presented in a form of a tables. Some of the data presented in the table is presented in a form of themes explaining what the tables contains, charts, and bar graphs to clearly give a proper and understandable presentation. The analysis of these data sets is provided in chapter six.

Verbal Data Presentation from Interviews

Public Participation

Public participation in this study refers to individual comments through direct messages, social media, or call-ins in the two radio shows. Both the verbal data and the visual data indicated that there is public participation in both shows. Public participation is allowed through different platforms used by the radio stations. All the interviewed respondents of the study indicated that the talk shows allow the public to participate. David Barker (2000:151) argued that talk radio is a representation of the public and their opinion; it is a platform from which private citizens can discuss their opinions on social issues (see chapter two for details). One of the respondents indicated that "*the public is allowed to participate, and we encourage them to participate. They are allowed to participate on the different platforms we have. First and foremost, they participate through calls, and we encourage them almost every day that they participate*" (Respondent A, 2020). Another respondent emphasized that though producers and presenters prepare the show in a way that even if there was no public participation they show would go on, they always have the public at the back of their minds. "*We have different platforms which we use, we have WhatsApp for voice notes which should be under a minute and there must not be any background noise, no swearing and their radio must be off. We have a direct line where we allow the public to contribute telephonically, especially when there is a prominent guest. We also have a Twitter line; we invite people to use Twitter and we read the tweets live on air*" (Respondent G, 2020). Geller Valerie (2012) argued that today's technology has broken the limits; people not only call in to the station during the show, but they are able to use social media to engage in the discussions.

The data from the recordings of the shows echoed the arguments from all the respondents within the verbal data. It also showed that the public is or was allowed to participate during the shows. In both shows, the public were allowed to participate except for 24 April and 25 April 2019 on Ukhozi FM where there was no public participation during the entire show. The data also shows that some topics had no public participation on some days, while other topics on the same day did attract participation. There was correlation between the data from the interviews, especially what Respondent G said above, and the recordings. The study recorded participation through platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, phone calls, and direct messages (SMS). The above-mentioned platforms excluded guests who were invited to the show. The data indicated that only emails where not used in both shows, and all the other platforms were utilized by the public. "*They use email, Twitter, Facebook, and the phone. They use calls more, although I don't know why, it's not something I have ever interrogated but they use the phone more, Facebook and Twitter as well. I think emails are the ones that are not used often*" (Respondent B, 2020). Unlike in SAfm, Ukhozi FM do not use SMSs as a platform for the public to participate. Other respondents indicated that due to time it is easier to use few social media platforms and not everyone within the SABC has access to all the social media platforms. "*The social media pages are managed by our digital specialist, but some producers have access to them, and they can post. When it comes to emails, it's hard to check all the emails*" (Respondent C, 2020).

Figure 5.1: Shows the number of public participation using different platforms on **Ukhozi FM** in April 2019
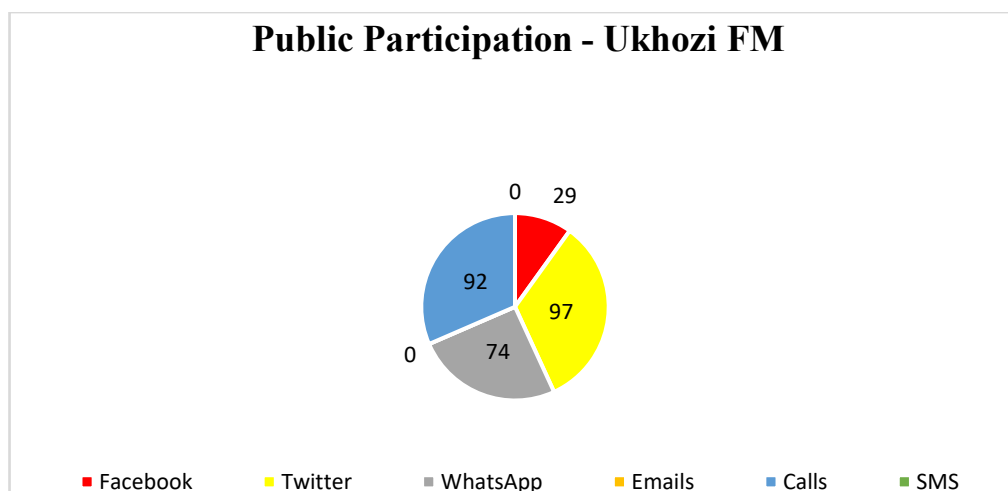
Figure 5.2: Shows the number of public participations using different platforms on **SAfm** in April 2019
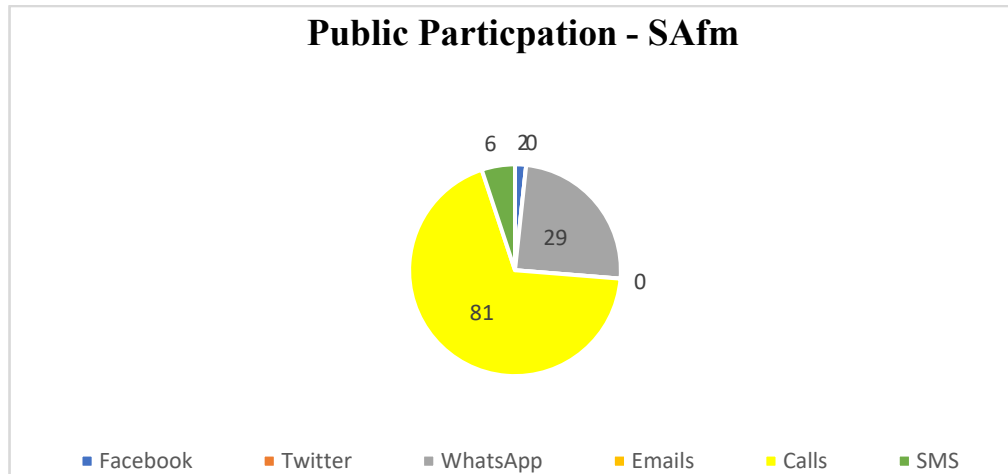
The data presented in the pie charts above shows a total number of four hundred and ten (410) participants for both radio stations, with two hundred and ninety-two (292) participants from Ukhozi FM and one hundred and eighteen (118) participants from SAfm in one month. There were six different platforms for participation that the researcher anticipated that both shows will use. Out of all the six platforms, only five were used and emails were not used in both shows.

Social Media and Public Participation

Tanja Bosch (2010:266) argued that the rise of technology is not a threat to radio but works in favour for both broadcasters and the public (see chapter two). The data showed that the SABC radio stations, particularly the two shows studied in this thesis, has adapted social media platforms such as WhatsApp to engage with their audience. They have availed social media platforms to help the public participate in the public sphere created by the shows. The data revealed that the shows ensure that there is non-exclusion of the public through availing different participating platform for everyone, even people in the rural areas. *"We use phone calls, and we try to have calls in between the show, we use WhatsApp and we try to have 30 voice notes per show, we have direct message as well, although there are less people who uses SMSs because most people use*

WhatsApp. We also use Twitter, and most people use Twitter as well" (Respondent G, 2020). Some respondents indicated that it is not compulsory to use all the social media platforms, but they enhance the public participation: "*So, what we do during the show, we either use call-ins, WhatsApp, social media and it's nice to use social media because you can read and hear from your listeners*" (Respondent E, 2020). Hailu, Khan, Pittchar and Achatum (2017) argued that technology has even changed the traditional radio programming because citizen, through social media, can drive radio producers and presenters to even change the topic and speak about what is trending on social media (see chapter two for details). "*On social media, listeners also share what they want on the show and social media is used consistently*" (Respondent E, 2020). The introduction of social media platforms by the SABC, such as WhatsApp, has made it easy for the public to participate. "*SABC has also introduced WhatsApp voice notes. I think it's so exciting for our listeners and they use it*" (Respondent D, 2020). Phone calls, for both radio stations, were predominately used more than any social media platforms, although Twitter was used more frequently on Ukhozi FM as compared to SAfm. According to the table, showing data from the recordings of both shows, below and the pie chart above, figures 5.1 and 5.2, both shows answered more calls than social media platforms in April 2019, even though social media platforms such as WhatsApp provided an easy way to participate.

The public participation was perceived as very meaningful by all the respondents. Describing how meaningful the public participation Respondent D indicated that, "*Their participation is very meaningful. When I sit down to create the show as a producer, I think about our listeners. So, for me I imagine the listener participating as I create the show. We are driven by them; I can't create topics without having them in mind*" (Respondent D, 2020). The data from the recordings revealed that there were rare instances where the public did not have meaningful contribution to the shows or made a comment on a topic raised by the previous radio presenter. The overall data showed that the public is always present in the shows, and they participate, especially in topics that are educational and of human interest. As pointed out earlier in chapter two, one of the characteristics of a radio talk shows is that it is designed for everyone and mostly it has a broad general appeal (Ilie, 2006). Both shows ensured that they are inclusive. "*Sometimes it is meaningful and sometimes it's not. Sometimes they call in for something that was discussed on a previous show because they could not go through, so when they get a chance on our show, they will talk about something else, but we will tell them what we are talking about. Sometimes you do get those who really know what*

we are talking about, and they participate meaningfully" (Respondent C, 2020). Both shows created platforms, through social media, for the virtual public sphere, providing avenues for personal expressions and to promote active citizenry, providing information and tools that may extend the role of the public in the society as argued by Papacharissi (2002: 10) in chapter two. In both shows, the presenter announced the topic of discussion for the day, and the public use social media and other platforms to participate. Another form of public participation on the shows, is through the guests who were invited to speak on certain topics on the shows, which will be discussed at length on the following theme.

Most of the respondents indicated that there is no formula or policy guiding them on the choice of platforms from which to allow public participation. It is within the producer and radio presenter's discretion to choose the platform: "*I invite people to comment via social media, such as Facebook. I find social media easy to use. I read comments before and after because it happens that when we start our show people are still commenting on a topic from a previous radio presenter. This helps me filter the comments that have nothing to do with my topic. When it comes to WhatsApp, it's easy to use and because of Covid-19 there are no producers to help me filter the voice notes, but I normally read the messages. With callers it's normally the same and we choose randomly"* (Respondent E, 2020). Some respondents mentioned that social media plays a huge role in getting people to participate, however, they still prefer calls because you can hear a person and it is live. "*We prioritize calls because of someone's airtime and it someone's voice live, rather than having me read comments from other social media platforms. However, it is not prioritized in the expense of others, but it makes more sense to start with the callers, but all the other platforms are engaged"* (Respondent F, 2020).

Participation Framework for Guests

A very important question for this study is who gets to participate as a guest or from the public in the discussions opened by both shows. Pamela Barbour (2001:69) argues that while a radio talk show programme suggests a mixture of items, topics, contributors and music, this mixture is not always made up of different topics. It can focus on a special topic or area; for example, politics, crime, development, economics, or football, and the mixture will be items related to the same topic. The table showing data presentation from recordings of the shows revealed that both talk shows discussed different topics. In both shows, there were topics discussed in each day. There

were a variety of topics, ranging from education, politics, community development, entertainment, etc. During the discussions the public was invited by the presenter to participate through announcing the topic on air. The presenters direct the public to join the conversation through social media. A majority of all the topics discussed in both shows had different guests invited into the studios or joining telephonically.

According to the respondents, guests are invited for different reasons. "*There is no generic formula on how things should happen"* (Respondent C, 2020). These reasons include the guest's knowledge of the topic and their ability to speak fluently on air. "*You need to do your research and find out if the person knows the topic or the guest has been affected by the topic. Language is another factor; you must be able to speak isiZulu. I also want to find out if you are broad enough with knowledge and you can speak clearly on radio."* (Respondent D, 2020). Thus, the requirements for the ideal guest include their ability to be able to connect with the audience; to be experts in that topic, or that they are representatives from different institutions including government. "*If I am looking for a guest, I look for someone who will be able to paint a picture for our listeners and give them an imagination, so you have to be a storyteller"* (Respondent A, 2020). The guest should also be someone who is well-known and someone who has a following on social media. "*The choice of guest is based on them being known as a commentator on that particular topic, they have a following, they are academics, or it could be someone who have experience on what we are talking about"* (Respondent F, 2020).

The public, through social media and telephone lines, were allowed to participate. The data revealed that the public is chosen at random if the topic allows the public to participate. It is important to note that in some days there was no public participation because of discussions that were more of an announcement or educational from a certain department or organization. For example, on 19 April 2019 on Ukhozi FM a guest from the South African Road Accident Fund was invited to share information on how the public can access services from the institution and there was no public participation. Comments from social media are read randomly as they come. "*It's really random. If someone calls, we take their call and we read comments as they come through, because if a topic is being discussed now, we take comments now. Shows are different, there are shows that allows you to segment that process but there are shows that does not allow*

you to do it" (Respondent B, 2020). There are no set criteria for the public, calls are taken as they come, and comments are read on social media as they come through with the discretion of both the producer and the radio presenter. "*When it comes to our public participation it's very open. It's more of a first come first served, unless there is a critical issue that needs to be addressed. We read them up as they come. We don't choose people because they are our favorite, although we do have our regular participants, but we also celebrate first time callers, and we always push the gender balance as well. We also balance our content to be very much inclusive*" (Respondent G, 2020).

Figure 5.3 compares the number of guests and public participants on *The View Point* on SAfm and *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM.

A Bar Graph Showing the Number of Guests and Public Participatents on The View Point (SAfm) and Sithakela Isizwe (Ukhozi FM) in April 2019
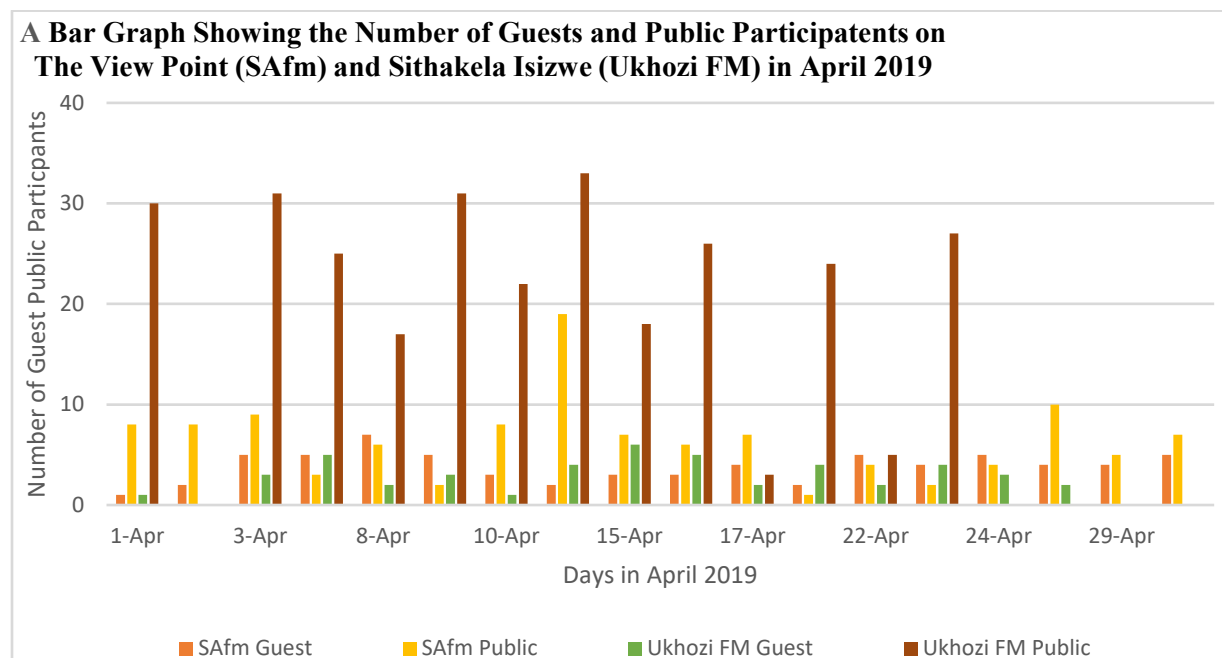
The bar graph above is a visual presentation of the number of guests and the public participants from both shows and it is a comparison between the two radio stations and their public participation in both shows, in April 2019. The bar graph also shows more public participation than guest participation in both shows. The choice of participants is also dependent on the available time on the show and the need to give a fair chance to almost everyone who want to participate. "*I listen to radio, especially SAfm, and we have people that comment in every show throughout the day, people who have comments in almost everything. So, we give other people a fair chance, we don't*

want to bore our listeners with one caller every day" (Respondent H, 2020). The quality of the caller or the comment is also a guide when choosing a participant from the public. "*The choice of participants also has to do with time, someone might make a relevant comment through WhatsApp and we then take that person. Sometimes we are guided by what people are saying because we can't play a voice note that has insults or allow a caller who is angry and insulting people"* (Respondent H, 2020). The data presented on the bar graph above and the data from the recordings of both shows indicates that there were days in April which had a high number of public participations. Respondents indicated that there is no specific day during which they expect high number of public participations, but there are different contributing factors influencing public participation each day. "*We receive more participation on Monday because we have an open line where callers can call, […] we call it the weekend rap. We have health issues discussed also on Monday. There are no specific days but there are days such as Tuesdays where we get a lot of voice notes because of the guest we normally have on the studio who is a co-host. Wednesdays is Business Wednesday and that is when people are taking their pen and notebook and they are taking notes instead of participating. Thursdays we have the youth on our student night feature, and we get some participants"* (Respondent H, 2020). It also depends on who is the guest on the shows and how well-known the individual is. "*The day we have a politician on the line is the day we have high participation. It's not about a day but it's about a particular segment where people feel they need to engage with their public representatives"* (Respondent F, 2020). The public participation is also dependent on the preference of the audience and what they like about the shows. "*It's not about a particular day, it's about people's preference. A talk show is not based on popularity, it's about what you are talking about. It's about what someone wants to listen to"* (Respondent B, 2020). Monday and Wednesday were mentioned as days with a high public participation for both shows.

Programming: In and Outside Influence

One of the questions posed in the study is whether the SABC employees have an influence on the choice of topics, the choice of public participants and the extent to which the public has influence on programming. All the SABC employees, who work in both shows, agreed that they have influence on what is aired on the show. "*Absolutely, before I am a producer, I am a creative. Being a radio producer does not mean I should always listen to one show. I am a radio listener as well and our influence is there beyond our shows, into other shows as well"* (Respondent A, 2020). As

much as the producers and radio presenters have discretion with regard to the content of the shows, the SABC management also have an input and the policies of the SABC serves as a guide. "*The public participation can't be influenced by an individual, but it can be influenced by how you have packaged the show. When it comes to the topic, everything must go for approval. There are weekly plans and daily plans that need to be done. However, before they can be approved, it's something that we have compiled. There are things we can air and there are things that you are not mandated to air. Everything must be in line with the public broadcasting policy and as well as the SABC public broadcasting policy. Some content, such as sexual content, needs to be aired at a certain time*" (Respondent B, 2020). The data revealed that the SABC employees do not control the number of participants, but it depends on the time available. "*I don't control it. Whoever can manage to come through via our calls we allow them. The issue of time is also a huge factor*" (Respondent H, 2020). There is no set number of participants for each day on the shows, but the producers or radio presenters set their own guidelines on how the public should participate and they are the ones who read the comments and answer the calls. The choice of platforms to use also has no formula, but all the available platforms are used alternatively when there is a need. "*Because the show is live, what we try to do is to give people our telephone line and the rules, such as that their voice notes need to be very short. We sometimes don't put WhatsApp voice notes that are too long. We don't have a specific number of participants and because of time it's hard to have many people. We try to put more people though because it is a talk show*" (Respondent G, 2020). Social media plays a huge role in creating a platform where the public can have unlimited participation, even when the show is over. "*Social media makes it easy for everyone to have a chance to participants even though we don't read all comments on air*" (Respondent E, 2020). Before comments are read live on air they are screened, and the producers also screen the calls before they are allowed to go through to the radio presenter. "*Even the calls and Twitter messages, we screen them, Facebook post, we go through them and we don't read all of them. We see which one speaks to what we are looking for*" (Respondent A, 2020).

The public, through their participation, have an influence on programming of the show and choice of topics. "*People do phone and suggest a topic or discuss a problem in their community and that is a direct influence and indirectly it will be through topics that are trending on social media*" (Respondent B, 2020). Through social media, the public can influence the producers to consider a certain topic. Sometimes their participation suggest that the show should expand on the issue

brought by the caller or the participant through social media comments." *Sometimes we check issues that are trending on social media and then we decide to talk about it on air as well. Sometimes we do take opinions from the public. But most of the time it's us who come up with the topics"* (Respondent C, 2020). The shows have created a community and the sense of community has created a strong bond that allows the show to include the public in their programming. "*For example, as they participate all the time, they share some of their problems and I sometimes think that I need to do a follow up show on some of their problems. They drive us all the time"* (Respondent D, 2020). The shows exercise the objective of the Independent Broadcasting Authority Act (No. 153 of 1993) which is to create and develop a broadcasting policy for public's interest and to contribute to democracy, the development of society, gender equality, nation building, provision of education and strengthening the spiritual and moral fiber of society (ICASA Act, 2000). "*Sometimes they send a message asking to come to discuss something or they want us to discuss something. We have many occasions where we have obliged to their proposal. They have an influence, but they don't have full influence on what should be aired"* (Respondent F, 2020).

The SABC and the Virtual Public Sphere

The question about the public sphere within the SABC is one of the most important questions for the researcher. The researcher believes it is important to investigate the effectiveness of the virtual public sphere created by both shows. The concept of public sphere, according to Jürgen Habermas (1989:4), is a realm within social life in which public opinion can be formed and which is accessible to all. There was only one respondent who did not want to comment on the question about the effectiveness of the public sphere created by the SABC. The rest of the respondent indicated that in their opinion, the SABC has created an effective virtual publish sphere through both shows." *Oh wow, the show has been doing that all the time and it has been effective. We create platforms on the show where people engage on the show. This question excites me because this is what we do all the time, and this is where we get to meet our listeners. This is not something that is done by the show, but it's done by SABC as a whole. People come in numbers to the live broadcasting. The show does not only create a virtual public sphere, but it creates a physical public sphere. It is so powerful and it's normally packed"* (Respondent D, 20020). The engagement within the public sphere, according to Habermas, is blind to class positions and the connections between activists in the public sphere are formed through a mutual will to take part in matters that

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have a general interest. "*We have created a platform such as the Business Wednesday where we have regular people that know that they will get business advice. There are regular callers who debate on the show as if they know each other which indicates that this is a radio community'. We have created a platform for people who have never met but who know each other virtually. They fight on air as if they personally know each other and it's so amazing to listen to them. They have a meeting on the show, and we know who is coming to the meeting on which day*" (Respondent H, 2020).

The SABC has not only created a virtual public sphere but individuals in the public sphere are given a voice. "*We are trying to do our best as an organization and we make sure that once you have entered into the virtual public sphere, we ensure that your voice is heard, and your questions are answered*" (Respondent G, 2020). The public sphere goes beyond giving a voice but to help people through information sharing. "*The SABC's SAfm is a national radio and it's open to everyone and because we try to engage issues of public affair and we hope that we have that impact in South African homes. A lot of our listeners come to consume the information we share. That is the reason why we should have public broadcasters such as the SABC so that people get information. This is not only to get information but to also develop themselves. Therefore, we always encourage in our show, to give a platform to the public. We have people coming to the show looking for information and they get help through guests that we bring to the show. The public indicates that they appreciate the assistance. It is possible that the show creates a public sphere*" (Respondent F, 2020). There are people who have benefited financially through the public sphere created by the SABC. The public sphere created by the shows receives support from the public as well. "*A lot of entrepreneurs in South Africa complain about funding, so we did a live pitch competition last year and we invited SMME owners to come and pitch in isiZulu and we did something called live crowd funding, where we invited business owners and other SMME owners on the live show too and we allowed people to pitch their ideas and voted by the audience and we asked people to pledge live on air and people pledged and one guy walked away with R3000*" (Respondent A, 2020).

Visual Data Presentation from Show Recordings

The tables below contain data collected from recordings of *The View Point* on SAfm in April 2019, a month before the South African National Elections. The tables below have six columns; column number one represents the CD number according to their dates as indicated on the second column which recorded the date of each CD and the topic of discussed on that particular day, as indicated on column number three. Column number four records whether there was public participation or not and by public participation in this research, the researcher means the public not the guest. Column number 5 recorded the number of guest and the number of public participations through the difference platforms as illustrated in column number six. The first table show data presentation from recordings of *The View Point* on SAfm and the second table show data presentation from recording of *Sithakela Isizwe*.

Data Presentation from *The View Point* on SAfm

The table below contains data collected from recordings of *The View Point* on SAfm in April 2019, a month before the South African National Elections. The data below reveals several things about the show's public participation, the themes/topics covered during the show in April and the platforms used for participation.

Platforms for Public Participation

The data presented on the table below indicates that *The View Point* used two social media platforms for public participation and this are Facebook and WhatsApp in April 2019. The show also uses cellphone direct messages and phone calls to allow public participation. However, the shows only used Facebook twice on1 April 2019. Calls-ins was the most dominant method used to allow public participation and there were few counts of direct messages. There show had public participation, either through social media platforms, call-in or direct messages through out April 2019. Social media was used in twelve days out of eighteen days of the show in April. There is also high number of call-ins as compared to social media on the show in April 2019. The show had only one live outside broadcasting where the public and guests were invited to participate.

The Relationship between Theme/Topics and Public Participation

The data from the recordings revealed that there were a number of topics that were discussed in April of 2019. They included, amongst other discussions, educational discussions (such as the voter education by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) on1 April), political discussions (such as the failure of South African government to fix apartheid special planning on 9 April), and business-related discussions (such as the discussion the discussion with the Business Management Forum President on 16 April). The data reveals that there was high public participation when the show was discussing political related topics. The highest public participation allowed by the show on air was on the 1st of April where the show had a guest from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). There was no day that had no topic but there were topics where there was no public participation. The show covered topics such as politics, general/human interest topics, leadership, health, public figure profiling, sports, arts, business, finance, technology, and education. Human interest/general topics had the highest overall number of public participations followed by politics. Topic such as arts, finance and technology had no public participation.

Figure 5.4 Shows the Relationship between Theme/Topics and Public Participation on SAfm in April 2019

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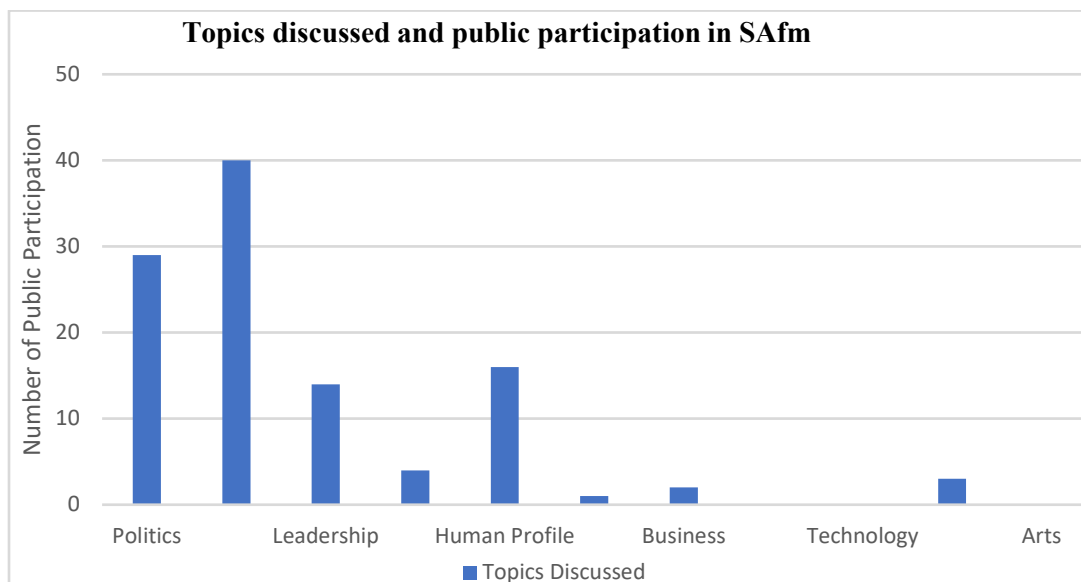
The Relationship between days of the show and Public Participation

According to the data presented on the table below, the show had public participation in the entire month but there were some days such as 8 April, 10 April, and 16 April, where there was less public participation. The data revealed that in April 2019 Mondays had an overall highest public participation followed by Thursdays, Wednesday and lastly Tuesday. The second week of April 2019 had the highest number of public participation and the last week had the lowest public participation. Majority of the Mondays with high public participation, politics and leadership issues were discussed and the days with the least public participation had the least political discussions covered.

Figure 5.5 Show the Relationship between days of the show and Public Participation in April 2019
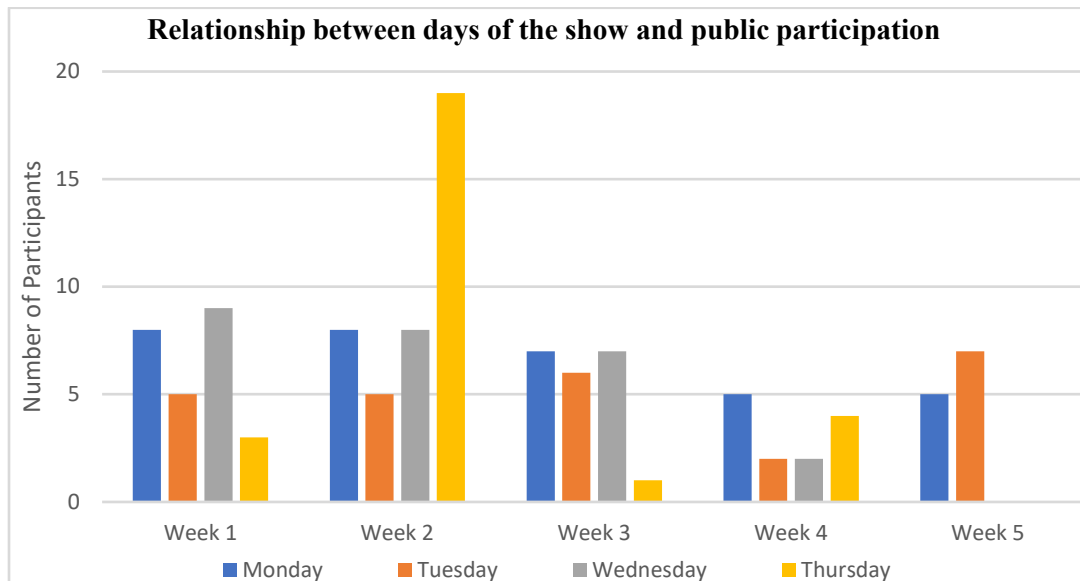
The Relationship between Guest and Public Participation

The researcher is aware that all the guest who participated on *The View Point* are also public citizens, but in this study they are considered guest and their contribution on the show is not classified as public participation. There were seventy-three guests, in total, who participated in the show in April 2019. There were only two topics that were discussed without a guest. These topics were a discussion between the public and the radio presenter. The data showed that there were days where there was more guest than public participation.

Figure 5.6 Show the Relationship between Guest and the Public Participation on SAfm in April 2019.

The Relationship between Guest and Public Participation

Guest and Public Participation
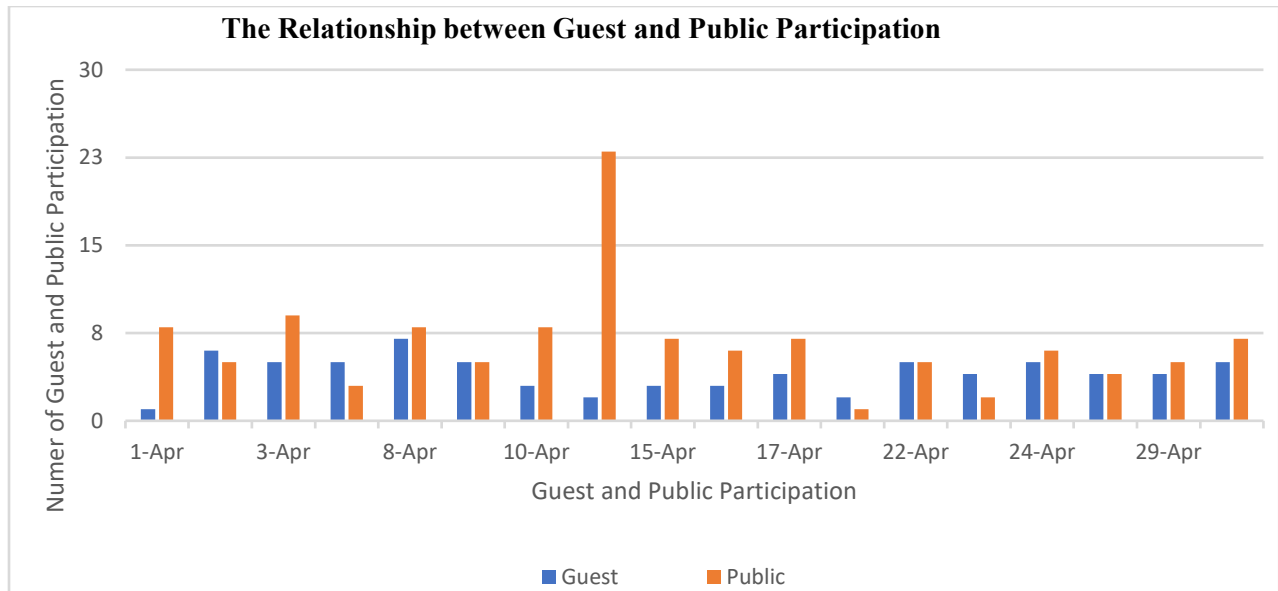
Guest   Public

CD Number	CD Date	Topics of Discussion	Was there any public participation?	How many Guest/Public?	Platforms of Participation FB SMS Twitter Call-in Email WhatsApp					
					FB	SMS	Twitter	Call-in	Email	WhatsApp
1	1 April 2019	Voter's Education and Right to Vote by the IEC	Yes	1 x Guest 8 x Public	F2			C3		W3
2	2 April 2019	The Life Mama Madikizela Mandela	Yes	1 Guest 4 x Public				C4		
3	2 April 2019	The Role of Traditional Leadership in Modern South Africa	No	1 x Guest						
4	2 April 2019	The Freedom Charter and its Relevance in South Africa	Yes	4 x Guest 1 x Public				C1		
5	3 April 2019	How Cannabis can be used for medicine?	Yes	3 x Guest 5 x Public				C3		W2

6	3 April 2019	Freedom to Grow and Use Cannabis	Yes	2 x Guest 4 x Public		C2	W2
7	4 April 2019	Integrity of the People we Elect to Public Office	Yes	2 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
8	4 April 2019	A Tribute to Hugh Masikela	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
9	4 April 2019	Why People Hate Journalist So Much?	Yes	2 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
10	8 April 2019	The Legacy of Solomoni Kalushi Manhlangu	No	1 x Guest			
11	8 April 2019	Igwitjo Movement Sport	Yes	3 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
12	8 April 2019	The National Anthem of South Africa	Yes	3 x Guest 7 x Public	S1	C5	W2
13	9 April 2019	The Failure of South African Government to Fix Apartheid Special Planning	Yes	2 x Guest 4 x Public		C1	W3

14	9 April 2019	African Narratives: Commemorating the Rwanda's Genocide	Yes	2 x Guest 1 x Public	S1		
15	9 April 2019	A View of South Africa Arts	No	1 x Guest			
16	10 April 2019	Celebration the Life of Chris Hani	Yes	7 x Public		C4	W3
17	10 April 2019	SALA Book Launch	No	1 x Guest			
18	10 April 2019	Cancer Crisis in South Africa	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
19	10 April 2019	Burning of Books and Libraries	No	1 x Guest			
20	11 April 2019	African Narrative: The Workplace	Yes	1 x Guest 6 x Public		C4	W2
21	11 April 2019	The EFF and the VBS Scandal	Yes	1 x Guest 7 x Public	S1	C4	W2

22	11 April 2019	A Call to Support Each other and Praise God	Yes	6 x Public	C6	
23	15 April 2019	Alternative Source of Government Revenues	No	1 x Guest		
23	15 April 2019	Traditional Governance	Yes	1 x Guest 6 x Public	C3	W3
24	15 April 2019	African Narratives: Sizwe the Entrepreneur	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public	C1	
25	16 April 2019	In Conversation with Business Management Forum President	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public	C2	
26	16 April 2019	Politics in the Workplace	No	1 x Guest		
27	16 April 2019	African Narratives: Would Colonizers Leave Africa?	Yes	1 x Guest 4 x Public	C4	
28	17 April 2019	In conversation with Apartheid Struggle Icon Judge Selby Sax	Yes	2 x Guest 3 X Public	C3	

29	17 April 2019	The Summer Annual Festival in Port Alfred	No	1 x Guest			
30	17 April 2019	Financial Freedom	Yes	1 x Guest 4 x Public		C4	
31	18 April 2019	Road Accident and Road Safety	No	1 x Guest			
32	18 April 2019	Global Warming and Climate Change	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
33	22 April 2019	The Role of Woman in the Traditional Leadership.	Yes	3 x Guest 4 x Public	S2	C1	W1
34	22 April 2019	Health Monday: Challenges Faced by Paramedics	Yes	2 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
35	23 April 2019	Is South Africa Ready for 4IR?	Yes	2 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
36	23 April 2019	Elections and African Governance	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
37	23 April 2019	South African 2018 Mining Charter	No	1 x Guest			

38	24 April 2019	Inmates Human Rights	Yes	2 x Guest 4 x Public		C2		W2
39	24 April 2019	How Indigenous Language Promote Social Cohesion and Nation Building?	No	1 x Guest				
40	24 April 2019	Journalist's Guide in Reporting on Migration	Yes	2 x Guest 2 x Public		C2		
41	25 April 2019	The Indigenous Language, Social Cohesion and Nation Building	Yes (Live broadcast x 6)	4 x Guest 4 x Public	S1	C2		W1
42	29 April 2019	Health on Monday	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public		C2		
43	29 April 2019	Age and Education Related Effects of Cognitive Functioning within Coloured Woman in South Africa.	Yes	2 x Guest 3 x Public		C2		W1
44	29 April 2019	Old South African Flag	No	1 x Guest				
45	30 April 2019	Team e-Smart	No	4 x Guest				

| 46 | 30 April 2019 | Government and Elections Integrity in South Africa | Yes | 1 x Guest 7 x Public | | C5 | W2 |

Data Presentation from *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM

The table below contains data collected from recordings of *Sithakela Isizwe* in April 2019, a month before the South African National Elections. The data below reveals several things about the show's public participation, the themes/topics covered during the show in April and the platforms used for participation.

Platforms for Public Participation

The data presented on the table below indicates that *Sithakela Isizwe* used three social media platforms for public participation, and this are Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp in April 2019. The show also used phone calls to allow public participation. Facebook was the least used platform compared to the four participation platforms the show used. Twitter was the most dominant method used to allow public participation and Facebook was the least used method. The data shows that the show had active public participants throughout April 2019. Social media was used in fourteen days out of eighteen days of the show in April. There was also a high total number of people who used social media compared to call-ins on the show in April 2019. The show had only one live outside broadcasting where the public and guests were invited to participate.

The Relationship between Theme/Topics and Public Participation

The data from the recordings revealed that there were a number of topics that were discussed in April of 2019 on the show. They included, amongst other discussions, educational discussions (such as the weekly literature with Mr. Mavundla), political discussions (such as the topic on the importance of voting on the 4 April), weekly family related topics such as the one on building a family, health related topics (such as the one on traditional health medication on the 4th of April) and business related discussions (such as the discussion the discussion about the challenges faced by business in South Africa on the 8 April). The data indicated that there was a high public participation when the show is discussion educational related issues. There was no day that had no topic accept on 23 April and 29 April where there was no show. However, on 24 April, there was no public participation in three topics that were discussed on that day. The show covered themes such as politics, general/human interest topics, leadership, health, public figure profiling, sports, literature, business, finance, technology, and education. Human interest/general topics had the highest overall number of public participations followed by politics. Topic such as arts, finance and technology had no public participation.

Figure 5.7 Shows the Relationship between Theme/Topics and Public Participation on Ukhozi FM in April 2019
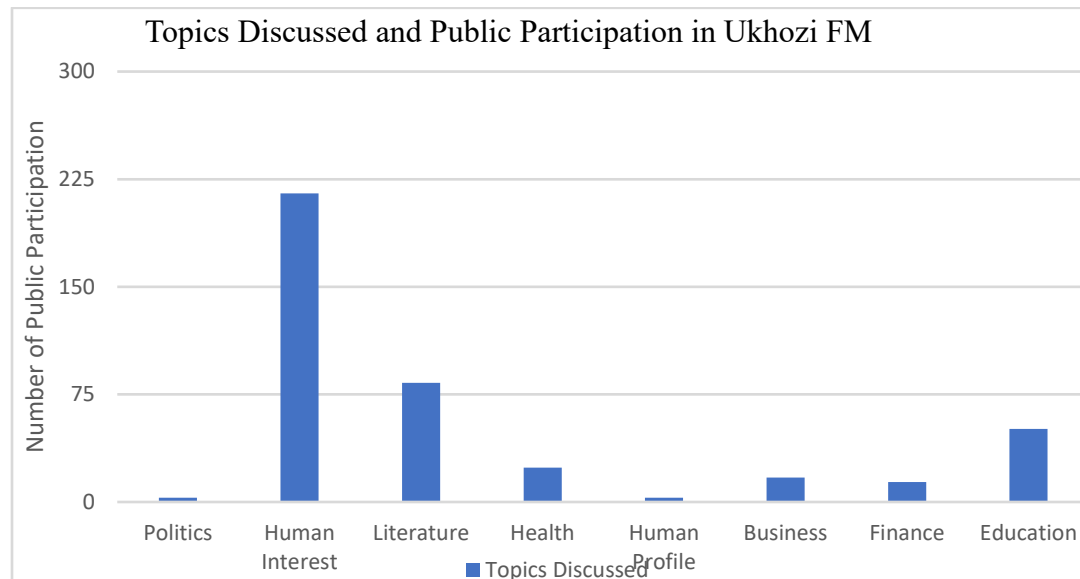
The Relationship between days of the show and Public Participation

According to the data presented on the table below, the show had public participation in the entire month except for 2 April, 29 April, where there was no show, and 24 April. The data revealed that in April 2019 Mondays had an overall highest public participation followed by Tuesday and Thursdays which had the same number of public participations, and Wednesday had the least public participation. The second week of April 2019 had the highest number of public participation and the last week had the lowest public participation. Majority of the Mondays with high public participation, literature and public interest issues were discussed and the days with the least public participation had the least political discussions covered.

Figure 5.8 Show the Relationship between days of the Week and Public Participation on Ukhozi FM in April 2019

Relationship between days of the Week and Public Participation
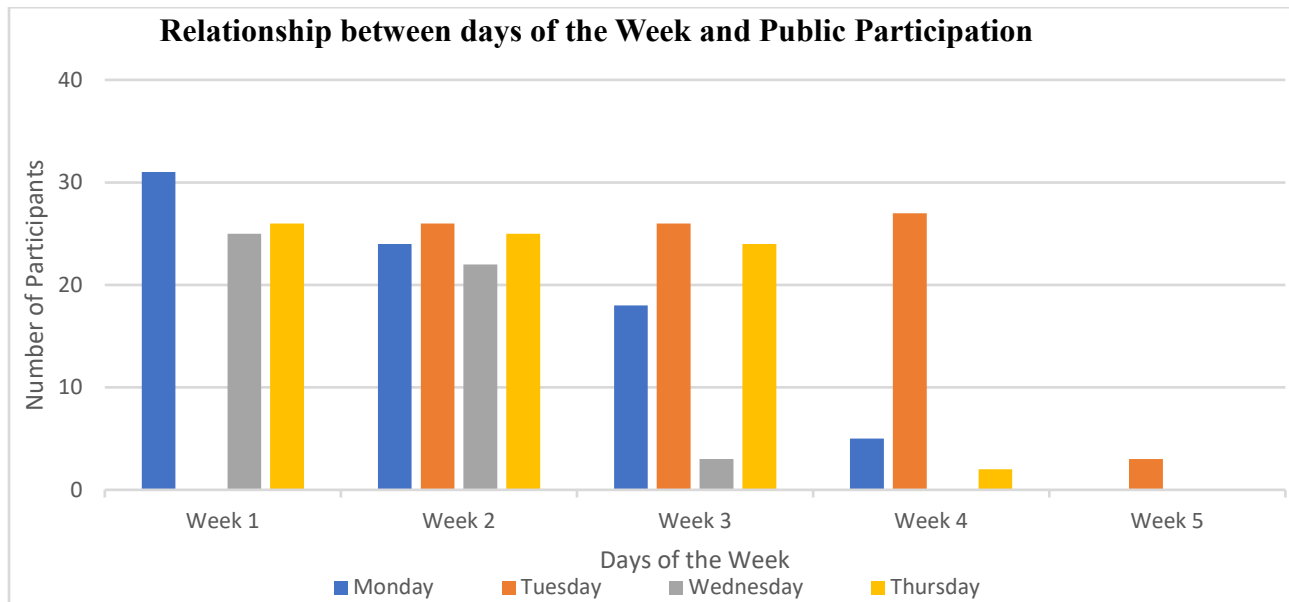
The Relationship between Guest and Public Participation

The researcher is aware that all the guest who participated on *Sithakela Isizwe* are also public citizens, but in this study, they are considered guest and their contribution on the show is not classified as public participation. There were forty-six guests, in total, who participated in the show in April 2019. There were only nine topics that were discussed without a guest. These topics were discussions between the public and the radio presenter, mostly on a human-interest topic. The data on figure 5.6 shows that the show had more public participants more than guests.

Figure 5.9 Show the Relationship between Guest and the Public Participation on Ukhozi FM in April 2019.
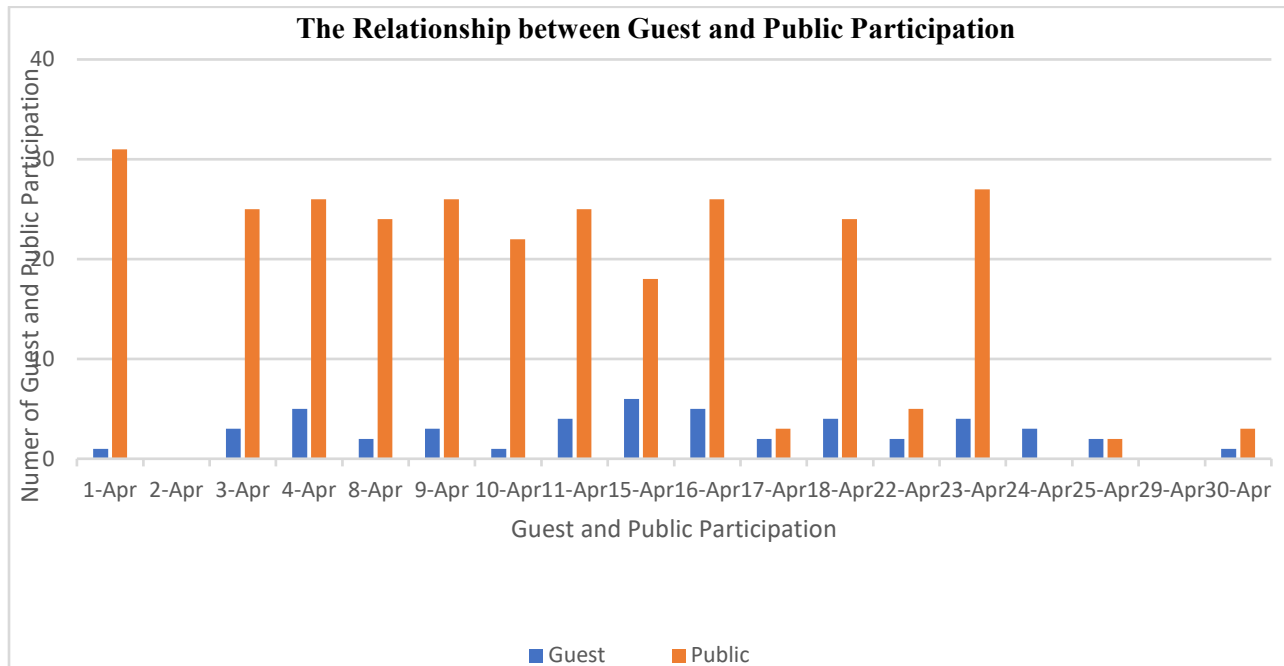
Table 5.2 Show data from the recordings *The View Point* in April 2019

Item	CD Date	Topics of Discussion	Was there any public participation?	How many? Guest/Public	Platforms of Participation					
					FB	*SMS*	*Twitter*	*Call-in*	*Email*	*WhatsApp*
1	1 April 2019	April Fool's Day: Have you Ever Been Fooled Before?	Yes	Guest 14 x Public			T6	C3		W5
2	1 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 17 x Public			T11	C4		W2
3	2 April 2019	No show	0	0						
4	3 April 2019	As a Man can you Use Male's Contraception?	Yes	0 x Guest 22 x Public			T6	C7		W9
4	3 April 2019	The Importance of Special Voting	Yes	1 x Guest 3 x Public				C3		
5	3 April 2019	Why is Important to Choose the Right Career Choice?	Yes	1 x Guest 7 x Public			T4	C3		

#	Date	Title		Attendance	T	C	W
6	3 April 2019	Our Home; Building the Nation		1 x Guest			
7	4 April 2019	What is a Political Party?	Yes	3 x Guest 3 x Public	T3		
8	4 April 2019	Inclusive Education and Autism	Yes	1 x Guest 9 x Public	T2	C3	W4
9	4 April 2019	What do you Use Google For?	Yes	0 x Guest 14 x Public	T10		W4
10	4 April 2019	Traditional Health Medication	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			
11	8 April 2019	Business Challenges you have Faced	Yes	0 x Guest 14 x Public	T4	C4	W6
12	8 April 2019	Dealing with Change	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
13	8 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 9 x Public	T7	C2	
14	9 April 2019	Autism	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public		C2	

15	9 April 2019	Dealing with Insurance Claims	Yes	1 x Guest 4 x Public	T1	C3	
16	9 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 3 x Public		C3	
17	9 April 2019	Why did you Move from your Province?	Yes	0 x Guest 17 x Public	T6	C6	W5
18	10 April 2019	The love for Science with Sena Masangu	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			
19	10 April 2019	Who is your Woman Crush Wednesday?	Yes	0 x Guest 22 x Public	T6	C7	W9
20	11 April 2019	What was Happening During your Youth Days?	No	0 x Guest 14 x Public	T7		W7
21	11 April 2019	Elections	No	2 x Guest 0 x Public			
22	11 April 2019	Learner Support	Yes	1 x Guest 9 x Public		C5	W4
23	11 April 2019	Dr Mahlasela with Traditional Healing	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			

No	Date	Title	Yes/No	Count	T	C	W
24	15 April 2019	Do you Need to go to University for Entrepreneurship?	Yes	1 x Guest 4 x Public		C2	W2
25	15 April 2019	Make the Right Choice: National Qualification's Framework	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			
26	15 April 2019	Interview with Busi M	Yes	1 x Guest 1 x Public		C1	
27	15 April 2019	Kufeziwe Gospel Event interview	No	2 x Guest 0 x Public			
28	15 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 13 x Public	T7	C6	
29	16 April 2019	On the World Voice Day: How do you Ensure that your Voice is Maintained?	Yes	0 x Guest 5 x Public			W5
30	16 April 2019	Interview with the MEC of Agriculture	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			
31	16 April 2019	Business Tuesday with Dr Gumede	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public			
32	16 April 2019	Interview with Dr Madela	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public		C2	

33	16 April 2019	Saving Money	Yes	1 x Guest 6 x Public		T3	C3	
33	16 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 13 x Public	F10		C3	
34	17 April 2019	Road Safety with Mr. Zwane	Yes	1 x Guest 3 x Public			C3	
35	17 April 2019	How to Raise a Girl Child?	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
36	18 April 2019	The Role that can be Played by Teenagers During Voting	No	3 x Guest 0 x Public				
37	18 April 2019	How do you Study When there is no one Helping you?	Yes	0 x Guest 24 x Public	F2	T7	C7	W8
38	18 April 2019	Health Issues with Dr Mahlasela	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
39	22 April 2019	Road safety with Mr. Zwane	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public				W2
40	22 April 2019	Business Monday	Yes	1 x Guest 3 x Public			C3	

41	23 April 2019	Dealing with Debts	Yes	1 x Guest 4 x Public	F2			W2
42	23 April 2019	Choosing Careers in the Accounting Field	Yes	2 x Guest 3 x Public			C3	
43	23 April 2019	Literature with Mr. Mavundla	Yes	1 x Guest 20 x Public	F15	T2	C3	
45	24 April 2019	Interview with Ulundi Mayor Mr. Shandu	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
46	24 April 2019	Human Trafficking	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
47	24 April 2019	Building a Family	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
48	25 April 2019	Ways of Governing a Country	No	1 x Guest 0 x Public				
49	25 April 2019	What is an Extra Curriculum and Why it's Important?	Yes	1 x Guest 2 x Public		T2		
50	30 April 2019	How Would you Know that Someone is a True Traditional Healer	Yes	1 x Guest 3 x Public		T3		

Radio Advertising and the Public Sphere

The two tables below show data extracted from the recording of the two shows as indicated on the previous tables. They both show a fraction of time spent on adverts that played during April 2019 in both *The View Point* on SAfm and *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM. The researcher finds it important to collect data on advertising during both show in order to investigate approximately the time spent by the shows on adverting. Pennington (2000: 9) argue that a talk radio consists of longer and shorter pieces and might include a regular round-up of consumer news, an interview, a discussion, an in-depth feature, and a short 'filler' item. However, it is important for public radio stations, such as those of the SABC, to not substitute public participation and debate with adverts. It is for that reason that the researcher finds it important to add a section on radio advertising and the public sphere. The tables below only show one advert once a week per show, which will be three days in April 2019. The table show what was advertised, the duration of the advert and the date of the advert.

Data Presentation on Advertising on *The View Point* on SAfm in April 2019

Date	Number of adverts	Duration of Advert	Advertisement Content
1 April 2019	No advert		
9 April 2019	3	38 seconds	Sports advert on SABC 3
		18 seconds	Advert about Scope with Khanyi Mbau on SABC 3
		45 seconds	Department Rural Development and Land Reform advert
17 April 2019	3	30 seconds	Sleeper day, advert by the SABC.
		29 seconds	SABC 3 sports advert
		30 seconds	Sleeper day, advert by the SABC.
25 April 2019	No advert, it was a live outside broadcast		

Data Presentation on Advertising on *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM in April 2019

Date	Number of adverts	Duration of Advert	Advertisement Content
1 April 2019	2	44 seconds	Public meeting announcement by Umzinyathi Municipality
		30 seconds	Good Friday Service by Grace Bible Church
9 April 2019	7	45 seconds	TV Licence by SABC
		39 seconds	First watch whiskey by First Watch Whiskey
		29 seconds	New series by "love lives here"
		45 seconds	TV Licence by SABC
		38 second	House registration by National Home Registration Counsel
		30 seconds	Good Friday Service by Grace Bible Church
		26 seconds	Legal aid ethics hotline by Legal Aid SA
17 April 2019	No advert, half of the show there was a soccer game		

25 April 2019	15	33 seconds	Amstel beer by Amstel Lager
		30 seconds	Tiles by Malls Tiles
		32 seconds	Rejoovena products by Ugambu Wami Herbal Clinic
		30 seconds	MTN Bundles by MTN
		26 seconds	Event in Nkandla by Inkatha Freedom Party
		30 seconds	Donation of cloths by SABC Foundation
		39 seconds	First watch whiskey by First Watch Whiskey
		25 seconds	City to City Motivational Tour by Ulundi Municipality
		30 seconds	Ceramic Tiles by Union Tiles
		25 seconds	City to City Motivational Tour by Ulundi Municipality
		35 seconds	750ml of Carling Black Label Carling Brewing Company
		30 seconds	African Bank by African Bank
		30 seconds	Tiles by Malls Tiles
		30 seconds	Ugambu by Ugambu Wami Herbal Clinic
		30 seconds	Donation of cloths by SABC Foundation

Conclusion

The data presentation chapter presented data collected in two folds. The first data presentation was verbal data collected from in depth interviews with producers and radio presenters from both SAfm and Ukhozi FM. The data was presented thematically, summarizing the contributions from respondents in relations to the themes that the researcher hope to use on the next chapter, data analysis. The second data presentation was visual data presentation from the recordings of both shows. The next chapter is the analysis of the chapter presented in this chapter.

Chapter Six

Data Analysis

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the data presented on the previous chapter. Julie Green, Karen Willies, Emma Hughes, Rhonda Small, Nicky Welch, Lisa Gibbs and Jeanne Daly, (2007: 546) define a qualitative data analysis as a process of sorting and classifying of the data collected for a certain study. Victoria Clarke and Virginia Braun (2013) argued that data analysis is a very important section in a study because this is where the researcher interprets different aspects of their research topic with the aim of responding to the research questions. The arguments brought forward in the previous chapters, especially chapters two and three, play a vital role in helping the researcher interpretate the data presented in chapter five above. Chapter two provided fundamental arguments, from different scholars, which are going to be helpful in this chapter. Chapter two's arguments on the history of radio and history of radio in South Africa, media regulation, the SABC, the type of radio stations in South Africa, radio broadcasting today, the future of radio and radio talk shows is helpful in analyzing and interpreting the data. Chapter three, the theoretical framework, provides a lens for the study through the public sphere theory. The public sphere theory provided a framework for what a public sphere should be, how radio, especially public service radio stations, has become a virtual public sphere.

As indicated in chapter four, the methodology chapter, content, and thematic analysis helped unpack the data collected through the recordings of the shows and the interviews from the radio presenters and producers. The researcher also uses content analysis and thematic analysis to analyse the data in this chapter. The chapter intends to provide a critical analysis and evaluation in order to make sense of the data. It is through the critical analysis and evaluation that the researcher hopes to answer the research questions and meet the objectives of the study.

The Primary Question

The study's objective is to examine whether the SABC radio stations, especially through their talk radio shows, have created a virtual public sphere where the public can meet to discuss and engage in discussions of public concern. It is very necessary for one to examine this since the SABC is a public service broadcaster and the role of a public service broadcaster defined by Ruth Teer-Tomaselli (1998), is the provision of a universal service of excellent programming,

while maintaining public legitimacy through an editorial independence. Clive Barnett (1999:12) echoed Teer-Tomaselli (1998) that the role of a public broadcaster, such as the SABC, is to provide fair, equitable and accessible programming. According to Pieter Fourie (2003:149), "public service broadcasting is the provision of an impartial space for free expression and open debate". Herman Wasserman and Arnold De Beer (2005:45) further argue that the role of a public broadcaster is broadcasting for the interest of everyone and appealing to the tastes of the nation, regardless of how diverse the nation might be, it is broadcasting that accommodates minority groups and provides good programming rather than focusing on increasing the number of people listening. Since the SABC is a government owned broadcaster, it is bound to be caught in the political crossfire and face criticisms such as the one pointed out by the Democratic Alliance through its official complain to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission of South Africa (BCCSA) in 2018 (*The Citizen,* 2018).[26] It is such constant criticism and comment from the public that sparked the interest in studying the extent in which the SABC has kept its public service broadcasting mandate which includes public participation. This will be possible through answering the research questions tabled in chapter one.

Public Participation in Public Service Broadcasters

Talk radio shows should be a representation of the public and their opinion; they are platforms from which private citizens can discuss their opinions on social issues (Barker 2000:151). The fight for inclusive programming and the integration of different cultures and people as alluded by Nwaneri *et al*, 2014 in chapter two is indeed bearing fruits as it was evident in the data that the SABC has transformed. It is allowing public participation through different platforms such as social media. This suggest that the SABC, as evidenced in the two shows in two radio stations under review in this thesis, value their listeners. Describing how meaningful the public participation is, Respondent D indicated that "*Their participation is very meaningful. When I sit down to create the show as a producer, I think about our listeners*" (Respondent D, 2020). This statement indicates that the public plays a huge role, and they are part of the reason why some shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* exist.

One could suggest that the number of public participations, through different social media platforms and other platforms such as call-ins (indicated in chapter five), is influenced by the nature of the show. However, the level of public participation as indicated in the data from

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[26]https://citizen.co.za/news/south-africa/1991046/da-to-report-ramaphosa-to-bccsa-for-abusing-the-sabc/

recordings presented through tables in this thesis, suggest that people are interested in the shows. It also suggests that they are interested in the topics discussed during the show. This reveals an interesting side of the public broadcaster, different from the one accused of representing the apartheid and the ANC ideology at different historical periods. It is unfortunate that this study only studies the public participation in the SABC radio stations without studying the reasons why people tune into this shows. However, from the amount of people who participate during any human-interest topics, as indicated in chapter five, it suggests that the programming and the choice of topics speaks to the audience they are broadcasting for. The lack of framework on how many people should participate per show makes it difficult for the researcher to completely conclude whether the SABC radio stations allow adequate public participation. It is encouraging though to see the data reveals the use of non-conventional was of public participation.

The coalition between the verbal and non-verbal data on public participation, as presented in chapter five above, suggests that producers and radio presenters mean what they said during the in-depth interviews. The excitement from someone interviewees, when asked about the public participation, shows that this is something they are really committed to. *"I like that question, because when you choose a person to be your guest it's very difficult"* (Respondent D, 2020). They were not responding just because they were requested to be part of this study, but rather because they felt strongly on the topic. Therefore, the public participation during this shows alludes to what Habermas (1989) described as a public sphere. To Habermas, in order for a forum to be considered a public sphere, participants should be allowed to freely engage without restrictions. What Participant A (2020) explained when indicating that "*the public is allowed to participate, and we encourage them to participate*", suggests that the SABC radio stations, especially talk radio shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, have created a virtual public sphere where private individuals can meet. The different platforms of public participation, which will be explained further on the next section, suggest that the shows ensure that there is no one who is excluded. The use of direct phone messages by SAfm, especially *The View Point*, suggests that everyone is given a chance to participate in the virtual community created by the radio stations. Teer-Tomaselli (1996:127) argued that the main elements of public broadcasting are and should always include the rejection of commercialism, the diverse programming that is available to everyone in the community, the proper structure of governance, which is the South African government in the case of South Africa, and the maintained high and quality standards of programming that is centred around the public. The

next sections provide critical analysis on how the public participate and what it means to the public and the SABC.

Social Media and Public Participation

The marriage between technology and the media, as indicated in chapter two, has not only enabled the access of radio by millions of people but it has allowed the public to have a chance to listen and interact with their favorite radio presenters. As Winer (2009) pointed out, the rise of technology is not necessarily a threat, but is working in favour for both broadcasters and the public. Social media and technology have given a chance for everyone to be part of the public sphere created by both shows. However, the researcher is aware of the possible digital divide amongst South African citizens. The data from this study did not only provide answers as to how the participation happened during shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, but it has validated the concept of a virtual public sphere. "*We either use call-ins, WhatsApp, social media and it's nice to use social media because you can read and hear from your listeners*" (Respondent E, 2020). The use of social media by the radio stations implies that the SABC radio stations are interested in including their listeners in their shows because not everyone could afford the airtime to call in to the radio station. The shows are also timebound, but social media gives an opportunity for more participants to take part, as indicated in the data from the recordings of the shows. The comment from Respondent E above indicates that there are different platforms used to welcome and encourage public participation. These social media platforms include Twitter, Facebook, and WhatsApp.

It is through social media that the radio presenters and producers know that listeners are actively listening because many people might not be able to use call-ins, the traditional method of participation, and social media has opened the door to mass participation. The use of social media by the SABC radio stations also shows that they are accommodating almost every listener who would like to participate. The use of social media for public participation in radio echoes what Lule (2013) brought forward, in chapter two, on how the unprecedented the reach of radio is, and how it has become an instrument of social cohesion bringing together members of different classes and backgrounds to experience the world as a nation. Even through social media was used consistently in both shows, it was evident that listeners still enjoy calling into the studio and have their voice heard. WhatsApp voice notes was one of the tools used by the public and it gave listeners a chance to share their views almost the same way they would have

done so using call-ins. "*SABC has also introduced WhatsApp voice notes. I think it's so exciting for our listeners and they use it*" (Respondent D, 2020).

The move from traditional way of participation, such as emails by both radio stations, to social media has not only shown the transformation of the SABC, in order to stay relevant, but it made it easy for listeners who have no radio coverage in their area to listen and watch the presenters live through social media such as Facebook. The rise of many radio stations, especially with the rise of technology and the internet, could make one wonder if the SABC radio stations has any future and competitive edge. This is the same question that scholars, as indicated in the literature review chapter, such as Muhammad Shahid, Abdullah Khan, Arsalan khan and Muhammad Umair (2021) has raised. However, the productive use of social media and technology by the public in both shows, as indicated earlier in this chapter, echoed what Winer (2009) argued about the rise of technology. She viewed technology not as a threat but working in favour for both broadcasters and the public. Winer's (2009) view of technology supports what the data revealed and what many participants in this study argued about the use of social media for public participation. It also echoes the views of Hailu, Khan, Pittchar and Achatum, (2017) on how technology has even changed the traditional radio programming because citizen, through social media, can drive radio producers and presenters to even change the topic and speak about what is trending on social media.

One could argue that social media and the internet can be very problematic when it comes to control. This assumption poses a question of how meaningful the public sphere that is created by the shows. Data from the in-depth interviews with producers and radio presenters indicates that even though there are days in which the public will be off topic because of a previous discussion on a previous show, the public's participation is very meaningful, and their contribution is valued. "*On social media, listeners also share what they want on the show and social media is used consistently*" (Respondent E, 2020). This suggest that social media, in these shows, is not only used for public participation on topics discussed on the shows but it is a tool used to hold the show accountable to the public. "*So, for me, I imagine the listener participating as I create the show. We are driven by them; I can't create topics without having them in mind*" (Respondent D, 2020).

The public participation on the two shows through social media and calls, is not an entire representation of the public participation of the radio stations and SABC radio stations

holistically. However, it gives a glimpse of how the public participate on SABC radio stations. This also does no ignore the digital divide amongst South African communities, as scholars such as Papacharissi (2002), Poor (2005), and Bosch (2010) critiqued the virtual public sphere for not representing everyone. The unequal access to public participation can be because the two radio stations has too many listeners, as indicated on the audience demographics section in chapter two. It can also be as a result of the lack of framework for how public are chosen either on social media or through calls, and this is explored in detail on the next session.

Public Participation Framework

There are two types of public participation in both shows, as indicated early in this study. There is the public who participate through social media and other platforms available and there are also guests who are invited by the shows to contribute to the topics that are discussed in the shows. The focus of the study is on the general public who participate through the platforms availed by the SABC radio stations. The data revealed that the SABC radio stations, especially those studied in this study, exhibit the elements of a public service broadcaster. This is because of the interesting guests invited to contribute on different topics and mainly the topics that are of public interest, as indicated on the data in chapter five, which are covered in this shows. It is also interesting to see many people participating in the shows. One could argue that the shows are aired at a convenient time for listeners to listen and participate since it's during the evening when everyone has settled after a long day. This could be true, and it could be an interesting angle for one to further conduct an audience analysis on the reasons for the audience to listen and participate on this shows.

Even though the data in chapter five revealed that there is public participation in both radio stations, there is no framework on who should participate from the general public. There were a number of reasons why a guest becomes a guest on the shows, which included the ability to speak well on radio, being a subject expert on the topic or the ability to speak the language used by the radio station. *"If I am looking for a guest, I look for someone who will be able to paint a picture for our listeners and give them an imagination, so you have to be a storyteller"* (Respondent A, 2020). However, there is no policy or framework on how they select and who they select from the public. *"There is no generic formula on how things should happen"* (Respondent C, 2020). This means that the choice of guests is at the discretion of the radio presenters and producers. *"It's really random. If someone calls, we take their call and we read comments as they come through"* (Respondent B, 2020). This suggest that participants are

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given a chance on a first come first serve as indicated by Respondent G. *"We don't choose people because they are our favourite, although we do have our regular participants, but we also celebrate first time callers, and we always push the gender balance as well"* (Respondent G, 2020). The regular participants highlighted by Respondent G, suggest that the virtual public sphere is active and the number of public participants per show is evidence that there is participation.

The lack of public participation framework from the SABC could results in destroying the authenticity of the virtual public sphere and it can make the virtual public sphere questionable. One could question the issue of censorship within the virtual public sphere. However, respondents pointed out a number of strategies they use when allowing public participation. This includes giving a fair chance to almost everyone who wants to participate, either the callers, social media comments or WhatsApp voice notes, but for WhatsApp voice notes there must be no noise on the background. *So, we give other people a fair chance, we don't want to bore our listeners with one caller every day"* (Respondent H, 2020). The radio presenters and producers have developed their method of selecting participants into their shows. This, however, contradicts what Habermas (1989) pointed out in chapter three. The public sphere should be a representative of publicness as an independent domain in relation to the state and private life (Habermas, 1989). Habermas' argument therefore indicates a possible loophole on the public sphere created by the SABC because the presenters and producers are employees of the state and they SABC is owned by the state. This suggest that the state could have an influence on this virtual public sphere. The majority of the respondents indicated that time is normally a huge factor and a guide in how many participants should be allowed in each show or each topic discussed on the show.

The researcher is not comparing the two shows in this study, but the difference between the two shows since they are directed at different audiences, in terms of public participation, time allocated for public participation and the amount of time given to advertising, was visible. SAfm uses only social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Twitter while Ukhozi FM is more diverse. Ukhozi FM uses social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp. SAfm uses more call-ins than Ukhozi FM but there is more public participation on Ukhozi FM compared to SAfm. There is more talk on SAfm as compared to Ukhozi FM, which plays more music than SAfm. The differences in this radio stations speaks directly to the audience demographics of the two radio stations indicated in chapter two. SAfm caters a

matured audiences, and differs from Ukhozi FM which that has a listenership ranging from lower, middle, and upper class. This could be the reason why Ukhozi FM includes more entertainment in its programming compared to SAfm. The difference in audiences on the two radio stations, especially the two shows, suggest a great need for a proper framework for participation instead of a random selection. The researcher is aware that the public are not restricted from using social media to engage with different people on the topic, but the main virtual public sphere in question in this study is during the show where comments are read live for everyone and where a caller speaks live on air instead of a WhatsApp message that is not read on air.

Programming: Outside Influences

If the SABC radio stations, through shows such as *Sithakela Isisizwe* and *The View Point*, provide a virtual public sphere, it is important to understand the inside and outside influence of the public sphere. Chapter three quoted Wendy Su's (2015:1) definition of a virtual public sphere as a realm independent from the state and big corporations. According to Brandenburg (2006) the virtual public sphere not only provides a platform for debate, public participation, and a gathering of private individuals to interact, but it provides a space almost free from government intervention and censorship. Therefore, the important question in this section of the study is to highlight the role played by the public in shaping the virtual public sphere.

The data revealed that there is a direct and indirect influence of the public to this shows. The direct influence is when the public make suggestions to the producers directly. "*People do phone and suggest a topic or discuss a problem in their community and that is a direct influence; and indirectly it will be through topics that are trending on social media*" (Respondent B, 2020). This implies that the public have a direct communication with the producers and presenters. "*Sometimes they send a message asking to come to discuss something or they want us to discuss something. We have many occasions where we have obliged to their proposal. They have an influence, but they don't have full influence on what should be aired*" (Respondent F, 2020). The public also influences programming indirectly through platforms such as social media, either created by the shows through their private accounts. "*Sometimes we check issues that are trending on social media and then we decide to talk about it on air as well. Sometimes we do take opinions from the public. But most of the time it's us who come up with the topics*" (Respondent C, 2020). The data echoes what scholars such as Brants (2005), who write on the Internet and the public sphere, argued about the Internet being able to provide

an extraordinary opportunity for citizenship. "The inherently non-hierarchical character of the Internet would enable bottom-up initiatives from individuals and groups that are traditionally not interested in or often ignored by politics and politicians" Brants (2005:143).

The influence of the public suggests that the audience of the two radio shows is active, and it is through the Internet, especially social media, that their active participation makes the virtual public sphere active. The active audience participation of this shows correlate with the growing weekly listenership for both radio stations as indicated in chapter two. It also suggests that they are enjoying the programming because the producers and radio presenters make them feel welcome in the virtual public sphere created by this shows. *"For example, as they participate all the time, they share some of their problems and I sometimes think that I need to do a follow up show on some of their problems. They drive us all the time"* (Respondent D, 2020). It is important to note, however, that the public participation and influence is dependent on whether the radio presenters and producers read their comments, answer their calls, or play their voice notes on air. This is one of the shortcomings of the virtual public sphere created by radio. It is most unlikely that people feel they have participated on the show if their comment are not read on air, their call was not answered, or their voice note was played on live on air. This does not suggest that when the public participate through social media, they didn't participate, it means their participation didn't reach the audience outside the social media platform.

Gatekeeping within the SABC: Inside Influences

It was evident from the data that the presenters and producers have an influence on the programming of the shows. This includes the choice of topics to be discussed during the shows, the choice of guests who contribute during the shows and the participants who participate during the shows. *"When it comes to the topic, everything must go for approval. There are weekly plans and daily plans that need to be done. However, before they can be approved, it's something that we have compiled. There are things we can air and there are things that you are not mandated to air. Everything must be in line with the public broadcasting policy and as well as the SABC public broadcasting policy. Some content, such as sexual content, needs to be aired at a certain time"* (Respondent B, 2020). All respondents in this study indicated that they have influence on the show in one way or the other. To a certain extent, this suggests that they are gatekeeping the virtual public sphere they have created through the shows. It might seem as if they are doing their job, in upholding the SABC broadcasting policy, but in the process, this suggests a great deal of gatekeeping.

When respondents were asked how they control the number of public participants during the shows, it was clear that there is a lot of gatekeeping during the shows. One of the respondents indicated that they do it through *"screening the calls, listening to what you are saying and compare it with what we are talking about. Even the calls and twitter messages we screen them, Facebook posts we go through them, and we don't read all of them. We see which speaks to what we are looking for"* (Respondent A, 2020). It is difficult to conclude whether the influence the producers and presenters have could lead to manipulation and censorship but their control of what happens to the show suggest that the virtual public sphere is still under the SABC control. *"Producers and the radio presenter decide when they are taking comments from listeners"* (Respondent C, 2020). Even though the producer of the show produces the show considering the listener at home, but they have total control of the show. *"As a producer I manage the show and I have an influence on what should be on the show. Of course, I have a listener at the back of my mind"* (Respondent D, 2020). Even though the producer has the powers, given by the SABC, to produce the show, the radio presenter also has a say in the production of the show. *"Yes, I definitely have an influence on that. As a presenter I need to be comfortable about what I am going to do on air. Yes, the producer can plan everything, or a structure provided by head office, but if I find a certain topic uncomfortable, I can say maybe let's change it to another one. I am free to share my opinion, the producer does not come and tell me what we will be doing. I am part of the planning of the show. I sometimes suggest people and we discuss it together and we agree on it"* (Respondent E, 2020). This, therefore, could put the virtual public sphere in great danger of censorship. It is such control that the SABC employees have that could lead to complaints such as the one brought forward by the Democratic Alliance to the BCCSA as indicated in chapter two. Some comments from respondents indicates that there is so much respect shown to the SABC broadcasting guidelines and the BCCSA policy on public broadcasters. However, it seems there is a very thin line between adhering to broadcasting policies and censorship. *"I have 100% influence. That is the reason I am a producer; I am making sure that I know what is happening around the country and the world. What I put on air needs not to bring the station into dispute. Even the guest I put on air should be people that are not biased. On the public participation, to a certain extent yes, when you call, I have to screen your call but on social media anyone can participate or comment. On WhatsApp, I have to check the relevance of the voice note"* (Respondent H, 2020).

Even though the SABC employees have control over programming and public participation, it does not mean the two shows do not resemble a talk radio show which is well known for

creating a platform for public discussions. Barker (2000:151), discussed in chapter two, pointed out that a talk radio is a representation of the public and their opinion; it is a platform from which private citizens can discuss their opinions on social issues. O'Sullivan (2005:719) also pointed out that the talk radio format involves discussions about certain topical issues and consists almost entirely of original spoken words as content. The two shows meet these requirements even though they control those who participate in these discussions and opinions, as pointed out by Barker and O'Sullivan above. The majority of the respondents noted that time is a huge factor when it comes to public participation. *"Whoever can manage to come through via our calls, we allow them. The issue of time is also a huge factor"* (Respondent H, 2020). Respondent G also argued that there is no specific number of participant that the show should have. *"Because of time it's hard to have many people. We try to put more people though because it's a talk show"* (Respondent G, 2020). Even though time is a huge restraint on how many people are able to participate, the presenters and producers still control who should to part, and they have developed their own ground rules. *"I guess when it comes to reading comments from the public and taking calls, I have a say because I am the one who is doing it. With calls it's a different story because producers screen them, even though I can end the call if I see that they are not talking anything in line with what we are talking about"* (Respondent E, 2020). The SABC mandate is different from what it was before 1994, but it seems as if there are still elements of control from the state. However, it would be unfair to ignore the transformation that the SABC has gonethrough since 1994, a period characterised by scholars such as Horwitz, 2001; Teer-Tomaselli and Tomaselli, 2001 and Currie and Markovitz, 1997.

The SABC Virtual Public Sphere: A Theoretical Evaluation

The public sphere theory, defined by Jürgen Habermas (1989), as an arena where opinions can be formed, delibarations and engagement can be made without the interferance from the state, provided a lens to study the SABC's virtual public sphere created by the two shows. Papacharissi, (2002: 10), discussed in chapter three, described the virtual public sphere as a platform that provides avenues for personal expressions and it promotes citizen activity especially through social media, providing information and tools that may extend the role of the public especially in the social and political arena. Brandenburg (2006) agreed with Papacharissi (2002) on how the virtual public sphere does not only provide a platform for debate, public participation, and a gathering of private individuals to interact, but it provides a space almost free from government intervention and censorship. Such arguments create a road map for how a virtual public sphere should be and help in evaluating the public sphere created

by both shows. It was evident, in both shows, that the shows have created more than a public arena, citizens were able to form opinion and share their thoughts. Even through the shows could not represent all the thoughts shared by the public due to issues of time and the fact that they had to select participants, the public's opinion was shared in the virtual public sphere. As Liwag-Lomibao (2016: 627), discussed in chapter three, highlighted how the Internet created a virtual public sphere that shaped the 2016 Philippine elections by being a tool for political lobbying and educating for overseas Philippinos, there were impactful influence of the virtual public sphere created by this shows. It was also pointed out by some of the respondents that the public have power in the virtual public sphere created by the shows. *"Every now and then there will be a case whereby a member of the public calls to comment on a certain point and we realize that the caller is on to something, then we discuss as a team that we need to further discuss this"* (Respondent F, 2020).

Most of the respondents agreed that the SABC radio stations, especially the shows in this study, have created a public sphere and a virtual public sphere. They pointed out that the shows provide both a public sphere and a virtual public sphere. *"This is not something that is done by the show, but it's done by SABC as a whole. People come in numbers to the live broadcasting. The show doesn't not only create a virtual public sphere, but it creates a physical public sphere. It is so powerful and it's normally packed,* (Respondent D, 2020). Responses from different respondents such as Respondent D suggest that the SABC employees are aware of their role within the radio arena, and they understand the concept of a public sphere. There was only one participant who didn't want to comment about the question regarding the public sphere. *"I don't think I am educated enough to answer that question"* (Respondent B, 2020). The idea of the physical and virtual public sphere created by the two shows create a sense of uniqueness of the SABC as a public service broadcaster from other type of radio stations as discussed in chapter two. The public mandate of the public service broadcaster argued by Alexander (2008) in Dhanasar et al. (2018:11), discussed in chapter two, is both clearly brought forward by the responses from majority of the respondents and evident through the data provided by the recordings of both show as illustrated in chapter five.

When the respondents were asked to evaluate the virtual public sphere created by both shows, their arguments suggested that the SABC radio stations have created a very effective public sphere. Early analysis on data presentation on public participation in this chapter suggested that the SABC radio stations do allow public participation. Respondents also indicated that

there are no specific days in which there is public participation, but the shows always allow the public to participate. Stephen Davis (2009: 349) argued in chapter two that radio is still a useful tool to shape people's minds and a vehicle for engaging on societal issues. Even though SABC radio stations such as Ukhozi FM might have a huge number of listeners as indicated on the audience section in chapter two, the data suggest that the radio station is playing a huge role in the lives of ordinary people. *"A lot of entrepreneurs complain about funding and so we did a live pitch competition last year and we invited SMME owners to come and pitch in isiZulu and we did something called live crowd funding, where we invited business own and other SMME owners on the live show too and we allowed people to pitch their ideas and voted by the audience and we asked people to pledge live on air and people pledged and one guy walked away with R3000"* (Respondent A, 2020). This suggest that the show is after tangible results and impact to its listeners. This could be the reason why both shows have a high level of participation when the shows discussed human interest topics. Even though the Covid-19 pandemic had inconvenienced the live broadcast and the ability to invite guest to the studio in 2020, the virtual sphere has been effective. *"At times we bring live debates, before Covid-19, where we had public engagements around businesses and all small businesses were there. We invited other businesses to give advice live and I believe this makes an impact. We have lot of learners who come back to give testimonials about the public sphere created by the show"* (Respondent C, 2020). When respondents were asked to compare radio and television, in terms of an effective virtual public sphere, the majority indicated that radio is by far the most effective and it allows more public participation than television. *"You can't ask that question, radio gives a lot of participation than television"* (Respondent D, 2020).

The effectiveness of the virtual public sphere brought forward by the data validates that the shows are not only a virtual arena in which people from different walks of life can discuss matters and issues affecting them, but they fit in Geller's (2012) description of talk radio shows, as they maximize audience interest and allow the listeners to express themselves freely. The usefulness of radio within a period when there are many platforms where people can congregate is suggesting that radio, especially the SABC radio is not dying. The Internet and social media are not replacing radio but enhancing it. "The future for radio has a lot to do with the internet but my argument here is that the future of radio is not the internet as a means of sending programmes to the audience but as a wider tool creating a hybridity in the programme-making process and the listening experience" (Berry, 2014: 4). The theory has provided a lens for

evaluating the virtual public sphere, but the evaluation wouldn't be complete without understanding how advertising within the shows has an influence in the virtual public sphere.

Radio Advertising and the Virtual Public Sphere

What stood out from the data, as challenges of the virtual public sphere created by both shows, it was the amount of time the shows have for public participation. *"What determines everything is time. Radio is all about time. Time determines what you can have on air and the number of participants on my show. I might want to have many participants but time is a huge factor. There are also breaks in between the show, songs and commercial breaks which also consume time"* (Respondent D, 2020). Time, on a talk radio show, can be consumed by either public participation, advertising and or discussions with guest. The data suggest that the producers and the radio presenters decides when it's time to take public participation or the number of participants in the show. There is no guide on how much time and how many people should participate during the show. This, therefore, creates a need to evaulate whether advertising has an effects on the effectiveness of the virtual public sphere and the number of poeple which it can accomodate.

There are two critical issues with the virtual public sphere argued by scholars such as Poor (2005). Firstly, there is the issues of digital divide which could result in many people excluded from the virtual public sphere created by this shows. Secondly, there is also the issue of commercialization of the virtual public sphere through advertisement during the virtual public sphere created by the two shows. This would contradict what Fourie (2003) in chapter two pointed out as the most important element that defines public service broadcasting, the ability to be universal in its accessibility and to address audiences as citizens, not as consumers. The data revealed that Ukhozi FM has more adverts than SAfm. This could suggest that SAfm has more discussions than Ukhozi FM. The amount of time given to adverts on Ukhozi FM on the 9th of April 2019, as an example, suggest that the reason one would not have an opportunity to participate is because of the amount of time given to advertising and features that have been paid or sponsored by companies. It was evident, especially on *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM, that there are features within the show that are sponsored by a company or a government department. An example was the weekly educational programme feature sponsored by the South Africa Department of Basic Education. This means in that particular time, both the public and the radio presenter have no control on what is aired during that time and the participation is guided by the amount of time available on that feature. Even though there were weekly

features such as the one about building family (see table 5.2), especially on *Sithakela Isizwe*, that were not sponsored by any company, but there were those which were bought by a private company. Even though this was not evident on *The View Point* on SAfm, the commercialization of part of the show to companies as a means of generating revenues could lead into the virtual public sphere shaped and swayed by coorparate companies. As a results, the public participation will be therefore controlled by the sponsor.

Regulation of the Virtual Public Sphere

The regulation of the media in South Africa has caused much debate from different scholars. The focus on this section, though, is the regulation of the SABC and the virtual sphere it has created through its radio stations. Barnett (2004) argued, in chapter two, that the change in policy and control of the media after 1994 gave power to the public as the media started representing many people in the country. It is not clear whether the SABC's self-regulation of its virtual public sphere through its mandate given to its employees can be considered or constitute censorship of the virtual public sphere created by the public broadcaster.

The influence of advertisers in radio is evident these days, as indicated early in this study. As much as radio stations, including the SABC needs money from advertisers to survive it is crucial that advertisers do not end up regulating what should be aired on a show because of the money they pay. As there have been a number of complains brought to ICASA, some indicated in this study, it is important for ICASA to ensure that radio stations are not swayed by advertiser. As indicated in chapter two under the regulation of the South African media, especially SABC, it is important for the SABC to ensure that a proper guiding framework is drawn for radio presenters and producers in order to maintain an unquestionable virtual public sphere. One cannot deny that it is possible that radio stations, including those of the SABC are censoring the virtual public sphere created by their shows through pleasing advertisers. It is therefore important that there is constant self-evaluation of public broadcasters.

Conclusion

The primary assignment for the study was to examine whether the SABC radio stations, especially through its talk radio shows *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, have created a virtual public sphere where the public can meet to discuss and engage in discussions of public concern. The study hoped to investigate that through a number of research questions as indicated in chapter one. The SABC has indeed created a virtual public sphere through its radio

stations, and it is active. Through the public sphere theory, as a lens for the study, the study revealed that the shows provided a public sphere and a virtual public sphere. The public participation and different topics showed that the virtual public sphere created by the show is alive.

The public use both the traditional and new ways of participation. They participate through calling into the shows, and they also use social media to engage not only with the radio presenter and the guest but to also engage with other listeners. It is through post on social media, posted by either the radio presenter or the producers, that the public is encouraged to participate into the shows. The shows also encourage the public to call during the show or send a voice note to be played during the shows. The producers and presenters had a choice of who to choose to participate either as a guest or from the public specially through social media. This suggested that the SABC has created a virtual public sphere and they are in control of the virtual public sphere through self-regulation guided by the public broadcasting policy. It was evident that the virtual public sphere faces a great deal of possible censorship through commercialization of the shows.

The influence of both the public and the SABC employees, producers, and radio presenters, on the virtual public sphere was evident. This implied that as much as the producers and presenters play a key role in selecting who to participate and what topic to discuss, the public has a role in the virtual public sphere created by the two shows. This says a lot about the SABC as a public service broadcaster, with a mandate to broadcast for the public. It also implies that the SABC has and is still transforming into a bigger and better public service broadcaster.

Chapter Seven

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to explore public participation in SABC radio stations with the aim of finding out whether the SABC has created a public virtual sphere through its radio stations. The study was inspired by the number of studies that has been done before and after 1994 about the SABC, providing interesting insights on the South Africa public service broadcaster. Scholars such as Ruth Teer-Tomaselli (1998), Herman Wasserman and Arnold De Beer (2005), Pieter Fourie (2003) have provided a framework for a public service broadcaster, highlighting that the role of a public broadcaster is broadcasting for the interest of everyone and appealing to the tastes of the nation, regardless of how diverse the nation might be. They further indicated that public service broadcasting is broadcasting that also accommodates minority groups and provides good programming rather than focusing on increasing the number of people listening. Public service broadcasting is also allowing the public to play a role in shaping the programmes. It is such foundation that inspired the researcher to use the public sphere theory as lens to explore whether the SABC radio stations, especially talk shows such as *Sithakela Isiszwe* and *The View Point*, has created a virtual public sphere through it's shows.

A Recap on the Research Questions

The primary question of the study is whether the SABC radio stations, especially the above-mentioned programmes, provide a platform to create a virtual public sphere by enabling the public to discuss issues of public concern and if so;

1. 1.1 Does the public participate on the platforms created by *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and *The View Point* on SAfm, and

   1.2 How do the public participate in the platforms created by the two shows?

2. How is listener participation encouraged by *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* presenters and producers?

3. How do the producers and presenters choose who to participate, through the platforms created by the shows?

4. How can the public's interaction influence radio programming and the extent in which it happens?

Contribution from the Existing Literature

The literature explored in this study gave meaning and validated the importance of the study through the relevance and links of different subject it covered. The literature on the history of radio and the history of radio in South Africa combined with the literature on radio today, radio in the digital age and the future of radio indicated an interesting pattern, showing huge developments from when radio was invented to what it is today. The radio milestones, shown by scholars in the literature, painted a picture that radio, such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm, is here to stay. There was a clear indication, even in the demographics and listenership of the two radio stations, that radio has been part of people's lives and continues to play a huge part in bringing social change. This was also validated by the findings in this study, as indicated in chapter six above. The literature painted a clear picture of what radio is, what a public service radio should be and a picture of the SABC radio.

It was evident that through technology and social media, public participation occurs in all the four different types of radio stations available in South Africa. This, therefore, gave an indication of what one could expect from a public service radio station such as the SABC. The importance of radio talk shows within radio programming was evident from different scholar's argument about the level of public participation in all types of radio stations, especially public service broadcasters such as Ukhozi FM and SAfm. It was also the reasons why the researcher saw it important to study a talk radio show, such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, within a public service broadcaster.

It was through the literature, in chapter two of the study, that the researcher was able to make sense of what the data revealed. As indicated above, it validated the study and provided a point of argument when analyzing the data in chapter six of the study. What scholars presented in the literature chapter made sense to the findings of the study and enabled the researcher to make academic conclusions from what other scholars have said in the field of radio.

The lens of the Study

The media, including radio has become a platform for ordinary people to meet, discuss matter of public concern as Habermas (1989) argued that the media should give voice to the public. Deane (2005:178) added that the role of the media, as it has been particularly pointed out by Habermas, is a useful tool in forming a crucial constituent and catalyst for the existence of the public sphere. The public sphere theory provided a lens into what a public sphere is, and it was

through the theory that one could understand the virtual public sphere created by shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point*, how it involve private individual citizens or an organization representing a group of people who came together to form a public sphere. In a public sphere, citizens are expected to participate freely. It is through the framework provided by the public sphere theory that the researcher managed to get an idea of how shows such as *Sithakela Isizwe* and *The View Point* should be. The researcher managed to evaluate the two shows and understand their role in creating a virtual public sphere.

The research revealed a different point of view from Habermas' (1989) view of a public sphere weakened in the twentieth century. The study revealed that the public sphere is no longer made of just masses of individuals but of organized people that institutionally exerting their influence on the public sphere and debate. It is for that reason, as indicated above, that the researcher found the theory very helpful and relevant in analyzing the public sphere created by the above-mentioned shows.

A Summary of the Findings

The qualitative research approach provided enough and reach data the researcher to analyse. Both the content and thematic analysis provided a suitable methodology to answer all the research questions and providing adequate information to meet the objective of the study. The primary question around the virtual public sphere created by the two shows was answered. The SABC radio stations, Ukhozi FM and SAfm through it talk radio shows, have created both a physical and virtual public sphere. The data indicated that the shows do allow public participation and the public has enough platforms, at their disposal, to participate. Even though the study shows that time is the main concern in the virtual public sphere, but the public is always given a platform to participate on the shows. They are not only given a platform to participate during the show, but they can participate even when the show is either hosting a live broadcast or even outside the time slot of the show, through social media. The respondents indicated that the public participation is meaningful, which validated how active is the virtual public sphere created by the shows.

The study reveal that radio is not dying, but social media has enhanced it. Even though the two radio stations still uses the old platforms of participation, including direct messages and call-ins, social media was mostly used as a means of public participation. This indicates that radio is moving with time. The advancement of technology and the internet has been used both to

create a vibrate virtual public sphere and as a tool for radio to reach its listeners everywhere. It was evident that social media has not only helped the SABC radio stations reach audiences outside their broadcasting spectrum, but it has also helped those who don't have the radio signal in their area. Social media such as WhatsApp, provided an opportunity for more people to have their voice heard on radio instead of waiting for the radio producer or presenter to answer their call. The number of calls the shows receive each show revealed that people are listening, and they are active listeners.

On the question of who gets to participate in the virtual public sphere, the data did not only reveal that anyone is welcome to participate but it also indicated that the presenters and producers have do not have a standard formular on how to select a public participant either who is calling or using social media to participate. Even though the public service broadcaster has a mandate of broadcasting for the people and allowing the people to shape the programming of the show, the study revealed that the SABC broadcasting policy must be also followed. The broadcasting policy does not stipulate how they should choose their participants and how many should they choose, which gives the SABC presenters and producers the right to decide who's comments to read, whose WhatsApp voice note to play, whose tweet to read and whose call to answer. This, however, makes one assume that the power of the virtual public sphere has been taken away and given to the hands of few individuals to decide it's fate. It was clear though that this is not done with the purpose of controlling the virtual public sphere but to guide it so that there is order. The power to choose who to participate as a guest in the shows, lies on the producers and radio presenters' discretion, but the study also revealed that there are guidelines on who should be a guest.

Even though the virtual public sphere is managed and controlled by the SABC, the study revealed that the public have an influence on programming of the show to a certain extent. They influence the programming through social media and through private request to have something discussed in the shows. This shows that the public realm where private individuals can gather and discuss matters of their concerns does exist through this radio shows. The virtue of the virtual public sphere's ability to accommodate societal needs suggest supports the view of SABC radio stations being the most impactful than SABC television when comparing the ability to allow public participation.

Contribution of the Study

The study has contributed to radio audience and public participation in public service broadcasting through providing insights on how radio has continued to provide a realm in which ordinary people can come together and have their lives impacted and impact someone's lives through participating in the show. The study has also validated how important public participation is in the media, especially public service broadcasters such as the SABC radio stations. It is important for the SABC to constantly evaluate their public service through scholarly work from outsiders such as the researcher.

There are few recent studies that studies talk radio shows, with a specific focus on the SABC radio stations and public participation. This makes this study relevant since it's a local study conducted locally by a local researcher. The study has indicated how important public participation in and their influence in programming. It would be very beneficial for the SABC to take a closer look into public participation as a solution to low listenership in radio stations where there is poor listenership. The use of the public sphere theory in this study has validated the relevance of the theory in studying radio audiences. The content from the recordings of the shows, as shown in chapter five, has provided a view on what the shows discuss almost on a daily basis and the high number of public participations in some days and some topics gave the SABC and any public service broadcaster, especially in South Africa, an idea of what people like and which days has a lot of public participation.

Recommendations

Different scholars have brought forward the role of radio in community building and engagement. Scholars such as Nkosi (2014) and Gunner (2017) have indicated that radio stations such as Ukhozi FM have made it their priority to offer programming that is uplifting to its listeners, giving them power, comfort, escapism, connectedness, and most importantly encouraging listeners to observe their culture. This study has revealed how radio has created a virtual public sphere and provided programming that speaks to listeners. However, the virtual public sphere created by the two shows is not totally free from possible censorship and control from bother the SABC and the producers or the radio presenters. This could be the reason why the public service broadcaster faces critics of being used as a tool by those in power.

It is important, therefore, that the SABC constantly evaluate itself to ensure that it doesn't gong back to what the SABC was during the Apartheid era. The virtual public sphere should always

be free from contamination. It should be free of biases, and it should always serve the interest of the public. Topics that are discussed should be driven by what the public is looking for instead of what is trending. When a topic is treading it should be discussed because it adds value to the listeners at home instead of popularism and attracting sponsors. The two SABC radio stations have exhibited good characteristics of talk radio shows and they need to ensure that these good elements are not overtaken by the need to serve advertisers.

Limitations of the Study and Area of Future Research

The study has provided a rich background of the virtual public sphere created by the two shows, but it couldn't sample many SABC radio stations because of time. This leaves a room for researchers to further study the public participation in other SABC radio stations. The study revealed that the SABC has no formular on how to select who to participate on the shows. It would be interesting for one to further study how the public view this radio stations and their inability to accommodate as many people as it can. The researcher, however, is aware that the SABC radio stations have millions of listeners, and it would be impossible for the broadcaster to accommodate as many people as it can in the discussions. Therefore, research on the implications of the lack of a framework on public participation could be an area of further research focus for other scholars.

Appendix

Appendix A: Ethical Clearance Letter

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

05 August 2020

Mr Sanele Justice Gamede (211524158)
School Of Applied Human Sc
Howard College

Dear Mr Gamede,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00001239/2020
Project title: Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm.
Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 31 March 2020 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted FULL APPROVAL

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 05 August 2021.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,
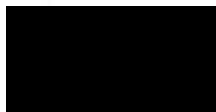
Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/

Founding Campuses: ▬ Edgewood ▬ Howard College ▬ Medical School ▬ Pietermaritzburg ▬ Westville

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Appendix B: Gatekeepers Letter – Ukhozi FM

luhamba phambili

100 KE Masinga Rd, Durban 4001
PO Box 1588, Durban, 4000
Tell 031 362 5403
Fax 031 362 5203
www.ukhozifm.co.za
info@ukhozifm.co.za

21 October 2019

Professor Ruth Teer-Tomaselli (Supervisor)
Mr. Sanele Gamede (PhD candidate)
Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)
School of Applied Human Sciences
College of Humanities
University of KwaZulu-Natal
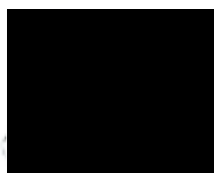Email: teertoma@ukzn.ac.za; gamedesanele@gmail.com

Dear Prof. Teer-Tomaselli and Mr. Gamede,

RE: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

We understand that Mr. Gamede is researching a doctoral thesis entitled 'Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm'.

In terms of the ethical clearance procedure of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted to Mr. Gamede and Prof. Teer-Tomaselli to research the radio show, Sithakela Isizwe, on the SABC radio channel, Ukhozi FM. This permission allows the researcher to interview the personnel of the station with regard to those issues that impact directly on his research.

Data must be collected with due confidentiality and respect as stipulated in the 'informed consent' form to be provided to interviewees. It is understood that all respondents are under no obligation to answer all or any questions put to them, and that they are able to withdraw from the interviews at any time. All information gleaned from these interviews will be reported accurately and fairly, and due acknowledgement will be given.

N.C. Tembe
PROGRAMMES MANAGER
Khozi FM: Pers no. 102257

Zandile Tembe
Programmes Manager

Appendix B: Gatekeepers Letter – SAfm

SAfm Auckland Park
6th Floor Radio Park Building
Cnr Artillery and Henley Road
Auckland Park, 2092

Date: 28 October 2019

Professor Ruth Teer-Tomaselli (Supervisor)
Mr. Sanele Gamede (PhD candidate)
Centre for Communication, Media and Society (CCMS)
School of Applied Human Sciences
College of Humanities
University of KwaZulu-Natal
(email teertoma@ukzn.ac.za; gamedesanele@gmail.com)

Dear Prof. Teer-Tomaselli and Mr. Gamede,

Letter of permission to conduct research

We understand that Mr. Gamede is researching a doctoral thesis entitled *'Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm'*.

In terms of the ethical clearance procedure of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted to Mr Gamede and Prof. Teer-Tomaselli to research the radio show, *The View Point*, on the SABC radio channel, SAfm. This permission allows the researcher to interview the personnel of the station with regard to those issues that impact directly on his research.

Data must be collected with due confidentiality and respect as stipulated in the 'informed consent' form to be provided to interviewees. It is understood that all respondents are under no obligation to answer all or any questions put to them, and that they are able to withdraw from the interviews at any time. All information gleaned from these interviews will be reported accurately and fairly, and due acknowledgement will be given.

Yours Sincerely,
Kina Nhlengethwa
SAfm Acting Station Manager
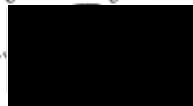
Signature: ....   Date: 29/10/19

Appendix D: Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
For research with human participants
INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved.

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is **Sanele Gamede** from the **University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, School of Human Applied Science.**

Email: gamedesanele@gmail.com

Contact details: 072 806 9092

You are being invited to consider participating in a study that involves research that investigates the public participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) radio stations, using *Sithakela Isizwe* on Ukhozi FM and The View Point on SAfm as a case study. The aim and purpose of this research is to investigate the following:

1. The extent in which the public participate on public sphere, in a form of *Sithakela Isizwe* and The View Point, created by Ukhozi FM and SAfm.

1.1 How do the public participate in the public sphere, mentioned above, created by Ukhozi FM and SAfm?

2. How is listener participation encouraged by Ukhozi FM and SAfm presenters and producers during the two shows?

3. How do the producers and the radio presenters choose who to participate and how they control the participation

4. The extent in which public interaction, during the two shows, influence the show's programming and the extent in which it happens?

The study is expected to involve all the presenters, technical and content producers of *Sithakela Isizwe* and The View Point. It will involve a one on one interviews done by the researcher, who will schedule a telephonic/video interview call with you in order to adhere to the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown rules. The interview will not take more than one hour. The study is self-funded.

The study will only require that you make time for a telephonic/vedio one on one interview. We hope that the study will be beneficiary to SABC because it will provide an understanding on the benefits of the online public sphere and a reflection to the presenters on how public has am influence and take part into the shows.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number_____).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions you may contact the researcher on 072 806 9092 or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION
Research Office, Westville Campus
Govan Mbeki Building
Private Bag X 54001
Durban
4000
KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA
Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609
Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Participation in this study will be purely voluntary, which means there will be no money or incentives involve or given to participants. Participants are also allowed to withdraw from

participation and the will not incur any penalty. The researcher reserve the right to terminate the participant from the study if the participant is abusive in anyway. The researcher will keep all personal information and details confidential during the term of the research and beyond. Names of participants will be changed and fake names will be used for confidentiality purposes. The researcher will keep all recordings and transcript safe in his supervisors office and they will be destroyed after five years.

CONSENT (Edit as required)

I _____ have been informed about the study entitled **Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm** by Sanele Gamede.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have had answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher on 072 806 9092.

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Witness   **Date**

(Where applicable)

_____   _____

Signature of Translator   **Date**

(Where applicable)

Appendix E: Interview Question

Interview Questions

1. During the show, *Sithakela Isizwe/ The View Point*, is the public allowed to participate?

2. Do the public participate during the show, *Sithakela Isizwe/ The View Point*?

3. Which platforms do the public use mostly, if they participate?

4. How meaningful do you think is the public participation in the show, *Sithakela Isizwe/ The View Point*?

5. How do you choose which platform to use to allow public participants?

6. How do you choose who to select as a participant during a certain discussion on the show, either as a guest or through the public participation platforms?

7. How do you control the number of public participants during the show, *Sithakela Isizwe/ The View Point*?

8. In which days do you mostly get public participation, why?

9. Do you think, as an employee of SABC, you have any influence on the programming, choice of topics and public participants?

10. Do you think public participation has any influence on the show, *Sithakela Isizwe/ The View Point*, programming and within SABC?

11. How effective do you think is the public sphere, especially online public sphere, created by the SABC?

12. In comparison, which platform between SABC radio stations and Television, has and allow the most public participation.

Appendix D – Turnitin Report

Turnitin Originality Report

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Word Count: 49012
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PhD Thesis Sanele Gamede By Sanele Gamede

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Abboo, Cheryl. "Public service broadcasting and the public mandate: a critical analysis of the SABC", 2009

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Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm. Name: Sanele Justice Gamede Student No.: 211524158 ii Public Participation in the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Radio Stations: A Case Study of Ukhozi FM and SAfm. Sanele Justice Gamede 211524158 HSSREC/00001239/2020 iii ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS I would like to firstly thank the Centre for Communication and Media Society, the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the College of Humanities with it's amazing, loving, and caring staff members who have been with me when I started my first year at UKZN 10 years ago. I have seen myself grow in the academic space each year in this amazing institution. A special thank you to Ayanda Ntuli who helped me since the first day at UKZN up to this far. To all my classmates, my colleagues at CCMS, thank you so much for the support. This work was not going to be possible without my supportive and loving wife who have been with me throughout the journey. The support that I have received from you Mrs. Gamede Phetsile Lerato Dudu is amazing and there is nothing I can ever do that can repay you for the amazing love, hard work and love you have shown me while I was studying. Sphesanele Gamede, my daughter, you might have been young when I started this journey and you couldn't understand when I couldn't give you the time you deserve, I want to say thank you for your patience. To the Gamede family, thank you so much for the prayers, love, and support in everything that I do. Morris Gamedze, you have been an amazing brother and I wouldn't be where I am if you didn't share some light to me and share with me the necessary information in order to pursue my studies. To my father (Bhekinkosi) and mother (Thandi), thank you for your unconditional love you have shown to me. To my Gamede family in Ndumo, I would like to say thank you to my late father (Ndawonye) and my mother (Mantombi) for adopting me over 10 years ago. Snenhlanhla Gamede, thank you for taking me in when I had nothing, and I had no one. Mr. Babani Matsenjwa and all my friends in Ndumo, including the Mthembu family, thank you. A special thank you to my supervisor, Prof Ruth Teer-Tomaselli, for believing in me since 2015 when I came to CCMS to do my Honors Degree. You loved me like your child, you disciplined me like your child, and you supported me like your own child. The work below wouldn't be possible without your support and mentorship. I would like to thank the National Research Fund (NRF) for funding me from Masters up until PhD. Without the financial support that I received, I would have not been able to do this study and I am grateful for the support that many students like me receive from this institution. iv Thank you to the SABC Management, especially Ukhozi FM former Programme's Manager, Zandile Tembe and SAfm Station Manager Kina Nhlengethwa,

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