

Yizo Yizo: This is it?

***Representations and receptions of violence and gender
relations.***

By René Smith

***A 50% dissertation towards the fulfilment of a Master of Arts
Degree in Cultural and Media Studies.***

ABSTRACT

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Yizo Yizo, a South African drama series aired in 1999, received extraordinary positive and negative attention for its gritty depictions of township school life. The dissertation explores the relationship between the context, programme/text, the viewers/audiences, the content and the form of *Yizo Yizo*.

Representations of violence and gender relations in *Yizo Yizo* are the primary concern of the dissertation. Contextual analysis is followed by an outline of the narrative needed to engage viewers' responses. This outline forms the basis for a discussion on representations of violence and gender relations, utilising textual and audience analysis to interrogate the nature of images. Concluding chapters connect issues of representation and reality, completing the critical circle introduced in the opening chapters through an analysis of the programme's title.

Yizo Yizo is examined using a cultural studies approach, assessing "the relationship between texts -- representations that produce meanings--- and their contexts" (Tomaselli, 1989:38). The methodology employed to deconstruct representations of violence, gender relations and realism, follows recent work on 'facticity' and essentialism in African-American cultural production (Smith, 1992; Lubiano, 1997).

In reference to depictions of violence and gender relations, the dissertation follows the established monographs of the British Broadcasting Standards Council (BSC), the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) of the United Kingdom, and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa (Gunter, 1986, 1987; Gunter & Wober, 1988; Cumberbatch & Howitt, 1989; Glanz 1994, respectively).

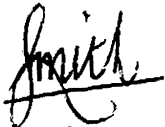
Utilising textual and reception analysis, the study found *Yizo Yizo*'s use of violence is substantiated through its dramatic intent. However, the drama fell short of exposing the 'myths' of township high schools. Thus, the viewer is left with dominant depictions of evil as responsible for the state of disequilibrium, leaving little room for an interrogation of the 'real' issues at *Supatsela High*. The series also side-steps the historical context that impacts the present conditions of township learning. Moreover, the portrayal of female characters in the series perpetuates dominant patriarchal ideology by regurgitation myths and stereotypes.

Research also highlighted the problem of viewing *Yizo Yizo* in an educational framework. The substantial drop in audience ratings for the final episode, which focused on a school that established or restored the 'culture of learning and teaching', indicates the series fell short of its educative potential. The series does not truly interrogate the socio-economic and political context of education in South Africa. Instead, the 'crisis' in education is paralleled with issues of delinquency rather than socio-economic inequalities of an educational system with a history tainted by the legacy of apartheid.

A further finding indicates that due to violent content, language and other issues, the SABC should have scheduled the programme after 9pm, during the watershed period.

Declaration

I, René Smith, declare that the work presented in this dissertation is my own. Any work done by other persons has been duly acknowledged.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Smith', with a horizontal line drawn through the middle of the letters.

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Abbreviations

AP:	Associated Press
AR:	Audience Ratings
BBC:	British Broadcasting Corporation
BBSC/BSC:	British Broadcasting Standards Council
FXI:	Freedom of Expression Institute
HSRC:	Human Sciences Research Council
IBA:	Independent Broadcasting Authority
NRF:	National Research Foundation
RAU:	Rand Afrikaans Universiteit/University
SABC:	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SAPA:	South African Press Association
UND:	University of Natal, Durban
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

Preface

The following dissertation emerged as an idea early last year (1999) when *Yizo Yizo* was aired on South African Broadcasting Corporation, Channel 1 (SABC 1). It only reached fruition when the proposal was submitted some six to eight months later to the Higher Degree's Committee, University of Natal, Durban (UND). These intermittent months were spent agonising over whether or not I really wanted to deconstruct a text that appeared 'groundbreaking' in its attempts to engage the experiences of township high school youth. To my knowledge, Mbongeni Ngema's *Sarafina*, is the only other 'successful' production exploring the experiences of township high school youth¹. This particular production focuses on the 1976 student 'uprisings', which were connected to altercations characteristic of the previous regime. The segregationist *bantustan* educational system (explored in *Sarafina*) continues to impact present-day issues in township schools. It is within this context of residual problems that *Yizo Yizo* must be assessed.

It follows then that in assessing the success of the programme, one of the aims of this dissertation is to question whether or not *Yizo Yizo* addresses the impact of historical educational crises (i.e. characteristic of the apartheid era) on the present conditions of education. In other words, does the series explore the experiences of township high school youth, post *apartheid*²? In addition, the dissertation aims to explore the nature of this 'success' by questioning whether *Yizo Yizo*'s success is determined according to its ability to 'educate' South African audiences on the conditions of township schooling, or according to its Audience Rating's (ARs)?

Before adopting *Yizo Yizo* as my area of research, there were numerous occasions in which I discussed the programme with family, friends, acquaintances and practically anyone else eager to talk about it. I was particularly surprised to learn that acquaintances from neighbouring countries (Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Lesotho)

¹ For a further analysis of the impact of politics in South Africa on cultural artefacts – i.e. context on text- see: Nixon (1994).

² On one level, reference to 'post *apartheid*' includes assessing issues related to education after South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. On another level 'post *apartheid*' refers to the present system of education in township high schools as being affected by the past (i.e. as a consequence of *apartheid*).

knew of *Yizo Yizo* (some had even watched the series). To add to this, an American student's interest in my area of research resulted in her watching a few episodes of the series. Her reaction is best described by her question: "Is this for real...is this really what happens in township high schools?"

The tone of her question was more an exclamation of disbelief, which masked her apparent knowledge of similar occurrences in public schools in America (Kozol 1991). A logical response to her question would have been to recite the meaning of *Yizo Yizo*. In the first instance, the phrase *Yizo Yizo* means '*this is it*' or as the writers of the series envisage, 'It's the real thing' (Perlman & Esterhuysen 1999). A common understanding amongst learners from Zwelibanzi High is that *Yizo Yizo* means 'That's the way it is'; 'This is what's up'; 'It's about time'; 'Here you go'; 'This is reality'. To this extent, it follows the ideology surrounding the use of the phrase *Yona ke Yona* featured in Yfm's marketing campaign during the radio station's inception (1997)³.

Examining the meaning of *Yizo Yizo* further illuminated contradictions of *representing* township high school experiences and portraying *real life* township high school life. This in turn inspired the focus on *representations of 'real life'* ("the real thing"), where I aim to interrogate representations of violence and gender in particular and the meanings implicit in these representations.

This dissertation adopts a cultural studies approach to analyse *Yizo Yizo* through assessing "the **relationship** between texts -- representations that produce meanings -- and their contexts" (Tomaselli 1989:38). The methodology employed to deconstruct representations of violence and gender relations, and to interrogate notions of realism follows the work of Valerie Smith (1992) and Wahneema Lubiano (1997) who examine the use of 'facticity' in African-American cultural production.

In reference to representations of violence and gender relations, this paper will attempt to contextualise the empirical in the conceptual discussion. In so doing, it follows the established research monographs of the British Broadcasting Standards Council (BBSC), the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) of the United

³ Yfm is a radio station "targeted at the 16-to-20-somethings that comprise South Africa's burgeoning black youth market" (Friedman 1997). Its relevance to the series will be discussed in the section on Youth.

Kingdom, and the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa (Gunter 1986, 1987; Gunter & Wober 1988; Cumberbatch & Howitt 1989; Glanz 1994).

Yizo Yizo is a highly textured narrative that is open to multiple interpretations, which this paper cannot interrogate. The primary concern of this dissertation is to examine *representations* of violence and gender relations in *Yizo Yizo*. To this end, I will analyse the series and will investigate the context of *Yizo Yizo*, which is inclusive of its socio-political milieu and of macro and micro research in the form of audience studies.

Finally, this dissertation will be informed by feminist epistemology acknowledging that my subjectivity impacts my understanding. That is, I believe that "researchers' understandings are necessarily temporally, intellectually, politically and emotionally grounded and are thus as contextually specific as those of 'the researched'" (Stanley & Wise 1990:20). In addition, as a black South African woman, I believe that I am further able to reflect on issues relevant to my 'reality' whilst remaining mindful of the politics of re-colonisation⁴.

⁴ Discussions pertaining to representations and portrayals of black life in South Africa are particularly sensitive. As one of the writers/directors of *Yizo Yizo* reveals, there are indeed some dissidents of the series who would prefer that issues pertaining to black people are best left to discussions within black communities, best relegated to the private sphere (Mahlatsi 2000).

Introduction

Yizo Yizo: This is it?

Representations and receptions of violence and gender relations.

Perhaps the best way to begin is to dissect the title of this dissertation. It follows then that this paper will explore representations of violence and gender relations in *Yizo Yizo*. In so doing, the dissertation will assess the text and context of *Yizo Yizo* by answering both 'what is *it*?' and 'what is, *this is it*?' The intended ambiguity utilises the English translation of *Yizo Yizo* (discussed in the preface) to illustrate that the paper is mutually constitutive of the composition of the text (story line) and the ontology of *Yizo Yizo* (real life occurrences informing the script). Complementary to this, a reception analysis is utilised to facilitate the assessment of the discourse of violence, gender, and authenticity in relation to the series, *Yizo Yizo*.

The paper will be divided into three main sections, each inclusive of sub-sections. The first section of the paper, **methodology**, begins with an analysis of the text and context of *Yizo Yizo* and includes comments on audience reception at a macro and micro level. The second section of the paper will develop comments on **text and context** by exploring the genesis and aims of *Yizo Yizo*. In so doing, I will assess the relationship between *Yizo Yizo* and various educational bodies, including the SABC's education department, SABC Education; the national Department of Education, and its, Culture of Learning Teaching and Service Campaign (COLTS).

Looking at issues surrounding the production of an 'educative' series dealing with township high school life leads to discussions on students/learners; notions of youth, subculture, and music - the local genre, *Kwaito* in particular. The *Yizo Yizo* compact disc recording (CD) featuring *Kwaito* artists informs the discussion on the intertextuality of the series.

Issues of **representation** will characterise the third section of the paper, and will include a textual and discourse analysis in which "meaning, representation and culture are considered to be constitutive" (Hall 1997: 6). The construction and production of meanings through language will inform the discussion on gender, where harassment

and rape as forms of violence against women will be assessed within the context of the patriarchal discourse of gender (Fiske 1987; hooks 1994). Audience responses to representations of female characters and violent images (for example) will feed into this section on representation. The connection between representation and reception and representation is best explored in the 'circuit of culture', which is composed of five different localities constituting the production of meaning - each of which is interrelated (Hall 1997). These include 'representation', 'consumption', 'identity', 'production', and 'regulation'. The two former localities are of primary concern to this dissertation and will contribute to further discussions on the nature of *Yizo Yizo*. To this extent, I will explore whether or not the series offers alternative approaches to representing conditions of township high school life, or whether or not the series re-articulates representations within the dominant ideology.

As a sub-text to the above-mentioned discussion on violence and gender, the research will engage notions of reality considered in the context of verisimilitude. In so doing, the discussion will interrogate the generic construction of *Yizo Yizo* so as to assess whether or not representations of violence and gender - violence against women in particular- are 'probable' and therefore 'appropriate' to the programme 'type' or form (Neale 1990). More importantly, issues of genre will highlight the construction of *Yizo Yizo* "as part of a widely shared and widely recognizable reality" (Smith 1992: 57).

It follows then that the study will entail an examination of the meanings and messages implicit in representations presented in the programme. The discussion on representations of gender for example, will include a general analysis of *language* (spoken and gestured) utilised in the series and seen in relation to social *myths* and *stereotypes* about women. Language and meaning are furthermore implicit in culture, which in turn is "concerned with **meaning**; the practices which generate that meaning, and the representational forms in which that meaning is encoded" (Tomaselli 1989:38).

Finally, an overview of the above illustrates that I will attempt to explore the relationship or inter-relation between the **context**, programme/**text**, the viewers/**audiences**, the **content** and the **form** of *Yizo Yizo*. In so doing, I will attempt to engage the “call for interdisciplinary media research that integrates textual and social aspects of investigation, and quantitative and qualitative methodologies” (Drotner 2000: 162).

Section One: Methodology

What is 'this is it'?

Yizo Yizo is a television drama series that was aired on SABC 1, at 20:30 every Wednesday evening from 3 February 1999 to 28 April 1999. Two related/supplementary programmes were aired on Wednesday 13 January 1999 and 20 January 1999, prior to the actual series consisting of 13 episodes. The first programme was a documentary comparing two schools "next to each other" where one was in a state of ineptitude, while the other was organised and represented the ethos of the 'culture of learning and teaching' (Maslomoney 2000). The second programme aired in the same time slot prior to *Yizo Yizo*, was a film about the making of the series (Gibson 2000).

The production of *Yizo Yizo* began as an initiative of SABC Education in which a series dealing with the culture of learning was commissioned. SABC Education put out a brief requesting "a drama series that would highlight the crisis in education, specifically in township schools in the country" (Gibson 2000). Laduma Film Factory won the tender, primarily on the basis of them highlighting the need for research. The research team consisted of the five writers and the research process included three months of visiting black schools, particularly in Johannesburg, and talking to students, teachers and principals. The aim of this initiative was to "find out why there was chaos" (Gibson 2000).

This "multi-lingual with English subtitles" series is aimed at "high school and out-of-school youth; parents, teachers and the general public" (COLTS 1999:1). The story involves learners at a township high school, Supatsela High (shot on location in Daveyton, Gauteng) and includes events occurring within a time frame of one academic year, during which "we witness the demise and subsequent transformation of the school. We examine the forces that corrupt the school and those that restore it" (COLTS 1999:1).

One of the defining characteristics of the series is that “the story and characters are based on research and are all believable and authentic” (COLTS 1999:1). This is integral to the ensuing discussion on *Yizo Yizo*, for it alludes to issues of realism, and essentialism that has been the subject of debate within the public sphere (Gaser 1999). The reliance on ‘facticity’ as a means to defend the paradigmatic and syntagmatic will be explored in relation to issues of violence, gender and genre, in the section on representations. In examining representations, I will assess the way in which research and ‘real-life’ exchanges are used to defend the choices included in the production of *Yizo Yizo*. For example, in response to questions surrounding the realistic portrayal of township high schools, the directors of the series maintain that the script was informed by stories emanating from research (Gibson, Mahlatsi 2000). To add to this, SABC Education purports that by exploring issues of transformation; *Yizo Yizo* intends to “lift a veil over what happens in typical township schools” (1999: 23).

Yizo Yizo: the story

The following synopsis is included to offer a general insight of the narrative⁵. Naturally the ideal would be for the reader to familiarise him/herself with the audio-visual text, as an idiomatic interpretation cannot truly reflect the essence of images.

The protagonists of the series are **Thiza** (standard 8/ class 10 student/learner⁶), **Hazel** (new standard 8 student), **Nomsa** (standard 8 student), **Javas** (standard 8 student), **Chester** (gangster) and **Papa Action** (student and gangster). Their colleagues include **Thulas** (older/mature student), **Dudu** (student), **Mantwa** (student), **Sticks** (student), **Bobo** (student), **Gunman** (student) and **Lesego** (SRC/LRC president).

Other characters include **Mr. Mthembu** (first principal), **Ken Mokwena** (second principal and history teacher), **Grace Letsatsi** (third principal), **Thabo Mahlatsi** (school advisor), **Zakes** (Thiza’s brother), **Sonnyboy** (taxi driver), **Snowey** (Hazel’s sister) and **Bra Gibb** (drug dealer). Teachers include, **Zoe Cele** (new, part-time

⁵ Attempts to obtain transcriptions of the series or scripts proved unsuccessful (reasons included the nature of filming and changes particular to this process).

⁶ Reference to student/learner and the different denotations of school year is indicative of the changes inherent in the National Qualifications Framework (see: section two). Attempts to challenge historical conventions of schooling have resulted in conceptualising students as learners and teachers as educators.

English Teacher), **Edwin Thapelo** (Science Teacher), **Louisa** (disillusioned teacher, friend of Ken) and **Zaza** (teacher, Zoe's cousin).

Yizo Yizo is a local drama series, set in a township in Gauteng. The story revolves around the community of a township high school, Supatsela High, which is inclusive of learners, educators, parents and local criminals (gangsters/thugs). It reflects upon the experiences of the community of this school and the crises and tribulations impacting the life of learners.

Most of the characters are returning to Supatsela High for another academic year. Notable exceptions are Miss Cele who is a new member of staff, Hazel a new learner and Thulas, also a new learner but five to six years older than his peers. Apart from those learners directly connected to the school, Chester (an ex-learner), Papa Action (his friend still attending the school) and Bra Gibb are the foremost characters involved in criminal activity in or outside the school premises.

The narrative also explores the relationships between learners, their peers, teachers and family. This includes the friendship between Javas and Nomsa, Hazel and Thiza and Mantwa and Dudu. Other relationships explored include Thiza, his brother Zakes, and his grandmother; Hazel and her sister, Snowey; Nomsa and her family (parents and sister) and Javas and his grandfather. Within the first four episodes, viewers learn of Thiza's attraction to Hazel, who instead is pursued by Sonnyboy, a taxi driver. Hazel's rejection of Thiza coincides with genesis of his relationship with Chester, Papa Action and entourage.

The general learning environment of *Yizo Yizo* is established and fostered by references to the socio-economic conditions of schooling in a township high school. These include the plight of part-time teachers and mature students, relationships amongst youth, lack of resources, problems particular to educational/learning material and educational departments, corporal punishment and so on. These conditions and the general environment of the community affect those attending Supatsela High at large. To this extent, the involvement of gangsters and other community members has a direct impact on the lives of learners.

The first four episodes of the series focus on the experiences of the learners and educators of Supatsela, under the auspices of Mr. Mthembu. Mr. Mthembu's disciplinary action in reprimanding a student for arriving late to school contributes to his demise and the introduction of a new 'leader' in the form of returning educator, Mr. Ken Mokwena. Ken's 'lenient' approach to the leadership of the school is in stark contrast to that of the first principal and is sustained by his (Ken's) relationship to the local 'druglord', Bra Gibb and thus to Chester and Papa Action, which results in his subsequent demise.

The local thugs are allowed onto school premises and the 'end of first term' celebrations are marred by their presence. School property is vandalised and drugs and alcohol consumed freely on the premises. The state of chaos is epitomised by the rape of a female student by her boyfriend, a local taxi driver.

The wanton behaviour of students at the party continues over the next four episodes, until the students revolt against the state of discord. This occurs after a teacher is shot by a gangster, educators and learners harassed by 'thugs'/gangsters, another student is gang-raped, and the second principal is taken hostage by a learner demanding the department of education address the crisis at Supatsela.

The change is also significant as it signals the inclusion of parents into the decision making process of the school's future. The transformation of Supatsela is dependent on the establishment of the 'culture of learning and teaching' through the partnership between the learners, educators, the school governing body and the community at large. This change occurs under the guidance of the third principal, Ms. Grace Letsatsi.

The final episode of the series illustrates the establishment of order, governed by a new 'principle' (pun intended). The school *per se* undergoes a physical metamorphosis and the community of Supatsela celebrates the conclusion of another academic year and the triumph of good over evil. The 'happy ending' is 'consummated' by the realisation of romantic relationships between Zoe and Edwin, Thiza and Hazel and Nomsa and Javas.

Receptions

Newspapers all over the country carried letters from irate parents and community leaders blaming the programme for setting antisocial trends, reviewers raved about the realism, and the black teenagers nodded their heads that someone understood the dilemmas they faced each day both inside and outside their classrooms (Oppelt 1999: 14).

The above quotation bears testament to the overwhelming response to the series. It also provides insight into issues on black youth, education, representation and reality that will form part of the ensuing discussion. However, before turning to this, it is important to assess the methodology used in my research, which informs the discussion at large. The following section will briefly contextualise *Yizo Yizo* in terms of audience studies where my study will be located at the micro level. In so doing, I hope to illustrate the 'marriage' of the micro and macro where the former will draw from the latter in the form of audience research at a national level.

The Macro

One of the ways in which to assess the popularity of a programme is through macro research in the form of Audience Ratings (ARs). Representative samples of viewers are chosen for what constitutes a national survey, which depends on an audiometer (fitted in homes) to gauge ARs. Audience Ratings is seen as a "technique designed to measure the proportion of viewers watching a programme or channel over a given period of time" (Modoux 1997: 288).

ARs for *Yizo Yizo* were generally substantive (see: Appendix 1a), with the highest recorded ARs (episode six) peaking at 18.4 (2, 105 880 people). Demographically, Nguni and Sotho language speakers constituted the majority of viewers (see: Appendix 1b). To add to this, age ARs suggest the programme was most popular with 13, 16 and 25 year olds with 35 and 50 year olds also constituting a significant number in terms of viewership (see: Appendix 1b). Constraints of time and space dictate that a full investigation of ARs is not possible and as such I have chosen to focus on Nguni language speakers as this group constituted the biggest sample (see:

Appendix 1b). Furthermore, the age demographics most pertinent to this paper, which is inclusive of responses from youth, is that of 16 year olds.

The lowest ARs are recorded at 10.9 for the final episode of the series (see: Appendix 1a). This was due (in part) to the scheduled soccer match on SABC 2 in a 19:12 to 20:49 time slot (see: Appendix 1c). The match in question involved South Africa's national soccer team, *Bafana Bafana* (Gibson 2000). Nevertheless, this remains problematic as the substantial drop in figures suggests that almost half the total viewership of *Yizo Yizo* did not see episode thirteen. The final episode of the series is integral to the story in so far as the 'culture of learning and teaching' is finally established.

Aired on SABC 1, 10 March 1999, from 20:33 to 21:02, the highest watched episode of *Yizo Yizo*, episode six (see: Appendix 1d), competed with the following programmes on the other channels of the national public service broadcaster, SABC, and it's primary opposition, E-TV⁷:

- *The Promised Land*, on SABC 2, from 19:59 to 20:53 (see: Appendix 1c).
- *Homicide: Life on the Street*, on SABC 3, from 20:33 to 21:19 (see: Appendix 1e).
- *Fantasy Island*, on E-TV, from 20:00 to 20:51 (see: Appendix 1f).

The Micro

At the outset of this project, I had decided that the best way to approach a study of this nature was to pursue a reception analysis. To this extent, I was concerned with the 'text' and its 'recipients', believing these to be "complementary elements of one enquiry which thus addresses both the discursive and the social aspects of communication" (Jensen 1991b: 135). Viewed within the context of this research, a reception analysis would therefore illustrate 'how' black⁸ youth "actively and creatively make their own meaning and create their own culture, rather than passively absorb pre-given meanings imposed on them" (Ang 1996: 136).

⁷ To this extent M-Net's figures are not included in data.

⁸ My decision to focus on black youth is connected to audience research, which illustrates black youths (thus suggesting heterogeneity) constituted the largest sample of viewers.

I decided that group discussions and interactions would provide the necessary insight into selected perceptions of *Yizo Yizo*. This choice was based the belief that qualitative research methodology allows for a more in-depth analysis in which meaning and experience (as opposed to information and experiment in quantitative methodology) are foreground (Jensen 1991a). I thus proceeded with focus group research, believing that these "groups create settings in which diverse perceptions, judgements, and experiences concerning particular topics can surface" (Lindlof 1995: 174).

Informed by the aims of the proposed research, preliminary audience research and macro studies (as outlined above), the following requirements were specified for the composition of focus group interviews (conducted in KwaZulu-Natal):

Six to ten (6-10), Black South African learners/students; 16 - 20 years of age; males and females (equitable in gender composition); comfortable with conversing in English; and residing in both suburban and township areas.

Learning institutions were chosen as the series not only deals with issues applicable to education, but is also a product of SABC Education and the Department of Education. In so doing, I conducted focus group interviews in one school, one technikon and one university (Wentworth Secondary, M. L. Sultan Technikon and UND, respectively) where each lasted approximately one and half-hours.

The twenty-four participants from the interviews each contributed to the dynamic group interaction and responses, which proved particularly rewarding and insightful. However, having planned to transcribe these interviews after all were completed proved unsuccessful. Although the beginnings of all interviews have been successfully transcribed, the bulk of two of these focus group interviews are inaudible and thus proved problematic in presenting accurate, completed data. Part of the reason for this however, lies in the very nature of focus group interviews. That is, I was adamant to obtain opinions/responses in a free-flowing environment, such that the only structure to group discussions took the form of questions (see: Appendix 2). Nevertheless, the reliance on focus group interviews for the purpose of this dissertation has been curtailed and therefore included as anecdotal information.

The primary qualitative research upon which this paper is dependent takes the form of in-depth interviews. A personal interview was conducted at SABC Education with the 'Programme Manager for youth, adult and public education', Siven Maslomoney (2000) and with the two directors of *Yizo Yizo* (who are also part of the writing team), Angus Gibson (2000) and Teboho Mahlatsi (2000).

Complementary to the interviews is a quantitative analysis, in the form of a questionnaire, which not only allowed for a much larger sample but also rectified the uncertainty related to quantifying data from focus group research (as mentioned above) (Brown & Dowling 1998)⁹.

The requirements for respondents to questionnaires were the same as those for focus group research except for specification vis-à-vis location. Although most completed questionnaires were carried out within and around Durban (KwaZulu-Natal), some were also carried out in Johannesburg (Gauteng). Unfortunately, the lack of an equitable balance in responses to questionnaires limited a further comparative analysis in terms of region/province.

Nevertheless, of the fifty-six returned questionnaires, only fifty-one were utilised in the measurement stage of research (two were incomplete spoilt papers whilst the remaining three fell outside age specifications -they believed they were youth and therefore insisted on filling in questionnaires). To this extent, the following illustrates a breakdown of responses to questionnaires per learning/academic institution:

- 12 respondents from Zwelibanzi High (KwaZulu-Natal)
 - 9 respondents from Holy Family College (Gauteng)
 - 3 respondents from RAU (Gauteng)
 - 8 respondents from UND (KwaZulu-Natal)
 - 10 respondents from Wentworth Secondary (KwaZulu-Natal)
 - 9 respondents from M. L. Sultan Technikon (KwaZulu-Natal)
- (27 respondents were female and 24 respondents were male)

⁹ The primary aim of utilising questionnaires in the first place, was to gauge if the focus group research reflected general perceptions ascertained from responses to questionnaires. A further aim was to allow for a comparative analysis of perceptions gauged in a more *restrictive* format (questionnaire) and in a more *open* format (focus group interviews). Naturally these aims were hindered by the limitations to the focus group research (as mentioned earlier).

The questionnaire comprised a total of 16 questions, which are a mixture of closed and open-ended questions (see: Appendix 3). Forced choice (closed) questions are significant to reliability particularly with respect to the process of measuring and tabulating responses (Priest 1996). The 'process' attentive qualitative section of this questionnaire includes 'open-ended' questions, which allows for responses that are indicative of personal experience (Jensen 1991a).

Yizo Yizo Questionnaire

The total number of completed questionnaires that will be analysed in this section is fifty-one (51). Some respondents did not comment on all questions as certain questions applied to specific people only (for example, Question 12(b) is only supposed to be answered if respondents choose 'no' for 12(a)).

The findings of the audience study - questionnaire- will be divided into the following focus areas:

1. Issues of viewership;
2. Character assessment;
3. Issues specific to areas of investigation in this paper:
 - (a) **Text and context** (supplementary material/ aims)
 - (b) **Representation** (gender/ violence/ reality)

Responses pertinent to the first two areas are illustrated below. The following data must be borne in mind for the remainder of the paper, as it will feed into the broader discussion. It is presented here as statistical information so as to provide insight into general issues related to viewing and should therefore, not be assessed in isolation. Furthermore, responses related to character assessment provide the reader with a general account of those characters perceived in a somewhat favourable light. This is particularly important to this discussion as it is connected to questions of identification and more importantly, issues of representation.

Viewership

All respondents to questionnaires (100%) indicated that they had indeed watched *Yizo Yizo*. Of a total of 51 responses, 53% were female and 47% male (see: figure 1.1). A total of 65% of respondents had watched all episodes with 20% having watched between five and ten episodes, followed by 15% who had watched only two to five episodes of the series (see: figure 1.2).

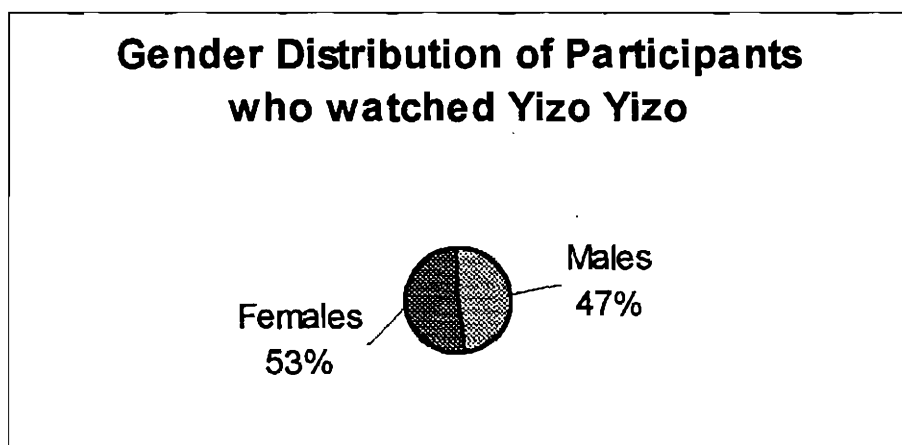


Figure 1.1

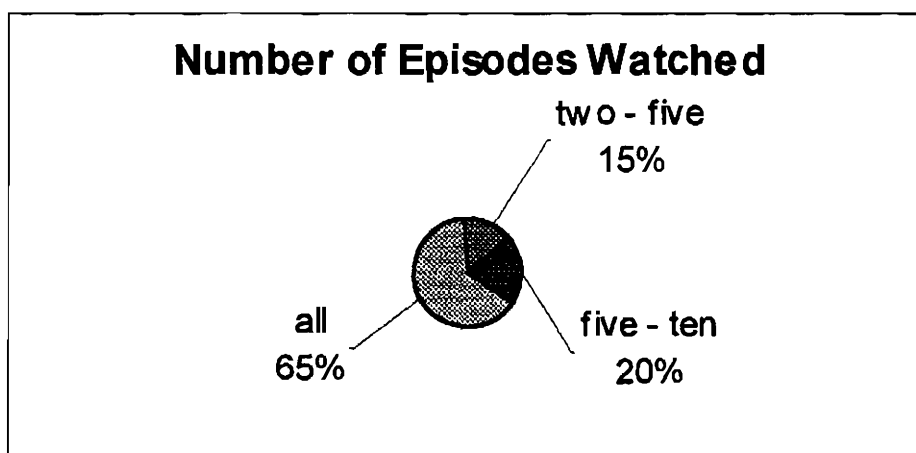


Figure 1.2

The majority of respondents (98%) indicated having watched the programme at 'home' (see: figure 1.3). Furthermore, 92% of respondents stated they were in the company of family members (see: figure 1.4).

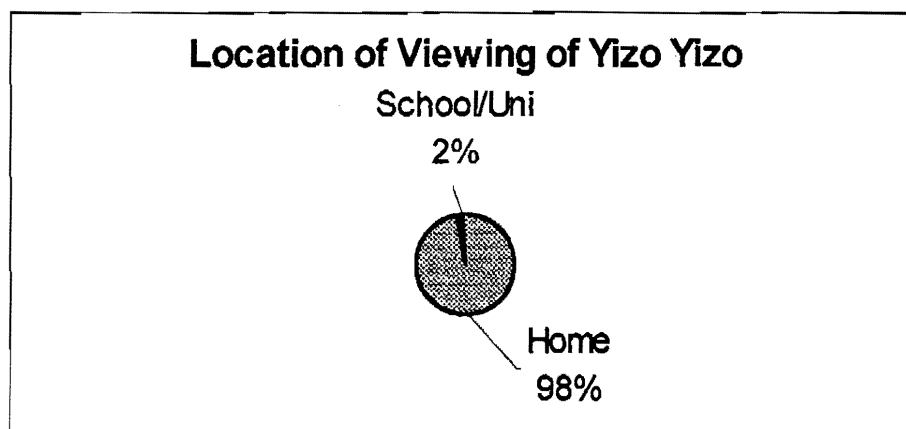


Figure 1.3

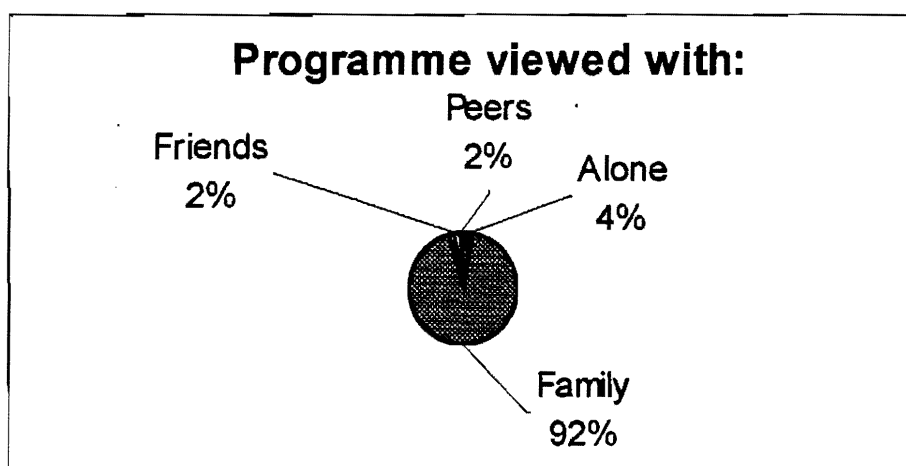


Figure 1.4

Character assessment

Of the characters chosen, the four protagonists (Javas, Nomsa, Thiza and Hazel) who are high school learners in the series, rated amongst the highest in responses to questions on favourite characters. Of a total of 45 responses to favourite characters, 18% of respondents chose Javas, who was seen as a 'good leader' (see: figure 2.1). Dudu (learner who was raped in episode nine) who was liked for her 'innocence' and her 'true character' received only 4% of favourable responses. Hazel, who was also raped (episode six) was admired as a 'true reflection of a hard-working township schoolgirl'.

The following educators were also included in the list: the third principal who epitomised new leadership, Grace; the new and young part-time English teacher, Zoe; and the caring and faithful Science teacher, Edwin. Respondents felt that Grace was 'understanding', 'strong' and 'confident'. Zoe was viewed as 'sociable' and having 'good teaching methods' and Edwin was seen as having 'integrity'.

Characters who were positioned as gangsters/thugs or people involved in some form of criminal activity or violence, also featured as favourite characters. Papa Action, seen as 'real', was chosen as third favourite character, while Chester, Gunman and Mr. Mthembu proved more popular than Edwin, Zakes and Bra Gibb who received only 2% of the total responses.

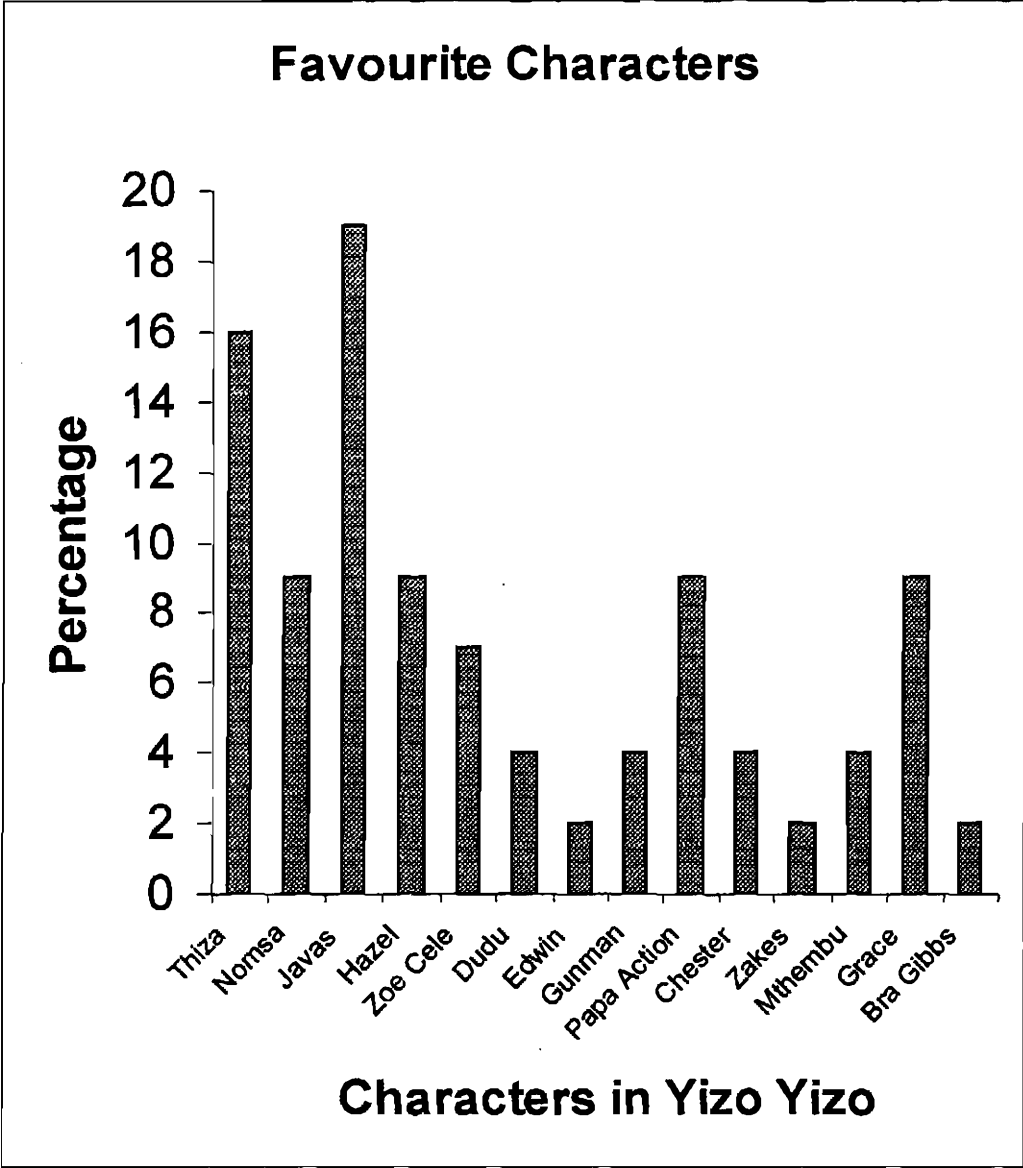


Figure 2.1

In response to perceptions pertaining to characters with strong personalities, 20% of 45 respondents chose Javas as the strongest character (see: figure 2.2). Hazel, Zoe and Nomsa followed with 16%, 13% and 11% respectively. Whereas Hazel is admired for her 'determination' and perseverance, Dudu, who received 7% of favourable responses, is admired for her bravery. Dudu's position as fifth favourite character is shared with Papa Action (one of the thugs who raped her) who is seen as 'courageous to act as a gangster'. Similar responses were given for Chester who received also received 7% of favourable responses.

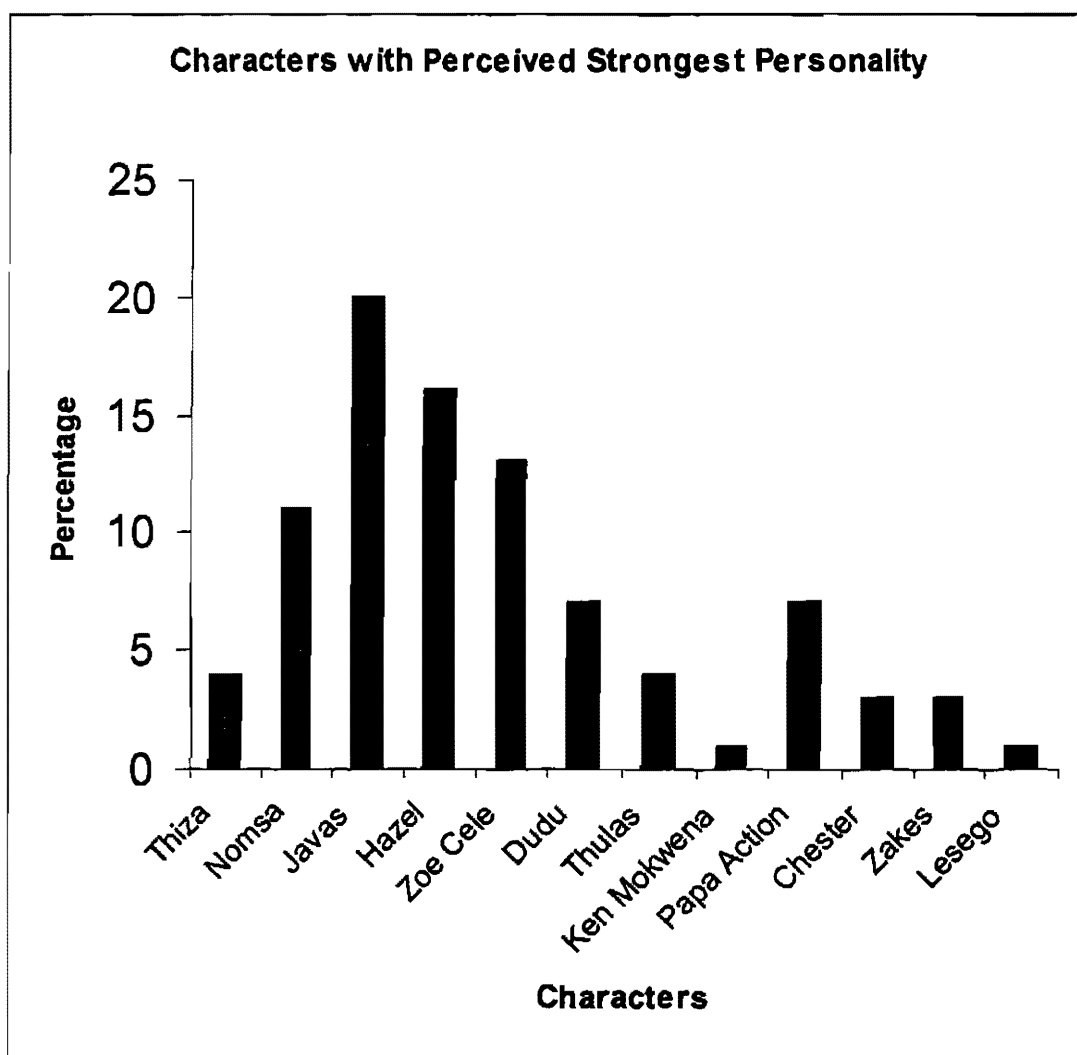


Figure 2.2

Section Two: Text and context

Yizo Yizo in the context of South Africa

Before embarking on this study, preliminary investigations revealed that there is very little research in South Africa that deals with the triad: youth, television and violence. One of the few studies to interrogate youth and violence is that of Gill Straker (1992), which focuses on the "psychological effects of violence on township youth in South Africa". However, as with other material (Meer 1989), research interrogating violence appeared to focus on so-called 'ethnic' strife, taxi violence and political violence contextualised in the period preceding the first democratic South African elections.

I was particularly concerned with Straker's work, which appeared most pertinent to this dissertation (inclusive of representations of violence). The most significant aspect of this research is the author's assertions regarding the "general culture of violence which prevails in ghettos" (1992: 52). It is indeed not the purpose of this paper to critique the assumptions fraught in such an assertion, nor to debate the 'validity' of such a statement. Rather, my concern lies with the author's choice of words - the language and meaning implicit in the statement - for this presents insight into general perceptions of township life.

The relationship between language and meaning, as mentioned earlier, is important to the ensuing discussion. Language in the context of this research is defined as that beyond the basic conception of language as a communicative form. Instead, I follow Andrew Favell's assertions (who draws on Barthes) that language be should understood "as a series of power operations which construct and determine the arrangements and limits of the world within which we find ourselves" (1999: 4). The choice of words used by Straker (1992: 52) in the above quotation suggests violence as endemic in townships. To add to this, the word 'ghettos', conjures up images of representations of American inner-city states where drive-by shootings, drug peddling and poverty is associated with African-American youth in particular, as seen in

Hollywood films such as John Singleton's, *Boyz N the Hood*, and Allan & Albert Hughes' *Menace II Society*. It is my contention that Straker's (1992) interpretation of township life (evident in this general statement) - that impacts her extensive research on the psychological effects of violence - panders to representing 'the myth' of township life. To this extent, Straker's (1992: 52) assertion about the "general culture of violence, which prevails in ghettos" works 'non-consciously' by naturalising cultural assumptions (O'Sullivan *et al* 1994). By associating violence and townships such that the one appears synonymous with the other, Straker (1992) perpetuates the myth of violence as a particular characteristic of black life. To this extent, she resorts to symbolic representations of black people as perpetrators of violence.

Yizo Yizo is located within a context of socio-political injustices sustained by historically specific inequity. Although it is not the purpose of this paper to debate the bias of certain reports of crime, it is important to articulate that this too contributes to the context that *Yizo Yizo* finds itself in. Nevertheless, it is self evident that South Africa is dogged by reports of crime as a particular form of violence. Cover stories declaring 'Fear grips Overport' (Veerasamy 2000) and 'Crime still rattles SA's skilled' (Bennett 2000) are all too frequent. Although restrictions of time and space limit a discussion on the nature of violence in South Africa, I am supportive and mindful of the importance of the historical on present social conditions. As Thipanyane (1992:35) purports,

It is unquestionable that the degraded and squalid lifestyle most of our fellow citizens find themselves in, is directly or indirectly caused by the present system of government [the apartheid regime] in South Africa. It also cannot be disputed that many of our people have been severely brutalised by the apartheid regime. All these factors are a simple recipe for disaster and an increasing degree of social change.

Two years after Thipanyane's contribution to the 'International Conference on the Rights of the Child', research documenting public perceptions of crime in South Africa was published by the HSRC. This research stated that "Twice the proportion of the blacks (41 percent) compared to that of the whites (20 percent) reported that fear of crime had a negative effect on the quality of their lives to a great extent" (Glanz

1994: 36). It would indeed be interesting to observe trends in studies documenting perceptions of crime post-*apartheid*, where the previous dispensation allowed for crime to be contained in townships¹⁰. Nevertheless the above highlights the history of concern about social violence.

What is important to this paper are the choices included in representing violence in a dramatic form to audiences living the reality. Although it is not the intention of this paper to debate the correlation of violent behaviour and viewing of violent programming, it is important to accredit the history of this research. There is indeed a plethora of research documenting violence in television programming for example (Gunter 1985) and the effects of the media on society (Barker & Petley 1997). Indeed, research on viewing practices of 'survivors' of rape or abuse in relation to violent programming is particularly pertinent to this discussion (Schlessinger *et al* 1992).

Due in part to the wealth of research on violence in television programming, certain public service broadcasters like the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) for example, have chosen rather to curtail representations of violence on television so as to circumvent (complaints about) the potential harmful 'effects' of violence in relation to aggressive behaviour. To this extent, British regulatory bodies are committed to ongoing research on violence and 'taste and decency' in broadcasting (Hargrave 1991). In light of this, questions pertaining to the scheduling of *Yizo Yizo* cannot be overlooked. If one accepts that *Yizo Yizo* includes 'bad' language (swearing and sexual innuendoes) as well as scenes of violence, then issues of taste and decency are relevant to the production of meaning. However, the importance of language in creating authentic representations and 'telling it like it is' cannot be overlooked (Gibson 2000).

Yizo Yizo employs colloquial language and 'slang' instead of the more traditional, conservative usage of the English language presumably because this is reflective of the language spoken by township high school youth. The series furthermore challenges the hegemony of English by utilising vernacular languages and instead relying on subtitles for the benefit of audiences unfamiliar with the majority of

¹⁰ Crime in post - *apartheid* South Africa, refers to crime in a democratic South Africa -where the past informs and impacts the present. To this extent, *apartheid* is seen as a contributing factor to the present 'problem' of crime.

national languages. Gibson (2000) suggests that South African audiences approach local productions with expectations unlike that utilised in decoding American drama's like *Homicide: Life on the Street*. He asserts, furthermore, that the 'legacy' of *apartheid*-style viewing contributed to the writers of the series pre-empting dissent vis-à-vis the language used in *Yizo Yizo* (Gibson 2000).

The significance of this lies in the extensive criticism against *Yizo Yizo* from parents in particular as alluded to in the opening quotation of this section (Oppelt 1999) and confirmed by Gibson, Mahlatsi and Maslomoney (2000).

Education

Yizo Yizo has its roots in the commissioning process orchestrated by SABC Education and the Department of Education who wanted to address the problems facing township schools and 'how' those schools infested with social problems (drugs and crime) can transform themselves (Mahlatsi 2000). A further aim of the series is to the "provide answers to crises that were happening in schools" as well as "to create some kind of platform for debate" (Mahlatsi 2000). Having secured the tender, Laduma Film Factory/Shooting Party, set about producing the series, which is created and written by: Peter Esterhuysen, Angus Gibson, Teboho Mahlatsi, Mtutuzeli Matshaba and Harriet Perlman.

According to director, Teboho Mahlatsi, *Yizo Yizo* can be defined as "an educational drama series" in which producers took the 'liberty' of creating characters that young people could identify with, instead of resorting to "putting the messages [down] their throats" (Mahlatsi 2000). This approach appears compatible with SABC Education which asserts that it strives to "deliver quality programming designed to promote critical thinking and problem solving in young and old viewers alike" (SABC Education Website (A)). Furthermore, supplementary material inclusive of teachers notes and a *Yizo Yizo* magazine is to be used in schools by learners and educators to generate debate around issues pertinent to the series, within the framework of the "Pillars of the COLTS campaign" (Macfarlane 1999:6).

The above illustrates the connection between *Yizo Yizo* and education. SABC Education is in partnership the Department of Education in so far as they work together "on one common vision: that is to exploit the possibility, or to exploit the potential of television for education in this country" (Maslomoney 2000). Moreover, the goals of the series (confronting denial about the culture of learning; creating a platform for debate; shifting the dialogue centre-stage) are indicative of the educative impetus of the series. That is, by creating dialogue and generating debate, the series would educate audiences about the crisis in township schools. With regards to impacting the discourse of education, the approach taken included challenging existing models of educational broadcasting, which Maslomoney sees as essentially 'message-driven'. To this extent, the series aimed to challenge message-driven programmes resembling the 'banking approach' to education: "what *Yizo Yizo* tried to achieve in education, was to create discourse, a dialogue amongst our communities" (2000). Furthermore, "amongst ordinary people, for the first time (in a long time, since I think probably the '80's) did ordinary parents and ordinary young kids suddenly think that education is important and we need to engage with this" (Maslomoney 2000).

Furthermore, *Yizo Yizo* must be seen in the light of recent national developments with regards to education within the framework of providing learning opportunities to all. To this extent, the philosophy of 'Lifelong Learning' is implicit in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). An important aspect of this new approach to education included the launch of Curriculum 2005, which is constitutive of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) (SABC Education Website (B)). It is within this context that *Yizo Yizo* be seen as an educative programme. That is, it adheres to one of the key principles of this approach to learning: "Schools and educators control the condition of success" (Potenza 2000:2). This theme is implicit in the series such that the transformation and subsequent success of Supatsela High is dependent on its learners and educators.

Youth

The choice of youth as a focus of this research is inextricably connected to the fact that high school learners/youth constitute part of the target market that *Yizo Yizo* was aimed at. On a more general level, the need for research that focuses on youth is

connected to the development of the 'youth market' in South Africa. The establishment of the National Youth Commission attests to this growth and highlights the importance of recognising the anxieties of youth (e.g. unemployment) as well as their contributions to this country (Amupadhi 1998).

For the purpose of this research, youth denotes teenagers between the ages of 16 and 20. This is also the age group that focus groups and questionnaires incorporated. However, I am mindful of the fact that youth generally refers to the group between children and adults which is problematic within itself and that excluding psychological and physiological definitions of age, youth can also be considered as people between the ages of 13 and 19, or 14 and 25. (Amit-Talai & Wulff 1995). Kirsten Drotner (2000:150) echoes problems pertaining to distinctions surrounding 'what' constitutes youth:

While 'effects' scholars are often diligent to point to psychological differences, it is a problem that few studies make theoretical distinctions between childhood and youth as historically and socially located categories, hence tending to conflate conceptual specifications of age and class.

Most studies on subculture and resistance came out of the work of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at the University of Birmingham (Hall & Jefferson 1977; Hebdige 1979). Studies emanating from the Birmingham School focused primarily on working-class youth subcultures where cultural production was seen in the context of 'class'. These studies were characterised by issues of resistance which were seen in the context of oppression, but they "also helped to reinforce the view of youth as primarily passive" (Wulff 1995). Recent studies on youth cultural processes, prefer instead to focus on conceptualising youth as 'active agents' (Amit-Talai & Wulff 1995). This is applicable to discussions on the local genre of music *Kwaito*, which can best be described as an eclectic mix of genres, including *Rap*, *MBaxanga* (traditional music), *Sepantsula*, *Dance*, *Hip-Hop*, *Acid Jazz*, and *Drum 'n Bass*.

Kwaito emerged from the townships and represented a means of articulating anxieties particular to township youth. As such is emerged as not only a form of resistance by township youth, but also as a celebration of youth, black youth, black township youth

culture. Seen as a product of liberation, of post *apartheid* empowerment, *Kwaito* is creatively re-articulating the expressive culture of *Sepantsula*¹¹. In general, the lyrics of *Kwaito* tracks engage political and social anxieties like unemployment¹² as well as other interests such as love, sex independence, leisure and so on¹³. The style of artists reflects the fusion of American Hip-Hop culture with African heritage (see: *Yizo Yizo* CD by Ghetto Ruff *et al*).

Following Marc Schade-Poulsen's (1995:88) sentiments of the Algerian genre of music, *Rai*, one of the reasons for the success of *Kwaito* is that it has "modernized an older repertoire and put it on a level of universal pop music while keeping with Algerian [read South African] character". The older repertoire in the case of South Africa is *Mbaxanga* and *Sepantsula*.

Maria McCloy's (1997) research on the emergence and developing youth market confirms that although black youth favour American *R&B* and *hip-hop* acts, "78% of respondents said *Kwaito* was their favourite music". *Kwaito* is therefore integral to the narrative of *Yizo Yizo* as it affirms the relationship between the series and its youth audiences. Furthermore, *Kwaito* is of particular importance as it is intrinsically connected to the notion of authenticating 'real-life' township experiences and is 'essential' to creating the ambience conducive to an 'accurate' reflection of township life. Indeed, as witnessed in the series itself, not only are local radio stations renowned for support of *Kwaito* -like Yfm- employed anecdotally in the series, but 'real life' *Kwaito* artists, TKZee make an appearance in the final episode of the series, at the 'end-of-year bash' celebrations. To this extent they (TKZee) contribute to the *horizontal intertextuality* of the series where *Kwaito* artists are interconnected to the primary text, *Yizo Yizo* (Fiske 1987:108). Gibson (2000) confirms the deliberate use of *Kwaito* -the paradigmatic choice of *Kwaito* as opposed to the use of *Rock* or *Brit-Pop*:

Well, the music was pretty much what students listened to. We wanted to

¹¹ I am grateful to Jeff Sehume for highlighting this relationship.

¹² See Michael Brake's (1985) account of subcultures in relation to social problems.

¹³ In this instance, leisure (for example) is articulated within the paradigm of resistant cultural processes. I do however recognise that needs, and experiences of leisure can operate within the parameters set by capitalism and as being fundamentally defined and determined by capitalism (see also: Frith 1981).

represent...it's something that again and again [students] said that the reason they really liked this music was because when they listen to it, they hear the sounds that they listen to. The songs would be like the songs that they'd hear in the taxis and in their own homes and that is important for us.

Kwaito music forms part of the negotiation of cultural processes by black South African youth. It is also *Kwaito* music, which forms the basis of the success and popularity of the *Yizo Yizo* soundtrack (*Yizo Yizo* CD by Ghetto Ruff *et al*). The familiarity of this soundtrack is confirmed by 74% of respondents to the questionnaire indicating that they or someone they knew had bought or dubbed the soundtrack (see figure 3).

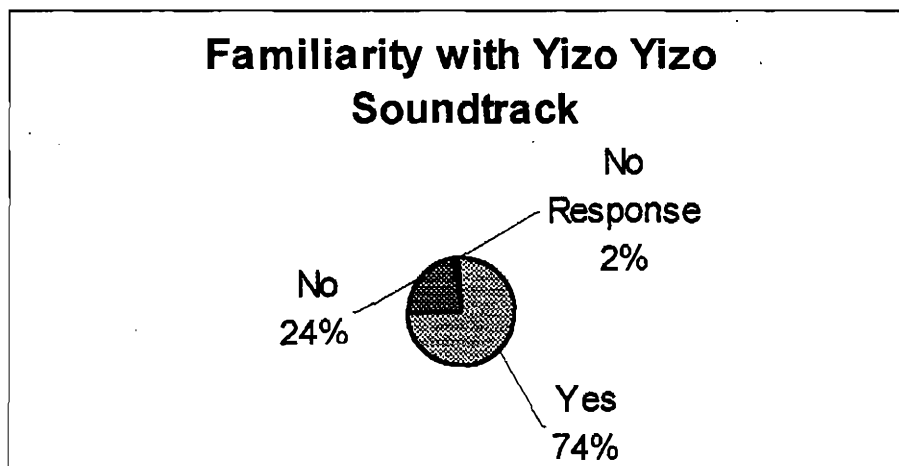


Figure 3

The success of the title track is confirmed by responses to the questionnaire in which the majority of respondents (49%) listed *Yizo Yizo* as the track with which they were most familiar. Moreover, the song *Yizo Yizo* contributed to creating a sense of identification with the programme: "when you listened to it, you'd automatically think of the series" (Mahlatsi 2000). This illustrates the reciprocity between the series and the album that refers to it explicitly. Fiske (1987: 108) refers to this as *vertical intertextuality*, which can also be applied to the relationship between the series and supplementary material (mentioned in the discussion on education).

Although the history of *Kwaito* is not well documented, the proliferation of new

Kwaito acts and the continuation of those accredited for its genesis illustrates its 'phenomenal' success (*Arthur Mafokate*, considered the 'king of *Kwaito*', continues to perform and produce this genre of music). Furthermore, the advent of Internet sites devoted to this genre of music and to revellers attests to *Kwaito* entering the global market (Sekgabela 1999). However, restrictions of time and space (and limited information), do not allow for an adequate interrogation of *Kwaito* particularly in relation to the contradictions of this subversive (originally) text: issues of commodification and representations of black 'Africanness'.

It is however important to highlight the use of black local musicians (through the soundtrack and on-screen appearance of TKZee for example) who lend an element of authenticity to the text. This is compounded by the very nature of *Kwaito*, which can be viewed as a celebration of youth culture, as an indelible asset to black South African youth culture, or as a form of resistance (Mashego 2000). This is not unlike the use of African American *Rap* and *Hip-Hop* musicians to cement the affiliation to 'real life' African-American experiences (Smith 1992). Nevertheless, the following section will examine issues of representation vis-à-vis violence, gender relations and the 'authentic' (black) township high school experience.

Section Three: Representations

Meaning: language and signs

The following section will interrogate the use of language, which is able to construct meaning, in framing the identity of the school and those related to it. The purpose of this analysis is to explore 'whether or not' and to 'what' extent certain images and representations were necessary to the story. In so doing, one is able to interrogate further the question of 'what' is learned about violence and gender relations through representations in *Yizo Yizo*.

The aims of the series included creating dialogue and debate about township high schools and to confront denial of the present state of the culture of learning (Gibson, Mahlatsi, Maslamoney, 2000). The following analysis also attempts to assess whether or not these aims and objectives were lost in the style of the programme. This then generates further debate as to the nature of the programme in relation to criticisms levelled against it: Is the inclusion of representations of violence necessary to the story? In other words, to what extent is the level of violence in the series justified? What purpose did the rape scenes serve? Are representations of violence and gender relations in *Yizo Yizo* necessary to articulating the ultimate aim of the narrative? What is the significance of having the series informed by real-life experiences? How does this impact representation? Fundamentally, the ensuing analysis will attempt to assess whether black South African youth were 'enlightened' or educated about the state of education in a crisis school in the township or merely offered entertainment by *Yizo Yizo*?

Supatsela High

Because there are many different and conflicting ways in which meaning about the world can be constructed, it matters profoundly what and who gets represented, [...] and how things, people, events, relationships are represented (Hall 1986:9).

No School! More Sex

School is like serving a long sentence in prison

The above graffiti on a school wall is part of the opening scenes of the television series *Yizo Yizo*. The impression created is that somebody feels that to engage in more sex, is better than to attend school. The second sentence is perhaps more emotional likening school, an Ideological State Apparatus, to a prison, a Repressive State Apparatus (Althusser 1977). The feeling of restraint and of being constricted is compounded by school being compared to a serving a long sentence. School is thus synonymous with an arduous process. Drawing on representations of prison experiences, (either through personal experience, through documentaries or films) the language and meaning of the graffiti (although simplistic) alludes to revealing accounts of attitudes and feelings by the person(s) responsible for the 'vandalism'. A further implication is that the viewer will witness a programme related to education in some way or another. Moreover, this impression is compounded by the use of graffiti, which conjures up images of vandalism, artistic expression, of the need to react against establishment, or of a struggle. The being/s associated with this act is/are presumably a young person/youth.

Episode one is replete with issues related to this context of dissatisfaction, as outlined above. The viewer is introduced to students crammed in someone's house with a beer bottle on Javas' lap. Javas is one of the students of Supatsela High who (as mentioned earlier) appears as the most favoured character for respondents to the questionnaire.

This is the first day of school, 13 January. Reference is made to sex, when the young men discuss dreams and masturbation, and the theme (sex) continues into the next scene where we are introduced to Zakes and his girlfriend in bed. The former draws a gun on his brother, Thiza, who apparently walks in unexpected or uninvited. The viewer has to decide if Zakes is in some kind of trouble, is in hiding, or is protecting himself from someone. As the series progresses we learn that Zakes is a thug, a gangster. He is however a caring criminal as he resorts to 'Robin Hood' antics by buying the school books car-jacked by Chester (one of the gangsters) at the end of episode one, and delivering them (dumping them in the school yard) in the quiet of the night to the school (end of episode two). He is protective over his brother, Thiza

and appears as the 'man' of the house who has chosen a life of crime so as to financially support his brother who would therefore not need to become a criminal.

Thiza is positioned as a quintessential young male learner in *Yizo Yizo*. He is introduced to viewers, dressed in uniform, and looking for money from his brother, Zakes, so as to acquire schoolbooks. We soon learn that he is a diligent learner who is full of aspirations. Zakes' girlfriend comments on Thiza's decision to be a writer: "Oh, that's sexy" are challenged by Zakes who responds: "Sister, behave, I'm talking to my brother"¹⁴. The nameless woman is reprimanded¹⁵.

The above illustration of the first few scenes of the series has been introduced to inform the reader of the context of *Yizo Yizo*. The viewer is introduced to township youth and their various anxieties, concerns and interests. Reference to and symbolic representations of school complement this. At a denotative level, audiences can therefore expect the programme to engage the contradictions of youth, education and township life in general. Although simple is description, the first episode of *Yizo Yizo* establishes a foundation for the series and allows viewers to be interpellated by the circumstances and conditions of township high school life (Althusser 1977). By introducing characters who are not primarily learners, the drama is thus not restricted to 'hailing' black youth attending township high schools, exclusively (Appendix 1b). In addition audiences are hailed on the basis of identification, empathy, sympathy with the themes, characters or style of the programme etc. The process of interpellation vis-à-vis *Yizo Yizo* is strengthened by reference to 'real-life', authenticity, facticity and essentialism. Representations of the 'real' will be examined in the discussion on genre. Let us first turn to representations of violence.

'Acts' of violence

There are various interpretations as to what constitutes a violent act. There are also

¹⁴ Text underlined signifies subtitles. (It is important to note that particular attention was paid to presenting accurate transcriptions of the episodes included in this dissertation. In the event of this not being successfully achieved, the author wishes to highlight that attempts to obtain transcripts and/or original scripts from stakeholders proved unsuccessful).

¹⁵ It is important to note that although violence and gender have been compartmentalised as two separate sections, these will at times, be tackled together. This is primarily due to the nature of the programme: these areas of concern are imbedded in the text at large and at times become lost in the 'drama' of the episodic happenings of *Yizo Yizo*.

various forms of violence: "physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, representational, cognitive", which further contribute to this debate (Fawcett *et al* 1996:1). For example, pulling or shouting at someone may be construed as violent by some and not by others (Hearn 1996). It is for this reason that it is imperative to attempt to define what is meant by violence. The importance of meaning is then embedded in interpretations by the creators, audiences and characters of the series. In other words, each stakeholder approaches the series with individual interpretations of the definition or definitions of violence.

Addressing the issue of violence within a context of increasing social and personal violence is particularly difficult as one risks under-representing or exaggerating violent acts. That is, someone used to violent experiences involving car jacking, or robbery at gunpoint, may not identify with language perceived as violent to those not used to aggressive communication. Nevertheless, I will attempt to provide a general account so as to allow for all that is physically and emotionally harmful to be construed as violent. Recognising that this runs the risk of oversimplification, the following definitions are perhaps best suited to defining violence.

The first definition of violence (recognisably functionalist) refers to "the application of force, action, motive or thought in such a way (overt, covert, direct, indirect) that a person or group is injured, controlled or destroyed in a physical, psychological or spiritual sense" (Van der Merwe in Thipanyane 1992:44). A second definition is one situated within the discourse of violence in television programming. In this regard, violence is perceived as: "the overt expression of physical force (with or without a weapon) against self or other, compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed, or actually hurting or killing" (Gunter & McAlleer 1990:80).

Based on the above definitions, there are indeed various acts that can be construed as violent within the series, *Yizo Yizo*. These include criminal violence like car jacking (also referred to as highjacking) perpetrated by Chester on two separate occasions, the attempted murder of Mr. Edwin Thapelo and Zakes and the rape of Hazel and Dudu for example. These forms of violence are otherwise referred to as 'social violence' (as distinguished from political violence) which is inclusive of arson, assault, and the various forms of abuse (Thipanyane 1992).

The importance of the socio-economic and socio-political context, within which these symbolic representations in *Yizo Yizo* occur, cannot be overstated. South Africa and the international community are faced with continuing reports of youth as victims or perpetrators of violence. Take for example a recent local headline: 'KwaMashu pupils pack guns with their pens' (Ndiyane 2000), or 'Student tells of campus shooting' (Bisetty 2000). Reports about violence in schools in the United States for example, aren't much different: 'Class killing: all teachers ask, could it happen in my school' (Sapa-AP 2000), and 'Schoolboy shoots teacher' (Associated Press 2000).

It is my contention that the contradictions of representations of violence in the series lie at the precise moment of representation where violence is commodified in the process of representing the 'real'. This problematises, rather than addresses the issue of violence in society and (in the case of *Yizo Yizo*) in township high schools. Moreover, violent actions aren't addressed with the intention of promoting a sense of social responsibility or social democracy which an educative drama should and can impart (McQuail 1994). This idea of democracy, tolerance and social responsibility is embedded in the intended 'learning outcomes' of the series, particularly vis-à-vis 'lifeskills, values and attitudes' (COLTS 1999).

Mr. Mthembu's reliance of corporal punishment (which coincidentally is outlawed in South Africa) as a means of discipline is only addressed when Nomsa is seriously injured (repeatedly beaten until she bleeds) and her mother intervenes. In episode two (two episodes prior to Nomsa's incident) Mthembu strikes another learner, Sticks, for challenging the schools code of conduct by wearing his hair in dreadlocks¹⁶. The demise of the authoritarian principal, Mr. Mthembu, should be viewed as a consequence of his actions. Instead he garners sympathy through his resignation and the imminent collapse of 'order' in the school.

¹⁶Mr. Mthembu, the authoritarian principal is recognised by his title alone. At the first staff meeting, he asserts the rules and codes of conduct that 'govern' the school and the need for the 'three golden rules' to be 'drummed' into the new students: "smart dress, cleanliness and discipline". He continues by insisting that students, "must learn to obey without thinking. Habit must win over their minds" (see: episode one).

The chaos that governs the 'reign' of the second principal is positioned in contrast to the original environment of Supatsela High, rather than to the eventual transformation of the school which epitomises a school environment conducive to learning. In other words, the disequilibrium characterised by the episodes five to ten are positioned as a direct result of the collapse of leadership rather than as a consequence of the inefficiency of a principal involved in criminal activity.

Furthermore, one cannot guarantee a consistent viewership in which the same viewers watch all 13 episodes of a series. It is therefore crucial that even if narrative closure is not achieved after each episode (as in the case of *Yizo Yizo*) violent actions need to be addressed in some way or other. That is, audiences needed to be offered choices that promote recourse even if this does not happen in 'real life'. For example, even if Sonnyboy isn't reprimanded immediately for the rape of Hazel, or Papa Action and gang for the rape of Dudu, offering a 'social responsibility' message in the form of 'help lines' or contact details for rape counselling (for example) after the episode, could have contributed to *Yizo Yizo*'s educative potential.

It is however clear from interviews with stakeholders of the series that the issue of narrative closure will be addressed in the next series. *Yizo Yizo II* will include hour-long episodes, allowing the production team to develop on one-dimensional characters like the gangsters (Mahlatsi, Maslomoney 2000). This is crucial to addressing some of the above mentioned grievances and to rethinking representations mentioned below.

To return to the textual analysis then, criminal activity is alluded to in the following exchange between a teacher and student (at registration):

Teacher: "This is not your book, boy"

Student (Bobo): "In this economy, people are forced to take other peoples things."

Later, the young male students discuss their failed attempt to use one book interchangeably so as not to purchase books individually:

Student1: Are you still a thief?

Student2: No, I repossess.

These anecdotal exchanges attest to the socio-political context of *Yizo Yizo*, which reflects broader political anxieties that are connected to the redistribution of land, and to issues of affirmative action. The meaning implicit in the choice of words reflects not only the student's attitude to crime, but also the social context within which this perception emerges. The student's (Bobo's) humorous exchanges are a stark contrast to Thiza's assertions a few scenes later: A life of crime is not for me. Thiza's comments are decisive in establishing characterisation, which is later challenged by peer pressure at the hands of Chester.

The infamous 'toilet scene' involving Papa Action and Bobo highlight another type of violence, bullying. Bobo is forced to submit to Papa Action (a challenge is perceived as a greater threat) and is not assisted by his friends for they are presumably equally afraid of Papa Action.

Papa action (in school uniform) calls Bobo who is taken to the school toilets.

Bobo: Please Papa Action, Not again...I beg you.

Papa Action: Are you finished?

Bobo: *(shakes head)*

Papa Action: Take him.

Thugs take Bobo to the toilet, which is dirty and full of excrement.

Papa Action: Get inside man

Bobo puts his head in the toilet while Papa Action chants: In the name of the father (flushes toilet) ...the spirit, and Satan... (flushes toilet). Eat you dog.

The above description unfortunately does not depict the tense and ominous nature of the scene included in the first episode of the series. Following dominant cinematic codes of representing 'forces of evil', darkness and shadows govern the scene that is shot in lavatory which appears constrictive in space. The use of close-up shots details the mood and thoughts of characters and contributes to the apparent effect of the scene, which is to entice audiences into the actions and the emotions of the characters involved.

Subsequent to Bobo's meeting with Papa Action, his friends taunt him by referring to him as 'chocolate boy'. Issues of bullying are not addressed until the final episodes of

the series where the community's vigilante actions contribute to Chester and Papa Action being imprisoned.

Another form of violence is presented at the end of episode one when a 'driver' sent to deliver schoolbooks to Supatsela High is 'hi-jacked' by Chester and Papa Action (an accomplice). The driver who had stopped to ask for directions to the school, is forced to disembark the vehicle, is given ten Rand (R10) for taxi fare and sent running. This scene occurs during the afternoon in the township and the rapid camera movements contribute to the tense, fast paced atmosphere of the scene. This climactic scene is followed by the end sequence of *Yizo Yizo*. The viewer is left waiting in anticipation for the following scene or episode.

A similar sequence of events occurs at the end of episode seven when Chester continues his attempts to lure Thiza into a life of crime. In this episode, Thiza is accompanying Chester who shows him the merits of being a gangster. These include recognition from certain members of the community, the nice car (red BMW) and the ability to be in control, which is inextricably connected to the possession of a weapon. In the concluding scenes of episode seven, Chester gives Thiza his gun to hold:

Chester: Hold here. Don't be a coward. Take it. It'll give you power. Are you scared? I told you you're a coward.

Later Chester shows his prowess by 'hi-jacking' another unsuspecting motorist.

Chester: Watch me. I'll make you a movie.

Chester (referring to his BMW): Take this car back to the township.

Chester rushes forward and jumps onto the bonnet of a stationary vehicle. He points the gun at the driver and orders them to get out.

Chester then proceeds to demonstrate the power of having a gun, the power of violence. The phallic imagery of the 'gun' complements that of the red BMW as a symbolic penis. This is supported by anecdotal, colloquial references to BMW as Be My Wife. The choice of BMW as Chester's choice of car reflects not only aspirations of class and status, but also reflects sexual drive/libido. Furthermore, it contributes to existing caustic stereotypes that posit BMW as an acronym for 'Black Man's Wife' or 'Black Man's Wish'. Indeed, it can be argued that research informing the series determined the choice of vehicle as 'essential' to authentic representations of local

gangsters. However, it is equally important to assess whether or not these representations are necessary to the story line. In this instance, Chester's 'potent' status is reinforced by not only his possession of the 'weapon', but also by his presence as pivotal to the unfolding events. In other words, instead of the focus being on the 'victim's' of this 'hi-jacking', it is Chester – in control of the gun/phallus- who dominates the scene (Wallace, 1992: 124).

The gun as a weapon and a symbol of violence is again integral to the shooting of Mr. Edwin Thapelo (Science teacher) by thugs, probably in revenge for his reprimanding Papa Action earlier in the episode. A few scenes later, Thulas holds Ken (the second principal who is connected to Bra Gibb, and thugs) hostage. Violence is again employed at the end of episode twelve when Chester shoots Zakes. The scene and episode ends with Thiza in possession of Zakes gun. Again, not only is the audience left anticipating Thiza's actions, but revenge and the spiral of violence is not interrogated until the final episode. In episode thirteen, Thiza refuses to avenge his brothers' shooting and overcomes negative pressures. In so doing, he represents a good role model.

An alternative reading of Thiza's actions for example illustrates that *Yizo Yizo* conforms to dominant representations: his actions perpetuate hegemonic assertions that criminal activity is connected to psychological disposition rather than to socio-economic conditions of existence, for example. That is, Thiza manages to 'overcome' his oppressive social conditions therefore suggesting that those who don't succeed choose not to. Furthermore, representations of gangsterism in *Yizo Yizo* support the dominant ideology which positions this form of criminal activity as a uniquely black township experience (hooks, 1994).

In a different way, the gun/phallus contributes to the closure of episode three for example. A netball match is taking place between Supatsela and another high school. Chester and Papa Action are spectators, the latter of whom appears anxious as he has placed a bet on his school, Supatsela High thus expecting a victory from his team:

Chester (*drives onto the netball court*): "Hello my love..." Get into the car and come and serve me. Am I talking or shitting?

Chester (*grabs Hazel*): Come here.

Mantwa: Leave me and my friend alone. What are you doing, don't touch me.

Chester (to Mantwa): What's with you?

Chester (to Hazel): You come here.

As this struggle continues, Sonnyboy (Hazel's friend who is a taxi driver) arrives. He gets out of his vehicle (taxi) and proceeds toward the court. The audience is in the privileged position of seeing that Sonnyboy is in possession of a gun, which is seen as he situates the weapon onto his belt at the back of his trousers.

Chester (grabbing Hazel): You come here.

Sonnyboy: (swears) Hey you shitty, wise guy, don't make me mad. Take your dirty hands off my girl.

Chester: You call this a woman? You know what? If you're a hero, come piss on my face.

Sonnyboy: Don't point at me.

Chester turns direction and faces his back to Sonnyboy

Sonnyboy: ...hey boy! you're just a boy.

Chester walks away and then pulls out his gun. Everyone ducks.

Having established power by just showing his gun, Chester then puts the gun away and gets in his car. Sonnyboy - with gun in hand- has 'rescued' Hazel and opens the door for her to get into the taxi. Acting as a chivalrous gentleman who is defending his honour and saving his 'his girl', Sonnyboy is positioned as 'hero' and Chester as 'villain'. Although both characters are in possession of weapons, it is Sonnyboy who is positioned as a force of good. He has been pursuing Hazel since the beginning of episode two, while Chester has already been situated within the framework of binary opposites as the evil character.

A further deconstruction of this classic narrative structure, utilising Vladimir Propp's analysis of fairytales, illustrates the above scene in relation to the six sections of the thirty-two narrative functions (Fiske 1987:135): In terms of *preparation*, Chester (as villain) attempts to gain 'possession' of the 'victim'. *Complication* occurs when Sonnyboy (the hero) arrives and sees the villains in action and then plans to assist or save the 'victim'. The *magical agent* - the weapon in this instance- assists the hero who is now *transferred* to the general location, where *struggle* ensues. The villain is

defeated. That is Chester loses his battle over possession of Hazel and the victim and hero are able to *return* home. This is confirmed by comments in the final scenes of episode three:

Mantwa: ...You're too late, she was saved by her boyfriend.

Mantwa's comments thus represent the sixth section of the narrative structure where the hero gains *recognition*. Episode three finally ends with the departure of the trademark 'red BMW' transporting Chester and entourage in a blaze of dust.

Restrictions of time and space limit a thorough examination of *Yizo Yizo*'s narrative structure, but reference to this (narrative structure) contributes to the discussion on the 'groundbreaking' nature of the series. The above outline illustrates a coherence (albeit general) between the narrative structure of *Yizo Yizo* and that of other texts. Todorov's analysis of the social is as applicable to deconstructing the series, as Propp's analysis of the individual (Fiske 1987). With regards to the former, *Yizo Yizo* begins with a state of equilibrium, proceeds into a disequilibrium (characterised by disruption of the original state of harmony as a result of various events) until finally equilibrium is regained -which is preferable to the first state of equilibrium.

The final episode of the series is reflective of the positive transformation of Supatsela High. Grace Letsatsi, the third principal, offers a new approach to leadership that restores the 'culture of learning and teaching' in the school. This is confirmed by Mahlatsi's (2000) outline of the aesthetics of the programme:

We said, from episode one to six is gonna be the first phase, and that [...] has its own very specific look. The first phase has this principal that rules the school with a very sort of iron hand [...] and the style that we created, the visual look of it, you know, goes with that. The way it's shot is very traditional. Everything is in wide shots and close ups on a tripod. And the second look, when that order collapses [...] the school sort of goes into chaos, the style of film also changes. Everything is hand-held, the images are grainy, and the colour is drained to signify the chaotic state of mind taking place in the school. When the new principal comes in, trying to bring things into order [...] the style also becomes a bit settled. We bring back the colour into the images, to create that kind of graceful state.

This deliberate style of filming bears testament to the generic construction of *Yizo Yizo*. The diachronic outline (chain of events) of the series follows a traditional narrative structure. Similarly, the synchronic (symbolic choice) utilises codes and conventions particular to a drama series.

But what of representations of *violence* in *Yizo Yizo*? Are violent images used to reflect reality or are they used as stylistic devices to accentuate the 'dramatic' nature of the programme? It is my contention that the nature of violent images in the series fulfils both of these aims.

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire believe that the series was not a violent programme. The findings revealed that 55% of all fifty-one respondents believed that *Yizo Yizo* is **not** a violent programme (see: figure 4). 2% were undecided, while the remaining 43% believed the series to be a violent programme. Respondents, who stated that *Yizo Yizo* is a violent programme, referred to various 'types'/forms of violence (which they felt was represented in the series) to support their claims: 'vulgarity', 'vandalism', 'shooting', 'explicit violence', 'rape', 'corporal punishment' etc. Those believing that the series is **not** violent offered the following reasons, for example: 'realistic portrayal', 'brings awareness', 'informative', 'nothing new', 'educative', 'truth'.

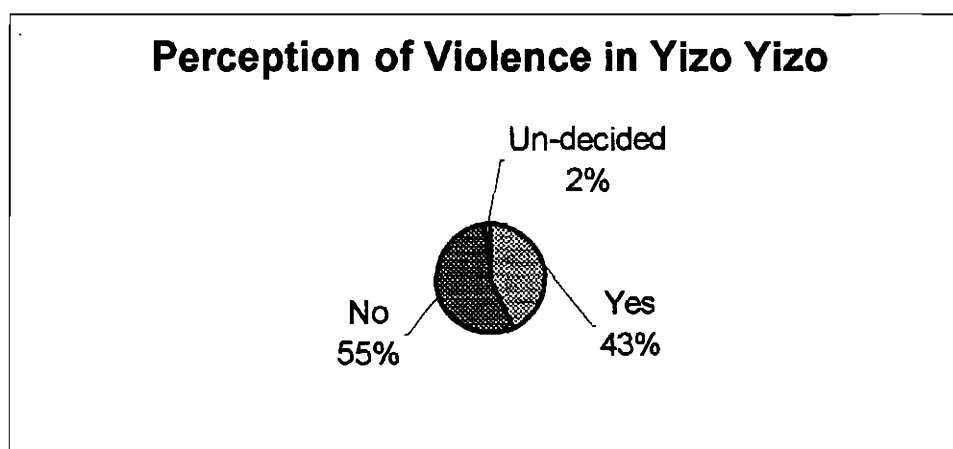


Figure 4

It is worth mentioning that the actual question (question 9, Appendix 3) on violence is essentially flawed. Clearly, definitions of violence are subjective, particularly in relation to questions on reality. Respondents who stated that the series is not violent listed 'reality' as a reason. This in itself illustrates the difficulty of establishing the nature of perceptions of violence in the series and is compounded by the use of a restrictive (closed) question.

However the responses do demonstrate that the margin between those viewing the series as violent, and those viewing it as not being violent does not provide for unanimous results. A similar trend emerges in responses to the question on the portrayal of female characters (question 8, Appendix 3) which will be presented in the latter part of the following section.

Representation of gender relations

Episode six illustrates the new rule at Supatsela High with Mthembu being replaced by Ken Mokwena as 'acting' Principal. The first few scenes of episode six deal with familial relations between Zakes' grandmother who believes that his criminal activity is the devil's work. Thiza is given a 'pep' talk by his older brother who warns that getting girls (Hazel) into his head will make him (Thiza) a "hobo". Later, Chester attempts to lure Thiza further into a life of corruption and uses Thiza's feelings towards Hazel by suggesting that Zakes would want him (Chester) to teach Thiza about girls and money. Thiza is then forced to drink alcohol and "become a man".

A few scenes later, Thiza, who is drunk and in the company of Chester and Papa Action (who are smoking marijuana) witnesses Sonnyboy's arrival. The following montage represents the chaotic atmosphere. The camera movements are quick, and unstable with the pandemonium at the bash complementing the gloom of certain characters and the music contributing to the tense atmosphere.

Hazel (*approaches Sonnyboy*): How do I look in this dress?

Sonnyboy: It's beautiful.

Hazel: Come let's go dance.

Sonnyboy: You know what? Let's go somewhere quiet. It'll be nice. Are you enjoying yourself?

Next scene: Thiza is watching and gets upset and drinks some more.

Next scene: Sonnyboy and Hazel go towards taxi.

Next scene: Drugs and partying continues.

Next scene: Thiza is upset and inhales the marijuana (takes a 'drag' of the 'joint'/'zol').

Next scene: Shot of a burning tyre that is thrown onto the playground.

Sonnyboy (sits close to Hazel and is drinking): Is it nice here?

Hazel: Yeah

Sonnyboy: Are your friends gone?

Hazel: (nods)

Sonnyboy: When are you leaving?

Sonnyboy: Did you tell them at home that you'll be late?

Hazel: I didn't

Sonnyboy: Okay

Sonnyboy: I treat you nicely, don't I?

Hazel: Ja...

Next scene: Shot of graffiti on school wall and P.A (he appears unstable, probably due to drugs) breaks down a classroom door with a hammer and school desks are burnt).

Sonnyboy(while trying to unbutton her shirt): Show me that you appreciate it.

Hazel: Wait, I don't have condoms. I don't want to fall pregnant.

Sonnyboy(makes advances towards her and tries to undress her again): It's not raining, or is it raining?

Hazel: No, what are you doing?

Sonnyboy: Why must I wear a raincoat?

Hazel (continuously trying to fend off Sonnyboy): Wait!

Sonnyboy forces himself on top of her and Hazel fights back and screams.

Sonnyboy: Look here...

Hazel's screams are inaudible (lost in the chaos of the celebrations). Fire and shots of burning furniture interrupt the sequence.

Sonnyboy (forces himself on her) Look at me. Look at me. I'm your boyfriend.

Hazel is crying.

Sonnyboy: You're killing me baby. Look at me. Why do you treat me like a stranger? You're mine. I'm your boyfriend. Don't behave like this. I love you.

Next Scene: End of term party continues. This is inter-cut by shots of fire on the school grounds, then back to a shot of Thiza who is half asleep, followed by a return to the party and then to a shot of Hazel who appearing melancholic. Finally, a shot of the fire is followed by the end sequence of *Yizo Yizo*.

The images of the rape scene being inter-cut by the chaos of the 'bash' add to the dramatic effect of the episode. For example, the image of the tyre being burnt is associated with images of political strife and 'deviance' as it draws from images of 'necklacing' used in the *apartheid* era to reprimand informers in particular. The choice of Thiza's dependence on alcohol and choice of gangsters for company is further questioned, for the montage connects his 'deviance' to Hazel's rejection.

Furthermore, Hazel is ideologically positioned as a product of exchange. She entered a relationship with Sonnyboy who buys her clothes and pays for her to have her hair styled. Her comments (in an earlier episode) to Thiza about her relationship with Sonnyboy (He cares for me, he's good looking and he gives me money) perpetuates the myth of women entering into 'agreement(s)' with partners. Before examining this further, it is important to highlight that Hazel's rejection is positioned to coincide with Thiza's relationship with Chester. Chester's advice to Thiza confirms Hazel's comments: You dress shit! You must look good and they'll come.

In focus group interviews, discussions about Hazel's rape refer to the unspoken 'agreement' between Hazel and Sonnyboy. In addition, there appeared to be

contention surrounding this the first rape and the second rape which involved Dudu, Papa Action and 'gang'. As one participant suggests:

The first one, not to say it was all right but in the first one, there was a relationship that they knew [...] and they were having a good time. It's just that her good time was not going as far as he wanted them to go. And the second one, she just didn't want it...from the word go (Bulelwa, UND focus group, 1999:4).

It is certainly problematic when a viewer draws a distinction between two rapes. The final comment of this response suggests that Hazel might have wanted 'it' (whatever 'it' is) in the beginning. This interpretation could be governed by Hazel's protesting that she did not want to engage in sex, as she did not have a condom. Nevertheless, the comment from the above-mentioned participant illustrates the need for a reassessment of representations of rape, violence against women and female characters in general.

Louisa for example is positioned as a lazy, inefficient teacher willing to offer sexual favours for a ride in a *Pajero* (episode one). Does this make Papa Actions sexual harassment less serious or less traumatic? In episode three, Papa Action sends Louisa (his teacher) a paper-aeroplane that reads: I want to have you for breakfast, lunch and supper. Louisa's challenge to his offensive (for her tone of voice and expression shows that offence is taken) remarks are overshadowed by the image which has already been created of her. The representation of Louisa as elitist is maintained, instead: "Some filthy ghetto rat here is dreaming. I say to you, better wake up and go to the toilet and relieve yourself".

'Patriarchal discourse of gender'

It is indeed problematic to deconstruct gender relations in *Yizo Yizo* as perceptions on what constitutes harassment (for example) are no doubt subjective. Unlike harassment, rape as a particular form of violence against women, is more likely to be accepted as violent behaviour. 'The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women' has defined violence against women as:

Any Act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women - including

threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether in public or private life (Soul City 1999:5).

Sexual harassment, for example, is defined as an “unwanted sexual conduct” which includes suggestive language (sexual innuendo’s) (*Soul City 1999:3*). There are numerous scenes in *Yizo Yizo*, which could be construed as suggestive language where the liberty of female characters is infringed upon, or where female characters are made to feel uncomfortable. For example, in episode one of the series, Nomsa is stopped by three male students and taunted about her uniform.

Student: “Nomsa”, Did you repossess that skirt from your baby sister?

Nomsa: Repossess...don’t mess with me

Student: If I could have those thighs...I would put pepper on them.

This altercation is a less overt expression of sexual harassment than the following incident (also episode one):

Papa Action (to Chester): “It’s time to claim your crown”.

Papa Action (*grabs a young woman*): “Come here...” “...Kiss me...” “...Voetsak”.

Episode one of the series includes various myths, and representations of women, either as objects of the gaze, or in stereotyped roles. Myth in this instance is seen as a culturally determined ideology (that is naturalised) constitutive of stereotypes which “reflects a prejudiced view of persons based on a single characteristic or set of characteristics” (Peach 1998:92). For example, the myth of marriage as central to the existence or life of women is presented in episode one when the young female learners are cleaning the female lavatories and Mantwa concedes to assisting Nomsa and Dudu by exclaiming that it is “good practice for marriage”. This symbolic representation in *Yizo Yizo* perpetuates the dominant patriarchal discourse in which “television’s fictional world apparently places greater emphasis on establishing the marital status of its female characters”(Gunter 1986:9). To add to this, although the circumstances of Mrs Shai and Snowey, for example, are distinctly different, both portrayals emphasise the importance of the domestic domain -a nice home in the case of Mrs Shai versus a corrugated iron home/ shack in the case of Snowey.

The visibility of female characters on television internationally has been proven to be unrepresentative (Gunter 1986). Female characters occupy dialectic sites of struggle. To this end, women are positioned as either good or bad as illustrated in the examples of Mrs Shai and Snowey. Mrs Shai is a hardworking nurse who is positioned as matriarch, while Snowey is the alcohol dependent, young unmarried, unemployed mother representing the 'welfare mother' (Peach 1998:95).

Representations in *Yizo Yizo* are particularly problematic, as they are hegemonic in so far as they elicit consent to the perpetuation of historical ideologies. *Yizo Yizo* contributes to the myth of the maintenance of the nuclear family as a contributing factor to attaining success. For example, the Shai family includes hardworking parents (a mother who is a nurse and a father, a traffic officer) and two children. Nomsa's strength of character, her values and belief systems are connected to her familial environment and her parents employment status merely contribute to her success and security. This representation foregrounds the *lack* of security and guidance in the case of Hazel. This in turn is seen as a contributing factor to her hardship and as a reason for her being seduced by Sonnyboy who offers material gain. In addition, Snowey's position as a single mother is a result of absentee parenting.

Within the context of the feminist discourse of gender, this representation is considerably problematic, as patriarchal guidance appears to guarantee that young men are successful. Javas' father and Mr. Thapelo are instrumental in disciplining and encouraging him, respectively. His success (he proves to be a diligent science student) and his strength of character (he negotiates an end to the hostage drama) is therefore implicitly connected to paternal and patriarchal influence.

Thiza's situation is different in that his brother, Zakes assumes the responsibility of father, with his grandmother as maternal figure. The audiences of *Yizo Yizo* are never introduced to the parent/s of Chester and Papa Action, Dudu and Mantwa for example. This implies that their social maladjustment is directly related to their absentee parents. In the case of Thiza, his brother's criminal activity contributes to him being 'led astray' thus rendering his grandmother's efforts as insufficient and inefficient. If Thiza's family life is viewed in relation to that of Javas, then a further

reading is that the absence of a *father*/father-figure is a contributing factor to failure. This demonstrates how *Yizo Yizo* preserves the culture of patriarchy and the success of the series “reflects its power to confirm hegemonic family values” (Wallace 1992: 125).

‘the Madonna’ and the ‘deviant’: Dudu versus Mantwa...

Women associated with the Madonna are idealized and sentimentalized as pure, good, modest, at once virginal and material (somewhat of a logical contradiction). In stark contrast, women associated with the whore are disdained and treated with contempt as sexually promiscuous and manipulated tempresses (see: Itzen, 1992:58). Women who fail to fit the Madonna image are labelled as whores or lesbians for refusing to conform to the prescribed parameters of women’s sexuality (Peach 1998:92).

The following section will explore further the juxtaposition of certain characters. It is my contention that representations of Dudu and Mantwa conform to stereotypes of women as either ideal woman or as deviant from expectations of what constitutes the ideal. Dudu is the young woman involved in the second rape and Mantwa is positioned as her friend in the series. As mentioned in section one, with regards to character assessment 4% of respondents chose Dudu as their favourite character. Dudu was also chosen for illustrating strength of character and received 7% of favourable responses. Comments on Dudu included her ‘innocence’, ‘true character’ and bravery. A notable absence in responses on character assessment is Mantwa (see: figure 2.1 and 2.2). This section will therefore attempt to explore the reason for this by examining the representation of the two young women.

The representation of Mantwa can be seen within the context of the myth of the ‘hypersexual’ black woman (hooks 1994)¹⁷. The focus of this section (informed by this notion of the promiscuous, hypersexual black women) will include an examination of portrayals of Dudu as ‘virginal’ and Mantwa as ‘loose’.

¹⁷ See also Angela Davis’ (1981) work on the “inseparable” relation between the “image of the Black woman as chronically promiscuous” and that of “the Black man as rapist”.

For the purpose of this essay, the following definition will be used as a basis for discussions pertaining to issues of harassment: "Sexual harassment can take verbal, physical and non-verbal forms. It can include suggestive gestures or jokes [...]. At worst, sexual harassment may result in rape (Soul City 1999:26).

It is clear from Ken Mokwena's comments in episode two (when asking Mantwa to clean his board during their history class) that Mantwa, like Hazel is objectified:

Ken: "Sexy legs like these will cause an old man a heart attack."

In episode three, the viewer gets a glimpse of Mantwa's opinions in her discussion with Hazel about Sonnyboy:

Mantwa: Sonnyboy is in love with you, why are you so slow?

Hazel: What do you mean?

Mantwa: He fell for you the first time you boarded the taxi...you know, taxi drivers have got money.

Mantwa appears to encourage the relationship between Hazel and Sonnyboy because (according to her) the latter appears to love Hazel. Mantwa proceeds to represent the myth of the 'gold-digger' who cares less of love and more of financial gain. Furthermore, in episode four it is Mantwa who not only alludes to materialism or material gain (again) but also encourages Hazel to sleep with Sonnyboy.

Mantwa: Friend! Have you slept with him?

Hazel: Mantwa, No.

Mantwa: What are you waiting for? Make your move fast friend. Move fast when the economy is bad.

Hazel: Listen, if he truly loves me, he'll wait.

Mantwa is positioned as a complete contrast to Dudu who appears to admire her and relishes her advice. In episode six, for example, the two discuss their proposed attire for the end of term bash and Mantwa suggests that she will be 'noticed' because she'll [...] be wearing [...] hipsters and smoking a zol. To which Dudu responds, I'll be doing the same.

They are then harassed by Papa Action and Chester, who grabs Mantwa and kisses her neck. She reacts by first smiling and then pushes him away and asks to be left alone. This is followed by her biting off a piece of Chester's 'apple'. Mantwa's smile, which is not seen by Chester - thus included for the benefit of the viewer- appears to suggest that she enjoys having her neck kissed by Chester. The seductive eating of the apple can be interpreted on one level as symbolic of oral sex and on another level, as a symbolic representation of the image of women as responsible for man's banishment from the biblical *Garden of Eden*. Although this image offers an alternative in so far as the man offers the apple, it reinstates the myth of the seductive temptress. Furthermore, seen in relation to the rapes that occur, the image of Mantwa first lavishing the attention of Chester and then pushing him away perpetuates the myth of women who get raped as having 'asked for it' and 'not being able to make up their minds'. In other words, it fosters the myth of women saying 'no', when they mean 'yes'.

This particular scene between Mantwa and Chester includes Papa Action and Dudu. When Chester turns his attention to Dudu, it is Papa Action's presence, his hovering, and stern, evil facial expressions, which not only contributes to the 'act' of harassment, but also to the overwhelming tense, uncomfortable atmosphere (of the scene). Dudu's final comment concurs with Mikki van Zyl's (1990) assertion that: "Women are perpetually trying to predict whether men's sexual behaviour will lead to violence and because they cannot control men's behaviour, take appropriate avoidance measures to prevent the anticipated threat".

Chester (*referring to Dudu*): Who's this little beauty? I'm going to bring you up myself and keep the wolves and little boys away from you. Do you hear me?

Mantwa: She's not your type.

Dudu: Please Chester, leave us alone.

The young women attempt to move away.

Dudu: We are no longer safe at this school.

And indeed, it emerges that Dudu's forewarning could not save her from Chester and Papa Action. In episode nine, Dudu is grabbed by Papa Action who is in the company of Chester and gang. The music is fast: *Kwaito* music in background infused with the

Yizo Yizo score, which in this instance is inclusive of an ominous tone. In her attempts to escape, Dudu is overpowered, and dragged to their car. The scene (as with the first rape scene) is interrupted by another scene including the Learners Representative Council who are discussing the school's state of affairs and the general reactionary and tense atmosphere. The focus returns to those involved in Dudu's abduction. The mise-en-scene is a chicken warehouse. A general unpleasant, unclean and noisy atmosphere is created. Papa Action rapes Dudu (and says: Let her pay for her sins) whose cries are accompanied by the noise of the chickens. This is followed by images of the other men present and the viewer is left to assume that she is being gang raped.

Representations of 'gendered violence'

It is clear from the above that there are various forms of violence against women. Representations of violence against women are pivotal to understanding and combating the 'problem' of violence against women and to perceptions of and attitudes toward survivors. This includes contesting existing stereotypes and myths about women and in the process violence against women.

It is evident from discussions with directors of the series that reconceptualising gender relations (research is being done with rape survivors) will indeed play an important part in *Yizo Yizo II*. For this and for their attempts to address rape within the context of intimate relations, the writers of the series must be commended. This story line challenges the common belief that "rape is something that takes place between strangers, and that rape between [...] a woman and her boyfriend, is not possible" (Smith 1999).

In South Africa, violence against women occurs within a context in which the infamous *Real Men Don't Rape* advertisement (endorsed by Charlize Theron) is able to elicit extensive dialogue about the nature of the offence to men, rather than to the subject matter *per se* (Basckin 1999). A booklet produced by Soul City (1999) focusing on violence against women states "the number of reported rapes has increased faster than population growth over the past few years, according to the Central statistic's latest report 'Women and Men in SA' (Central Statistics 1998:38)".

Rape is an international problem regarded as a 'violation of human rights'. As evidenced in the above textual analysis, it is intrinsically connected to representations of women in general. One of the open-ended questions in the questionnaire attempted to gauge perceptions on representations of female characters in *Yizo Yizo*. In assessing responses, six choices were created: *positive* portrayal; *negative* portrayal; *undecided* (mixture of both positive and negative); *reality*; *no comment*; and *unclear* response.

To this extent the majority of respondents, 31%, believed that *Yizo Yizo* portrays female characters in a negative light (see: figure 5). Twenty-four percent (24%) were undecided, believing that portrayal is both negative and positive, while 12% of respondents believed that the portrayal of female characters was good. Six percent (6%) used 'reality' (not stating whether this was negative or positive) to describe the portrayal of female characters in *Yizo Yizo*, while 27% of respondents chose not to answer.

Responses advocating that the series portrayed female characters in a positive light included the following comments: 'wholesome', 'respectable', 'courageous', 'caring', 'strong', 'independent', 'good'. Those believing that portrayals were negative listed: 'defenceless', 'weak', 'inferior', 'victims', 'sex symbols', 'cheap', 'abused', 'useless', 'sluts', 'worthless', 'bitches', 'low morals'.

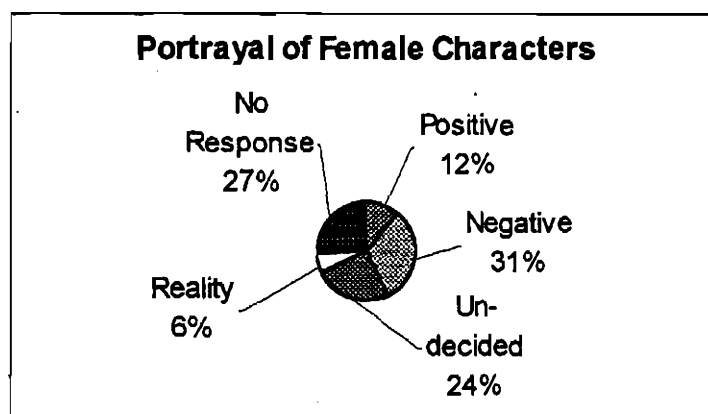


Figure 5

Responses to questions on violence and gender are complicated by the nature of responses to questions on reality (questions 11-13, Appendix 3). As mentioned above,

comments on 'reality' and 'realistic' representations were cited (by some) in responses to representations of violence and gender in particular (see: figure 4 and 5).

With regards to questions on reality, 66% of respondents believed that *Yizo Yizo* presented an accurate reflection of township high school life (see: Figure 6). 24% disagreed with this representation, while 2% were undecided.

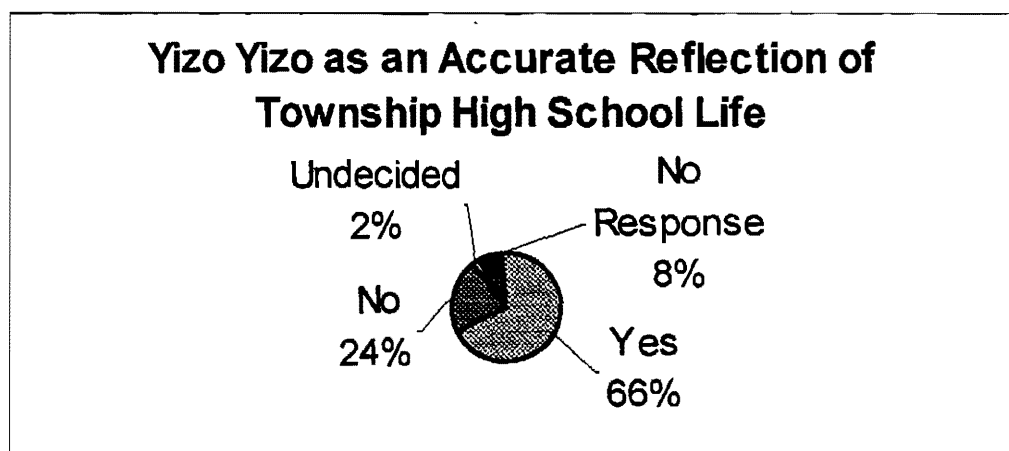


Figure 6

Respondents who felt that the series did not present an accurate reflection of township high school life were afforded the opportunity to defend their choice. A common response related to opinions that 'not all township high schools are the same', neither are they all 'corrupt and full of vagrants'. A respondent mentioned that 'township high schools also have disciplinary actions', while another commented that 'similar things happen in white schools'.

Finally of those respondents from a township high school in Umlazi who felt that *Yizo Yizo* did not present an accurate reflection of township high school-life, some were adamant that 'there are perfect or almost perfect schools', 'the school that I'm attending isn't like that'.

Furthermore, of the 51 respondents, 67% had actually attended or been to a township high school, while 29% had not attended or been to a township high school (see: figure 7).

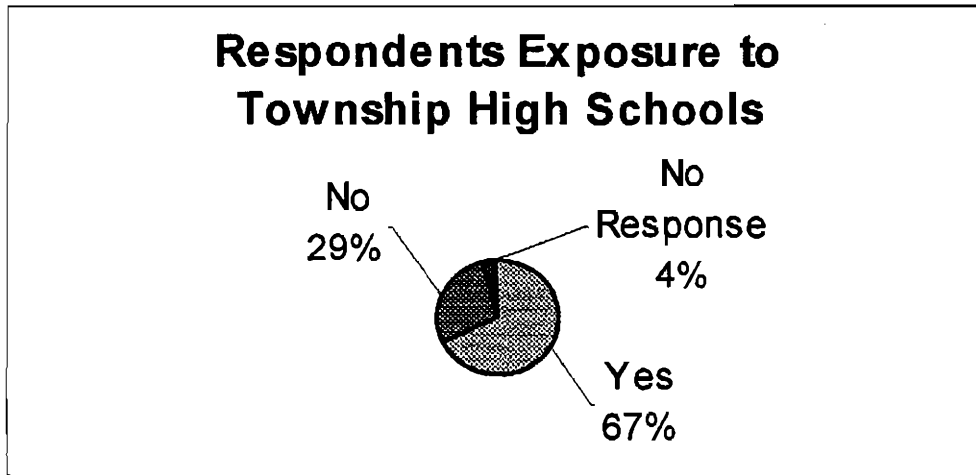


Figure 7

The final question on reality asked whether respondents identified with the reality that is represented in *Yizo Yizo*. The majority of respondents, 60%, felt that they did identify with the reality portrayed (see: figure 8), while 24% said that they did not, followed by another 12% who were undecided.

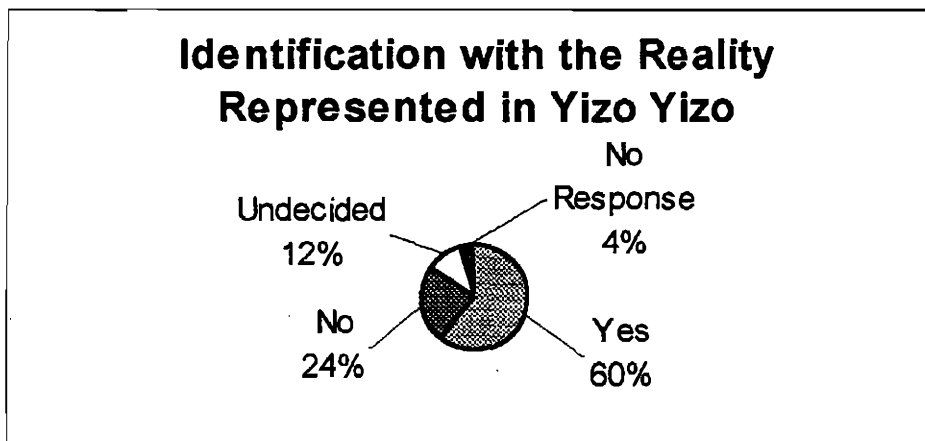


Figure 8

The above comments solidify the allusions to "black vernacular culture" (*Kwaito* as 'cultural production and language as 'vernacular language' for example), which in turn assists in authenticating representations of black youth - and through the nature of the themes implicit in *Yizo Yizo*, black township-high-school youth (Lubiano 1997:106).

Questions of genre

Members of the same culture must share sets of concepts, images and ideas which enable them to think and feel about the world, and thus to interpret the world, in roughly similar ways (Hall 1987: 4).

Looking at issues of representation includes examining the way in which things are portrayed, reflected and constructed. Part of this process includes analysing the form of the text at large. The paper will thus proceed with an analysis of *Yizo Yizo* in terms of genre.

Attempts to ascertain the definition of the form of *Yizo Yizo* reveal a unanimous affirmation from stakeholders of the series that *Yizo Yizo* is a drama series. Variations do however emerge in these descriptions. For example, Gibson (2000) defines the programme as a 'drama series' and proceeds to say: "virtually every single thing in the series is based on anecdotes". He clarifies this even further by suggesting: "We were going for drama, but we were going for naturalist drama" (Gibson 2000). For Mahlatsi (2000), it is an 'educational drama' which doesn't necessarily look "like an expected educational drama. It looks like any other drama series that you watch on television". Maslomoney (2000) chose to define the genre as a "reality-based drama".

The following discussion will begin by accepting that *Yizo Yizo* is a drama series. It is a fictitious narrative that develops over 13 episodes. The contradictions of the series exist somewhere between it appearing as a *fictitious text* (a work of fiction) with its varied codes and conventions, and it *referencing the 'real'*. The essay is informed by these interpretations while focusing on issues of genre in relation to reality for this implicitly relates to responses to the questionnaire and to the broader 'debates' and 'dialogue' about the programme (Oppelt 1999).

Following insights into the production process of *Yizo Yizo* as alluded to earlier, it is possible to see the importance placed on establishing the 'look' or style of the programme (Mahlatsi 2000). Comments on 'real life' experiences informing the programme appear to suggest that equal importance was placed on 'facticity' and on establishing 'authentic' representations. In this regard, representation and the 'look'

works at what Fiske (1987) posits as *level two* of the codes of television -where *level one* is reality constitutive of appearance, gesture and expression (for example) and where *level three* is ideology (of race, capitalism or patriarchy for example)¹⁸.

'Technical codes' assist in shaping the representations of action, narrative, and dialogue of *Yizo Yizo* where the aim is to reflect the lives of 'real' people, in 'real' townships, attending 'real' township schools (Gibson, Mahlatsi, Maslomoney 2000). To this extent, *Yizo Yizo* fulfils its role as a reality-based drama. In reference to it being naturalist it does indeed resemble characteristics commonly associated with (naturalist dramas like) *Homicide: Life on the Street* and *NYPD Blue* (Gibson 2000). With regards to the programme being educational, further research would need to be conducted. This paper is particularly concerned with *Yizo Yizo*'s educative (and not so much its educational) impetus, which has been discussed at various intervals in this paper.

This dissertation argues that *Yizo Yizo* is educative in so far as it affords the viewer opportunity to learn about the happenings at Supatsela High. The supplementary material -which was developed *after* the series began- certainly attempts to re-route any divergence by mapping out problems affecting school attending youth (Perlman & Esterhuysen 1999). Furthermore, if education is about creating dialogue, then the barrage of responses to the programme is indicative it fulfilling this aim.

It is clear from the following comments from respondent's vis-à-vis the focus of *Yizo Yizo*, that it remains problematic to determine if the series educates audiences about the 'crisis in education'. If the nature of this crisis includes the following descriptions, then the series succeed in its aims. However, these very responses demonstrate the ambiguity of the text in reflecting a clear goal. Clearly, further research would need to interrogate 'what' informed these choices.

¹⁸ See also Keyan Tomaselli's (1996) account of *The semiotics of visual representation*.

The majority of respondents believed that *Yizo Yizo*'s focus was on issues of representation. That is respondents mentioned verbs like 'show', 'reflect', 'portray' and 'represent' in relation to 'townships'; 'township schools', 'education' and 'school life'; 'youth'; 'teenage life', 'black life', 'violence', 'rape', 'drug abuse', 'issues of crime', 'corruption', 'corporal punishment', 'reality' and 'true image'. Only one respondent mentioned a *character* as opposed to an *issue(s)*, stating that the focus of *Yizo Yizo* is 'Chester'.

In 'But Compared to What?: Reading realism, representation, and essentialism in *School Daze*, *Do the right thing*, and the Spike Lee discourse', Lubiano (1997) assesses the essence of representation as 'truth'. To this extent she examines the contradictions of authenticity and realism in the work of Spike Lee and locates this within the context of black popular culture. Lubiano's position is similar to that of Smith (1992) who draws on Barbara Foley's assessment of the history of facticity in African-American narrative writing in relation to the impact of slavery. The following section will interrogate *Yizo Yizo* in relation to these sentiments.

Representing real violence

Examining issues of genre and 'reality' is particularly important to this discussion as perceptions of violence and gender for example are connected to opinions advocating these portrayals as reflecting reality. Realism is indeed contentious and at the root of mixed emotions. The disparity exists somewhere between opinions advocating that "hopefully, the shock of reflecting serious dysfunction in our schools will trigger corrective behaviour" (Ndebele, 1999) and opinions about possible copycat actions as well as violence against characters (Miya 1999).

It is worth repeating, that it is not the intention of this paper to explore the 'effects' of violence on television, nor to examine 'copy-cat' acts. Nevertheless the attack on the actor who plays Papa Action, Ronnie Nyakale (Philip, 1999) warrants a attention (albeit brief). Although the interview with Gibson (2000) reveals the sensitive, 'personal' nature of this event, it remains important to this paper as it relates to issues of reality and portrayal. The altercation between Nyakale and a viewer (who has a grievance with the character Papa Action) was instrumental to the Freedom of

Expression Institute (FXI) adopting the theme of 'attacks' on actors/actresses. FXI asserts that it is "worried that attacks on actors may be the manifestation of certain sector's of society's inability to understand the difference between the roles actors play and their real-life existences" (1999:9). Although it is not the focus of this paper to debate approaches to audiences, it is recognised that proponents of the 'active audience' approach (Fiske (1987) in particular) would highlight the elitist assumptions implicit in these assertions irrespective of defences citing the 'reality' of such cases (appearing frequent enough for FXI to devote workshops towards addressing this issue).

Reflections on 'real-life' violence

It is indeed equally important to allude to discussions on violence and television, particularly when analysing issues of representation and reality. A number of studies link the generic construction of programmes to possible changes in behaviour patterns of children. For example, in the *Dimensions of Television Violence*, Barrie Gunter (1985) refers to Belson's work in the late 1970's, which postulated that violence in certain types of programmes was linked to aggressive behaviour in adolescent boys:

In particular, programmes presenting fictional violence of a realistic kind including many contemporary crime-detective series and westerns, were highlighted as powerful facilitators of aggression amongst male viewers, whilst violence occurring in cartoons or science fiction and comedy settings showed little or no relation to violent predisposition's (Gunter 1985: 39).

This concurs with earlier behavioural studies where:

[R]esearchers have found that young viewers shown film footage depicting violence labelled as real-life fiction, exhibited significantly more aggressive behaviour subsequent to exposure than did matched youngsters for whom the footage was labelled as fiction (Feshbasch 1972, In Gunter 1985:16).

The varied approaches to researching violence in television has a history which spans almost five decades and references in publications amount to thousands: The BBSC and the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen are synonymous for work related to violence. Certain individuals are synonymous with the 'violence and television' debate: George Gerbner's work on the

'effects' of violence for example has spanned three decades. Derrick Jensen's (1998) interview with him (Gerbner) reflects the prominence of 'effects' studies¹⁹ decades after their proliferation in the years preceding and including the dominant paradigm of development²⁰. Other examples of individuals working with the paradigm of violence on television include Ulla Carlsson & Cecilia von Feilitzen (1998) and Neil Postman (1987).

Philip Schelsinger *et al* (1992) confirm the view that there are other social and cultural experiences, which impact on the 'fear' and apprehension of crime and violence. The authors of research on 'Women viewing violence', highlight the importance of *personal experience* (of violence) in relation to the fear of violence and crime. To this extent, women subjected to domestic violence were particularly disturbed by representations of similar scenes on television and indicated that "certain types of media tended to *increase* their anxieties about crime" (Schlessinger 1992:41). Furthermore, "when asked to choose from a list of those formats most likely to *increase* fear of crime, women were most likely to choose television news, television dramas and documentaries, television films, and the tabloid press" (Schlessinger 1992: 41).

Employing social theory, Richard Sparks (1992) interrogates the notion of the fear of crime in relation to genre. His focus is on television crime drama where

Narratives of crime, pursuit and capture encode repertoires of images of cities, heroism, wickedness and vulnerability in ways which, at any given time, may be variously regarded as being 'realistic', exciting, funny or otherwise morally and aesthetically satisfying (Sparks 1992: 5).

Although most studies into violence on television focus on children as distinct from youth - which is the focus of this paper and research - these studies offer further insight into the debate vis-à-vis children viewing violence (Gauntlett 1996). The studies on children are important to this paper when one reviews comments on the

¹⁹ According to Gunter & McAlleer (1990), the four main effects postulated within a psychological framework assessing television in relation to changes in attitudes or behaviour of viewers. These include: *Arousal; Disinhibition; Imitation; Desensitisation*. *Catharsis* is viewed as the fifth psychological mechanism.

²⁰ See David Gauntlett's *Ten things wrong with the effects model*, in Roger Dickenson, *et al* (1998).

viewership of *Yizo Yizo* where it emerges that children also constitute a part of *Yizo Yizo*'s audience for the series. As Gibson (2000) purports, "the original brief was to reach an audience which was high school students, teachers and parents". "People from all those camps seemed to be watching it [...] and people much younger as well".

To add to this, one of the salient points that emerged from a focus group (Wentworth Secondary) was the concern articulated by a male youth attending a township school. He shared his appreciation of the series (and anticipation for its return) and mentioned that he was of the opinion that representations of violence in the series reflected his reality. However, he continued to express concern about his younger brother's interpretation of the series and proceeded to suggest warning mechanisms to accompany the series.

Reviewing studies pertaining to violence on television with respect to children (and for the purpose of this section, representations of reality) reveal further poignant assertions:

Many psychologists [...] have propagated the view that children's interests in television is not held by the meaningful content of programmes, such as the script and the characters, but is captured by the formal features such as visual complexity, movement, zooms, cuts and sound effects. The novelty and 'attractiveness' of television, it is claimed, produces involuntary attention which has little to do with thought, appreciation or cognition; television supposedly overrides normal discrimination and the viewer becomes simply 'reactive' (Gauntlett 1996: 45).

The respondent's anxieties with regards to his younger brother imitating and mimicking certain scenes appear congruent to the above assertion. Responses to the questionnaire revealed that *Yizo Yizo* was indeed viewed in the company of family members, thus lending some merit to the suggestion that the series also appealed to viewers younger than thirteen (Appendix 1b).

The option of warning mechanisms indicating the nature and amount of violence in television programme was articulated by respondents to earlier research conducted by the national public service broadcaster, which was responsible for airing *Yizo Yizo*

(SABC 1994). The SABC's concern with violence in television was highlighted about six years ago when the then chairperson of the board, Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, warned "that there is an unacceptable proportion of violence on television (SABC 1994: 15). The article in one of their in-house publications discussed research commissioned by Dr Daan van Vuuren, General Manager of Broadcasting Research. Some of the findings included:

- "*Real life* violence, such as in news programmes, had a greater emotional effect on viewers *who were exposed* to such situations (for example people living in strife-torn areas such as Thokoza)" whereas,
- "*Fictional* violence, as depicted in action programmes like *MacGuyver*, had a greater emotional effect on viewers *who did not* experience real-life violence [...]" (SABC 1994:16)

As suggested earlier in discussions on the meaning of the title of the series, *Yizo Yizo/This is it* alludes to the programme's relation to 'reality' or real life depictions of violence and gender relations for example. Accepting this in light of the above comments by van Vuuren leads one to deduce that depictions of representations of real life violence *could* have an emotional impact on viewers of the series.

However, having established that *Yizo Yizo* is a drama and therefore fictional problematises this equation. Comments from stakeholders (Gibson, Mahlatsi, Maslomoney 2000) reveal that the series was based on real life situations applicable to subjects of the series and audiences who are predominantly black South African (Appendix 1b). Clearly, asserting that the *Yizo Yizo* has some relation to reality allows the series to assume an 'authoritative perspective' for "[r]ealism poses a potential, longstanding challenge for counterhegemonic discourse" (Lubiano 1997: 104).

By positioning itself as distinct from the imaginary experience that is not 'it', *Yizo Yizo* automatically positions itself as an alternative viewing experience unlike representations particular to the apartheid era (Gibson 2000). Furthermore, viewers of the series are lead to believe that the narrative will unearth the 'truth' of the experiences regarding education in a township high school. Moreover, real-life township high school learners are to embrace the opportunity of engaging representations that not only utilise but also reflect the experiences of black youth.

The apparent slippery milieu of the above discussions is due to the lustrous, complex terrain of the programme itself. Moreover, by illustrating the dexterity of the text, I hope to demonstrate that the generic construction of the *Yizo Yizo* impacts representations and receptions of violence and gender. That is, research into violence on television,

[...] must leave the simplified notion of 'entertainment violence' aside and realize that the borderlines between fictional and non-fictional media violence are often blurred and sometimes non-existent, and that all kinds of media violence are cultural and symbolic construction (Cecilia von Feilitzen 1998: 99).

Before turning to some final comments, it is important to repeat that very little research into the nature of violence and television, particularly in relation to youth, has been conducted in South Africa. Although this country's approach is said to "follow similar lines to that of the BBC", "very little published material" endemic to the South African situation exists. "This lack of empirical data means that opinions on the possible influence of the electronic media, and particularly television, on Third World communities rest to a large extent on unscientific presuppositions" (SABC 1994: 18).

Concluding remarks

Yizo Yizo is indeed a highly textured narrative that is open to multiple interpretations, which this paper cannot interrogate. The primary concern of this dissertation has been to examine representations of violence and gender relations in the drama series, *Yizo Yizo*. In so doing, the introductory 'contextual' analysis was followed by an outline of the narrative that was needed to engage viewers' responses to questionnaires. This was followed by a discussion on representations of violence and gender relations, which utilised a textual and audience analysis to interrogate the nature of images. The concluding chapters of the main text of the paper sought to connect the issues of representation and reality. The latter of which was introduced in the opening chapters through a discussion on the meaning of the title, *Yizo Yizo*.

Choices relating to language and images are clearly informed by the genre of the programme. It is my contention, that the primary substantiation of representations of violence is to complement the element of drama. With regards to 'showing it like it is', I can only state that nothing represented in a dramatic form can ever truly reflect the 'real'. Furthermore, being based on the real certainly doesn't vindicate *Yizo Yizo* from analyses or studies situated in 'real-life'.

The drama falls short of its (potential) counter-hegemonic narrative in so far as it refrains from exposing the myth of the 'conditions' of township high schools. In so doing the viewer is left with the dominant ideological positioning of the forces of evil as responsible for state the disequilibrium. The restoration of 'equilibrium' is thus particularly relevant when viewed in relation to the substantial drop in audience ratings for the final episode, which epitomised a school in which the 'culture of learning, teaching' are established or restored (depending on how the viewer views the original state of leadership). It is clear from the ARs, that episode 13 was the least watched programme of the series (Appendix 1a).

Unlike the first series (where issues of scheduling are viewed in retrospect) the issue of scheduling will need to be addressed by the broadcaster of *Yizo Yizo II*, prior to it being aired.

As this paper has discussed, the first series elicited extensive debate on the nature of violent images and issues of 'language' (Gibson 2000). These issues are certainly not new to debates on scheduling and television programming. Earlier research from the BSC illustrated that bad language, and violence on television was responsible for 'unease' amongst viewers (Hargrave 1991). As such, decisions regarding scheduling (whether in the context of Britain or South Africa) are an important dimension to broadcasting programmes containing bad language and violence.

Within the context of South Africa, the Independent Broadcasting Authority's (IBA) revised 'Code of Conduct' stipulates certain requirements for broadcasters in terms of sensitivity in scheduling. To this extent, the 'Position Paper on the Revision of the IBA's Code of Conduct for Broadcasters' concedes that:

Rather than prohibiting the broadcasting of explicit material, the Authority will require broadcasters to exercise due care in scheduling decisions, especially in relation to children (IBA 1999:3).

Bearing in mind that *Yizo Yizo*'s audience spanned all ages, the question arises as to why the series was not scheduled during 'the watershed period'? If the purpose of scheduling was to reach as many high school youth as possible then it is arguable that this could have been done half an hour later, at 21:00. "The assumption underlying this, is that after 9pm, parents and guardians share the responsibility with broadcasters for what children see on television" (IBA 1999:8). Although it could be argued that parents have the ultimate responsibility - as guarantors- as to what children see, the *Yizo Yizo* team (in partnership with SABC Education and the national Department of education) has to show discretion in targeting their audiences.

Although the message of 'dialogue' and 'interactive communication' between all stakeholders of Supatsela High illustrates the fulfilment of the educative aim of the series (to demonstrate the importance of dialogue between learners, educators, parents, education departments and the community at large), this does not suggest that ideologies implicit in the text should be overlooked. Furthermore, the series does not truly interrogate the socio-economic and political context of education in South

Africa. Instead the 'crisis' in education is paralleled with issues of delinquency rather than socio-economic inequities of an education system with a history tainted by the legacy of *apartheid*. Positioning itself as an essentialist narrative, *Yizo Yizo* should have exposed the myth of the conditions of township high schools as a problem of 'forces of evil' disturbing the balance of 'leadership'. Moreover, the regurgitation of myths and stereotypes of women (in general) sustain the dominant ideology.

Finally, this essay demonstrates that the form of the programme clearly impacts the nature of representations of violence and gender relations (for example). The series presents various themes affecting education in township high schools in the form of a drama series, which in turn allows it to attract a substantial number of audiences. Clearly the slippery milieu of the programme *form* further problematises a definitive argument as to the nature of representations of violence and gender relations in *Yizo Yizo*. As the previous chapter demonstrated, it is indeed problematic to dissect representations of violence and gender within a framework where the issue of 'reality' is used to support responses from stakeholders and audiences. Moreover, I have been particularly cautious not to situate 'real-life' experiences conveyed in responses to the questionnaire at the centre of theoretical approaches to the portrayal of 'blackness'. It is therefore imperative to highlight that this study emerges as a foundation for future research.

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Title:gen Source Period:01/01/1999-31/12/1999

All Adults Age 16+ U:11445 S:1939

Day	Date	From	To	Station	Title	AR	000's
Wed	13/01/1999	2033	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	11.7	1339065
Wed	20/01/1999	2033	2102	S1	Yizo-Yizo	12.2	1396290
Wed	03/02/1999	2032	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	14	1602300
Wed	10/02/1999	2032	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	15	1716750
Wed	17/02/1999	2033	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	14.6	1670970
Wed	24/02/1999	2035	2105	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.7	1911315
Wed	03/03/1999	2032	2103	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16	1831200
Wed	10/03/1999	2033	2102	S1	Yizo-Yizo	18.4	2105880
Wed	17/03/1999	2034	2104	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	1865535
Wed	24/03/1999	2034	2104	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.5	1888425
Wed	31/03/1999	2036	2107	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	1865535
Wed	07/04/1999	2032	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	17.9	2048655
Wed	14/04/1999	2031	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	18.2	2082990
Wed	21/04/1999	2033	2103	S1	Yizo-Yizo	17.4	1991430
Wed	28/04/1999	2034	2104	S1	Yizo-Yizo	10.9	1247505

GENERATIONS

MONTH AVERAGE AR 000'S

Nov-99	8.7	996
Dec-99	7.3	835
Jan-00	7.6	870

THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL

MONTH AVERAGE AR 000'S

Nov-99	8.1	927
Dec-99	6.8	778
Jan-00	7	801

And:

Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad	Ad
U-144	U-727	U-729	U-766	U-3528	U-2377	U-2377	U-3183	U-2863	U-4377	U-4191	U-3129	U-1947	U-3597	U-3135	U-2767	
S-202	S-1352	S-1378	S-196	S-520	S-375	S-497	S-633	S-384	S-619	S-813	S-714	S-404	S-713	S-507	S-395	

Day	Date	From	To	Title	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR*	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR	AR
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Wed	13/01/1999	20:33	21:00	Yizo-Yizo	11.7	9.7	15	13.2	11.9	12.5	10.7	11.5	2.2	2.4	24.4	19.5	17.7	20.5	6.7	2.9
Wed	20/01/1999	20:33	21:02	Yizo-Yizo	12.2	10.9	14	12.1	13.2	12.1	11.2	11.8	2.1	4.7	20.9	21.5	17	18.2	10.8	2.8
Wed	03/02/1999	20:32	21:00	Yizo-Yizo	14	13.4	14.7	11.8	14.8	13.7	13.2	13.8	3.4	1.8	26	21.9	18.1	22.9	11.7	2.2
Wed	10/02/1999	20:32	21:00	Yizo-Yizo	15	14.8	16.3	17.9	14.8	15.2	15	15.3	2.7	2.1	30	26.7	22.6	24.5	12.2	2
Wed	17/02/1999	20:33	21:01	Yizo-Yizo	14.6	13.6	18.3	20.1	15.1	15.1	13.5	13.2	3.1	3.1	26.4	31.7	27.2	23.6	7.7	1.9
Wed	24/02/1999	20:35	21:05	Yizo-Yizo	16.7	14.4	20.1	19.3	18.1	18.8	15.6	14.5	4.2	3.6	31	29.9	24.1	28.8	10.8	3.8
Wed	03/03/1999	20:32	21:03	Yizo-Yizo	16	15.3	18.1	18.5	15	17.9	15.7	15.8	2.9	3.4	30.7	29.4	24.5	27	10.7	3.1
Wed	10/03/1999	20:33	21:02	Yizo-Yizo	18.4	16.6	21.4	20.3	17.7	21.2	18.9	17	3.9	4.3	33.1	34.6	31.7	30.3	9.8	4.4
Wed	17/03/1999	20:34	21:04	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	15.9	19.3	15	18.6	16.5	15.8	13.9	3	2.5	32.2	28.5	27.1	28.6	9.2	1.7
Wed	24/03/1999	20:34	21:04	Yizo-Yizo	16.5	15.2	19.5	18.3	17.6	16.6	15.3	15.9	2.9	2.5	34.8	28	27.2	27.8	10.3	2.2
Wed	31/03/1999	20:36	21:07	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	15.2	19	15.9	19.2	15.8	15.5	13.3	2.6	3.3	29.9	32.4	25.9	27.3	10.2	2.2
Wed	07/04/1999	20:32	21:01	Yizo-Yizo	17.3	16.4	20.1	18.5	17.9	18.8	20	15.8	4.9	5.4	30.6	31.9	30.8	27.5	13.3	1.8
Wed	14/04/1999	20:31	21:01	Yizo-Yizo	18.2	15.7	21.5	19.2	19.7	19.9	14.9	17.6	3	3.5	37.3	32.1	32.4	29.5	10.7	2.1
Wed	21/04/1999	20:33	21:03	Yizo-Yizo	17.4	16.2	20.5	19.4	19	18.8	18.7	13.7	2.2	3.3	35.9	31.8	38.2	27.1	12.9	1.6
Wed	28/04/1999	20:34	21:04	Yizo-Yizo	10.9	10.3	12.7	12.1	11.3	11	10.2	10.9	4.8	3.9	19.4	17.6	17.9	15.8	9.1	1.6

SABC 2 JAN - MAY 1999
WEDNESDAYS 20H30 - 21H00

date	From	To	Station	Title	ADS AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	ENG AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	AFR AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	NGU AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	SOT AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES
15/01/1999	1959	2048	S2	The Promised Land	4.7	537915	3.3	94479	4.5	196965	4.5	188595	7.1	222159
15/01/1999	2048	2055	S2	Children's Dreams	4.5	515025	3.1	88753	3.4	148818	5.1	213741	6.4	200256
16/01/1999	2057	2058	S2	This Day in History	4.5	515025	3	85890	3.8	166326	5.1	213741	6.2	193998
3/01/1999	1959	2053	S2	The Promised Land	5.6	640920	6.4	183232	5.2	227604	4.4	184404	7.4	231546
3/01/1999	2053	2056	S2	Car Stereo	5.9	675255	7.4	211862	5.5	240735	5.9	247269	4.8	150192
01/01/1999	2000	2054	S2	The Promised Land	6.2	709590	4.8	137424	9.3	407061	3.9	163449	4.8	150192
01/01/1999	2059	2127	S2	Nuus	6.7	766815	5.5	157465	9.8	428946	4.9	205359	4.7	147063
7/01/1999	2001	2054	S2	The Promised Land	9.1	1041495	6.5	165095	7.8	341406	7.7	322707	15.1	472479
3/02/1999	2000	2053	S2	The Promised Land	5.9	675255	6.7	191821	7	306390	4.7	196977	4.4	137676
3/02/1999	2053	2057	S2	Music	5.7	652365	6.5	186095	6.4	280128	5.1	213741	3.7	115773
01/02/1999	1959	2050	S2	The Promised Land	6.8	778260	7.5	214725	8.3	363291	4.2	176022	6.2	193998
01/02/1999	2051	2056	S2	Fascinating Nature	6.4	732480	7.6	217588	8.2	356914	4.3	180213	4.3	134547
7/02/1999	2001	2053	S2	The Promised Land	5.4	618030	4.3	123103	6.6	288882	4	167640	5.6	175224
7/02/1999	2053	2058	S2	Fascinating Nature	5.6	640920	5.6	160328	7.5	328275	4	167640	3.5	109515
7/02/1999	2059	2130	S2	Nuus	5.7	652365	5.5	157465	8.8	385176	3	125730	3.4	106386
4/02/1999	2000	2052	S2	The Promised Land	6.4	732480	5.6	160328	7.6	332652	4.9	205359	5.8	181482
4/02/1999	2052	2057	S2	Fascinating Nature	6.2	709590	4.8	137424	8.6	376422	4.7	196977	3.8	118902
13/03/1999	2002	2053	S2	The Promised Land	4.8	549360	3.6	103056	4.9	214473	3.6	150876	6.9	215901
13/03/1999	2053	2056	S2	Music	4.7	537915	2.8	80164	4.4	192588	4.3	180213	6.7	209643
01/03/1999	1959	2053	S2	The Promised Land	5.6	640920	4.8	131699	6.5	284505	4.1	171831	6.8	212772
01/03/1999	2059	2130	S2	Nuus	5.8	663810	4.2	120246	7.4	323898	3.6	150876	5.9	184611
7/03/1999	1959	2051	S2	The Promised Land	5.2	595140	4.4	125972	8.3	363291	3.1	129921	4.6	150192
7/03/1999	2051	2054	S2	Music	4.4	503580	4.5	128835	6.7	293259	3.5	146685	3.2	100128
4/03/1999	2000	2052	S2	The Promised Land	6	666700	4.9	140287	8.6	376422	4.3	180213	5.5	172095
4/03/1999	2055	2058	S2	Music	5.9	675255	5.5	157465	8.1	354537	5.3	222123	4.3	134547
11/03/1999	2001	2054	S2	The Promised Land	4.6	526470	3.6	103068	5.7	249469	3.8	159258	5.1	159579
7/04/1999	2000	2052	S2	The Promised Land	7.3	835485	6	171780	11	481470	6.9	289179	3.8	118902
7/04/1999	2052	2056	S2	Car Stereo	7	801150	4.8	137424	10.8	472718	7.6	318516	2.8	87612

Approved

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11/20/2017

SABC 1 JAN - MAY 1999
WEDNESDAYS 20H30 - 21H00

date	From	To	Station	Title	ADS AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	ENG AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	AFR AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	NGU AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	SOT AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES
5/01/1999	2002	2031	S1	Generations	13.4	1533630	4.7	134561	3	131310	24.1	1010031	21.7	678993
16/01/1999	2033	2101	S1	Sakhisizwe Court	12.7	1453515	3.6	103068	1.8	78786	22.8	955548	22.1	691509
3/01/1999	2001	2032	S1	Generations	11.8	1350510	3.7	105931	2.4	105048	23.8	997456	19.7	616413
3/01/1999	2033	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	11.7	1339065	2.2	62986	2.4	105048	24.4	1022604	19.5	610155
10/01/1999	2001	2032	S1	Generations	14	1602300	5	143150	5.1	223227	24.8	1039368	23.2	725928
10/01/1999	2033	2102	S1	Yizo-Yizo	12.2	1398290	2.1	60123	4.7	205719	20.9	875919	21.5	672735
7/01/1999	1831	2224	S1	T/Sport: Cricket	11	1250950	14.8	423724	11.6	507732	9.1	301381	5.8	181482
13/02/1999	2001	2031	S1	Generations	14	1602300	6.1	174643	2.5	109425	25	1047750	22.9	716541
13/02/1999	2032	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	14	1602300	3.4	97342	1.8	78786	26	1089660	24.9	779121
10/02/1999	2002	2031	S1	Generations	14.3	1635635	3.7	105931	1.7	74409	27.4	1148334	20	813540
10/02/1999	2032	2100	S1	Yizo-Yizo	15	1716750	2.7	77301	2.1	91917	30	1257300	26.7	835443
7/02/1999	2001	2031	S1	Generations	13.3	1522185	6.1	174643	3.2	140064	23.6	989076	25.1	785379
7/02/1999	2033	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	14.6	1670970	3.1	88753	3.1	135687	26.4	1108424	31.7	991893
4/02/1999	2003	2035	S1	Generations	14.7	1682415	3.1	88753	3.7	161949	27.2	1139052	26.2	819798
4/02/1999	2035	2105	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.7	1911315	4.2	120246	3.6	157572	31	1299210	29.9	935571
13/03/1999	2000	2031	S1	Generations	13.7	1567965	1.4	40082	3.6	157572	24.9	1043559	25.9	810411
13/03/1999	2032	2103	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16	1831200	2.9	83027	3.4	148818	30.7	1288637	29.4	919926
10/03/1999	2000	2031	S1	Generations	16.2	1854090	4.1	117383	4.6	201342	27.9	1169289	29.5	923055
10/03/1999	2033	2102	S1	Yizo-Yizo	18.4	2105880	3.9	111657	4.3	188211	33.1	1387221	34.6	1082634
7/03/1999	2002	2034	S1	Generations	15	1716750	4.4	125972	2	87540	29.4	1232154	25.6	801024
7/03/1999	2034	2104	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	1865535	3	85890	2.5	109425	32.2	1349502	28.5	891765
4/03/1999	2001	2033	S1	Generations	15	1716750	4.6	131698	2.2	96294	30.7	1288637	24.8	775992
4/03/1999	2034	2104	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.5	1888425	2.9	83027	2.5	109425	34.8	1458468	28	876120
1/03/1999	2001	2034	S1	Generations	14.6	1670970	5.4	154602	3	131310	26.4	1166424	26.6	832314
1/03/1999	2036	2107	S1	Yizo-Yizo	16.3	1865535	2.6	74438	3.3	144441	29.9	1253109	32.4	1013796
7/04/1999	2000	2030	S1	Generations	16.9	1934205	5.3	151739	5.4	238358	28.5	1194435	28.2	882378
7/04/1999	2032	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	17.9	2048655	4.9	140287	5.4	238358	30.6	1282440	31.9	998151
4/04/1999	2031	2101	S1	Yizo-Yizo	18.2	2082980	3	85890	3.5	153195	37.3	1563243	32.1	1004409

SABC 3 JAN - MAY 1999
WEDNESDAYS 20H30 - 21H00

Date	From	To	Station	Title	MINIMUM ESTIMATED		MINIMUM ESTIMATED		MINIMUM ESTIMATED		MINIMUM ESTIMATED		MINIMUM ESTIMATED	
					ADS AR	VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	ENG AR	VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	AFR AR	VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	NGU AR	VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	SOT AR	VIEWERSHIP FIGURES
6/01/1999	2032	2219	S3	Prime Suspect	5.2	595140	7.5	214725	4.6	201342	4.2	176022	3	93870
3/01/1999	2032	2211	S3	Deafening Silence	4.4	503580	5.5	157465	2.7	118179	3.7	155067	6.9	215901
3/01/1999	2032	2211	S3	Deafening Silence	4.4	503580	5.5	157465	2.7	118179	3.7	155067	6.9	215901
0/01/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	7.2	824040	10.8	309204	8	393930	3.5	148635	3.6	112644
0/01/1999	2034	2215	S3	Deafening Silence	6.3	721035	5.2	148876	3.6	157572	7.6	318516	6.8	212772
0/01/1999	2034	2215	S3	Deafening Silence	6.3	721035	5.2	148876	3.6	157572	7.6	318516	6.8	212772
7/01/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	5.8	663810	7	200410	3.2	140064	5.6	234696	6.2	193998
7/01/1999	2034	2134	S3	Touching Evil	4.1	469245	1.9	54397	2.6	113802	5.7	238887	4.9	153321
13/02/1999	2032	2128	S3	Touching Evil	4.8	560805	6.4	183232	5	262620	2.9	121539	2.7	85709
0/02/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	7.3	835485	12.1	346423	9	393930	2.7	113157	1.5	46935
0/02/1999	2032	2124	S3	Touching Evil	5.4	618030	8.8	251944	5.1	223227	2.5	104775	2.2	68838
7/02/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	6.9	789705	12	343560	8.5	372045	1.7	71247	4.7	147063
7/02/1999	2035	2125	S3	Touching Evil	5.1	583695	8.5	243355	5.6	245112	2.4	100584	2.6	81354
4/02/1999	2000	2031	S3	News	7	801150	11.7	334971	9	393930	3.1	129921	2.4	75096
4/02/1999	2033	2130	S3	Touching Evil	5.1	583695	8.3	237629	4.2	183834	4.2	176022	2.1	65709
13/03/1999	2000	2031	S3	News	7.3	835485	11.6	332108	8.9	389553	1.8	75438	4.2	131418
13/03/1999	2033	2127	S3	Touching Evil	5.5	629475	9.6	274848	5.6	245112	2.2	92202	2.7	84483
0/03/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	6.2	789590	10.6	303478	7.7	337029	1.7	71247	2.1	65709
0/03/1999	2033	2119	S3	Homicide:Life on the	5.7	652365	9.9	283437	5.9	258243	2.8	117348	1.9	59457
7/03/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	6.9	789705	11.1	317793	8.3	363291	2.2	92202	3.2	100128
7/03/1999	2033	2120	S3	Homicide:Life on the	6.1	698145	10	286300	6.1	266997	2.8	117348	3.6	112644
4/03/1999	2000	2031	S3	News	7.4	846930	12.6	360738	8.9	389553	2.7	113157	2.4	75099
4/03/1999	2032	2118	S3	Homicide:Life on the	5.4	618030	9.8	280574	4.9	214473	2.5	104775	2	62580
1/03/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	7.2	824040	10.4	297752	8.3	363291	3.8	159258	2.5	78225
1/03/1999	2033	2122	S3	Homicide:Life on the	5.6	640920	7.2	206136	7.6	332652	3.5	148635	1	31290
7/04/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	5.7	652365	10.7	289163	7.1	310767	2.9	121539	1.3	40677
7/04/1999	2032	2122	S3	Homicide:Life on the	4.7	537915	7.5	214725	4.5	195965	3.2	134112	1.8	56322
4/04/1999	2000	2030	S3	News	8.1	927045	15.4	440902	7.7	337029	3.9	163449	3.5	109515

ETV JAN - MAY 1999
WEDNESDAYS 20H30 - 21H00

date	From	To	Station	Title	AOS AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	ENG AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	AFR AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	NGU AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES	SOT AR	MINIMUM ESTIMATED VIEWERSHIP FIGURES
6/01/1999	2000	2048	etv	Laurel Avenue	1.1	125895	0.8	22904	0.9	39393	1.7	71247	0.8	18774
6/01/1999	2049	2057	etv	Transworld Sport	0.6	68670	0.9	25767	0.5	21885	0.5	20955	0.8	18774
3/01/1999	1959	2104	etv	Sinatra	1.1	125895	2.3	65849	0.8	35016	0.2	8382	1	31290
0/01/1999	2000	2100	etv	House of Windsor	1.5	171675	3.1	88753	1.7	74409	0.5	20955	0	0
7/01/1999	1959	2058	etv	House of Windsor	0.8	91580	1.1	31493	0.1	4377	1.5	62865	0.2	6258
3/02/1999	1959	2051	etv	Fantasy Island	1.6	183120	2.5	71575	2.3	126933	0.8	33528	0.3	9387
3/02/1999	2051	2056	etv	Featuret:How Stella	1.5	171675	2.5	71575	3.2	140064	0.3	12573	0.5	15645
0/02/1999	2000	2043	etv	Fantasy Island	1.3	148785	0.7	20041	2.1	91917	0.6	25146	1.2	37548
0/02/1999	2044	2058	etv	Featuret:Practical Ma	1.3	148785	1	28630	2	87540	0.3	12573	1.3	40677
7/02/1999	2000	2051	etv	Fantasy Island	1.8	206010	4	114520	2	87540	0.6	25146	0.4	12516
7/02/1999	2051	2058	etv	Transworld Sport	1.4	160230	2.3	65849	1.9	83163	0.3	12573	0.4	12516
7/02/1999	2059	2159	etv	Women on the Beat	1.4	160230	2.6	74438	1.3	55901	0.6	25146	0.7	21903
4/02/1999	2000	2051	etv	Fantasy Island	1.4	160230	3.9	111657	1.2	52524	0.1	4191	0.4	12516
4/02/1999	2051	2058	etv	Transworld Sport	1.2	137340	2.4	63712	1.8	78766	0.1	4191	0.4	12516
3/03/1999	2003	2053	etv	Fantasy Island	2.3	263235	2.6	74438	4.6	201342	0.4	16764	0.3	9387
3/03/1999	2059	2127	etv	Real Life	1.9	217455	2.9	83027	2.5	109425	1.1	46101	1.1	34419
0/03/1999	2000	2051	etv	Fantasy Island	1.1	125895	1.9	54397	1	43770	1	41910	0.8	25032
0/03/1999	2051	2057	etv	Sport on	1.3	148785	2.8	80164	0.9	39393	0.8	33528	0.6	18774
0/03/1999	2059	2128	etv	Real Lives	1.3	148785	2.7	77301	1	43770	0.9	37719	0.9	28161
7/03/1999	2000	2052	etv	Fantasy Island	1.2	137340	1.9	54397	2.1	91917	0.5	20955	0.7	21903
7/03/1999	2052	2057	etv	Royal Families	1.3	148785	1.4	40082	2.2	96294	0.5	20955	0.7	21903
7/03/1999	2059	2128	etv	Real Lives	1.5	171675	1.3	37219	2.2	96294	1.3	54483	1	31290
4/03/1999	2001	2053	etv	Fantasy Island	0.8	91580	1.5	42945	1	43770	0.4	16764	0.8	18774
4/03/1999	2053	2058	etv	Featuret:How Stella	1	114450	2.3	65849	1.1	48147	0.4	16764	0.3	9387
1/03/1999	2000	2052	etv	Fantasy Island	0.7	80115	2.2	62986	0	0	0.2	8382	0.5	15645
1/03/1999	2059	2128	etv	Real Lives	1.2	137340	2.7	77301	0.6	26262	0.4	16764	1.1	34419
7/04/1999	2000	2050	etv	Fantasy Island	1.3	148785	1.6	45806	2.4	105048	0.2	8382	0.3	9387
7/04/1999	2050	2057	etv	Transworld Sport	0.8	91580	1.5	42945	1	43770	0.1	4191	0.2	6258

FOCUS GROUPS:

1. What does 'Yizo-Yizo' (Y-Y) mean?
2. Why/when did you decide to watch Y-Y?
3. What for you, is the purpose of Y-Y? That is, what is Y-Y about, what is its aim?
4. What does Y-Y say about education?
- 5a. What kind(s) of violence is/are there in Y-Y?
- 5b. What about crime?
- 5c. What do you think of copycat acts?
6. Is the violence represented necessary to make it really clear what happened?
7. Can the following be defined as violent acts? (Why/why not?)
Crime sexual harassment harassment swearing yelling
- 8a. Who do you consider a victim of violence?
- 8b. Which 'victim' deserved to be punished?
- 8c. Who would you say is responsible for the 'violent acts'/ actions towards them?
9. Have you experienced advances similar to those represented in Y-Y?
10. What do you understand by sexual harassment?
11. If someone took you out on a date (e.g.. Movies), paid for your ticket and refreshments, would it be alright /acceptable for him to expect more (i.e. to go to his place)?
12. Do you consider Y-Y, a fictional or factual representation?
Why?
13. How would you define the programme Y-Y in terms of genre (kind/type of programme)?
14. What do you understand by reality? That is, what is real and what is not real?
15. What is it about episode six that made it factual and/or fictional?

16. What is it about episode nine that made it factual and/or fictional?
17. Do these episodes give you the tools to understand reality?
18. Does the music heighten/ add dramatic effect to the scenes?
19. Would you be more/ less/ not at all upset if sounds were edited out?
20. Does the series give you the tools to understand what is apparently 'really happening'?
21. Was/is Y-Y a successful production?
Why?
22. Has it fulfilled its aims?
23. Would you like to see Y-Y return to our screens?
Why?
23. How would you edit Y-Y to make it more/less realistic?
24. Any other comments?

Researcher to remember:

Is it really important for public to know the facts?

Would it make a difference to you to know the outcome of the violent act/scene or the whole series?

*Yizo-Yizo Questionnaire**Name:**Age:**Occupation:**Do You want to remain anonymous?*Please *encircle* where appropriate, otherwise, please *print* your answer.

1. Have you ever watched Yizo-Yizo?

yes no

2. How many episodes did you watch?

1 2-5 5-10 All: 1-13

3. Where did you watch Yizo-Yizo?

home friends place work school other (specify): _____

4. With whom did you watch Yizo-Yizo?

alone family friends students/learners teachers/educators

other (specify): _____

5a. Who is your favourite character?

Thiza, Nomsa, Javas, Hazel, Thulas, Miss Cele (Zoe), Edwin (the science teacher), Matwa, Dudu, Gunman, Papa Action, Chester, Zakes (Thiza's brother), Snowy (Hazel's sister), Sonnyboy (the taxi driver), Mr. Mthembu (first principal), Mr Ken Mokwena (second principal), Ms. Grace (third principal), Bra Gibbs, Lesego (SRC president),
 other (specify): _____

5b. Why?

6a. Which character has the strongest personality? _____

6b. Why?

7. What do you think is the focus of Yizo-Yizo?

8. How are female characters portrayed in Yizo-Yizo?

9a. Do you think that Yizo-Yizo is a violent programme?

yes no

9b. Why/Why not?

10a. How many rape scenes occurred in Yizo-Yizo?

10b. Who was involved?

11. Have you ever attended or been to a township high school?

yes no

12a. Do you think that Yizo-Yizo presents an accurate reflection of township high-school life?

yes no

12b. If not, why?

13. Do you identify with the reality that is represented in Yizo-Yizo?

14. Have you or anyone you know bought or dubbed (recorded) the Yizo-Yizo soundtrack?

yes no

15. Which song are you most familiar with from the album?

16. Any other comments you would like to make?