

**EMPOWERING ZIMBABWEANS THROUGH THE USE OF  
INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN THE MEDIA: A CASE OF  
SELECTED NEWSPAPERS**

**By**

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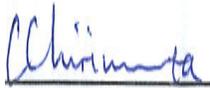
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# DECLARATION

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I, Chipu Chirimuuta, declare that: **Empowering Zimbabweans Through the use of Indigenous Languages in the Media: A Case of Selected Newspapers** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



SIGNATURE

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## **Dedication**

To my loving family: Antonette, Antonia-Cinder, Anthony Junior, Antonella Princess and Anthony Chirimuuta.

To my late mother: May your soul rest in eternal peace. You must be the happiest of all with this completion of the thesis.

## ABSTRACT

This study explores the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in the publications of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* has contributed to the empowerment of the indigenous people. It is informed by the idea that language is an important instrument of development which can either facilitate participation or engender exclusion, bringing about agency thereby inspiring a transformational and participative agenda. Given that the media plays a major role in information dissemination, this study engages an important subject which has often been given cursory attention. The study is guided by the post-colonial theoretical framework. It employs the mixed methods approach which is premised on the assumption that life is characterised by complex realities which can be understood using multiple approaches. As such, elements of both quantitative and qualitative research are used. Findings revealed that the use of indigenous languages empower readers through making information accessible in a language that makes sense to them. The collected data also show that the newspapers are pivotal in resuscitating the indigenous languages that have been overshadowed by the hegemonic English. They promote the values, norms and general cultural features of indigenous people. Above all, the papers provide curriculum-specific columns for school going children. However, these newspapers are found wanting with regards to the scope of their coverage. Their coverage tends to concentrate on the socio-cultural lives of people at the expense of scientific, technological, political and economic issues. Furthermore, the papers' handling of the history of the nation is simplistic and lacks depth. In addition, issues of spirituality also tend to be concerned with the negative (witchcraft, bogus prophets and traditional healers) than the positive aspects. The study recommends a conversion of the papers from tabloid to a genre that accommodates politico-economic, scientific and technological news the social interest stories already being covered in these indigenous language papers; the development of orthographies of other local languages to avoid having Shona and Ndebele being the only indigenous languages that are used in these papers and that the papers present the best of all aspects of the Zimbabwean cultural heritage to restore the indigenous people's belief and respect in themselves. The study also suggests that the two papers and many more that are to come in indigenous languages, must showcase, develop, promote and institutionalise the positive aspect of the Zimbabwean cultural heritage and the infusion of all dimensions of indigenous knowledge systems into the current set-up.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

### 1.0 Background to the Study

This research is in the area of media and language. It seeks to explore the connection that exists between the language of the media and accessibility of information to potential readers. It particularly observes that the media landscape in Zimbabwe is awash with publications in English while indigenous languages are marginalised and condemned to the periphery. For instance, Maseko and Dube,(2013) make reference to the Media Products Survey in which the position is that there are 8 licensed and functional radio stations in Zimbabwe and these are; Power FM, National FM, Radio Zimbabwe, Spot FM, Zi FM, Star FM, Ya FM and Radio Diamond. In addition to these, there are three other licensed stations which are non-functional at the moment, namely Wezhira Radio Station in Masvingo, Kumakomoyo in Mutare and Radio Dialogue in Bulawayo. Of these, only National FM focuses on local languages while Radio Zimbabwe caters for Ndebele and Shona speakers. National FM broadcasts in Kalanga, Venda, Chewa, Nambya, Sotho, Xhosa, Chikunda, Hwesa, Shangani, as well as Shona and Ndebele. Furthermore, of the 14 hours of broadcasting between 5am and midnight, minority languages are given approximately four hours 35 minutes broadcasting time (Maseko and Dube, 2013). On the other hand, Ndebele and Shona are used on television occasionally. This revelation paints a grim picture of the state of indigenous languages in Zimbabwean media.

Furthermore, of all the multitude of newspapers and magazines that are published and sold on the street corners of Zimbabwe, only two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* are in indigenous languages. This reality paradoxically continues to hold water, in spite of arguments by African linguists that indigenous languages in Africa have managed “against all odds to survive as media of communication and vehicles of knowledge in many parts of Africa” (Orao, 2009:77). What Orao has highlighted is the undisputable fact that the various indigenous languages continue to be used by their speech communities at local level, but the reality remains that they rarely get a space on the global linguistic terrain. Because of this sad scenario, most of the indigenous languages in Africa have not found their way into the field of commerce and industry, neither have they managed to sneak into the media platform which has become the 21<sup>st</sup> century public sphere. This historical epoch (21<sup>st</sup> century), continues to witness the “awful inflation of the value of the former colonial masters’

languages as the currency in the global flow of wealth, information and technology while that of local languages is flattened and devalued” (McCarty, 2003:148) both at national and international levels. This scenario, as McCarty contends, has resulted in a situation where the world’s linguistic diversity continues to be endangered. The implication of this is the creation of an information void among many indigenous Zimbabweans who would otherwise want to consume media products in their mother languages. This study contends that the marginalisation of indigenous languages in the print media remains a Trojan horse in attempts aimed at national development. The marginalisation of a language poses serious challenges in terms of accessibility of information. It is against this background that the study therefore makes an attempt to unravel the place and role of language in media.

### **1.0.1 The Linguistic Legislative Position of Zimbabwe**

Legislatively, Zimbabwe is a multilingual country with 16 officially recognised languages. This recognition is enshrined in the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act Chapter1; Section 6: which asserts that:

...Chewa, Chibarwe, English, Sotho, Kalanga, Khoisan, Nambya, Ndau, Ndebele, Shangani, Shona, [Zimbabwean] sign language, Tonga, Tswana, Venda, and Xhosa are officially recognised languages in Zimbabwe.

The constitution further states that:

The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must-

- a) ensure that all officially recognised languages are treated equitably; and
- b) take into account the language preferences of people affected by government measures or communication (The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013; Chapter1; Section 6:17).

This new constitution reversed the grouping of all the other indigenous languages, save for Shona and Ndebele (which had long been recognised as national languages), under the banner of minority languages. The new constitution recognises the fundamental linguistic rights of the various speech communities in Zimbabwe. It lives up to what Kamwendo (2006) refers to as a multilingualism friendly constitution, a linguistically all-inclusive language framework (Mavesera, 2013). In accordance with the new constitution, the state is perceived as having a mandate to promote and advance the equal use of all languages used in Zimbabwe, including the Zimbabwean sign language, and it has a responsibility to create conditions for the development of those languages (The Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act

2013, Chapter 1; Section 6:17). What happened in Zimbabwe through this constitution could be what Mutasa (2004) was alluding to when he talked of officialising languages for the purposes of technological advancement. To complement the clause on the language question, Chapter 2 Section 16 (1) of the constitution reinforces that the State, all institutions and agencies of government at every level must promote and preserve cultural values and practices which enhance the dignity, well-being and equality of all Zimbabweans. Again, the implication is that the state and all institutions and agencies of government at every level, as well as all Zimbabwean citizens are expected to work towards the preservation and protection of Zimbabwe's heritage. Thus, in this way, all the officially recognised languages are perceived as the carriers of the Zimbabwean culture in its diverse forms and hence have to be accorded equal status and attention. This is exactly what South Africa did soon after its attainment of independence. It declared eleven languages as officially recognised languages inclusive of the previously officially recognised English and Afrikaans (Kamwendo, 2006).

In spite of this existence of a wide range of indigenous officially declared languages, the media terrain in Zimbabwe, the press in this case, is mostly dominated by English with only two newspapers (*Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*) disseminating information in Shona and Ndebele respectively. The establishment of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* on the Zimbabwean media fraternity has however registered a historical landmark, a scenario in which two of Zimbabwe's print media have resorted to adopting Shona and Ndebele in the collection, mediation and dissemination of news to media audiences. It is this adoption that has prompted the research to find out the extent to which the adoption has empowered Zimbabwean people who speak the above-mentioned languages. It seeks to unravel the extent to which the use of these two indigenous languages has facilitated the democratic participation of the people who speak the languages as well as consume the products of the two newspapers. The research will also look at the language issue in light of Bamgbose's (1991:9) assertion that, "African language policies are characterised by avoidance, arbitrariness, fluctuation and declaration without implementation". Again, the research will quiz to find out whether even after constitutionally recognising all these languages, the nation is not in the same position with South Africa as articulated by one of its critics of the language policy who has argued that:

We have one of the most progressive constitutional arrangements ever in regard to the language question, yet indications are that we are about to go the

way of all neo-colonial flesh also in this regard (Alexander cited in Kamwendo, 2006:55).

## **1.0.2 Conceptualising Empowerment**

The term empowerment can mean different things to different people in different geopolitical and economic backgrounds. In the context of this research, empowerment alludes to raised awareness (Rappaport, 1986 as cited in Lord and Hutchins, 1993: 2). It is a process by which “people with little or no economic power [are accorded] the means to gain greater control and resources in their lives (Albee, 1981 cited in Lord and Hutchins, 1993:2). It implies the enhancement of people’s capacities and capabilities to control and determine the direction and destiny of their lives. Furthermore, Narayan (2002: ix) posits that empowerment alludes to the tapping into the resources and capabilities of the people, expanding their freedom of choice and action and above all adoption of a bottom-up strategy in addressing the people, their roles and experiences in the pertinent issues of their lives. He further contends that the term refers to a scenario where citizens can exercise their voice and insist on accountability.

Empowerment may also allude to a situation where people within a given community are better placed to assume an active role in the decisions that affect and determine the trajectory of their community. Empowerment is also perceived as the creation of an environment in which human skills; knowledge and expertise as well as the historical experiences that have gone into building and cementing them are respected and acknowledged. It is about fostering democratic involvement in socio-political, economic, religious and every other respect, increasing networking and connectedness in attempts to claim people’s rights. In short, the concept of empowerment as envisaged in this research is all about altering power structures and destroying obstacles that hinder the effective engagement of members of the society in their struggle to claim a space on the socio-economic, political and even the media terrain.

According to Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph (2009: xiv), empowerment is hinged on the realisation that people have tremendous power in their experience, knowledge, and intrinsic motivation. For them, empowered communities are filled with engaged and involved people who can greatly help in achieving flexibility, innovation and success in a challenging global environment. Hence, their belief that “empowerment is the key to integrating technology,

financial acumen, and human innovation (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2009: xv). The three scholars contend that empowerment is not giving people power, but rather people “already have the power which is enshrined in their knowledge and motivation” (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph (2009:17). In fact, they argue, empowerment involves releasing, focusing and re-focusing that power to ensure that everyone’s potentials are effectively harnessed and utilised.

However, these scholars believe that the most critical point of entry into the field of empowerment lies in the effective sharing of accurate information in a language that is best understood because the long perceived ‘superior’ languages and cultures as well as need for monolingualism is now counter development (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2009:28). These scholars give the impression that success is embedded in the respect and acceptance of multiculturalism in this new global dispensation of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. They further argue that accurate information is the currency of empowerment and responsibility. For them, people devoid of information, accurate in this sense, cannot respond to socio-economic and political situations in a responsible manner (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2009:32). People with exposure to such information are better placed to make sound decisions, since they would be in possession of the critical “currency of responsibility” (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2009:32).

## **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Literature on media has documented that the media fraternity can be utilised to promote cultural diversity as well as accord the subaltern groups spaces for participation in the global arena. It is purported that media avails an infrastructure which allows the free exchange of information and ideas, deliberations on issues of public concern through the promotion of cultural diversity of the different members of the society. In the same vein, it has been well documented that the use of indigenous languages or mother languages greatly facilitates, participation, innovation, creativity and ultimately the empowerment of the people who speak and use the languages. When it comes to the Zimbabwean press, the reality is that news coverage and dissemination is predominantly in the English language. Under such circumstances one is left questioning if effective deliberations which are classless, non-

discriminatory, bent on shifting power structure and obstruction to unrestricted democratic communication as well as participation can be achieved in a language that is utilised mainly by an elitist group. As has been explained in the background to the study, local languages have not been extensively utilised in the print media. It is, thus, against this background that one starts to wonder if the existence of the two newspapers in indigenous languages, Shona and Ndebele, could be a potential stride in the struggle for both linguistic rights as well as right to access of information. Could this move facilitate a paradigm shift in the processes of informing the Zimbabwean population, exchange of ideas and ultimately the shaping of ideas? The study thus intends to find out the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* can foster the people's participation in the political and economic deliberations in the public domain.

## **1.2 Aim of the Study**

The study is motivated by the researchers' perceived need to move away from the common language discourse as in the context of novels, poems, short stories, theatre, language policy planning and language of instruction in classrooms- to an interdisciplinary approach. For it is the contention of this study that media, as in newspapers, television, films and even videos, are rapidly overtaking novels and all oral forms of literature as major vehicles for information dissemination in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As has already been argued, media are now the public sphere of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Besides this quest to interrogate the language aspect in the media spaces also comes in the background of debate on media as potential facilitator of human empowerment and social development in any given nation. The aim of this research is to find out the extent to which the establishment of newspapers in Shona and Ndebele, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* respectively, has opened up the media spaces for the disadvantaged, isolated and voiceless sections of the population. It endeavours to interrogate the content of the two newspapers to find out the extent to which they handle the critical political and economic issues that enhance successful survival and emancipation of indigenous Zimbabweans who speak the languages on this competitive global plain. Above all, the research would attempt to find out if the news coverage of these two newspapers makes them capable of competing favourably on the media platform with their counterparts that are mediating news in the English language.

### **1.2.1 Objectives**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. explore the linguistic and cultural implications of the adoption of Shona and Ndebele in the news coverage and transmission in *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* respectively;
2. examine the extent to which the existence of the two newspapers has helped demystify the misconception of Zimbabwean local languages inferiority to English;
3. discuss the content of the two newspapers to ascertain the extent to which it can help the consumers of their products to understand the socio-political and economic global issues as well as make meaningful and valuable contribution to the global repository of knowledge and culture;
4. examine the extent to which the two newspapers can promote unrestricted debates on issues that affect the Zimbabwean people's daily lives;
5. comment on whether the use of these two indigenous languages is a panacea to enhancing and empowering the indigenous Zimbabweans.

### **1.2.3 Research Questions**

1. What are the implications of the presence of newspapers in Shona and Ndebele with regards to the linguistic and cultural scenario in the country?
2. Does the nature of the news stories in the two newspapers help the people understand the social, political and economic environment in which they live?
3. To what extent are the newspapers covering stories that are similar to those covered by the newspapers that are disseminating news in English? Can these papers effectively replace the newspapers published in English without short-changing the media consumers?
4. Can the use of Shona and Ndebele in the two newspapers assist the consumers of the papers to make effective contributions as well as deliberate at the same wave length with their counterparts who consume news disseminated in English?
5. Is the use of Shona and Ndebele a panacea to the empowerment of the people through the use of the media terrain?

### 1.3 Justification

As has already been alluded to, the language question, particularly in Africa, has generally been discussed within the context of the field of literature, theatre and linguistics. Very few scholars have linked the language debate to mass media. This idea has actually been aired by Blankson (2005) when he asserts that media scholars have traditionally failed to examine the implications of dependency on foreign languages for the true emancipation of Africa. He contends that it is worth recognising that language and media cannot be treated in isolation because:

Media carry language. They also operate through language. And furthermore, they develop language (Moring, cited in Cormack, and Hourigan, 2007:17).

Furthermore, Schudson (1994) proposes that language is the fundamental human mass media. For Schudson, it is through the mass media that all other media speak and therefore:

no other medium is so deeply rooted, so emotionally fraught, so insistently the basis for political aspirations, or so much an impediment to efforts of states to use modern media for hegemony control (Schudson, 1994:12).

According to Moring (2007), the possible reason why the language question has been seemingly absent from the mainstream media research could have been the predominantly monolingualism orientation of most of the western and capitalist cultures (Moring, cited in Cormack, and Hourigan, 2007:17). This culture views English as the language of global communication because of its connectedness to firstly the superpowers and secondly “westernisation” and “modernity” (Ives, cited in Charamba, 2012; Pennycook, 2000; Crystal, 2003). However, now that the world is rapidly moving towards the recognition and respect of multiculturalism and multilingualism, media research has all the reasons to tackle the language debate within the media contours. To further validate the engagement into the language debate within the media fraternity is the argument by Tiffin (2001) that stresses that written text has ever been part of the grand project of imperialism when he asserts that:

The murder weapons are not always conspicuous, in addition to the military technologies (and later bureaucracy) it was text, those “invisible” bullets which facilitated, envisaged and consolidated the conquest and colonialism of other people by Europeans. Resulting in a metaphor of local bodies apparently lost in foreign textual construction and interpretation (Tiffin, 2001:203).

Surely, the centrality of language in media can never be underestimated. For any truly grounded African media can only develop out of a deliberate move to encourage the use of,

as well as engage the widely-spoken languages, to promote local cultures and talent (Blankson, 2005:3). Blankson insists that it is only such a move that will empower the emerging pluralistic media to communicate with the majority of the people and encourage participation in civic discourse in perceptible languages. Furthermore, no one would doubt that it is a serious omission on the part of the media scholars to overlook the language debate or discourse because language has ever been a bone of contention in the socio-political and economic history of all formerly colonised countries. As Kamwendo (2006:53) has argued; “Language has been one of the sites of political struggles... and was one of the critical tools for advancing the goals of [imperialism]”. With such propositions, there are surely all the reasons to be concerned with the cultural and linguistic direction of the media.

Taking cognisance of the argument that the media have become the 21<sup>st</sup> century public sphere where all the pertinent issues affecting the lives of people are deliberated on, then there is, again, no reason why we cannot think of the medium of communication that is used on this platform. This becomes even more imperative when considering Prah’s (2003) contention that languages are part of Africa’s cognitive preparation for facing the challenges of the 21st century. These challenges are most disseminated through media, which in most cases have been in the dominant language, that is, English. In concurrence with Prah is Mutasa (2004) who asserts that nations that make use of their own languages practically in all domains are countries that have a higher propensity to economic and technological advancement. Furthermore, according to Mazrui 1994 (cited in Mavesera, 2013: 10), “no nation has ascended to first rank technological and economic power by excessive dependency on a foreign language”. In addition to these voices, McChesney (2004), insists that, globalisation, technological revolution and democratisation characterise the era in which we live. Within this aforementioned era, media and communication occupy the critical position. The aim behind this technological revolution is fostering of “informed public participation” (Copp, Hampton and Roemer, 1993: 19). These scholars have also argue that empowerment and above all development cannot be achieved without the access and capacity to process knowledge-based information efficiently. Considering Mcquail’s proposition that “information, culture, and ideas are considered collective property for all” (Mcquail, 2000:195), it becomes prudent to investigate if these two newspapers are setting the record right.

On this note, Mabika (2014), further insists that, indigenous languages should be utilised in media in Africa because they are a highly charged cultural object to be harnessed for development and civic participation. However, of paramount importance in this study is the view that language and communication cannot be viewed in isolation or separation. This research therefore proceeds from these earlier researches and focuses on two Zimbabwean newspapers, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, with regards to the use of indigenous language for social and economic empowerment. Focus will be placed on questioning if the adoption of the indigenous languages in the two newspapers really amounts to an improvement of the local people's involvement in local and global deliberations.

#### **4 Brief Review of Related Literature.**

##### **1.4.1 Language**

According to Lo Bianco (1987), language is the most sophisticated and fundamental form of human communication. It is a contrivance for human use in negotiation, creation of meaning and the enunciation of perception of meaning. Lo Bianco (1987) perceives it as a pivot to the cognitive development and socialisation of children which is indispensable to all learning and conceptual formation. He views it as “a means of personal growth, cultural enrichment and recreation” (Lo Bianco 1987:1). Language in this scholarly work is perceived as the primary means of transmitting people's knowledge and past achievements as well as ensuring contact between generations. Lo Bianco further argues that in any given society language is the instrument of power and domination, a means of interpreting reality which can also become a device of emancipation and freedom. This is the same idea that is being projected by Mansoor (1993) when he argues that the language that a particular community chooses to use in administration, commerce and media is the language of power. In concurrence with them is Mutasa (2004), as cited in Mavesera, 2013: 2), who also argues that language is the currency for buying power on the market. For Lo Bianco (1987), language is very important in this 21<sup>st</sup> century era whose media landscape is characterised by modern technology, for the purposes of providing appropriate information to the “information poor”. Like Lo Bianco (1987), Prah (2007) views language as the critical means of human intercourse. They believe the “jump towards expanded knowledge production, reproduction in society has only been possible when the language of the social majority [mother tongue] has been centrally placed” Prah

(2007:4). It is therefore this liberatory character, that is attributed to language in works of these scholars, that has motivated this study to focus on the potential of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywato* empower the people. With such attributes being ascribed to language, the main thrust of the research thus is to find out if the use of Shona and Ndebele, in the two newspapers, automatically endows them with the power that is envisaged in the scholarly argument.

Official policy during the colonial as well as in the post-independence era tended to marginalise and sacrifice indigenous languages in favour of English as the language of communication, education, media, business and even government transactions. This dominance of English in many domains of life in Zimbabwe and many other former British colonies has been explored by Charamba, (2012) as he attempts to challenge the hegemony of English in post-independence Africa. It is, however, the position of this research that the “hegemony of English” in Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general has to be understood within the framework of the socio-political and historical context within which this status emerged.

The policy towards language emanated from the colonial policy in the then Rhodesia, which was informed by Zimbabwe’s position within the capitalist empire. It was driven by the colonial system’s need to produce compliant workers to assist in the administration of the colony as well as create consumers to sustain capitalist expansion, that is, “the development of global capitalism under the empire” (Pennycook, 2000:50). With the expansion of British Empire, came the unprecedented spread of the use of the language. Within this Empire, English became “a vector and means, by which an unequal division of power and resources between groups [was] propagated” (Ricento, 2000:18). The political, social and economic structure in the Empire witnessed the rise in the status of English and resultantly leads to the marginalisation of the local languages. It also enhanced the frustration of social and economic progress for those who were proficient and fluent in the languages - “linguistic genocide” (Ricento 2000; Chimhundu, 2002; Hungwe, 2007 and Charamba, 2012). For these scholars, this colonial legacy, with all its complex material and ideological agendas, saw English rising as a language of power and privilege. As such, competence in the language amounted to

increased opportunities for communication and above all economic mobility through access to employment on the job-market (Hungwe, 2007). According to Chimhundu (2002), the education that emanated from this legacy was designed to have a thrust on speech training in English since “Africans had to be drawn into the orbit of Europe” (Southern Rhodesia Government, 1952 as cited in Hungwe, 2007:139). In this education system, the medium of instruction had to be no other language, but English. The proponents of this ideology felt that English would be the key which would open to [the colonised] a world of new ideas because it was believed to be “the language of new thought and expression” (Luggard 1910, cited in Pennycook, 2000: 53).

To further enunciate the superior status that was attached to English by the capitalist adventurers, Pennycook (2000) cites a statement uttered by Grant, one of the colonial administrators in India, who asserted that:

English... would open up a new world of literature, reason, history, virtue, and morality, by which “the general mass of their opinions would be rectified; and above all, they would see a better system of principles and morals. New views of duty as rational creatures would open upon them; and that mental bondage in which they have long been [held] would gradually dissolve” (Grant, 1910, cited in Pennycook, 2000: 52).

Even after the passing of the colonial era, English continued to enjoy preference as a vehicle to emancipation from poverty and opening up of unrestricted opportunities in former British colonies. The social mobility prospects associated with the English Language continued to generate and sustain a “negative perception of multilingualism which served to diminish the status of African languages, [presenting] them as a problem rather than an asset” (Bamgbose, 2011:2) to the ultimate goal of emancipation and above all development of the African continent. This scenario is exactly what Hungwe (2007) is lamenting in the conclusion that the ushering in of independence did not change the status of English and above all that of the indigenous languages in Zimbabwe. English retained its dominant status with Shona and English being accorded national language status (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987). This situation also explains that the local languages, in spite of the national language status conferred on them, by virtue of 1) being used in education at elementary level and 2) being treated as optional subjects in the education system continue to be used in the lower echelons of society and out rightly eliminated from the global political, economic, technological and

scientific fields. Hence Hungwe's (2007:135) assertion that post-independence Zimbabwean linguistic topology "has been characterised by continuities rather than change; providing limited support for the development of indigenous languages". English language continued to enjoy the status of "the language of international communication, of science and technology, of religion and ideology, of trade and commerce in the world" (Crystal, 2003).

The highlighted perception is what Maseko and Ndlovu, (2013) are expressing when they point out that English is preferred among Zimbabwean youths as it gives them a sophisticated and globally savvy outlook. What the above scholars have presented is an impression, among the youth, that English is surely the only language that can open the doors to meaningful communication and participation on the global terrain. The question that remains unanswered then is: With the introduction of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* would the superior advantage of English as a vehicle of transmitting information, ideas, knowledge and even opinions continue to hold?

#### **1.4.2 The Colonial Legacy and Cultural Imperialism**

According to Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1986), language is the reservoir of the history, culture, creativity, values, norms, belief systems, expectations, sorrows and successes of any given community. It determines how these people perceive themselves and their place in the global community. In fact, the indigenous language of any particular group of people is imbued with all their strategies for responding to their political, economic and social challenges. This notion serves to show the pivotal role of one's language for survival, self-identity and even self-actualisation. In his book *Decolonising the Mind* (1986), Ngugi waThiong'o laments the denigration of the African indigenous languages on the global linguistic platform. He argues that "the biggest weapon wielded and actually daily unleashed by imperialism against the collective defiance is the cultural bomb" whose effect is the total destruction of a people's faith in their names, languages, environment, heritage of struggle, unity, capacities and above all themselves, making them hanker to associate with other people's languages, cultures and history at the expense of their own (waThiongo, 1986). It is this same scenario that Prah, (2003) alludes to in the argument that adoption of the foreign language alienates the people

and their removal from cultural and linguistic primordial moorings assumes the form of denial of the home culture. For Prah, this is an unfortunate situation because “the language of the conqueror in the mouth of the conquered is the language of the slaves” (J.H. Broekman cited in Prah, 2007:8).

For Ngugi wa Thiong’o, just like Prah, “imperialism is total: it has economic, social, political, military, cultural and psychological consequences” (waThiongo, 1986:3) and all this amounts to unprecedented control. Hence the need to assist the people to “seize back their creative initiative through a real control of the means of communal self-definition in time and space” (waThiongo, 1986:4), that is, the indigenous languages. Such a step, it is perceived will endorse inter-racial unity, foster respect for and tolerance towards linguistic and cultural diversity and above all the ingraining of democracy within a nation (Langtag Report as cited in Kamwendo, 2006: 67).

The concept of cultural imperialism that has been highlighted by Ngugi wa Thiong’o has also been explored at great length by Whitt (2009). Whitt (2009) describes imperialism as one of the numerous forms of oppressive relations that exist between dominant and subordinated cultures. This is the same idea that is presented by Murphy (2007) who argues that colonialism, not only involved the physical occupation of territory of non-western nations and the extraction of their resources, but was a period of intense cultural syncretism. For Whitt (2009), whether intentional or unconsciously, the imperial system maintains and sustains the political power, secures the social control, and further the economic profit of the dominant culture (Whitt, 2009). To concretise his argument on cultural imperialism, he cites Keeshig-Tobias (1990) who viewed the whole concept of imperialism as amounting to cultural theft, above all, theft of voice. Similarly, it is Bamgbose (2000) cited in Prah, (2009) who concludes that a borrowed language is bound to exclude the African people from active participation in political and economic endeavours characteristic of their societies. Indeed the absence of the indigenous language on the media fraternity, particularly in Zimbabwe, amounts to nothing but the robbing of the indigenous people of their voices, their capacities to generate their own media content, “undermining their integrity and distinctiveness, assimilating them into the dominant culture by seizing that [which assists them to define

themselves in relation to the global environment and reshaping their self-concept to suit the hegemonic intentions of the]dominant culture” (Whitt, 2009:6).

What Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1986) and Whitt (2009) are championing in their works is a drive towards positively responding to the appeal for a rediscovery and resumption of African indigenous languages, an exhortation for:

a regenerative reconnection with millions of revolutionary tongues in Africa and the world over demanding liberation. It is a call for the rediscovery of the language of humankind: the language of struggle (waThiongo, 1987: 108).

His is an exhortation to bringing to an end:

the continuation of the oppressive power relations that have historically informed the interactions of western and indigenous cultures, and part of a continuum of contemporary practices that constitute forms of cultural imperialism (Whitt, L. 2009:1).

The same desire to move the ‘centre of perception’ (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1987) is expressed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985) when they allude to the idea of allowing people and groups to make things happen and engage in the form of a 'dialogue', where controversial issues are resolved through listening to each other (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985: xv). What all these scholars are envisaging is a transformation of the current power relations where the world has been seen to be revolving around the western linguistic axis, culminating in economic and political control of dominated groups. What they all point towards in their works is that every language has its own social and cultural basis and these are instrumental to the formation of mental processes and value judgments (Ngugi wa Thiongo 1986). They call for the liberation of natural and human resources and the entire productive forces of the nation- the beginning of Africa’s real progress, empowerment and development (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986). They yearn for a linguistic terrain that empowers the indigenous African people to “sleep not to dream, but dream to change that world” (Carter cited Ngugi wa Thiong’o 1986:108).

### **1.4.3 The Linguistic terrain in Post-Independence Zimbabwe**

As already mentioned the linguistic terrain in post-independence Zimbabwe, just like in most former colonies remained unchanged, with English continuously enjoying “hegemony” over all the other indigenous languages. This reality exists, paradoxically, in an environment where post-colonial political and academic discourses are vigorously chronicling the evils of colonialism, and never championing the enhancement of their local languages. The new system continues to see English as a ‘neutral’ language of science and technology advancement (Charamba, 2012). It would seem as though in Zimbabwe, the politicians at the negotiation table in Lancaster were overwhelmed with the prospects of independence to the point of forgetting to negotiate for the rectification of other state instruments that propelled the capitalist system such as language. However, for Chimhundu (1997), the official neglect of the language issue in post-independence Zimbabwe was actually deliberate and can be just explained in terms of the elitist leadership’s fear of the unknown. The elite nationalists unconsciously adopted the notion that rejection of English was foolishness given its technological reach and technological advancement (Chimhundu, 1997).

However, Freire (1969) proposes that the failure of the former colonised to change the language problem is a manifestation of the complex problem that emanates from the fact that they were “suffering from a duality existence which had established itself in their innermost being, shaped by and existing in the [linguistic imperialism] and violence (Freire, 1969:34). For Freire, the stance taken by such post-colonial leaders reflects the sum total of the tragic dilemma of the oppressed. He postulates that they are afraid of embracing freedom, autonomy and responsibility and as a result, most post-colonial African independence states have failed to break away from their past in order to forge new identities. Hence the hegemony of English continues to be the phenomenon that haunts the post-colonial linguistic landscape, a phenomenon that obviously accounts for the existence of a multiplicity of newspapers on the street corners and on-line disseminating information in English.

Of course, the Education Act of 1987 had provisions for addressing the language discrepancy in post-colonial Zimbabwe, however, according to Dube and Maseko (2013), it restored the

dominant position of English, with Shona and Ndebele being elevated to national language status (but practically not equal to English). Dube and Ncube (2013) acknowledge that the instrument (the Education Act 1987) was revisited in 2006 when additional local languages such as Venda, Sotho, Kalanga, Nambya, Zimbabwean sign language and other indigenous languages became recognised and prescribed for use in the education of children at elementary level. They, however, claim that the revisited version continued to fall short of promoting indigenous languages as it relegated the indigenous languages for use at elementary level in the education system (Dube and Ncube, 2013). Such a policy, they posit, gives an impression that it would be “illegal to use [an indigenous language] as a medium of instruction at any level that is beyond primary education” (Dube and Ncube, 2013). It further conveys the impression that these local languages are incapacitated for use in learning and teaching beyond lower elementary level (Bamgbose 2011).

To further substantiate the argument on the continuity thesis, Hungwe (2007) explores the Nziramasanga led Presidential Commission of Enquiry of 1998 whose terms of reference include “to study and recommend specific policy initiatives on indigenous languages with a view to their wider use generally and more specifically in the education and training systems in Zimbabwe” (Government of Zimbabwe, 1999:161). According to Hungwe, the Commission also failed to ameliorate the status of the indigenous languages even though it raised concerns over their position. There was no clear policy as well as laid down procedure for the elevation of the indigenous languages from “linguistic encirclement” (Ngugi wa Thiongo, 1986). The impression that is given is that from merely looking at the document particularly paying attention to “the vagueness of the policy or its lack of feasibility”, (Bamgbose, 2011:6) one can conclude that the policy is not meant to be taken seriously. For Hungwe, like the 1987 Education Act, the report recommended “English as the medium of instruction throughout the training systems of Zimbabwe” (Government of Zimbabwe 1999:169).

In the same vein, Dube and Ncube, (2013), reiterate that the dominance of English continues to push indigenous languages to the peripheries of communication and many other critical domains in the Zimbabwean people’s lives. For them, a language that is not actively used in

communication has a propensity to attrition (Dube and Ncube, 2013). However, unlike other language policy critics in Zimbabwe who place their emphasis on the domination of indigenous languages by English, Dube and Ncube,(2013) lament the domination of Ndebele language by Shona and English. For them, Shona is given better linguistic treatment than Ndebele. Like Hadebe (2006), they believe that politicians have to take cognisance of the fact that unity and progress are not necessarily achieved through one language and above all that people can only be empowered by their own language. It is this dimension of the language policy in Zimbabwe that this research attempts to address, that is, the extent to which the use of the Shona and Ndebele in the two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* can empower the masses.

What has been peculiar in the works of most of language critics is their tendency to attribute liberating powers to indigenous languages, citing the crucial role of mother languages in the emancipation of speech communities. Like all linguistic human rights discourses, there is a general assumption that mother tongue use in different domains of life is an empowering process. If language can be an empowering factor, could the contrary also be the same? This research study, therefore, tries to find out all the other possible variables that have to be considered to enhance the empowering potential of these languages. The two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, were investigated to determine the validity of this proclaimed emancipatory and empowering nature of mother tongue use.

#### **1.4.4 Language and the Media**

Within the field of media, there are scholars who yearn for the use of indigenous languages as expressed by Cormack (2007) in Cormack, M. and Hourigan, N. (eds), 2007:4) when he alludes to the use of indigenous languages as a democratic move targeted at championing linguistic diversity. Like Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Cormack, sees the media fraternity as having a great role to play in promoting linguistic diversity. For him, the field of media has a role to ensure "linguistic normalisation" (Cormack, 2007:11), through enabling indigenous people to get access to fair "treatment from the dominant media, but (implicitly) in the language of the dominant culture" (Cormack, 2007:9). Theirs is a desire to see the rest of the African

continent digressing from the hero worshiping of the so-called “international language(s) of socio-economic and political power” (Kamwendo, 2006). For Cormack, there must be emphasis on strategies and procedures by which “minority languages are not merely rescued and maintained, but are incorporated into everyday life” (Cormack, 2007:11). He believes that in the process these languages will begin to be seen not just as some dubious throwback to a pre-modern age, but rather as part of the new identity politics within the current global dispensation. Furthermore, Cormack (2007) argues that language, the local languages, in this case, are central to the concept of the public sphere, which gives an impression of communal unrestricted communication, public participation that constitute the engine that is driving the turbines of economic, political and even the general media fraternity globally. In concurrence with Cormack is Riggins (1992) who further proposes that the use of indigenous languages would greatly assist the indigenous people to develop their own media, conveying their own point of view in their own languages. He feels that in a way the use of these local languages would assist them to design media and the media products in such a way that responds to their information needs and preferences as distinct speech communities (Riggins, 1992). What these scholars are proposing is in line with Alfaro (2006)’s assertion that:

... today the media constitute a crucial source of civic education and legitimization of democratic power. Notions of political authority, political values and general understandings of a nation’s political institutions are consolidated through the daily programmes of mass media and particularly via news (Alfaro, (2006) cited in Murphy, 2007:2).

Osborn (2010) also acknowledges the critical need to embrace the African indigenous languages on the media terrain, paying particular attention to the localisation of these languages to the new information and communication technologies. For him, in the Information Society, besides acting as a means of communication, language has a socio-economic role similar to that of money in industrial society (Osborn, 2010). While money is used to acquire material goods, language is used to acquire knowledge, ideas and many other intangible goods. The information and communication worldwide, he argues, has turned more of multicultural and multilingual than monolingual, making it even more imperative than ever before to embrace and accommodate the use of the diverse indigenous languages in the continent. Availing content in the languages most familiar to the African consumers of these new information and communication technologies, he believes, would be indispensable in the adoption and optimal participation on the global economic, political and cultural landscapes

as the local people find themselves grabbing the opportunity to produce and disseminate local content (Osborn, 2010). He adds on that in a context where people may speak several languages – as is common in Africa – the option of using different languages is also empowering (Osborn, 2010). Like other scholars who have written championing the cause for the use of indigenous languages, Osborn (2010), contends that communication is indisputably easier in the first language (L1) than in languages that people acquire later. He adds on that even at a community or societal level, L1 speakers are considered a central and indispensable aspect of cultural fabric, as well as socio-economic interaction.

Of critical importance to Osborn's argument is the fact that the use of indigenous languages in media would go a long way towards providing a solution, opening up opportunities and possibilities for more effective use of technology by the 'majority'. In the process, the use of these indigenous languages will, thus complement and expand on the potentials that have all along been offered by the use of the former colonial masters' language, English. While he acknowledges the opportunities that can be ushered in for the African communities by the introduction of indigenous languages in new information and communication technologies, Osborn is also conscious of the challenges that come with the attempt at embracing these indigenous languages. Key among the cited challenges is the multiplicity of African languages with their diverse dialects creating a situation which he terms "multiple dimensions of Africa's linguistic complexity" (Osborn, 2010: 6). However, Osborn still believes that the introduction of indigenous African languages in the use of information and communication technologies would greatly assist the global and the African community in particular, to address these socio-linguistic realities in the continent. Such a move would benefit the African media platform considering the fact that information and communication technologies are now getting internationalised. With the indigenous language on board on the media terrain, the indigenous communities that use those languages are bound to experience an "ability and desire to participate in the political process" (Polat, 2005:40) of the day. With all these scholarly assertions, it will be prudent to ascertain whether Shona and Ndebele in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are automatically empowering the people.

### 1.4.5 Indigenous Languages on the Public Sphere

As has already been highlighted, the media is the public sphere of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This public sphere according to Habermas (1990) is all inclusive, accommodative and access to it is guaranteed to all the citizens. Taking the case of the print media landscapes in Zimbabwe where “the hegemony of English has largely gone unchallenged” (Charamba, 2012). One would question:

How can one fully participate in anything, or compete, or learn effectively or be creative in a language in which one is not fully proficient or literate? Above all, how can a country develop its human resource base to full potential without the languages of the people? (Chimhundu, 1997:63).

According to Maseko and Ndlovu (2013), African languages make accessible information that would otherwise be meaningless if presented in non-indigenous languages. For them, the public’s right to know is better serviced if information is presented in a language that is naturally theirs (Maseko and Ndlovu, 2013). What these scholars are arguing is that the adoption of the Zimbabwean local languages would automatically translate to empowerment.

The conclusions of these scholars are very important to this study as they serve to reveal the general belief in the empowering potential of the indigenous languages. With all this fascinating evidence of the crucial role of a people’s language in all spheres of life, this study gears itself to analyse the two newspapers in light of these previous findings. The research goes beyond what all these other scholars have done and scrutinise the dynamics of media production to find out if adoption of the mother tongue would automatically translate to empowerment. This dimension is going to be addressed by the study through the analysis of the content of the news stories in the two newspapers, their ownership as well as their editorial policy. This move would attempt to explore the other hidden factors other than the use of indigenous languages that could also militate against the masses’ democratic participation and promotion of multiculturalism and linguistic pluralism.

## **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

This research is mainly inspired by the postcolonial theory. According to Mapara the postcolonial theory is [among other things] about the “colonised and formerly colonised announcing their presence and identity as well as reclaiming their past which was lost or distorted because of being othered by colonialism” (Mapara, 2009:141). He further argues that postcolonial theory is hinged on cultural identities. “As a theory, it is also anchored on binary oppositions where white (as represented by the English language) is presented as superior and black (as represented by the indigenous languages in Zimbabwe in this case) is inferior. In all representations, including in the media fraternity, the western version is “always the standard while the non-European are inferior and have to have their sensibilities and values cultivated so that they become just similar to the Europeans or at least approximate them” (Mapara, 2009:141).

Proponents of the postcolonial theory include the likes of Fanon (1967) who have argued that because of colonialism the history, language, culture and belief systems of the colonial masters were imposed onto the colonised people and affirmed as superior to those of the colonised. This theory is very relevant in this research in so far as it presupposes that the assumption of the alien (western) languages, history, sensibilities and belief systems culminated in the great disempowerment of indigenous people in Zimbabwe. Thus, incapacitating them in all their endeavours to construct and redirect their history and social structures towards actively addressing pertinent issues of their time.

## **1.5 Research Methodology**

This study employed the mixed methodology approach. This approach involved the utilisation of multiple approaches in the process of grappling with the emancipatory capacity of indigenous languages newspapers. The idea behind the choice of the mixed research methodology was to exploit elements of both the qualitative and the quantitative research

paradigms so that results mutually complemented each other in the search for objective viewpoints and therefore conclusions.

This choice was also informed by the idea that research on social issues is replete with complex and multiplex social phenomena that cannot be simply unraveled through the use of single frame explorations. Furthermore, adoption of the approach was also premised on the idea that the media terrain and its operations are a contested terrain; as such knowledge and information obtained from these sources are bound to assume multiple realities. It was thus the contention of the study that these complex and multiple realities can therefore be understood using a cocktail of approaches rather than adopt a single approach. Furthermore, the approach postulated, the conclusions arrived at through a combination of different methods enriched and improved understanding of the phenomena under study. The study assumed that the adoption of such an approach would foster fresh ideas about them, while at the same time generating answers to questions that may be difficult to answer using a single method.

The study used the survey and content analysis research methods. For the survey, the study used the questionnaire and the interview data collection tools. The population for the survey constituted experts in the fields of language, language policy and media; personnel from Zimbabwe Newspapers; newspaper vendors and readers of the two newspapers. The population of the newspapers, for purposes of content analysis, comprised all the publications of *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* for the period January 2014 to December 2015. Through a process of random sampling, 20% of 208 publications were selected as a sample for the study.

### **1.5.1 Descriptive Survey**

Under the qualitative research design, the descriptive survey was used as the research method. According to Aggarwa, (2008) as cited in Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010) descriptive survey is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This kind of research involves a

high level of proper analysis, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships. For Kerlinger (1973) cited in Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010), surveys focus on people's beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations and behaviour. The descriptive survey is important for this research on the extent to which the introduction of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have empowered indigenous Zimbabweans, because the study is hinged on unraveling the attitudes and opinions of the people who read *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* with regards the papers' potential to provide a spring board from which people can share information, and make meaningful contribution on the global knowledge and skills arena.

### **1.5.2 Content Analysis**

To complement the descriptive survey method, the research also uses content analysis as a research method. Holsti (1969) as cited in Kuthiala (2010), views content analysis as any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages. Kuthiala (1999) sees it as the scientific process of investigating both quantitatively and qualitatively the oral, printed, audio and visual information in the context of the intended and perceived meanings. This is a method for finding intended and actual meanings of messages. It helps to make the unobserved context of the message more meaningful. Since content is the pivot of any communication, investigating the nature of the content of communication becomes the main task of this research on the efficacy of the newspapers in local languages in empowerment and the deliverance of democracy in Zimbabwe. Content analysis as a critical method in this research assists in determining the nature of discourses, in understanding and evaluating media messages as presented in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. It helps the researcher to interrogate the information that is fed to the brains of indigenous media consumers and analyse it in terms of its content, meaning and possible effects in the context of participating in the public deliberations of their political realities.

Interviews were carried out among the people who live in Harare urban center to find out the extent to which their consumption of *Kwayedza* news products has helped them to be active participants in global political, economic and social debates. In the same vein, interviews

were carried out among people who live in Bulawayo, who have exposure to the news products of *uMthunywa*. Questionnaires were used to source information on what people in general thought about the two newspapers in indigenous languages. These questionnaires were distributed through both e-mails and physical delivery. Content analysis of the news items and the interaction that ensue after the consumption of the stories from the two newspapers was also carried out to ascertain the extent to which these platforms were providing the much-needed space for political-socio-economic situation deliberations. This analysis was targeted at determining the two newspapers' propensity to empowering and fostering democratic participation of the people who consume their products. The analysis thus, determined the extent to which the two newspapers in indigenous languages have been leverages for strategic communication where alternative voices can be mainstreamed. The media, old or new, has proved to be the core institution facilitating mass communication in the public sphere in contemporary societies (Fenton, 2010).

### **1.5.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation**

According to Rao and Vaki (1984) as cited in Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010) analysis helps in categorising, ordering, manipulating and summarising of data to obtain answers to research questions. For the analysis and interpretation of the collected information, mostly qualitative methods are utilised. However, for responses that were obtained through the use of the questionnaire, statistical presentation of the results was done. Frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs were used to display the distribution trends that were discovered from the study. Conclusions were arrived at from the displayed trends as reflected in the collected data.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The research focuses on establishing the extent to which the use of Shona and Ndebele in selected newspapers opened up the media spaces for and empowered the disadvantaged, isolated and voiceless sections of the population. This study is mainly confined to *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* newspapers. Chapter one constitutes the introductory chapter. It

presents the background information upon which this study is carried out. This chapter addresses the following aspects of the study: the background of the study, the research problem, objectives and research questions, the justification, the literature review, research methodology, the theoretical framework and the scope of the study. The second chapter presents the review of literature that is related to this study that is literature on language, the language policy in Zimbabwe, the language policy in Zimbabwean media as well as the place of language in the public sphere. Chapter three explores the theoretical framework which is informing the study. Chapter four of this study presents the methodology for the study. It discusses the study's research design, the research methods that are used for carrying out the study, the population of study as well as the instruments that were used for data collection. Above all, the chapter also explores the data presentation, analysis and interpretation strategies that were utilised by the researcher. The fifth chapter analyses: a) data that was collected through interviews; b) data that was collected through the distributed questionnaire and c) the content of the news coverage of the two newspapers. In this chapter, the study engages in a general discussion and consolidation of aspects derived from the analysis. The final chapter, chapter six, is the conclusion to the study.

## **1.7 Definition of Terms**

### **Empowerment**

In this study, empowerment could simply be viewed as the creation of an environment in which human skills; knowledge and expertise as well as the historical experiences that have gone into building and cementing them are respected and acknowledged.

### **Indigenous Languages**

These are the languages that have been in use by the groups of people whose origins can be traced to Zimbabwe. These languages have been in use since time immemorial. In this study, "those who can establish that they have been in the area for the longest time, and continue to live there," (Browne, 1996: 4) are considered the indigenous peoples of the concerned community.

### ***Kwayedza***

This is a newspaper that is published in Shona, with offices in Harare, and is mainly consumed by the Shona speaking communities in Zimbabwe. It covers issues that are informed by the socio-political, economic and cultural experiences of these particular speech communities.

### ***Umthunywa***

This is a newspaper that is published in Ndebele, with offices in Bulawayo, and is mainly consumed by the Ndebele speaking communities in Zimbabwe. It covers issues that are informed by the socio-political, economic and cultural experiences of these particular speech communities.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

To conclude, this study endeavours to place the existence of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* on the Zimbabwean media platform within the context of the language debate and continued discourse over the destiny of Africa. The aim is to find out if these two newspapers have helped the people in Zimbabwe to move out of the “linguistic encirclement” (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986:7) and helped them with the basic instrument for “conceptualisation, thinking and mental development” (Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986:28). The chapter has outlined the background of the study, the research problem, aim and objectives, research questions and the justification to the study. A summary of the literature review, research methodology, the theoretical framework and the scope of the study has been provided.

## **Chapter 2: Extended Literature Review**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter contextualises the study by interrogating the handling of the language question, making reference to the use of indigenous languages as a medium of instruction in education as well as the languages of mass communication. The chapter attempts to interrogate works of individual scholars separately and then attempts to establish a thread that is characteristic of the host of voices which inevitably displays the gap the current study seeks to address. The literature therefore starts off by a closer look at the concept of language. It attempts to make an analysis of scholarly works by writers from non-African background, works by scholars of African origin as well as works by scholars of Zimbabwean origin.

The general trend that has been highlighted by the majority of the scholars is that any community and above all African communities have no option, but to revive and uphold their indigenous languages if they are to be considered as equally empowered players on the global market place. They concur that communities have to switch out of the hegemonic English language and make use of their languages in all domains of life, be they law, business, politics, and education, to allow them to effectively and democratically participate on the global arena. With regard to print media, scholars have very little documented information in as far as the use of indigenous languages and its potential to empower people is concerned. Most of the documented information that is available is mainly anchored on language policy issues. It is, therefore, the intention of this study to make full use of the abundantly available literature on language policy as well as the scarce resources on indigenous languages in media to come up with a statement pertaining to the efficacy of indigenous languages use as democratically empowering discourse in print media. The chapter starts off by a global perspective on language issues and the review zeroes in on related literature on language issues with regards to African and Zimbabwean perspectives on indigenous language usage in media, making close reference to its potential to open up the media terrain, promoting plurality, cultural diversity and democratic participation for the indigenous Zimbabwean people.

## 2.1 Language

To effectively handle the area of study, the review looks at the question of language as has been addressed by different scholars. This literature will go a long way into fitting the area of research in the actual context of the global language debate. As has already been stated in Chapter One in section 1.4.1, language in the context of this study is the principal means of spreading people's knowledge and historical experiences as well as ensuring contact between generations. Taking up the argument in light of this idea, Danladi (2013) asserts that in political and social policy, language functions not just as a vehicle of interaction and an instrument of communication, but also as a culturally important tool of the dominant ideology (Danladi, 2013:1). In a way, Danladi argues that "to learn a language is not only reaching out to others but to maintain a variety of the social bond, a shared sense of values and communal awareness" (Danladi, 2013:1). Like all the other scholars who have written on language there is a general consensus in the literature that language is an embodiment of a people's culture and all their historical experiences. Danladi also states that language is a powerful tool of control that was used by the colonial powers to subjugate indigenous peoples in the various colonies during the empire building project.

For Mansoor (1993) the language that a particular community chooses to use in administration, commerce and media is the language of power. In concurrence with this idea is Mutasa (2004), as cited in Mavesera, 2013:2), who argues that language is the currency for buying power on the market place of ideas. As pointed out in in Chapter One, section 1.4.1, Lo Bianco (1987) posits that language is very important in this 21<sup>st</sup> century for purposes of providing appropriate information to the "information poor". One wonders if what Lo Bianco is consciously or unconsciously implying in this argument that provision of information to the poor could therefore be most appropriately and effectively relayed using the mother tongue. What has been established in this review of related literature is that the area of indigenous language use in media has, from the available documentation, proved to be an area that is not very popular among researchers. Very little has been done with respect to researching on the use of local languages as a strategy of promoting indigenous languages in modern communication media. For the majority of western scholars, when they talk of language in their media discourse, they mean English language, hence the great effort made

by this review of related literature towards exploring the hegemonic tendencies of English in various communities across the globe.

Prah (2007) on the other hand, views language as the critical means of human interaction. Prah believes:

the jump towards expanded knowledge production, reproduction [in the general sense] in society has only been possible when the language of the social majority [mother tongue] has been centrally placed (Prah, 2007:4).

It is therefore, this liberating character that has been attributed to language as a phenomenon that has motivated this study to focus on the potential of selected newspapers in indigenous languages in Zimbabwe, in emancipating and empowering the people who read them. In light of such attributes being ascribed to language, the main thrust of the research hence is to find out if the use of Shona and Ndebele, in the two newspapers, automatically endows the readers with the power and freedom to meaningfully deliberate and contribute in pertinent issues of the day, as envisaged in the scholarly argument. The study appreciates and acknowledges the potential of indigenous languages in emancipating local people. However, it differs from these scholars in that it tries to find out the applicability of these ideas to the Zimbabwean situation. If it has been discovered that the use of indigenous languages generally enhances the people's political, economic and social power, the study thus tries to find out the extent to which this is true of the Zimbabwean people's experiences with the use of their languages.

In light of the arguments that have been presented by these different scholars, it becomes very clear that the question of language and its use in any domain, media in this particular situation, is very important in empowering communities. This is very evident when considering the phenomena that mother tongues are equated to; they are viewed as currency on the marketplace, as symbols of power and influence, as embodiments of the identity and cultural heritage of the people, as means of human interaction and above all as an effective tool in poverty alleviation interventions. It is therefore imperative for research to be targeted at the media terrain as a critical area that could promote and foster the use and development of indigenous languages in the nation. For this study, the emphasis is not so much on the need to bring indigenous languages onto the media field. The study acknowledges the existence of

the languages on the Zimbabwean media platform as represented by Shona and Ndebele through *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* publication. These papers have been on the media platform since 1985 and they have soldiered on up to this day. The thrust of the study then is to assess the extent to which the uses of the languages make news and information accessible to the majority of the people in the nation. It is to find out if all the positive attributes of mother tongues that have been highlighted by the various scholars is being realised and enjoyed by the indigenous people in Zimbabwe.

## **2.2 English and the Notion of Imperialism: Crystal's Perspective.**

As has already been alluded to, for most scholars in the media field, when they talk of language in media, they are unconsciously talking about English. This scenario has been attributed to the global positioning of English that has resulted from many historical, socio-economic and political factors. The global position of English has been well researched on by Crystal precisely on the premises of Galtung's theory of imperialism which posits that there is a dominant centre and a dominated periphery. In this theory, the idea is that what is imposed by the dominant centre is internalised by those in power in the periphery in order to legitimate exploitation

Crystal provides reasons as to why English became a world language. He views the rise of English language from the time of the pioneering voyages to the Americas, Asia and Antipodes. This expansion, he claims continued with the 19<sup>th</sup> century scramble for Africa and the colonial developments in the South Pacific. The English language is said to have made its greatest strides into global language status in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century when most of the newly independent African countries adopted it as an official language of communication, media, business, law and education. For Crystal, it is the spread of the language across all the continents that make the title "global language a reality" (Crystal, 2003:29). In a sense, Crystal is arguing that language as a primary means of communication can play a critical role in the capitalists' cultural and linguistic penetration of the periphery.

Pursuing the idea of the assumption of English as a global language, Han-Yi (2013) posits that the transmitting of the norms and ideas of the centre through language, linguistic imperialism is not only a distinct type of imperialism, but also pervades all types of imperialism. For him, linguistic imperialism is a subtype as well as an integral part of cultural imperialism, along with media-based, educational and scientific imperialism. Han-Yi (2013) makes reference to Laitin's (1983) statement that goes:

Of all the cultural ties that still bind Africa to Europe, it is the continued use of European languages as the official languages of African states that remain the most significant.

Like all other critiques of the question of language he believes that language is both a medium of communication and an identity symbol.

In response to the question of whether Asians have a choice Tsui and Telfson (2007:18 as cited in Han-Yi (2013) have pointed out that

...their language policy responses to globalisation have been shaped, and even determined, by the linguistic practices and preferences of multinational corporations, transnational organisations and international aid agencies. Asian countries have little choice but to legitimise the hegemony of English.

What is recurrent in his work is that English has attained a worldwide status. This idea of English as being the appropriate candidate for global language status is reinforced in the publication *The Past, Present and Future of World English* (Crystal, 1999). Crystal believes that a language achieves global status when many nations across the globe decide to give it a special place on their linguistic landscapes even though they have very few people or even no mother tongue speakers and also even though they have their own mother tongues (Crystal 1999; Crystal, 2003). In this respect, he concludes that English has made strides towards this status because it has been embraced as the official language in many countries and is being used as the medium of communication in domains such as the legal institutions, the media and even the education system. He argues that English has been made the official language in more than seventy countries. By the year 2000, about a quarter of the world's population was already fluent or competent in English (Crystal 2003:6).

Han-Yi (2013) and Crystal provide the background against which the inquiry into the two newspapers is grounded. After English language was used as a capitalist tool for penetrating the African continent, it crowded out the indigenous languages, creating an environment that stunted their growth and limited their usage as media of communication and instruction. When ultimately the indigenous languages find their space on the media platform, as evidenced in the appearance of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, it thus becomes important to find out if they are able to perform the informing duties with the dexterity and the rigor that the colonial languages have done all along.

### **2.3 Antonio Gramsci's Theory of Hegemony and the Language policies in Colonial and Post-Colonial States**

The term hegemony has its roots in Greek society, it means to lead. According to Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony, the power and spread of a dominant language is not solely facilitated and buttressed through the use of state apparatuses such as the army and the police, it is achieved through ideological instruments that force marginal language speakers to accept the "prestige and utility of the new language (Ives, 2004). This power is established through persuasion and consent (Gramsci, 1971). Charamba (2012), views the hegemony of English as a reality in virtually all former British colonies. For him, the unquestioning acceptance of English as a world language is what constitutes hegemony. Like the other scholars who have talked at great length about English as a global language, this hegemony can be traced back to the rise of the British Empire as well as the dominance of the American economy (Crystal, 1999; Crystal, 2003; Charamba, 2012). Charamba sees a link between super-power politics and the hegemony of English. For him, the hegemony of English has to be understood within the confinements of the global politics and its links to regional and national politics. The colonial legacy he eludes has seen English occupying a high and prestigious position while African languages occupy the lowest rung on the linguistic ladder. Such a scenario, he argues, has resulted in the dominance of English and the unprecedented suppression of the indigenous languages. With the hegemony of English came "the periphery, exclusionism and isolation suffered by these languages under the dominance of English" (Charamba 2012:3). On this linguistic platform, it is argued; English became the only "language that gives someone the power to control his conditions" (Ives, 2009:679).

Charamba cites Bleiker, (2000:217) who says “language is not a mere medium of communication. It is also the very site where politics is carried out”. He spells out that the hegemony of English is hindering the African communities in a multitude of ways. First, it affects the local knowledge systems; it distorts the indigenous cultural meanings and presents them in bad shape. Secondly, he argues that it militates against African education endeavours. In light of these arguments, it then becomes important to find out if the switching on to the indigenous languages as medium of communication and instruction, as witnessed in the Zimbabwean *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, creates a scenario where the indigenous knowledge systems are promoted and local cultural meanings favourably presented. In other words, the idea is to find out if Zimbabweans are able to present the best that the African heritage has instore through the use of the local languages in media.

Charamba is in support of what Mazrui and Mazrui (1998:2004) meant when they say; the pro-English push that comes with the hegemony of English is in actual fact a promotion of the final victory of capitalism throughout the world under the influence of western imperialism. The underlying idea in Charamba’s thesis is that as long as there are some languages that are more equal than others on the global linguistic terrain, there will never be any traces of empowerment on the part of those who speak the local and less powerful languages that are dominated by English. Above all there will be no guarantee for multiculturalism, diversity and linguistic pluralism. In a sense, the hegemony of English will only serve to create an unbalanced world order characterised by “unipolar configurations in terms of power relation” (Roy-Campbell, 2001:172). The presence of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* in Zimbabwe however present a situation where the indigenous languages are registering their presence on the media market. What however the study tries to do is find out if these languages are not, like the colonial master’s languages, being used as weapons of presenting the Zimbabwean situation in bad shape.

## **2.2 Phillipson Perspective on the Dominance of English in Europe**

According to Phillipson (2012), market forces in Europe that propel the heavy reliance on English have successfully pushed for the unquestionable acceptance of the use of English in

the continent. Frantic efforts, he argues, have been made to set in motion the use of English as a lingua franca. He argues that this move has been fueled by the belief that English can be a panacea to all communication dilemmas, making the language appear as a necessity in socio-political and economic interactions. For Phillipson, the expansion of English across the globe rode on the wave of cooperate globalisation and neo-liberalism, and for him English, capitalism and the corporate became inseparable. The neo-liberalists, he argues familiarised the idea that English can be free of its origins and disconnected from the economic, political and military system that support it –a free floating language whose expansion should be considered as advantageous for all (Phillipson, 2012). Such an assumption is a misrepresentation of reality and a miscarriage of justice as far as Phillipson is concerned. For him, viewing:

a language as purely instrumental, as ideologically neutral, apolitical, purely technocratic in mission, entails closing one's eyes and mind on how social structures operate nationally and internationally and is in conflict with the principle of social justice and a balanced sustainable language ecology (Phillipson, 2012:450).

To complement Phillipson's argument, Trobout (2012) also argues that English is not a lingua franca, because for him, a lingua franca is a non-language. English, he stresses, is a normal language with its specific mono-lingual semantics like all other languages. It is the bearer, like all the other natural languages, of a particular vision of a world. As such it is not universal and purely objective as is expected of all normal lingua francas. With this grounding of the history of English, Trobout (2012:108) concurs with Phillipson that the expansion of English is nothing but imperial in orientation. Its spread and popularisation only goes a long way towards fulfilling Theodore Roosevelt's argument in 1970 that stated that:

...we have room for but one flag, the American flag; we have room for one language here and that is English (Theodore Roosevelt (1970) cited in Phillipson, 2012:442).

What these scholars are pointing at is that English as a world language implies English as an instrument of strengthening British and American influence (Crystal 2003; Phillipson, 2012; Phillipson, 2013). These scholars have also argued that the adoption of another language, in place of the mother tongue, entails the dispossession of capital invested earlier in other languages, that is, all the other languages that will be discarded (with all the riches and wisdom embedded in them) in the process of shifting towards the preferred language - English.

Even in Europe itself, the expansion of English and its subsequent suffocation of the indigenous languages has raised heated debate. In Europe, the expansion of English is viewed as a threat. Phillipson starts his 2013 publication by citing Churchill's statement that:

The power to control language offers far better prizes than taking away people's provinces or lands or grinding them in exploitation. The empires of the future are the empires of the minds (Churchill 1943, cited in Phillipson 2013: 145)

The elevation of English to a global language status according to Philipson (2012) is an attempt at creating a lingua franca which paradoxically is an act of perpetuating English domination. In Europe, English became the language of higher education and all other forms of interaction. It spread its tentacles across the continent strengthening its hegemony over knowledge production and information dissemination restricting the use, context of local languages and threatening them with extinction (Coleman, 2013: xiii – xiv). The strength of Phillipson's argument lies in the realisation that the imposition of English on communities that already had their own mother tongues was part of the grand colonial enterprise. It suppressed and threatened the indigenous languages with annihilation, in the process disempowering the people who spoke them. The argument paints a picture of the process of linguistic disempowerment of the people in the European continent. It thus makes it clear that the dominance of indigenous languages by English is not only peculiar to the African set-up, but even to communities in Europe that were placed under the armpits of Britain and the United States.

In Germany English was also embraced and according to Meyers (2012), it "masqueraded as serving the interests of all equally well" (Meyers, 2012:47). Like in other parts of the world, English subsequently it has also been a subject of debate. This unquestionable acceptance of English explains why Meyers (2012) bemoans the neglect of German in higher education in preference to English. For him, this move is tantamount to

Englishisation and Americanisation of German higher education and research as though the use of English is intrinsically superior in quality to what is or can be done in Germany (Meyers, 2012:47).

## **2.5 The Linguistic Scenario in the United Kingdom**

In the United Kingdom, citizens are encouraged to use English in spite of the fact that there are other languages such as Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Cornish, Irish, Scots and Ulster Scots among others. According Romaine (2008) people in the United Kingdom are said to be free to use their indigenous languages in the private domain, that is, in their homes. However, resources to develop and promote the use of the different indigenous languages for use in the public domain are never prioritised because the languages are deemed to have divisive implications in the society (Romaine, 2008). It has been argued that even in the United Kingdom people who are not proficient in English have found themselves in disadvantaged positions since they automatically find themselves excluded from accessing education, media information or even the justice system. Since the majority of the media products are disseminated in English, it has been argued, people who speak other languages other than English are denied the opportunity to participate in public life. Thus, even in the United Kingdom, the obtaining linguistic scenario continues to defy the contention that:

...maintaining cultural and linguistic diversity is a matter of social justice because distinctiveness in culture and language has formed the basis for defining human identities (Romaine 2008:19).

## **2.6 The Hegemony of English in Asia**

In India just like in most former colonial states, English is the language that provides access to job opportunities, the key to economic prosperity, the medium of trade and commerce, news, higher education, maritime communication and general information in the world of globalisation (Han-Yi, 2013; Durrani, 2012). According to Durrani (2012: 51) English is a “window to the world... [that] enjoys a special position in the minds of democratic Indians”.

Durrani also argues that English was an instrument that was used in the hegemonic project in India whose thrust was to create “a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals, and in intellect” (Durrani, 2012:31). It was presumed that this class would comprise the administrative officers, clerks and compliant civil servant who

would implement the imperial project. The language that dominated the implementation of the project became none other than English, that way the language developed firm roots in India. Durrani (2012) argues that this supremacy of the language continued even into the post-independence era where English continued to be the language of the fields of higher education, media, economics, politics, social interaction and academics. He further argues that in spite of the fact that Hindi was declared the official language in India, English continued to occupy the strategic position.

Even after the passing of the colonial era, English continued to enjoy preference as a vehicle of emancipation from poverty and opening up of unrestricted opportunities in the former British colonies (Durrani, 2012; Han-Yi, 2014). The social mobility prospects associated with the English language continued to generate and sustain a “negative perception of multilingualism which served to diminish the status of indigenous languages. It presented indigenous languages as “a problem rather than an asset” (Bamgbose, 2011:2) to the communication processes of the African people. The implication, as a result, is that the empowerment of the people in postcolonial state is not achieved through the use of the people’s mother tongues, but the former colonial masters. Such an assumption deprives the local language of the potential and capacity to emancipate and develop the people.

### **2.6.1 English as the Language of Preference in Singapore**

In Singapore, the expansion and influence of English was also felt. Singapore is an island city state in south-east Asia located off the Southern-most tip of the Malay Peninsula. It is a former British colony. In this former colony and like in all other like nations, English is the sole medium of instruction and mass media. According to Phillipson (2012), linguistic capital was invested in English as a social engineering strategy, to ensure the production of human resources for running the imperial project, and very little was provided for the promotion and development of linguistic capital of the indigenous languages. For Phillipson, that act of relegation of the local languages was nothing but linguistic capital dispossession. What however is critical as expressed by Phillipson (2012) is that communication, be it in the field of education or in mass media, in Singapore is solely in English. This scenario echoes the

position articulated by Churchill as cited in Crystal, (2003) when he talked of protecting the future of the 'Empire' through taking control of human minds, using language as the effective tool. This explains why English is the sole medium of instruction and mass media in the region. If mass media predominantly operates in English, one wonders if the indigenous people in Singapore are able to access news and information in an unrestricted manner when these are presented to them in a foreign language. This implies that the mass media in Singapore does not take cognisance of the linguistic and cultural interests of the diverse communities that inhabit the nation. Above all, this could imply that the media's representation of the subaltern voices is even questionable.

### **2.6.2 The Relegation of Indigenous languages in Pakistan**

Like in India, indigenous languages such as Punjabi, Sindhis, Pashto Balochis and Urdu also found themselves being pushed to the peripheries of social, political and economic interaction in Pakistan. Even though Urdu was declared the official language, English continued at the helm of the linguistic terrain. According to Khokhlova (2014:37), small communities whose languages were dying saw their native speakers opting to shift to bigger neighboring languages, while some small languages that managed to survive as important identity markers continued to survive as informal languages in the private domain. Being a former colony, the colonial linguistic ideologies continue to affect the nation's language policies even after independence. They continued disregarding local knowledge and realities in their deliberate relegation of the indigenous languages.

### **2.7 The Media and Language in Africa**

According to Musau (1999), media are the main source of information about the social and political processes in any community. They provide explanations pertaining to the various institutions in the communities. Musau (1999) however posits that the majority of the media in the continent employs English and other former colonial languages as their language of disseminating information. He acknowledges the existence of media products in indigenous languages in the various nations of the continent; he postulates that the use of language and

the type of language has ideological implication. This therefore implies that the choice of a language for use in the dissemination of information, in its own essence, form part of the principal structure of authority and subordination in a particular society (Oso, 2006 cited in Odedeji, 2015). Furthermore, Musau's (1999) argument suggests that language choice thus become the battlefield on which political wars for dominance and control of minds are fought. What this scholar is insinuating is similar to what Ngugi (1986) implied when he said that the colonial languages are the cultural bomb that was and continues to be unleashed on the African continent.

### **2.7.1 English Language Use and the Press in Africa**

All countries in Africa save for Ethiopia and Liberia, are former colonies. This process of colonisation invariably dictated that the people had to accept and internalise the language of their colonial masters. Subsequently, they had to sacrifice their mother tongues in preference for the foreign languages. Because of this colonial experience, English is spoken in 18 countries in Africa while French is used in 21 (Adedeji 1987 cited in Musau, 1999). All these countries have made English or other former colonial masters' languages their official languages and this has found expression in their media. In all the former British colonies, English language newspapers dominate the media fraternity. As a result, media products in indigenous languages, be it in electronic or print form, are generally scarce. This scenario generates curiosity with respect to the nature of the news and information coverage that is found in such media. Their existence in an ocean of foreign languages dominated media provides a curious person with enough reason to investigate into their effectiveness and accessibility to the masses.

Looking at the literature that has been presented on the language question in post-colonial states in Africa and the linguistic orientation of the media terrain in the same state, one gets the impression that the problem facing indigenous languages in the media fraternity in Africa are a mirror image of the challenges being faced by the local languages on the continent. This explains why communication in indigenous languages has largely been outshone by the former colonial languages. The language policies in most postcolonial states in Africa, which

are also influenced by the colonial legacy, have significantly contributed to the devaluation of these languages in all spheres of human existence, the media fraternity included. It is also interesting to note that with the end of the cold war, the liberalisation wave that affected the globe did not spare Africa. Within the media fraternity this liberalisation wave which was spearheaded by the United States dictated that:

- a) people should be able to communicate without interference
- (b) that there should be many people communicating, or at least many different ideas and points being communicated (Musau, 1999:138).

While this liberalisation move might sound very positive for the postcolonial nations in Africa, where accessibility of mass media has been the preserve of the chosen elite, the question that remains unanswered is that of the philosophy that informs the process. While the flow of information and news across borders has been facilitated and made possible, there is little, if any, evidence that the process has considered the necessity to protect the cultural and linguistic interests of African nations. As a result, the new wave of liberalisation has tended to enhance the position of media in English and other former colonial states at the expense of that in indigenous languages. As such, the colonial media structures found their way into the 'independent' states. Hence the conclusion by Musau that the new media dispensation in Africa during the post-cold war era "has not matched by policies that encourage the entrenchment, spread and full utilization of African indigenous languages" (Musau, 1999:138). For Musau, this lack of a media policy that promotes indigenous languages in the continent has adverse implications for local languages in Africa.

Unlike many postcolonial states in Africa, Zimbabwe has two languages that are used in the public domain, Shona and Ndebele. This thus implies that Zimbabwe could be different from countries such as Nigeria that have decided to take English and tailor-make it to carry the sensibilities and burdens of its peoples' life experiences. Since some Zimbabwean indigenous languages have already found their way into usage in media, what remains is to see if the existence of the media in the local languages really does make information accessible and beneficial to the people. This would also imply scrutinising the languages to see if they have been empowered enough to cope with the current discourses and in the process, improve people's attitudes towards them through utilising them in the public domain. Musau (1999) posits that one of the most effective ways of increasing the advantages of a local language is

making use of it in mass media. In the case of this study, Shona and Ndebele are already being used in media. The aim thus becomes to determine if this use has improved the people's attitudes towards them while at the same time improving their access to news and information.

### **2.7.2 Indigenous languages use in Media in the African Continent**

According to Odedeji (2015), the major problem facing indigenous media in Africa is the choice of English as the language of disseminating information, a scenario which invariably relegates the local languages to linguistic doldrums. He concludes by suggesting that for indigenous language media to thrive in Africa, the nations have to intensify the promotion of the indigenous languages. They also have to encourage and nurture a reading culture in indigenous languages through educational policies, mandating the media to increase their local content to suit African needs and elevating the languages to official status.

According to Odedeji(2015), the media occupy a very influential position in society. To expatiate on the significance that he attaches to media, he makes reference to Oso (2006) who argues that:

...the mass media have become probably the most important social institution in the construction and circulation of meaning in any modern society; the mass media permeate our daily lives. They have become the main source of leisure activity. And for most people they are mainly the source of information about, and explanation of social and political processes, and also a major fund of images and suggestions concerning modes of self-representation and general life style (Oso, 2006 cited in Odedeji, 2015:38).

To further buttress the impact of language when used for disseminating information he quotes:

...language and the way it is used in mass media, structure our views of the world... The use of language and the type of language used have ideological implications and they form part of the overarching structure of power and subordination in a particular society (Oso, 2006 cited in Odedeji, 2015:38).

## 2.8 Indigenous Languages in Media in East Africa

According to Orao (2009), while it is well documented that East African countries are multilingual societies, the reality on the ground has very little to show for it in terms of management strategies for the linguistic and cultural diversity. In the majority of the East African countries, he argues, English and Kiswahili are recognised official languages with the rest of the local languages languishing in exclusion. Orao contends that the language policies that inform the choice of language to be used in media, in both colonial and post-colonial East Africa has been driven by the desire to internationalise the national education systems and all other spheres of life. Such a push, Orao argues, went a long way into promoting and sustaining English hegemony at the expense of all the other indigenous languages. In the process, the policy planners, it is argued, greatly contributed to the exclusion of indigenous languages from the public sphere (Orao, 2009:79). This automatically implied that the bulk of communication, the education system and even business were carried out using English. For Orao, the official languages, English in particular, whose choice was informed by the colonial experiences in the sub-continent, are very far removed from the everyday experiences, very remote from their immediate needs – and for that reason, he views them as inappropriate tools for enabling the African people to participate in public discourses and public affairs.

Habwe (2009) in a discussion of the language situation in East Africa states that the majority of literary works in East Africa, in particular Uganda is written in English and frantic efforts have been made to translate many works into Kiswahili. However, with respect to the area of media, both electronic and print, English and Kiswahili have been the dominant languages. Tanzania, Habwe argues, boasts of the largest number of newspapers in Kiswahili while Kenya has only one newspaper “*Taifa Leo*” and Uganda has none.

What is evident in Habwe’s work is that Kiswahili continues to be given prominence in East Africa at the expense of the multitude of indigenous languages that are spoken by the East African citizens. As a lingua franca, it has been positioned in such a manner that virtually everyone feels his/her language problems have been catered for, yet the fact of the matter is that the multitude of indigenous languages are now being subjected to the hegemony of

Kiswahili on the one hand and English on the other. This research by Habwe has however not addressed the extent to which the use of Kiswahili has empowered the people in East Africa. Furthermore, it has not revealed the implications of using Kiswahili as the language of media in communities that have a multiplicity of indigenous languages in place. As for the case of Uganda, the research appears not to question the use of English as the language of media.

### **2.8.1 Indigenous Languages in the Kenyan Media**

According to Orao (2009) English and Kiswahili are the only official languages in Kenya and approximately forty other indigenous languages have been pushed to the peripheries of the Kenyan linguistic terrain. Like in the other East African countries, the media is dominated by English and for him, mass communication that is public communication is found wanting as far as reaching the intended audiences who in most instances are proficient in indigenous languages is concerned. For Orao (2009), because of the linguistic factor, the majority of the people in Kenya miss out on the bulk of information that is conveyed through the media. Subsequently, because of the language policy that was adopted in post-colonial Kenya, indigenous languages had no opportunity for promotion into the public and social sphere. They found themselves continuing in the old state of being considered as ‘vernacular languages’ that can only be useful within the private domain (in the household set-up and other social informal gatherings) as well as in elementary education.

### **2.8.2 Media Policy, Mass Media and the Kenyan Indigenous Languages**

The emergence of vernacular mass media in post-independence Kenya witnessed a change in the usage of indigenous languages within the media fraternity in nation. Kenya experienced a tremendous growth in the media sector. This growth also registered significant developments in the use of indigenous languages in media. A significant number of broadcasting stations became dedicated towards using diverse local languages. Orao (2009) singles out the Royal media, a private media company that scored a record of six FM radio stations broadcasting in a variety of local languages (Orao, 2009:80). For Orao, media owners recognised the strength of indigenous languages as crucial means of everyday communication in the various communities of the country (Orao, 2009:81). He also states that media in indigenous

languages had several advantages for the targeted populations which included among others; economic gains; opportunities for developing a public sphere within the language community, thereby allowing the community to participate in creating its own news agenda; providing an indication that indigenous languages are sufficiently developed to cope with the fast changing world, and therefore to effectively cater for the communicative and social needs of their speakers; and offering prestige to indigenous languages. The use of indigenous languages, he contends, provided opportunities for the recognition of a community's medium of expression. It dignified the languages, shaped language pride and language choice and ultimately brought the communities in touch with various socio-economic innovations. He concludes his discussion by pointing out that mass media in indigenous languages afforded the Kenyan local languages an opportunity to move from the private domain to the public domain. To cap up his argument, Orao makes reference to Omwanda (2000) who argues that:

in an ethnically diverse society such as Kenya, the state must still play an important role in assuring a level playing field for all groups to equitably participate in the mass media market. (Omwanda cited in Orao 2009:85).

Orao acknowledges the effectiveness of using indigenous languages and thus highlights the gains that have been realised by the Kenyan communities as a result of the various community newspapers and radio stations that were established in the nation. However, even after the documentation of the successes scored in the use of indigenous languages in media, the concluding statement gives an impression that the State still has a critical role to play in the successful accomplishment of the usage of these languages in media. In other words, the scholar is suggesting that a level ground has to be created and sustained to foster and promote the continued and effective utilisation of the indigenous languages in media. Otherwise such a level field is still yet to be realised.

Orao (2009) proposes that the State has to put in place legal instruments that do not disadvantage any language on the media platform. These positive scores that were experienced in Kenya as a result of the use of indigenous languages in the media are quite interesting. They make it even more imperative for researchers in the field of language and media to find out if the use of the local languages in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* has assisted Zimbabwean access critical information on burning issues of the day. If the Kenyan local

languages were successfully elevated into the public domain through their use in media, could the same be said of Shona and Ndebele that are being used in the two newspapers. The study thus tries to find out if a level ground been created for the effective use and participation of the local languages on the media terrain.

## **2.9 Indigenous Languages in Media in West Africa**

### **2.9.1 The Language Situation in Nigeria**

According to Mustapha (2014), the acceptance of English as an official language in post-colonial Nigeria was a confirmation of the Gramscian concept of linguistic hegemony. From the literature that has been presented on Nigeria and the language question, it is evident that the Nigerians accepted their former colonial master's language (English) and they intend to use it to carry the weight of their experiences (Achebe, 1975). Thus, Shaibu (2013) argues that in spite of the decolonisation movement that has swept across the continent of Africa, English continues to occupy a top position at the helm of linguistic topography. The idea that comes out of the above-mentioned scholars is that the Nigerians have come to acknowledge that English is an integral part of their lives and is indeed a resource that needs to be nurtured and developed (Mustapha, 2014: 94). As such in Nigeria there is not much controversy, he claims, when it comes to the question of English language, "it is the language of the media, the court, the legislature, the language of instruction and politics" Mustapha, (2014:90). However, Mustapha is quick to acknowledge that the unanimous embracing of the "hegemonic and neo-colonial language" has its own share of undesirable implications on the indigenous languages of Nigeria. The major effects that have been highlighted are the creation of communicative inequalities and general discrimination of the people who are not proficient in English. Tsuda (1992) adds that the use of English language has perpetuated mental colonisation, linguistic, cultural and psychological dependence upon the coloniser's culture.

The Nigerian situation presents a typical neo-colonial linguistic set-up where the states continues to cling to the language that formerly constituted the colonial state apparatuses for controlling, oppressing, restricting and repressing the colonised subjects. This suggests that the Nigerian people's linguistic experiences had become indelibly a part of their experiences

to a point where they could not operate outside framework. The independent nation thus could not envisage itself operating outside the confinement of English. By implication Nigeria felt that the use of the 400 indigenous languages as means of communication and as media of instruction was an obstacle to assessing information as well as conducting business in all other domains of life.

## **2.9.2 Indigenous Languages and the Media in Nigeria**

As has already been mentioned, the colonial legacy resulted in English being the official language in Nigeria. However, it has been argued that there are over four hundred (400) indigenous languages in Nigeria (Adeninyi and Bello, 2006; Odegbenle, 2013; Danladi, 2013; Balogun, 2013; Mustapha 2014) which have been left in the doldrums of the linguistic landscape as a result of this consented acceptance of English. Of this multitude of languages, according to Adeninyi and Bello (2006:156) the indigenous languages in Nigeria fall into three major categories. The first category consists of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. These three languages, the two authors claim, are national in outlook. They are believed to be commonly used in the public domain, that is, Hausa in the Northern region, Igbo in the Eastern region and Yoruba in the Western region (Danladi, 2013). The second group of languages as posited by Adeninyi and Bello comprises of twelve languages that have a regional outlook. Among these are local languages such as Ijaw, Nupe, Edo, Efik, Fulani, and Itsekiri. The third category, they posit, consists of those local languages that are confined to the localities in which they are used. For them these languages have not been accorded any recognisable status on the communication landscape of the nation, they are only recognised by the people who speak them (Adeninyi and Bello, 2006:156). In spite of the existence of these local languages, the three major regional groups, it is stated, accepted English as the only unifying solution to the linguistically diverse Nigerian communities. This accounts for the reason why English is widely used and occupy an imperative role within the job-market, in the media and as a medium of instruction in the education fraternity (Danladi, 2013:5).

Yoruba, Odegbenle (2014) argues, was the first language to be used in mass media with the publication of the first newspaper, *Iwe Irohin fun Awon Egba* in 1859. He states that there are

also other publications in some of Nigeria's indigenous languages such as the *GaskiyaTafi Kwabo* in Hausa the *Ogene* which he argues is circulated in Eastern Nigeria. Between 1959 and 1996 there were some newspapers in indigenous languages which were established in Nigeria, these included the *EkoAkete* (1922), *EletiOfe* (1923), *Iwe Irohin Ose* (1925), *Ekogbehim* (1926) *Akede Eko* (1928), *Gbohunghohun* (1996), the *Amana* (1996), the *Udoka* (1996), and *Alaroye* (1996) (Odedeji, 2015:39). According to Odedeji, the majority of the newspapers in local languages have gone into extinction, save for *Alaroye*.

However, looking at the identified newspapers, they must be the few newspapers in indigenous languages that were once produced in this linguistically and culturally diverse nation. What this clearly means is that the majority of the indigenous languages in Nigeria have not had an opportunity to be accessible to the general masses through mass media. To seal this discussion on the use of indigenous languages on the print media fraternity in Nigeria is Nwaolokpe (2013), who observed that newspapers in Nigeria started in 1859 with the publication of the newspaper for the Egbos and Yoruba, *Iwe Iroyin fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Yoruba*. To this day there are so many newspapers in circulation in Nigeria, but very few are in indigenous languages (Nwaolokpe, 2013:69). While the scholars acknowledge the existence of the few newspapers in indigenous languages, they have not gone into examining the extent to which their use of local languages made news and information accessible and beneficial to the people.

In addition to the limited presence of indigenous languages in the print media in Nigeria, Odedeji (2015) further posits that almost all magazines in Nigeria are published in the English language. As for broadcasting, he argues, there is no broadcasting station in Nigeria that has been licensed to specifically and exclusively use indigenous languages of Nigeria. Odedeji explains that what exists in Nigeria are stations that use a mixture of English and local languages depending on the location and worldview of the given station.

Odedgenle takes up the broadcasting field and argues that the broadcasting field in Nigeria, on paper "the National Broadcasting Commission [declared that], the electronic media shall be made accessible and affordable to all Nigerians, for the preservation and promotion of the nation's culture and values". Paradoxically, as outlined by Odedgenle, (2013), most radio and

television stations transmit in English and the English content reigns supreme. And for Odedgenle, over reliance on the English language in broadcasting has resulted in an information gap that is perceived to have culminated in the hindrance of the understanding of the media messages.

Nwaolokpe (2013) highlights the idea that the use of a foreign language is an obstacle to effective un-packaging of media messages. He points out that for any activity to be effectively accomplished; there is need for communication and for effective communication to be realized. By implication, the involved people have to convey what they intend to clearly and precisely. The people have to be able to understand correctly what the media is conveying (Nwaolokpe,2013:63). Just like Nwaolokpe (2013), Odedgenle (2013) posits that understanding of communication content is enhanced when the mother tongue or indigenous languages are utilised. The choice of the English language, it is implied, robs the audience of the accurate conceptualisation of the intended message (Odegbenle, 2013:166). Odegbenle (2013) further argues that in Lagos; where Yoruba is the dominant language, radio and television stations, rarely have content in the indigenous language, that is, Yoruba. *Raypower* it is pointed out, possesses only one programme in Yoruba, the rest of the stations hardly have anything in local languages.

While scholars such as Nwaolokpe (2013) and Odedgenle (2013) have clearly documented the positive effects of harnessing mother tongues in the media, it is evident that very little, if anything has been done toward creating more space on the media landscape for the indigenous languages. The Nigerians have even failed to maintain most of the highlighted newspapers in indigenous languages floating on the media. This explains why of all these media products in indigenous languages, the newspaper known as *Alaroye* (as argued by Odedgenle, 2013) is the only one that has survived the stunting effects of media produced in the hegemonic English language.

## 2.10 The Language Situation in South Africa

Like in Asia, English language occupied a high position in Apartheid South Africa. According to Alexander (2010), proficiency in English amounted to cultural capital; it was an index to the class location of an individual. In a way, the command of the language provided an automatic elevation to the elite class. In the background of such a linguistic platform, mastering the dominant language (English in particular) became a necessity which ultimately resulted in the marginalisation and near annihilation of most of the local languages. It resulted in the “valorisation of English, highlighting unintentionally the social distance between the elite and the general masses” (Tshotsho, 2013:39). Above all, it resulted in English being largely the language of mass communication, business, education and any other interaction in all spheres of life.

Amid this linguistic background, most South African scholars acknowledge the injustices that ensued as a result of giving English and Afrikaans a higher status on the linguistic platform in South Africa. In light of that scenario, Alexander (2010) argues that “languages are formed and manipulated within the definite limits to suit the interests of different groups of people”. It is against this argument that he contends that paying lip-service to the question of the significance of language policy and language use has a propensity of resulting in missed opportunities with respect to the liberal democratic dispensation that characterised the post conflict negotiations between Africans and the Apartheid regime during the early 1990s. Like most linguistic scholars, Alexander believes that language is a means of subsistence, a tool for human cooperation and communication. As such, he further argues, the language(s) in which production processes take place become the languages of power. Alexander further goes on to reiterate the idea of linguistic isolation and restriction when he concludes that failure to command the language of production implies automatic restriction to options to employment in a world where employment opportunities are hierarchical and differently rewarded. Unfortunately, in South Africa, none of the indigenous languages fall into this privileged category and Alexander (2000:12) bemoans this paradox:

Being able to use the language that one has best command of in any situation is an empowering factor and conversely not being able to do so is necessarily disempowering.

What Alexander could be implying is that the self-esteem, self-confidence, potential creativity and spontaneity that is associated with one's first language is the foundation of all democratic communities and institutions.

### **2.10.1 The Linguistic landscape in Post-Apartheid South Africa**

Post-Apartheid South Africa adopted a constitution that recognised eleven languages. According equal status to eleven languages in South Africa was a great step towards the promotion of African Languages which had been relegated to the peripheries of official and critical communication discourses (Tshotsho, 2013).

The overall aim behind the language policy stance in post-apartheid policy South Africa was to redress the linguistic imbalances, that had been fostered and sustained by the imperial system, and ultimately promote multilingualism, respect and tolerance of cultural diversity (Tshotsho, 2013:40). The ultimate goal was to splinter the hegemony of English and Afrikaans and foster linguistic freedom of choice (ANC, 1992 cited in Tshotsho, 2013:40). In short, the idea of elevating eleven languages to the same platform in South Africa was viewed as an empowerment gesture – empowering the South Africans to freely make a choice of their language of preference, for purposes of communication and consumption of mass media; to freely develop linguistic skills in their language of choice – a prerequisite for active and meaningful participation in critical life issues; and above all accord all the South Africans an opportunity to promote and develop their indigenous languages that had been left in the cold during the Apartheid era (Tshotsho, 2013:40)

Attempts to accomplish this vision of a democratic and multilingual society witnessed the establishment of:

- a) the Pan South African Language Board (Pansalb), representing all the official languages as well as South African Sign Language
- b) 9 provincial language committees with the task of representing the Pansalb and supervising the implementation of the official languages in the various provinces
- c) 14 language bodies with the task of developing the corpus of their respective languages

However, in spite of all this, language scholars continue to lament the failure of the government to provide adequate resources to implement the multilingual policy. For them, the promotion of the use of the eleven languages as a policy goal will remain a dream as long as resources are not channeled towards the realisation of the fruits of the policy. For Tshotsho (2013), in reality English and Afrikaans continue to occupy a privileged position than any other languages in South Africa. He suggests that even, “the value attached to these languages, by blacks [themselves], undermines the survival of other languages” (Tshotsho, 2013:39).

According to Alexander (2010), even after going through the painful experience of liberating the nation, high proficiency in English continues to present itself to the black elite as holding the promise of liberation, unification and empowerment. In actual fact, many of the Africans in South Africa are said to prefer English as their choice of medium of instruction and for scholars like Tshotsho (2013), such preferences make chances of ever having an African language as an alternative medium of communication and mass media very bleak. Tshotsho (2013) argues that the responsible government ministries are quite aware of the anomaly that is threatening to derail the grand language policy, but they are not taking any action in that respect.

### **2.10.2 Goals of the Post-Apartheid Language Policy in South Africa**

1. To promote national Unity
2. To entrench democracy and human rights
3. To promote multilingualism
4. To promote respect for and tolerance towards linguistic and cultural diversity
5. To promote national economic development (Department of Arts, Culture Science and Technology 1996, cited in Tshotsho, 2013:40)

Paradoxically, the preference of English has tended to undermine the policy of the government to promote equal opportunities (Tshotsho, 2013:40) as members of parliament continue to use English in their deliberations; most government documents are written in English; business in South Africa is conducted in English and job interviews are equally

conducted in English. For Alexander, English is used as a yardstick to measure the capability and capacity of a prospective employee to execute his/her duties perfectly. To make the whole linguistic scenario in South Africa more frightening amid a promising legal framework, the majority of media information is disseminated in English; be it through print, broadcasting or even the new information technologies.

### **2.10.3 Indigenous Languages in Media in South Africa**

According to Alexander (2010), with the exception of the South African Broadcasting Corporation which has taken great strides in the harnessing of indigenous languages in its broadcasting services, most media have tended to resort to the unilingual information dissemination slant. Alexander concludes by arguing that unless African languages are given market value, that is, unless their instrumentality for the processes of production, exchange and distribution is enhanced, no amount of policy change at school level can guarantee their use in high status function and the ultimate fall from glory and hegemony of English. As the situation stands the perception that news or media information worth its value can only be accessed in English demonstrates the economic value that the English language continue to command among members of the society in South Africa.

However, this does not imply that there exists no media in indigenous languages in South Africa, according to the South African Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) survey in 1996 there were 29 newspapers in English, four in Afrikaans, two in Zulu, *Sunday Times* and *Isolizwe* (based in KwaZulu Natal) and one in Xhosa (Odedeji, 2015:42).

### **2.10.4 The Linguistic Terrain in Post-Independence Zimbabwe**

As has been highlighted in the brief literature review in the introductory chapter of the study, the linguistic terrain in most post-colonial states remained unchanged, with the former colonial master's language continuing to enjoy superiority. Responding to this situation Gora (2010) asserts that the ushering in of independence did not change the status of English and above all that of the indigenous languages in Zimbabwe. English retained its dominant status

with Shona and English being accorded national language status (Government of Zimbabwe, 1987). The indigenous languages in post-independence Zimbabwe continue to “battle against marginalisation” (Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012:28). This unchanged situation, also explains why the local languages, in spite of the national language status conferred on them, by virtue of 1) being used in education at elementary level and 2) being treated as optional subjects in the education system continue to be used in the lower echelons of society and out rightly eliminated from the global political, economic, technological and scientific fields (Gora, 2010; Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012). It has been argued that the post-independence Zimbabwean linguistic topography has been characterised by continuities rather than change; with the environment providing limited support for the development of indigenous languages (Hungwe, 2007; Gora, 2010). English language, it has been discovered, continues to enjoy the status of “the language of international communication, of science and technology, of religion and ideology, of trade and commerce in the world” (Crystal, 2003, Khokhlova, 2014).

Magwa (2008) is one of the proponents of the language debate in Zimbabwe. Like most of the scholars who have researched and written on the language issue, he bemoans the little attention given to indigenous languages in Africa as media of instruction and mass communication. His first step in his 2008 thesis is to quote Yahya-Othman, who asserted that, “failure to use a local language in teaching contributes not only to the erosion of the cultural values of society, but also leads to more poverty and divisions in society” (Yahya-Othman, 2001, cited in Magwa 2008:2).

For Magwa (2008), there should be no distinguishing line between concerns for linguistic discrepancies and concerns for issues to do with human rights, democracy and good governance. Magwa laments the linguistic anomaly that exists within the nation that has seen information from the government to the people being disseminated in “a language that 90% of the people do not speak and hardly understand” (Magwa, 2008:6). He suggests that information from government and even speeches from politicians are given in foreign languages, which most Africans do not understand. For Magwa, when a language is used to

exclude the majority from participating, it automatically reveals that the nation's language policy has become part of the apparatus for blocking access to democracy" (Magwa, 2008:2).

Magwa further cites Fhulu (1999) who argues that the existing language policies that are drafted along European lines reflect a culture of apemanship and parrot. For him self-respecting Africans must distance themselves from such conditions by all means necessary. Viewing the linguistic terrain in Zimbabwe, Magwa (2008) see a 'linguistic discrepancy' where the language of government, business, and mass media is not the language of the targeted audience. Like most critics of the language situation in Zimbabwe, Magwa confirms that English has firmly entrenched itself as the language of government, business, the media, education, training and specialised information, as well as upward mobility and wider communication within and outside Zimbabwe's borders (Chimhundu, 1993:57, Magwa, 2008). He argues that African languages predominantly occupy what are perceived to be the relatively unimportant family, social and cultural domains and continue to be downgraded particularly in the educational system and in public life (Magwa, 2008; Gudhlanga and Makaudze 2012). According to Magwa, the Constitution that was adopted at independence with all its amendments as well as the Education Act were 'characteristically colonial' since they promoted English at the expense of the downtrodden indigenous languages. The new era which was ushered, he contends, did not accord the local languages any legal status and to put in a nutshell his idea, he cites Chimhundu when he argues:

How can you guarantee democracy where the law of the country is not understood in the language of the people? How do you abide by what you do not know? How can you use information to which you have only limited access? How can you fully participate in anything or compete or learn effectively or be creative in a language you are not fully proficient or literate in? Above all, how can a country develop its human resource base to the full without the language of the people? (Chimhundu, 1987:7).

To complement Chimhundu's argument, Gudhlanga and Makaudze (2012) have postulated that the process of decolonisation should involve the promotion of the use and development of indigenous languages. For them such a process will enable the indigenes to effectively and successfully compete for space in the politics and economics spheres. They contend that "the use of indigenous languages is part of the empowerment that is essential for national building" (Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012:29). Their argument is based on their belief that when a:

language is marginalised, the window through which people look at the world is permanently shut. When people can no longer have access to the world through their language, they have not lost a knowledge base, but have been incapacitated, their organisation capacity is limited (Gudhlanga and Makaudze, 2012:35).

By implication a community that lacks any form of organisation cannot be deemed to be empowered enough to participate in democratic interaction.

Magwa bemoans that the new government was comfortable to adopt the same foreign language that was used by the colonial system to disempower the majority of the people through making grassroots participation in debates difficult or even impossible, and ultimately making information inaccessible. Hence the continued dependency syndrome as English continues to be the language of mass media, business, legal and political as well as the medium of instruction in all educational domains. He makes reference to the work of Rusike (1990: 15) which highlights that media are the “rocks upon which the social fabric is built”. He laments the reality that most media institutions and media products are using foreign languages as the language of disseminating their information.

For Magwa (2008:5), the African linguistic situation is a paradox, the continent managed to continue communicating in its indigenous languages for thousands of years, yet its current linguistic topography is dominated by languages foreign to it. As a result, “after having achieved political independence and striving for economic self-reliance, African countries have remained very much dependent on foreign languages” (Magwa, 2008:5).

In addition to language policy planners such as Magwa, there are also Zimbabwean linguists such as Ndhlovu, who have made their contributions in the language debate. Ndhlovu (2008) has also delved on the language issue and discusses at great length the concept of the language issues as a human right issue. For him, every group of people or individual has a right to language. In his argument, he cites Mazrui and Mazrui, (1998: 115) who argue that the right to language refers to “the right to use the language one is most proficient in, as well as the right of access to the language of empowerment and socio-economic advancement”. And for Ndhlovu if by any chance a person has been deprived of the access to a language that

is crucial in ensuring personal social mobility that act amounts to marginalisation. The idea that underlie his thesis, is that there is nothing minority about the so-called minority languages in Zimbabwe. According to Ndhlovu, language is a carrier of culture, it embodies a people's system of ethics and it is the very medium by which they generate and consume knowledge. Above all their language is an incontestable repository of their memories and dreams. For him, the Zimbabwean language policy in the post-independence era is characterised by obscurities, inconsistency and contradictions. In his 2007 research "Everyday Forms of Language-based Marginalisation in Zimbabwe", Ndhlovu discusses the micro-social forms of language-based marginalisation among the diverse ethno-linguistic polities of Zimbabwe. He highlights the salient effects of linguistic inequalities on individual members of speech communities which include among others negative perceptions, stereotypes about minority languages, forced assimilation of local language speakers into majority language groups, linguistic imperialism tendencies of majority language speakers, and above all internalised domination and inferiority among local language speakers (Ndhlovu, 2007).

Ndhlovu also bemoans the marginalisation of indigenous languages. He defines the concept of marginalisation as being limited in scope and space and for him this process also involves "exclusion, discrimination as well as rejection, omission and isolation" (Ndhlovu, 2007:119). Ndhlovu believes that if a language is not utilised in certain functions or domains in which space is accorded to other languages within the linguistic ecology, it is marginalised. Such a scenario, he claims, would result in a situation where members of group communities or individuals are discriminated against or even oppressed on the basis of the status of the language they speak. This same language marginalisation, he contends would also culminate into institutionalisation of the subordination, that is being placed in or occupying lower classes, ranks or even positions, of the "inferior" language speakers.

According to Ndhlovu, "English, Shona and Ndebele have been recognised as languages of wider communication, languages of the media, languages of education; and by extension languages of up-ward socio-political and economic mobility"(Ndhlovu, 2007:119), while the rest of the other African languages have been reduced to the category of minority languages. Ndhlovu further expresses his disappointment at the nature of the linguistic ecosystem in

post-independence Zimbabwe when he argues that institutions were created to which access was dependent on ability to communicate in the country's national languages, that is access to education, corridors of political power, and general upward social mobility was dependent on one's competence in Shona and Ndebele (Ndhlovu, 2007:120). In the same vein the future of all the languages that had been labeled minority was linked to that of its speakers – perpetual marginalisation on the peripheries of the linguistic topology. In his argument, he concurs with Tollefson and Pennycook 2008; Crystal 1999; Crystal 2003, who have argued that the symbolic communicative statuses attached to languages have a bearing on the socio-political and economic prospects of the speech communities that use them. For Ndhlovu:

the rise and/or fall of language speakers is dependent on the political power-play surrounding the use of their languages in different domains. Also, the status that a language enjoys or suffers from cannot be fully understood outside the specific political conditions of those who speak it (Ndhlovu, 2007:120).

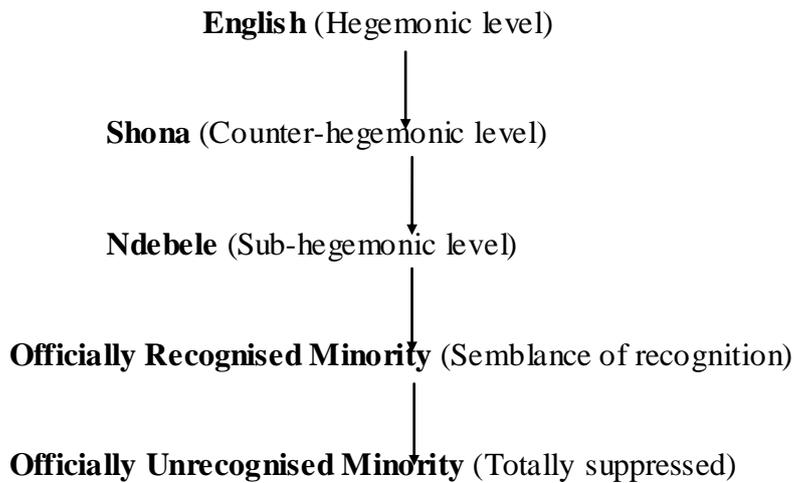
What appears to pain Ndhlovu is that all the other languages that had been accorded minority status were, and still continue to be, denigrated as languages of backward, uncivilised and the uneducated, while national languages have become the language of economy, power and politics.

When it comes to the question of linguistic hegemony, Ndhlovu is, however, of a different view. He argues that grouping all African languages and presenting them as equal victims of English hegemony without getting into finer details is a dangerous generalisation and a misrepresentation of the reality on the ground. For him, this tendency has fuelled the continued marginalisation of other indigenous languages by other local linguistic groups such as Shona and Ndebele (Ndhlovu, 2007:125). He argues that:

“among minority language speakers, the realities of English hegemony are far more remote than the everyday forms of linguistic and cultural assimilation posed by Shona and Ndebele” (Ndhlovu, 2007:125).

To sum up his argument, Ndhlovu believes that because of the colonial as well as postcolonial policies of assimilation, all languages in Matabeleland have lost ground to Ndebele and those in Mashonaland have yielded in to Shona hegemony. For him, this language marginalisation has tended to translate into economic deprivation and socio-political discrimination of the subdued speech communities.

### 2.10.5 Hierarchies in the Zimbabwean linguistic ecology



(Adopted from Ndhlovu, 2007: 129)

The hierarchy of languages that has been presented here is very interesting, just below the hegemonic language, which represents the dominant discourse; there is Shona, followed by Ndebele, the officially recognised and the officially unrecognised minority languages at the bottom of the ladder. One is left wondering which languages in Zimbabwe are falling under the last category of the hierarchy. Local languages in Zimbabwe are on record as being used within the private domain. Furthermore, there is no particular legal instrument that stops people from making use of their mother languages to warrant the creation of a category of languages that have been totally suppressed. This accounts for the existence of a situation where most people who belong to the previously termed minority languages are bilingual or multilingual. Such people, in spite of switching onto the dominant language for social, political and economic benefits, continue to use their mother tongues in the comfort and security of their home, only to switch on to the dominant language when communication within the public domain. This study on the ranking of the languages could have made justice to this field of scholarship if it had given examples of such totally suppressed languages. Without concrete examples to illustrate his point, Ndhlovu's argument could be viewed as emotionalembodied and lacking empirical evidence.

According to Ndhlovu, the above illustration expresses that the Shona language occupies a counter-hegemonic position in the Zimbabwean linguistic ecology with Ndebele following immediately below it, and behaving in a sub-hegemonic manner with respect to other 'less recognised' languages. Subsequently, what emerges is a situation in which two Zimbabwean national languages, namely, Shona and Ndebele, have been successfully imposed on speakers of marginal languages as an intrinsic part of 'modernisation', 'nation-building' and 'progress'(Ndhlovu, 2007: 2008). This enterprise of fashioning new mental structures based on Shona vs Ndebele linguistic dichotomy has consequently ushered sentiments of stigmatising, downgrading and invisibilising other language speakers, he argues. A fusion of politically and culturally based domineering attitudes ultimately confronts the whole question of language marginalisation in postcolonial Zimbabwe (Ndhlovu, 2007: 129).

Ndhlovu's discussion goes further and points to the idea that the marginalised status of the so-called minority languages has a direct link to the inferiority complex and mental domination of the speakers. While on that point, he is quick to acknowledge that in real life situations people remain loyal to their language or adopt other languages on the basis of power, utility or prestige. In the same vein, they may give up their language if the benefits of adopting another language exceed the advantages of remaining with the ones they have because "language maintenance efforts are always intricately intertwined with the exigencies of political and economic demands" (Ndhlovu,2007:131). What is greatly highlighted in Ndhlovu's argument is that adoption of another language is not a voluntary exercise, it is a direct response to the demands of, and is influenced and mediated by hegemonic forces in operation. To substantiate this point, he cites Ives (2004) who says:

One common element of hegemony is that it helps explain why large groups of people continue to acquiesce to, accept and sometimes actively support governments and their entire social and political systems that continually work against their interests. In other words, can we say a society is free of domination if the government or state is not using overt coercion and physical force to dominate its subjects? (Ives, 2004:16)

The pervasive argument in Ndhlovu's works is that the phenomenon of inferiority complex and subordination is indeed a manifestation of the domineering and suppressive tendencies of the major language groups which are hidden "in the fissures and fault lines of seemingly stable ethnolinguistic relations in Zimbabwe" (Ndhlovu, 2008:132).

Furthermore, Maseko and Moyo (2013:252) advance a similar argument in that they consider the domination and suppression of other indigenous languages in Zimbabwe by stronger indigenous languages such as Shona and Ndebele. They feel that languages such as Shona and Ndebele have also contributed to the “killing” of other smaller indigenous languages. They claim that Shona and Ndebele were, prior to the 2013 Constitution, recognised as national languages, while the rest of the local languages were considered minor and ultimately left to die on the fringes of the sociolinguistic milieu without receiving any recognition. When some languages are used to exclude other languages, then it becomes evident that there is something amiss with the country’s language policy (Magwa, 2008; Maseko and Moyo, 2013; Mabika, 2014).

#### **2.10.6 The Colonial Linguistic Inheritance in Zimbabwe**

Literature on the language question in post-independence Zimbabwe has gone a long way into proving that the politicians at the negotiation table in Lancaster were overwhelmed with the prospects of independence to the point of forgetting to negotiate for the rectification of other state instruments that propelled the capitalist system such as language. Freire wrote his works well before Zimbabwe’s attainment of independence, but his ideas are applicable to the situation in the nation. He proposes that the failure of the former colonised to change the language problem is a manifestation of the complex problem that emanates from the fact that they were “suffering from a duality existence which had established itself in their innermost being, shaped by and existing in the [linguistic imperialism] and violence (Freire, 1969: 34). For Freire (1969), the stance taken by such post-colonial leaders reflects the sum total of the tragic dilemma of the oppressed; they are afraid of embracing freedom, autonomy and responsibility. As a result, most post-colonial African independence states have failed to break away from their past in order to forge new identities. Subsequently, the hegemony of English continued to be a phenomenon that haunted the post-colonial linguistic landscape; a phenomenon that obviously accounts for the existence of a multiplicity of newspapers on the street corners and on-line disseminating information in English. Chimhundu (1997) however has a different interpretation to this linguistic stance. He argues that the official neglect of the language issue in post-independence Zimbabwe was actually deliberate and can be just explained in terms of the elitist leadership’s fear of the unknown.

From such arguments, one is given the impression that the elite nationalists unconsciously adopted the notion that rejection of English was unwise given its technological reach and technological advancement. However, a closer scrutiny of the political situation in period just after the attainment of independence in Zimbabwe dictated that such a deliberate stance had to be taken in 1980. It is on record that language experts had to advise the government to avoid the language issue after it was realised that the newly born nation was highly and dangerously polarised on linguistic grounds. This polarisation was clearly expressed through the bitterness, animosity and anger that were exhibited by Ndebele speaking communities on the eve of the closure of Mthwakazi Radio Station, a move that was aimed at paving way for the opening of a new national radio station in the new nation.

Of course, the Education Act of 1987 had provisions for addressing the language discrepancy in post-colonial Zimbabwe, however, according to Dube and Maseko (2013), it restored the dominant position of English, with Shona and Ndebele being elevated to national language status (but practically not equal to English). In concurrence with them is Gora (2013) who emphasises that colonial experiences have persistently continued to shape, guide and define post-colonial practices in language planning. The colonial role of African languages and English as a language of wider communication persists more than three decades after the attainment of political independence. Like all the other scholars who have discoursed on the language issue, she believes the previous neglect and marginalisation of indigenous languages during the colonial era is still firmly embedded within the Education Act particularly with regards the question of the official medium of instruction (Gora, 2013:124). After independence, she argues, there has been a series of ministerial circulars and amendments to the Education Act, which determine medium of instruction at different levels of schooling (Mnkandla, 2005). The Amended Education Act of 2006, she contends, is not really different from its previous versions because they all place emphasis on indigenous languages at elementary stages of literacy. The Amended Education Act states that, prior to form one, Shona or Ndebele or English or any local languages be used as medium of instruction in the first seven years of school, an extension of only four years on what the 1987 Education Act (Education Act,1987:225) stipulated. Such a scenario has resemblances to linguistic scenario during the colonial era where the government also emphasised initial

literacy through the child's mother tongue. However, Gora notes with great concern that even after the amendments; indigenous languages are not effectively used as medium of instruction even at the elementary stage of education. For Gora, the amendments have generally been cosmetic and she concludes that in reality, application of any version of the Education Act has remained theoretical (Gora, 2013:4). As such, the linguistic platform continues to render the majority of the Zimbabweans linguistic prisoners. What is at the centre of Gora's argument is her conviction that "One's mother language is a value which one cannot part with; it is irreplaceable" (Gora, 2013:124). It is this conviction that makes her advocate for the removal of the:

dogmatic ideology that our indigenous languages are inferior such that they cannot be used as medium of instruction (Gora, 2013:128).

She urges Zimbabweans to do away with the tribal mentality that Shona and Ndebele languages are being elevated at the expense of the other indigenous languages (as espoused by the likes of Ndhlovu, 2007 and 2008; Maseko and Moyo, 2013). She believes that this seemingly skewed stance is just a starting point in the struggle for the restoration of the local languages. For Gora, the struggle can only begin in the educational arena; the education system must therefore be used as the springboard for the struggle. Languages, she concludes, are like currencies; and therefore, Africans have a responsibility of giving their languages the value that empowers them to buy more" on the global market of ideas (Gora, 2013, 128).

Like Gora (2013), Dube and Ncube (2013) also acknowledge that the instrument (the Education Act 1987) was revisited in 2006 when additional local languages such as Venda, Sotho, Kalanga, Nambya, Zimbabwean sign language and other local languages became recognised and prescribed for use in the education of children at elementary level. They, however, argue that the revisited version continued to fall short of promoting indigenous languages as it relegated the minority languages for use at elementary level in the education system (Dube and Ncube, 2013). Such a policy, they argue, gives an impression that it would be "illegal to use [an indigenous language] as a medium of instruction at any level that is beyond primary education" (Dube and Ncube, 2013). It further conveys the impression that these local languages are incapacitated for use in learning and teaching beyond lower elementary level (Bamgbose, 2011).

To further substantiate the argument on the continuity thesis, Hungwe (2007) also explores the Nziramasanga Presidential Commission of Enquiry of 1998 whose terms of reference included “to study and recommend specific policy initiatives on indigenous languages with a view to their wider use generally and more specifically in the education and training systems in Zimbabwe”(Government of Zimbabwe, 1999:161). According to Hungwe the Commission also failed to ameliorate the status of the indigenous languages even though it raised concerns over their position. There was no clear policy as well as a laid-down procedure for the elevation of the indigenous language from “linguistic encirclement” (Ngugi wa Thiongo, 1987). For Hungwe (2007), the Nziramasanga document lacked any convincing implementation procedure and usually from “the vagueness of the policy or its lack of feasibility, one can tell that the policy should not be taken seriously” (Bamgbose, 2011:6). It would be a cosmetic reform that will be a mere political gimmick. For Hungwe, like the 1987 Education Act, the report recommended “English as the medium of instruction throughout the training systems of Zimbabwe (Government of Zimbabwe 1999:169). Dube and Ncube (2013), also reiterate that the dominance of English continues to push indigenous languages to the peripheries of communication and many other critical domains in the Zimbabwean people’s lives. For them, a language that is not actively used in communication has a propensity to attrition (Dube and Ncube, 2013). However, unlike other language policy critics in Zimbabwe who place their emphasis on the domination of indigenous languages by English, Dube and Ncube (2013) lament the domination of Ndebele language by Shona and English. As has already been argued when analysing Ndhlovu’s works, theirs is more of emotional argument than one based on facts. The very language they claim to be overshadowed by Shona and Ndebele in media is also used in Broadcasting, the problem may be in the closure of community media that occurred at the point of attaining independence as well as the existence of only one Television Station and a very few radio stations in the nation.

For them, Shona is given better linguistic treatment than Ndebele. Like Hadebe (2006), they believe that politicians have to take cognisance of the fact that unity and progress are not necessarily achieved through one language and above all that people can only be empowered by their own language. It is this dimension of the language policy in Zimbabwe argument that

this study attempts to address, that is, the extent to which the use of the Shona and Ndebele in the two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* can empower the masses.

What has been peculiar in the works of most of language critics is their tendency to attribute liberating powers to indigenous languages, citing the crucial role of mother languages in the emancipation of speech communities. Like all linguistic human rights discourses, there is a general assumption that mother tongue use in different domains of life is an empowering process. If language can be an empowering factor, could the contrary also be the same? This study, therefore, tries to find out all the other possible variables that have to be considered to enhance the empowering potential of these languages. The two newspapers *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* will be investigated on to determine the validity of this proclaimed emancipatory and empowering nature of mother tongue use.

#### **2.10.7 Media from Rhodesia to Zimbabwe**

According to Mabika (2014), from 1933 when radio broadcasting was first introduced in the country to the early sixties, the then Southern Rhodesia broadcasting and all other media activities relied on products from outside the country. This all ended when Southern Rhodesia became a separate country, and the *Rhodesia Broadcasting Corporation (RBC)* was set up (Mabika, 2014:2392). The *RBC*, in its early days in the early sixties, launched a local broadcasting service on short-wave and broadcast from a site geographically in the centre of Zimbabwe at Guinea Fowl near Gweru (Miller, 2007). Though at the time broadcasting served an area within a 200-mile radius of Gweru by 1968, the *RBC* had expanded its services to Salisbury where Radio Jacaranda was launched, followed by *Radio Matopos* in Bulawayo and *Radio Manica* in the then Umtali (Deacon, 2009 cited in Mabika, 2014). At independence in 1980, the *RBC* had opened various FM stations in the then Salisbury and Bulawayo areas, and the network had gradually expanded to 22 community stations covering the whole country (Miller, 2007).

With regards the print media, there were two major daily newspapers, The *Rhodesia Herald* and *The Chronicle*. In addition, there were weekly newspapers such as *The Sunday Mail*, *The Sunday News* and *The Financial Gazette*. According to Mukasa (2003), these newspapers

promoted European cultural standards and worked at great length towards denigrating African culture and political agitation as the archenemy of western civilisation. In fact, the press during this era developed principally as an instrument for European imperialism (Dumisani, 2000). He argues that the stories about Africans were “largely, if not exclusively, negative and demeaning” (Mukasa, 2003:172). Alongside the colonial inclined press there was the nationalist press which had papers such as the *Daily News*; and other church publications such as *Moto* and *Umbowo*. This nationalist press was a reaction to the injustices, racism and exploitation that characterised the colonial set-up. However, of critical importance is the fact that they all were published using the colonial language – English. The ushering in of independence witnessed the perpetuation of the colonial status quo with regard to the language situation in media in Zimbabwe. The majority of the papers continued to publish in English save for *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*.

When the country gained independence in 1980, it adopted the colonial media structures. Community radio stations were shut down. And only two newspapers in local languages were established, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* (Mabika, 2014). At independence, the Zimbabwe government, it has been argued, decided to ignore most indigenous languages and concentrate only on a few already advanced indigenous languages, such as Shona and Ndebele (Magwa, 2008, Mabika, 2014). Magwa (2008, 2010) and Gora (2013) have tried to justify the situation in which Shona and Ndebele appeared to be given preference to other indigenous languages soon after independence. Their argument is that at independence, written Shona and Ndebele had already developed at the time since they were subjects taught at secondary level in local schools. Naturally, they argue, these two indigenous languages received the first preference countrywide over other underdeveloped minority languages. Giving the platform to a few local languages, which had readily available educational material made sense at the time. For Magwa, it is only unfortunate that reversing this state of affairs many years after independence is now proving an uphill task (Magwa, 2010).

With regards to the question of the development of the indigenous languages, Magwa and Gora appear to ignore the fact that there is evidence that the majority of the previously termed minority languages were equally documented by the missionaries before the on-set of independence. These languages were being taught and examined in schools during the colonial era. Literature was sought from neighbouring countries for educational purposes. For

example, learning material was imported from South Africa for use in schools that taught Venda, Shangani, and Ndebele among others while textbooks on Tonga and Nambya were brought in from Zambia. This was stopped at the time of political upheavals during the colonial era, when the regime feared that the consignments from Zambia could have letters from liberation movements. With such avenues for accessing learning material available in neighbouring countries, no serious language planner will be content with arguing that Shona and Ndebele had to be used because they had readily available teaching and learning materials. One is left with no option but to question tolerance of the linguistic status of these two language scholars. They are not as emotional about the exclusion of other languages as their counterparts.

Literature on the media and mass information dissemination has revealed that the principal role of media institutions and media practitioners is the dissemination of information. It shows that mass media are supposed to be viewed as critical players that have a mandate of informing without bias or favour, facilitating dialogue as well as providing relevant information to the citizenry from which members of the public get a better understanding of their society (McCombs & Shaw, 1993; Browne, 2008). The scholars have also revealed that generally members of the society interact by exchanging information in a language understood by the people involved in the communication process. As such, effective communication can only take place if a common language is used. Mabika, for instance, makes reference to Salawu, (2006) who argued that communicating in indigenous languages enhances social cohesion and greatly facilitates the preservation of African cultures. It is against this contention that Mabika believes that using indigenous languages in interacting with the masses has a great propensity towards enhancing effectiveness of mass communication. She further makes reference to Mufwene (2002) and Anyozo, (2009) who also have postulated that studies have shown that the use indigenous languages in radio broadcasting “is the most effective channel of mass communication since it reaches more peripheral areas than other media and is easily understood by the audiences” Mabika (2014: 2391). Mabika believes that Zimbabwe being a country that won its independence through a protracted struggle has a mandate to protect and safeguard the sovereignty of its people by “ensuring the vibrancy of its indigenous languages and prevent their dominance by foreign ones such as English or a few indigenous languages such as Shona and Ndebele” (Mabika, 2014: 2392). She bemoans the limited use of indigenous languages in media, particularly

broadcasting. Mabika (2014) argues that due to the political dispensation of the Zimbabwean nation, broadcasting has constantly created an environment in which “local languages are not given necessary recognition, leading to their exclusion from most of the existing radio stations” (Mabika, 2014:2391).

#### **2.10.8 Using Indigenous Languages in the Media in Zimbabwe**

Mabika believes that the media plays an important role of disseminating information and shaping the thinking faculties of the receivers of the information and ultimately their way of life. For her, it is unfortunate that while Zimbabweans have access to a wide range of media, most of them are accessed in English (Mabika 2014: 2393). She believes that indigenous languages are critical in all spheres of business, government, education, and the in the media in particular. She makes reference to Fourie (2001:448) who asserts that “the particular role of news in our lives is therefore inextricably linked to the general role that language plays in society.” Mabika bemoans the fact that there are only two indigenous language radio stations, namely Radio Zimbabwe and National FM. Radio Zimbabwe, she argues, is limited to only Shona and Ndebele. Only one national radio station, ‘National FM,’ broadcast in most of the local languages. It broadcasts in Shona and Ndebele, as well as in 13 other indigenous languages (Mabika 2014: 2393). With regards to print media, there is *Kwayedza* (Shona) and *Umthunywa* (Ndebele).

Similarly, Ndhlovu (2004) bemoans the way minority languages are treated in the Zimbabwe broadcasting media. He argues:

While NFM is meant to cater for minority languages that include Doma, Chikunda, Chewa, Yao, Hwesa, Barwe, Venda, Sotho, Kalanga, Shangani, Tonga, Xhosa and Tshwawo, Shona and Ndebele programmes take up most of the airtime. ... Minority groups are always unfairly left out of the national agenda (Ndhlovu, 2004: 139-140).

Of critical importance in Mabika’s research is her revelation that even though the broadcasting services act has a clause that dictates the need to broadcast in indigenous languages, she discovered, like Ndhlovu in his research on the politics of language, that Shona and Ndebele overshadowed all other languages and it was even evident that the Station

Managers believed that their listeners understand these two broad categories of languages. Mabika argues that the broadcasting Act is silent when it comes to the number of indigenous languages to be used and she cites the example of Khoisan which she argues has never been used since the inception of the radio station.

The researches that have been carried out on the use of indigenous languages in the Zimbabwean media are quite interesting. They echo the arguments that have already been highlighted by the majority of prominent scholars on language, language policy and linguistic imperialism across the globe. Like the researches in similar fields in other continents and other nations within the African continent, the scholars acknowledge and appreciate the existence of some indigenous languages on the media landscape, such as Shona and Ndebele that are used in the publication of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. What however is conspicuously missing is addressing these media products in indigenous languages to find out if they are presenting the Zimbabwean philosophy of life and cultural heritage in good taste. The assumption of the research is that the question at stake is not just elevating the languages and placing them on the media platform. Instead, gaining a space on the landscape is just a fraction of what is expected. Research has to be carried out to discover whether the use of the local languages 1) makes critical news and information accessible to the general public as and when it is necessary; 2) makes people appreciate the indigenous language; and above all provide a space for Zimbabweans to produce news stories that reflect upon their real-life experiences, challenges, values and norms in an undistorted manner.

## **2.11 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed literature on the language debate. It defined the concept of language and went into discussing what various scholars have presented with regards the language issue in different domains. The chapter also looked at the use of indigenous languages in the media in Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa and finally Zimbabwe. From the reviewed literature, it emerged that in spite of the decolonisation movement that has swept across former colonial states as well as the international conventions for the promotion and development of indigenous languages; these languages continue to suffer marginalisation at the hands of the hegemonic former colonial masters' languages. The review also revealed that the speakers of the neglected languages are in the same vein disempowered and discriminated against for their lack of proficiency in the dominant languages. The chapter then concluded by questioning whether the use of indigenous languages in the selected newspapers has really positively proven that such a stance empowers and emancipates the people who read these newspapers that are published in indigenous languages.

## **Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework**

### **3.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter concentrated on the literature review. It revealed that in most African countries the use of indigenous languages in the media is very limited mainly because of the language policies that were adopted by the nations on their attainment of independence. On attainment of independence, it has been revealed; former colonial languages became the official languages. Resultantly, the media domain continued to be dominated by the English language at the expense of the local languages. In the background of this review of literature, this chapter mainly concentrates on exploring the theoretical framework that is informing this study. It attempts to unpack the tenets of the theory paying attention to the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in print media in Zimbabwe can empower the people to democratically participate in the public domain and contribute positively in forging their future. The theoretical framework that guides and gives impetus to this research is the postcolonial theory.

This theory is very relevant in this research in so far as it presupposes that the assumption of the alien (former colonial) languages, history, institutions, sensibilities and belief systems affected colonised people. It postulates that the impulsive acceptance of the colonial structures culminated in the great disempowerment of the indigenous people. It presumes this arbitrary embracing of colonial languages, and many other aspects associated with them, incapacitates the indigenous people in their attempts to construct, redirect their history and social structures towards meaningfully participating on the global market place of ideas.

### **3.1 Understanding Postcolonialism**

To have an enhanced understanding of the postcolonial theory, one would surely need an understanding of the term postcolonialism. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, (1998), postcolonialism deals with the effects of colonialism on cultures and societies that have had contacts with colonialism and imperialism. The term, they argue, was originally used by historians during the post Second World War era to refer to the post-independence

era. From the 1970s onwards, the term began to be used by literary critics in their analysis and interrogation of the various repercussions of colonialism (Ashcroft et al. 1998:186). The term became synonymous with critiquing the political, linguistic and cultural experiences of former European colonies. According to the trio, the concern in postcolonialism was the material effects of the conditions of colonialism.

As a field of inquiry postcolonialism became concerned with the study and analysis of European territorial conquest, the various colonial institutions, and the digressive operations of the Empire. It dealt with the complexities of subject creation in colonial discourse as well as the resistance of these subjects to the set up systems. Most importantly, postcolonialism deals with the different responses to colonial infiltrations and their contemporary legacies in both pre-and post-independence nations and communities (Ashcroft et al. 1998:187).

According to Ashcroft et al. (1998), postcolonialism as a term has also been used in historical, political, sociological and economic analysis where it has been utilised in processes of interrogating the impact of European imperialism the global communities. In these different fields of study, the concern of postcolonialism is scrutinising the processes and effects, the reactions to, European colonialism from the 16<sup>th</sup> century right up to the present-day neo-colonialism (Ashcroft et al. 1998:188). According to the trio, because the former colonised people are ever documenting their colonial experiences, and also in light of the fact that these post-colonial societies have their own internal agenda and force that continue to interact with and modify their response to the colonial enterprise, the field of postcolonialism has consistently experienced changes.

Childs and Williams (1997) have also written on postcolonialism, for them the term “postcolonialism” gives an impression of an end of a historical epoch. They contend that postcolonialism induces the ideas of dissolution of empires and the total dismantling of all colonial structures of control. They argue that the ushering in of independence in virtually all former colonies was cosmetic, it was just a presentation of flag independence; a situation that witnessed the mere replacement of western flags with very little, if any, change in the socio-economic and political structures that govern the nations. This scenario is exactly what Slemon (1995) as cited in Rukundwa and van Aarde (2007) referred to when talking of

...the exchange for flag independence that brought no economic independence, nor reparation for the past experiences of imperialism, since colonialism as a practice still remained active in a new form – neo-imperialism (Slemon 1995, cited in Rukundwa and van Aarde, 2007:1173).

Childs and Williams (1997) conclude that the term colonialism has to cover all forms of oppression. In the same vein, they argue that, “post-colonialism should then be viewed as a trans-historical concept, always present and always in the process of dissolution in one part of the world or the other” (Childs and Williams, 1997:2).

The above argument by Childs and William’s (1997) argument is similar to what Ashcroft et al. (1989:2) implied when they argued that:

We use the term “post-colonial” ... to cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonisation to the present day. This is because there is a continuity of pre-occupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperialism.

In the context of this study postcolonial theory will help unpack the extent to which the colonial media systems and structures have remained intact and functional, in spite of the attainment of independence as well as ratification of international conventions that promote and protect people’s linguistic rights and democratic right to information. In analysing the two newspapers, the theory will help in finding out the amount of linguistic and cultural damage that was caused by colonialism. Furthermore, it will help determine whether after the attainment of independence there was continuity or change with regard to accessibility and helpfulness of the disseminated news and information.

Slemon as cited in Childs and Williams (1997) further adds that the concept postcolonial is more useful not when it is used synonymously with the post-independence historical period in former colonised nations, but rather when it locates a specific anti or post-colonial influence in culture. For him, this influence on culture has to be one which begins at the point of contact with the dominant colonial power. This contact, it has been observed, witnessed the dominant colonial power engraving itself onto the body or space of its “Others” and

continuously modifying its presence in the form of neo-colonialist international relations (Slemon as cited in Childs and Williams, 1997).

### **3.2 Postcolonial Theory**

According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1989), post-colonial theory is grounded in colonial histories, institutional practices and the responses to these practices by the colonised people. They argue that the theory is hinged on the scrutiny of the impact of colonialism on both the colonisers and the colonised.

Rukundwa and van Aarde (2007) suggest that postcolonial theory developed its appraisal of historical situations around societal histories, cultural differences and political discrimination that are practiced and normalised by colonial and imperial machinery (Rukundwa and van Aarde, 2007:1173). To further substantiate their point, they make reference to Young (2001) who also reiterated that postcolonial theory is concerned with colonialism “only to the extent to which that history has determined the configurations and power structures of the present” (Young, 2001: 69).

From the literature that has been documented on postcolonial theory, it is evident that this critical canon aims at exploring the multifaceted forces that held together and sustained the imperial enterprise at the point of colonial establishment. The theory also makes it clear that colonies had different colonial experiences, not every colony shared virtually all the aspects of colonialism, neither did they all share the same essential features since colonialism is “like a rope with overlapping strands” (Wittgensten, 1958, cited in Rukundwa and van Aarde, 2007:1173).

The general argument that emerges from most of the literature on postcolonial theory is that it is a theoretical approach that interrogates the dominant discourses of power as espoused by the colonial system. In addition to projecting the worldview of the colonised, postcolonial

theory also explores the influence that the colonial encounter had on certain thinking processes, public opinion among many other aspects of human existence. It cross-examines the imperial project and the complicated power dynamics that characterise colonialism and its aftermath (Ashcroft et al. 1998). Postcolonial theory also delves into the politics of knowledge creation, control and dissemination. It further pays attention to the projection of the machinery or apparatus that are used to sustain, nourish and perpetuate the imperial project as well as the neo-colonial structures. In this study, the canon was used to scrutinise media, which happens to one of the critical apparatus that was used to maintain and sustain the colonial enterprise. *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are analysed in light of the idea that even after the attainment of independence by former colonial states, neo-colonial systems continue to be nourished and sustained by the very systems that would have been inherited on the eve of the defeat of the capitalist settlers. The thrust of the theory is mainly on the how as well as the logic behind the capitalist system's representation, be they social, political or economic, of the colonial master and the colonised groups of people.

Taken in the field of literature, postcolonial theory generally analyses literary works written both by colonial masters and the colonised paying particular attention to the impact of imperialism on issues of power relations, economics, politics, and cultural orientation. Furthermore, as observed by Mwangi (2009), literature, within the context of postcolonial theory, has to expose to the western readers to the honest and objective relationship between the North and the South. The writers, he believes, have to reveal to the European readers that:

...the water they drink is often taken from the mouths of the thirsty in the third world and the food they eat is snatched from the mouths of the hungry in Asia, Africa and South America (Brecht, 1983 cited in Mwangi, 2009:266).

The literature is expected to provoke a guilty conscience in the western reader, conscientising the reader of his/her personal participation in the creation of the miserable conditions in the global south (Mwangi, 2009). Post-colonial literature explores the wrongs against humanity in the formerly colonised world, to use Young's (2001:6) expression; it is "a product of the economic dominance of the north over the south".

According to the scholars of postcolonial theory, critics of postcolonial literary works need to adopt a postcolonial reading. Defining this concept, Ashcroft et al. (1998), views a postcolonial reading as a way of interrogating texts to draw deliberate attention to profound and inescapable effects of colonialism. They perceive it as a form of reconstructive reading which demonstrates the extent to which the text contradicts its underlying assumption (civilisation, justice, aesthetics, sensibility, and race) and reveals its (often unwritten) colonialist ideologies and processes (Ashcroft et al 1998:192). The analysis of the newspapers, with the guidance from the theory, attempts to find out if there is evidence of any traces of colonial belief systems in the coverage of the news and the presentation of the information to the masses.

### **3.3 Postcolonial Theory and the Language Question**

In the field of language, postcolonial thinkers have acknowledged language as the major cultural component that was repressed as a result of the imperialist project (Mwangi, 2009:95). The theory views language as the site on which human identity is sculptured and as such they prioritise and lobby for the use of indigenous languages against the background of dominant discourse (Mwangi, 2009). For the theorists, the roots of linguistic dispossession lie in the capitalist enterprise of the imperial era. One wonders, however, if the postcolonial thinkers are not romanticising indigenous languages as transmitters of freedom to former colonised communities.

### **3.4 The Historical Development of Postcolonial Theory in Latin America**

Postcolonial theory addresses issues of colonialism by building on many other philosophical traditions that were critical of colonialism such as Marxism, post modernism and post structuralism. What is of paramount importance when it comes to this theory is that it is multi-disciplinary. It draws its material from a multiplicity of disciplines and activities.

According to Young (2001), postcolonial theory as a “political discourse” emerged mainly from experiences of oppression and struggles for freedom after the “tricontinental”

awakening in Africa, Asia and Latin America: the continents that have been historically associated with poverty and conflict (Young, 2001:383). Postcolonial criticism focuses on the oppression and coercive domination that operate in the contemporary world (Young, 2001:11). According to Young, the philosophy underlying this theory is not one of declaring war on the past, but resistance against the prevailing realities which, implicitly or explicitly, are the consequences of that past. Therefore, the attention of the struggle, as envisaged in postcolonial theory, is concentrated on neocolonialism and its agents (international and local) that are still protracted through political, economic and social exploitation in post-independent nations. In conclusion, Young suggests that postcolonial theory emerged out of what the west perceived as anti-slavery and anti-colonialist activism.

### **3.5 Postcolonial Theory as a Tricontinental Theoretical Approach**

The term tricontinental is used to refer to what most western oriented thinkers have termed third world countries. From the postcolonial theory perspective, the term “Third World” is colonial and therefore inappropriate; postcolonial critics hence prefer to use the term ‘tricontinental’ instead. The term tricontinental refers to the amalgamation of Africa, Latin America and Asia in their formation of a tricontinental bloc. This tricontinental bloc was brought to fruition at the Havana Conference in 1966 where a journal, *The Tricontinental* was launched (Rukundwa and van Aarde, 2007).

According to Young (2003:18), the tricontinental brought together the three continents, uniting them and their interests in a common perspective vis-à-vis the western world. Of critical importance is the fact that the tricontinental provided the first international organisation that was dedicated towards promoting resistance to colonialism and imperialism, based in, organised and brewed from within the Third World itself (Young, 2005). It brought together the anti-colonial struggles in Africa and Asia with the radical movements of Latin America and marked the initiation of a global alliance of the three continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America against imperialism.

The tricontinental focused exclusively on anti-colonial and anti-imperial struggles across the world, initiated an overall framework for globalised struggle and stood for a positive form of

globalisation which had been espoused by the then Cuban ruler, Fidel Castro. The globalisation that had been enunciated by Castro was:

a globalisation of solidarity between the human family, ...working for a world that is really for all, without hunger or poverty, without oppression or exploitation, without humiliation or contempt, without injustice and inequalities, where everyone might live in full moral and material dignity, in true liberty (Young, 2005:19).

The Tricontinental stood firmly against all those global elements that enforced forms of domination and exploitation on the poor masses of the world. Above all, it was committed to the wars of liberation across the continents. This grouping of the three continents brought together the anti-colonial and postcolonial writings of people like Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, among others. The Havana conference consolidated the enunciation of the anti-colonial and anti-imperial sentiments.

### **3.6 Proponents of Post-Colonial Theory**

The pioneers of the postcolonial theory have been identified as Said, Spivak and Bhabha. According to Young (1995), the trio constitutes the “holy trinity” of postcolonial critics who have achieved the greatest prominence in the field. While Said has been singled out as the father of postcolonialism, Spivak and Bhabha are presented as having substantially developed this project of bringing “radical” western theory to bear on postcolonial issues (Young, 1995). The majority of the proponents of postcolonial theory propagated that the dominant powers successfully lined their pockets and maximised their global political and cultural control at the expense of the colonised peoples who were reduced to passivity and silence by the conquest.

### **3.7 Spivak and the Concept of the Subaltern**

In her works, Spivak places a lot of emphasis on the less privileged groups of the colonised and neo-colonial territories. To capture the experiences and sensibilities of these downtrodden people, she uses the term ‘subaltern’. This term, according to Young (1995) is adopted from the works of Gramsci where it is used to signify subordinate or marginalised groups in Europe – specifically in the Italian society. Of critical importance in her interest in

the subaltern groups of society is the female subaltern whom she believes are subject to a greater degree of economic, cultural and political marginalisation than their equally disadvantaged male counterpart. What is significant about the works of Spivak as a postcolonial thinker, in light of this study, is her interest in the marginalized groups. Taken in the Zimbabwean context, the local communities, whose indigenous languages have been overshadowed by English language, can equally fit into the category of the subaltern groups of society. The enactment of direct and indirect strategies to coerce people to abandon their local languages in preference of the alien colonial ones presents yet another form of imperialism– cultural imperialism which deepens the alienation of the affected people and deprives them of their natural voice.

Her famous essay, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ expresses her general concerns with regards the disadvantaged and downtrodden masses in the relationship to the ‘west and the rest of us’. In this particular essay as well as other later works, the term ‘subaltern’ is used to refer to all the developing countries, but most specifically India. It “refers to the subsistent farmers, unorganised peasant labour, the communities of zero workers on the street or in the countryside” (Young, 1995:84). In some essays that followed later the term is used to embrace all the disadvantaged constituencies in the West, which included women as well as the whole class of migrants which Spivak describes as ‘urban home-workers’.

Spivak’s main concern is the degree to which these people she calls the subaltern can enjoy agency. She questions whether the subaltern can speak for themselves, and wonders if they are condemned only to be known, represented, and spoken for [in most cases] in a distorted fashion by others, particularly by those who exploit them or other disinterested elements who come in as aid-workers (Spivak, 1988, cited in Moore-Gilbert, 2000:452). Spivak’s concern is almost similar to the questions that are raised in the study, the question of whether the language used in the media accords the subaltern group adequate space to actively and responsibly respond to pertinent global issues affecting its communities. In light of the principles of the theory, the study would be able to question if the two newspapers, through their news coverage can help the formerly linguistically silenced masses regain agency in matters affecting their lives be it at national or global level. In light of the establishment of

the two newspapers in indigenous languages that were established to serve the information needs of post-colonial Zimbabweans, the study questions if they have the capacity to present their ideas, ideals, the historical experiences and above all the cultural heritage to the indigenous people as well as to the global communities authoritatively. It would thus become possible to find out if the establishment of the two newspapers in Shona and Ndebele has managed to restore the people's voice that they had been robbed of as a result of the colonial encounter. It is as if the research is asking: After the establishment of the two newspapers soon after independence, can the, marginalised and exploited Zimbabwean masses now speak?

The ideas of Spivak have inspired the research to question if the people who consume the newspapers in indigenous languages are really empowered to speak about their lives, challenges and opportunities, successes and failures, using their own undistorted voices. The major questions that are prompted by Spivak's writing are: Are the indigenous languages, in the selected print media, used to represent the concrete real life socio-economic and political experiences of the indigenous people or they present a distorted or partial reflection of their lives in relation to the global realities as espoused by the dominant discourse? Are they able to express their position and responses to global socio-economic and political events through the platform that is presented by the newspapers? These and many other questions provide the grounds against which the research is carried with post colonialism as the guiding philosophy.

Spivak's works make a conclusion that there is no space and platform on the global arena, from which the subaltern can speak. There is no room, she argues, from which they can articulate and effectively express their interests, fears, agonies and general historical experiences to the global community in their own terms, their own natural voices, because of the heavy presence of the "itinerary of silencing, which paradoxically presents the postcolonial subaltern as seemingly free speaking subjects or agents in the discourses of the dominant order" (Young, 1998: 452). The subaltern have been deprived of the greatest and natural gift that humanity was endowed with, the gift of voice. In a way, the voices of the subaltern have been muffled. With such a conclusion, it then is the aim of the research study

to find out if what Spivak is insinuating is similar to what is happening to the indigenous Zimbabweans' voices vis-à-vis the newspapers published in indigenous languages. Using the ideas obtained from the reading of the subaltern, the research will attempt to see if the newspapers in indigenous languages are affected by strategically orchestrated media legal instruments that could incapacitate them in their endeavours to emancipate the linguistically disadvantaged local communities.

In addition, Spivak bemoans the failure by educated elites to lobby and advocate for the empowerment of the disadvantaged and marginalised groups such as the women, prisoners, and Third World subaltern. For Spivak, the elite instead purport that these groups can still continue to speak for themselves irrespective of the plethora of their disadvantages. She believes the voice of the subaltern is “ventriloquised, as a result ‘one can never directly encounter the testimony of the women’s own voice-consciousness” (Young, 1995 cited in Moore-Gilbert, 2000:152). The voice, she argues, is manipulated accordingly and “subsequently the subaltern becomes the silent interlocutor of the dominant order” (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:153). What Spivak is expressing is that in colonial discourse, the subjectivity of the subaltern is constructed according to the belief systems of the dominant culture which produces the environment, the language and historical milieu in which the subaltern exists. With the above proclamation one wonders if the Zimbabwean voices as expressed in the selected newspapers in indigenous languages are a natural expression of an empowered people or a mere expression of what the dominant discourse has made people believe works in indigenous languages are, that is, didactic, romantic and to a greater extent more culturally and religiously rooted than political.

### **3.8 Homi Bhabha and Postcolonial Thought**

Bhabha is another of the significant proponents of postcolonial theory. For Bhabha, the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised is complex, nuanced and politically ambiguous (Moore-Gilbert, 2000).

### **3.8.1 Bhabha and the Concept of Hybridity**

Bhabha is significant in postcolonial theory for his concept of hybridity. Hybridity according to Moore-Gilbert (2000) is an “invention” of postcolonial thought, a radical substitute for hegemonic ideas of cultural identity” (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:456). In the same vein, Ashcroft, et al. (1998), propose that hybridity refers to the creation of new trans-cultural structures that emerge within the contact zone of colonialism. Ashcroft, et al. (1998), contend that hybridity manifests itself in diverse forms, linguistic, cultural and political among other dimensions. It suggests the disruptive and transfiguring power of multivocal language situations and by extension of multivocal narratives (Ashcroft et al. 1998:61). From Bhabha’s perspective, all cultural statements and systems are constructed in a space that he calls a “Third Space of enunciation” (Bhabha, 1994:34). Cultural identity, he argues, emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent space, which makes the claim to cultural ‘purity’ flimsy.

For Bhabha, the recognition of this ambivalent space of cultural identity may assist people to overcome the idealism of cultural diversity and persuade them to recognise and appreciate the empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate (Bhabha, 1994; Ashcroft et al. 1998). For Bhabha, it is this ‘in-between’ space that carries the burden and meaning of culture. Thus, the notion of hybridity, according to Bhabha becomes critical in postcolonial criticism when it is taken to imply “... a conscious and politically motivated concern with the deliberate disruption of homogeneity” (Ashcroft et al. 1998:1120). In this context, hybridity becomes a political driving force that creates room for the embracing, the subversion and challenging of division and separation (Ashcroft et al. 1998:1120). When it assumes this character, Bhabha believes, hybridity develops the propensity towards reversing and unseating the structures of domination in the colonial situation (Bhabha, 1994; Young, 1995).

Taking the principle of hybridity as espoused by Bhabha, the research attempts to find out if the selected newspapers in the indigenous languages are really exhibiting the cultural hybridity that is a product of the contact with the colonial systems. The question is whether they are capturing the new cultural structures that are products of the encounter with the colonial powers. The diction that is chosen and the news stories that are given prominence are

expected to explore the hybrid nature of the cultural existence of the indigenous Zimbabwean people. In a way, the news coverage is expected to address the diverse and dynamic African identities; acknowledging the effects of colonialism and the unquestionable need to recover that which colonialism sought to destroy, but not necessarily being obsessed with recovering and reinstating the pre-colonial past as is enshrined in postcolonial theory (Mwangi, 2009).

Like most critics of colonialism and imperialism, Bhabha argues that the colonial system created sophisticated apparatuses of control and dominance. These strategies were orchestrated to guarantee the economic, political and cultural survival as well as perpetuation of the imperial project through the formation of an elite group – the mimic men. This class of indigenous people represented and safeguarded the vision, goals of the colonial project. This process of grooming indigenous personnel to run the colonial project, led to what Bhabha terms mimicry.

For Bhabha, mimicry is the process by which the colonised subject is reproduced as “almost the same, but not quite” European (Bhabha, 1994:86). After constructing this class of native interpreters, the colonial system encouraged the colonised to embrace the coloniser’s cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values. For Bhabha, the result of this mimicry is never a simple reproduction of intended traits. The result, he argues, is rather a blurred copy of the colonised that can be quite threatening. This mimicry thus contains in it the seed of colonial destruction (Bhabha, 1994).

Again, the principle of mimicry is very interesting in the interrogation of the newspapers in indigenous languages. The educated elite are the equivalence of the indigenous personnel that are perceived to have assumed the values and sensibilities of the coloniser. They think and behave “almost the same, but not quite” European (Bhabha, 1994:86) as already been stated. The idea, thus, becomes to find out if the news coverage, by these media practitioners (who form part of the educated population of the society), is a mere reproduction of the imperialist perception of the indigenous Zimbabwean way of life. The question is: Are the stories surely a mirror image of what the colonial system had made us believe (through its use of various

state apparatus, such as education) we are? If so, have these newspapers been reduced to platforms that reinforce perception of Africa as a static gigantic continent that does not respond to global science and technological developments? Answering these questions would go a long way into addressing the research problem, that is, determining the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in selected newspapers can empower the media consumers.

While the mimic men are a necessary component of the imperial chain of command, they are also “inappropriate colonial subjects because what is being set in motion in their behavior is something that may ultimately be beyond the control of colonial authority” (Ashcroft et al. 1998:66). The trio contends that the behavior of the mimic men has a propensity towards disturbing the imperial set-up itself. The threat in mimicry, they argue, comes not from an overt resistance but from the way in which it continually suggests an identity not quite like the coloniser (Ashcroft et al. 1998; Bhabha, 1994). This identity of the colonial subject ‘almost the same but not white’ means that the colonial culture is always potentially and strategically despondent and rebellious (Ashcroft et al. 1998; Bhabha, 1994). Mimicry thus becomes synonymous to mockery, since it tends to caricature the language, the norms, values and institutions that are being imitated. It, therefore locates a crack in the centrality of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behavior of the colonised. Again, the mockery inherent in the writings of the generation of the western educated elite, the media practitioners in this case, is also going to be searched for to identify the cracks that are being created on the established system. In a sense, the newspapers in indigenous languages are expected to present an opportunity for the educated Zimbabwean to destroy the tentacles of the post-colonial system on Zimbabwean media fraternity even though they might be struggling to assume the colonial values and norms.

### **3.8.2 Bhabha’s Perception of Colonial Resistance**

Bhabha believes that the coloniser must be addressed directly by the colonised in order for the oppressed masses to achieve emancipation. For him, the colonised must refuse to fit into the framework set by the coloniser’s support systems and structures. Bhabha believes it is at this point that mimicry becomes a “strategic reversal of the process of domination... that

turns the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eyes of power” (Bhabha, 1994:112). According to Bhabha, “...like all forms of power, colonial authority systematically, but unintentionally incites challenge and negation” (Bhabha, 1994:113).

What Bhabha is insinuating is the idea that, from a postcolonial perspective, the newspapers in indigenous languages have to present themselves as a site from which the formerly colonised Zimbabweans confront the imperialistic set up in order for them to achieve emancipation. Such newspapers, it may be argued are expected to counter the dominant discourse that is embedded in the English language published newspapers and re-assert the Zimbabwean communities and their indigenous languages as equal players on the global media terrain.

Bhabha suggests that mimicry in the colonial context is a strategy of power as well as resistance. According to Bhabha, while it works towards consolidating hegemony through encouraging the subjects to imitate the forms and values of the dominant culture, this strategy can never fully succeed in obliterating all traces of the original identity and sensibility of the colonised. For him, this system of cultural differentiation always requires the subordinate to remain sufficiently different from the coloniser in order for the latter to continue to have control over its subjects (Moore-Gilbert, 2000:458). This bedrock of ‘culture difference’ on which the colonial power is based, breaches the supposedly “universal” values of western culture upon which empire as an assimilative project is premised. Mimicry, Moore-Gilbert argues, thus becomes a double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline which appropriates the other, however, its dependence on the maintenance of elements of cultural difference between the coloniser and the colonised “poses an imminent threat to both normalised knowledge and disciplinary powers” (Moore-Gilbert, 200:459).

### **3.9 Frantz Fanon and the Postcolonial Theory**

Frantz Fanon is another important figure in postcolonial theory. He was born on the Caribbean island of Martinique which by then was a French colony. He was a psychiatrist,

philosopher, revolutionary, and writer whose works are prominent in the disciplines of post-colonial studies, critical theory, and Marxism. His works are central to any discussion on decolonisation. He was the unsurpassed thinker of the 20th century on matters concerned with decolonisation and the psychopathology of colonisation. Because of the depth with which he dealt with the psychology of colonialism, his works motivated liberation movements in most colonial states.

In his works, he deals emotionally with the “mechanics of colonialism and its effects on those it ensnared” Sawant (2012: 121). He uses psychology as a means of investigating the impact of colonialism on both the colonised and the coloniser.

In *Black Skin, White mask*, he interrogates the African elite that took up the place of the colonial master with no effort at radically changing the structure of society. The black skin of this elite class, he argues, is masked behind its affection to the values, the language and the lifestyle of the imperial system, hence the title *Black Skin White Mask*. He sees the colonial society as being compartmentalised – with the whites being pitted against the blacks and the poor against the rich. This division of the population according to classes and race, he believes, creates acrimony. For Fanon, true decolonisation will eradicate this “devilish dichotomy and create a society where the last shall be the first” (Fanon, 1965:36).

With regards the question of the dichotomy that has been alluded to in this theoretical framework, the research attempted to detect if the existence of the selected newspapers in indigenous languages, amid an array of print media in English, really create a division within the society where to read the selected newspapers in indigenous languages is nothing but to be poor while reading newspapers in English is to be rich. The social class status implications as determined by the consumption of the selected newspapers will thus be a point of interest to this research study.

Furthermore, Fanon bemoans the failure of the elite to effectively pursue radical changes that would benefit the masses. For him, their concern in the decolonisation mission is not to improve and alter the political system for the good of the general masses. Rather, their target

is accessing and amassing wealth as well as attaining the status that had previously been enjoyed by the colonisers. Their desire, he argues, is to siphon the strength of the masses and the natural resources for their personal benefit (1965:53). In his works, Fanon advocates for an educated elite that works tirelessly towards “radically [restructuring] the society on the firm foundation of the people and their value” (Fanon, cited in Ashcroft et al. 1998:99). He suggests that newly independent countries must not be contented with the mere replacement of metropolis bourgeoisie since this subsequently leaves the countries dependent on foreign markets and capital after protracted struggles against the colonial set-up and the imperial system.

What Fanon is discussing can be related to the media fraternity in Africa in general and Zimbabwe in particular. The idea being that the limited use of local languages in media and the overtly over reliance on the English language published media has a tendency to render the Zimbabwean society dependent on media products produced outside rather than within the nation. It tends to reduce the Zimbabweans to consumers rather than producers of the media products that they consume. If they are not part of the production process, it implies they have no space for writing their own stories and life experiences using their own voices. Rather, their stories will continue to be told from the perspectives of the multimedia oligopolies whose philosophy of life is determined by the western world and America. By implication, the Zimbabwean society will be having no voice with which, and no platforms or space from which to articulate their feelings, values and norms on the global arena.

### **3.9.1 Fanon and the Use of Violence in Decolonisation Processes**

In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon projects the idea that the plight of the colonised can be understood from the historical perspective of the colonised. He advocates for active intervention, on the part of the colonised, as an appropriate response to colonialism – violence. This advocacy stems from his belief that colonialism is a violent phenomenon, in the same vein, decolonisation itself has no option but to assume a violent character (Fanon, 1965).

For Fanon, decolonisation can only be fully achieved through violent uprising against the system. According to Fanon, colonialism is made possible through extreme violence and intimidation; and violence is the only language that a colonialist understands:

Colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and it can only give in when confronted with violence (Fanon, 1965:23).

What Fanon is proposing is that it is only through a violent insurgence targeted at obliterating everything that had contacts with colonialism, that a new breed of society will be created.

Fanon adopts the Gramscian notion that the only elements of colonisation that change as a result of negotiating at tables are formalities. For him, it is only these formalities that change while all the state apparatus and other support systems that ensure the continued sustenance of colonialism are left intact. With well-orchestrated violent response to colonialism, religious and tribal divisions created and exacerbated by the colonialists are believed to deteriorate as the urgency of unity is realised by the masses. This way, he argues, a new culture, not a culture that is defined by the Europeans, nor a culture that is anchored on indigenous traditions of the pre-colonial era, that culture is no longer existent, reactionary and has been ruined and degraded in the psyche of the colonised through colonial racism and segregation (Moore-Gilbert, 2000). He attributes this digression from the norm, the formation of a hybrid, to the calls by political leaders encouraging “their people to fight: to fight against colonialism, to fight against poverty and underdevelopment, and to fight against sterile traditions” (Fanon, 1965:94). A hybrid culture which is neither European nor traditionally African as espoused by Bhabha is the ideal tool with which to confront colonialism. For Fanon, the colonised must move forward and they cannot afford to be mired by traditions nor by disempowering colonial constructions of the African image (which implants an inferiority complex in them).

Taken within the context of the study, the media fraternity, the implication is that the media terrain in this postcolonial era has to aggressively address the political, economic and cultural issues that affect the people. The principle behind the aggressive stance is that the imperial project, even in its new form as neo-colonialism, is an aggressive and violent phenomenon,

which, like its predecessor, the colonial system, is divisive. As such, to achieve the grand project of decolonising the Zimbabwean nation, the selected newspapers have to address the global and national political and economic issues that affect indigenous people. It has to address those elements of the global relationships that contribute to poverty, underdevelopment, and promotion of the preservation of static traditions and cultural beliefs. It is, therefore against this postcolonial principle that the study uses the content analysis method to interrogate the news coverage of the selected papers.

### **3.9.2 Fanon and the Concept of Self-Consciousness**

For Fanon, the use of psychology in the anti-colonial struggle has a twofold purpose: it investigates the inner effects of colonialism on the colonised and it provides the tools of resistance, ‘turning the inculcation of inferiority into self-empowerment’. The process of decolonisation, he contends, is a matter of consciousness; it needs to be defined in the minds of the people. He further argues that the war against any kind of oppression must be rooted in the self-consciousness of those engaged in, and are affected by imperialism, bringing them to the level of responsibility and accountability that would prompt their active participation in changing the status quo. For him, self-consciousness can refer to a cultural revolution which lobbies for the eradication of the state of subjugation. It is consciousness informed by the desire, a spirit of longing, a spirit of want and satisfaction. Self-consciousness as a means of cultural and personal rebirth is not ashamed of the past, but defies the oppressor’s consciousness to see sameness and equality in the other (Rukundwa and Aarde, 2007:1188). For Fanon, the use of violence to unseat the colonial set-up demands self-determination, and Rukundwa and Van Aarde (2007) concur with him when they argue that:

...freedom had never been handed over to any colonial country on a silver plate. Self-determination, as espoused by Fanon, prepares the ground for freedom for those who cannot get it by other means (Rukundwa and Van Aarde, 2007:1187).

### **3.10 Amilcar Cabral and the Postcolonial Thought**

Cabral is yet another thinker who has been associated with postcolonial theory. He was born in 1924 and died in 1973. He was an agronomist by profession, who dedicated his life to

rejecting and campaigning against colonial dominance. As a political activist, he became the principal leader of the political movement that mobilised people to break the colonial yoke in Guinea Bissau. Of great interest in this discussion of postcolonial theory is the fact that he was actually one of the delegates of the Tricontinental Conference in Havana in 1966.

### **3.10.1 Cabral's concept of decolonisation**

Cabral is a strong advocate of the use of the African culture in the fight against the imperial project and the colonial enterprise. He discusses the question of cultural oppression at great length, and calls for the rehabilitation of African culture since he contends that it is a major feature of the people's history (Cabral, 1994). In his works, Cabral argues that when Goebbels, the architect of Nazi Propaganda heard issues of culture being discussed, he took out his pistol (Cabral, 1994). For him, that action revealed that the Nazis, who are the most catastrophic expression of imperialism and of its unquenchable desire for domination, unambiguously understood the value and implication of culture as a driving force to resistance against foreign domination (Cabral, 1974).

This principle that calls for the supremacy of culture in any fight against imperialism is very relevant to the study of the selected newspapers in indigenous languages. In fact, browsing through a few issues of the papers one cannot miss the centrality of culture on their news coverage. Cultural issues are the central theme of the newspapers and most of the editorial comments do not take too lightly the importance of culture in the Zimbabwean society. The crux of the matter in this research is not to explore the newspapers' presentation of the cultural milieu in the society but to explore the extent to which the coverage of the cultural issues is helping the readers shake off the manacles of the neo-colonial system. The idea is to see if culture is presented in ways that can awaken the consciousness and militancy of the masses in their pursuit of the decolonisation mission and ultimate meaningful democratic participation on the international spaces.

Like Fanon, Cabral is an advocate of violence in processes of destroying the colonial empires. His solution to colonial dominance is not mere taking up of arms to destroy the system, but to harness the African culture in the process of breaking this colonial yoke. For Cabral, "...to take up arms to dominate a nation by force of arms is, above all, to take up arms to destroy or at least, to neutralise and paralyse its culture" (Cabral, 1974:14). For Cabral, the defamation of the cultural values of African peoples based on racialist prejudices and the ultimate goal of achieving the objectives of the imperial project of perpetually exploiting the African had adverse effects on Africa (Cabral, 1974:15). As such, the study using the postcolonial lens has a duty to determine if the media practitioners that produce the newspapers in indigenous languages are able to harness the cultural component on which the selected newspapers are hinged, to help people see the adverse outcomes of the racial prejudices and unceasing siphoning of the resources of the African continent.

Cabral, however, is convinced that the colonial system did not successfully manage to annihilate the African culture. For him, "the African culture survived all the storms, taking refuge in villages, in the forests and in the spirit of the generations who were victims of colonialism" (Cabral, 1974). He further stresses that:

For as long as a section of the populace is able to have a cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation, at any given time... cultural opposition (indestructible) will take on new forms (political, economic or military) with a view to posing a serious challenge to foreign domination" (Cabral, 1974:12).

Thus, for him:

Like the seed that long waits the most propitious moment for generation, so as to assure the continuity of the species and its evolution, the culture of the African is today continuing its growth across the continent in the struggle for liberation (Cabral, 1974:14).

If the African culture continues to play an active role in the struggle for liberation, as espoused by Cabral, then it is envisaged that the prioritisation of indigenous culture(s) in the selected newspapers that publish in local languages surely does empower people to be conscious of the political, economic and cultural trajectory of their communities amid global forces. In so doing, they make the masses better placed to claim their space on the global arena and subsequently make their own indelible mark on the global knowledge production arena.

According to Cabral, (1974) what the colonised people would need to do to successfully free themselves from the tentacles of colonialism is to return to the ways of their own culture, which are nourished by the living reality of their environment, and which counteract the detrimental effects as well as all forms of subjugation to the future of the culture (Cabral, 1974). If the principle of going back to the “source” is what is guiding and propelling the publications of the selected newspapers in indigenous languages, then it becomes imperative for the research to determine the extent to which this so-called “source” is being tapped for the correct aspects that will drive members of the society into insurgence against colonialism and its neocolonialism forms.

Cabral, like the majority of scholars of postcolonial thought, acknowledges that the colonial system, in its bid to achieve maximum effects in terms of perpetuating exploitation, did not only institute a system of repressing the cultural life of the colonised people, it established strategies for the social alienation of a critical part of the populace – the class of the educated Africans. This class according to Cabral assumed the mentality of the coloniser, “considered themselves culturally superior to the people they belong to, ignored and despised their cultural values” (Cabral, 1974:14). Like their colonial masters, they castigated the indigenous culture and struggled to be European in all respects, but colour.

Again, like the Europeans this new class of elites questioned the ever existence of African culture, history or philosophy and instead impulsively accepted the values, norms, languages and sensibilities of their colonisers. Cabral, however, insists that “Our peoples, no matter their stages of economic development, have their own history” (Cabral, 1974: 16). For Cabral, history enables people to see through the extent of the imbalance and conflicts (economic, political and social) inherent in the society. The reflection on these imbalances in the selected newspapers is thus, the subject of the research.

Cabral (1974: 17) further reiterates that in the political sphere, no matter how beautiful and attractive the reality of others “might be, we can only truly transform our own reality on the basis of its concrete knowledge and on our own efforts and sacrifices”.

Cabral concludes that if colonial dominance had to be sustained and nourished through processes of strategically oppressing cultural practices of the oppressed people, then, national liberation is necessarily an act of culture (Cabral, 1974). Again, if the selected newspapers are hinged on the cultural existence of the indigenous Zimbabwean people, surely their coverage of events has to go a long way into supporting and fostering the struggle for the emancipation of the local people from all forms of discrimination and segregation.

### **3.11 Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin Postcolonial Theory**

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin are said to have produced the first major theoretical account of a wide range of postcolonial texts and their relation to the larger issues of postcolonial culture. *The Empire Writes Back* has been singled out as one of their major works published in the field. In line with the majority of their works, it constitutes a radical critique of Eurocentric notions of literature and language. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin. (1989), more than three quarters of the people living in the world today have had their lives shaped by colonialism. They believe that the historical experiences of these colonised people were powerfully captured in their writings and arts (sculpture, music, painting and dancing among others) (Ashcroft et al. 1989:3).

#### **3.11.1 Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin: Perceptions to the Language Issue**

According to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1989:78), one of the major characteristics of imperial oppression is control over the means of communication. Within the imperial set-up, language became that stratagem by which a:

...hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated and the medium through which conception of truth, order and reality becomes established (Ashcroft et al. (1989:78).

This control is designed to regulate what the colonised know about the coloniser and even their seemingly new environment around them. For Ashcroft, et al. (1989:78) the control of the means of communication is the empowering factor in any colonial enterprise.

In exploring the language question within the context of postcolonialism, the trio quotes Viswanathan (1987) who argues that:

British colonial administrators, provoked by missionaries on the one hand and fears of native insubordination on the other, discovered an ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control of the natives under the guise of liberal education (Viswanathan (1987) cited in Ashcroft et al. 1989:2)

The trio argues that the spread of English and the expansion of Empire emanated from a common ideological orientation and that the spread and expansion of the one is intrinsically bound up with that of the other. The rise of the empire, and its accompanying linguistic instrument, they argue, went a long way into naturalising imperial constructed values and at the same time denigrating everything indigenous to the colonised people as savage and primitive (Ashcroft et al. 1989:3). The control of the means of communication, they argue, creates an environment that gags the voice of the oppressed. “There is literary silencing which will not permit the freedom necessary to appropriate language – people find themselves languageless, gagged by the imposition of English on their world” (Ashcroft et al. 1989:83).

For the trio, the postcolonial voice rejects all these imperial constructions. They present the discussion of postcolonial writing as being largely one based on the process by which “the language, with its power and the writing, with its signification of authority, has been wrested from the dominant European culture” (Ashcroft et al. 1989:7). With this suggested power of the ownership and control of the means of communication, the million-dollar question that then drives this research is whether the mere assumption of a language becomes tantamount to restoring the gagged voices of the subaltern groups who are the subject of this study. Furthermore, the interest mounts on the question of whether the preference of an indigenous language for the collection and dissemination of media products can suddenly endow locals with the authority to fragment the western dominant culture.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

This chapter has revealed that postcolonial theory is built from the colonial experiences of people who engaged in the liberation struggles globally and particularly in the tricontinental countries in Africa, South and Southeast Asia and Latin America. The theory allows people emerging from socio-political and economic domination to reclaim their negotiating space for equity. Postcolonial theory, it has emerged, interrogates the consequences of the exploitative imperial project. It scrutinises the “truth” that had been peddled by colonialism and attempts to create a space, in the academic world, for alternative voices and perspectives to be heard in various disciplines be they philosophy, sociology, literary studies, history or mass media. From the discussion in the chapter, it can be argued that postcolonial theory raises self-consciousness which revolutionises the minds of the colonised and the coloniser as well as empowers them to build a new society where liberty and equity prevail. It involves the construction of a new identity based on the painful interaction between the colonial hegemonic system and the marginalised and oppressed colonised people (Rukundwa and Aarde, 2007). The most critical proponents of the theory have been identified as Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Fanon and Cabral. These critics have written extensively on the effects of the imperial project and the colonial enterprise, highlighting the possible ways by which the colonised or former colonised populations could disentangle themselves from the imperial grip.

## **Chapter Four: Methodology**

### **4.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter dealt with the postcolonial theoretical framework that informs the study. It attempted to unbundle the tenets of the theory in light of the research question that interrogates the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in print media can empower people to democratically participate in the national and global economic, political and cultural debates in a meaningful way. This chapter concentrates on the methodology that is exploited in pursuing this research. It defines the term methodology and explores the various facets of the concepts, justifying why certain aspects of “methodology” are utilised. The research methods that have been used in carrying out the research have also been discussed. Data collection tools that were used in the research endeavour have also been explored, paying particular attention to their relevance to the resolution of the problem under study. The chapter finally spells out the data analysis and interpretation procedures for the research.

### **4.1 Research Methodology**

It is very important to understand the term research methodology before any other concept in this chapter. Research methodology is a complex phenomenon that includes a whole host of things. Research methodology as a term cannot, therefore, be used interchangeably with the term research methods. The research design, research methods, sampling strategies, instruments for data collection, procedure for data gathering, strategies and modes of data analysis are all embedded in the concept of methodology. The data presentation and interpretation techniques are all explored and their choice justified for their suitability (validity and reliability) under this banner of research methodology. Research methodology can then be viewed as a systematic way to solving an identified research problem (Gray, 2013). Research methodology has many dimensions, and research methods are just but a constituent of the research methodology. Thus, when addressing the question of the research methodology, one is not only talking of the methods that are going to be used in the study, but considers the logic behind the methods used in the context of the study. In fact, the

researcher explains why he/she is using a particular method or technique and not using others. Why a study has been carried out, how the research problem has been defined, in what way, what data have been collected and what particular methods have been adopted, why particular techniques of analysing data have been used and a host of many other questions are usually answered when addressing the aspect of research methodology.

## **4.2 The Research Paradigm**

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994:107):

A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the "world," the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts, as, for example, cosmologies and theologies do.

It can be viewed as an accepted or correct scientific way of working, a way of pursuing knowledge, acceptable models or belief systems or set of principles, a consensus on what problems need to be investigated and how to investigate them (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2011). Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), also add that it is the choice of paradigm that sets down the intent, motivation and expectations for the research and influences the way knowledge is studied and interpreted. The choice of a paradigm provides the background against which subsequent choices regarding methodology, methods, literature or research design are made.

Paradigms are deeply embedded in the socialisation of their adherents and practitioners, and they inform them of what is important, legitimate and reasonable. In other words, a research paradigm is like a torch bearer which guides the researchers in articulating the research problems and sub-problems; formulating hypotheses and sub-hypotheses; reviewing related literature; choosing appropriate research methods; designing data collecting instruments; choosing the universe, population and sampling methods and designing the data collection procedure as well as outlining the data collection stages. It is the paradigm that determines the process of presenting, analysing, and interpreting the data; and drawing of objective conclusions, based on research findings, which constitute answers to the sub-problems and

the main problem. The assumption of this analogue, therefore, is that the researcher is expected to follow the direction of the light from the ‘touch bearer’, which is the guiding philosophy behind the research paradigm, in all the stages of the research undertaking, as outlined by the paradigm that would be chosen to guide the research process. In research traditions, there originally existed two common research paradigms: the qualitative and the quantitative research paradigms.

#### **4.2.1 The Quantitative Research**

Quantitative research is rooted within the normative or positivist paradigm. Within the context of this paradigm, the research process must involve the use of deductive logic and be based on a pre-determined design while its ultimate objective must be discovering general laws of nature. The other objective of research has to be determining the relationship between variables in the universe (Borg, and Gall, 1989). The quantitative research paradigm attempts to develop and employ mathematical models, theories and hypotheses pertaining to natural phenomena. Because of this emphasis, the process of measurement is central since it provides the fundamental connection between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships, based on models and theory.

The underlying assumption in quantitative research paradigm is that the researcher can objectively view the world with the certainty of unveiling the links between different variables and coming up with generalisations that are consistent or universal throughout the universe (Borg and Gall, 1989). It is this existence of natural laws, for example, that accounts for the existence of concepts such as the universal law of gravitation. Within the domain of the quantitative research paradigm, such relationships make up the natural laws in the universe, hence the formulation of hypotheses which link variables. Such hypotheses or proposed relationship would then be tested using trends emanating from the collected data. If the hypotheses are consistent with the emerging trends, it then follows that the proposed relationships between the variables are valid.

#### **4.2.11.1 The Philosophical Underpinning of Quantitative Research**

The philosophy that governs the quantitative research paradigm is positivism. The underlying assumption is that aims, concepts and methods of the natural sciences are applicable to the social sciences. It assumes that a single reality can be broken apart into pieces capable of being studied independently. Positivism is driven by an assumed existence of fixed natural laws which researchers can discover and generalise from. It posits that researchers can take a distant, objective stance towards objects of research. What is most critical in this philosophy is the notion that things can be seen or proved instead of being socially constructed, as such, research evidence, as perceived from this philosophical standpoint, must be strictly based on observable and measurable variables (Creswell, Klassen, Clark and Smith, 2011). There is an assumption that inquiry can be value-free and the methodology used is expected to ensure this.

#### **4.2.2 The Qualitative Research Paradigm**

Existing alongside the quantitative research was the qualitative research paradigm. According to Borg and Gall (1996), qualitative research is grounded in the assumption that features of the social interpretations by different individuals vary, and these interpretations tend to be transitory and situational. The assumption is that these features are dependent on changes in time and the setting in which the research is carried out. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) describe the qualitative research paradigm as multi-method in focus. Qualitative research is believed to involve an interpretive and naturalistic approach to sources of research data (participants or subjects). Within the framework of qualitative research, the researchers study individuals, phenomena or events, in their natural settings. The objective of qualitative research is to interpret phenomena as they naturally occur. In qualitative research, the meanings from the observed and analysed data are dependent on different interpretations in a particular context. The explanation to this multi-dimensional nature of interpretation resides in the fact that unlike in the case of natural sciences, in social sciences the human factor affects the universality of generalisations, resulting in differentiations in research findings. Under the ambit of this paradigm, data can come in the form of words, images, gestures,

impressions, or tones which represent real events or reality as it is seen symbolically or sociologically.

#### **4.2.2.1 The Philosophical Underpinning of Qualitative Research**

The qualitative research paradigm is informed by the interpretivist/subjective perspective (sometimes described as post positivist or constructivist). From this perspective, the research must apply the inductive logic and observe phenomena within their context. The perspective contends that all knowledge, and:

all meaningful reality is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context...meaning is not discovered but constructed (Crotty, 1998: 42).

What is outstanding here is that adherences of this paradigm believe that reality is a mental framework or mental construct. From their point of view:

Realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature (although elements are often shared among many individuals and even across cultures), and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:110).

The proponents argue that objectivity is not possible and that the results of any inquiry are always shaped by the interaction between the researcher and the subjects of the research. This interpretive paradigm looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social phenomenon. It focuses on the perspective of a given group of people on reconstructing their own reality. It asserts that realities are multi-faceted and holistic (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). From this point of view, only time-and-context-bound observations of phenomena or events are possible. In addition, it contends that all entities are in a state of simultaneous shaping, such that it is impossible to relate causes to effects.

What emerges out of the above discussion on the two commonly known research paradigms is a divide that has a predisposition of creating obstacles to attempts at integrating both paradigms in a single study to assist researchers achieve a comprehensive and cohesive understanding of social phenomena. According to Brynman (2007), it was against the existence of such a dichotomy of quantitative and qualitative research that the paradigms war emerged paving way for the rise of a ‘third’ research paradigm, that is, mixed research methodology.

#### **4.2.3. The History behind the Emergence of Mixed Methodology**

According to De Lisle (2011) paradigmatic considerations have tended to dominate the debate over research methodology. Until the 1970s, positivism dominated the field of research to the point that quantitative research was regarded as the standard approach to carrying out research (Howe 1988; Denscombe, 2008). The 1980s, however, witnessed the emergence of the constructivist-interpretive worldview and witnessed its overwhelming acceptance in various disciplines (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005; Ridenour and Newman, 2008, De Lisle, 2011). Subsequently, a conflict between the two paradigms, the paradigms war, ensued and amid this were “paradigm purists who vociferously argued for the superiority of one method over another and the incompatibility of the different approaches” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This “war” gave an impression that qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, including their associated methods, cannot and should not be mixed (Howe, 1988; De Lisle, 2011). Fueling this paradigm war were doctrines, such as the “incompatibility thesis, the myth of good science and the irrationality of strong realism and the tradition of dualism which pitted one approach against another” (De Lisle, 2011 :88).

It was amid this debate on the irreconcilability of the two traditional paradigms that a new paradigm, propagated by a new generation of philosophers emerged, the mixed methodology paradigm (Denscombe, 2008). This new paradigm upheld the idea of the possible harmonious existence of the traditional and seemingly rival paradigms in a single research endeavour. The proponents of the mixed research approaches posited that:

... if social phenomena are complex and knowing is subject to multiple realities, how could one philosophical paradigm be considered best or even superior? Indeed, how could any one method fully capture such complexity? (De Lisle, 2011:88).

The proponents of this new paradigm who sought to bring harmony in the previously highly contested paradigms terrain concluded by proposing that:

...it seems reasonable to conclude that some issues are best captured by adopting multiple mental models and employing different methodological approaches (De Lisle, 2011:90).

They attempted to make their methodological stance more plausible by suggesting that in practice the distinction between different approaches is a very thin line, it is only in theory that this peculiarity is magnified (De Lisle, 2011). It was against this background that the third methodology in research, a paradigm that has been referred to as 'mixing methodologies in research' which presented ground breaking insights into the multiple realities of social life experiences, emerged.

According to Lopez-Fernandez and Molina-Azorin, (2011), the idea behind the adoption of mixed methodology as a paradigm is that the results obtained through the different methods combined can enrich and improve human understanding of the phenomena under study and foster fresh ideas about them, while at the same time generating answers to questions that may be difficult to answer using a single method (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003, Lopez-Fernandez and Molina-Azorin, 2011). In fact, the proponents of third research paradigm have argued that the goal of mixed methodology is not to replace either the quantitative or qualitative approaches, but rather to "draw from the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15). To use Johnson and Onwuegbuzie's words "mixed methods research sits in a new third chair, with qualitative research sitting on the left side and quantitative research sitting on the right side" (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15). In this in-between position, the new paradigm attempts to help bridge the schism between quantitative and qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004).

Proponents of mixed methodology contend that epistemological and methodological pluralism should be promoted in all research endeavours to allow the researchers an

opportunity to be clearly informed about epistemological and methodological possibilities and, above all improve their efficiency in their research undertakings. They contend that adopting the multiple designs affords the researcher the best chances of effectively addressing and articulating the requirements of the research question (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:15).

#### **4.2.4 Mixed Methodology Approach**

This study utilised the mixed methodology paradigm. This implies that it combined elements of the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms for purposes of obtaining knowledge, about the impact of two selected newspapers on the democratic dispensation of the local people who consume them. The idea was to get the impact of these indigenous languages news platforms from a broader perspective than when a single approach was employed (Tashakkori and Teddie 2003). It involved the utilisation of multiple approaches in the process of grappling with the emancipatory capacity of these indigenous languages newspapers. The idea behind the choice of the mixed research methodology was to exploit elements of both the qualitative and the quantitative research paradigms so that results converge for purposes of mutually complementing and supporting a conclusion. According to de Lisle (2011), this methodological stance is rooted in Jick's (1983) view of qualitative and quantitative methods as complementary rather than rival camps.

The assumption behind the methodological stance is that when combined, quantitative and qualitative approaches provide a better generalised picture of the extent to which the people who read the selected print media in indigenous languages get informed, achieve information gratification and realise a certain degree of self-worth and importance on both the national and global public sphere. In this study, it is believed that the structural features of the newspapers under study was addressed using quantitative research methods while processual aspects were handled using the qualitative research approaches (Cresswell, 2009:31).

Furthermore, the choice of the paradigm was also based on the assumption that the use of multiple perspectives or viewpoints in a research effort has a high propensity for enhancing accuracy. It was the contention of the study that this eclectic approach would increase credibility and validity of results through convergence of different perspectives as encapsulated in the two divergent worldviews. This choice was also informed by arguments by scholars such as De Lisle (2011) who has highlighted that research on social issues is replete with complex and multiplex social phenomena that cannot be simply untangled through single frame explorations. Touring the same argument is Rodgers (2008) who proposes that complex social issues tend to be unforgiving to rigid probes by uncompromising researchers who unwaveringly insist on sticking to their epistemological stance while ignoring the realities of the practical situations on the ground. The “messiness of complexity demands multiple investigative tools” (Greene 2006:89). As such, according to De Lisle (2011), mixed methodology becomes the most appropriate paradigm for exploring such complex and multiplex issues in society. In a nutshell, the fusion of the different methodological perspectives was expected to create an environment in which qualitative and quantitative approaches complemented each other in the study creating a “complementary compensation of weaknesses, blind spot of each method” (Creswell, 2009:26).

#### **4.2.4.1 Defining Mixed Methodology Paradigm**

The mixed methodology research paradigm has been defined as:

...the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combine elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (for example, use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner, 2007:123).

Johnson et al. have distinguished three categories of mixed methods: (1) qualitative-dominant; (2) pure mixed; and (3) quantitative-dominant. For purposes of this research, the qualitative-dominant mixed method was employed. Johnson et al. (2007:1240) define qualitative-dominant mixed research design as:

...the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-post-structuralism-critical view of the research process, while concurrently recognising that addition of qualitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects.

What this however implies is that the quantitative analysis was not as rigorous as that which is done in a purely quantitative approach (Brynman, 1984), but greatly went a long way into answering the research question.

The rationale behind the choice was that qualitative-led approaches are best for capturing the complexity of social issues (Creswell, Shope, Clark, and Green, 2006). Furthermore, it was observed that combining different data sets in mixed methods strategies enhanced transferability, generalisability and practical significance of the research findings and conclusions (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2004).

#### **4.2.4.2 The Philosophical Underpinning of Mixed Methodology**

The philosophy that guides the processes of mixed methodology research is pragmatism. Pragmatism provides the foundation for rejecting the incompatibility thesis that forms the bedrock upon which quantitative and qualitative designs as well as the ideological “wars” associated with them rest. It provides the scaffolding upon which practical, multi-perspective, and flexible research philosophy is built (Brynman, 2007; Denscombe, 2008; De Lisle, 2011). In a way pragmatism seeks to “challenge what are regarded as sterile and unproductive dualisms...favouring a search for common ground between the “old” philosophies of research” (Denscombe, 2008:273). This philosophy thus provides grounds for the fusion of the two.

Another interesting principle of pragmatism is the view that an approach in research will be appropriate as long as it opens opportunities for better ways of democratic, purposeful living (Gray, 2013). As a philosophy that informs research processes, pragmatism provides an epistemological justification for mixing approaches and methods (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). Pragmatism presents the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data in a single study not only

as legitimate, but in some cases necessary (Gray, 2013:29). The philosophy provides a basis for using mixed methods approaches as a third alternative, another option available to social researchers in situations where they perceive that neither quantitative nor qualitative research alone will provide adequate findings for the particular piece of research they have in mind (Johnson et al., 2007; Tashakkori and Creswell, 2007; Denscombe 2008). The bottom line in the pragmatism is that research approaches should be mixed in ways that offer the best opportunities for answering important research questions because:

... not only is it allowable to mix methods from different paradigms of research but it is also desirable to do so because good social research will almost inevitably require the use of both quantitative and qualitative research to provide an adequate answer (Denscombe,2008:274).

The other aspect of pragmatism that is of paramount significance to this research is the transformative – emancipatory paradigm, that is enshrined in pragmatism, which argues that knowledge is not neutral, but reflects the power and social relationships within the societies we construct (Mertens, 2003). This model acknowledges that many constructs are just social creations and some constructs are even privileged than others (De Lisle, 2011:91). This transformative- emancipatory worldview that is embedded within pragmatism also focuses on the lives of the marginalised groups and the analysis of asymmetric power relationships. It is this aspect of the power relations with regards the dominant and marginalised groups of people that was of interest. The study assumed the speakers of the local languages in Zimbabwe are in some kind of marginalised position and therefore contended that the use of the indigenous languages in the selected *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* newspapers would automatically reflect the power dynamics that are characteristic of the media fraternity and the society at large. Like the constructivist-interpretive paradigm, the transformative-emancipatory worldview acknowledges multiple realities, thus, placing emphasis upon seeing phenomenon through the eyes of the respondents (Neuman, 2007).

#### 4.2.4.3 The Mixing Strategy

In this study, quantitative approaches in the mixed methodology were used for “measuring generality of the “known” phenomena and central patterns of association, including inferences of causality” (Creswell, Klassen, Clark, Smith, 2011). The qualitative methods on the other hand were expected to assist in the “identification of previously unknown processes, explanations of why and how phenomena occur, and the range of their effects” (Pasick, 2009 cited in Creswell, Klassen, Clark, Smith, 2011). In this study, the mixing of the previously incompatible paradigms then became more than simply collecting multiple forms of qualitative data through interviews and content analysis or multiple types of quantitative evidence through the questionnaire survey. This eclectic data collection process that was adopted in this study deliberately gathered both quantitative and qualitative data and work toward combining the strengths of each of the data collection instruments in analysing the efficacy of the selected newspapers in empowering the local publics.

For purposes of mixing the methods and data collection tools, sequential mixing was used. Data were collected in four phases. The first phase placed great emphasis on qualitative data. The qualitative data obtained from interviewing the personnel working for the selected papers in indigenous languages, *Kwayedza* and *Umthunyawas* used for the formulation of the survey instrument, the questionnaire. The interview with the newspaper publishing teams I concentrated on eliciting information on what they believe to be their role in the media fraternity, their niche on the media terrain, their successes and challenges in disseminating information dating from the time of the newspaper’s inception to date. Responses from the interviews with the publishing team determined the nature of themes, and issues to be addressed in the survey instrument. The third phase comprised the content analysis aspect which integrated the qualitative and quantitative components of the research findings. The final phase comprised the merging of the data from the initial three phases, the complementary use of both qualitative and qualitative data to answer the research question.

As has already been alluded, the study adopted a qualitative-dominated mixed methodology approach, implying that qualitative approach took precedence over the quantitative approach. According to Mason, (2006:10):

A qualitative driven approach to mixing methods offers enormous potential for generating new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of social experience, and enhancing the capacity for social explanation and generalisations.

Qualitative driven mixed methods were best placed to capture the complexity of economic, social and political factors of media production and consumption (Creswell, Shope, Clark and Green, 2006).

### **4.3 The Research Methods**

Research methods are modes of data collection. They are a range of approaches used to gather research data, analyse and interpret it so that inferences based on the data are made (Cohen and Manion 1994:38). In interrogating the potential of the use of indigenous languages in empowering the people, promoting democracy, and active participation through media, the research used the survey as one of its research methods.

#### **4.3.1 The Survey Research Method**

This study made use of the survey method as one of its multiple strategies of data collection for purposes of addressing the research problem. This use of multi strategies was directly informed by the mixed research methodology paradigm which provided the guiding principles for carrying out the study

##### **4.3.1.1 Defining the Survey Research Method**

According to Neuman (2007:167), survey research developed within the positivist approach to research. Mathiyazhagan and Nandan (2010), propose that the term survey is derived from the French word “*surveer*” which means to look over. From this definition, the duo contend

that survey implies “to examine the condition or value-appraise; to query in order to collect data for analysis of some aspects of a group or area; to view or consider comprehensively; (Mathiyazhagan and Nandan, 2010:34). Survey research, therefore, involves the analysis, interpretation, comparisons as well as identification of trends and relationships. The survey method was chosen for carrying out this study because of its attributes of being appropriate for describing opinions, attitudes, and feelings, perceptions of a well-defined group or population.

#### **4.3.1.2 The Data Collection Strategies for the Survey**

This section explores the data collection instruments and data analysis techniques that were employed in pursuing this study. The study made use of a different set of data collection instruments for the survey and yet another set for the content analysis exercise. Surveys generally employ a diversity of data collection tools which include interviews, questionnaires, observation, panel surveys among many other data collection techniques (Mathiyazhagan and Nandan, 2010; Neuman, 2007). For this particular study on the two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa*, the researcher employed questionnaires and the interviews for collecting data. For the content analysis research method, the research made use of structural analysis, thematic analysis, visual analysis and semiotics.

#### **4.3.1.3 Defining the Questionnaire**

A questionnaire is a list of written questions that are completed by respondents in a research exercise (Leedy, 1997; Mathiyazhagan and Nandan, 2010). The questionnaire is believed to be the most common strategy for collecting data that in most instances is beyond the physical reach of the researchers (Leedy, 1997; Somekh and Lewin, 2005). This study opted for the use of questionnaire as a data collection instrument because questionnaires are impersonal, they do not involve any face-to-face interaction. This characteristic feature of interviews ensured the achievement of anonymity (Holt, 1997). Furthermore, it is believed that this instrument allowed the informants ample time to attend to the questions, giving them room to consult documents where possible.

Generally, questionnaires are either open-ended or closed-ended, depending on the nature of data that the researcher intends to collect. Open-ended questionnaires are used for eliciting qualitative data while closed-ended questionnaires are used for collecting quantitative data (Flick, 2009). The questionnaire that was used for this study consisted of both open-ended and closed-ended questions.

#### **4.3.1.4 Close-Ended and Open-Ended Questions**

Closed-ended questionnaires consist of questions that are designed with unambiguous responses provided. In such questions, the research avails the desired responses to the informants for them to choose the possible best responses which suit their answer. Such questionnaires are easy to statistically analyse. Because responses were provided, ambiguity was highly reduced and the chance of respondents answering the actual question that demands their response was also enhanced.

The use of closed-ended questions, however, had its own limitations. The questions have a tendency to obscure what the informants might be thinking. Closed-ended questionnaires thus demand that the answers provide a range of answers that possibly approximate the answers of all possible respondents. Closed-ended questions also need to be exclusive and exhaustive so that respondents get the exact answer that matches their choices. Open-ended questionnaires on the other hand consist of questions that do not restrict respondents in their question answering. Such questionnaires are made up of questions that do not provide respondents with a set of answers to choose from (Flick, 2009). Such questionnaires are employed when researchers have little knowledge about the subject of the research.

This study did not exclusively employ a closed-ended-questionnaire or an entirely open-ended questionnaire; it made use of a single questionnaire that fuses characteristics of both closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. The closed-ended questions were used for

sourcing personal information on issues such as gender and age. The open-ended questions, on the other hand, was used to source information on what people in general think about the newspapers in indigenous languages as news platforms. Through the use of the open-ended questions the respondents were expected to get the adequate latitude to open up their minds, and respond to the questions from an unrestricted position. Because they were answering the questions using their own words, the respondents had high chances of effectively expressing their attitudes, feelings and even expectations with ease. In short, the amount of freedom that the open-ended questionnaire gave to the respondents was very essential for the eliciting of a holistic picture of the people's experiences. It is this holistic picture of the people's lives within the global information set-up that this study sought to uncover and understand.

The questionnaire was expected to enable the researcher to get views from as many respondents as possible from Harare, Bulawayo and other areas where *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* or either of the two publications are in circulation. The use of the questionnaire was also an advantage to the respondents in so far as they could be asked to bring the responses later after they had found time to address the issues. Some of these questionnaires were distributed through e-mails while others were physical delivered to the respondents.

Furthermore, the questionnaire ensured anonymity. This anonymity was believed to assist some of the respondents to truthfully express themselves regarding their opinions, feelings hopes and fears about newspapers in indigenous languages as empowering agents and promoters of socio-economic and political democracy. The knowledge that they would never be identified was likely to motivate the respondents to give information that truthfully reflected upon their normal interaction with these indigenous languages media platforms as well as their perceived role in bridging the information gap that has been associated with the publication of media using former colonial languages, English in this case.

#### **4.3.1.5 Weaknesses of the Questionnaire as a Data Collection Instrument**

In spite of all these advantages, the questionnaire is believed to have its own set of challenges that might militated against the success of the research endeavour. While many people could respond to the questionnaires, the amount of responses did not match the much-needed detail and depth on the complex issues pertaining to the respondents' interaction with newspapers in indigenous languages media. Some answers lacked the detail that the research was anticipating.

Furthermore, the instrument left the researcher with no control over the real respondents of the questions. There were chances that some other people other than the targeted respondents were tasked to answer the questionnaire (Holt, 1997). Above all, the researcher was left with no opportunity to probe beyond the given answer, to clarify ambiguous answers, and to take advantage of the respondent's non-verbal communication. The other disadvantage of the questionnaire as a data collection instrument was that it had the lowest response rates in comparison to all other instruments.

Notwithstanding all these weaknesses of the questionnaire, a questionnaire was designed to elicit information on: how the people read newspapers in indigenous languages; their motives for visiting these news sources; the frequency with which they pay these visits to the media platforms; how much the newspapers in indigenous languages have enlightened them on political issues in Zimbabwe; how much the newspapers in indigenous languages have allowed them to have their voices, their views and concerns heard; and finally the relevance of the newspapers in indigenous languages to their political, economic and social lives amid this fast changing global world and information systems. The question of accessibility and reliability of the news sources was also sought. The instrument attempted to find out if the newspapers in indigenous languages have really provided the people with alternative platforms where they can participate politically and economically without fear. The disadvantages of the questionnaire form were reduced by mixing open-ended and closed-ended questions in the questionnaire. Mixing offers an opportunity for the researcher to cover up for the weaknesses of one instrument using other data collection techniques.

#### **4.3.1.6 Target Population and Sampling for the Survey Questionnaire**

The survey questionnaire targeted academics who are experts in languages, indigenous languages in this case, as well as media experts for their critical expertise. The choice of experts from different disciplines was informed by the nature of this study. The study cuts across two disciplines, that is, the languages discipline and the field of media studies. As such, the characteristics of the search dictated that, information be sought from experts, in both the languages fraternity, as well as, the media fraternity. This interdisciplinary approach was also informed by the research paradigm that was chosen for this study, the mixed methodology approach which also stipulates that research in the present age has become more interdisciplinary, complex, and dynamic; therefore, calling for an urgent need to use research methods in a complementary manner such that at the end of the day researchers are left with no option but to use multiple methods to enhance communication, promote collaboration, and to produce convincing, valid and reliable research results (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004: 15).

It was believed that this chosen targeted population would provide the valuable information on the language issues in general as well as the language issue in print media production as evidenced on the media terrain in Zimbabwe. As readers or consumers of the two newspapers the respondents were also consulted, for their input with regards their perception of the two papers and possibly their rating of them as critical sources of information.

A sample comprising the print media practitioners and experts in the field of language and the media disciplines was drawn using probability sampling. Under this probability sampling strategy, the purposive sampling technique was employed. In coming up with a purposive sample, the researcher selected the most useful sample to answer the research question, in this case print media practitioners, language specialists and media experts.

#### **4.3.1.7 Data Collection for Survey Questionnaire**

The questionnaires were administered with the help of research assistants who were operating in different regions of the nation where the two newspapers are or either of them is in circulation. However, before administering it, with the aim of improving the validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a small sample that was selected based on the proximity to the researcher. It was assumed that the pilot study provided assurance that the instrument communicated the intended message to respondents. Furthermore, this pilot study was expected to help in the improvement of questioning skills on the part of the researcher.

The questionnaire schedule was complemented by instructions on how to fill in the questionnaires. In addition, the questionnaire schedule was accompanied by a cover letter stating the area as well as the objectives of the study. It is, however, unfortunate that the use of this data collection tool did not accord the researcher an opportunity to observe the respondent's reaction to questions on the questionnaire.

#### **4.3.1.8 Data Analysis for the Survey Questionnaire**

On receiving the responses, the researcher went through them for editing purposes. Quantifiable data from the survey questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics which include description of central variables by statistical measures. The collected statistical data was presented in percentages, tables, charts and graphs, while the descriptive data was analysed qualitatively. This study assumed that the survey method would bring out a picture of what many people think about the news coverage and the impact that the selected print media platforms have on the Zimbabwean local communities vis-à-vis their relationship to their environment and the global community.

### **4.3.2 Interviews as a Data Collection Instrument for the Survey**

To complement the questionnaire as well as to cover up for the weaknesses of this data collection tool, the research used the interview data collecting technique. The interview method was used for sourcing information from language experts as well as media practitioners who are perceived to constitute a rich data reservoir with regards to issues of the place of language as well as the role of media in society.

#### **4.3.2.1 Defining the interview**

Frey and Oishi (1995) as cited in Garrick, (2000) state that an interview is a purposeful conversation that is aimed at eliciting information on a particular topic to be researched. Williams (2009), sees an interview as a conversation whose aim is to collect respondents' views, feelings, interpretations and meanings in their societal dynamics. In concurrence with the above highlighted scholars is Myers (2009), who observes that an interview is an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. Myers (2009) further asserts that interviews are used to collect primary data for almost all types of qualitative research and they are generally categorised into structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews. For Nyame-Asiamah and Patel, (2009), interviews are appropriate for studying language issues vis-à-vis social empowerment in light of principles behind complexity and social empowerment philosophies. With such a definition of interviews as data collection instruments, interviewing respondents become an eligible candidate as a tool for collecting information that was expected to go into answering the research problem of this particular study.

#### **4.3.2.2 Data Collection Using Interviews**

Interviews were carried out, among the people who live in Harare, Bulawayo and other regional areas in which *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa*, or either of the two newspapers are circulated to find out the extent to which the use of indigenous languages in the selected newspapers has created an ideal platform for empowering people and championing democratic participation in Zimbabwe.

Attention in the interview questions was placed on how the newspapers in indigenous languages as media platforms have helped people to access information about: what is happening globally; the economic status of Zimbabwe; relationship between Zimbabwe and the international world; political manifestos for all the Zimbabwean political parties (during periods of elections); the use and distribution of the national economic resources, constitutional rights and many other issues that help the populace to be part and parcel of the processes of deciding and determining their destinies (that is, participating in the political and economic debates of the day). Interviews were recorded using a digital audio recorder and later on transcribed into the written form.

#### **4.3.2.3 Advantages of Using Interviews in Carrying out a Survey**

The major advantage that was likely to be experienced in using the interview as a data collection instrument in this study was that of response rate. Virtually every respondent had an input in the findings, since generally all of the consulted respondents positively accommodate rather than turned down the researcher. Interviews permitted the longest question schedules (Neuman, 2007). The researcher had an opportunity to ask all types of questions, from simple to complex. Furthermore, nonverbal communication and the setting greatly helped augment the quality of the findings (Flick, 2009).

In the process of conducting these interviews, there were opportunities for controlling misinterpretation of questions by respondents as well as probing for further clarification or even restructuring the question in cases where responses were vague or ambiguous (Flick, 2009). Besides the fact that interviews enhanced chances of arriving at detailed responses to the questions, they also assisted the researcher to get to more delicate and personal issues pertaining the dissemination as well as consumption of media products that are published using local languages in Zimbabwe. Of most importance is the fact that interviews accorded the researcher opportunities to allow the research to qualify, verify as well as complement

information as it was elicited directly from the horses' mouth with what would have been gleaned from the setting around the respondents as well as their non-verbal clues.

The interview had its own shortcomings. It was observed that some respondents tended to exaggerate their access and visits to the newspapers in indigenous languages as news sources in an attempt to excite the researcher by giving the impression that they have pride in their mother tongues. Such a scenario had implications on the validity of the information that was collected and ultimately on the applicability of discovered general trends to the whole spectrum of society.

#### **4.3.2.4 Disadvantages of using the interview as a data collection instrument**

Interviews were time consuming; this constraint almost created a situation where the researcher almost failed to complete data gathering (Myers, 2009). Respondents at times lacked trust in the interviewer and as a result they were unprepared to divulge sensitive information with regards to the popularity of the two newspapers, the number of copies sold per week and even the nature of the story coverage. Interviews also resulted in elite bias, where the researcher was forced to focus on high profile informants and making it difficult to get access to a wide and varied range of interviewees (Myers, 2009; and Neuman, 2007).

#### **4.3.3 Content Analysis**

To complement the survey method, the research also used content analysis as a research method. According to Macnamara (2005:1), media content analysis was introduced as a systemic method of studying mass media by Harold Lasswell in 1927, primarily in the study of propaganda. It became very popular during the 1920s and 1930s when it was used for investigating the content of the rapidly expanding field of communication movies. The arrival of Television further exacerbated the use of content analysis in the 1950s (Macnamara, 2005). This accounts for the popularity of content analysis in the study of a wide range of

texts from transcripts of interviews, narratives, films, television programmes, editorial and advertising content of newspapers as well as magazines (Macnamara, 2005:1)

#### **4.3.3.1 Defining Content analysis**

Neuman (1997) defines content analysis as a technique of gathering and examining information, or content, in written or symbolic materials. Neuman proposes that:

The ‘content’ refers to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas, themes, or any message that can be communicated. The ‘text’ is anything written, visual, or spoken that serves as a medium for communication (Neuman, 1997:272-273).

Neuendorf (2002) on the other hand, suggests that content analysis may be briefly defined as the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics. It includes the careful examination of human interactions; the analysis of character portrayals in television commercials, films, and novels; and the computer-driven investigation of word usage in news releases and political speeches (Neuendorf, 2002:1). Content analysis is applicable to many areas of inquiry which includes the analysis of naturally occurring language. For Macnamara (2005:6), media content analysis is a non-intrusive research method that allows examination of a wide range of data over an extensive period to identify popular discourses and their likely meanings.

What emerges from the literature on content analysis as a research method is that it relies heavily on the researcher’s reading and interpretation of media text. The researcher examines the relationship between the text and its likely audience, meanings, (recognising that media are polysemic, that is, open to multiple meanings to different readers) and tries to determine the likely meaning of texts to audiences. It pays attention to audience, media and textual factors – not simply the text.

In this study, the researcher identified a body of materials for analysis (as expected in carrying out content analysis), that is, newspapers in indigenous languages in Zimbabwe for purposes of analysing the nature of the content that they disseminate to the public. The study

then created a system for recording specific aspects of it. The process included finding out how often certain words or themes occurred. Finally, the researcher recorded what was found in the story coverage. The technique assisted the researcher to discover features in the content of selected newspapers that might otherwise go unnoticed (Kuthiala, 2010). Content analysis as a research method is generally used for examining sources of information which include books, newspapers and magazine articles, advertisements, speeches, official documents, film, videotapes, music lyrics, photographs, articles of clothing and works of art. In carrying out this study the term content was used to refer to words, meanings, pictures, symbols, ideas themes or any message that can be communicated, the text is anything written or visual that serves as a medium of communication (Neuman, 2007:227).

This method was critical in this particular research because the research itself is all about media messages, the manner in which they are disseminated, shared, received, perceived, and acted upon. Since content is the pivot of any media communication, investigating the nature of the content disseminated in the newspapers that are published in indigenous languages was the main task of this research. Content analysis assisted in assessing the nature of discourses, understanding and evaluating the media information as it was presented through Zimbabwean newspapers published in local languages. It helped the researcher to interrogate the information that was fed to Zimbabwean masses and analysed it in terms of its content, meaning and possible effects in the context of democratic participation in the public deliberations of their political, economic and social realities.

The other merit of content analysis as a research method that made it a possible candidate for this particular study was the fact that it revealed messages in a text that are difficult to see through the use of casual observation (Kuthiala, 2010). The creator of a text or “those who read it may not be aware of all its themes, biases or characteristics” (Neuman, 2007:228) and content analysis became handy in divulging the hidden dimensions of the media messages. For purposes of this research content analysis emphasised the amount of coverage and the prominence of the coverage, thus examining the newspaper directly using content analysis. Each sampled issue of the newspaper was a unit of analysis.

#### **4.3.3.2 Data Collection for Content Analysis**

Data for the content analysis exercise were collected from a universe of print media product in the media fraternity in Zimbabwe. This universe consisted of all the newspapers, magazines and other forms of print media in Zimbabwe. From this universe, a population from which the study was to be carried out was identified. According to Salaria, (2012) a population consists of all members of a well-defined class of people, events, or objects. Best and Kahn (2007) defines a population as any group of individuals who have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher. They further argue that population may comprise all the individuals of a particular type or a restricted part of that group. For this study, the population consisted of all the *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* issues published during the period January 2014 and December 2015. This implies that approximately 208 issues of the two newspapers made up the population of the content analysis exercise.

#### **4.3.3.3 The Sample for the Content Analysis Method**

The content analysis reduced the population of analysis to a small manageable group – a sample for feasibility purposes. A sample is a group that is selected from a population with the ultimate goal of collecting information that is representative of the population of study (Neuman, 2007). It constitutes a cross-section of the entire population of the study. According to Salaria (2012), a good sample not only need to be representative, it needs to be adequate or of sufficient size to allow confidence in the characteristics of the population.

#### **4.3.3.4 Sampling the Published *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* Issues**

Sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe as representative of that population or universe (Kerlinger, 1973; Salaria, 20012; Neuman, 2007). This process of drawing up a sample was done through simple random sampling. The study selected 20% of the publications for the period January 2014 to December 2015 for the two respective

newspapers which publish in indigenous languages in Zimbabwe, *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa*. Since both newspapers are weekly publications, the sample therefore was drawn from a total population of 208 issues for both newspapers. Through simple random sampling 20% of the 2008 issues were selected for analysis. Because the aim of the research was to gain insights into the *Kwayedza* and *Umthunywa* publications, the study purposefully selected individual issues. This phase of the data collection process comprised the content analysis exercise, where the study concentrated on analysing the coverage of stories by the selected newspapers in indigenous language in an attempt to see the nature of the news reportage. This study employed random sampling for content analysis.

#### **4.3.3.5 Data Analysis for the Content Analysis Method**

In analysing the stories covered in the two selected newspapers, content was codified according to their frequency, direction, intensity and space (Neuman, 2007). With regards the question of frequency, the study concentrated on counting the number of occurrences of phenomenon. Attention was placed on how often and, where possible, the percentage that the total occurrences constitute. When it comes to direction, the study scrutinised the stories for their tone in presenting phenomenon, whether positive or negative. For intensity, the study looked at the strength of the presented message in a direction (be it negative or positive), that is the degree to which the act or message is acceptable. To determine this intensity, the study scrutinised the diction that was employed for representing the media message in the newspapers. Finally, when it comes to space, the research study recorded the size of the text or the amount of space or volume allocated to stories, themes or issues in the newspaper issues. Space in written text was counted in words, sentences, paragraphs, or space of a page.

For purposes of coding in the content analysis exercise, the study triangulated; it exploited manifest and latent (semantic analysis) coding. Manifest coding refers to the highlighting of the visible surface content. It entails counting the number of times a word or phrase appears in written text or the number of times a specific action appears in a video clip or film (Neuman, 2007:229). Semantic coding on the other hand investigates underlying, implicit meaning in the content of text. The rationale behind using both manifest and latent coding

was the fact that while latent coding depends on the researcher's knowledge of the language and social meaning, the validity of latent coding far exceeded that of manifest coding because people communicated meaning in many implicit ways that depended on the context, not just in specific words (Neuman, 2007). It was believed that the triangulation of the coding systems strengthened the results of the content analysis exercise.

#### **4.4 Ethical Considerations of the Study**

According to Mpofu (2014), the need to follow the stipulated ethics in researches which deal with human beings is no longer an option but an obligation which researchers are expected to unwaveringly adhere to. This implies that researchers have responsibilities, that is, to the informant who provides the data on which the research endeavour will be hinged, to their specific professional field and the society at large (Mpofu, 2014).

##### **4.4.1 Principles of Research ethics**

There are six major principles of research that are espoused in the Framework for Research Ethics (FRE2010). One of the principles stipulates that research has to be undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency. They further propose that the research staff and participants must be informed about the purpose, methods and even the intended use of research findings. These participants also have to be conscious of what their participation in the research entails; the risks if any that are associated with being involved. To add on to that, the principles also dictate that the confidentiality of the given information and anonymity of the participants has to be observed. Above all, they prescribe that participation on the part of respondents has to be voluntary and free from any coercion. The principles spell out that harm to participants must be avoided at all costs and that the independence of the research must be clear and any conflict of interest or partiality must be explicit (FRE, 2010).

Borrowing a leaf from these principles in social science research, the study ensured that no one who participated in the study was exposed to any form of harm. It tried to avoid any violation of human rights in the name of empirical research (Neuman 2007:50). Since the research team was investigating around issues of people's responses in real-life scenarios, it avoided high-anxiety-producing situations, so as to circumvent placing people in situations of psychological discomfort or stress (Neuman, 2007:51).

To further complement this avoidance of harm on the part of the respondents, the researcher got the consent of the participants. Before commencing any data collection exercise, the researcher first and foremost asked for permission from the Zimbabwe Newspapers Holdings Limited to carry out research on the two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. A written application for the permission was submitted to the company and permission granted.

However, it has to be made clear that the granting of the permission on the part of Zimbabwe Newspapers holdings was not enough, the participants had to be informed of what they were getting involved in so that they took an informed stance (Grays 2013). The researcher and the team of research assistants ensured that all participants were well informed about the research problem and its objectives such that their involvement in the study was more based on voluntary basis than anything else. This process of seeking consent was an ongoing process since according to Butler, (2010) as cited in Mpfu (2014) informed consent are ongoing and negotiated processes that continued throughout this study.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter explored the research methodology that was exploited in pursuing this study. It defined the term “research methodology” and discusses the different research paradigms that are normally used in carrying out research studies. The chapter further revealed that the study was informed by the mixed research methodology approach, which implies that it made use of philosophical aspects from both the quantitative and qualitative worldview in its attempt to effectively and meaningfully address the research problem. The research methods that were

used in carrying out the research have also been discussed. This discussion of the selected research methods has among other things highlighted both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the respective methods. Furthermore, the chapter spelt out the population of the study, the sampling process and further engages in a discussion of the data collection instruments that were utilised, paying particular attention to their relevance to the resolution of the problem under study. The chapter as well discussed the data analysis and interpretation procedures that were adopted for the research. It revealed that data collected through the identified research methods was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively in line with the dictates of mixed research methodology of acknowledging and respecting the compatibility of the “traditional” research paradigms. Finally, ethical considerations that were considered in carrying out the study have also been highlighted.

## **Chapter Five: Research Findings, Analysis and Discussion**

### **5.0 Introduction**

Chapter four delved on the research methodology that was employed in the research. It highlighted the research approach that was adopted, the mixed research approach. It also spelt out the target population, the sampling strategies, the data collection instruments as well as the presentation and analysis techniques that were employed. Having laid down the research methodology in the preceding chapter, the current chapter presents and analyses the data that were collected using the content analysis, questionnaire and interview instrument. Data were presented using both quantitative and qualitative techniques of presenting research information. The presentation and analysis of the collected data were determined by the number of data collection instruments that were employed in the research endeavour (the interviews, questionnaire survey and the content analysis exercise). Against this background, it follows, therefore that the initial stages of the chapter explored the data that was obtained from interviews. The second stage of the chapter handled information that was obtained from the distributed questionnaire schedule. This stage was characterised by a mixture of both quantitative and qualitative representation of data obtained from the field. The third and final segment of the chapter concentrated on data collected using content analysis as a data collection instrument. Again, in this section the presentation of collected data assumed both the qualitative and the quantitative character.

#### **5.1 The History of the Press in Zimbabwe**

The history of the newspaper as medium of disseminating information dates back to the colonial era. It was marked by the establishment of the *Rhodesian Herald* in 1892 which was largely funded by the colonialist, Cecil John Rhodes, who had political and mineral interests which needed publicity (Shamba, 2015).

During this period, the newspaper represented the ideology and socio-political dispensation of the colonial capitalist system. It represented the racial divide that characterised the era. During this historical epoch, the print media was a major tool of the empire for the maintenance and perpetuation of this divide (Makasa, 2003). According to Makasa (2003), during this era the thrust of journalism was promoting and upholding the colonial settlers' systems of operation while denigrating the African cultural ethos. The established colonial media structures did not place the Zimbabwean people's culture and traditions at the fore front of human, economic, political and social development. Instead, in their agenda these media structures set to destroy the African people's cultural bonds and traditions (Ngugi, 1986). With regards to the question of the language of collecting news and dissemination, for *The Rhodesian Herald* and many other forms of media products that followed, English was the main medium of communication.

At independence, Zimbabwe inherited these colonial media structures. However, to suit the new spirit of independence, changes had to be made. The print media went through a process of metamorphosis and witnessed the emergence of publications that reflected the ethos, ideology, socio-economic and political orientation of the re-born nation (Interview with Participant X1, 1 April 2016). There was an attempt to transform the media discourses that had perpetuated the marginalisation of the masses for the entire duration of colonialism. With this transformation, it was hoped the print media could now be relied upon as a platform that resonated with Zimbabwean practices, thought and belief systems. With this metamorphosis, it was also believed, there would emerge the purging of foreign influenced discourse and discussions on the media terrain as well as the introduction of Zimbabwean grounded media discourses.

In line with restructuring the media terrain to suit and meet the demands of the previously marginalised masses, the government bought the majority of the shares in Zimbabwe Newspapers (Zimpapers), a company that owned all major newspapers in the country (Makasa, 2003). It then established the Zimbabwe Media Trust (ZMT) whose mandate was to promote the interests of the ordinary people on the Zimbabwean media fraternity. It is within

this media climate that the two newspapers in indigenous languages, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, on which this research is hinged, were conceived. They came into being in an environment where there was a growing demand for regular coverage and deliberation on rural issues and events, that is, issues and events that affected and influenced the lives of the ordinary people in the newly independent country. The newspapers, thus made the ordinary Zimbabwean people's lives the centre of the media discourse, one of the prerequisite for a people empowering media landscape.

At inception, the two newspapers provided a paradigm shift from the mainstream newspapers. These mainstream newspapers were deliberately highly urban anchored, entirely using the former colonial master's language and disseminating explicitly foreign oriented content (Narsee, 2013). The new papers presented a paradigm shift that focused on a people-centred press whose content echoed the life experiences, joys, sorrows, challenges and successes of the ordinary people. Above all, these papers presented the news in the very language and vocabulary of the concerned people. The guiding principle for this paradigm shift was that:

...for people who won their independence through sweat and blood it was imperative that they think and act like Africans as a reflection of their hard-won independence from colonial rule (Makasa, 2003:176).

This stance by the two newspapers resonated very well with the principles of empowerment as espoused by Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph (2008) who posit that the accessibility and sharing of information is a major benchmark in the empowerment of a community. The introduction of the two newspapers in indigenous languages made media information accessible and allowed for the sharing of information as and when it was needed. This sharing of information in the language best understood by the people represented a historical landmark in their lives, an entry point to empowerment. For Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph (2008), access to information is the currency of empowerment and responsibility in the new dispensation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The agenda of the two newspapers, thus, was to challenge the ethos and ideology of the colonial media systems. Their aim was to keep the flames of the African culture alive and

creating a cultural memory bank that would give light to the future. In a way, the papers were expected to re-awaken indigenous records and promote African ideas and culture, supporting the resuscitation of the Zimbabwean traditions through the media. Viewed this way, the papers were a way of celebrating Zimbabwean culture.

## **5.2 Presentation and Analysis of Data from Interviews**

Interviews that were earmarked for personnel at Zimbabwe Newspapers (Zimpapers) were divided into two sets, one set was meant for the editorial team while the other was addressed at the newspaper vendors who have been given the task of selling the newspaper products on the various street corners of the nation.

### **5.2.1 Presentation and Analysis of Data from Interviews with *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* Editorial Teams**

The first question on the interview schedule requested participants at Zimbabwe Newspapers (Zimpapers) to **give a brief history of *Kwayedza/Umthunywa***. According to the research findings that were gathered through the interviews, *Kwayedza* is a 24-page tabloid newspaper which was launched during the winter of 1985 in a move that was aimed at providing a weekly newspaper in indigenous languages to the Shona readerships scattered around the nation. The information gleaned from the interviews with the personnel at *Kwayedza* point to the idea that to date, the tabloid is perceived as Zimbabwe's most popular newspaper providing news in one of the 16 recognised official languages – Shona.

The first issue of *Kwayedza-uMthunywa*, they state, hit the market during the winter of 1985. The first editor was Paul Chidyausiku and the sitting editor is the fifth in the line (Interview with Participant X1, 1 April 2016). It emerged that the main reason behind the establishment of the newspapers in indigenous languages was to provide news coverage and dissemination in the people's language. Thus, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* were supposed to be newspapers that identified themselves with the Zimbabwean local communities. The editorial team at

*Kwayedza* at the Zimbabwe Newspapers Head Offices in Harare pointed out that this was a paradigm shift from the colonial era, where generally most newspapers were published in English. This strictly English policy of covering and disseminating information, they stated, resultantly created an information gap among the local people who were not proficient in English (Interview with Participant X1, 1 April 2016).

Taking this move in the context of empowerment thesis, the introduction of the papers was an empowerment move. It made information accessible to the ordinary people; in the process, it addressed the people's right to information. This provision of information symbolically gave the people the much-needed currency for use on the market place of ideas and knowledge and information (Blanchard, Carlos and Randolph, 2008; Osborn, 2010). Of most importance, this introduction changed the linguistic axis around which the lives of the people resolved (Ngugi, 1986).

According to the Zimbabwe Newspapers editorial team, at the Herald Offices, there were so many people who needed news stories in local languages. Taking cognisance of the thrust of the study, the information gap, thus could be viewed as a disempowering factor on the masses in an era where access to information was critical. In fact, an information void as already alluded to in Chapter 1 is an unhealthy diet for socio-economic and political empowerment. This gap therefore persuaded Zimbabwe Newspapers to introduce papers that utilised the languages of the people for the coverage of news stories that were centred on what the masses experienced and believed.

In response to the question on the history of *uMthunywa*, the study revealed that *uMthunywa* like *Kwayedza* is a weekly newspaper under the Zimbabwe Newspapers stable. It is published in Ndebele, in Zimbabwe's second largest city, Bulawayo. The study also found out that from its inception, *uMthunywa* was basically controlled from Harare, at the Zimbabwe Newspapers head offices, alongside its stable-mate *Kwayedza*, under the editorship of the journalist Paul Chidyausiku. Its establishment was necessitated, just like in the case of *Kwayedza*, by the need to cater for the Ndebele readership that had no newspaper in indigenous languages. It

was designed to cover issues and events occurring within Bulawayo and the whole of Matabeleland province. It also emerged in the discussion that from the onset, *uMthunywa* faced serious challenges owing to viability problems related to low circulation. Unfortunately, figures pertaining to the performance of the paper would not be revealed. However, what emerges is the fact that the newspaper failed to play the role that it had been established for, that is, providing an alternative voice to that offered by the mainstream newspapers that published news in English.

These viability problems saw the paper being reduced in terms of size, the paper had to shrink from twelve pages to a four-paged tabloid in 1987 (Interviewee X2, 25 May 2026). This also resulted in *uMthunywa* being reduced to a full appendage of *Kwayedza*. With this combination of the two indigenous papers, in 1988, the publication came to be named *Kwayedza-Umthunywa*. In 1993, the Ndebele section of *Kwayedza-Umthunywa* disappeared from the media sphere, signaling the folding of *uMthunywa*.

In 2004, *uMthunywa* re-emerged under a new editor with a new market-driven thrust, anchored on the values of tabloid journalism. According to the editorial team, it took the lead as a representative of tabloid journalism in the country as a paper that printed gossip and human interest stories that the ordinary people on the street could relate to. Like in the case of *Kwayedza*, it emerged that the paper prioritises social issues related to the grassroots. It focuses on its Matabeleland province readers, who constitute the bulk of the paper's readership and particularly explores the meanings and relevance of their everyday lives. In media circles, having people's lives being the subject and source of news or information implies the communities are actually authoring the papers and that the people's voices are being represented. Again, it is unfortunate that the said reasonable circulation figures could not be revealed to the researcher.

Within the context of empowerment discourse, the establishment of newspapers in indigenous languages implies a deliberate thrust towards helping people seize back their creative initiatives through real and actual control of the means of communal self-

identification and definition. This could probably account for the point raised in the interview responses that *uMthunywa* has enjoyed reasonable circulation figures since its re-appearance on the market.

Interview question 2 read: **What could have prompted the establishment of these newspapers in local languages, that is, Shona and Ndebele?**

To this question, the crew at *Kwayedza* mentioned that the main aim behind the introduction of *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* was to promote indigenous languages. The participants also pointed out that the non-availability of news sources in indigenous languages at the onset of independence necessitated the establishment of *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*. They argue that there was a conspicuous void with respect to an indigenous voice to the majority of the Ndebele and Shona audience both in the urban and in the rural areas. What also emerged from the responses to this question is the idea that there is need to safeguard the culture and traditions of the people. According to the Zimpapers editorial team, “there is no nation on the globe that can effectively survive the harsh realities of the global politics without a cultural and traditional base” (Interview with Participant X1, 1 April 2016). The two papers thus had to reverse the cultural secretions that have been alluded to in chapter one. With the two newspapers in place, the Zimbabwean people’s voice, that had been stolen through the cultural robbery that characterise the imperial project, is expected to be recovered.

It was also pointed out that the choice of language for use in the newspapers is influenced by the belief that the surest way of keeping the languages alive is making use of it. The interviews also revealed that, at independence, it had become clear that choosing not to use the indigenous languages relegate them to the peripheries of communication and ultimately expedite the extinction of the languages.

The other argument that emerged from the responses to this question is that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* focus on the coverage and dissemination of news on social issues, matters that affect Zimbabweans more or less on a daily basis, but with a bias towards promoting the

country's moral, traditional and cultural values. This was supported by interviewee X2, who posits that a complete package of *Kwayedza* gives its readership in-depth cultural and traditional stories.

*Kwayedza*, in particular, provides a readers' forum, *Tiudzei* (tell us) which promotes dialogue between the paper and its audiences. It has an education section, *Denhe Reruzivo* (the knowledge keg), which is a favourite section for school children and teachers (Interview with Participant X1, 1 April 2016). According to the editorial team, *Kwayedza* has a bit of politics, cartoons, and women's page to balance the gender issue and health news. There is also a column for pen pals (*Tishamwaridzane*), entertainment, and an agriculture page to support the country's land reform and finally sport news (Shamba, 2015).

The participants also revealed that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are circulation-driven papers that are distributed nationally and also published online. The participants also pointed out that where there are other Zimpapers products like *The Herald*, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are also visible, they stressed.

Interview question 3 asked: **Was there a statutory instrument that mandated the establishment of *Umthunywa* and *Kwayedza*?**

The participant representing *uMthunywa* argues that there is no real statutory instrument that is put in place to make it mandatory for Zimpapers to have publications in indigenous languages. It emerged from the discussion that the move was a result of a Board decision to establish *uMthunywa* alongside *Kwayedza*. However, the team at *Kwayedza* pointed out that there were instruments that were put in place and were used to facilitate the registering and operation of these two newspapers.

Interview question 4: **What exactly is the thrust or niche of the paper?**

In response to this question, participants pointed out that the thrust of *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* is basically Zimbabwean people's culture, human and social interest stories. The

papers major on those issues that border on the bizarre, coverage which hinges on township gossip and rumour-mongering (Interviewee X2, 25 May 2026).

In light of this response, it could be pointed out that the cultural thrust thus allowed for the presentation of the Zimbabwean cultural values which enhance the dignity as well as the well-being of Zimbabwean people. It implies that the papers allowed for the coverage of culture in its diverse forms on the media fraternity. In light of the empowerment discourses, the papers had the right thrust since empowerment only becomes meaningful when the dignity of the of the concerned people is being restored.

Interview question 5: **I understand at one point *Umthunywa* and *Kwayedza* were published and distributed together:**

**a) How did the crew manage to ensure the timeous merging of the two papers before circulation to the masses?**

From the interview discussions, it emerged that the whole process of producing both *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, during the time it was an appendage of *Kwayedza*, was quite hectic. This was compounded by the fact that everything at that point was being done manually, the computer age had not yet reached Zimbabwe. A hard-typed copy of *uMthunywa* was produced and then sent to Harare where *uMthunywa* was then printed as a supplement to *Kwayedza*. After printing, *Kwayedza-uMthunywa* was sent back to Bulawayo for packaging and distribution alongside other Zimpapers products for the readers in Matabeleland.

The interview questions went further to probe the team with regards to the splitting of the two newspapers into stand-alone presses. The question that followed immediately was:

**b) What could have prompted the split of these two papers in indigenous languages to create a situation where people now rarely access *Umthunywa* in Harare?**

The general picture that emerged from responses to this question was that at the time of split, the majority of the Ndebele speakers were resident in Bulawayo and rural Matabeleland North and South than in Harare. At that point, the team stated, it made both business and

aesthetic sense that the paper, *uMthunywa*, be located in the heart of Ndebele speakers while *Kwayedza* remained resident in Mashonaland where the majority of the Shona speaking people resided. Having probed into the question of the split of the two newspapers, another question followed to allow the team to exhaustively shed light on the separation of the two papers.

The question that probed for further information was:

- c) In your opinion, is it desirable to have *uMthunywa* being inaccessible or unavailable on the Harare street corners?**

Participants representing the *Kwayedza* editorial team argue that *uMthunywa*, just like *Kwayedza* could be accessed in Harare. However, those representing the team at *uMthunywa* admitted that while *Kwayedza* may be accessed in the Matabeleland province, *uMthunywa* is difficult to access in the Mashonaland part of the country. They pointed out that as a team they are beginning to see that the absence of *uMthunywa* in Mashonaland is not a positive development. They premised their argument on the view that the nation has witnessed a rapid increase in the populations of Ndebele speaking people in Harare. So many institutions of higher learning, uniformed forces and companies in Mashonaland have registered a rapid increase of people who are native speakers of Ndebele and are able to read and understand the language. They noted that there is now increased mobility of people and as a company that is in business, it is imperative that Zimpapers avails the paper in Harare.

**Interview question 6 asked: How has *uMthunywa* been performing on the media market, in respect to sales, distribution and consumption?**

The participants representing both the *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* editorial teams could not disclose sales figures for reasons best known to them. They pointed out that the figures were confidential. The crew from *Kwayedza* however, pointed out that the trend is that sales of the paper have increased despite the availability of the paper online. They attributed the high levels of cash sales to the nature of the readership of the paper, they suggested that this could be a result of the fact that the readers maybe unsophisticated and not internet savvy.

The participants representing *uMthunywa*, on the other hand, attributed the high levels of sales to the distribution patterns of the paper. The distribution of *uMthunywa*, they pointed out, is now done all over Bulawayo, its environs and most parts of the regions in Matabeleland South and North. The news coverage covers areas as far as Victoria Falls and Beitbridge at the extremes, they mentioned. The participants also pointed out that the consumption of *uMthunywa* as a media product is relatively high in relationship to the sales rates. They were quick to point out that while a demographic survey to substantiate this is not available, snippets from the Zimbabwe All Media Survey suggest that it is read by people from as early as 15 years old to 65 years plus.

**Interview question 7: How does *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* differ from other print media products that are found on the Zimbabwean media market and published in English?**

The general consensus that came out of the interviews was that the difference is very high, even though *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* are closely similar to tabloids like *Bulawayo Metro* (*B-Metro*) and *Harare Metro* (*H-Metro*). Participants pointed out that in these two newspapers, there are very little political and economic content but high social and sporting stories.

**Interview question 8: After consuming the news coverage in *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*, do you think the readers really experience a degree of information gratification?**

There was a general consensus that the readers surely experience a high degree of information gratification. There was a general belief that the use of indigenous languages makes the readers easily identify with the papers. Besides, the collected data revealed that the stories that are covered are within the immediate experiences of the people and are most likely to fascinate them. Participants highlighted that what is of paramount importance, when it comes to the question of satisfaction, is the language that is used for disseminating the

information. They posited that the use of the people's local languages has a propensity to draw the readers closer to the papers' editorial style.

**Interview question 9: After reading *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza* would readers need to consult other newspapers to know what is happening around them, nationally and internationally?**

Findings from answers to this question revealed that if the reader has a passion for international and political news, he/she will definitely develop a pressing need to consult some other news sources after reading *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*. The participants agreed that the international coverage in *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* currently does not possess the rigour, depth and breadth that are found in the dailies or other traditional weeklies such as the *Standard*, *Financial Gazette* among others. According to the participants, the lack of depth could be due to the thrust of the paper, not much is covered by way of hard political events or political commentary or analysis.

**Interview question 10: If your answer to question 9 implies that you have to consult other papers, explain why there will be need to do so.**

The interviewees state that other papers are consulted for in-depth coverage of political issues and international news. An example of the religious-political turmoil of the Middle East was given, the xenophobia in South Africa and the Boko Haram crisis in Nigeria among many other politically induced problems in the world. The interviewees pointed out that conflicts have never been accorded any space in these two newspapers in local languages. Issues about the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Syrian refugees, the crisis in Iraq, the insurgence in Libya, the Islamic State in Libya (ISIL), and Russian intervention versus American interests in the Middle East are quite glaringly missing in the two newspapers.

**Interview question 11: Considering the content of *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*, of what significance is the content to the economic, social, religious and political emancipation of the people?**

The general impression that is found from the collected data from the interviewees is that as papers founded on tabloidism, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* do not have a bearing on any form of emancipation of the people unless it is implied. The papers, the interviewees pointed out, are not deliberate on economic, religious and political emancipation because they have a purely human interest approach, as earlier alluded to.

**Interview question 12: Is the content really Zimbabwean?**

All the participants were quick to state that no one would dispute that the content in *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* is Zimbabwean. The content, they believe, resonates with the lived experiences of township life, the rural life and it identifies with the everyday socio-political struggles of the Ndebele and Shona people. The stories derive their content from the ordinary people's lives, their gossip by the water wells, the riverside and the tit-bits one would expect from a high-density neighbour's over-the-fence chattering, the findings revealed.

**Interview question 13: Still looking at the content of *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* do you think the two papers are different from other papers which in most cases are apparatus of indoctrination rather than aids to masses emancipation?**

According to the interviewees, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* are far away from being state ideology apparatuses. They hardly have any political content and even the editorial often reflects on the societal ills within the communities than convey any political message. Probed further into the question of whether the idea of deciding not to convey political message is not, in itself a political decision, the interviewees could not give a clear response. While they acknowledged that the media terrain is a contested terrain and is far from being politically neutral, they still maintained that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are more of social-cultural commentaries than political ones.

**Interview question 14: Is the use of these indigenous languages in the publication of these two newspapers helping in any way to uplift the indigenous languages from the peripheries to the centre of the media-linguistic terrain?**

The general consensus is that the use of indigenous languages is central to the building of an African consciousness. As such, to a large extent the use of indigenous languages has revitalised and awoken the sense of pride in the mother languages among the Shona and Ndebele people. People in the streets openly marvel at the use of indigenous languages particularly in the headlines and banners used, for example, “*Umthakathixhaka! Wabanjwalibalele*” (a wizard is caught red-handed in broad daylight), participants argued.

**Interview question 15: Do you think the use of indigenous languages in media in its own is a solution to empowering the people?**

The general consensus is that the use of indigenous languages is part of the solution to the empowerment of the local people in Zimbabwe through the use of the media. It has been pointed out that people are empowered when their own languages are used in the public sphere. Reference is made to the Lower and Upper Houses of Assembly which have been caught up in a difficult situation over the use of indigenous languages, where Ndebele speaking legislators feel they can express their ideas best in their native language resulting in the non-Ndebele legislators arguing that they have been excluded. Conflict arises when the Ndebele-speaking legislators question their fellow non-Ndebele members why they have problems when the Ndebele speakers happen to be at home with Shona usage in parliament. This shows how much a language can mean to its speakers. It gives them an impression of a high degree of power and capacity to control when their mother tongue is used in the public domain, hence the quarrelling.

According to the participants who responded on behalf of *uMthunywa*, *uMthunywa* is currently filling in that gap well. The interviewees felt that the use of local languages augers well with lived experiences of their speakers who, from time immemorial, have watched their languages being marginalised on the media fraternity. They went on to express that unlike other media products in the mainstream media, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* still use idioms, proverbs, wise sayings in authentic *Ndebele* and *Shona*. The papers have to be credited for

keeping these idioms, proverbs among many other things alive. They are reservoir of the Zimbabwean people's life experiences, their wisdom, values norms and social, political, religious and economic successes and failures. In a way, this characteristic of the two newspapers is in line with Dube and Ncube's (2013) contention that people can only be empowered through their own mother tongue.

The two papers also have language lesson sections for school going pupils of various ages. The papers also have columns for recipes which are supposed to be on authentic traditional Ndebele and Shona dishes. All this coverage, the interviewees pointed out, cements the central place of the indigenous languages amongst those that identify with it whether by birth or by association.

**Interview question 16: Does the presence of newspapers in local languages on the Zimbabwean media fraternity make the media platform a democratic public sphere?**

According to the members of the editorial team at Zimpapers, a public space is one where the audience can openly discuss issues of governance be they local or national. *Umthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, they pointed out, do not offer that platform since they have a human-interest tabloid approach. They stressed that the stories are social and there is hardly a feedback system on content between the reader and the paper. Sound though this argument is, a physical perusal of the two newspapers would reveal that there is an element of feedback system. *Kwayedza* to be specific, carries public spaces or columns such as *Tiudzei* (Let us know), *Fembera fembera tione* (predict the answer) where room for dialoguing with the readers has been availed. Such a characteristic is a requisite function for eliciting feedback and dialoguing with media consumers. Such columns destroy the barricades that usually hinder readers' participation on the media terrain. The columns thus act a strategy to acknowledge and respect the intrinsic knowledge that is embedded in the readers.

What however was most pronounced in their responses is that the papers are distanced from political commentary and this trajectory alienates the readers from the national and even global political events. In fact, one of the participants even made the assumption that the

readers are ‘unsophisticated political commentators’ who are content with voting in their political choices and nothing else (Interviewee X2, 25 May 2016).

### **5.2.1.1 The Assumed Motivation behind the Formation of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

After going through the information that is obtained from the interviews with representatives of the Zimpapers, it becomes clear that the establishment of the two newspapers was a move towards making Zimbabweans who read the two newspapers develop confidence and belief in themselves. It is as though the two newspapers had been bestowed with an agenda setting responsibility. Their agenda was first and foremost to assist the people who were emerging from colonial rule to dream and think outside the proverbial western box. These two papers were new structures that were strategically established to cultivate and foster the Zimbabwean people’s pride in their self-belief, belief systems, languages, values and norms (Manhambara, 2015). The move was orchestrated to provide an African or Zimbabwean point of view from which the people were expected to engage the world. In a way, it was meant to provide an alternative voice, different from that provided by the small group of elites that in most cases was alienated from the rest of the populace. They were supposed to provide a different voice from that of the class of ‘educated’ Africans who greatly yearned to be identified and associated with the departed imperial masters (Fanon, 1965; Fanon, 1967). What the architects of these newspapers had correctly realised is that indigenous languages are an embodiment of an individual’s identity and national identities (Bamgbose, 1987) and that they both are existential issues that are directly and indirectly linked to who we think we are, how we interface with the rest of the world and above all how we transform the natural environment around us. The architects, therefore, were taking a leaf from the Chinese, Japanese and other Asian nations, that had proved that development, and above all empowerment, does not imply that people denounce who they are as a people.

Empowerment from the context of this study starts with one crucial stance/step, appreciation of who we are as a people, our values and aspirations as well as appreciation of what we stand for as a nation. In a nutshell, empowerment can only be realised when we become our real selves amid the family of nations and within the global village. By adopting the indigenous languages as the medium of collecting and disseminating information, the two

newspapers are expressing the notion that in our languages, our folklore, our songs, customs, history, proverbs and idioms lies the binding spirit, strength and identity of the people.

Taking the linguistic stance that is adopted with the publication of these pioneer newspapers in indigenous languages from a political point of view, the idea that one gets is that at the inception of independence there was a realisation that the struggle for liberation had not necessarily ended with the laying down of guns on attainment of flag independence. It continued in yet a different version, where there had to be heroes that were expected to fight for the liberation of the African minds. This liberation had to adopt a new dimension and as such, *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* were expected to be one version of the battle front, with fighters having to be deployed in trenches for this new struggle where the re-awakening and re-affirming of African culture and beliefs was to be achieved.

This new battle front is strategically set to make a significant contribution to the struggle for intellectual liberation – where the nation had to ideologically and intellectually engage the same enemy that was defeated at the battle field at the turn of the 1970s. These papers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, taken from this perspective, were setting the appropriate media agenda, an agenda that celebrated the people’s Zimbabweanness, their heritage, their language and their sensibility.

#### **5.2.1.2 The philosophy behind the cultural grounding of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

Within the context of this research, culture is information and information is the literature and history of who a people who reside in any given community are (Cabral, 1974). With the coming of independence, the assumption was that the enemy, in the form of the colonial system, retreated from the farms and resurfaced to ambush the people from the safety of media houses, research institutes and cultural centres across the world where they battled to win the minds of the “freed” masses (*The Patriot*, 3-9 June 2016). From these new fronts, the former colonisers were launching their attacks and spreading neo-colonialism. *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, the interviews have revealed, were meant to create new frontiers in the discourse

of the struggle for emancipation as well as possible ways the masses could engage ‘detractors and perpetrators of western hegemony’ chief among them being the fight against the linguistic hegemony (Charamba, 2012). The other idea that spurred the establishment of the papers was that they would lay the foundation upon which indigenous languages could be bailed from the peripheries of the media, education and other public domain discourses, to the centre (Ngugi, 1993). The papers were thus meant to lay the foundation upon which posterity would develop ideas of *Ubuntu/Hunhu*.

As has already been alluded to in the section that dealt with the interviews that were carried out among the producers of the two newspapers in indigenous languages, the thrust of the two papers is culture. And at this point it is very important to bring in the notion of change of war frontiers that has been introduced earlier on, where it was argued that at the attainment of independence, the new leadership could have realised that they surely had won the battles but they had a mammoth task of liberating the minds that had been battered in the classrooms of colonial education (P’Bitek, 1989) ahead of them. The very minds that had heeded the invitation to empty oneself of creativity, achievements, traditions and self-confidence in exchange for Western ideas, practices, traditions prescriptions of what it meant to be human and the forced acceptance of a position as the scum of that humanity (Fanon, 1967; Nyamnjoh, 2012).

It is prudent at this juncture to argue that the introduction of the two newspapers in local languages is a strategy aimed at revitalising the Zimbabwean culture and re-invigorating the critical elements of the culture that would ensure maximum empowerment of the liberated people. The newspapers in indigenous languages are meant to provide a resistant media discourse that protected and provided for African interest. They were aimed at providing a critical model in which western neo-colonialism was meant to be resisted and fought. They thus, were expected to act like anti-bodies in resisting western imperialism (Kgatla, 2015). As such the efficacy of their discourse had to strike at the heart of the African deepest ‘soul-need’, a quest for ‘Ubuntu’ (African wholeness) (Martey, 1993). Above all, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywahad* to help the masses in Zimbabwe to effectively occupy their cultural and

discursive spaces, just as much as they occupy their land and political space(*The Patriot*, 8-15 July 2015).

### **5.2.2 Presentation and Analysis of data from interviews with Kwayedza and uMthunywa Vendors**

After carrying out interviews with the representatives of the editorial teams of the two newspapers, there was need to talk to the people who are engaged on the ground, selling or distributing the news to the targeted readership. This explains why the study had to engage the newspaper vendors who were believed to possess a more objective and unbiased perspective of the performance of the two newspapers on the media market. Twenty newspaper vendors were consulted, that is, ten in Bulawayo and ten were interviewed in Harare. Most newspaper vendors in Bulawayo were not willing to participate because they thought the research was politically motivated. However, in Harare, the participants were just forthcoming, but the researcher had to balance the number of participants for the two major cities. The responses that were obtained are outlined in this section of chapter five (5).

Question number 1 on this particular interview schedule was: **For how long have you worked as uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza vendor?**

The least period of service as a newspaper vendor was one (1) year, 10% of the participants had served as newspaper vendors for a period ranging between 1-3 years. 30% of them had served for periods ranging from 4-6 years. 25% of the participants had been vendors for at least 7-10 years while 35% had been in the trade for periods ranging from 11 - 14 year. Generally, the vendors pointed out that they have been working as newspaper vendors for quite a long time. This implies that 90% of the sampled vendors have witnessed the two papers in indigenous language, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, grow in terms of popularity and circulation.

Question 2 on the interview schedule was: **Which other newspapers do you sell?**

The vendors state that they sell all the news products that are produced by Zimpapers stable which include newspapers such as *Chronicle*, *Sunday News*, *Sunday Mail*, *Southern Times*, *The Herald*, *H-Metro*, *Manica Post*, *B-Metro*, and *ZimTravel*, they also pointed out that they also sell newspapers published by the AlphaMedia stable; such as *The Standard*, *Daily News*, *NewsDay*. They highlighted that they also sell newspapers such as *The Zimbabwean Eye*, *The Patriot*, *Weekend Post*, *Independent*, among many other publications.

Question number three was: **Compared to other newspapers that you sell, what is your comment on *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza* sales.**

Before responding to the question the vendors made it clear that there is a distinction between *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, and many other newspapers that are sold on the street corners of the towns in Zimbabwe. The difference they pointed out is the fact that the two newspapers in indigenous languages are weekly newspapers while the majority of them are dailies:

When it comes to the weeklies, *Kwayedza* and [*uMthunywa*] have the highest sales. We cannot compare them to dailies whose sales are determined by the nature of the headline for that particular day (Interviewee V1, 1 April 2016).

However, the general impression that emerged from the participants is that the two newspapers have high sales in comparison with other weekly newspapers that are sold alongside them. 90% of the vendors state that they sell all the copies that would have been allocated to them before the end of the week. One of them went on to mention that even if a dividing line between dailies and weeklies is absent, “*Kwayedza* is ranked second after *Harare-metro (H-Metro0*” (Interviewee V3 1 April 2016).

The participants further state that the sales for these two papers are boosted by the school going clientele base. They said that school going children, especially those who would be sitting their Grade 7, “O” level and “A” level examinations heavily rely on the two newspapers sections on Education. In those sections of the papers, they state, prescribed novels (set books) are analysed and simplified for the students. This way, the papers have helped students understand and pass Shona and Ndebele literature. Furthermore, within the

same education section, lessons on Shona and Ndebele language structure, *mipanda* and *uhlelo*, (noun classes) are presented and examination type questions addressed for the advantage of the students. This education section, they state, is believed to have contributed to an improvement on the pass rate of students in Shona and Ndebele respectively. As such, most parents would ensure that they expose their children to *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* for improved examination results.

Taken within the concept of empowerment, coverage of researched curriculum-specific content is a critical landmark that is perceived to have raised the profile of the local languages as media of instruction and disseminating information.

Still on the question of sales, 90% of the participants acknowledged that the publication of news in Shona and Ndebele by the two newspapers has greatly contributed to the high sales. There was consensus that people buy the newspapers because they communicate in languages they understand and identify with. There being no other newspapers that disseminate news in local languages, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* have, thus become the port of call for those who desire to get news in the languages they identify with- their mother tongues. As a result, even if this kind of readership would buy other newspapers that are published in English, they would make sure they have their weekly dose of news in their mother tongues because they have pride in reading texts written in their own languages. In a way, an element of media pluralism is realised as the two papers become additional actors on the media terrain that has previously been the preserve of English language, presenting alternative voices to the readers.

30% of the participants felt that the sales of the papers are mostly determined by the nature of the headline on that particular week. If the headlines of the papers are catchy, then the two papers are likely to sell like hot cakes and be depleted in a day or two days' time, they pointed out. The other factor they attributed to the high sales is the cost of the papers. The two newspapers reduced their price from \$1 to 50cents in 2014. This low price according to the participants makes the two newspapers very affordable, hence the high rate at which their copies are sold.

Question number four was: **How many *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza* copies are you allocated on a weekly basis?**

On average 50% of the vendors confirmed that they are allocated fifty copies of either *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza* as their weekly allocation. 30% claimed that they are allocated 20 copies per week. 10% pointed out that they are given 40 copies, 5% stated that they get 30 copies while the remaining 5% declared that they receive less than 10 copies for their weekly allocation. Participants claimed that their allocation is dependent on the nature of the readership market during the season. During periods where the sales are high, the participants stated that they got more copies. They pointed out that the sales for *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are mostly high during examination periods. During this period, the study found out that the number of unsold papers is very minimal. In most cases, there are no returns (leftovers) at all.

Question number 5 tried to find out how long it took the vendors to finish selling their weekly allocation: **How long do they take to be sold out?**

It emerged that the participants get their weekly allocation of *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunywa* on every Thursday of the week, and on a normal week they finish their allocation within a period of three to four days. Out of the 20 participants involved in the study, 40% claimed that they get their allocation sold within a period of 1-2 days while 60% asserted that they complete their tasks within a period of 3-4 days during normal market days. In situations where the sales will be poor, they send back left overs, which within their field of operation they call returns, on every Wednesday the following week. What, however, emerged from the responses to this question is the fact that those who get their weekly allocation sold out in a period of 1-2 day would have got an allocation of 20 copies of less per week. 90% of the participants stated that the leftovers, do not exceed more than five copies, while 10% claimed that the papers are never completely sold out; most of the copies have to be taken back to Zimpapers offices as leftovers

Generally, the participants pointed out, if the stories that are in the newspapers are appealing to the readership, the newspapers quickly get sold out, but if the stories have failed to meet

the interests of the people, there are very high chances of having a lot of returns. Again, the participants pointed out that the number of returns is also determined by the headlines and the nature of the stories covered in the issue. In fact, if the headline is interesting the paper can be sold out on the same day or in two days' time.

Question 6 tried to find out if the participants actually read *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa*: **As a newspaper vendor, do you personally read *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza*?**

In response to this question all the participants acknowledged that they do enjoy reading the newspapers in local languages. They claimed that they read these newspapers before they even read papers that are published in English. "*Parino buda...ndopatinoto tanga kuri verenga*" (We start reading it the moment it is released to the readership, when we receive our weekly allocation) (Interviewee V8, 1 April 2016). They stated that they actually buy their own copies which they later take home for consumption by other members of their families.

Question 7 asked: **What could be motivating you to read *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza*?**

The participants pointed out that they are attracted to *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* by the stories that are based on real Zimbabwean life experience. The participant revealed that they were aware of the fact that the Zimbabwean society is divided into three main camps when it comes to its perception of the two newspapers. They claimed that there is a section that accuse the two newspapers of publishing unfounded stories, lies; another one believes they just publish humorous stories while the other category believes what is covered in the papers is expressive of real life experiences. Be that as it may, while it is incontrovertible that the stories are humorous, participants felt that humour does not distance the stories from their real-life experiences base.

The study also found out that the coverage of non-political issues in these two newspapers provides readers a break from the political squabble that characterise news coverage in most mainstream papers that could talk politics from the cover page to the last page. *Kwayedza* and

*uMthunywa*, they claimed, provided a break from the very serious political hard news to a more humorous news platform that affords them an opportunity to laugh off their political and economic problems.

90% of the participants pointed out that they are attracted to the newspapers by the languages that are used. For them, the languages that are used for news coverage are quite appealing. They claimed that they just enjoy reading written works in their mother languages. In a sense, after reading newspapers in indigenous languages such as *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, their thirst for information in their own mother tongue is quenched.

Question 8 asked: **Which section of *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza* do you enjoy?**

In response to this question, participants gave varying responses. Section such as sport, *Ukuhluzwa izingwalo* (analysis of novels and poetry), *asifeni ngembabo* (Let us enjoy the jokes), *pemba umuzi* (Pen pals), in *uMthunywa* and *nhau dzevarimi* (news for farmers), *Nhau dzematunhu* (news from various communities), *tishamwaridzane* (Pen pals), *tsika nemagariro* (culture and traditions), *nhetembo* (poetry) in *Kwayedza* were highlighted.

Question 9 attempted to find out if *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* had similar areas of reporting as any other newspapers that are found on the media fraternity in Zimbabwe. The question asked: **Do *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* have the same sections as those found in other newspapers?**

All participants concurred that the two newspapers have different sections from those found in other papers found on the media terrain in Zimbabwe. The participants felt there is a difference between the sections found in newspapers in indigenous languages and those published in English. They highlighted that there are certain domains that are not handled in the two newspapers which can only be accessed when one visits newspapers published in English. The domains that were pointed out as being conspicuously missing in the newspapers in local languages were issues to do with business. According to the participants,

those people who have challenges in reading or accessing English equally need news on business issues and this has to be done in their own languages.

Furthermore, they highlighted that the two newspapers barely have advertisements. They argued that one has to look for daily newspapers to get classified adverts. They stated that adverts on houses on sale, motor vehicles, among many others are some of the things that readers would be very happy to receive in their own languages. One of the participants even pointed out that even advertisements on deceased estate need to be presented in these papers in the language that is understood by the people. The participants raised concern that people who need classified information should not be found having to run around in search of *The Chronicle* or *The Herald* to get the classifieds. They pointed out that all newspapers should have this information so that no section of the society is left disadvantaged. If the advertisements are appearing in the English published newspapers in English, the participants mentioned, then when it comes to *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* they have to come in the languages that are used for covering and disseminating the news that is Shona and Ndebele. This concern proved to be very correct when it emerged, during the process of analysing the content of the newspapers. It was evident that there are very few advertisements in the two newspapers. It also emerged that in some cases the very few adverts are presented in the very language whose hegemonic powers the two newspapers have been tasked with challenging- English. As a result, one is left wondering if the people who inserted the adverts really intended the readers to go through them.

#### **5.2.2.1 Advertising in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

As has already been expressed, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have very few advertisements. However, of those few, the majority of them are presented in English, even though there are some advertisements that are presented in Shona or Ndebele. Out of the sampled issues, some of the advertisements are as follows:

  
**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**NATIONAL PEACE AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION BILL H.B. 13, 2015**

The Portfolio Committee on Justice, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, Thematic Committee on Human Rights and the Thematic Committee on Peace and Security will hold Public Hearings on the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission Bill H.B. 13, 2015 from the 10th to the 17th of April 2016. The Committees will be divided into two (2) groups and will cover various areas as follows:

**TEAM A**

DATE	PLACE	VENUE	TIME OF PUBLIC HEARING
11 April 2016			1100hrs
12 April 2016	Kwekwe	Kwekwe Theatre	1000hrs
14 April 2016	Gweru	Gweru Theatre	0900hrs
14 April 2016	Victoria Falls	Chinotimba Hall	1500hrs
15 April 2016	Hwange	ZPC Social Club	1400hrs
16 April 2016	Plumtree	TMB Hall i.e. Plumtree Town Council Hall	1030hrs
16 April 2016	Lupane	Lupane Local Board Community Hall	1500hrs
20 April 2016	Bulawayo	Bulawayo Holiday Inn	1000hrs
	Harare	Senate Chamber	

**TEAM B**

DATE	PLACE	VENUE	TIME
11 April 2016			1200hrs
12 April 2016	Gutu	Gutu Council Boardroom	1000hrs
13 April 2016	Masvingo	Masvingo Civic Centre Hall	1000hrs
14 April 2016	Mutare	Mutare Civic Centre Hall	1400hrs
14 April 2016	Marondera	Marondera- Mbuya Nehanda Hall Dombotombo	1300hrs
15 April 2016	Bindura	Tendai Hall	1400hrs
16 April 2016	Chinhoyi	Cooksey Memorial Hall	1000hrs
20 April 2016	Harare	Senate Chamber	

**ALL THOSE WHO WILL BE PUTTING ON MILITARY UNIFORMS, SIGNS OF RANKS, FLAGS OR BADGES AND POLITICAL PARTY REGALIA WILL NOT HAVE ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC HEARING.**

The public, interested groups and organizations are invited to attend these hearings. Written submissions and correspondences are welcome and addressed to:

The Clerk of Parliament  
Attention: Portfolio Committee on Justice,  
Legal and Parliamentary Affairs,  
Thematic Committee on Peace and Security  
and Thematic Committee on Human Rights

P.O.Box CY 298  
Causeway Harare

Submissions can also be made by email through email address [clerk@parlizim.gov.zw](mailto:clerk@parlizim.gov.zw)

The public can access soft copies of the bill on our website [www.parlizim.gov.zw](http://www.parlizim.gov.zw)

Telephone: (04) 700181-8, 252936-50 ext. 2053/2176/2130/2171  
Zenda Precious / Kunzwa Absalom  
(Committee Clerks)  
Manyemba Tanyaradzwa Linda / Catherine Mpfu Muvhami  
(Public Relations Officers)  
Fax: (04)252935

*Umthunywa* 24- 30 December 2015.

This is an announcement on the schedules for meetings that would be held by the Peace and Reconciliation Commission in various districts within the nation. This announcement or advert, stipulates the criteria that will be used for screening people who would be attending the meeting. For access to the peace commission hearing the public is not allowed to come in military uniforms, signs of ranks and above all flags or badge of political parties. However, all this information is presented in English. Being an advert that is inserted in a newspaper that disseminates information in indigenous languages, it would have been judicious to present this critical information in the language that the readers best understand.

In yet another advertisement that was presented as an insert in both *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, there was an attempt at advertising *Chibuku*, the most consumed traditional beer in Zimbabwe using the local languages. This advertisement is even more significant to this study taking cognisance of the fact that it borders around totems of the Zimbabweans. In this advert, the company has used beer packages that have images of the animals that are at the centre of the various totems of people in Zimbabwe. Hence the advert:



statement “*Asazaneni nge Chibuku*” (let us know one another through *Chibuku*”. In this advert, Chibuku launches a campaign that is rooted in Zimbabwean culture and heritage. Through the campaign, *chibuku* allow all the consumers of this traditional beverage to celebrate their culture and historical roots. Hence the statement:

Our goal is to create a sacred and unbreakable bond, forged over the furnace and tested over the sun and rain. We are brothers, we are sisters, we are fathers and mothers, and together we are the children of Africa. *Asazaneni ngeChibuku* (Let us know one another through Chibuku).

The advert further reads:

*Dingaloku thenga iChibuku Super elesitemosakho, esesihlobo, esomnganekumbeesithandwasakhosithokozelokujabulelaamasikoezitemozethu ngeChibuku.* (Look for and buy Chubuku Super with your totem, a relative’s, a friend’s or even your loved one’s totem so that we enjoy celebrating the cultural heritage of our totems with Chibuku)

What is of great concern about this advertisement in light of the study is the fact that after speaking good about totems and encouraging people to revive their identity based on their totem, using the language that the people understand, the critical information that concerns the health of the people is left in the language of the former colonial master. After presenting the message in Ndebele:

*Asazaneni ngeChibuku* (Let us know one another through Chibuku); *Dinga lokuthenga iChibuku Super ele sitemo sakho, esesihlobo, esomngane kumbe esesithandwa sakho sithokoze lokujabulela amasiko ezitemo zethu ngeChibuku.* (Look for and buy ChubukuSuper with your totem, a relative’s, a friend’s or even your loved one’s totem so that we enjoy celebrating the cultural heritage of our totems with Chibuku).

After this, the warning that is supposed to accompany all alcoholic beverages is presented in English. This warning reads: ‘Alcohol may be hazardous to health if consumed to excess. The operation of machinery or driving after consumption of alcohol is not advisable. Not for sale to persons under the age of 18’. Further, the detailed information on the origins of terms in the advert is also presented in English, as if to say when people start talking about serious issues, English is the best medium. This is critical and serious information that could have a lot of impact on the consumers of this traditional beer if it was to be provided to them in the

language that is most familiar to them. As a paper whose agenda is to celebrate the local languages and the cultural heritage embedded in it, translating the information into Shona and Ndebele would have made a great impact and worked towards empowerment of the readers.

Using these few advertisement as an example, the complaints raised by the participants remain holding water. The advertisements that are found in the paper are presented in the very language that the two newspapers are trying to challenge. Since advertising is part and parcel of national and global commercial activities, the use of English would shut out the people from economic activities. In fact, the claim about the absence of advertising that has been advanced by the participants is valid. There is barely any advertising in their mother tongue in newspapers that communicate in their own indigenous languages. The advertisements that are presented in English are as good as not being there. After analysing the sampled newspapers in light of the accusations on the absence of advertisements, it emerged that the papers do not have much on advertisements.

Question number 10 asked: **After reading *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza* do you feel satisfied that you have found everything that you expect from any press such that you will not need to read any other newspapers?**

Participants highlighted that they read the *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza* on the day they receive their weekly allocation and they will be done with the newspapers in indigenous languages. Thereafter they concentrate on the dailies which bring a different set of news on a daily basis until Thursday the following week when they receive a new issue of *uMthunywa* and/or *Kwayedza*.

As newspaper vendors, the participants claimed, they have no problem with the two newspapers failing to bring news based on all domains of human survival. Their argument was that they have the different newspapers at their disposal and so, they read them as much as they would wish. However, for readers who buy the papers, they pointed out that there is need for coverage of most of the critical domains of life, such as business, politics and classifieds in the local languages. For them, it is the absence of focus on these areas that

forces readers to buy other newspapers even when their favourite paper is *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*.

However, there were sentiments that readers may need to visit other media platforms for ‘authentic’ and ‘realistic’ information about life experiences. Participants claimed that some of the stories in the two newspapers would be questionable:

*...okunye ucina ubona angani lapha ade bebhala amanga ...njengo kuthi umuntu udlwangul’ idonki!* (Some of the stories are unbelievable, especially stories such as a man being caught in a compromising position with a donkey). (Interviewee V4, 21 March 2016).

However, the overall impression that emerged was that the two newspapers are weeklies so definitely one would be forced to throw an eye on the dailies that present news timeously and on a daily basis.

Question 11 was a follow up on the previous one. It sought to find the reasons why participants would feel gratified or have a pressing need to visit other sources of information. The question read: *What could be the possible reason?*

For 90% of the participants, satisfaction emanates from the language that is used for disseminating the news. However, limiting the focus of coverage to ‘cultural issues’ was cited as the reason that forces readers to resort to other sources of news that make use of a language other than the one they would have preferred. These two newspapers in local languages, the participants argued, do not disseminate news based on the national, the regional or even international economic situation. The participants further pointed out that the papers also do not publish advertisements on what is available on the market. Besides they do not talk about international news, it was stated. Even at local level, the participants highlighted, the papers do not cover stories from the whole nation; *Kwayedza* is confined to Mashonaland while *uMthunywa* confines its coverage of news to Matabeleland.

Question number 12 asked if the families of the participants had a passion for reading *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*: **Does your family enjoy reading *uMthunywa* or *Kwayedza*?**

All the participants confirmed that their families enjoy reading the *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*. They highlighted that they buy a copy of their own which they carry home to share with members of their family. They confirmed that the members would take turns to read and enjoy the stories. Furthermore, all the male participants pointed out that their wives enjoy reading the papers most. Participants also confirmed that their children were benefiting most because the newspapers assist them in handling their Shona and Ndebele novels. For other participants, having been born and grown up in the urban set-up, their children enjoy reading the papers and they go to them to get exposure to rural life experiences.

Question 12 enquired on the number of people who constituted each individual participant's family. It asked: **How many people are there in your family?**

Responses to this question revealed that the number of members in the families ranged from three to six and there was consensus that these members of the different families get exposed to the news coverage of the two newspapers through the single member who accesses it from the workplace. Each time an issue was published, it emerged, one copy that would have been paid for reached almost six readers who may not be included in the statistics of the readership that could be based on the number of copies that are sold in shops as well as at the street corners in the different towns. This, therefore, could insinuate the idea that formal statistical records on the actual readership of the two newspapers in local languages could be lagging behind the actual figures.

### **5.3 Presentation and Analysis of Data Collected from Experts in Language Issues, Language Policy Planning and Media Discipline**

This section of the chapter presents the findings that came out of the research after administering a questionnaire schedule to experts in Language issues, Language Policy Planning and the Media Discipline.

#### **5.3.0: Biographical information**

##### **5.3.1 Table of the frequency distribution of gender**

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	19	76%
Female	6	24%
Total	25	100%

Of the 25 participants who consented to responding to the research questionnaire as experts in issues to do with Language; Language Policy and Planning, the media discipline, 76% were male and 24% of participants were female.

### 5.3.2 Gender Distribution of Participants

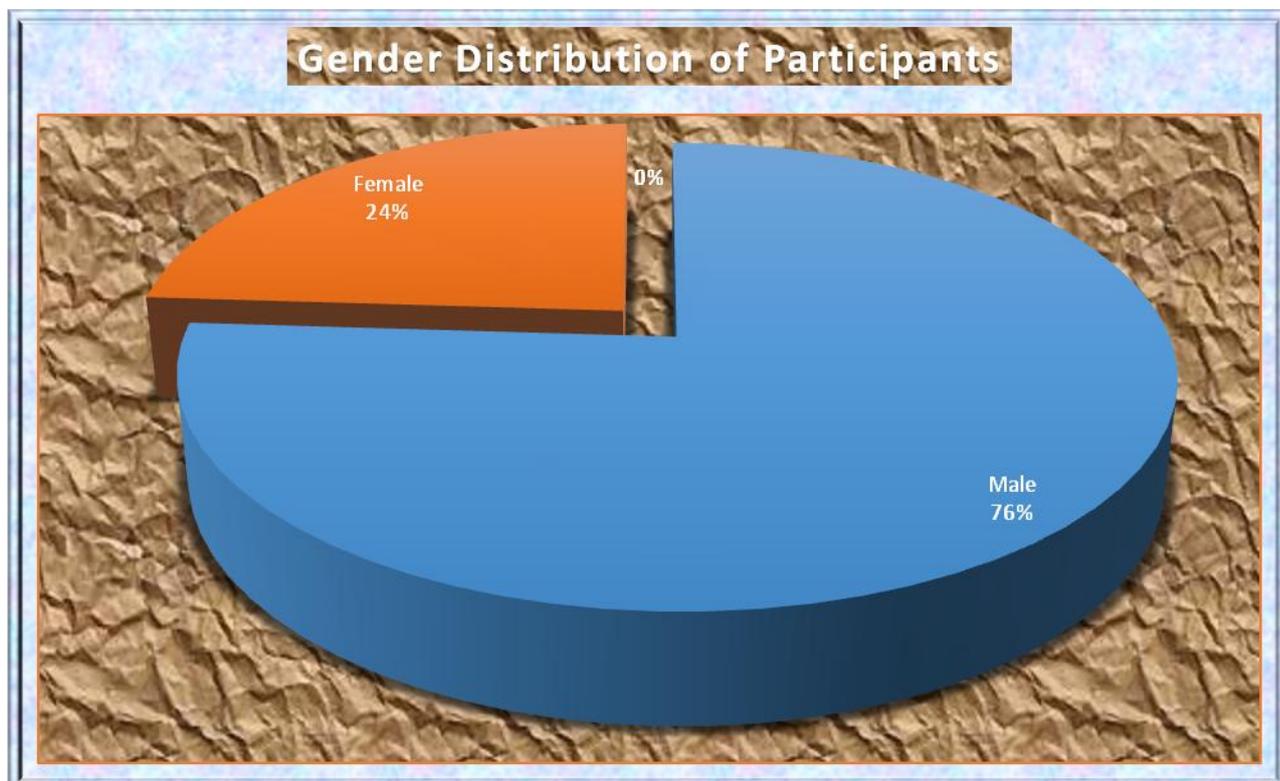


Figure 5.1

### 5.3.2 Table of the frequency distribution of Age

No.	Age Range	Total	Percentage
1	21-30 years Old	2	8%
2	31-40 Years Old	8	32%
3	41-50 Years Old	12	48%
4	50 years and above	3	12%
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Out of the 25 participants who responded to the research questionnaire, 8% were aged between 21 and 30 years; 32% were aged within the range of 31-49; 48% fell within the 41-50 age group while 12% fell within the 50 years and above age range.

### 5.3.4 Age distribution of Participants

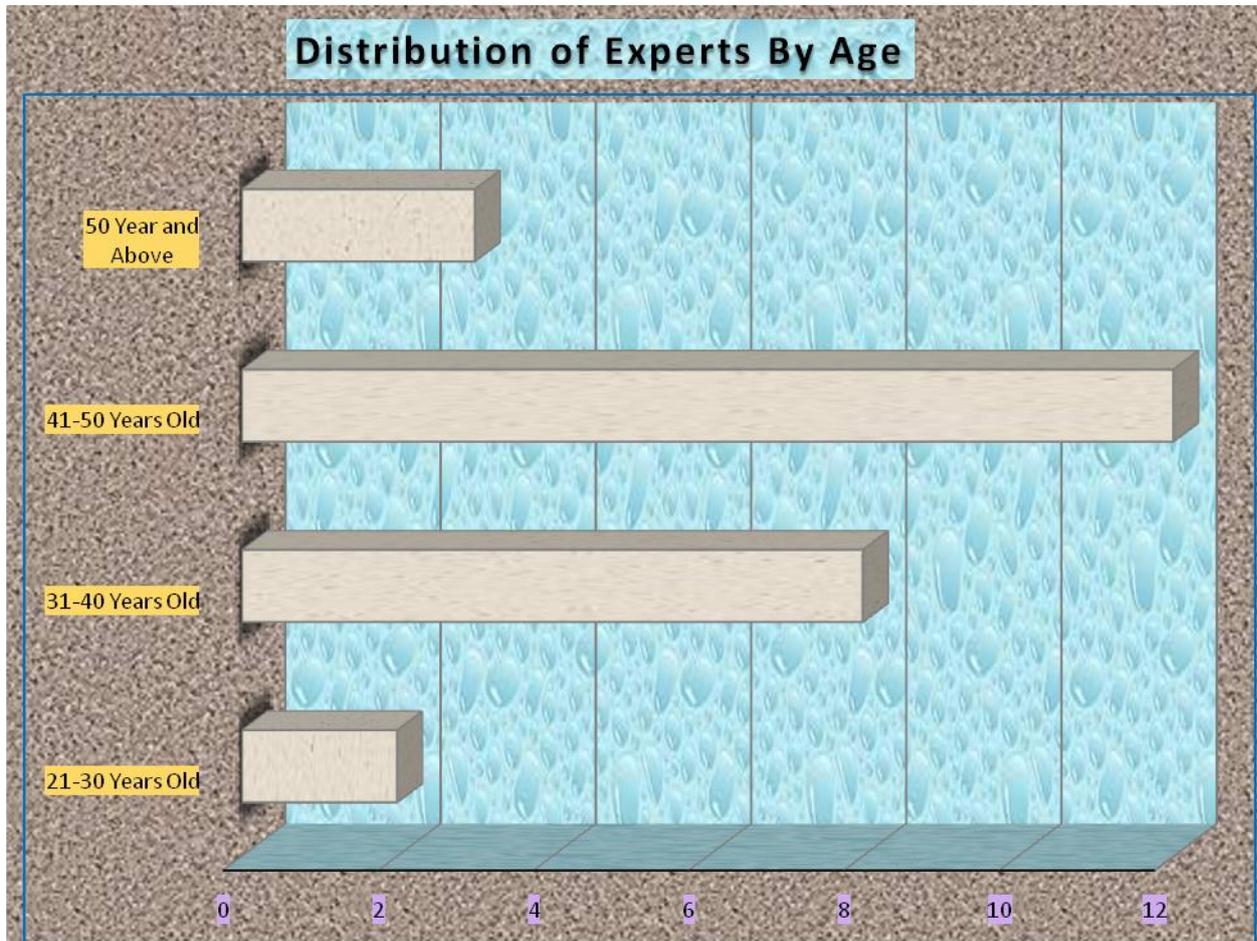


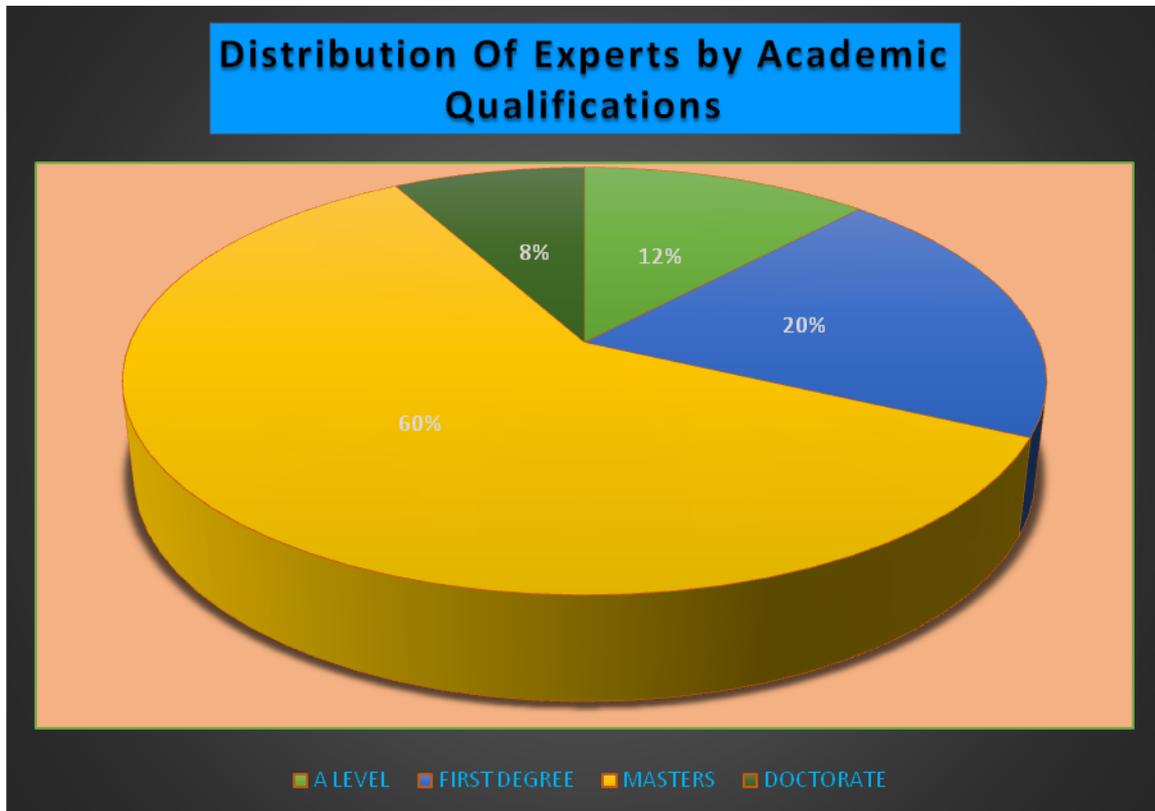
Figure 5.2

### 5.3.3 Table of the frequency distribution of academic qualification:

Academic qualification	Frequency	Percentage
A Level	3	12
First Degree	5	20
Master's degree	15	60
Doctorate	2	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>

Out of the 25 people who participated, 12% of them possessed an A level academic qualification, 20% had First degree qualifications, 60% were holders of Masters' qualifications while 8% of them had doctoral qualifications.

### 5.3.6 Academic Qualification Distribution of Participants



**Figure 5.3**

**Table 5.3.4 Frequency Distribution of Mother Languages of the Experts**

Language	No of Participants	Percentage
Shona	15	60%
Ndebele	4	16%
Kalanga	3	12%
Tonga	1	4%
Ndau	2	8%
Total	25	100%

Out of 25 participants who were consulted for the study, 16% of the participants were Ndebele by origin, 60% were Shona, 12% were Kalanga native speakers and 8% of them were Ndaou speaking. There were only 4% of the participants whose mother tongue was Tonga. The findings revealed that people who belong to other language speaking groups whose mother tongues have not been accommodated in the two newspapers were not forthcoming in responding to the questionnaire. What was conspicuously clear here was that the people who belong to other local language groups that are not represented in the two newspapers did not bother themselves about the newspapers. One participant who indicated belonging to the Xhosa speech community, wrote N/As throughout the questionnaire schedule and at the end of the questionnaire wrote ‘because I do not even read *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa*’.

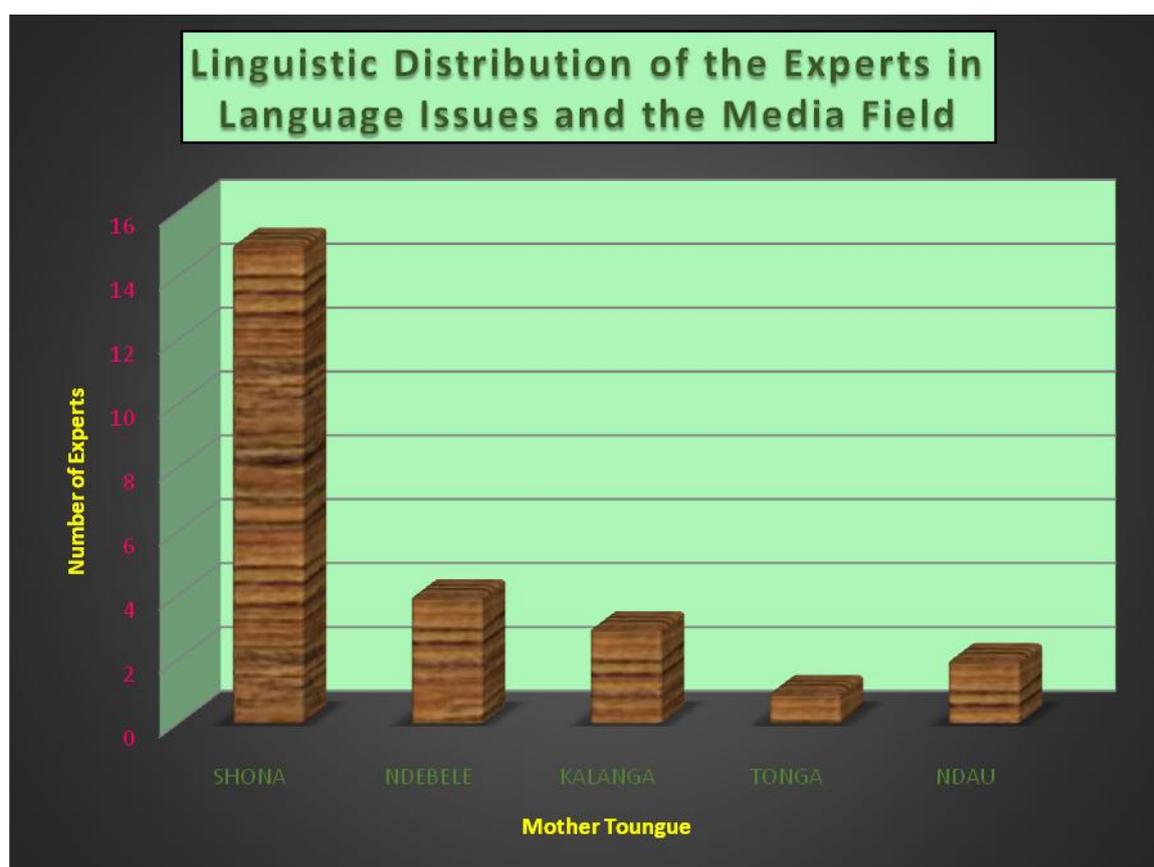


Figure 5.4

Question 3 on the questionnaire asked: **How often do you read *Kwayedza*?**

**Table 5.4.6: Table on how frequently the papers are read**

How often papers are read	Frequency	%
Have never seen <i>Kwayedza</i>	0	0
Never read <i>Kwayedza</i>	2	8%
Read <i>Kwayedza/Umthunywa</i> when I come across it	7	28%
Read <i>Kwayedza</i> at least once in a fortnight	10	40%
Read <i>Kwayedza</i> every week	6	24%

The study revealed that 40% of the people who participated read the papers at least twice a month. 24% of the participants professed that they read the papers every week. 28% claimed that they read the papers whenever they come across them while 8% stressed that they never read the two newspapers in indigenous languages. A close look at the questionnaires that were completed by those who claimed that they never read the two papers revealed that they read the headlines and never go through the actual stories in the papers to get the bulk of the coverage contained in the issues.

Question 4 asked: **Are the stories covered in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* relevant to your everyday life experiences?**

Out of the twenty-five people who responded to the questionnaire 48% of them felt that the stories in the two newspapers are relevant to what happens in their everyday experiences, 28% pointed out that the coverage was partially relevant while 20% felt that the stories were mainly relevant to the traditional way of life. Only 4% of the participants saw no link between *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* coverage and current life experiences. It is interesting that 52% of these respondents have various degrees of doubting the relevance of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* to their everyday experiences. This probably is because they have assumed new lifestyles that are divorced (with varying effects) from those lifestyles experienced by the majority of the people who are not part of the elite group.

Question five on the questionnaire was: **Do the stories in *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunywa* provide coverage that caters for everything that a reader would look for in Print media?**

The experts felt that the papers did cater for what they would expect from a newspaper. There were concerns that there are areas that the newspapers are falling short in the provision of information. Out of the 25 participants who responded to this question, 12% felt that the paper does not cater for what they would look for in print media. 52% pointed out that the papers catered for them to a lesser extent while 28% felt that it catered for their information needs to a greater extent, 8% felt that it absolutely performed what they expected from a print media product make comparisons with what other people who read the papers have said.

The most interesting point that comes from these participants is the fact that the two newspapers can pass for ideal newspapers that can be distributed to the masses for consumption. What however is the bone of contention within this group is the nature of the story coverage. In reality, 88% of the participants acknowledge different levels of benefiting from the papers which range from partial to absolute fulfilment. This implies that 88% of participants do not castigate the papers for failing to address everything that they need, but read the stories and move on to other papers to get news on other domains that are not addressed in *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa*. In fact, the collected data reveals that only 12% of the participants feel that their information needs are not catered for. Such a situation is quite normal because people who read the paper have different tastes. As such that percentage of participants that claims the papers' failure to cater for their needs is not enough to rule out that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have catered for the information needs of the readership.

Question number 6 on the questionnaire schedule that was earmarked for experts in Language, Language Policy and Media, was: **Give reasons for the answer you have provided for question 5.**

In response to this question, participant (B) argued that *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* carry news that analyse women, children's issues or community-specific news, sport, entertainment, culture which broadly often or generally satisfy reader expectations in a print

paper. However, the participant claims, the newspapers tend to be weak in their capacity to build opinion (Ariami and Bianco, 2014). Elucidating on this point, participant B stated that opinion building is one traditional role of the media, which aims at helping to frame events and give them simple meaning. Such an argument becomes very interesting when viewed from the perspective of the two newspapers' presentation of Zimbabwean indigenous medical systems. As shall be discussed in the analysis of the stories covered, there is evidence of failure by the papers to take up a stance that encourages the readers to have faith in the traditional medicine and traditional ways of resolving problems. Even where there are stories of situations where the medicine is playing its own part in addressing people's ailments, such as in the Friday Chisanyu case who packages herbal medicine in conventional containers, the reporters decide to keep a distance. Little effort is made to present the story as a strategy to counter the dominant discourse that is embedded in the conventional medical systems that are western oriented and re-assert the Zimbabwean communities and their indigenous medicine as equal players on the global health system. That decision to tour the middle line makes it difficult for the papers to build a positive opinion on most of Zimbabwean cultural practices which include traditional medicinal remedies.

The other idea that emerged from responses to this question has been that the papers concentrate on human interest stories; stories bordering around "supernatural," witchcraft, sorcery and the traditional way of life. The participants highlighted that these stories are mostly sensational and border around domestic issues, at the exclusion of crucial political and economic issues affecting the nation and the globe at large. In concurrence, with this argument was participant (D) and participant (E) who posited that the two newspapers are tabloids that concentrate more on gossip and local social stories, shying away from the current affairs issues that normally are handled by what they perceive to be a standard newspaper. Furthermore, according to participant (C), issues of job opportunities, economic changes and the solutions to those changes, population trends and any other information that might be of critical importance to the development of society is given lip-service.

All the participants stated that current issues and trends are not exhaustively covered in the two newspapers. They pointed out that there is little or no coverage of political, economic

and global issues. For these participants who ranged from those with first degrees to doctoral qualifications, this attribute renders the papers almost irrelevant to the intellectuals as this group of readers always has a pressing need for constant up-dates on political and economic news at both national and global level. They felt that even at local level, local politics, science and technology, and other areas that are more appealing to them are either given minimum attention or even ignored. Instead, participants argued that there is a tendency in both papers to concentrate on beliefs in the ‘supernatural’ and that they wondered if the Zimbabwean population consists of people with the type of beliefs that are given prominence in the newspaper. Sound though these arguments are, when it come to the question of whether there are still people with such beliefs, the answer is that such people still do exist. If it’s a question of witchcraft, there is evidence of stories of people who actually confess that they are witches or there were once witches. Stories that have been analysed in the content analysis section of this study demonstrate and confirm this. The critical argument that can be taken as very valid by these experts is the question of the newspapers spectrum of news coverage. They surely have to cover more domains than the socio-cultural issues that are currently the main subject of news reporting.

Participant B further pointed out that a notable percentage of the Zimbabwean population has since adopted a paradigm shift in its beliefs. For this participant, some people no longer believe in these highlighted beliefs, such as *zvikwambo*, *uroyi/ukuloya*, *ondofa*, miracles and mysteries. Even if people believe in some of these supernatural forces, they pointed out that the beliefs are now faint such that people can easily ignore or brush them aside and consider the scientific explanation of phenomena:

Though the beliefs may circulate in general discussions, with some still being contained in religious books, from which they are retrieved and reinforced in the mind of the discussants, congregants and the general public, most of the people do not take them seriously any more (Participant A, 17 April, 2016).

Being intellectuals and experts in their disciplines, the participants’ arguments are tainted with elitist sensibilities which have been inherited from the colonial education system. From the post-colonial theoretical perspective, this group could represent that section of the community in a post-colonial state that has gone through the education system that was

previously designed to serve the interests of the settlers and to distance the education system recruits from their own people and their own belief systems. As has already been alluded to, this elitist group already assumes that every other person in the Zimbabwean community has since stopped believing in what is published in the two newspapers. However, if one looks at the responses from the interviews with newspaper vendors, who are part of the general people in the Zimbabwean community, doubts about the existence of such issues are greatly eroded. Such kind of responses indicates that, in light of expectations on the two newspapers, the elite operate from perspectives different from those of the rest of the community. They view the papers and their story coverage using Western ideological lenses. Unfortunately, within the context of the Western ideology, African belief systems were and are still being castigated for being supernatural, hence the accusation of the stories as supernatural. In adopting this frame of mind, the intellectuals miss the reality that African people's lives are influenced by their religion and that every "aspect of life [is] interpreted in the [context of the] supernatural" (Igbon, 2011:96).

Even up to this present day such beliefs have hardly been exterminated in spite of the fact that colonialism almost eroded African values and norms. Such beliefs in the supernatural and witchcraft have unswervingly "defined the African people's personality, history and belief that cannot be jettisoned without consequences" (Igbon, 2011:96). What *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are doing is to mirror the reality of Zimbabwean people's existence that has influenced and sustained these beliefs that have withstood the lacerations of the colonial system. The reason why the participants would probably think they are unbelievable is because they have been fed with Western sensibilities which posit that "everything including human beings can be given a natural explanation independent of the supernatural" (Igbon, 2011:96). In the African cosmology, the reality is a merger of the spiritual, the visible and the invisible all constituting the unwritten blue-print of the African peoples' lives. Unfortunately, this knowledge of Zimbabwean people's lives has been crowded out of existence by the dominant Western-oriented education system, religion and media. Again, this explains the experts' lack of appreciation of the kind of coverage disseminated by the two newspapers; it is because they are using borrowed spectacles, which may be inadequate to explain the African situation on the ground.

Against such, a background of Zimbabwean people's belief systems it would, therefore, not be a problem for newspapers in local languages, developed by and for the consumption of the local people to address these beliefs that form the backdrop of the Zimbabwean people's cultural existence. While the respondents' demand for news that address current economic and political issues is not being downplayed, what probably the newspapers could be advised is to find a way of harnessing the Zimbabwean belief system, the political and economic domains to their issues.

Question number 7 on the questionnaire was: **From a media expert or language expert perspective, what kind of coverage is expected of *Kwayedza* or *UMthunywa* as papers that represent the voice of the majority?**

Participant B, a media expert in the Department of Media and Journalism Studies at one of the State Universities in Zimbabwe, pointed out that the two newspapers have to cover all the issues that are handled in the other newspapers that are published in English, within the mainstream media, with the same breadth and depth in their coverage and treatment.

Participant B further proposes that, since the paper targets the greatest percentage of Zimbabwean indigenous language speakers, the papers must give a wide range of coverage of stories. What the participant implied was that the journalists have to be as diverse in their story coverage as possible in order to approximate the broad range of readers and reader expectations. The expert further posits that stories should also experience a:

transition from sensational esoteric to the more neutral news format guided by the 5Ws and an "H" (who? when? where? what? Why? and How? did it happen). Simply put, news as applying to any other print media product should be the guiding lenses for news covered in *Kwayedza* (Interview with participant B, 19 April 2016).

According to participant B, readers expect to get government policy positions, coverage on the state of the economy, national issues as well as the various strategies that would have been put in place in an attempt to manage them, just as they would do from *The Herald* or *Daily News* or *NewsDay*.

These findings give an impression that the coverage reflects a general inadequacy and incapacity of the indigenous languages to handle issues of political, economic, scientific and technological manner, among other fields, at both national and global level. What the participants are pointing at is that the two newspapers are indirectly campaigning for the continued use and hegemony of English for purposes of accessing critical national and global information.

Viewed in this context of, and as enunciated by the experts, for these two newspapers, prospects of accomplishing the task of re-awakening the history and cultural memories of the indigenous people become questionable and chances of becoming first ports of call for news and information to the Zimbabwean people shrouded with uncertainty. Newspapers are indeed platforms for obtaining and exchanging information. It is also no doubt that communities rely on them for unrestricted access to information on local, national and even global issues such as global warming, climatic change, economic trends and the political climate, among many other issues. Yet, the impression the participants get from the operations of the two newspapers is that English and not the local languages is necessary in the lives of Zimbabweans (Crystal, 2003), since it is the key to unlocking news coverage on issues on higher domains. For them the indigenous languages as a currency for trading for information on the global media market is devalued. As such English continues to be paraded the powerful currency on this global market place of ideas, information and knowledge. With such a scenario in the background, Mutasa's calls for the liberation of African countries from the grip of linguistic imperialism and the need to recognise indigenous languages (Mutasa, 2006; Ngugi, 1986; Chinweizu, 1987) is reduced to a fallacy. Their lobbying for a paradigm shift towards indigenous languages is met with a sneer as the newspapers that have gone for local languages find themselves being accused of failing to be considered as serious and authentic sources of information.

In the same vein, the broadening of the "public sphere, accessible at independence mainly to a privileged minority white elite" (Chuma, 2004:19), which was part of the transformative agenda, also becomes elusive as the kind of information that ends up being dished out to the

masses short-changes the readers, depriving them of the opportunity and privilege of accessing news in other domains of life save for the cultural domain.

An appraisal of findings from these participants would prove that the papers are found wanting in effectively spotlighting local languages in the media. The two newspapers, by virtue of using local language have a potential to be wide national and family reads, but, they have shied away from national and global political and economic issues and closed themselves together with their readers into a cocoon of what they perceive as their “cultural niche.” The statement that the participants are making is that readers do not live in a vacuum, they live in a global community where they are equally affected by what happens in that community while at the same time they also need to affect what would be happening in that community. In this case, one is reminded of the Indian philosopher’ Mahatma Ghandi. Ghandi said that he will open the windows to his hut to allow the winds of the outside world to freshen up the ideas inside but he proclaimed that he would do it in such a way that the windows are not too wide to allow the winds to blow away the hut. This analogue is a clear pointer that identity, as indeed development itself, feeds off the fruitful changes from elsewhere. Hence the unavoidable need to address issue such as global climatic, political and economic issues among others and in the process providing suggestions for circumventing the global challenges.

These sentiments that are raised are quite pertinent given the fact that these newspapers are the only platforms in the media fraternity that link the local people to the public domain. What this also implies is that the papers have to undergo a process of metamorphosis from the tabloid genre to one that caters for both the serious economic and political news that are handled in the spreadsheet newspapers as well as the human-interest stories which are characteristic of the tabloid. This way the papers will manage to bring the elite and the non-elite together tethered around media produced in their mother tongues.

Participant B further posited that over emphasis on the bizarre and novel tends to weaken the paper’s appeal to didactic and analytic readers. Resultantly the paper is turned into a ghost of

its original version whose agenda included promotion of a literary and reading culture for a country fresh from colonialism. The other argument that was raised in response to this question was the idea that the audience profile has vastly transformed within the more than three decades of political independence. According to participant (B), the paper now wavers dangerously on the disdainful assumption that readers are still semi-literate, semi-educated, excitable and incapacitated to interrogate media products:

...this is a dangerous policy, a blind-spot both at board and editorial policy levels. It largely accounts for the narrow readership the papers are speaking to when clearly the indigenous languages are used to address the majority of the country's population (Participant B, 19 April 2016).

Participant (B) further argued that the country's economic and political situation has brought about feelings of desperation at personal and group levels with a yearning for a change in the way the country is relating on the global arena. There are many questions of economics, politics, science and technology, hence the existence of social uncertainty which is uppermost in people's minds. These critical questions, he argues, are superficially alluded to or addressed than seriously engaged in *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa*. The participant also argues that against this background, it therefore, becomes imperative and most logical to resort to papers such as; *The Zimbabwean Independent*, *The Standard* and *The Herald* among others in search of alternatives and the missing viewpoints.

Interestingly, the fears that are being raised can only be felt by people who subscribe to the need to have close ties with the former colonial metropolitan states. The desperation that is alluded to by this participant is that which comes from insecurity emanating from the bold anti-neo-colonialism stance that was taken by the government, a stance that severed the nation from the global superpowers in the West. In fact, if the mandate of the two newspapers is to foster a cultural renaissance within the nation for purposes of empowering the people, it cannot afford to entertain and enhance the feelings of helplessness. Again, it is this attachment to the colonial metropolis that has blinkered some experts and prevented them from seeing that the two papers have a wide readership. In fact, this large pool of readership has been confirmed by the participants who represented the newspaper vendors and the crew at Zimpapers.

Again, as already revealed, the experts feel that some aspects of the two newspapers dampen the spirit of ‘analytic experts’. The impression that is given is that the less educated people who read and enjoy the products of the two newspapers are not analytic. What, however needs to be pointed out is that analytic power is not the preserve of the elite, the people in the rural areas and high density areas are highly analytic and imbued with high levels of intelligence. They actually could be the very people who analyse situations using the correct lenses.

Participant (B) also contends that news is driven and shaped by what is called expert systems. These, the participant claims, are known and acknowledged authorities in their areas of specialty who provide what readers think is a credible viewpoint. He pointed out that he finds these expert systems to be both weak and sparse in a paper which ideally has the potential to be a wide, national and family read. He believes that the manner of sourcing news is weak and the trail of opinion strong where fact and evidence are woefully required. This, he concludes:

militates against the seriousness of the papers relegating them to a casual read than a first port of call in the quest for news and information. Sadly, readers of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* mostly buy one title, *Kwayedza*, for various reasons, but predominantly, economic inability to purchase more than one title (Participant B, 19 April 2016).

For this particular participant:

the papers are strong in their ability to mesmerise but weak to challenge the mind as they clearly shy away from issues of an intellectual and discursive nature and debate on that platform (Participant B, 19 April 2016).

High sounding though this argument is, it is informed by elitist sensibilities. The term, expert systems are applicable to highly modernised societies where there is over-reliance not just on experts as authorities in different social structures, but computerised expert programmes. Searching for the definition of the term ‘expert systems’, that was raised by one of the participants, one finds out that this is a programme designed to solve problems at a level comparable to that of human experts in a given field. The impression that one gets here is that the papers are being expected to act as expert systems, become the authority, the think-tanks and source of authoritative information for people. This idea of expert systems as already

alluded to takes away the readers' power to make meaningful contributions and sense out of disseminated information. It gives the impression that one has to be an expert to deal with the problems and provide solutions to society. Yet within the context of the African society expertise is not acquired through reading mountains of books but through the careful tutelage and consistent guidance from life experience and wisdom acquired through age.

If the reporters of the two newspapers are going out into the community to collect their information before dissemination, then the expert systems in the form of the informants out there in the village are available. Discussions with the journalists who work at *Kwayedza* actually revealed that they interact with the people involved the very people at the centre of the stories such that what they get are first hand narratives of events and cultural issues. Thus, the informants who will be providing the narratives are experts systems in their own right. Accusing the papers of lacking expert systems is in itself an act of taking away the community's ability to tell its story as well as to address its situations and come up with solutions that best suit its context and available resources. In short it is tantamount to usurping the people's creative potential together with their capacity to determine and produce media products that best address and suit their inner essence.

In concurrence with Participant (B) is Participant (G), a language expert teaching at one of the highly-regarded and prominent High Schools in Harare who pointed out that the two newspapers have to adopt a paradigm shift and address issues such as global warming since such topics are very crucial to the lives of the people whose voices the papers purport to be representing. In addition, Participant (I) also believed that while it is good for the two newspapers to get credit from highlighting more on the Zimbabwean people's social lives, it would be prudent for them to also conscientise people on democratic and human rights issues.

While the argument on the need to address environmental issues, climate change and global warming is quite pertinent and holds water, the papers at their inception were aimed to uphold Zimbabwean cultural norms, values, belief systems and identity. Story coverage on

issues to do with mutual co-existence between the people and their environment, if read and understood well would go a long way in assisting people address issues to do with climate change from Zimbabwean cultural perspective. *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have stories on taboos associated with the environment. They have covered stories on tree species that cannot be used as firewood because it is perceived as taboo to use them as firewood. Such taboos have their own share of contribution to addressing issues of deforestation, soil erosion and, in some way, the depletion of the ozone layer. The newspapers in indigenous languages do not have to emulate the mainstream papers in their approach to environmental issues. They have to lobby from the Zimbabwean cultural perspective, using the Zimbabwean traditional philosophy to environmental preservation and management.

With regards to the demand for the papers to deal with issues of human rights and democracy, there, again, is evidence of the influence of western ideologies in the experts' appreciation of the newspapers in indigenous languages. The papers have first and foremost championed the observance of the linguistic rights of the people who are native Shona and Ndebele speakers. The papers' commitment to reversing the colonial era linguistic anomalies and challenge to the hegemonic position (Crystal 2003) that had been enjoyed by English in Zimbabwe can pass for a landmark achievement in the call for democracy and human rights in post-independence Zimbabwe. However, for most educated people who parade as experts in various fields, democracy and human rights are understood within the context of the dictates of the Western nations. For them, democracy and human rights can only be when they fall within the conceptual framework and interests of the West. One wonders if there can be any democracy which surpasses giving voice to the previously voiceless and muffled people as well as restoring their culture with all its rich reservoirs of knowledge and wisdom to the people. In the context of this research, making the public sphere accessible to the masses in Zimbabwe is a big score towards addressing linguistic rights as well as the people's right to information. It was a radical and aggressive move towards decolonising the national systems, challenging imperialist oriented media systems in the nation. In a way, the challenge has connected the media fraternity in the new Zimbabwe to the political, economic and cultural struggles in neo-colonial Zimbabwe. In choosing to communicate in the local languages, a political stance was being taken in the communication field that had previously been the preserve of the few elite and the colonial settlers. This move reversed the centre-

periphery one-way flow of information that characterised the colonial era (Chakravartty and Sarikakis, 2006).

Instead of crying foul and blaming the colonial system, through the launching of the two papers, the nation diverted the centre of disseminating information from Europe to Zimbabwe. It was “the most significant struggle over international communication policy” (Chakravartty and Sarikakis, 2006:30) in post-independence Zimbabwe. Geopolitical and economic and cultural imperatives set the principles guiding the paradigm shift towards emancipation Zimbabweans from structures of imperialist power. However, this democratic move which facilitated empowerment and unrestricted participation on the part of the local people is not easily recognised because of the loud intellectual debates on human rights and democracy.

Addressing the same question on the kind of coverage that is expected of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, Participant (H) also added that the local languages also need to be used for handling technical issues so that they are in tandem with their status of being official languages. According to Participant (E), reporting on issues that are covered by those newspapers that publish in English would ensure that the local languages get that rare opportunity of being used in the public domain, as media of disseminating current affairs, business, legal or court or any news that may be topical at any given situation.

It is true that the promotion of the local languages for use in the media fraternity has to involve extending their use in addressing technical issues. As for the need to cover stories that are covered by the main stream papers publishing in English, it is no doubt that exactly what the readers would be expecting. This implies as has already been highlighted, a conversion of the two newspapers from tabloid to probably broadsheet-cum-tabloid papers. This newspaper genre which sits in between the two previously separate genres will then be incorporating the serious news that are covered in the broadsheet newspaper. In addition, the new version would then include what participant (A) referred to as the highly shrouded in “superstitions” and “myths domains “which are predominant in most of the stories that

occupy the prime pages of the papers” (Participant A, 17 April, 2016) and are characteristic of the tabloid. The serious political and economic news coverage would then cater for the information needs of the educated elite such as the consulted experts while the so-called mesmerising stories will engage the semi-literate people who are believed to have no time for serious reading. The result would then see a convergence of the whole spectrum of the society on the newspapers published in indigenous languages. In such a situation, the information will be more empowering than ever before since nothing will be lost through translations or any other forms of making the news accessible to the readers.

Question 8 on the questionnaire was: **Comment on *Kwayedza* or *UMthunywa*’s ability to provide timely, accurate, impartial and comprehensive information to the widest possible audience, in a form and content best suited to the audience.**

Participant A, another media expert who teaches at one of the state universities, argued that for the two newspapers to provide timely information, they have to have a daily version to complement the weekly versions, if they are to capture the daily occurrences in the local and global society.

With regards to the papers’ coverage of state issues, the general consensus that emerged was that the papers are quite supportive of the government programmes. However, findings revealed that critics of the government seem to receive little or no coverage. Participants pointed out that these newspapers in indigenous languages are expected to cover an array of socio-economic, political and religious issues with all their complexities in an equally competent manner.

Question 9 read: **Media should also be about recognising the importance of the perspectives we are ignorant of or often ignore. Do you think *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

**help us tune into these ‘unheard voices’, providing a platform for the neglected or ignored voices?**

Responding to this question, participants stated that the idea being expressed here is the general assumption that media has to cater for the subaltern voices and perspectives. They concurred that the assumption is that media has to provide a platform from which the readers are helped to tune into these neglected and at times ignored voices, thereby allowing other sections of the society from which the readership ensues to understand the predicament, strengths and abilities of these neglected groups. For Participant (A), these neglected voices include among others the voices of the less privileged, the physically challenged, the poor, the uneducated, and the minorities (whose mother tongues may hardly be appreciated) and above all, political parties with alternative voices. These voices the participant argues have to get adequate coverage in the papers. This also implies that the needs and views of the voiceless have to be well presented.

Participant (A) concluded that instead of addressing the needs of these disadvantaged members of the society, *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* are:

specialising in diverting minds into trivialities, reinforcing the trivial issues and un-progressive beliefs among the poor, the less educated, and the physically challenged people (Interview with Participant A, 17 April 2016).

Participant (I) on the other hand, has a different perspective from that of participant (A) towards the papers, he argues that the two newspapers provide a platform for the voices of the marginalised and semi-illiterate people in Zimbabwe. In the two newspapers in indigenous languages, he sees those kinds of newspapers that strive to achieve a nationwide coverage of the news despite the fact that their head offices are resident in the two-main city centres of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo and Harare respectively. They cover news from the most remote parts of the country, areas that are generally rarely accessed by the journalists who work for the mainstream media who would rarely or never delve into the remotest corners of the nation except only when they are covering news on an official’s visit to such areas.

Be that as it may, Participant (I) strongly concurs with the majority of the participants who felt that any newspaper in indigenous languages should be as equally sophisticated as any other mainstream newspaper, in terms of the spectrum of issues being covered, the depth of coverage and the quality of evaluation of the information disseminated. Shona or Ndebele, they argued, should be regarded as equally powerful as all other foreign languages, such as, English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, among others. They stress that the newspapers in those local languages should have no choice, but to adopt a wide and in-depth coverage of issues. They should just be alternative papers in terms of language, not papers directed to a particular section of the population and with a selected domain of coverage, the findings revealed. Again, it has to be reiterated that these same sentiments, calling for the expansion of the scope of the paper have already been raised in the presentation and discussion of the data that was obtained from the interviews with the Zimpapers personnel.

Further commenting on the use of indigenous languages in media the participants suggested that language activists, specialists and even the government should not be struggling to convince people that there are a lot of strengths in using indigenous languages in issues of communication, these languages, they argue, should be used in all life domains and all the nation has to do is watch the empowered population as it enjoys and benefits from the use of indigenous languages which are carriers of the people's culture.

Commenting on the education section, *Denhe reruzivo* (the knowledge keg), in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* which apparently occupies a large chunk of the paper, the participants pointed out that there was no need to reproduce classroom lessons in the paper. As a reader, Participant (A) expects *Kwayedza*, for example, to use *denhe reruzivo* (knowledge keg) to address scientific, social, political, cultural, technological, economic, religious, legal as well as all facets of educational issues at a level which is the same as that at which English, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Japanese, among others, are being used in other forms and genres of media.

Further commenting on the ability to cater for the disadvantaged, Participant (A) stated that the two newspapers in indigenous languages should be easily accessible to the disadvantaged people, for instance copies have to be delivered to the nearest point for the physically challenged. He also questioned if the two newspapers in indigenous languages have, for example, brail versions of published issues to cater for the visually challenged members of the society. He posits that if there was no such provision, those two newspapers which are expected to give voice to the people are equally discriminatory.

Participant (B) on the other hand posited that admittedly, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*'s strategic strength has been its drive and capacity to open new avenues to often forgotten voices given the structure of the mass communication, which tended traditionally to focus on the elite, the male and whites of the society. Thus, in *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, what makes news is a departure from the above and concentrating on the ordinary man and woman of society.

Question 10 was: **Do you think the production of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* is a solution to the shortage of media products among the indigenous people who are not proficient in English?**

The general consensus among the participants of the research is that it is undeniable that the two newspapers have provided additional publications on the street corners of Zimbabwe. Of course, they argue, it is irrefutable that disadvantaged and minority communities want to read about themselves in a language that is theirs. Furthermore, they also argued that they want to be heard through the media. To that effect, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have provided part of the solution. However according to Participant (B); this has to be supported by other voice giving media such as radio and television.

What emerges conspicuous in the response to this question is the idea that the two publications are not a total solution. In fact, the responses point to the idea that the solution that is offered by these two newspapers is partial since the papers lack diversity in their coverage of issues as they find themselves bogged down to the culture niche which they

religiously cling to. Besides, in spite of the existence of these newspapers in indigenous languages, readers continue to visit other sources of news for effective engagement in national and global current issues and trends. Be that as it may, the readers' visits to other platforms for information cannot be used as ammunition to attack the two newspapers in indigenous languages. Their existence on the market does not necessarily mean the readers no longer have any freedom to consult other platforms of media information.

In concurrence with this idea is Participant (I) who argued that while the use of the local languages in the two newspapers might be rightly perceived as a solution to the shortage of media products on the information terrain, the reverse may also be true. The two papers, she argued, need to be complemented by other papers in indigenous languages. If the new constitution recognises 16 indigenous languages, publication in all these local languages would go a long way in providing a comprehensive solution to the shortage of media products on the media terrain for those people who enjoy reading newspapers written in their mother tongues as well as those who are not that much proficient in English.

Question 11 on the questionnaire was: **The media typically foster debate in the public arena, challenging ideas, the status quo, debunking myths and addressing taboo topics. Do you think that *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunyuwa* have managed to do this?**

There was general consensus that the spaces for debates have been availed by the two newspapers in indigenous languages. According to Participant (I), the two newspapers have done extremely well in fostering debate in the public arena particularly on social issues. She believes in these two papers those issues that under normal circumstances society is not comfortable to discuss are routinely tackled. She, however, feels that the debates are locked up in the cultural domains that are covered by the papers.

According to Participant (B), while acknowledging the idea that these papers set in motion debates, there is great need to qualify that these debates tend strongly to be at a social level. Thus, what we find is a social public sphere and less of a political and economic

public sphere. “Persuasively, we are inclined to conclude that the paper skirts around deep political issues and questions” (Interview with Participant B, 19 April 2016).

Commenting on the idea of the ability of the two papers to challenge the status quo, participants pointed out that the challenging remained confined in terms of domains of the newspapers’ coverage. Within the religious scope, participants felt that the status quo was being challenged. Religious leaders and their doctrines are being questioned and placed under scrutiny as revealed by the cartoons that are in *Kwayedza* to be specific, where there is evidence of cartoons such as ‘*maporofita ne n’anga dzenhema*’, among other cartoons. The participants feel that this challenge is confined to the religious belief systems and never comes anywhere near the political or economic status quo.

Otherwise, save for the scrutinising of bogus prophets and traditional healers, participants pointed out that these papers in local languages are actually reinforcing myths instead of debunking them. They argue that high frequency of reportage of stories on negative spirituality actually buttresses the myths, shelling the readers in a cocoon of past traditions which may be naturally waning from the minds of the population.

Question 12 was: **Does the presence of *Kwayedza* and/or *UMthunywa* on the Zimbabwean media fraternity make the media platform a democracy?**

Responding to this question, Participant (A) argued that it is difficult to talk about democracy in this case, because the word has been misused and abused by many to achieve their intended goals. The participant, however, finally argued that taking democracy from his personal perspective, there is no democracy. He pointed out that the statement that is being issued in the two publications is that those who use indigenous languages should remain locked or cocooned in the past while other newspapers and media houses that use English should float above the waves of current events. Furthermore, the participant argued that as long as other officially recognised languages are not represented in the coverage of news, the medialandscape will be too far away from talking about democracy.

Participant (B) on the other hand posited that the presence of the two newspapers in indigenous languages does not in any way make the media fraternity a democracy. Of course, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are merely two contributions to the achievement of democracy. The participant however acknowledges that their contribution is critical to the achievement of this democracy. As a follow, up to the idea of democracy, participant (I) pointed out that Zimbabwe is still far away from thinking of the media fraternity in Zimbabwe as a democracy because the two papers are only highlighting, predominantly Shona and Ndebele, and in some instances, Kalanga and Sotho (in *uMthunywa*) in a nation where there are 16 constitutionally recognised languages. There are so many speakers of other local languages, the participant stated, that have failed to find representation on the media fraternity in spite of their languages being recognised as official languages. The existence of predominantly Shona *Kwayedza* and a predominantly Ndebele *uMthunywa* symbolically divides the nation into two, Matabeleland (Ndebele) and Mashonaland (Shona) giving the wrong and dangerous impression that in Zimbabwe there are only two linguistic groups. In the process, this disadvantages and overshadows other linguistic groups in the same way English has tended to overshadow the rest of indigenous languages in Zimbabwe in particular and the rest of the formerly colonised world in general (Ndhlovu, 2007). According to participant (I), unless and until Zimbabwe starts publishing its media products using the diverse languages that it has been blessed with, there is no way by which we can talk of the media fraternity in the nation as being a democracy, because it lacks the requisite linguistic representation.

**Question 13 asked: Is the use of these indigenous languages in the publication of the two newspapers helping in any way to bail the indigenous languages from the doldrums of the media-linguistic terrain?**

The response that emerged from the participants is that the use of these indigenous languages cannot be equated to bailing Zimbabwean local languages from the peripheries of the linguistic-cum-media landscape. For participants like Participant (A), these publications have totally failed to liberate indigenous languages from the peripheries because of their pre-occupation with the traditional domain at the expense of current trends. This characteristic, it has been concluded, has resulted in a large percentage of the population in Zimbabwe not taking them seriously. The ultimate result has been that readers and the general public end up

looking down upon indigenous languages because of the failure of the papers to address a wider spectrum of news packages.

Question 14 was: **Does the use of local languages in *Kwayedza* and/ *uMthunywa* translate to the emancipation of people's lives?**

According to the findings from the experts, as long as the papers are not managing to provide news coverage that is appealing to those who believe in themselves as being sophisticated they cannot count themselves among media products that can emancipate societies. According to Participant (A), these papers are letting the indigenous languages, and the people who use them, down because of: 1) the limitations of the domains of their news coverage; 2) the trivialities covered; 3) the absence of sophistication and flexibility in terms of aspects covered in the news in the indigenous languages, and 4) the level of intellectual usage of the indigenous languages in the news coverage. The impression that is given here is that in an environment where there exist print media in both English and indigenous languages, to read the newspapers in indigenous languages is nothing but to be poor and semi-illiterate while reading newspapers in English is to be rich, educated and sophisticated. In a sense, the participants' responses are pointing to the fact that the mere adoption of indigenous languages in coverage of news stories may not be synonymous to restoring the gagged voices of the subaltern groups, the linguistically disadvantaged Zimbabweans. This thus implies that participants are of the opinion that the preference of an indigenous language for the collection and dissemination of media products may not suddenly endow indigenous people with the authority and capacity to fragment the western dominant cultural structures that continue to dominate their existence.

Participant (B) believes that many other factors have to be considered when talking about the concept of emancipating of people's lives beyond the paper itself. *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are just one vehicle towards popular emancipation. Sound though this argument is, it conjures ideas of arrogance on the part of experts. Surely, the satisfaction of those who view themselves as urbane cannot be the sole yardstick upon which the success of these papers is measured. Their ability to represent the ideals of the Zimbabwean culture and heritage has to

be the major benchmark upon which the success or lack of it of the papers is determined. In fact, the success of languages is not measured against the extent to which they are used by intellectuals, but the extent to which they manage to be effectively utilised for the benefit and empowerment of the general masses in their societies. Of course, it is no doubt that mother tongues are empowering forces to their communities.

Question 15 was a follow-up to the previous question and it read: **If the answer is no, what other factors should be considered to ensure maximum empowerment through the use of media?**

The concern that was reiterated was that Shona and/or Ndebele need to be used to address issues at a higher level in all the domains of news coverage to:

make them more appealing to people of different educational backgrounds who may want to read alternative papers published in their indigenous languages without belittling their intellectual level of operation (Interview with Participant A, 17 April 2016).

According to Participant (B), education, media literacy, constitutional literacy, access to economic opportunities, access to supporting media platforms for comparative discursive engagement with the key issues of defining society at any given moment are critical constituencies to societal empowerment. Access to social media tools today is also an integral part of popular or mass empowerment. As such, there were suggestions that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* take advantage of the social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube to carve an international presence while igniting global debate and discourse. This way, it is believed, the papers are likely to widen the spectrum of views in the public domain and nourishing public debate for more informed decisions and choices.

The other point that came out of the study was that media laws must be attuned to support popular empowerment. It was argued that currently the media laws need much realignment to capture the spirit of popular participation, a characteristic that is likely to lead to empowerment and ultimately development.

Participants generally concluded that a culture of reading for enjoyment and personal growth than exam-focus reading predominant among Zimbabweans must be encouraged. Such an agenda, they felt could only be achieved when vibrantly supported *via* media such as *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* as well as getting support from a multiplicity of magazines both print and electronic, themselves variegated into specialised areas such as women magazines, men's magazines, farming news, education news, sports news, health news. This should produce a whole gamut of active news production with the entire society talking vibrantly to itself in many diverse facets that shape it using their own languages.

Furthermore, evidence that has emerged from the responses of the participants has revealed that in most situations, the information that is disseminated in the papers tends to be riddled with elements of exaggeration. This exaggeration according to most responses only helps to sensationalise the stories and to paint a picture of a bizarre scenario that has a capacity of holding little or even no intellectual capacity.

In the same vein, the intellectuals who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the newspapers in indigenous languages have a mandate to provide coverage on information pertaining to the options that are available to the country, and even individuals. These concerns of a wider than narrower range, seems to be few and far between in the paper. If at all, the concerns are summarised even in situations where deeper discussion may be desired. Emphasising on the absence of this idea of a deeper discussion, one of the participants who responded to the questionnaire for readers of *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunywa* argued, "This leaves me hungry for information and at the worst let down, even betrayed by the paper" (Participant 5, May 2016). In concurrence with participant 5 was participant 16 who argued that: "We need political stories and coverage of even parliamentary or government debates". Addressing this area of deep concern, the participants went on, would provide room for improvement and the ability to capture a wider and more nuanced readership. In addition to the need to provide news that are centred on national and global political trends, there was also concern that the papers are very limited when it comes to issues of business reporting.

In their concluding remarks, experts stress the point that *Kwayedza* and *Mthunywa* need to adopt a paradigm shift by engaging into an ‘intellectual spruce’. With respect to the idea of intellectually sprucing up the two newspapers, there is need to exercise caution. As has already been alluded to, such arguments usually come from people whose interests and needs have been catered for by the mainstream media. Those sentiments and ideas normally come from people whose values, norms and dreams are shaped by the capitalist ideology. As such one wonders whose philosophy would be informing the so-called sprucing to suit the taste of this category of readers. If the sprucing has to do with the coverage of stories that resonate with the lived traditions of the Zimbabweans, then the call for the spruce is tainted with hypocrisy because according to Chinweizu the so-called myths and superstition are actually part of the sum total of the historical realities of African people. As such in calls for improvement on these papers that have made landmark breakthrough should take cognisance of Chinweizu’s (1987: xix) postulation that:

A decolonised and re-educated African ought always to demand that matters be explained from an Afrocentric viewpoint, with scientific tools, and that the results be translated into intelligible common sense. By so insisting, we enable ourselves to spot and avoid ideologies, open as well as hidden, by which we are liable to be confused and misled, and attractive myths by which we are liable to be tricked and lynched *en masse*.

In light of Chinweizu’s argument, the papers could be viewed as doing the right thing by spotlighting the myths and the belief systems of the Shona and Ndebele people. From an Afrocentric perspective, the papers are highlighting the systems that bind the people to their history and cultural heritage.

#### **5.4.0 Presentation and Analysis of Data from *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* Readers**

This section presents data obtained from surveys carried out among the readers of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* using questionnaire administration to the targeted participants.

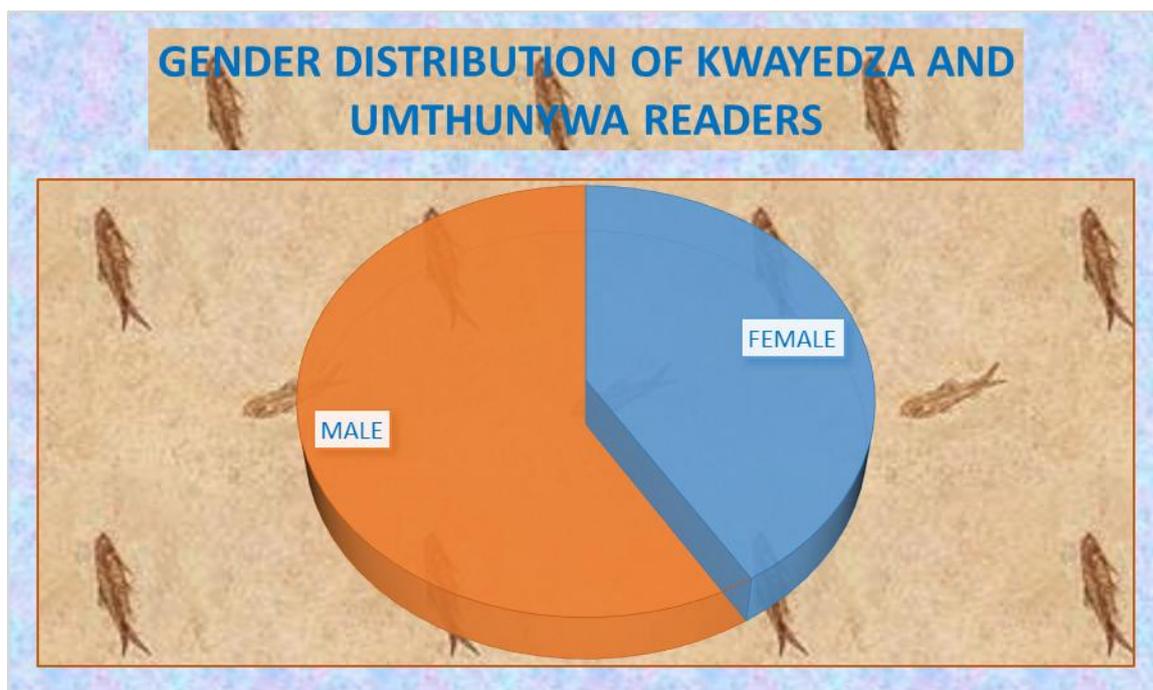
##### **5.4.1 Biographical information for *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* readers**

A sample of thirty-five participants was used for sourcing information on *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* readership.

##### **5.4.1 Table of the frequency distribution of gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	20	59%
Female	15	41%
Total	35	100%

Thirty-five participants were identified to respond to the questionnaire. Out of this number, 59% were male, while 41% were female. The pie chart presents the gender distribution of the participants who answered the questionnaire that was scheduled for people who read *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunywa*.



**Figure 5.5**

The general picture that emerges from this biographical information is that men and women equally have interests in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. This frequency distribution of readers of the two newspapers by gender reveals that both women and men almost have an equal interest in the two newspapers.

#### 5.4.2 Table of the frequency distribution of Age

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 20 years old	1	3%
21 – 30 years old	18	51%
31 – 40 years old	6	17%
41 -50 years old	3	9%
50 years and above	7	20%

Of the thirty-five people who consented to responding to the research questionnaire as readers of the two newspapers, 3% of the participants fell within the age range of 20 years

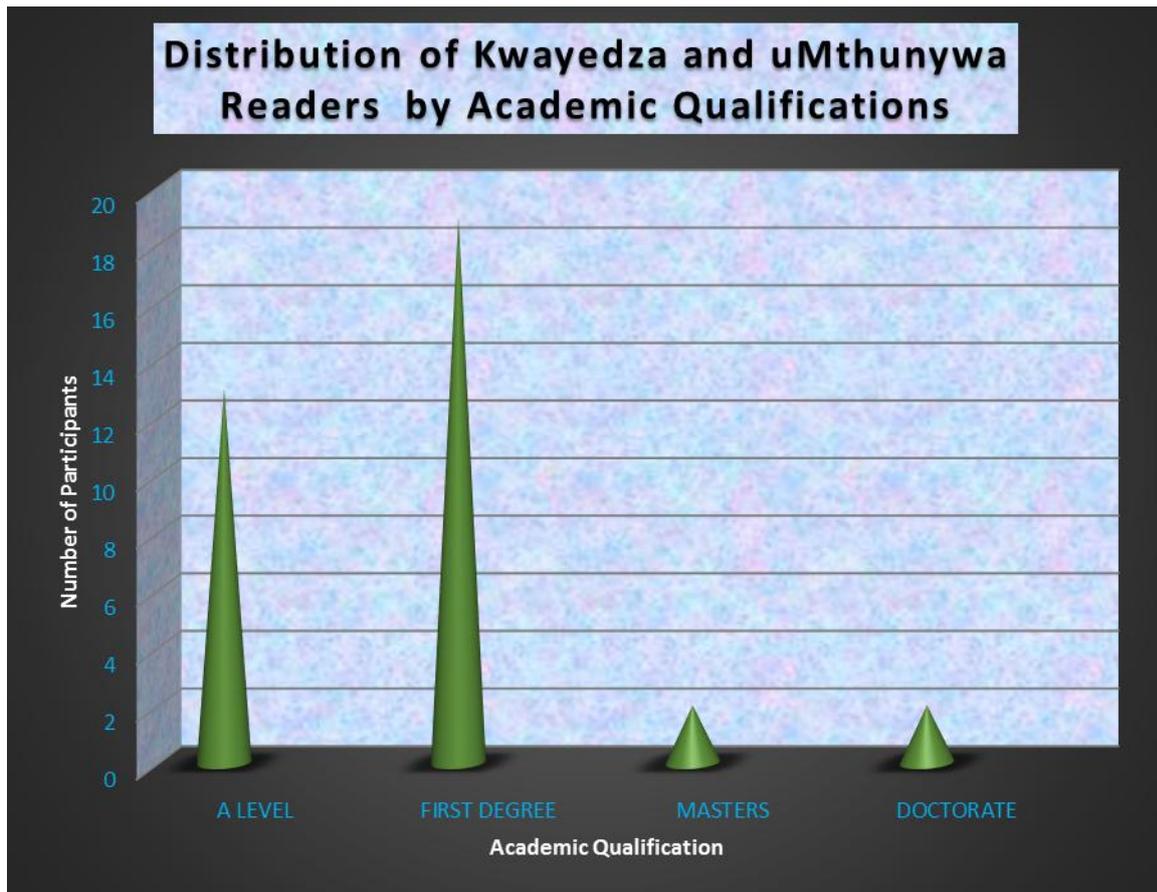
and below; 51% were aged between 21 and 30 years; 17% of the participants were aged within the range of 31-40; 9% fell within the 41-50 age group and 20% fell within the 50 years and above age range.

What appears to be prevailing is that the majority of the people who have a positive appreciation of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are the ordinary people in the community more than the educated people. It also emerged that even though people with university degrees read the paper, they visit *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* as media platforms not for serious engagement with burning issues of the day, but for the fascinating and mysterious stories in the papers.

**5.4.3 Table of the frequency distribution of academic qualifications of people who read *Kwayedza***

<b>Academic Qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
“O” Level	5	14%
“A” Level	7	20%
First Degree	19	54%
Master’s degree	2	6%
Doctorate	2	6%

Of the thirty-five people who participated, 14% of them had an ‘O’ Level qualification. 20% of them held an ‘A’ level qualification; 54% had attained first degrees, 6% of them had a Masters’ while the remaining 6% possessed doctoral qualifications.



**Figure 5. 6**

Question 4 on the questionnaire was: **What makes *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa* interesting to read?**

The general response was that these two newspapers are a source of interest because they are published in indigenous languages and their coverage concerns the lives of the indigenous people within the residential areas of the African population. Participants expressed that the point that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* report on issues that are happening in their own immediate environment and because the stories are covered and disseminated in the readers' mother languages, participants can easily relate to the experiences or events. This question also revealed that the uniqueness of the story coverage, which is peculiar and almost specific to the two newspapers makes reading the papers very interesting.

Responses to question 5 which attempted to find out the mother tongues of the participants proved rather tricky as most people generally classified themselves as either Shona or

Ndebele speaking depending on the region in which they reside. Those in Matebeleland would just say they are Ndebele, while those in Mashonaland would claim to be Shona.

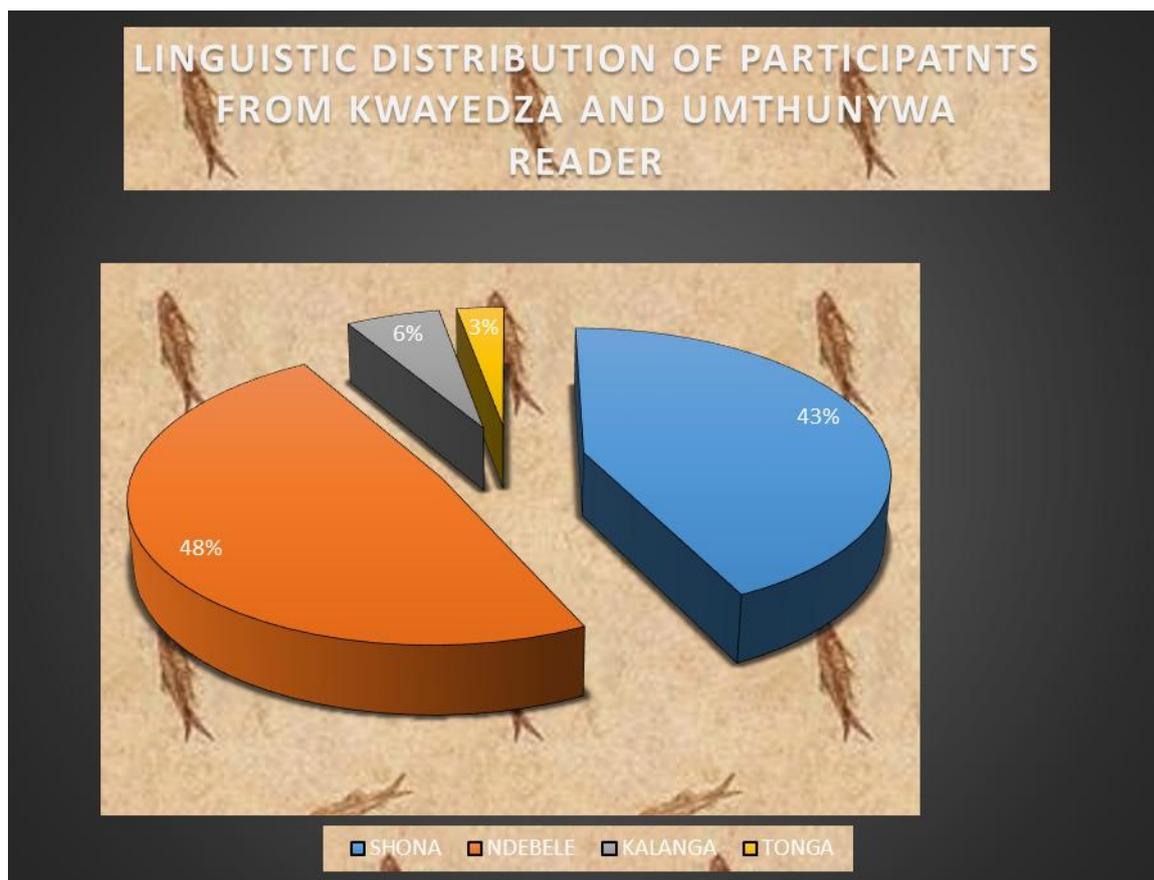
**Table 5.4.4 Frequency Distribution of Participants by Language**

<b>Language</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Shona	15	43%
Ndebele	17	48%
Kalanga	2	6%
Tonga	1	3%

Out of the 35 participants who were involved in the study as readers of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, 43% of them pointed out that they were Shona speaking, 48% were Ndebele, while 6% were native speakers of Kalanga and 3% belonged to the Tonga speaking group.

**Figure 5.7: Linguistic Distribution of Participants from *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* Readers.**

The pie-chart below is a graphic illustration of the distribution of the people who provided information for the study. It clearly illustrates the participants' mother languages.



**Figure 5.7**

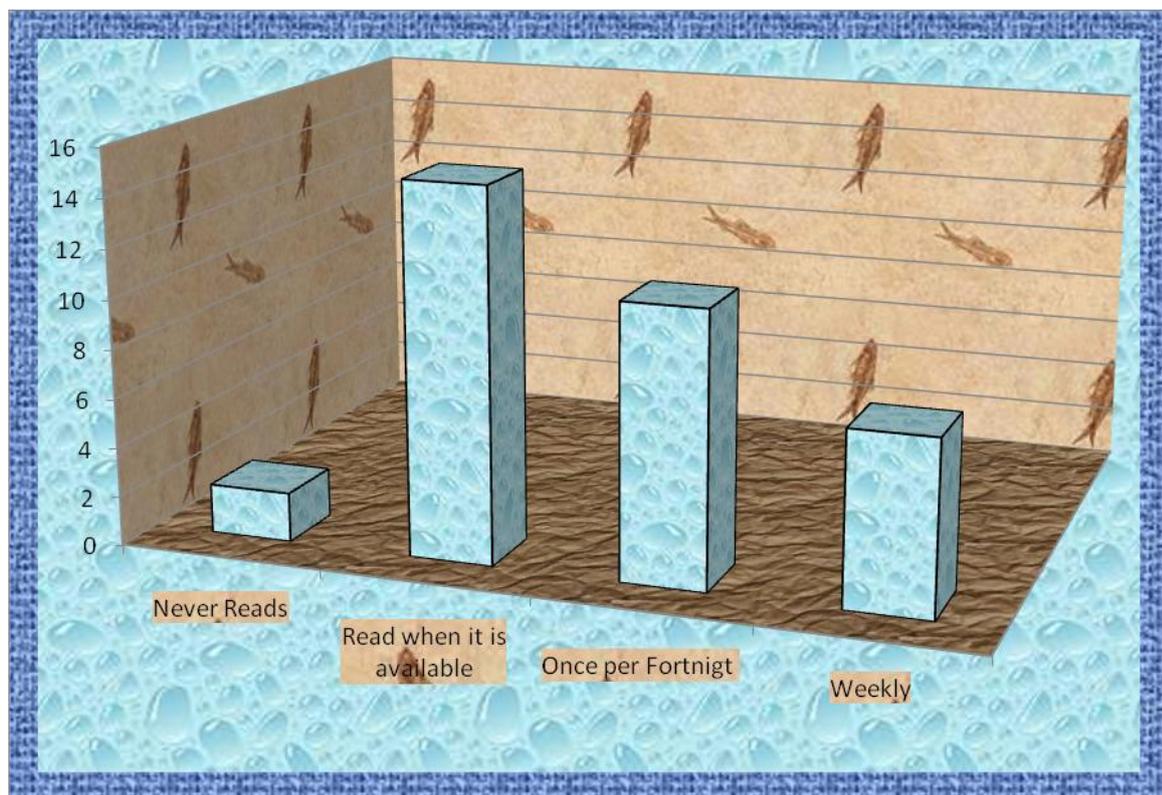
In response to question 6 which read: **How often do you read *Kwayedza/ or uMthunywa*?** The responses that emerged showed that virtually all the participants had seen *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa* on the street corners where most of the newspapers in Zimbabwe are sold. However, variations emerged when it came to the question of how much of the papers they read as well as the frequency with which they read these papers which are in their mother tongues. 43% of the participants pointed out that they read *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa* when they get a chance to come across them. Otherwise, they are that category of readers that do not really feel a pressing need to visit this news platform; nonetheless, they still would go through the pages of the paper if it is readily available to them. What this implies is that *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa* are not a first priority on their budget for news, information and entertainment.

**Table 5.4.5 Frequency Distribution of Nature of reading**

<b>Nature of Reading</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Have never seen <i>Kwayedza/uMthunywa</i>	0	0
Never reads <i>Kwayedza/uMthunywa</i>	0	0
Rarely reads it	6	17
Reads it when I come across it	8	23
Once every fortnight	10	29
Every week	11	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>100</b>

The data indicate that every one of the participants have seen the two newspapers on the street corners of Zimbabwe, it also emerged that they also read the papers in spite of the fact that the nature of their reading varies. 17% of them confessed that even though they read the papers, they rarely do so. 23% of the participants claimed that they read the papers whenever they come across them. 29% asserted that they read the papers at least every fortnight while 32% professed that they read the papers every week.

**Figure 5.8: Distribution of Participant on the Nature of Readership**



**Figure 5.8**

Question 7 on the questionnaire schedule asked: **Which columns of *Kwayedza* or *UMthunywa* are most interesting to you?**

The responses to question 7 were varied; some were not even sure of the columns that fascinated them in the two newspapers. The answers ranged from *Nhau dzematunhu, tsika nemagariro* in *Kwayedza*; *akubulawe zimbambo, ukuhluzwa kwezingwali*, in *uMthunywa*, while all the male participants pointed out that they were interested in sport news.

Question 8 on the questionnaire was: **Are the stories covered in *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa* related to Zimbabwean everyday life experiences?**

Responding to this question, 9% of the participants argued that the story coverage in the two newspapers have no links whatsoever to current experiences in Zimbabwe, 23% thought the stories were partially related to what is happening in the lives of the people, 26% thought the stories were linked to the traditional way of life while 31% of them felt that the experiences were related to those of a very small group of people. 11% of the participants chose to differ and they argued that the stories were linked directly to what is happening in the lives of the majority of the people in Zimbabwe at the current moment.

Question 9 read: **Are the stories covered in the newspapers linked to global/ international events?**

The impression that emerged is that there is very little link, if any, to global or international events. 20% of the participants claimed that the stories have no link to international events while 54% suggested that the stories rarely have linkage to global issues. This high percentage of responses aligned to the idea of having minimal links to global issues serves to qualify the arguments that were projected by the language, language Policy and media experts who responded to the questionnaire schedule that has been presented and analysed in section 5.3 of this chapter.

**Table 5.4.6 Frequency Distribution of Responses to the Newspapers Coverage Link to Global Events.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Not at all	7	20
Rarely	19	54
Half the times	7	20
They are linked to what is happening in the world	2	6

To further expatiate on the answer, they had provided in the previous question participants question 10 asked: **Give reasons for the answer you have provided for the preceding question. Provide examples of issues that you would look forward to read in *Kwayedza* if you feel there is something being left out.**

The general consensus among the readers was that they would surely want to be exposed to national and global (international) issues so that they are aware of the connection that exists between their country and the outside world. They pointed out that they would want to keep abreast with what is happening at both national and international level. Above all, they would also desire to know if they are moving in tandem with other countries in the region, the continent and the world. This information, it emerged, is critical as it enables members of the public to determine where the Zimbabwean society is in relation to global changes. Participants felt that at this point in history there are real fears under globalisation that people may find the Zimbabwean community shut out, therefore, that international voice and dimension need to be thrown into the print media coverage, in local languages, to ensure that people are not caught by international events napping.

What these participants are requesting for are newspapers that do not lock them within their localities. The implication is that they are positing that unlike in the early 1980s where nationalism was a very powerful force; there is now a more powerful force in the name of globalisation whose influence and effects cannot be easily ignored. Hence their quest for news coverage that provides a dosage of global issues.

Furthermore, there were other participants who felt that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* had to address issues that affect the people who live in the urban set-up. They felt that problems affecting people in the high-density areas where the majority of the people reside, whose voice *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* purport to be representing must be addressed. These have to include the surging population in the locations, water and sewage treatment problems, power outages, and the demolition of houses in towns. It should also include the regularisation of urban settlements for purposes of protecting desperate home owners, among many other

challenges that are faced by the previously marginalised people in the urban set-up, they pointed out. Again, this implies that this particular group of readers is advocating a change in the genre into which the papers fall. As one of the participants at Zimpapers pointed out, the papers are tabloids. As such their thrust has to be on human social interest issues. If the papers were to address the concerns of these participants, they would need to incorporate issues that might under normal circumstances not fall within the tabloid genre.

With regards to the representation of the voice of the people in the rural areas, there was also concern that serious issues that affect the lives of rural people such as climate change and even the El Niño induced drought should have been the critical issues around which discussions within the newspapers were generated, instead of concentrating on *zvikwambo* (goblins) and other traditional beliefs. The collected data revealed that respondents are aware of the fact that newspapers are sources of authoritative interpretation of events and as such, readers go to them for these kinds of interpretations. If there is going to be drought in Southern Africa, the participants pointed out, the readers need to be informed as to how widespread and deep this phenomenon would be. It would be the desire of the readers to get information as to whether the drought phenomenon is endemic to the region or it would be a global phenomenon.

The other idea that emerged from the study is that the coverage of issues in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* has gaps, issues to do with the environment, it was pointed out, are given lip-service yet the majority of the people live in rural areas where they rely on the environment. This existence of a large population in the rural areas, it implies, would dictate that coverage of sustainable utilisation of the environment is needed to preserve the environment for posterity. Like the experts who participated in the study, the readers also felt that issues to do with the depletion of the ozone layer and the risks associated with the situation, complicated and technical though they might be, have to be handled in these people's newspapers.

While such concerns are acknowledged, and appreciated, it has to be pointed out that the paper has a section on agriculture, *nhau dzevarimi* (farmers' news) where such issues are

handled. What probably these participants are pointing out is that these stories should be given primacy and made to occupy the front pages of the issues in which they appear. The raised argument could be resulting from the fact that the column on agricultural issues appear towards the far end of the paper. While in most issues the stories on traditional and cultural issues occupy the front pages. As the data collected from interviews with the personnel at Zimpapers has indicated, the thrust of the papers is promotion of moral, traditional and cultural values. As such, the front-page stories would no doubt be concerned with moral and cultural affairs.

The other idea that came out of the study is that some of the stories covered in the two newspapers are too fictitious to be believed, and for those that are real, there is a tendency by the reporters to exaggerate the situation to create an inexplicable story. According to the participants, the quality of the stories “reduces the paper to a mere gossip corner which can only be read by those who have nothing serious to do” (Sibanda, 2016). With regards to this point of view, it has to be highlighted that labeling some of the stories covered in the newspapers as superstitious is actually adopting a Eurocentric yardstick for assessing the performance of the paper on the media market. The research found out that these stories are not just myths; they are real life experiences that have been proved to be true by the people who are involved in them. It is unfortunate that the education that has been received by these readers could be playing a very big role in shaping their interpretation of the stories as superstition. The goblins and many other ‘mysterious’ things are a reality within the African cosmopolitan, they form part of the African people’s spirituality. What probably could be the worry of these readers is the fact that the papers are placing too much emphasis on the negative aspect. Otherwise, it would be unfair to label the stories as non-existent mental impressions of concerned people.

To conclude, the readers of the two newspapers in Shona and Ndebele, just like the experts are hankering for papers that would delve into issues of the local business environment, the global financial landscape, and the global politics as well as governance issues at national and international level. The general consensus among the readers of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* is that these two papers have to address more issues or problems affecting the people. The

readers want to read and experience the political voice of the people that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* represent. For them, the coverage is too much engrossed on socio-cultural and religious issues as if these issues are divorced from the global experience. The main problem, they argue is not just about the nature of the stories covered, but also even the manner in which they are disseminated to the masses, the bulk of the presentation of all that is negative.

Like the experts in language, language policy and media, the readers appreciate the positive move that the two newspapers have taken in presenting news in their local languages as well as showcasing the Zimbabwean cultural values and norms. However, they are also concerned that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have not taken time to consider addressing more domains of life other than the cultural one that has been the preserve of papers. Furthermore, participants were full of praises to the editorial team for developing an electronic version of the newspaper which has made it easy for many people to easily access the media platform from their cell-phones.

Question 11 on the questionnaire schedule was: **How do you access *Kwayedza* and/or *uMthunywa*?**

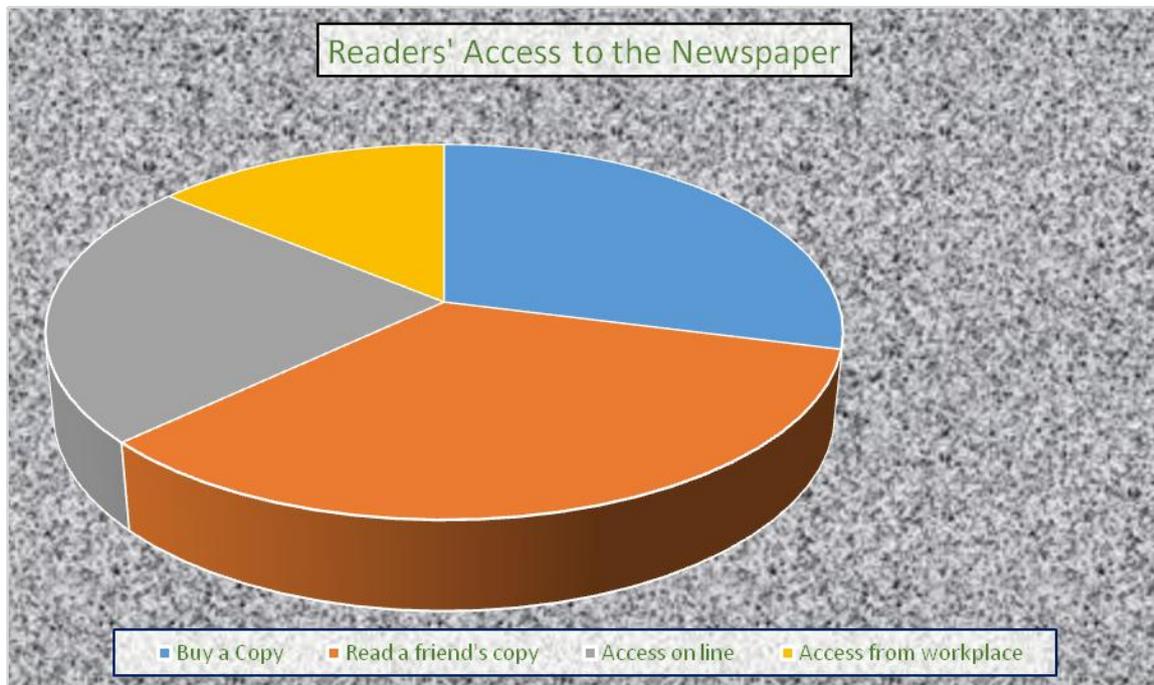
Table 5.4.6 demonstrates the various ways by which readers of the two newspapers, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* access the newspapers.

**Table 5.4.6 Frequency Table on how Readers Access the Newspapers.**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Buy a copy	10	29
Read a friend's or relative's copy	12	34
Access online	8	23
Access copy from workplace	5	14

It emerged that 29% of the readers of the two newspapers actually buy the newspapers to access the news. 34% read papers that would have been provided for them by friends or relatives. This implies that if one person within the family or group of friends buys a copy, then automatically all those who are linked to him or her get access to the papers. 23% confirmed that they access the papers on-line while 14% pointed out that they read copies that are delivered to their workplaces.

**Figure 5.9: How Readers Access the Newspapers**



The survey finalised by asking the participants if they had **any other comment on *Kwayedza* or *uMthunywa***.

All the participants agreed that the papers have done a sterling job in promoting indigenous languages given the fixation that Zimbabweans have with the English language. They argued that the two papers have soldiered on despite facing a lot of hardships. However, participants felt that the papers have failed to take advantage of the opportunity presented by these indigenous languages to unfold wider the range and realm of discussion topics that could be

carried out for the development of the country. Participants concurred with Bamgbose's (2011) position that indigenous languages are a powerful weapon of empowerment. For them, the use of these languages in the media could greatly facilitate development and empower communities far much better than borrowed colonial languages. In fact, readers of both *UMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* unanimously agree that they enjoy reading newspapers that publish in their mother tongue. According to Participant 1:

*UMthunywa* has done a great job, the paper has even catered for those people who are not proficient in English" (Participant 1, May 2016).

Such a statement indicates that the readers at least acknowledge that the papers have created an opportunity for making choices on the media platform.

## **5.5 Content Analysis Discussion of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* Story Coverage.**

### **5.5.1 *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*: the tabloids**

Before any meaningful discussion of the news coverage of the two newspapers is done, it is imperative to explain the genre under which these two papers fall. According to the data collected from the interviews with the personnel at Zimpapers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are tabloid newspapers. Participants at Zimpapers indicated that the papers are anchored on tabloid journalism. With this pronouncement from the producers of the two papers, it therefore becomes imperative to examine the tabloid as a media genre. Exploring the category of the media products will greatly assist in understanding the rationale behind the presentation of certain news items in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*.

### **5.5.2 Defining the Tabloid**

According to Narsee (2013), the "tabloid" refers to a type of culture in the mass media which is sensational. The tabloid, he argues, places importance on the commercial aspects of media content. The profit that is likely to be accrued from the dissemination and circulation of the media product is given more prominence than any other outcome of the news dissemination.

Hujanen, 2005 cited in Narsee, (2013), on the other hand argues that the tabloid can be viewed as a move in emphasis from hard news to salaciousness, sensation and entertainment.

What, however, emerges from the literature on the tabloid as a genre of media is the fact that the tabloid has the capacity to act as the voice of the voiceless, the large groups of the working class and the peasants who in most instances are side-lined and excluded from media coverage by the mainstream media. The argument that emerged is that the tabloid provides a platform, for the inclusion of these previously relegated members of the society, by providing an outlet through which their views, concerns, hopes, aspirations and impediments could be articulated.

This genre according to Narsee (2013), has gained popularity among media consumers as it appeals to the everyday life experiences of the ordinary person on the street. The news coverage in tabloids relates to the life experiences of the readers and issues that directly affect them in a humorous manner and in a language, that is understood by them. The focus in the tabloid is not the political elite and their leadership wrangles (Narsee, 2013). Rather it is the general people on the streets and their struggles to earn a living in the seemingly hostile economic and political national and global terrain. As a result, the tabloid has managed to appeal to its readers by handling issues that are important to them as well as challenging authorities on behalf of the readers. The other characteristic of the tabloid that has contributed immensely to its popularity among the previously relegated members of the society is the idea that, generally, the tabloid is popular for its affordability and “millions purchase tabloids at affordable prices and the majority of these readers have previously never purchased a newspaper before” (Narsee, 2013: 15). *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* fit well in this genre, since they are affordable in comparison to other papers in the mainstream media that publish in English.

Narsee (2013) further argues that tabloids offer their readers company, understanding and guidance. It is this companionship and trust that tabloids have created which invites readers to turn to them for help. People who have been disappointed by issues that affect them come

to tabloids because they believe that someone is listening and someone will tell their story (Narsee, 2013).

The other point that has been raised about the tabloid as a genre of media is that tabloid journalists speak to the people first and then speak to the officials last (Narsee, 2011). What this implies is that the tabloid journalists go out to the communities that were previously neglected and create contacts with those communities. Rather than focusing on the 'big fish' with their 'big elitist stories', tabloids do what journalists are traditionally expected to be doing, 'giving voice to the voiceless' (Narsee, 2013).

As has already been highlighted, the tabloid as a media genre is unlike the mainstream media that is largely elitist in its news coverage and reporting and often has a high propensity of excluding the poor and disadvantaged members of the society. And unlike journalists in the mainstream newsroom that often rely on press releases, the telephone and the internet to get their stories, the tabloid journalist actually goes out there to collect stories. The tabloid has taken it upon itself the responsibility of rekindling the relationship that should, under normal circumstances, exist between the community and the media (Narsee, 2013).

According to Narsee (2013), the tabloid is on record for facilitating public discussion and debate, which is a critical component of most nations emerging from the colonial experiences. It demonstrates a paradigm shift towards the previously neglected majority, allowing them access to the public sphere.

Another characteristic feature of the tabloid as a genre is the dissemination of quick-read stories which are in most cases accompanied by illustrative pictures to fill up the missing components of the story that would have been compromised by the need to present simple, straight forward and not so difficult to decipher type of story coverage. It is this quality that makes scholars such as Luthar (1998) point out that in the tabloid media, there is a deliberate fusion of the visual and verbal aspect of the covered story. For Luthar (1998):

The tabloid news are aesthetical visual spectacles. It is precisely the visual techniques and their simulation of authenticity which makes the news seem real than reality itself (Luthar, 1998:10).

This therefore implied that the visual presentation becomes more important than the verbal presentation of the information, hence “the strong emphasis on the visual aestheticisation of news” (Luthar, 1998:15). Luthar, (1998) further contends that the events, as explored in the tabloid genre are presented within the context of the personal experiences of the readers as well as within the framework of their concept of common sense.

In light of the discussion of the tabloid a genre, and again taking cognisance of the study, one gets an impression that while this genre places emphasis on the previously disadvantaged, and provided an opportunity for empowerment through accessibility and affordability of media products, it has very little room for engaging the political and economic issues of the day. What emerges from the information on the tabloid is that in 1985, Zimbabwe in its pursuit to empower its populace chose a genre that emphasised ‘sensation’ at the expense of critical dimensions of life in the form of politics and economics. This genre that was adopted by the two indigenous newspapers made the papers compartmentalise life experiences, giving the impression that one can live a cultural life that is divorced from politics and free from the economic factors of the day. The million-dollar question that arises then is: Can this genre effectively assist the masses to critically reflect on their political and economic situation and empower them to participate in political, economic and cultural processes from an informed position for positive transformation of their own society?

### **5.5.3 *Kwayedza* Sections or Pages**

The front page carries the main story headline or headlines with eye-catching pictures. Usually there is only one advert at the bottom of the paper called the solace advert. On Page 2, that is where in-depth content to do with culture and tradition – *Tsika Nemagariro* – is placed. Traditional leadership is the usual sources of such content as the paper tries to connect the past with the modern world. From pages 3, 5, 6, 7, 8; the paper carries other news

stories. Page 4 consists of the leader page where the comment is found, usually written by the Editor. It is on this page that the editor guides and manipulates the emphasis of the story along the chosen path to suit the paper's ideological slant. The editor, thus, eliminates the undesirable content to ensure that what sails through suits the purpose of the paper. The editor, thus, enhances the major points, drawing attention to places where the audience should focus. In short, he/she sets the agenda and assumes the gate keeping position.

It is also on this same page that the main cartoon and readers' feedback column *Tiudzei* (Let us know) are found. The readers' views that can either be positive or rubbishing some of the newspapers' content are published on this page. Pages 9, 10, 11, 16 are reserved for the education content targeting schools. This section drives the paper as many schools have embraced *Denhe Reruzivo* (knowledge keg). Set books for examination writing students are well analysed to help school children tackle examination questions. It is in this part of the newspaper that one also finds the cartoon *Manuwere* (which only focuses on educational issues, in this section).

The Centre Page (Pages 12 and 13) can have a lead story which might be political in orientation. This story would co-exist with some turns from other pages. Page 14 features the cartoon, stars (*nyenyedzi*) and a puzzle entitled *Tsvaga mazwi* (look for words). Page 15 caters for the interests of women. The paper is aware of the fact that women constitute the highest percentage of the readership of *Kwayedza*. On this page, there is a dressing competition called *Kwayedza* African Woman of the Year Competition. The competition is sponsored by *Kwayedza* in a bid to promote "descent" African dressing and in a bid to fight cultural erosion (cultural imperialism) through the media. Women from all corners of the country send in their photographs for publication and winners are selected by readers and published at the end of the year.

Nhau Dzeutano: This page carries health news since health reporting is very crucial in journalism. Page 18: Readers find *Tete Chipanga mazano* who addresses different social issues from readers and a column from page sponsors Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association (ZWLA).

Tishamwaridzane: This is one of the pages that drive the newspaper with contributors writing from all corners of Zimbabwe seeking for love partners who would want to go into relationships. Page 20: This is the Entertainment and religion page. This is where readers find the high informative column *Imbwa Haihukure Sadza* by prolific poet Ignatius Mabasa. Nhau Dzevarimi: This page carries farming content. Pages 22, 23 and 24 consists of sport content – both local and foreign. Because Zimpapers has embraced new media technologies, foreign stories for page 23 is attributed to different international media houses like BBC Sport, Reuters, CNN, Sky Sports News or Daily Mail Online.

#### **5.5.4 The Post-independence Media Ideology**

In post-independence Zimbabwe, the media ideology revolved around the need to create an environment that ensured that the “press was mass-oriented and nationally accessible” (Ronning and Kupe, 2000). This implied that the press had to have an empowering effect on its readers after nearly a century of disempowerment through and an unfair distribution of media products which was skewed in favour of the settlers. To ensure that this grand aim was achieved, the Mass Media Trust was founded and tasked with the responsibility of ensuring that the media is made accessible to the masses. What, however has to be emphasised is that the most crucial goal (at national level), at that historical juncture, was ensuring that the new media terrain and all the systems that supported it did not remain “entombed in the casket of its predecessors” (Chihuri, 2013: 213) whose thrust was spreading the voice of the imperial system and muffling the voices of the masses.

#### **5.5.5 The Historical Voice and Memory in *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza***

While the general consensus among the producers of the two newspapers in indigenous languages has been that the papers are very much distanced from the political and historical discourses of the day, an appraisal of *Kwayedza* has revealed that there really is a politico-historical voice in the paper even though this voice does not dominate the human social interest discourse as the participants have tended to term it. One participant from *uMthunywa* had argued that the politico-historical voice can only be implied. However, in some sampled

issues of *Kwayedza*, that voice came out clearly and loud even though it was not given the amount of space that could allow it to shout to everybody who reads the paper.

#### **5.5.5.1 The Historical Voice and Memory in *uMthunywa***

*UMthunywa* does not cover much of the issues that have a direct bearing on the colonial historical-political issues of the nation. The reason could be that the paper assigns such responsibility to *The Chronicle*, which is a daily paper. The August 13, 2015 issue, however, has a story that covers the heroes' day celebrations in Bulawayo; "*Kuthakazelelwa usuku lwama qhawe koByo*" (Heroes Day celebrations in Byo). The story covers the Heroes Day celebrations in Bulawayo that were carried out at the Nkulumane Provincial Heroes Acre. The story highlighted the importance of the HeroesDay and spells out that the independence of the nation would have been impossible had it not been for the heroes. Such an approach to this historical landmark gives readers reasons to reflect on the sacrifices that were made by the heroes who lost their lives in the protracted struggle for the independence of Zimbabwe. The day, the story continues, is meant to provide an opportunity for the nation to express its profound respect for the gallant sons and daughters that took up arms to repossess the land that had been forcibly wrestled from the Zimbabweans. The story tries to link the political empowerment that came as a result of the liberation struggle to many other forms of emancipation. This is done through highlighting the major aspects of the President's speech which was anchored on indigenous languages. The story spotlighted President Mugabe's reiteration that the indigenous languages will be made media of educational instruction to minimise annihilation of other speech communities on linguistic grounds. What this story is pointing out is that the Zimbabwean people's independence will never be complete and fruitful until it is accompanied by linguistic empowerment. This explains the story's emphasis on the promotion of the indigenous languages as a unifying strategy that complements the cultural and linguistic diversity that characterise the nation.

In another issue, July 30 (2015) *UMthunywa* has a story "*Bathakazelelaimpilo yeqhawe uDkt Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo*" (they commemorate the life of Dr Joshua Nkomo). This story covers the arts festival that was held in commemoration of the life and history of Dr. Joshua

Mqabuko Nkomo, *Umdala Wethu*. The story highlights that the artists were doing this in remembrance of the gallant sons and daughters that sacrificed their lives for the independence of Zimbabwe. The artists, the story goes, acknowledged that there were some heroes who never lived to witness and enjoy the fruits of their sacrifices. The story further emphasised the point that the artists cherished the call and reverence for unity that Dr Nkomo spread and nurtured among members of the Zimbabwean community.

In yet another issue of, August 6 2015, “*Awanikezwe inhlonipho efaneleyo amaqhawe*” (heroes must be accorded the respect that is due to them). One former freedom fighter encourages young members of the society to search for the history and memory of the liberation struggle from the elderly members of the society who experienced it in order for them to better appreciate the struggle for independence. It is the acquisition of this in-depth knowledge of the liberation struggle from a Zimbabwean perspective, the story goes, that will assist them to guard it jealously. The former freedom fighter concluded by encouraging members of the society to desist from discriminating one another on tribal or ethnic grounds and be united in the promotion and safeguarding of the Zimbabwean norms, customs and traditions because a nation is what it is because of its cultural norms and values as expressed in the Ndebele saying ‘*isizwe yisizwe ngama siko aso*’ literally translated to (a nation is a nation because of its cultural norms and values). This therefore implies that a nation which can stand firm on its cultural pillars is an empowered nation. As such, receiving such words of wisdom through media dissemination is in itself an empowering move. After reading such stories from *uMthunywa*, one is left convinced that in the sampled issues the Zimbabwean historical experiences are respected and acknowledged. Such a stance in news coverage has a high propensity to empowering the readers.

Even though sampled papers of *Kwayedza* have not registered coverage of issues to do with the Heroes Day, as *uMthunywa* has done. It is worth noting that the paper has made the importance or significance of the Heroes’ Day clear to the readers, particularly those who were born after independence, the born frees. Through *uMthunywa*’s coverage of the Heroes Day the nation is assisted in remembering the selfless sacrifices of the gallant sons and daughters of Zimbabwe. The statement being made in *uMthunywa*’s news coverage is that the

liberation struggle, the death toll, the displacement of people and above all the general suffering that accompanied independence is indelibly carved in the history and memory of Zimbabwe and cannot be erased. Hence, the Zimbabwean community cannot afford to ignore it. It is, thus, worth noting that the papers in indigenous languages are spelling out how the Heroes Day came to be; why the nation has it on its calendar as well as the significance of the day to the history of the nation at large. The papers have taken cognisance of the fact that for many of those who were born after 1980, Heroes Day or even independence is taken as an ordinary break from work for purposes of relaxation. Of course, people would surely rest and relax given any form of holiday, but as a way of pursuing the agenda that was set for *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* in 1985, the coverage is slanted towards probing people to reflect as well as remember the significance of these memories.

Through the coverage of events that are packed with the history and memory of the nation, the papers have helped in their own ways in recording, in written form, the Zimbabwean story for the benefit of posterity. They have made their own contribution in making the Zimbabwean people's version of history reclaim its space on the historical records alongside the versions of the former colonial masters who happen, of late to be taking a leading role in writing the history of Zimbabwe. It would be ideal if these newspapers record these narratives at great length so that posterity can have a better appreciation of the history of Zimbabwe, particularly its road to independence. This dimension is unfortunately missed by the participants who responded to both the questionnaires and interviews. The respondents' concept of political coverage could probably be restricted to the current political scenario that is characterised by leadership wrangles and power struggles. These participants have actually maintained that they have to resort to other newspapers for them to get a dose of political coverage. For *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, the political coverage has to be in tandem with the agenda that was set for the papers at their inception; promoting that which is ideal about the Zimbabwean history. Of course, their claim that there is very little of international political news coverage continues to hold water.

Taking cognisance of the fact that school going children are part of the readership base of these two newspapers, the two papers have played their role in documenting the significance

of these important days on the calendar where the masses are given an opportunity away from their busy schedules of work. The papers have tried to reverse the situation where the new generation, known as the born-frees, know more about Western heroes than they know about Zimbabwean as well as African heroes. The reason behind that scenario has been that heroes from the west have been immortalised in books, films and documentaries, a scenario which is found lacking in Zimbabwe. *UMthunywa* thus has taken it upon itself to set the ball rolling along those lines. The stories in the paper have made it clear that the history behind the Heroes Day is the support base of the present and remembering and commemorating that day would remind people of the need to continue fighting for total political, economic, religious and ideological independence of the nation.

In their narratives, newspapers in indigenous, as expressed in the sampled *uMthunywa* issues, have made the struggle for liberation a living force which shapes how the young generation and the rest of the readers view themselves in relation to other nations. They have tried to make the liberation struggle so pervasive, a key aspect of the ubiquitous national ethos which informs and guides all people's actions as they interact at individual and national level as well as with the environment around them (Zhuwarara, 2016 cited in Andreuci, 2016). *UMthunywa* in particular has tried to make the coverage and narration of the stories create a national sensibility that is steeped in the historical experiences of the nations as it moved from colonialism to the present-day situation.

In its narratives, *uMthunywa* has made the struggle for liberation a living force which shapes how the young generation and the rest of the readers view themselves in relation to other nations. It has made the liberation struggle so ubiquitous, a key aspect of the pervasive national ethos which informs and guides all people's actions as they interact at individual level, national as well as with the environment around them (Zhuwarara, 2016 cited in Andreuci, 2016). The coverage and narration of the story is done in such a way that it creates a national sensibility that is steeped in the historical experiences of the nations as it moved from colonialism to the present-day situation.

### 5.5.5.2 The Historical Voice and Memory in *Kwayedza*

The politico-historical voice in *Kwayedza* is pronounced in the column *Ziva- ibvawaziva* (literally translated to: Know and get to know it). This could be the shortest column in the twenty-four-paged tabloid. Critiquing this shortest column, one would surely acknowledge that *Ziva- ibva waziva* is a socio-political and cultural awakening column which probably should be occupying more space than it has been given in the issues. Given the obligation of the paper as specified at its inception, this awakening column deserves to be given more space than the insignificant corner that has been allocated to it.

An analysis of some of the sampled issues reveals that this seemingly insignificant corner occupying column has a historical voice which attempts to revive the memories of the Zimbabwean experiences at the hands of the imperial project and all the systems that accompanied it. It is such historical knowledge that is essential in informing and empowering the people with the wisdom of the way to forge into the future.

The reason why the news crew thinks they are doing very little with regards to the coverage of the historical and political voice is because the column that covers these issues is very short and overshadowed by other stories. It takes a person who reads every page and every column of the paper to notice it. For purposes of this study, it is imperative to note that, what matters is not so much the length or quantity of the disseminated information, but the quality of the historical information that is dished out to the readers and the final implication to the people's perception of them. The sampled issues of *Kwayedza* give the readers an exposure to some of the historical episodes that characterised the imperial project and these are explored through this column - "*Ziva-ibva waziva*". However, because of the amount of space allocated to the column, the detail and analytical approach which the presentation of the stories would have called for is found wanting as the reporters grapple with the need to make the mouthful information fit into a very little space. Furthermore, tabloidisation also has its own fair share of contribution to the stifling of the analysis, depth and breadth of the news coverage.

Of course, historians have been on record lamenting over the “deploring and oversimplification of history and politics in magazine features [and newspapers]” (Foner, 1996:435). What is important in this study is the inescapable point that the coverage of these historical and political issues point at the critical milestones that accompanied the imperial project, events that are familiar to everyone who has an interest in the history of Zimbabwe as a nation. At the historical juncture at which *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* were established as media platforms available to the masses, there is evidence of an attempted shift of attention and methodology in the dissemination of the history of the nation. Attention appears targeted at the previously marginalised groups, that is, those people who could have encountered problems accessing the textbooks that were presented in the colonial master’s language. Through the presentation of the short episodes of *Ziva-ibva waziva*, the history of the nation is being moved from the four walled classrooms, from the history textbooks to the masses out there in the countryside for them to appreciate and make sense.

#### **5.5.6. The Coverage of the Colonial Encroachment in *Kwayedza***

The encroachment of the imperialists is a critical milestone on the history and memory of the African people. These recollections of colonialism are captured in some of the sampled issues where there was coverage of the coming of the European race into Africa. This coverage took the story right from the coming of the Christian missionaries to the ultimate conquest of the nation after the defeat of the Ndebele and the Shona people in the Ndebele uprising of 1893 and the Shona uprising of 1896 respectively. What however, is worth noting is the fact that the editorial team takes a casual approach to this decisive memory as indicated by the size of the column as well as the placement of the column. This casual approach is actually revealed by the lack of titles to these critical stories. The stories are just presented as critical historical events in summary form.

*Kwayedza* traces the imperial project back to the 15th century when the Christian religion was introduced to Mutapa Empire. *Kwayedza* (*Gumiguru* 24-30, 2014:2) through its column *Ziva -ibva waziva* had one historically oriented story which stated that during the 16<sup>th</sup> century

the Christian missionaries tried to convert people in the Mutapa Empire to Christianity. Converted Africans in the Mutapa Empire were baptised and conferred with 'Christian names'. However, the story goes, these attempts proved difficult because the people had a strong and unwavering belief in their traditional customs, norms and values. The people in the Mutapa Empire were quick to notice the unscrupulous intentions of the imperialists because they were closely tied to their cultural systems which provided them with the lenses with which to view themselves in relation to the outside world. These systems assisted them realise that the Whiteman was a cultural and social conqueror whose role was just equivalent to that of the military conqueror (Cabral, 1974).

What emerges in this story, though very short and covering an insignificant space of the twenty-four (24) paged tabloid, is the question of the importance of a people's cultural belief systems, values and norms in processes of defending and maintaining a people's autonomy and self-control. It is made clear in this short story that a people's cultural fabric provides the basis upon which devotion to protect the nation's heritage is grounded. The story of the protracted struggle for independence as presented by the multiplicity of scholars might be multidimensional and varied, but the story as covered in this column reveals to the readers that protection of the Zimbabwean heritage has been a central feature of the people's struggles. *Kwayedza* surely does this, not through the use of theoretically and philosophically sophisticated abstract discourses, but simple, short and easy to read stories.

In another issue, published for the period, *Gumiguru* 31-6 *Mbudzi* (2014, *Kwayedza* had yet another shot of the history of Zimbabwe, the encroachment of the missionary communities into Zimbabwe. The story traces the history of the arrival of the first missionary in the Mutapa Empire, Father Goncalo da Silveira, a Roman Catholic priest. It explains that this missionary converted many people to Christianity in all the areas that he passed through and by 1561 he had almost succeeded in converting Emperor Mutapa to Christianity. As the story explains, he was assassinated the same year following the spread of the message that the Portuguese were coming to colonise the Mutapa Empire.

The above-mentioned missionary was a Catholic Jesuit Priest who was assigned by the Portuguese crown to convert the Emperor to Christianity as a strategic ploy to conquer the Empire non-militarily, that is, through evangelism as they had done in Congo (Rountree, 2009). The Empire was targeted because the Portuguese had discovered that the bulk of the gold that they had obtained from their trade at the Tanganyika Coast came from the hinterland, the Mutapa Empire in particular (Chanaiwa, 1972). Controlling the gold trade then implied that the Portuguese had to have a firm control over the producing Empire. As stated in *Ziva - ibva waziva*, Father Goncalo nearly succeeded in accomplishing this mission. Unfortunately:

a group of advisors called vaMwenye (foreigners) who lived at the Mutapa court, but operated as far as the Mozambique coast convinced the [the Emperor] that the whites were evil and their religion would cause God (Mwari) to be angry and withdraw the rains among other things (Jama, 2016:4).

*Vamwenye* were a group of advisors who were responsible for the rejection and death of Goncalo. They were people who originated from The Middle East, probably from Arabia. They were kinsmen to the Sena people in Mozambique and had a Venda offshoot located below the Limpopo River (Tirivangana, 2016). Rulers in Mutapa emerged and became strong from the wisdom of descendants of these advisors. These *VaMwenye* had learnt from their experience with the Portuguese that the West was no good. They knew that missionaries such as Goncalo were preaching the gospel in ways that protected the imperial interest. They, as dictated by King Leopold II, taught the Africans to be disinterested in the riches that were found on and within the bowels of their land (King Leopold 11, 1883). They taught them to be happy in their poverty because the kingdom of heaven was theirs and that this very same kingdom of heaven had no place for the rich (Tirivangana, 2016; Mararike, 2015). According to Jama (2016), had the Portuguese been successful, they could have done to Mutapa Empire what they did in Congo. In Congo, the Portuguese after having benefited from the hospitality of the hard-working Congolese, attacked, subdued, enslaved the masses and converted the nation into a colony (Chanaiwa, 1972).

The assassination of Goncalo da Silveira during this historical era marked the first initiative by Africans at prevention of the Europeans from entering the citadels of the empire as well as

defending the African human dignity. With this assassination, the people of Mutapa Empire were symbolically waging a war against imperialism which according to Cabral is “an act of culture” (Cabral 1974:17). By taking this action the residents in the Mutapa Empire were fulfilling Cabral’s idea that:

A people who free themselves from foreign domination will be free culturally only if, without complexes and without underestimating the importance of positive accretions from oppressor and other cultures, they return to the upwards path of their own culture, which is nourished by the living reality of its environment, and which negates both harmful influences and any kind of subjection to foreign culture (Cabral 1974:14).

The people were surely taking a political stance of blocking the inward movement of imperialism whose main agenda was the cultural, political, religious and economic suppression and oppression of the colonised entities (Ngugi, 1986, Chinweizu, 1987). They had come to realise in their own way, that conversion to Christianity was tantamount to wrestling them away from their beliefs and traditions and that such an accomplishment on the part of Goncalo da Silveira was a critical and integral part of the imperial project which he represented. In a way, they had realised that such an accomplishment was antithesis to the cultural and political survival of their Empire (Cabral, 174). Furthermore, what this story in *Kwayedza* is pointing at, is that a people whose belief in their culture is strong is not likely to be easily hoodwinked by the imperialists, hence the assassination of Goncalo da Silveira. His assassination was, as it were, a demonstration of the unquestionable need to defend the Mutapa social and political integrity against the weapon of psychological destruction (colonial-driven-Christianity).

As a follow-up to the short political and historical coverage that had been given in other sampled papers, the *Kwayedza* (Gunyana 5-11, 2014) issue gives yet another summary of the history of colonialism paying particular attention to Cecil John Rhodes, a British by origin, whose initial residence in Africa was South Africa. The story states that Cecil must have been the most ambitious and richest of all the Empire builders during the imperial era. It chronicles that: Cecil John Rhodes was the Prime Minister of the Cape from 1890 to 1896. According to the story, Rhodes expanded the British Empire by colonising Bechuanaland, the present-day Botswana, in 1884. He moved into the present-day Zimbabwe in 1889 which he later named

after himself, Rhodesia. He died in 1902 and was buried at Matopo Hills in Bulawayo, the story concludes.

There are two significant issues in this story coverage of *Kwayedza* (Gunyana 5-11, 2014). First, the story provides a link between Christianity and imperialism (as explored in the preceding story in *Gumiguru* 31-6 *Mbudzi*). After witnessing the coming in of Father Goncalo da Silveira in the previous story, this particular story proceeds to narrate the coming of Rhodes to Zimbabwe. Goncaloda Silveira, with his Bible had paved the way for the coming in of Rhodes and his armed pioneer column and the BSA Company.

Like the first stories that have been discussed so far, the history and memory of Zimbabwe are presented in a very simplistic manner, such that a lot of detail with regards what really took place is, in most cases, missing. One of the missing ideas is that Rhodes belonged to the post-world war generation that left Europe in search for fortunes in the colonies. And that upon settling in Zimbabwe, the establishment of Rhodesia became a commercial enterprise, with the colony being run by a company known as the British South African Company (BSAC). The mandate of this company was to exploit the land, minerals, animals and even the human resources of the country (Muchemwa, 2015; Chihuri, 2015). And ever since the coming of Rhodes and the British South Africa Company (BSAC), the history of Zimbabwe became characterised by the exploitation of both the natural resources and the people who habited the nation.

The other missing detail in the story coverage is that the Matopo hills area, after the colonial settlement, had been reduced to a district under the control of Rhodes. According to Andreucci (2016), from 1894, Matopo area was renamed Rhodes Matopo National Park. The whole area became his personal district by virtue of it being assigned to him through the land dispossession process (Chihuri, 2015). This process saw the white settlers grabbing land from the Africans resulting in the impoverishment of the Africans. According to Muchemwa (2015:46),

...by December 1893 Cecil John Rhodes had been assigned virtually the entire district of Matopo Hills. By February 1894...the whole southern Matabeleland, including Esigodini and Matopo Hills were declared and occupied (assigned to Cecil John Rhodes).

Secondly the burial of Cecil John Rhodes at the sacred hills of Matopo is critical. It marks the beginning of the loss of Zimbabwean traditional cultural practices, norms and values together with the belief systems that bound the socio-political and economic fabric of the nation together. Of significance is the defiling of the religious institutions and sites as represented by the demand by Cecil John Rhodes to be buried in the sacred *Njelele* shrines in *Matojeni* area where the Shona and the Ndebele performed most of their traditional religious ceremonies, but most specifically their rain-making ceremonies- those very ceremonies that sustained the lives of the people? According to Chihuri, “Cecil John Rhodes desecrated the nation’s values by being buried on the sacred hills of Matopo, home to the nation’s revered spirits” (Chihuri 2015: 195).

What probably needs to be explained is the fact that the Matopos Hills was the place that accommodated the holiest religious shrine, *Njelele*, among the Ndebele and even people within the Southern African region as a whole. According to Chivaura (2015) as cited in Tirivanagana (2016) Matopo Hills was known among the Shona people as *Mabweadziva*, meaning ‘mountains of sacred springs, pools and lakes’. It was known as *malindidzimu* in Kalanga meaning the ‘the sacred place of our ancestors’ (Chivaura (2015) as cited in Tirivanagana, 2016). This accounts for Tirivangana’s view of Matopo hills as a spiritual centre of Zimbabwean Shona and the Ndebele people. The place was actually a spiritual centre for rainmaking ceremonies for people from “east, central and southern Africa, such as Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Lesotho, Angola, Uganda and South Africa” (Tirivangana, 2016:21). Until as recent as mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, a spiritual voice could be heard in *Njelele*, one of the sacred caves in the hills (Chivaura, 2015).

In spite of this spiritual and cultural importance of the Matopo Hills to the local Zimbabweans as well as nations around, Cecil John Rhodes chose it as his final resting place and he penned down his dictate in the contents of his will where he pointed out that:

I direct my Trustees on the hill aforesaid to erect or complete the monument to the men who fell in the first Matabele War at Shangani in Rhodesia the bas-reliefs for which are being made by Mr. John Tweed and I desire the said hill to be preserved as a burial-place (Stead, 1902:4-5).

To ensure that his chosen resting place is well maintained he declared in his will that he entrusted his trustees with the Matopos and Bulawayo fund for:

Preserving, protecting, maintaining, adorning and beautifying the said burial-place and hill and their surroundings and shall forever apply in such manner as in their uncontrolled discretion they shall think fit the balance of the income of the Matoppos and Bulawayo (Stead, 1902:5).

What this means is that after having effectively claimed and occupied large tracks of lands plundered the resources both on the surface and within the bowels of the Zimbabwean nation, Rhodes decided to finalise his mission by adulterating the central nervous system of the Zimbabwean and above all Sub-Saharan religion and spirituality.

The burial of Cecil John Rhodes at this shrine marks the beginning of the infringement into the religious systems of the people as the sacred *Mabweadziva/Malindidzimu* now found itself having to be converted into a grave site, of a foreigner. After dying in the Cape, he had to be moved to the Matopo Hills. His journey to Matopo hills symbolically joined the two nations of Rhodesia and South Africa in line with Cecil's Cape to Cairo dream. Buried alongside Cecil John Rhodes's remains, are some of the many colonial settlers who chose to be laid to rest alongside their perceived hero, Cecil John Rhodes (Andreucci, 2016).

As has already been alluded, the choice of genre makes the newspaper coverage very sketchy. The notion that readers do not have time to read through lengthy and dense narrative has probably made it difficult for *Kwayedza* to provide detailed information on Rhodes' final resting place as well as the statistical details of the people of colonial background who are laid at Matopo hills. Though not mentioned in the *Kwayedza* story coverage, the first colonial administrator, Leander Starr Jameson, is laid alongside Rhodes. Having died in London, Jameson's body had to be repatriated and brought to Matopo Hills for burial near Rhodes grave. The first Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Patrick John Coughlan is also buried at the

sacred hills. Furthermore, thirty-four colonial fighters out of the group that was led by Allan Wilson, known as the Shangani Patrol in pursuit of Lobengula who was fleeing, whose remains were later found in February 1994 were also ultimately buried at Matopo Hills where the Shangani Memorial was erected (Andreucci, 2016). Again, the erection of the monument was in fulfilment of the wishes of Cecil John Rhodes as expressed in his will (Stead, 1902). Their presence represents the usurpation of the African cultural sites through the transposition of colonial graves and monuments on sites that should reflect and embody African values and cultural heritage. With all these foreigners, one wonders the extent the spirituality of the nation and the whole of the sub-Saharan region has been dislodged.

Again, it cannot be underscored that all this information, that has not been revealed in this column could have been the backbone of the revival and re-awakening of the African history and memory. This information is quite pertinent for the empowerment of the Zimbabweans as well as preparing them for active participation on the global arena. Provision of detailed accounts of historical experiences of Zimbabweans under the hand of colonialism would go a long way towards empowering them.

Taken in the context of the Shona customs with regards to burying the deceased, Rhodes usurped the privilege accorded to the African ruling lineage, it was only the chiefs who were buried in mountainous places, caves in particular, to symbolise the significant and different progressive roles they played for their societies. However, given the sacred nature of the *Njelele* shrine, burying Rhodes at Matopo hills was an act of corrupting, defiling and destruction of the purity of these shrines (Muchemwa, 2015).

It has also been on record that colonial settlers declared that no other person was supposed to be buried within a certain radius of that grave. This was done in fulfilment of the desire of Cecil John Rhodes as expressed in his will:

...no person is to be buried there unless the Government for the time being" of Rhodesia until the various states of South Africa or any of them shall have been federated and after such federation the Federal Government by a vote of two thirds of

its governing body says that he or she has deserved well of his or her country (Stead, 1902:4-5).

Furthermore, no one was also expected to be seen performing any religious ceremonies within the vicinity of that grave. This, thus, became another way by which the colonial settlers blotted out the indigenous people's spirituality in order to completely obliterate their value system, beliefs, identity and confidence as a people. It was a deliberate strategy to subvert and divert Africans from seeking recourse from their true spiritual and cultural anchor, their ancestral spirits. In conclusion, this burial, which, as viewed from the amount of space allocated to it, has high chances of being missed or trivialised. It is surely a simplified presentation of the defilement of the Zimbabwean spiritual shrines, the relegation of the spirits and spirit mediums as well as the ultimate dispossession of land and livestock which was the corner stone of the imperial project.

Simplistic though these historical episodes have been presented, this column, "*Ziva- ibva waziva*", in yet another *Kwayedza* (*Gunyana* 5-11, 2014) issue further chronicles the land dispossessions that occurred as a result of the colonial settlement. In this particular issue, the column highlights that Zimbabweans had their first military encounter with the colonial settlers in two wars; the Ndebele uprising of 1893 and the Shona uprising of 1896-7; and in both encounters the Zimbabweans were defeated resulting in them being displaced and dispossessed of their land (Ranger, 1967; Beach, 1979; Muchemwa, 2015; Chuhuri, 2015). After their overwhelming victory the settlers removed the Africans from areas with fertile lands and placed them into 'native' reserved lands which had infertile soils. The story further explains that the colonial settlers introduced the land tax that was supposed to be paid by Africans soon after the defeat of the Shona and the Ndebele people (Muchemwa, 2015, Chihuri, 2015). In order to raise the money to pay that tax, the African people were forced to seek employment from the settlers who were exploitative. Working for the settlers became a necessity because the taxes were paid using money (the economy had been monetarised). This monetarised economy was a new phenomenon; it had no roots in the African set-up. With no cash in their possession, and the bulk of the livestock looted by the British South African Company (BSAC) (Muchemwa, 2015, Chihuri, 2015,) the Africans had no option, but to get engaged in the settler farms and factories the story concludes.

The other information that is important to the understanding of the Shona and Ndebele uprising that is not visible in the story presented in *Kwayedza* is presented by Muchemwa (2015), when he argues that when the *Imbizo*, *Insuga* and *Ingubo* Ndebele regiments surrendered in April 1894 the settler system demanded that the Ndebele people surrender all the cattle belonging to the king as well as provide labour for the colonial gold mines (Muchemwa, 2015:46). Small Ndebele settlements were created in a community of European land, strategically located where they could be accessible for forced labour on the farms and the mines.

According to Muchemwa (2015), the land that was occupied by the colonialists on the eve of the conquest of the Ndebele people in 1893 virtually represented 100% of the habitable land in Matabeleland, otherwise the rest of the land could not sustain human life, it was mosquito and tsetse fly infested and, therefore prone to sleeping sickness and Malaria (Muchemwa, 2015). As tenants, they were expected to pay rent in the form of labour. Men on the other hand were asked to pay hut tax for every hut that they built (Muchemwa, 2015). Half of the cattle that were looted from the Ndebele people after their defeat were allocated to the volunteers who participated in the pioneer column while the remaining half went to the BSA Company. An estimate of 200 000 cattle was looted from the Ndebele people after their defeat (Muchemwa, 2015:51).

According to Chihuri, in order to pressurise Africans to succumb to labour demands the settlers employed diverse strategies which included the following:

- Introduction and enforcement of the hut tax payment which was to be made in cash or provision of labour;
- Forced labour for capital projects such as road and railway line construction, (the BSACP [British South Africa Company Policy] would move around forcing people whom they thought were idle to provide labour);
- Introduction of native commissioners and native police to enforce the settler's orders among the indigenous people;

- Formation of the loot committee chaired by Thomas Meikles to confiscate the livestock of the indigenous people. According to Chihuri, 2015, by the end of the first three years of settlement of the pioneer column, the settlers had looted 80% of the livestock belonging to the indigenous Zimbabwean people;
- Reckless slaughter of livestock (cattle) believed to have been infected by the rinderpest in order to reduce the number of cattle remaining in the hands of the indigenous people (Chihuri 2015:85).

As a result of the land grabbing and large-scale displacement:

The Africans in the occupied territory could no longer have their own way of life, they could no longer hunt for subsistence, perform various religious ceremonies or activities as land previously considered sacred and habited by their spirit mediums such as Nharira and Matopo in Matabeleland South were now designated animal game reserves or European land (Chihuri, 2015:124).

Chuhuri,( 2015), further insists that, legal instruments to legalise the land dispossession of Africans were put in place, resulting in the creation of:

...a colony of poverty-stricken, down-trodden and marginalised black community on one hand and a flourishing, well catered for, and affluent white community living at large and in opulence, on the other hand (Chihuri, 2015:132).

Of course, all the above-mentioned detail about the political, cultural and economic subjugation of the Shona and the Ndebele people, which form the most decisive part of the history and memory of Zimbabwean people, does not explicitly come out. As argued by the editorial teams, the genre that is used as the platform for the dissemination of this historical message does not have room for presenting densely loaded stories. For in the tabloid genre, “there is a strong emphasis on the visual aestheticisation of news” (Luthar, 1998:15) and as such, importance is placed on the visual presentation than the verbal presentation of the information (Luthar, 1998:10).

What is also significant in this story coverage is the idea that all strategies by the settlers on the eve of the defeat of the Shona and the Ndebele were orchestrated to ensure complete impoverishment and marginalisation of the indigenous people (Chiwome and Mguni, 2012) so that they would work very hard in the farms, mines and industries of the imperialist to get the money that was needed for the payment of the various introduced taxes. The strategies were all imperial moves to reduce the “natives into an exploitative natural resource” (Muchemwa, 2015:112).

It is such knowledge, such kind of revelations, which unfortunately is given lip-service in this *ziva-ibva waziva* column that is needed to create a positive awareness of where Zimbabweans are coming from and, possibly, where they are likely to be forging towards. The knowledge of one’s history is critical to the empowerment of the people. If only this presentation of the memory of the people was done exhaustively, the Zimbabwean people’s perception of themselves would be different. Again, the presentation of this history would be done through the lenses of the African people, narrated in the language, as well as from the perspectives, of the Zimbabwean themselves. This narrative, it would appear, would be guided by the very historical experiences that the Zimbabweans actually went through. This way the news coverage would help the readers understand themselves first, before they can understand the world around them. It would make them identify their own space first before they can relate that space to the global spaces around them. And in the context of a nation emerging from the tentacles of colonialism, this kind of information would have kept the people; the government as well as all agents of the government focused on total emancipation of their nation and ultimately lead to the empowerment of the grassroots.

#### **5.5.7. The Colonial Destruction of the Spirit of Revolution**

In the *Kwayedza* edition of 14 -20 Mbudzi 2014, “*Ziva –ibva waziva*” column summarises the history of Lobhengula’s sons. It states that Lobhengula was the king of the Ndebele people. He had three sons, Mpezeni, Njube and Nguboyenja. The story states that these children went for their education in Cape Town during the 1895s. It concludes by pointing out that after the

overthrow of their father, Lobhengula's children did not revive their father's kingdom. Mpezeni died in 1899, Njube in 1910 while Nguboyenja died in 1944, the story says.

It is unfortunate that none of the readers ever mentioned the existence of such coverage in *Kwayedza*, giving the impression that they never see the column because of its position in the paper. However, the story is another quick-to-read one. It is short, easy to follow and understand. It only provides highlights about Lobhengula's lineage after his defeat by the colonial settlers. The story does not really explain the reasons why these sons distanced themselves from perpetuating the legacy of their father as tradition would have expected of them. The most important point to take note in this snapshot of the history of the Ndebele leadership is the introduction of the colonial education system. It is made clear that after the death of their father, the sons never inherited the kingship as tradition would have dictated or demanded.

What is however eye catching in the lives of these three men is their recruitment into the colonial education system. Under normal circumstances, education is aimed at inculcating the knowledge systems, values, norms, and above all the belief systems of a given people as well as appraise that knowledge in question (Nyamnjoh,2011). The sad reality that comes out after scrutinising the destiny of Lobhengula's three sons is that:

... the right of conquest of the colonialists over Africans, body mind and soul, meant real or attempted epistemicide – the decimation or near complete killing and replacement of indogenous epistemologies in Africa with epistemological paradigms of the conqueror (Nyamnjoh, 2012:11).

What is presented in this story is an oversimplification of the effect of the colonial education systems on the African communities. It is, however, worth noting that to ignore or minimise the conditions under which the education system was introduced to the colonised is surely a misrepresentation and an abortion of history. It is to miss the fundamental realities of the imperial enterprise. The reality is that the education system into which the King's sons were exposed brainwashed, indoctrinated and cultivated an element of self-hate within them. As Namnjoh (2012) would argue, the education system they went through 'impoverished [the] realities' of these men, and as Ngugi (1986) would argue, it demonised everything African,

including the languages, values, medicine, religion, customs, dressing styles, belief systems, education, governance systems, legal and policing systems among other systems as primitive (Ngugi, 1986).

From the presentation in the story coverage, the three men appear to have been beneficiaries of the colonial education system yet in reality; “they are the direct victims of the newly introduced epistemology” (Bourdieu, 1996:5). The kind of education system that they were introduced to was one that:

repressed where it should have fostered, tamed instead of inspiring and enervated rather than strengthened. It succeeded in making slaves of its victims, to the extent that they no longer realise they are slaves, with some even seeing their chains of victimhood as ornamental and the best recognition possible (Fonlon, 1965 cited in Nyamnjoh, 2011:11).

These three sons of Lobhengula represent the first indelible scars of the colonial education system on the African society. It signifies first and foremost the assassination of the traditional Zimbabwean epistemology (Mungwini, 2015). With the coming of colonial education, the Zimbabwean science of knowledge, the production of knowledge itself and its management was wrestled from the indigenous people. Taking control of the citadels of knowledge allowed the colonial system to manipulate, control and subjugate the conquered communities (Arbino and Arnold, 2012). In a sense, it became a social engineering stratagem, a weapon of enforcing a sense of inferiority complex within the conquered people.

Secondly, it symbolises the demise of the African traditional leadership lineages, the removal of any chances of there ever being a leader groomed along the Ndebele military style. The result of the knowledge they acquired through the colonial institution was the presentation of the value of being man enough to fight for one’s heritage as irrelevant, useless and humiliating. Through the education system, the very off-springs of the lion were tamed, as such, there was never going to be any lion as dangerous as King Lobhengula and his predecessors among the Ndebele people. The education they got was disempowering, it was education to eradicate any traces of their being men, that kind of teaching that targeted effective and totally stripping men of their manhood (Fonlon, 1965 cited in Nyamnjoh, 2011).

Raising the same argument p'Bitek (1989) viewing people in the same predicament as that of King Lobhengula's sons would argue that "their manhood was finished in the classrooms; their testicles were smashed with large books" (p'Bitek 1989:95). From the coverage, it is evident that the three sons have been castrated by the education system and they can no longer behave as real men in the Ndebele context would do, that is, fight for their land and everything that rightfully belongs to them just as much as *amajaha omkhonto* (literally translated the energetic young men of spears) would have done. After draining their manliness and reducing them to unthinking zombies, the system successfully transformed them into willing slaves who dared not challenge the status quo. Allegorically, "they were infantilised and feminised" (Nyamnjoh, 2012:6).

Taking Nyamnjoh's (2012) line of argument, with the obliteration of their manhood, Lobhengula's three sons were reduced to mere shadows of men among men within the Ndebele traditional set-up. Thus, making it exceptionally problematic for them to question the virility and authority of their white masters, who loathed inquisitiveness and preached unquestioning faith from those they had conquered (p'Bitek, 1989). In summary, the education system:

...made dead fruit the sons of chiefs who behaved like foolish little children towards the ways of their land (p'Bitek, 1989:12).

Otherwise, Lobhengula's children could have been the rallying points around which the liberation movements in colonial Zimbabwe revolved. Unfortunately, the education system they had received was that which:

...cultivated a bitter tongue; fierce like the arrow of a scorpion, deadly like the spear of a buffalo-hornet; ferocious like the poison of a barren woman; and corrosive like the juice of the gourd vis-à-vis one's past, one's traditions, one's people, one's relations (p'Bitek, 1989 cited in Nyamnjoh's, 2011:7).

Like all colonial education recruits, the three sons were taught to uncritically:

ignore and disparage things held dear by the [Ndebele], they were groomed to insult, laugh at and term primitive and pagan as well as obediently champion and glorify the ways, exploits and dreams of the imperialists and Europe (Nyamnjoh's, 2012:9).

The recruitment of the sons into the education system was, thus, a ploy to prevent them from becoming the locus of Ndebele people's nationalist memories; a systematically orchestrated strategy to dismember, neutralise and desecrate these main figures in the history and memory of the Ndebele people. In a way, it can be viewed as a move that was meant to dissipate and then erase the memory of the Ndebele people's fight for the acknowledgement and respect for their sovereignty. It taught them to forget and despise their own heroes in favour of the Whiteman's ones.

Placing the sons in colonial education system could be viewed as a way of preventing the Africans from claiming their autonomous space amid the intruders and a hostile environment devoid of referral points or motivational figures. The European colonisers had, therefore, understood the role of culture as posited by Cabral (1974) and subsequently rushed to label everything African primitive, pagan, and un-progressive. The colonial forces feared the power of culture in spurring people to resisting colonial dominance (Chihuri, 2015; Cabral, 1974). This probably accounts for the spree to brainwash the Africans in an attempt to sway them from their culture, the very centre around which the African people's lives revolved. The enrolment of Lobhengula's sons into colonial schools can, thus, be viewed as some of the visible expressions and effects of this spree.

If the newspaper had presented the story with the critical eye that it deserved, the story of the three sons of Lobhengula would have been expressive of the Rhodesian genocide, it could have been an illustration of the sum total of all the atrocities against Zimbabweans through colonial education as an institution. While the imperialists defeated their father Lobhengula using the barrel, the sons were educated and psychologically tamed to become colonial slaves. They were removed from the very systems and support structures that empowered and enabled them to be in control of their own destinies. Subsequently, with the introduction of the colonial education system, with its philosophy of individualism, the African community cohesion was lost. The capacity to act and sacrifice for society (on the part of the sons), as did their father Lobhengula, was lost in the classrooms of the white colonial education (p'Biteck, 1989). Out of these sons of a gallant soldier emerged clones of colonial settlers, though black

in colour, they were filled to the brim with anti- African ideas and sensibilities (Fanon, 1967).

Noteworthy is that when a class of people like the sons of Lobhengula multiply in society, the adhesive substance that binds the society together ruptures. As a result of the colonial education, the sons grew up to reject their traditions and culture of resistance to colonial encroachment. This education system, thus, erased generations and generations of fighters inspired by the gallantry of the cream of African fighters, and thus, greatly worked towards keeping the African people down and perpetuated self-destruction.

Rodney (1980:62) observes that “colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment”. Surely the war of liberation could never be led by people who had been exposed to mental confusion because mobilising the masses and sacrificing everything in itself demanded someone who was an un-whitewashed proud African, full of self-confidence and dedication to serving mother Africa. Zimbabwe had to wait until 1955 for a political party known as the African National Youth League, in the then Salisbury, the banning of which witnessed the formation of the African National Congress (ANC) under the leadership of Joshua Mqabuko Nyongolo Nkomo in 1957 (when African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) combined with the African National Congress (ANC) to become ANC) (Muchemwa, 2015) to get leaders around which resistance to colonialism revolved.

However, there is need to acknowledge and appreciate the positive step taken by the *Kwayedza* news crew, even though the newspaper does not give a detailed account of the history of dispossession, the ideas of the pains and loss at the hands of the colonial system is re-created in this column. The paper also unconsciously projects the idea that written text, as expressed in the written books used in the education system, the bible that was used in church as well as all other forms of media have ever been part and parcel of the grand project of imperialism (Tiffin, 2001). What needs to be continuously reiterated is the fact that history and memory are powerful constituents for the successful emancipation and empowerment of

a people. As such effective capturing of such issues in *Kwayedza* can also go a long way in empowering Zimbabweans.

Besides providing snapshots of the history of the nation, the two papers extensively cover issues on the belief systems of the contemporary society. Under this category, there are stories that are based on the Zimbabwean people's traditional religious beliefs as well as stories on the contemporary Christian beliefs.

#### **5.5.8. Mitupo/izibongo/Totems**

In line with the idea of upholding and celebrating the concept of Zimbabweanness, *Kwayedza* has a column on *mitupo*(totems) in which different totems are presented in different publications. It is also interesting at this juncture to point out that readers, newspaper vendors and even experts that were consulted did not talk about the existence of this column in the newspapers in local languages. This could be implying that even if they have seen and read the column, it has not aroused an interest in them. Be that as it may, this column has the most empowering effect in as far as it reinforces the notion of the identity of Zimbabwean people. It thus lays the foundation against which the Zimbabweans can reconnect with their history after the long period of forced disconnection which was characterised by the struggle to be 'white and urbane'.

According to Nyabeze (2015:1), the practice of totems in Zimbabwe lies at the very centre of the social fabric in Zimbabwean society. The totem of a clan, he argues, represents the philosophy, belief systems and cultural practices of that particular group of people. On the other hand, Nyathi (2001) highlights that *mutupo/isibongo*, refers to an animal, part of an animal, bird or snake that a person is connected to. It defines and identifies one's family line. In a sense, it defines an individual's spiritual identity (Nyathi, 2001:45).

It is some kind of spiritual identity code. It defines one's ancestry, blood or genetic line. It thus can be said to be one's spiritual DNA or ID.

Nyathi, further highlights that *mitupo/izibongo* are underpinned by a philosophy that there is a symbiotic, interwoven and intertwined relationship between human beings and nature. Through the practice of totemism, people learnt to protect the animals they revered and opted out of eating their flesh. They consider the animal or bird as sacred. In the process totemism assumed a critical role in the preservation of biodiversity in a given area since it reduced competition for some edible animals, birds, reptiles, insects or plants (Nyabeze, 2015). This role became possible as it was viewed as “taboo for one to eat [one’s] totem animal; one risked losing teeth or some catastrophe would befall him or her for violating this taboo” (Nyabeze, 2015:1). The culture of totems in Zimbabwe, therefore, is a social strategy that has determined the Zimbabwean people’s relationship with each other as well as with their natural surrounding environment. From Nyabeze’s perspective:

totems in the past moderated societal behaviour in the pre-colonial era and today they are still in use in modern society, nothing more could show their relevance and significance to Zimbabwean society than this (Nyabeze, 2015:2).

It is also worth noting that from this reverence of totemic animals that totemic praises arose. Members of the clan were praised using their totem after a successful accomplishment of a task, such as a hunting expedition. Through the use of these totemic praises, Nyathi (2001) argues, positive behaviour was reinforced while the negative one was suppressed. The praises were thus motivational and served as an incentive that contributed to enhanced performance in an individual.

These totems are a rich source of oral history for any clan, where key historical highlights were narrated, places of origin unraveled, their successes, weaknesses and legendary figures celebrated (Levis-Strauss, 1991). It is very unfortunate that the participants in the form of readers, newspaper vendors and even the experts in language, language policy and media disciplines, could not readily acknowledge the existence of this historical dimension of their lives as embedded in the column on totems. All they were looking for is the coverage of history as it is determined and directed by politicians and super powers. Yet, in life knowledge of history has to begin at family level, then it move on to the clan, the community before moving on to embrace the national and international historical narratives. What sounds very interesting in the findings from the study is the fact that people have been so confused

and (mis)educated to believe that the history that is embedded in their totems is not history and that is why every other participant would lament the absence of coverage of historical and political issues in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. Credit has to be given to the newspapers in local languages for reviving this kind of oral narrative that are very important for the successful cultural re-awakening and empowerment of the people. A people with pride in its identity is really emancipated and empowered community.

### **5.5.9 *Kwayedza* - Column on the African Woman of the Year**

In this column, the idea is to assist the nation to start defining and appreciating the beauty of the African women using an African yard-stick. The newspaper ushers in a divergent move from the mainstream beauty contests which are normally earmarked for young members of the society where they are expected to satisfy the criteria of beauty as set and endorsed through western lenses. Where to be beautiful implies being like the European model, to bleach and slim oneself physically and culturally to the point of the ludicrous and the ridiculous (p'Bitek, 1989). Beauty in this context was synonymous to hot-combing hair, and aspiring to dress like the colonial ladies. The result of which was the creation of a creature that was neither black nor white, an identity-less entity that was characterised by confusion. The product of this confusion and crisis could not and still cannot progress or make an impact on global civilisation as a people until they decide who they want to be (Fanon, 1967). Taken in this context, *Kwayedza*'s African woman of the year thus tries to assist the readers chicken out of the shells of identity crisis. It tries to challenge the notion that Whiteness is the only valid type of beauty (Brewington, 2013).

In contrast to the mainstream beauty contests which assist the young members of the society to invest heavily in their nakedness (Oloruntoba-Oju, 2007), the African woman of the year contest looks for real African women who are controlled and guided by the African sensibility, that is, women who meet the cultural indigenous indicators of value and beauty in Zimbabwe.

Again, this column continues to pursue the idea of fighting colonial mentality from as many different fronts as possible. It is the assumption of this study that the idea of an African woman of the year came against a background of an upsurge in the number of women who were bleaching their skins in an attempt to be viewed as beautiful (Pitché, Kombaté and Tchangai-Walla, 2005). The promotion of an African oriented version of beauty is an attempt at reversing the colonial:

...journey, endowed with the mission of annihilation or devaluation of African creativity, agency and value systems, [leading] to an internalised sense of inadequacy...[compelling] Africans to lighten their darkness both physically and metaphorically for the gratification of colonising hegemonic others (Nyamnjoh, 2011:1).

It is the contention of this study that the underlying assumption, known or unknown to the Zimpapers stable, is that if Africa is at all going to participate meaningfully on the global public sphere, it would be best for it to do so within the framework of the interests and concerns of Africans as guiding principles (Nyamnjoh, 2011).

It could also have been against a background of many female members of the Zimbabwean communities who had resorted to investing in ‘culturally unacceptable’ styles of dressing. The colonial experience as has already been expressed indoctrinated the Africans and instilled into their minds that black is all about evil, negative, primitive and backwardness. It made the African, as already been alluded to wish and strive to become European/white against all odds, witnessing the emergence of the use of skin lightening substances which in most cases left the women, and even men who used them, with psychological and physical indelible scars; inferiority complex as well as exposure to health challenges such as possibilities of developing skin cancer.

In the African woman of the month/year, *Kwayedza* assists the masses to go through a process of self-introspection and self-redefinition in a move that is expected to make the Zimbabweans better appreciate themselves. Looking at the competition as presented in the newspaper, there surely is no age restriction to entry giving the impression that beauty in the

African context does not fade away. Being able to live up to the expectations, principles, norms and value of the society in which one finds herself is beauty.

Discussing the rationale behind the presentation of the African woman of the month/year, the editor of *Kwayedza* pointed out that the column is aimed at promoting the interests of women who happen to constitute the largest percentage of their readership (Shamba, 2015). After entering into the competition, women have chances of winning, as part of incentivising the readers, as it were. However, in the context of this research, and also in light of the niche of the paper, what emerges from a little scrutiny of the coverage of the African woman of the month/year is a move towards promoting and upholding the culture of Zimbabwean people. It becomes an attempt at re-defining the beauty of women from an African perspective. For them dressing in a descent manner, as espoused by the Zimbabwean cultural yardstick of decency, is surely a cultural concern.

Upholding the Zimbabwean culture is really critical in any attempts at empowering the masses. No one would dispute that the study of history, the liberation struggles are presaged by an increase in cultural consciousness which crystalises in moves at asserting the cultural personality of the oppressed people as they become agents in the rejection of the oppressive situation (Cabral, 1974). The general trend has been that within the people's culture lies the seed of protest which ultimately culminated in the emergence of the liberation movements (Cabral, 1974). In the light of this idea of promoting the cultural sensibility of the readers, the idea probably is that a people who are conscious of their cultural sensibility would be better placed to confront neo-colonialism.

#### **5.5.10 Promotion of African Nutrition Knowledge**

The question of the ability to provide a decent meal at the table is a major benchmark for determining whether a community is being empowered and developing on the global arena. As has already been alluded, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have been seen to be taking an active role in promoting nutrition and food security in households. The general goal in the two

publications was to adopt a deliberate attempt to bring out an African oriented approach to nutrition through the provision of recipes that are anchored in the African nutritional belief systems. Taking up the idea of the two tabloids as fronts for waging a war against mental oppression, the idea here is that the column on food, nutrition and health had to provide a platform from which the nation (through the two newspapers) reinstated the indigenous food varieties, dishes, knowledge and wisdom of health to their place alongside their global counterparts. It is, however sad to note that anchoring the indigenous food varieties, dishes and knowledge of health in the coverage of the two newspapers tends to be fleeting in tenure as the papers, especially *uMthunywa* is found, along the way, celebrating western oriented food varieties and recipes at the expense of the local ones. As for *Kwayedza*, by mid-2015 it shelved the column citing shortage of human resources to sustain it.

Food security and nutrition have been concerns of Zimbabwean from time immemorial. The Zimbabweans people's food came in different shapes, colours and flavours. With the coming of colonialism, most people ceased to consume traditional foods and adapted to the western type of food. As a result, most food varieties, feeding habits and some taboos associated with eating some types of food have diminished. With this unquestionable adoption of foreign food variety went the traditional ways of harvesting food and sharing.

In *uMthunywa*, there is a column, “*Asipeke LoMaMoyo*” (Let's Cook with Ms. Moyo) where indigenous knowledge and wisdom on nutrition and feeding habits are promoted. What is interesting about this column is that it is placed adjacent to that on health issues. This kind of positioning, gives the impression that the food that we feed our bodies with is critical to the preservation and restoration of our health.

In *Kwayedza*, there are recipes that campaign for the reverting of Zimbabwean people to their traditional foods hence the provision of recipes such as *Kubika mufushwawenyewe ne dovi* (preparing dried *nyeve* vegetables with peanut butter) (Gumiguru 10-16 2014:16). The idea here is that the colonial experience has seen us throwing away our nutritious foods in favour of the alien ones which in most cases are:

1. expensive and unaffordable for the general person walking in the street;
2. not locally available;
3. prepared in a fast food style that uses ingredients such as fats which have of late been associated with the major health problems such as hypertension and cancer;
4. inaccessible to the low-income earners amid these difficult economic times.

By presenting recipes such as this one, where there is use of *nyeve*, a vegetable crop that almost grows ‘naturally’ in the homestead, even without the human agent and attention of an individual, and *dovi* a product of an indigenous crop that equally can be easily produced as long as there is reliable rainfall, the column is saying ‘look you people you have a rich nutritional resource that has been neglected for long’. It is urging Zimbabweans to go back to their indigenous vegetables and desist from being manipulated and abused by the imperialists through the consumption of their commercialised food. There is a move as it were, towards winning people’s hearts to the side of the indigenous food resources as the recipes are clearly making it conspicuous that people can add some of the “modern” ingredients such as tomatoes, onions and spices to make their indigenous food appetising and inviting to the partakers. The two newspapers are arguing, as it were, that nutritious food is not just that kind of food that we find displayed in the supermarkets, it also includes the kind of food that has been growing in Africa, being nurtured by the African natural environment in which the African men and women have been nurtured as well. If nature has a symbiotic relationship with the human society, then, the very food stuff that is nurtured by our environment is best placed to address our nutritional needs.

Gumiguru17-23 (2014:17) has a recipe on *Kubika zvitaka zvehuku* (Cooking chicken livers). Chickens are locally reared in most communities in Zimbabwe. Apparently as a result of the kind of education that we acquired, consumption of things like gizzards and livers was generally viewed as a sign of poverty. To reinforce the concept of poverty and helplessness in the act of consuming such types of food that was enjoyed in the traditional set up such as gizzards and livers, the colonial system made them the cheapest in relation to real meat on the market.

A recipe such as this one, on how to prepare chicken livers, demystifies the idea of the link between poverty and the consumption of offals. It makes the readers aware of the advantages of consuming this highly nutritional type of meat. What emerges from this nutritional misconception was the idea that the consumerist economy that had been put in place during the imperial project was designed to ensure that the Africans associate expensiveness with quality and, in this context, nutritional value. If the chicken livers were relatively cheap on the market, the consumption of them would surely send the message of poverty to the neighbourhood. The recipe is, as it were, interrogating the consumerist mentality of the people and tries to make them see value and nutrition in the locally available, accessible and affordable food. The message here is that a high price tag is not synonymous with higher and better nutritional value.

This historical reality of the Africans' reliance on the resources available by their immediate environment has been well documented. To bring back the memories of the old good year, *Kwayedza* has recipes that are based on game meat. In line with this agenda, *Kwayedza* (Gunyana 12-18 2014:17) publication has a presentation of a recipe for cooking game meat, hare meat in this case. The recipe *Kamunakiro ketsuro mudovi* (the lusciousness of hare meat in peanut butter) presented in the issue (Gunyana 12-18 2014:17), highlights the fact that the African communities relied on the available resources in their environment for survival and nutritional sustenance. The meat in this case is not the ordinary type of meat that we know of, it is smoked game meat. The recipe combines the smoked meat with other ingredients such as onions, tomatoes and *dovi*. The title of the recipe on its own has its own share of persuasive powers in the whole enterprise of moving the centre of nutritional choices and preferences from the European informed one to an African centred perception (*Kamunakiro ketsuro mudovi*). The title of the recipe appeals to the senses of the readers and arouse their appetite, to complement the title, a very illustrative and saliva inducing picture is presented to tell the rest of the story to the readership.



This picture is a clear demonstration of the emphasis on the visual rather than the verbal articulation of the message. The idea here is that having a densely-presented recipe with no illustrative picture would have communicated a different message from what *Kwayedza* has presented here. The picture appeals to the sense of sight as well as informs the senses of taste and smell; and ultimately plays a significant role of persuading the readers that the traditional dishes can be equally or even more attractive than those dishes that have western origins.

From game meat, the paper goes to the domestic animals that we have on most of Zimbabwean homesteads, where it presents a recipe on how to prepare a meal from an indigenous chicken commonly known as the road-runner. Like in the previous recipe, the diction that is used in presenting and accompanying the recipe is just but persuasive. The title of the recipe is “*Kahuku kechivanhu kane munakiro wako*” (the little indigenous chicken has its own unique taste). With such flowery descriptive words, surely the readers would be persuaded to desire to experience the unique and unmatched taste of the indigenous chicken. In the process, they are made to appreciate their locally available poultry as opposed to generally and widespread consumed broiler chickens.

For the past years, people in Zimbabwe had shifted from relying on indigenous poultry for their recipes, the use of the broiler chickens had become the norm such that if a visitor had a

privilege of having a broiler slaughtered for him/her, it was a sign of respect and acceptance. The indigenous chickens were quickly being overshadowed and left in the cold within the field of nutrition and feeding habits. The main reason being the length of period that is required to bring up a mature indigenous chicken as compared to five-six weeks that are needed to produce a mature broiler chicken. This was coupled by the prestige and status that had become attached to the commercially produced broiler chicken which witnessed the waning popularity of the indigenously produced chicken which has become popularly known as the road runner.

It is, however, unfortunate that these broiler chickens have high levels of fats and are normally not as naturally tasty as the indigenous ones. This explains the use of the appetising title "*kahuku kechivanhu kane munakiro wako*", (the traditional little chickens have a unique taste) a taste that is unique and probable difficult to capture in words. This explains why even without any form of marinating, quoting or spice adding, frying and stewing leaves the indigenous chicken looking golden, appetising and above all intact. Again, to fill up the gap that human language normally fails to capture, a picture, showing an indigenous chicken that has been fried and stewed for more than an hour is presented. From the recipe that is accompanying this picture, it is clear that an hour of continuous stirring has failed to break or distort the indigenous chicken pieces. As such the boiled and later fried chicken just looks good and inviting. Through the presentation of this dish, the indigenous dishes that had become the object of ridicule, shame and mockery during years of colonial subjugation are being resuscitated and rehabilitated for the betterment of the society.



*Kwayedza Gunyana 26-2 Gumiguru 2014:17*

What is of interest in most of these recipes is that they are served with cereal foods that include millet, rapoko, and sorghum among others. This further highlights the deliberate slant towards indigenous foods and nutritional habits. Above all, it demonstrates a denial of the imperialist superiority complex which rubbished everything African.

The presentation of the recipes that have their roots within the Shona and Ndebele cultural milieu counter the widespread misconceptions of African cultures as static, bounded and primitive and of Africa needing the tutelage and enlightenment from some other nations to come up on its feet.

In *uMthunywa*, the column, “*Pheka lo maMoyo*” (Cook with Ms. Moyo) in the August 13-25 2015 issue has coverage on the preparation of peanut butter (*idobi*). According to *uMthunywa*, peanut butter was the relish that was cherished in the traditional set-up and still

continues to enjoy the status to this day. The column encourages the use and consumption of *idobi*. The recipe takes the reader right from the farming stage where it educates the readers that nuts are grown, and then dug after they have reached maturity stage. It narrates to the reader that the nuts are then plucked and dried before shelling. After shelling they are then roasted and the outside coat removed through rubbing the nuts. After this, the nuts are ready for peanut butter production. In the traditional set-up, the nuts were crushed and ground on a grinding stone into a very thin paste. The recipe explains that peanut butter is rich in nutritional value and can be used as a spread on bread or for preparing relish as has been alluded to earlier on. Recipes in which *dovi/idobi* can be used are provided:

- *Idobi le mibhida yomfushwa* (peanut butter and dried vegetables) the story does not take people for granted, it explains what exactly the dried vegetables are. It explains that *umfushwa* are vegetables that are cooked and dried during their time of plenty, that is the rainy season in particular when people have all types of vegetables (*nyeve/ulude*, *munyemba/indumba* and pumpkin leaves) in abundance in their fields. The process of cooking and drying is an act of extending the shelf life of the vegetables. This was and still is a strategy by which indigenous people ensured continued food availability and security even during the dry season when no vegetables could and can be found in the fields or even in the forests. This way people continued and still continue to enjoy their favorite meals using resources that would have been dried and stored in the homes.

This explanation on what exactly *umfushwa* is, is very important, it un-packages the local knowledge systems and the various ways by which food security was ensured. In the process of presenting a recipe for the nutritional fulfillment of the readers, more knowledge that can be harnessed for the development of the communities is unpacked, such as extending the shelf-life of seasonal products for use during times of scarcity in this case. The other recipe that is given is that of peanut butter and biltong:

- *Idobi lemihwabha* (biltong in peanut butter). There is an explanation of what the term *umhwabha* means. According to the recipe, *umhwabha* refers to that kind of meat that was cut into thin strips, salted and hard dried uncooked (biltong). This could be beef, goat, game or any other type of meat that would be in abundance at any given time.

The idea here is that the indigenous communities did not believe in wasting or throwing away food during its time of plenty, they had strategies of preserving and extending the shelf life of the food for future consumption.

In an environment where both the adult and the young members of the society have been swayed towards opting and relying on western introduced food varieties and feeding patterns, re-introducing the indigenous dishes and the indigenous feeding habits is quite empowering. It enables the poor peasant in the rural areas, the struggling unemployed masses and the poorly-paid working class in urban centres and small towns to access descent and balanced meals for their families. The ingredients for the dishes that are presented in this column are the very indigenous food crops that are grown at home and vegetables that at times grow naturally in the gardens, field and are accessible and easily brought to the table even when people hardly have any cash in their pockets.

Such recipes that are grounded on the historical realities and resources, targeted at the Zimbabweans readers go a long way into challenging the imperialist's economic networks and strive to achieve economic justices and empowerment for people. In the context of Cabral's (1974) argument, provision of alternatives would help keep the prices of food low and affordable for the general family households. Thus, through the food and nutrition columns of the two newspapers there is evidence of an attempt at instating a new economic order in which the indigenous people can have a voice, choice or alternatives in their grappling with the challenges of life, particularly bringing food to the table.

It is unfortunate that, after having set the tone for a paradigm shift for indigenous feeding habits and nutritional values, the papers suddenly lose sight of their agenda. *Kwayedza* abandons the column on the recipes and *uMthunywa* diverts from the traditional foods and feeding habits and starts preaching the gospel of the western recipes, the chocolate and sponge cakes. It is unfortunate, however, that a reason could not be obtained from *uMthunywa* for this about turn. What, however can be concluded from this diversion is the idea that the colonial feeding habits became indelibly printed in the Zimbabwean people's life styles such that even after attainment of independence and the setting of the re-awakening

agenda, colonial food varieties and dishes continue to parade as good and necessary for the people. They are viewed as the standard. Nonetheless the two newspapers have to be credited for coming up with a column for traditional oriented dishes.

From January 2015, *Kwayedza* shifted attention from the presentation of traditionally prepared dishes as part of an on-going process of strengthening people's confidence in indigenous foods and nutritional knowledge. There was a shift to the coverage of issues to do with health problems such as Ebola, HIV, child pregnancy, TB and only one article was covered on traditional medicinal knowledge. Talking to the chief editor of *Kwayedza*, he clarified that the move from coverage of indigenous nutritional knowledge and feeding systems was necessitated by financial challenges. The column, it is argued, was run by a paid correspondent, and with the economic difficulties prevailing in the nation, it became difficult for Zimpapers to continue running the column amid financial challenges. This move saw the recipes column being replaced by other stories that could however be viewed as being more inclined to health. Sound though the excuse could be, the argument that remains is that if the indigenous food systems, feeding habits and nutritional values were critical components of the newspaper's strategy of re-awakening Africa, surely resources would be sourced out to achieve this critical goal.

### **5.6 Cultural Issues in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

According to Cabral, (1974: 13), culture is:

...an essential element of history of a people. Culture is, perhaps, the product of this history just as a flower is the product of a plant. ...It is the vigorous manifestation of the material and historical reality of the society already under domination or about to be dominated.

Cabral further argues that:

If history allows us to know the nature and the causes of the imbalances and conflicts (economic, political and social), which characterise the evolution of society, culture teaches us what have been the dynamic syntheses, structured established by the minds of society for the solution of these conflicts, at each stage of the evolution of this same society in the quest for survival and progress... it is in the culture that you find

the capacity (or responsibility) for the production and fertilisation of the seed which ensures the continuity of history, ensuring at the same time, the perspective of the evolution and of the progress of the society in question (Cabral, 1974:13).

### **5.6.1 Culture and social empowerment**

It is Cabral's belief that colonial and imperialist forces culturally dominated indigenous people and maintained that dominance through repressive means. He however believes that culture is equally an agent of colonial resistance. He argues that generally in a society where there is a strong indigenous cultural life, foreign domination is not assured of continuity as the dominated people have a high susceptibility of waging political, economic or even armed resistance. He states that "for as long as a section of the populace is able to have a cultural life, foreign domination cannot be sure of its perpetuation" (Cabral, 1974:12).

Taking Cabral's stance as a starting point, it could suffice that the introduction of the culturally inclined newspapers was an attempt to resuscitate the cultural life of the Zimbabwean population after the purported end of colonial rule. It was a move, as it were, to extricate the people from the siege that had been created by the imperial systems and institutions. The two papers need to be credited for highlighting that culture is the foundation upon which any form of emancipation can be achieved; it is the spring board upon which the people could be catapulted into development.

It is against this conviction that Cabral believes that struggles for independence are actually "organised political expressions of the culture of the people who undertake the struggle (Cabral 1974:15). Cabral believed that the major goal of imperialism is to keep the African culture under repression and in the process moving towards the, either directly or indirectly, annihilation of most of the critical cultural elements of the dominated people. He however, is of the contention that it is the responsibility of the people to keep their culture alive, even amid the organised repressive apparatuses. It is this culture that would act as a basis for the emancipation and empowerment of the people because "dominant rule cannot be sustained except by the permanent and organised repression of the cultural life of the people in

question” (Cabral 1974:12). For Cabral, with a culture in place, people can still resist imperialism even when their politico-military resistance is destroyed (Cabral, 1974). Taking a leaf from Cabral’s writings, this study adopts the position that culture is information and information is the literature and history of who we are.

As has already been alluded to in the section that dealt with the interviews that were carried out among the producers of the two newspapers in indigenous languages, the thrust of the two papers is culture. And at this point it is very important to bring in the notion of change of war frontiers that has been introduced earlier on, where it was argued that at the attainment of independence, the new leadership could have realised that they had won the battles but they had a mammoth task of liberating “the minds that had been bashed in the classrooms of colonial education” (P’Bitek, 1989) ahead of them. The very minds that had heeded to the invitation to empty oneself of creativity, achievements, traditions and self-confidence in exchange for Western ideas, practices, traditions, prescriptions of what it meant to be human and the forced acceptance of a position as the scum of that humanity (Fanon, 1967; Nyamnjoh, 2011) had to be emancipated and empowered to be able to self-reflect and respect their own identity.

It is prudent at this juncture to argue that the introduction of the two newspapers in local languages was an agenda setting strategy aimed at revitalising the Zimbabwean culture and re-invigorating the critical elements of the culture that would ensure maximum empowerment of the liberated people. Their first port of call in their revitalisation of the Zimbabwean culture is the language question, where there is an attempt at reviving and encouraging the use of indigenous languages that had been thrown onto the peripheries of discourses in the public domain. In place of these languages, English was placed, thus proving Blankson’s (2005) supposition that language is one of the sites of political struggles and tool for advancing imperialist goals.

### 5.6.2 The Language Issue

The two papers take it upon themselves to explain the importance of indigenous languages, particularly the mother tongue, to the development of a people.

*Kwayedza Ndira* 2-8 2015 has a story: ‘*Rurimi rwaamai rwunoumba tsika*’ (Mother tongue mould the people’s cultural being) which is written by Father Emmanuel Francis Ribeiro. Father Ribeiro is one of the first missionaries to champion the cause of the African people within the Roman Catholic Church. He was the first priest to introduce music in local languages as well as the use of traditional instruments in church. He was also one of the priests who provided support for the freedom fighters during the liberation war. In his article, Father Emmanuel Francis Ribeiro argues that people should have pride in their mother tongue. He argues the mother tongue is an embodiment of the rich cultural heritage of a people and as such a lot of value has to be placed on it. He also posits that upholding a people’s mother tongue will greatly assist them understand their cultural traditions. It makes people understand where they are coming from and possible where they could be heading to. Father Ribeiro in this issue concludes by pleading: “*Mutauro wedu wechiShona musaurase, musatevedzera vechiRungu nekuti ivo havafe vakanyora mabhuku avo nechishona*” (do not abandon our Shona language in favour of English because the English themselves will never write their books in Shona).

In support of the story by Father Emmanuel Francis Ribeiro is yet another story from *Kwayedza Kubvumbi* 10-16 2015 entitled “*Mitauro yemuno, kwete yekunze!*” (Local Languages, not foreign ones) (*Kwayedza Kubvumbi* 10-16 2015:4). The story highlights the idea that the government acknowledged the importance of all the local languages in the nation. It therefore initiated a constitutional outreach programme which came up with the Zimbabwean Constitution Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013 which officially recognised 16 languages in Zimbabwe. The story goes on to explain that under this constitution, it is the responsibility of the government and its agents to ensure that these languages have been promoted and taught in the school curriculum (Zimbabwean Constitution Amendment No. 20. Act 2013). According to the story most of the local languages such as Chewa, Tonga, Ndaou among others appear not to be given the status that the constitution has accorded them. There is mention in this story of some schools that are not offering any indigenous languages

in their curriculum. The story goes on to state that the Minister of Primary and Secondary education is concerned about these schools that are not offering indigenous languages since constitutionally these languages should start being offered right from early childhood development (ECD).

The same idea of the importance of indigenous languages has been highlighted in *Kwayedza, Mbudzi* 20-26 2015:4 in an editorial comment entitled “*Rurimi rawamai hwaro hwetsika*” (Mother tongue, the foundation of a people’s cultural heritage). This comment reinforces the importance of mother tongue as the cornerstone of the indigenous cultural norms, values and customs. It explains that all speech communities are proud of their languages because these languages form the basis upon which humanity is created. The editorial explains that it was against the background of this critical aspect of language that the Zimbabwean government raised 16 of the local languages to official language status. Following these developments, the story goes; the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education was tasked with ensuring that the languages are elevated to the status of languages of instruction from ECD right up to “A” Level.

The story further highlights that the government is making efforts to take a leaf from experiences of people in China, Japan, among many other nations, where the medium of instruction in the education system is the mother language of the children being taught. The story also explores the high status that has been accorded to English in all spheres of life in Zimbabwe. To augment the idea of the hegemonic status of English, the editorial highlights that a full academic certificate in Zimbabwe must have five subjects including English, Mathematics and Science. It explained that it is not mandatory for any graduate from the Zimbabwean education system to possess a pass in an indigenous language. “O” and “A” level graduates can proceed to colleges of higher learning without these local languages as long as they are in possession of a pass in English. That in itself serves to show the hegemony of English over all the other local languages that the colonialists found in Zimbabwe, the editorial concludes.

The conquest of the nation brought with it the imposition of the language of conquerors and with it came the denigration of the Zimbabwean traditional customs, values, norms and belief systems that cemented the people together and brought harmony within these communities.

According to this editorial comment, the constitutional move that was taken in Zimbabwe is not an easy stance; it calls for a concerted drive to convince the people that their own languages, their mother tongue has to take precedence in all matters that demand linguistic choice or debate. The comment concludes by saying that Zimbabwe is well known for its high literacy and this accolade has to be accompanied by the promotion of indigenous languages in the nation. As such, this task cannot be achieved by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education only, but it has to be a communal responsibility.

### **5.6.3 The Relationship Between Human Empowerment and Language.**

According to Cabral (1974), one of the ways of reviving the culture of a people is addressing the education system, through the language of the people so that the education system goes beyond literacy and numeracy, but nurtures a pride in being African. This aspect is demonstrated by *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* through their education sections which create a platform where the learning of the mother language is demystified and made interesting. This explains the existence of a lot of pages that cover the largest number of columns on the learning and mastery of the Shona and Ndebele subject in the two tabloids. Through the education columns in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, areas in the Shona and Ndebele curriculum which used to pose challenges for school going children leading to the high failure rate are addressed. From the responses obtained from the interview sessions, it is claimed that the pass rate in the two local languages have helped school-going children in their handling of Shona and Ndebele examinations.

It is however, unfortunate that the education sections in these newspapers are mainly anchored on the learning of Shona and Ndebele, particularly the skills of responding to grammar and literature questions in the respective languages. Yet, the education system offers more languages than Shona and Ndebele. The call for using Shona, Ndebele and all the other indigenous languages as media of instruction in schools has to be supported by the use of the languages in the handling of different subject areas. That way learning itself would be demystified with the use of the mother tongue and the speakers of the said language empowered.

While establishing the importance of the indigenous languages, the editorial comment takes an opportunity to empower the readership with the knowledge of the dictates of the Zimbabwean constitution in as far as the question of languages is concerned. It highlights the 16 officially recognised languages and emphasises the mandate of the government and any other agent of the government to ensure the promotion and development of these local languages. The education institutions, as agents of the ministry of Education therefore have a mandate to start offering these languages in their curriculum. Their failure to offer these languages is equivalent to disregarding the Zimbabwean constitution as well as deprivation of a people's constitutional rights. In a way, the 2013 Constitution addresses Magwa's (2008) concern that indigenous languages need not just be resuscitated and maintained, but they have to be incorporated into everyday life operations.

However, what is missing in this call for the upholding of local languages is a practical demonstration of the power of using the languages. *UMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* need to be living examples demonstrative of the feasibility of using the indigenous languages in all public domains. This implies that the papers have to make use indigenous languages in the coverage of news in all the spheres of human operation-science and technology, law, business, politics and even religion. As it stands, the papers' coverage is only confined to the cultural issues.

In addition to the language issue, which, according to both *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, is the embodiment of the cultural norms, values, beliefs and thought systems of a people, the two papers also cover stories on other various cultural institutions among the Shona and the Ndebele speaking people. The African spirituality is one aspect that has received wide coverage from the papers. This is revealed through the coverage of stories that reflect the Zimbabwean people's beliefs systems.

## **5.7 The Presentation of the African Religion and Spirituality in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

### **5.7.1 African Spirituality**

The general definition of the concept of spirituality has been presented as an individual's spiritual relationship with the inner self and the universal mind (Nyengele, 2013). In light of this definition, spirituality works for good and evil just like any other sciences (Nyengele, 2013). The most interesting point that is raised here is the idea that spirituality is a science. When used for good, spirituality promotes justice, honesty, truth peaceful coexistence among members of the community and the environment around them, support for fellow members of the community and ultimately a sense of belonging and preparedness to defend one's people and land, unity, forgiveness and reconciliation. On the other hand, when spirituality works for evil, it results in untold suffering, death, diseases, hatred, lack of respect for other people and their property, selfishness, hatred for one's people and all their belief systems, destruction of human relations and above all the destruction of the natural environment around the people.

According to Nyengele (2013), African spirituality is similar to other forms of spirituality, like those different forms of spirituality; it is not a static system of values, beliefs and behaviours, but a dynamic, changing way of life. This, argues Nyengele, is often ignored by those scholars who call for a return to an 'African past' which perhaps no longer exists, or practices which have lost their meaning and significance for contemporary Africans. For him:

African culture is an influx, and so are African values. In fact, Africans, as well as any other community of people, are daily involved in the task of living in and building a culture (Wirsty, 1995 cited in Nyengele (2013:35).

Mulago as cited in Nyengele (2013) argues that African spirituality is a set of ideas, sentiments, rituals and practices based on the following essential elements: belief in a Supreme Being (*Mwari*), creator of all who is dynamically involved in the world. The *Mwari* that is enshrined in the African religion and spirituality is one who is democratic, not autocratic, it is a *Mwari* who looks after and fends for the people, people loving and does not wait for people to burn in hell. There is no hell in this context, neither is there a heaven above the sky. Embedded in this context of African spirituality is the belief in two worlds, the visible (in which the living are found) and the invisible world – *nyikadzimu* (the spiritual world). The invisible world is viewed as both transcendent and immanent.

From the point of view of the African spirituality, there is no concept of human beings being created from mud. According to the Shona philosophy, for example, '*mhunhu akasikwa*' (a human being is a product of spinning a forked stick), this is why God is *Musikavanhu* (the spinner of human kind). A human being thus becomes a product of energy conversion. From the African perspective:

Human being = Kinetic energy  $\xrightarrow{\text{heat}}$  ignition/conception.

The kinetic energy is produced when human muscle movement is used during the energetic movement of the stick or forked object; this energy thus produces heat which ultimately results in ignition, in this context, conception. This is the same idea that is projected by Mazama (2015) when she said that life in the context of Afrocentricity is an endless flow of energy. This concept of creation accounts for the respect that is accorded to life among the Shona people in particular and the Africans in general. The Africans believe in the eternity and sacredness of life.

In the same vein, when one has been 'ignited', he/she has no end, even death does not spell the end of a person within the context of African spirituality, and death merely becomes a transformation through which an African is moved from the world of the living to the spiritual world. Death is actually the beginning (Mazama, 2015) of a new set of responsibilities on an individual as a spiritual guide to his/her people. This explains the dancing, the singing and ululation during funerals as compared to the melancholic mood characteristic of western funerals.

In the world of African spirituality, *Mwari* uses spirits as the mediators with the world of the living (Mandivamba-Rukuni, 2015). With respect to spirits, there are various forms of spirits in Africa. The spirits are ranked in a hierarchical order based on their importance or significance to the lives of the people (Rukuni-Mandivamba, 2015). At the apex of the hierarchy of these spirits is the Creator (*Mwari/Umvelinqangi/Umlimu/Unkulunkulu*). Right below the creator, according to Rukuni-Mandivamba, is the rain-maker spirit. Below the rain-making spirit is the hunter spirit, then there is the divination spirit, then there is the wondering spirit which also is followed by the clan spirit (the spirit of the ancestors). The war

spirit follows in the ranking followed by the avenging spirit. At the bottom of the ranking of these spirits is the witchcraft spirit, not very much significant although the society recognises its existence (Mandivamba-Rukuni, 2015).



Adopted from Rukuni-Mandivamba (2015)

As such, within the context of African spirituality there is no concept of the evil spirit. Even avenging spirits (*ngozi*) are not evil as such; they are spirits that are championing the need for restitution as a prelude to forgiveness and reconciliation between members of offended spirit and the offender. Under normal circumstances after the payment of reparations and performance of expected rituals, the spiritual war being waged by the *ngozi* ceases and there is reconciliation and restoration of peace. Furthermore, the same spirit that might manifest as *ngozi* within the offender's family would manifest as a positive guiding clan spirit (*mudzimu*) in its family or clan of origin. Against this backdrop, it becomes conspicuous that reconciliation and peaceful co-existence is central in the African spirituality. In a sense, no matter how grave the sin one could have committed forgiveness and reconciliation, and not perishing in hell, is key in the context of African spirituality.

One might also wonder how the witchcraft spirit could be viewed, according to Rukuni-Mandivamba (2015), this is the only spirit that is negative, the only spirit that does damage for fun, he argues. Within the African context, witches were and are still feared for the anti-social activities associated with them (Irvine, 2005). The range of activities of witches is considered deadly, destroying life primarily through perceived mysterious wasting, diseases, and eating the soul of their victims thereby causing death (Essein and Ben, 2010). However, according to Essein and Ben (2010:47), spiritual healers in the African context have the antidote for solving these supernatural problems. It is also worth noting that in the African context, witches are not killed as espoused in the Biblical literal interpretation of Exodus 22:18 "thou shall not suffer a witch to live". Instead, witches are managed, hence statements such as '*Muroyi royera kure kuti vekwako vagokureverera*' (witch, do your mischief further away from home so that your own people will defend you). In a sense, even the witches could have been assets in their own communities. While not denying the problems caused by the spirit of witchcraft in communities, the world of African spirituality may be conversant of the fact that there are many fundamental causes of human problems which include poverty, ignorance, poor health facilities, unemployment among others which make it illogical to attribute most human problems to powers of witches (Essein and Ben, 2010; Okere, 2005). This accounts for the management stance adopted in the African context and hence the insignificant status given to the spirit on the hierarchy of spirits.

The African spirituality is characterised by a belief in the interconnectedness of all life spheres; and a belief that the whole of creation and the entire universe are sacred and that they are divinely connected. At the heart of African spirituality is the quest for harmony: harmony between the human being and nature; between the human being and the community; between the human being and the living spirits of ancestors; between the living and the dead; between the visible and invisible worlds; and most importantly, harmony between human beings with *Mwari* (Rukuni-Mandivamba, 2015; Nyengele, 2013). What this implies is that this spirituality is characterised by selfless love and concern for the wellbeing of fellow members of the community; individual sacrifice for the communal heritage; forgiveness and reconciliation; hardworking; respect for other people and properties; respect for human life; respect for one's parents and above all respect for the deceased members of the community.

With this brief background on the African spirituality, it would be incumbent upon the newspapers in indigenous languages to help reclaim the African spiritual space as an essential step towards true liberation and empowerment of the Zimbabwean people. Resuscitating and reconstructing the Zimbabwean identity through story coverage and news dissemination that re-empower the Zimbabwean spiritual arena after its onslaught during the 89 years of incessant buttressing of the colonial agenda to annihilate the spirituality of the people, has to be top on the agenda of these papers. Otherwise people would risk fighting for and celebrating other people's traditions at the expense of their own (Mazama, 2015). Besides, if these newspapers do not help the nation pursue its set spiritual agenda, people would be recruited to participate in other people's spiritual agendas. The papers have a role to correct the spiritual misrepresentations which were and still continue to be made in favour of the colonial world views. If the media fraternity manages to adopt such an agenda, the nation will surely leave a *bona fide* history, legacy and cultural heritage. This way, posterity would inherit and enjoy the benefit of self-knowledge, self-pride and African sensibility that had been denied to generations that survived under the colonial system and experienced the imposition of distortions in narratives of their history, cultural heritage and spirituality.

*Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have stories covering the aspect of African spirituality. Under the banner of Zimbabwean spirituality, the papers have addressed issues related with the rites of passage associated with birth and death. They have covered stories on witchcraft, and many other Shona and Ndebele belief systems.

As has already been highlighted by the participants who were involved in interviews and questionnaire survey, the most conspicuous element of spirituality that is covered by the two newspapers is witchcraft. The two newspapers have spent much of their energy on witchcraft which unfortunately has been viewed as a less important aspect of the African spirituality by thinkers such as Mandivamba-Rukuni (2013). The coverage of issues of spirituality by the papers has confirmed the primacy that is accorded to issues of witchcraft and other negative aspects at the expense of the very important aspects of African spirituality that have a large bearing on the renaissance of the Zimbabwean people after nearly a century long of colonial suffocation and subjugation. This, however, does not rule out the fact that other positive aspects of African spirituality are given coverage.

There are instances where there are attempts at addressing the beliefs that shape and guide the Zimbabwean people's way of life. In such cases, the papers address the concept of the two worlds – that of the dead as well as that of the living. It is however unfortunate that the coverage ends up bogged down by western ideologies to the point of demonising and rubbishing the African spirituality rather than assisting people to view it as the centre of reference around which their sense of self and direction into the future should be acquired.

The general trend in the two newspapers is, therefore, a tendency to concentrate on the negative which the participants who responded to the interview questions and the questionnaires referred to as trivialities. For them this aspect was being given undue attention rather than addressing the actual spiritual bases of the people, the very sources without which it could be very difficult for Zimbabwe and Africa in particular to reclaim its space on the current global civilisation. The critical aspects of African spirituality that are being alluded to here, and are visibly missing or skirted around in the newspapers under discussion, are those

spiritual fundamentals that can help Zimbabwe confront global white supremacy and successfully champion that which is in the best interests of the nation. Spiritual essentials such as the wondering (innovative) spirits, the hunter spirit (which brings everything home) and divination spirit among many have not been given any space in these newspapers. Exploring some of these elements of African Spirituality could provide Zimbabwe with new and even more innovative strategies for dealing with the 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges.

### **5.7.2 The Rites of Passage**

In the context of the African society, Zimbabwe in particular, there are many rites of passage which include among others, rites related to the birth of an individual into a community, graduation from childhood into adulthood, marriage, and death. These rites were and are still informed and guided by the Zimbabwean spirituality. The two newspapers *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have covered issues on some of these rites. The most conspicuous one being the rites associated with burying the dead. The coverage reveals that in the context of the African society, there is no permanence on earth, when a child is born, she/he grows into an adult member of the society, and ultimately graduates into another state of being. That graduation comes in the form of death. Upon death, one is said to have joined her/his ancestral spirits. *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* try to capture the belief systems that are associated with burying the dead.

### **5.7.3 Burying the Dead**

*Kwayedza* (*Kubvumbi* 10 -16 2015:2) has a story entitled “*kuviga chitunha*” (burying the corpse). This story highlights the traditions that are followed when people are burying their deceased loved ones. According to the story, age, and social status determines how a deceased person is buried in a traditional set-up (*Kwayedza, Kubvumbi* 10 -16 2015:2). The story states that the traditions are followed from the time the person dies right up to the time of burial.

According to the story, spirit mediums, and chiefs are buried in caves. This according to the traditional customs symbolises the respect that is accorded these people for the critical roles

and responsibilities they had during their lifetime. This respect is shown by burying them in places different from places where ordinary people are buried. On the other hand, a deceased pregnant woman must not be buried together with the unborn-baby in the Shona cultural context. The two have to be separated before burial traditional procedures are followed. The unborn-baby then is buried on wetlands while the corpse of the mother is buried in the normal grave yard.

In the Zimbabwean tradition, a still born child or any baby who had not developed teeth was buried on wetlands because it is believed that burying the corpse on dry areas would result in the mother failing to beget other children. Burial on dry land would symbolically signify the drying up of the woman's womb and her capacity to have children. While on the other hand, in the event that the deceased woman would have been carrying a child, the two were separated because traditionally the mother does not belong to the same lineage with the child (*mutorwa*), therefore they cannot be buried in the same grave.

Furthermore, the story says that culturally a person who dies a natural death is buried in a descent manner with all the respect and honour accorded to her/him, but one who would have committed suicide was not supposed to be brought into the home. The corpse had to be taken from the place of death to the grave site and such a person was buried with all her/his belongings. It was believed that this was the proper way of ensuring that the deceased's spirit would not come back to haunt surviving members of the family. In such a situation, even the money that she/he possessed was buried with her/his corpse. In fact, "*kuvafushira nembatya dzavo uku kureva kuti vaende netwumweya twavo twusingade upenyu*" (burying them with their property was a way of sending them away with everything that belongs to them, even their anti-life spirits that would have caused their death) (*Kwayedza Kubvumbi* 10 -16, 2015:2).

Reading *Kwayedza* on the rites associated with burying the dead reveals that all dead people are buried with their heads placed on the eastern side of the grave (*Kwayedza Kubvumbi* 10 -16, 2015:2). This tradition is informed by the African people's belief in life after death

(Mbiti, 1987). The east is the direction from which the sun rises. Symbolically, the rising sun is believed to provide the guiding light that would lead the spirit to everlasting peace. As it were, when the sun rises, it is expected to rise with the deceased and then lead them into the life after death which Africans believe is characterised by this everlasting peace. It is this belief that informs the belief in death as a condition of resting, hence the statement ‘*azorora*’ (she/he has rested).

In the Shona, cultural practices, there are certain things that are forbidden when it comes to the handling of the corpse of the deceased as people escorts it to its final resting place. *Kwayedza* has stories that highlight some of the things and practices that are considered to be taboo when it comes to the burying of deceased. *Kwayedza, Mbudzi*(November) 21-27 2014 has one such story. In this story, a family mistakenly buried their loved one with US\$450. The relatives on realising the blunder requested permission to exhume the grave so that they take the money. Unfortunately, the chief, representing the traditional leaders who are the custodians of cultural practices and traditions declared that such an act was traditionally unacceptable and unheard of; it would translate to an abomination.

The situation of this family became complicated by the fact that in the traditional context, burying a corpse with money is also taboo. Burying a corpse with money is not permitted, “*patsika yechivanhu hazvi bvumidzwe kuti munhu avigwe nemari*” (it is unheard of in our cultural practice to have someone being buried with money). Burying a corpse with money is believed to be done by unscrupulous people, people with evil intentions who would want to ensure that the spirit of the dead does not come back to torment people, particularly those who would have offended the deceased person during his lifetime. As for alternative ways of rectifying a complicated situation such as this one, the traditional set-up again has very limited room for allowing people to exhume graves, a traditional healer, who represented the voice of these stakeholders, was quoted saying “*pachivanhu kufukunurwa kweguwa kunotoda masvikiro nen’anga dzichitungamirira kuti vanhu vasatorane nemweya yevafi*”(In the African tradition exhuming a buried corpse needs the involvement of spirit mediums who would lead in the processes to prevent people from being affected by the spirits of the deceased people).

To complicate the situation of this bereaved family, the Zimbabwean legal system also appears to have provided no remedy. The same *Kwayedza* issue also presented the legal position in Zimbabwe with regard issues of excavation of graves. The paper has a story; “*Guva haringofukurwa: Mupurisa*” (A grave is not just exhumed: Police) (*Kwayedza Mbudzi* 21-27 2014:7) which explains that even under the legal instruments in Zimbabwe, exhuming of graves is not allowed. The story explains that excavation of graves can only be done when the death is viewed with suspicion and criminal investigations have to be done to unearth evidence that has to be used before the law – in courts. The story also explains that even in such circumstances, there are procedures that have to be followed to seek the granting of permission to exhume the grave from the government. The police spokesperson is quoted as having said; “*pasi pemutemo wenyika yeZimbabwe, kana mushakabvu achinge avigwa, guva rake haringo fukunurwa kunyangwe pakava nezvikonzero asi kuti panotofanirwa kutangwa patsvagwa mvumo kubva kuHurumende.*” (Under the Zimbabwean constitution after burying the deceased, the grave must never be excavated even when there are strong reasons; permission has to be sought from the government).

#### **5.7.4 Respect for the Deceased and their Resting Places**

Zimbabweans believe that death is not the end, but a state that merely facilitates the graduation into the spiritual world where a new set of responsibilities is believed to await people. This explains why the grave sites are regarded with sacredness. As such they are respected as a way of showing respect for the deceased. This philosophy is captured in some of the stories that are covered in both *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*.

In one of the issues in *uMthunywa*, there is an editorial comment that has a title, “*Umbono woMthunywa: Kababotshwe abatshontsha inhlabathi emangcwabeni*” (Editorial Comment: those who steal pit sand from the grave yards must be arrested). This comment is lamenting the loss of respect among the Ndebele people and Zimbabweans in general for places where the deceased are laid to rest-grave sites. The story explains that people no longer respect the deceased; they have the audacity to dig graves while others even go to the extent of stealing

the coffins from the graves for purposes of reselling. In the traditional set-up graves and grave sites were revered such that no people, particularly young members of the society, had the courage to tread near or in grave areas. Graves were feared and those who were seen digging in such areas were regarded as witches because of the sacredness attached and the respect that was accorded to the people buried in the area. However, according to the story, children now fearlessly walk through the graves, even during the evening.

This commentary was written against a background of the media stories that stated that the Number 6 graves in Bulawayo were being dug by members of the society to get pit sand for the construction of their houses. According to *uMthunywa*, the excavation of these graves is an indication of the worst levels of loss of respect (*ukuxhwala*); people no longer have any regard for the deceased. The comment even makes reference to the biblical scriptures when it states that the scriptures themselves have categorically stated that dead bodies have evil spirits that follow them. As such, the story goes, the dead and the living cannot be made to co-exist since this will only bring the living close to the evil spirit and eventually bring bad omens into their lives. Such omens, continues the comment, have a negative effect in the lives of the living and in some instances, people may find themselves failing to realise any economic development because of these evil spirits that would have followed them from the grave sites. The editorial comment states that those people who are stealing sand for purposes of constructing their houses from the graves at Number 6 are drawing evil spirits and bad luck into their families because of the spirits of the deceased people would continuously haunt them.

Besides having evil spirits haunting them, these people are said to be digging the graves and leaving the coffins in the open. This makes the opportunistic thieves easily come, empty the coffins of the human contents (corpses) and take the coffins for resale. These corpses, according to the comment, are surely a cause of concern; they are potential health hazards. The editorial comment suggests that the police have to work in collaboration with the community around the grave site to ensure and enforce respect for the dead and their graves. The people who are digging graves, leaving them open, just for purposes of taking sand are criminals, the story argues, who deserve to be brought before the law. They have greatly

contributed to environmental degradation of the grave site as they leave behind uncovered gullied that have a propensity of being hazardous when the rains fall. The comment concludes by stating that what is of critical importance is the need for people to respect Zimbabwean values, customs and traditions, to respect the graves and the deceased who were laid to rest at those sites.

This coverage of issues to do with the need to preserve and respect grave sites is very critical. The respect that is being alluded to, forms part of the critical threads that make up the Zimbabwean people's social fabric and their relationship with their deceased one who would have passed on. What, however, is worrisome in this coverage is the association of the deceased with evil spirits. This perception has no roots in the Zimbabwean spiritual landscape. The idea of relating dead people with evil spirits is Euro-centric in orientation. It was part of the bigger strategy of separating the Africans from their cultural axis. It is this culture that is the very source of the humus that nourished their socio-politico-economic development. This was part of the whole project of erasing the identity of the Zimbabweans in particular and the Africans in general, a way of removing any cultural reference systems from the lives of the Africans for effective manipulation and exploitation.

It has to be noted that publishing such a worldview does not help in any way to resuscitate the Zimbabwean people's self-pride and belief in themselves and everything associated with their historical experiences. It is antithesis of the goals behind the establishment of the two newspapers in indigenous languages in 1985. If anything, the idea of the evil spirits following people from the grave sites to their homes and ultimately causing misfortunes in their lives, is a mockery of the respect that Zimbabweans are expected to accord their loved ones who have passed on. For *uMthunywa* to publish information that proclaims that grave sites are the dwelling places of evil spirits is nothing but perpetuation of the colonial ideology that indoctrinated Africans and associated their ancestors with the devil. While it is a fact that evil spirits are a phenomenon that exists within the Zimbabwean context, not all spirits of dead people are evil. Placing all the spirits of the dead people at Number 6 cemetery in Bulawayo under one blanket, evil spirits is surely a misrepresentation of the Zimbabwean cultural perception of deceased members of the society.

### 5.7.5 Witchcraft

The other concept that forms part of the African people's spirituality is the belief in witchcraft. Witchcraft within the context of the Shona and Ndebele communities was and still is not a virtue; it is actually viewed as a vice. This witchcraft has found wide coverage in the two newspapers in indigenous languages on which this study is based. The reason that has been given for the attention being given to witchcraft, according to the participant, is that it is a phenomenon that characterises the life experiences of Zimbabweans. For the participants who argued that the two newspapers resonate with the real-life experiences of the people, the goblins and snakes that vomit money, the witches that consume human flesh and enter locked houses, the lightning and charms all do exist among the people.

*Kwayedza Chikumi* 12-18 2015 has a story “*Nyama yemhunhu makeke: muroyi*” (Human flesh is a delicious: witch). In this story a teenager girl in form three is alleged to be possessed by a spirit of *huroyi* (witchcraft). The story alleges that she openly admitted that human flesh is a delicacy and that it surpasses all other forms of meat she has ever had, even chicken. She openly confesses that she and her team have killed 72 people and that they use young children as horses or hyenas on their witchcraft errands.

In *Kwayedza Gumiguru -Mbudzi* 2014, there is a story “*Tsvara kadenga yoreurura*” (The beautiful lady confesses), in which one beautiful woman is presented confessing her witchcraft activities which saw many men losing their money and hard earned property. In this story, she confesses that she belonged to an aquatic cult that had trained her into the art of siphoning people's money. She explained that she would target men with money and businesses, through her negative spiritual activities she would lead to the downfall of the men. The lady alleges that she got the powers from the aquatic world where she was recruited into by her aunt. Using the powers gained from her recruitment into the aquatic spiritual world, she could get into shops as well as banks and get away with as much goods and money as she could. She also alleged that the money that she got from the targeted wealthy men as

well as the business organisations was taken to the aquatic world where it was handed over to the Queen, a process which was done every Friday of each week. She confessed that when she deviated from the aquatic spiritual activities, the punishment levelled against her was continual bleeding ever since 2009 to 2014.

In yet another *Kwayedza* issue there is a story, *Muroyi aka bvotomoka parufu: Ndini ndaka uraya baba vemunhu*. In this story a male witch confesses his anti-social activities at a funeral where he openly tells members of his family of his hand in the death of two of the members of the family including his own mother in 1974.

In yet another issue, *Kwayedza*, Mbudzi 20-26 2015, there is a story “*Muroyi akadonha pabere*”. In this coverage, a family in Macheke woke up to find a naked old woman in their home after she allegedly fell from a hyena during her witchcraft sprees. According to the spokesperson of the family this happened after they had received home-protection prayers (*minamoto*), which were given to them after one of the prophets in their church had seen a vision of wicked visitors whose aim was to kill one of the family children.

*UMthunywa* has its own fair share of stories on witchcraft. In its 8 October 2015 issue, there is a story of an old woman (*Zondwa Tshuma*) who is alleged to have kept a horn that contains human blood. This horn it has been argued is believed to have the power to kill as well as bring misfortunes on targeted members of the community.

The story claims that the old woman, during her rituals, would blow the horn and the blood contents in it would subside and once that happens misfortunes would befall a named or chosen victim, who ultimately would die and his/ her blood would then come and fill up the space that would have been created when the old woman blew the horn. It is further explained that if the blood contents spilt onto the floor in the process of blowing the horn, the human target would die instantly. The story alleges that the old woman’s horn prevented other members of the community from developing economically and kept everyone in

perpetual poverty. Members of the community, the story goes on, also alleged that the horn was used to spy on their socio-economic plans and it kept MaTshuma informed of each and everyone's plans. On getting the information on their development plans, she would then blow her horn and all the plans would be nullified. They pointed out that they failed to understand how she got to know everything even things that would have happened in the evening when everyone else was asleep or indoors.

In yet another story that is covered in the October 8 2015 issue there is a story "*Vumbu inyoka isisitheka ngerayisi ngomlomo*", (A snake emerges carrying a packet of rice). In this story, a family in the Habane community in eSigodini confessed to keeping a snake that went around stealing money and food from the shops in the area. This came out at an all-night prayer that was hosted by the Zion Christian church. The news crew was informed that the family inherited this snake from their parents and its function was wealth creation. As the people were praying, the story goes; a python came from the direction of the shops carrying a two kilograms(2kg) packet of rice much to the surprise of everyone who was at this gathering. On its arrival, the snake went straight to the kitchen. When it came out it became vicious ready to attack the praying gathering.

The story highlights that the family had started facing problems from the snake; as a result they resorted to calling for an all-night-prayer. The family, which happened to be the host at this all-night-prayer, acknowledged that they had been using this snake, however, of late that snake was becoming a problem, and it was now stealing their own resources. Besides, they claimed, the snake now wanted to kill one of them and in most cases, they would spend sleepless nights as it marauded the homestead in a bid to kill at least one member from this family. The business community, the story goes, had been at the mercy of this snake as it stole money and food during the evening. Before the situation turned sour, the Moyo family, which happens to be the family concerned, had no problems at all, they virtually had everything they would desire to have.

*UMthunywa* October (1) 2015 issue has a story of a corpse of a child who had died and was buried two years before (in 2013) in Nkayi in the Jongela community. Surprisingly this same corpse of the child was found in one old woman's granary, two years later in 2015. The story highlights that the corpse was looking fresh, as though the child had recently died, undecomposed with the only missing part being the tongue. The story states that two years before, the child was found murdered in a forest with the private parts removed. The fresh corpse was found in the granary of MaNkomo who is believed, together with her counterparts, to have converted the corpse into a spiritual zombie that was used for stealing food from the neighbourhood. The story stated that one of the informants they approached told them that the old woman, MaNkomo confessed that they killed the child then ate the private parts as a way of protecting themselves from charms that are used for fortifying homesteads against witches. It is argued that the old woman confessed that the members of her group can exhume bodies of the deceased.

In the July 23, 2015 issue, there is yet another story of an old woman who is believed to be keeping lightning in a bottle "*Isalukazi sigcina umbane embodleleni*" (An old woman keeps lightning in a bottle). The old woman is believed to be in possession of lightning captured in a bottle. This bottle is alleged to contain the lightning, samples of soil from the grave yards and human blood. This combination of weird things is believed to have been used in killing members of the family and the community at large. The news crew was told that the old bottle which contained these things was very hot that it took more than three hours for the faith healers to take control of it. The faith healers finally managed to overpower it after sprinkling holy water on the bottle. According to the faith healer, the story goes, it was this heat that turned into lightning.

The story explains that members of the Ncube family had to resort to the assistance of faith healers after they had experienced incidents of family members being struck by lightning, their daughters were also failing to secure marriages, and there were numerous mysterious deaths which made many people within the community point fingers at the 90-year-old woman known as NaNhlanhla (Nhlanhla's mother). One of the grandchildren to this old woman confirmed that their grandmother was found with a bottle of charms which was used

for fixing the grandchildren who would have refused to adhere to what she desired. In the event that someone would have wronged her, the story goes, she would just go to this lightning bottle and the concerned person would just find him/herself being struck by lightning on the onset of rains. The family is said to have had eight children, but all of them have since died because of the old woman. In the event that she would have caused the death of a person, the story continues, the old woman would go to the grave of the deceased, take a sample of soil and put it in the lightning bottle to reinforce the power of the charm.

On discussing the issue of the bottle with the old woman, she confirmed that the bottle was hers. She told the news crew that the bottle contained lightning charms and samples of soil from various graves, and she spelt out that if the lightning would have failed to strike the victim, it suppresses the economic development of that targeted person. She further elaborated that the samples of soil from the grave sites had the power to make her sons-in-law come to live with their wives' family. The story suggests that community members were happy with the removal of this bottle because they also complained that this lightning had taken its toll on the community, this act, they believed would provide some relief to them. The bottle was taken and burnt to ashes.

Among the Ndebele people cattle were/are a measure of wealth. A man was and is still respected among other men because of the size of the herd of cattle in his possession. *UMthunywa* presents a story in which a woman attempts to use supernatural forces and charms to expand her herd of cattle. *UMthunywa* 28 October issue has a story entitled “*Ungenisa umntanakhe lebululu emacansini efuna ukwandisa umhlambi wenkomo*” (She forces her daughter into intimacy with a snake in a bit to expand her herd of cattle). In trying to capture the story, a vivid image of the snake is presented to the people to ensure that they are well aware of the type of snake that is the bone of contention. As such *uMthunywa* manages to kill two birds with one stone. The paper manages to familiarise readers with the type of snake that is at the centre of the story. With many families living in urban areas, and most of the rural areas having been affected by land tenure policies that stretch from the period of colonialism many people have lost touch with the animals in their environment. The overgrazing and deforestation that emanated from the land dispossession that accompanied colonialism affected the natural environment that sustained the lives of snake. As such many

people no longer know the various snakes that form part of their heritage. The vivid picture that accompanies the story thus helps the paper show the readers the type of snake that is being reported on.



*uMthunywa*, 28 August 2015

In this story the woman in Nyamandlovu is said to possess a snake that sexually abuses her 38-year-old daughter as a strategy for expanding her herd of cattle. When questioned about this snake, Mrs.Ndlovu confessed that this snake was brought into the family by her late husband with the aim of enhancing the family herd. She explained that when her late husband brought it home it was in the form of a small root that was supposed to be buried in the cattle pen. The traditional healer who provided the root was open to her husband and that the root was a snake that was going to be moving around the pen licking the cows so that they have many calves.

The community is said to have invited traditional healers (*tsikamutanda*) after they had experienced problems with their cattle resulting in their suppressed numbers. It was this healer who pointed out that the old woman had a snake that sexually abused her daughter as a way of increasing the size of the family herd. The story explains that the woman confessed

that the snake belonged to her and that she was grateful that the snake had been removed from her life. Members of the community also confirmed that the daughter had been reduced to a weakling; she was always ailing and could not secure herself a marriage partner. The mother confessed that the moment the snake was burnt; her daughter began to show signs of great recovery from her ailment. She could even take care of household chores, something she could not do during the time they were in possession of the snake.

In *uMthunywa* 28 August 2015 issue, there is a story of a cat in the Nyamayendlovu community that is said to be moving around cattle pens milking cows resulting in them being unable to produce as much milk as they were expected. It is also believed that this cat through its activities was causing the cows to fail to have calves, while causing those that would have conceived to experience miscarriages. Having experienced this problem, the members of the community agreed to consult traditional healers to look into this communal problem. The traditional healers are said to have removed many things from different households in the community. As for the issue of the cat, the traditional healers asked MaNyathi, the owner to bring it to them. She brought the cat and the container in which the things that were stolen by the cat were stored.

In yet another issue, *uMthunywa*, 13 August 2015, there is a story of an old woman, Selinah Dlamini who claims to have inherited 'ukhomane' (a traditional winnowing bowl made from reeds or bamboo) for use in witchcraft activities. She claims that she can fly using this instrument with eleven other members of her group to places such as Malawi and South Africa.

*UMthunywa*, 22-28 October 2015 also has stories that are based on witchcraft. On the second page of the issue there is a story "Inyanga ibanjwa ichela imithi ko makhelwana" (A traditional healer is caught performing rituals at a neighbour's homestead). In this story a traditional healer is caught performing rituals at a neighbour's homestead at midnight. On being interrogated, he claimed he had got lost, and that the ritual he was performing was supposed to be done at yet another home close to the neighbour's. The healer claimed that it

was unfortunate that he got lost only to realise his mistake on being found by the owners of the home.

In *uMthunywa* of November 19-25 2015, there is a story of a widower who is resident in Gwitshi community in Nkayi District who is alleged to be in possession of a snake. For the past 20 years, it is alleged, the snakes would lick his cancerous wound that is located around his private organs before it proceeded to get intimate with his daughters-in-law. The allegations have it that it is this same snake that strangled the man's wife to death.

In another *uMthunywa* issue of 26-November-2 December 2015:2, there is a story "*Alala lembila amadoda enkayi?*" literally translated to (Are the men in Nkayi sleeping with a rabbit?). In this story, it is alleged that men in Nkayi are alleged to be sleeping with a rabbit known as *Macacada*, after it was revealed that a couple in the community was in possession of a rabbit whose role was to get intimate with men as well as steal farm produce from the granaries of the villagers. The story alleges that *Macacada* derives its strength from sleeping with men and sucking their manhood. In the evening, the rabbit turns into a beautiful lady as it goes out abusing men. After that, it turns into a donkey when it carries the stolen farm produce. It is alleged that *Macacada* built a house for the couple and it had intended to build another one, plans which could have been nullified by the capture of the rabbit.

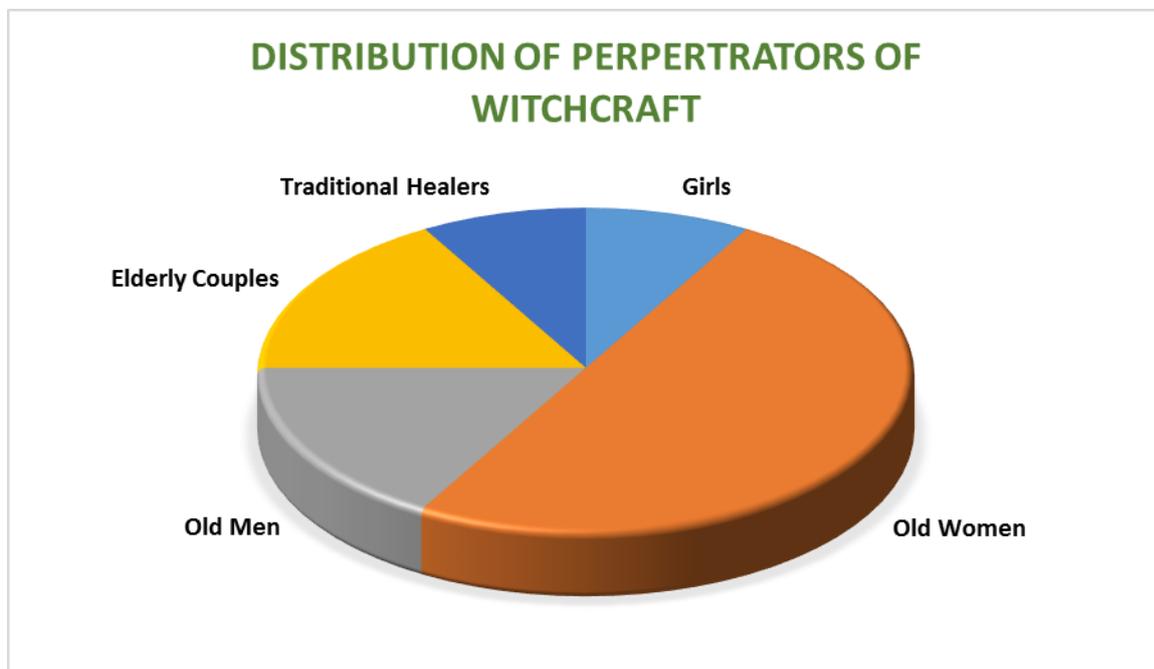
In yet another show of the power of witchcraft, *uMthunywa* 14-20 April, 2016 had a story "*Uxhawulwa yindwangu ahlanye*" (He is hand shaken by a baboon and gets mad). In this story an illegal gold miner who was famous for being abusive – beating up people and confiscating their gold - was given a handshake by a baboon and immediately he lost his sanity.

The range and amount of story coverage around this issue only helps to support the idea that the two newspapers are over excited about the coverage of issues of witchcraft. However, of most importance in these stories is the age of the people being accused of being witches, the

elderly women and men or traditional healers in the communities. Out of the of the twelve stories that are centered on witchcraft that have cited individuals as perpetrators of the evil, only 8% of the stories are centered on young female members of the community. The rest are either on old women, old men, elderly couples or traditional healers.

**Table 5.7.2: Frequency distribution of perpetrators of witchcraft**

Perpetrator	Frequency	Percentage
Girl	1	8%
Old women	6	50%
Old Men	2	17%
Traditional Healers	1	8%
Elderly Couples	2	17%



**Figure 5.10**

From the data collected, it has emerged that 55% of witches were old women in their individual capacities, with the remaining percentage being shared among young girls who were being initiated into the act, elderly men, elderly couples and traditional healers.

Such stories are a mirror reflection of what happens in many communities within Zimbabwe. In fact, as indicated in the stories people actually believe they have the spirit of witchcraft and can cause harm to fellow members of the society. However, a closer scrutiny of the stories will reveal evidence of a strategic and systematic erasing of points of references in terms of Zimbabwean cultural repositories. In an attempt to cover issues of African spirituality, the journalists in association with the communities are running the risk of blackmailing elderly people, who have managed to keep themselves alive, safe from the killer diseases that are taking their toll on the young members of the society, as witches. The elderly people find themselves being castigated for the gift of life that has been bestowed on them. This becomes even more disturbing when some of the stories have to be corrected when the same papers acknowledge that the story later proved to be nothing but mere malicious fabrications meant to tarnish someone's image. Such instances then end up proving correct participants who pointed out that some of the stories sound untrue.

Through the stories, critical components of the African spirituality such a respect for fellow members of the society and above all respect for all elderly members of the society are breached. In a way, the stories on witchcraft especially those that end up pointing towards elderly members of the society end up contradicting the spirit of respecting and protecting the elderly people. This becomes even more worrisome when considering that the faith healers or the pastors or the prophets who are engaged in addressing issues of witchcraft would be young members of the society who could even pass for grand children to the accused. As a result, the stories depict these elderly people, the moving libraries of African knowledge and wisdom, being dressed down and condemned by the very same society that is meant to benefit from them. Prospects of an empowering cultural renaissance become bleak when points of reference are humiliated as seen in most of the stories. In a way, we see *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* pursuing the colonial agenda of destroying any cultural structures and systems that could be the rallying points for the Africans.

Witchcraft was and still is antithesis to the virtues of the Zimbabwean spirituality. In fact, witchcraft is a deviant culture that is subscribed to by a few people. Such a practice can, therefore, not pass as a culture of all. All that the readers get from these stories of witchcraft is the idea that Zimbabwean beliefs are evil, yet these beliefs, the real Zimbabwean belief systems, form an integral part in binding the people, promoting respect for human dignity and peace with their environment (Kazembe, 2008). It was this belief system that guided and championed for the democratic rights of the indigenous people and played a critical role in their struggle for independence. It is, thus this positive dimension of the indigenous belief system that must see its way into the media platform. Such characteristics would help showcase indigenous people are equal players in the promotion and upholding of human rights and democracy on the global arena. It is no doubt that the concept of witchcraft is characteristic of all communities in the human race, even the developed countries on the globe. However, their media is never pre-occupied with such issues, but the progressive aspects of their religion and spirituality.

In actual fact, offences, wickedness, violation of societal norms, and other sinful acts are not accepted by *Mwari* according to traditional Zimbabwean spirituality (Kazembe, 2008:55). Zimbabwean traditional belief systems, be they of Shona or Ndebele origin, provide the people with the values, attitudes and worldviews against which people get to understand the world within which they exist. The worldviews provide a system of morality that establishes right from wrong, good and appropriate from bad and inappropriate behaviour (Kazembe, 2008). Anyway, as already been alluded to, the spirit of witchcraft is the least significant of all the spirit that are found in the African spirituality cosmology, it should therefore, have been given minimal attention while greater focus is paid on those aspects of African spirituality that champion the ideals of the Zimbabwean society and set the agenda of the people in the neo-colonial setting.

Paradoxically when one reads stories on the Shona or Ndebele people's beliefs in the two newspapers, all that is presented is the negative. What we see is a perpetuation of the colonial discourse that argued that African spirituality was synonymous to witchcraft (Kazembe,

2008:57). That is why in colonial discourses traditional medical practitioners or spirit mediums were termed 'witchdoctors'. Indirectly, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* are campaigning for the destruction of the Shona and Ndebele religious belief systems and in the process (because the belief systems and the people's culture are inseparable) their culture. They present them as an evil that needs to be eradicated. The very characteristics that under normal Shona and Ndebele belief systems are condemned are presented and celebrated as the norm in the two newspapers. What, however, needs to be pointed out is the idea that Zimbabwean belief systems reinforced meaningful activities that brought joy, comfort and thus strengthened the unity of the community (Kazembe, 2008). Hence the need to have such aspects of the belief systems taking the centre stage in the coverage of the two papers.

Furthermore, the coverage of stories in the two newspapers illustrates a narrow and limited appreciation of the African spirituality and religion on the part of the reporters. This probably could be attributed to the spiritual void that was created right from the onset of colonialism with the effective implantation of spiritual colonialism. After the outbreak of the First Chimurenga war, the colonial settlers could not accept that the 'docile and cowardly' people had gone on an insurrection. They, thus, blamed the spirit mediums, the *Mhondoros* or *Masvikiro*, (which the colonial settlers referred to as witchdoctors) for influencing the people into revolting. Subsequently, the colonial system targeted these spirit mediums for murder with the High Priest of Mwari at Matopo hills – the area where the very first battle of the First Chimurenga took place - being the first casualty. He was quickly followed by Charwe on 27 April 1898 (*The Patriot*, 29 July-August 4 2016). This identification and decapitation of the prominent spirit mediums continued until the system was content that the major spirit mediums that commanded respect and could influence large groups of people were eliminated.

Before being guillotined, the repositories and custodians of the Zimbabwean spirituality were coercively baptised into the Christian faith. Examples of such spiritual leaders that were coerced into Christianity were Kaguvi, Maremba, Ndowa, Zvidembo, Gundusa, Munyongani and Chiriseri. Mediums like Charwe (the spirit medium of Nehanda), Mvenuri and Mashindu refused to be converted and it is on record that beheading them was characterised by a lot of

resistance (*The Patriot*, 29-July-5 August 2016). For those like Kaguvi who complied with the system, after the acceptance of the Christian faith and the denouncing of the African religion as evil, the custodians are said to have died peacefully and with resignation. This narrative of baptism and succumbing to death is very important, it symbolises the Zimbabwean people's spiritual death. Just as much as the spiritual and revolutionary leaders resigned their African religion and spirituality, and quietly accepted their colonial fast-tracked death, the people's faith in their religion and spirituality also faded and died. It is this allegorical death that accounts for the missing positive dimension of African spirituality in the coverage of news in the two newspapers. After the elimination of these spiritual leaders, the colonial system left no points of reference for the current generations to tap from. The negative image of Zimbabwean beliefs that was imposed and reinforced over decades is what is left for the generations that came after the systematic elimination and replacement of the local spirituality.

From the time of the spiritual death, death as a phenomenon among the Zimbabweans immediately assumed a new dimension which was not common to Africans. Instead of symbolising victory (Mazama, 2015), in the case of the spiritual leaders who succumbed to the colonial religion, their death represented defeat. Hence the void in the knowledge and ability to write and document a holistic representation of the Zimbabwean peoples' spirituality within the stories covered in both *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. This also might help explain the obsession with witchcraft at the expense of very positive aspects of the African people's spirituality which the colonial system and ultimately the two newspapers in indigenous languages are silent about.

While these newspapers are meant to benefit the majority of readers who read news in local languages, they have performed worse than their sister English versions as they misrepresent the indigenous people's spirituality and unconsciously advocates for Western values and worldviews.

What, however, is important to point out here is that true liberation and empowerment need also to assume a spiritual dimension. A spiritual front has to be established from which a religious war is launched for effective decolonisation of the people. From the slant of the

newspapers, it is apparent that when independence came, the people abandoned and gave up the spiritual struggle and there was a total embracement of the colonial master's religion and spirituality. It is however, worth noting that real freedom cannot be attained and sustained on the basis of a borrowed religion, particularly a religion that took part in and guillotined the Zimbabwean ancestors, mediums of the different forms of spirits and ultimately deprived the people of their heritage, (Chivaura 2016:3). The implication is that at independence, the new system must have mainstreamed indigenous spirituality and infused all dimensions of indigenous knowledge systems of governance and leadership into the new system. Now that the new political dispensation failed to do so, these newspapers in indigenous languages have to be lobbying for the recognition of positive indigenous systems of governance and leadership.

As alluded to in the presentation of research findings from the content analysis that was carried out on the two newspapers, stories of witchcraft and sorcery occupy the bulk and prime space that are expected to have been used in addressing the spiritual dimension of the Zimbabwean people's culture. Again, it has to be reiterated that witchcraft was and still is antithesis to the virtues of the Zimbabwean spirituality. In fact, witchcraft is actually a deviant culture that is subscribed to by a few people. Such a culture can, therefore not pass as a culture of all. All that the readers get from these stories of witchcraft is the impression that Zimbabwean beliefs are bad, yet in real life situations, they form an integral part that binds the people, promote, respect for human dignity and peace with their environment (Kazembe, 2008). In actual fact, offences, wickedness, violation of societal norms, and other sinful acts are not accepted by *Mwari* as understood within the context of traditional African spirituality (Kazembe, 2008:55). This wickedness while constituting part of the real-life experiences that are captured in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* need not outshine other critical aspects of the Zimbabwean people's spirituality.

Zimbabwean traditional belief systems, be they of Shona or Ndebele origin, provide the people with the values, attitudes and worldviews against which people get to understand the world within which they exist. The worldviews provide a system of morality that establishes right from wrong, good and appropriate from bad and inappropriate behaviour (Kazembe, 2008). In any case, as already been alluded to, the spirit of witchcraft is the least significant of all the spirits that are found in the African spirituality cosmology (Mandivamba-Rukuni,

2015), it should therefore have been given minimal attention as greater focus is paid on those aspects of African spirituality that champion the ideas of the African society and set the agenda of the people in the neo-colonial setting.

#### **5.7.6 The Zimbabwean Traditional Medical Institution as presented in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

Just like there is very little positive coverage of the concept of African spirituality in the newspapers, the reportage on the traditional medical institution in the Zimbabwean society has equally received very little attention. In most instances when the positive aspect of the traditional medicine is revealed, the voice of the reporter or the editorial comment comes in to create an element of doubt as to the efficacy of the medicine or even the traditional practitioners themselves. There would be another story just adjacent to that on the traditional medicine or traditional medical practice with a title such as “*Kasika kuona chiremba*” (You must hasten to see the doctor), thus giving the impression that the traditional practitioner is not a doctor, the term “doctor” it implies is a preserve of the western trained practitioners who use western oriented medicinal treatment.

*Kwayedza Gunyana* (2015) talks of “*n’ganga yave kugadzira mapiritsi*” (A traditional healer is now producing tablets). This is a story of a traditional healer who has started producing tablets from traditional medicine. From the story coverage, Mr. Friday Chisanyu’s medicine is helping quite a large number of people. Again, it is unfortunate that the participants in this study, who cried foul about the absence of stories concerned with contemporary problems affecting human existence did not see this story. It is now common knowledge that globally nations are resorting to indigenous knowledge systems as a response to medical, environmental and many other challenges that have affected human lives.

According to the healer, the tablets are of great assistance to those members of the society who are not comfortable with being associated with the consumption of traditional medicine. What the story is implying is that there is a large population in Zimbabwe that is still mentally colonised and would never want to be associated with indigenous medicine. In

addition to that group, there is another large group that play hide and seek, pretending not to be benefiting from the indigenous medicine. This part of the population is aware that in reality indigenous medicine effective. They have decided to remain secret consumers of this heritage and in broad day light they pretend to be anti-indigenous medicine. The story concluded by arguing that patients who were found at the Chisanyu Health Centre in Mbare admitted that they are really benefiting from the packaged medicine they are receiving (*Kwayedza, Gunyana* 4-10 2015:17).

The story highlights a milestone in aligning indigenous medicine to current trends on the global market. We begin to see the medicine being packaged, ready for displaying on the pharmaceutical shelves where we expect them to compete favourable with the other forms of medicine from other nations on the global market. With indigenous medicine packaged in the conventional way, the statement that is being put forward is that traditional healing is not an archaic and static practice that does not harness and tap from current global trends. There is coverage of a move at mainstreaming indigenous medicine to global practices in the wake of threatening health problems. We begin to see the Zimbabwean indigenous medicinal systems coming into play, claiming their space on the global medical fraternity and making their unique contributions to the global efforts at alleviating human suffering. It is, however, unfortunate that the story does nothing to help build people's confidence in their own medicine since the coverage leaves the aspect of being unprepared to be associated with traditional medicine unchallenged. Yet, according to Chinweizu et al (1987:20):

... it is a common and easily observable fact that even the most 'detrified' and 'modernised' Christians, scholars, scientists, and entrepreneurs among the African bourgeoisie today still consult African divinities, diviners, and healers when their health and other affairs are in serious trouble...western medicines are fine in their places but when things get tough, you run back to your roots and ancestral ways.

Furthermore, if the Chinese have managed to package their indigenous teas and medicines and even circulated them on the global market, what would prevent the Zimbabwean medicine from following suit? A story such as this one would, under normal circumstances, be celebrated and given high sounding coverage. Yet in this particular coverage, there is an element of skepticism even in the coverage as the story decides to keep a distance from the attitudes that are being displayed by the beneficiaries of the tradition medicine that has been

packaged in conventional containers. A comment on the use of indigenous medicine in the 21<sup>st</sup> century would have helped. This is where the concept of opinion building that was alluded to in the questionnaire responses by the experts in language, language policy and the media discipline should come in. The expert systems, not those designed within the western perspective in the form of computerised programmes, but those designed and assessed using the Zimbabwean yardstick, are expected to become pronounced when there is coverage of such crucial issues which have a propensity of empowering the people. A voice that builds a positive opinion towards the medicine has to be heard. This implies that the journalists who cover such issues need to have received indigenous knowledge systems appreciation workshops to enhance their appreciation of them.

In addition, if the agenda of the two papers is to uphold and promote the African knowledge systems, cultural norms, practices and values, then this story is falling short of setting that agenda as it is tainted with an element of indifference on the part of the coverage. Looking at this story coverage it is the contention of this study that if *Kwayedza* is a paper that is targeting the people, the general people in Zimbabwe, the mostly disadvantaged members of the society who in most cases have challenges accessing medical facilities, the story coverage that followed should have tried to develop the concept of the efficacy of indigenous medicine. There is surely nothing as empowering as assisting people to survive decent lives through the harnessing of locally available resources, without having to be forced by circumstances to visit commercialised facilities whose main target is to manipulate and drain financial resources from their clientele as much as possible. The perception that is being championed by this story is that indigenous medicine cannot be as good as that prepared and obtained from Western oriented laboratories.

In yet another series of stories based on traditional healing, there is coverage of a healing practice known as *kuuchika* – a healing process that is used to solve the problem of people who would be experiencing challenges in getting pregnant or begetting children. Within the cultural set-up in Zimbabwe, a family is considered to be a very important union in which each individual within the society is expected to belong. This family has to have children; children are believed to form the bedrock upon which the family and the society at large

derive sustenance. The demographic increase in the society is achieved through the family unit and people of tradition knew the relationship between population increase and socio-economic development of a society. The belief was that the larger the population the greater the socio-economic development within a community as there will be more human resources to tame the environment for the benefit of society. With that philosophy at hand, the Zimbabwean communities believed that every newly established family (or even already existing ones) had to bring forth new members into the society – children and in the event that challenges were being faced, traditional medical solutions were available.

*Kwayedza, Gumiguru 30 -5 Mbudzi 2015* has a story titled “*Kuuchika: Vamwe vodyiswa tsvina*” which highlights that in the traditional set-up, members of the society, be they male or female who fail to have children are expected to get some form of treatment through a cultural practice known as ‘*kuuchika*’. This traditional practice can also be performed for people who are having same sex children, they get treated to change the sex of the next child they would be anticipating to have. Traditionally, this kind of treatment was done using herbal medicines.

The story “*Kuuchika: Vamwe vodyiswa tsvina*” highlights the plight of two women who were experiencing difficulties in getting children. In their search for a solution to their problem, they found themselves being asked to drink a substance that looked and tasted like blood. Taking the substance down the throat was an uphill task, the women stated. As a result of taking this kind of treatment the two women in question confessed that they can no longer eat meat. Besides being asked to drink this obnoxious substance, the prophet in question wanted to sexually abuse them. The prophet pointed out that the spirit had declared that they engage in spiritual intimacy as a final stage in their cleansing ceremony and *kuuchika* practice. It was at that stage that the women decided to terminate their visits to the prophet. In this same story, there is also mention of the fact that there are some stories that have been known to be circulating stating that *kuuchika* can be performed using practices that can be unpleasant such as asking the concerned women to drink dog waste or urine and even going to the extent of prescribing that they consume the soil taken from the entrance of a beerhall.

The above covered story, which is paraded as the normal way of performing *kuuchika* is actually a reflection of a deviant, unprincipled, uncouth section of members of the society (*nhubu/izigangi*) who have lost the African sensibility, *chivahu*, and have taken joy in abusing people in the name of performing a cultural practice – *kuuchika*. The Zimbabwean culture respected human dignity and would never approve the use of dog waste or urine and even consumption of soil taken from the entrance of a beerhall to address the question of childlessness. Whatever the prophet was doing was not *kuuchika* but unquestionable human abuse. Such a projection of a negative and dehumanising approach to human problems only serves to present African traditional strategies or practices as non-qualifying candidates on the global medical fraternity. It is the contention of this study that the coverage of news that spotlight such activities as the norm has to be ceased if Africa is to leave positive and self-empowering trails on the global landscape.

To further nail the traditional medical practices, the same issue has a story, just adjacent to the one on women who are being made to consume obnoxious substances - “*Kasika kuona chiremba: Dr Moyo*”. In this story the doctor reiterates that the problems of failing to have children is most felt by women because in the traditional set-up the men are least suspected of failing to have children. Women get abused, they can even be beaten, or divorced for failure to have children and according to the story, this accounts for the reasons why it is mostly women who visit the spiritual healers where they end up being sexually abused. In the story, there is an implication that in most cases the women get impregnated by the prophets in the name of cleansing. The implication being that the problem might be with the men. The resolution, *kasika kunoona chiremba*, implies that people need not waste their time trying the indigenous medicinal alternatives because they do not work. All the alternative system can do is to dehumanise and ostracise affected members of the society in the name of offering treatment. The undisputable fact that traditional Zimbabwean society had its own medical solutions to this problem, which had been tried and tested, is overlooked. While the reporter acknowledges that since time immemorial problems of childlessness existed, and highlights the existence of the traditional Zimbabwean strategies for dealing with childlessness, he/she is quick to state that solutions to such problems were administered in a hygienic and decent manner, using mechanisms that would not compromise the health of the affected individual.

The reporter concludes his/her story by encouraging couples that are having problems childlessness to consult conventional medical assistance because if they resort to faith healers they stand high chances of being syphoned of their hard-earned cash and even being made to consume unhygienic substances (Kwayedza, *Gumiguru* 30 -5 Mbudzi 2015).

While the question of bogus healers is not disputed, the manner in which the reporter brushes away the indigenous knowledge systems for addressing the challenge on which his/her story coverage is hinged leaves a critical reader who is thirsty for knowledge from indigenous knowledge systems with more questions than answers. The slant of the stories makes anyone who reads the story question the efficacy of the indigenous medical knowledge systems. It is worth noting that the stories in the two newspapers themselves target the most spine-chilling and odd circumstances of human survival. This implies that such experiences are not a true reflection of the normal lives of the people, but a snapshot of some of ugly faces of the products of deviance in the Zimbabwean people's belief systems. This dark portions of the deviant belief systems, which probably are perpetuated and perpetrated by irresponsible, self-centered opportunists is what the coverage is taking for the norm in the Zimbabwean traditional sense.

What the reporter should have done, considering the ideology within which the idea of launching the papers emerged, is engage in an in-depth research on the traditional ways of addressing the problem on which the story is hinged, and then publish a story grounded on true Zimbabwean medicinal practices of *kuuchika* to counter the bogus abusive prophets' practices. Such a move would have gone a long way to allow for a presentation of Zimbabwean traditional medicine and knowledge systems as a potential alternative solution to the problem that these women are facing. A thorough research into possible ways by which such challenges can be tackled using *chivanhu* was called for instead of blindly championing the supremacy of the western conventional medicine as the only plausible solution. The agenda that is set for the readers in this story is that of elevating the western medicine at the same time disparaging local medical systems.

What the story on “*kuuchika*” should have explored is the idea that the Shona cultural set-up had support systems in place that helped the communities handle challenges that were likely to be encountered as they grappled with life. The set-up had its own medicinal sciences that were effectively harnessed to resolve human biological problems such as difficulties in getting children. In the context of this study on the empowering capacity of the two newspapers in indigenous languages, this coverage is very important since it helps the readers realise that they have resources within their cultural heritage that could be harnessed to address health problems among members of the community. As has already been hinted, the two newspapers were a counter to colonial mind-set. They were a product of an attempt at making the Zimbabweans gain confidence in their support systems. By presenting the Zimbabwean cultural option to resolving social problems, the newspapers would be presenting an alternative way, championing the indigenous alternative to the resolution of life problems. The newspapers thus would be going beyond the main stream media that may give presidency to the conventional western oriented strategies of resolving problems. A space would be created, as it were, for the indigenous medical structures in attempts at addressing problems of life.

In yet another publication, *uMthunywa*, August 6 (2015), there is a story “*Seluqede abantu upondo lwenyanga olulendlebe*” (the traditional healer’s horn with ears has finished people). In this story a traditional healer is alleged to be in possession of a horn that she blows, resulting in most people experiencing misfortunes and ultimately flocking to her place for assistance. The story alleges that the healer had a big horn with two white ears. She confirmed that she had visited faith healers known as “*owafawafa*” with the aim of enhancing her healing powers, but unfortunately these faith healers identified the horn.

Under normal circumstances, healers are associated with assisting people experiencing health problems as well many other challenges that may bedevil their lives. The healer in the context of the African set-up is a real custodian of the African values, norms and traditions. However, the kind of healer who is presented here is the contrary of what is expected of a real traditional healer. In this story, we have a derogatory presentation of the Zimbabwean medical practitioner. The practitioner is a murderer, a spinner of troubles for people and one

who is bent on benefiting from the problems of the very people whom she is expected to serve. In a sense, this healer is actually a witch. This perception has been popularised by the colonial system that labelled every aspect of the African medical fraternity as evil to pave way for markets for the western produced pharmaceutical products as well as to create a population that would be perpetually dependent on the colonial systems and their metropolitan states.

This negative image of traditional healers is further presented in yet another story, in *uMthunywa* 5-11 October 2015, with a title “*Saphela isibaya ngokwala itsamali eyisangoma*” (A herd of cattle perishes after rejecting a *sangoma* girlfriend). In this story a family in Lupane is said to have lost sixteen (16) beasts after the head of the family had decided to terminate his relationship with a girlfriend who happened to be a *sangoma*. The *sangoma* is said to have threatened that the man who jilted her ‘shall see’. A few days after such utterances, the story points out, the men’s cattle started dying mysteriously.

Again, given the idea that *uMthunywa* was established as a platform for celebrating Zimbabwean cultural heritage, coverage of stories should have been on the virtues of the Zimbabwean indigenous medical fraternity rather than solely zooming on the deviant practices of wayward bogus traditional healers. In the context of the traditional medical fraternity, moral uprightness is one of the prerequisite, as such, this particular ‘healer’ is found unsuitable for the duty that she is expected to perform within the society. Having an affair, let alone one that compromises the harmonious existence of the family in the society would be least expected from a custodian of values and norms of the people. Purity was and still is very critical quality that was and is expected of people who served as spiritual mediators within the community. This woman, who has an affair, lacks the qualities of a typical traditional healer who was and still is expected to preserve the sanctity of all the critical institutions in the community which includes the marriage institution as well as the traditional medical fraternity. Having read about such a traditional healer, surely very few will have faith in seeking assistance from traditional healer.

*UMthunywa*, August 28 2015 issue has a story of a cheating traditional healer who turned blind after cheating a client “*Inyanga iphenduka isiphofu ngemva kokuqila isigulani*”. The story explains that a famous traditional healer in Masvingo who happens to be a member of the Zimbabwe traditional Healers Association (Zinatha) turned blind after duping one of his clients of a vehicle. This criminal act prompted the chairperson of the Zinatha to call for an urgent meeting that ultimately expelled Dhewa because reports of his unscrupulous activities had become numerous. Many people are said to be frequenting Zinatha offices in Masvingo complaining of being swindled of their livestock and hard-earned money by Dhewa and his accomplices. His activities, the story highlights placed Zinatha in disrepute and urgent measures had to be taken to save the image of this big and reputable organization.

Again, this is another story that demonstrates *uMthunywa*'s obsession with spotlighting negative aspects, of otherwise, critical cultural systems and structures that could be harnessed for the empowerment and development of society. Traditional medicine and their practitioners could provide possible alternatives in the 21st century where most African nations are grappling with neo-colonialism.

### **5.7.7 African People's Spirituality and the Role of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

*Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have revealed that there is need to restore the spiritual base of the people. The two papers uphold the idea that Africans cannot go anywhere without reconnecting with their spirituality, their ancestors (Mazama, 2015). As the agenda setters as well as for purposes of being effective emancipation agents, the two newspapers extend the realm of coverage with regards spiritual issues among the Zimbabweans. When all is said and done, with regards the coverage of issues of spirituality, in the two newspapers, what we end up seeing is a sorry contrast to the “vibrancy, gusto and absolute energy of African [spirituality] which is firmly and deeply rooted in the African home soil (Chinweizu, 1987:2). This implies that the reporters for these newspapers need to engage into actual research to try and help the masses understand the principles behind these activities and even relate to the contemporary scientific knowledge. As has been argued by Mazama (2015), the colonial enterprise made Africans embrace other people's rituals and forced them to neglect those

which belonged to them. Bearing in mind that the people's spirituality and their ancestors are the source of their inspiration, there is need to reconnect and re-inscribe the people into the paths that were created for them by their forefathers. These paths thus would form the guiding principles that act as torch bearers for the Zimbabweans in particular and Africa in general, as the people tread into the modern day global political, economic and cultural arenas. Such a move will result in the society's movement from knowledge level to that of being imbued with wisdom, by virtue of understanding of the principles that govern the African spirituality.

## **5.8 Other Issues that are covered in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa***

### **5.8.1 Gender Violence**

The abuse that women go through as a result of being childless is chronicled in the story "*Oroverwa kusabata mimba*" in the issue *Kwayedza Mbudzi* 2014) this is a story of a woman who is being subjected to domestic violence by her husband as a result of failing to get a child. For the husband, "*Dambudziko guru ndere kuronga mhuri. Mukadzi wangu ndiri kuona kuti anenge asingachadi zvekuita mumwe mwana nekuti pari zvino tava nemakore mashanu taroorana pasina kana chimuko*. He complains that the problem has even drawn the attention of his own parents who are constantly interrogating him over their failure to have a child. "*Vabereki vangu vava kutogara vachinditongesa kuti sei ndisiri kuita mwana.*" Like in most cases of childlessness that are handled the traditional way, the husband sees no reasons why they have to consult medical practitioners at hospitals "*panyaya yekushaya mwana iyi hatina kumbobvira taenda kuchipatara nekuti ndinoona kuti iye ndiye anenge ane zvekumusha kwake zvirikunetsa, zvinoita kuti asade kuitamwana kana kuti ari kuzviitira maune achiti ndakamupa chirwere*" (*Kwayedza, Mbudzi* 14-20 1014:6).

In the same issue and on the same page there is yet another sad story of a woman, Alice Milanzi, who resorted to bringing her sister as a second wife for her husband after her marriage went on the rocks because of childlessness – the story is entitled: "*Ofemeswa nemunin'ina waakaunza pabarika*". Unfortunately, instead of saving her marriage, the act actually created an enemy for her. The very person who was supposed to bring relief for her

turned against her; and became abusive to the point that she had to seek refuge from the courts of laws where she ended up being granted a peace order. As has already been said, this all serves to convey the importance or the critical role that children play in marriages - bonding the two-different people.

### **5.8.2 Improper sexual relations**

Besides addressing the belief systems with regards the birth, growth and burial of Shona people, *Kwayedza* also highlights on the nature of relationships that are culturally expected of Zimbabweans. In the Zimbabwean cultural set-up, intimate relationships are entered into by people of the opposite sex. There is no room for same-sex relationships because intimacy in the cultural set-up is supposed to be for reproductive purposes, it has to be aimed at procreation not intimacy for intimacy sake. As a social critic, *Kwayedza* castigates gay relationship and this stance is revealed in the story entitled: “*Dj ngochani ari kurura: Varume vari panguwa yakaoma vamwe vakasara nemavanga*” (Gay DJ goes wild: men’s lives are under threat).

This story is about a gay DJ, Panganai Tangwena (32) who has become serial abuser of other men around the Murambinda growth point in Buhera. The story has it that he is being accused of four cases of sodomising fellow men. It has also been said as a defense strategy, men have resorted to moving in group because this criminal is on record of being very powerful. They also resorted to leaving their drinking places earlier than normal to avoid this gay DJ who ambushes them both in broad daylight and at night. The story says that when this gay DJ is in search of his prey, he dresses in long white dresses such that most men are deceived into taking him for a woman, only to be tripped and ultimately sodomised unexpectedly. To authenticate the accusations that are levelled against Tangwena, the *Kwayedza* crew interviewed one of Tangwena’s victims, 18 years of age, who is said to have shown them the wounds that he incurred as Tangwena bit him in the process of sodomising him. The story ends by citing the Manicaland police spokesperson, Inspector Enock Chishiri who confirms that under the Zimbabwean laws, gay relationships are illegal.

While this story is based on human interest issues, it has strong cultural underpinnings. The biggest cultural message that comes with this story is that in the Zimbabwean society it is an abomination, taboo for a man to be intimate with another man. The community is under threat and *Kwayedza* as the voice of the poor people comes in to listen and re-tell the story. Covering this story would help alert the affected community as well as draw the attention of security agents who have the muscles and weaponry to handle this powerful social misfit. The empowerment also comes in the sense that an inspector is introduced into the story to educate people on the unconstitutional nature of being gay. After reading the story people get to know that gay relationships are illegal.

In yet another issue of *UMthunywa*, *uMthunywa* 18-24 Nhlolanja 2015:3 there was a story with the title: “*Udlwangula imbuzi esontweni ayichiye isifile*” literally translated to (he sexually abuses a goat in a church leaving it dead). In this story, a teenager, in form three, is reported to have abused an expecting goat in a church resulting in its death. It is alleged that he tied the goat and closed its mouth throughout the duration of the abuse, an act that ultimately led to its death. In his defense before the court, the accused is said to have blamed it on evil spirits. On the other hand, *Kwayedza* has a story of yet another young member of the community in the *Chundu* communal area in Hurungwe who was caught in a compromising position with a donkey. When the owner of the donkey caught him red-handed, he demanded that the young man marries the donkey. These two stories are interesting in that they present an image of people who really need psychological therapy for this deviant behavior. Unfortunately, when stories like these are presented in a newspaper whose agenda is to re-awaken the African cultural essence, they fail to assert the humanity and integrity of the indigenous people. The behavior that is covered in the stories echo some of the myths that have been spread by European thinkers, historians and empire builders about Africans. In these documentations, the western oriented thinkers have pointed out that the African exhibits the natural human being in his completely wild and natural nature, devoid of morality. This coverage that mirrors the men in compromising positions with animal serves to confirm this imperialist ideology of Africans being sub-human and closer to the animal world. The stories work towards justifying the dehumanization, the degradation and ultimately military conquest of the African communities. Mesmerizing though the story is, it does not present the nation in good taste. This deviant behavior is not what is

characteristic of Zimbabwean men. Instead it only helps confirm the metaphoric heart of darkness thesis that was brought in by the colonialists. As has already been stated, the ideal of the Zimbabwean heritage need to take centre stage to allow the restoration of the people's self-esteem and belief in their cultural heritage.

In another *Kwayedza* issue, there is coverage of a story of a man who gets drunk then goes on to unveil his private parts to his niece. Again, while this could be a story that is shared and enjoyed across fences in the high-density areas and at water points in the rural area, this story paints a sad state of the morality of the people in the post-colonial set-up. In the true Zimbabwean of tradition, a niece was just viewed as one's own child. Revealing one's private parts to such a close relative was and is still an unheard-of thing, it is an abomination. This story therefore is portraying the extent to which social relations have been blurred by the adoption alien concepts of social relations which emphasise individualism at the expense of communalism. It revealed the shattered moral and social fabric in the Zimbabwean set-up

Next to the story in the same issue there is a story, with the title "*Dzvii achirezvana nemusikana webasa*" (Caught red-handed seducing a maid). Again, the concept of immorality and insensitivity of the people is captured here. In most cases, the maid is a teenager or a young woman in her prime stage of life. Normally the maid is expected to be taken and treated as one of the members of the family or even like one's own child. Thus, seducing the maid can be viewed as one of the worst ways of reflecting insensitivity and wickedness on the part of the family man. The man in the story reflects the selfishness and lack of respect for disadvantaged people that is now characteristic of society. Like the capitalists who took advantage of the disadvantaged nature of the Africans and exploited them for their wealth creation, the man in this story takes advantage of the maid to quench his emotional needs.

What emerges out of this coverage the story of the gay DJ, the man who abuses goat to death, the young man who becomes intimate with a donkey, and the man who reveals his private organs to a niece is a reinforcement of the racist mentality that Africans have an insatiable

sexual drive. Such coverage appeals to western tastes in media which place emphasis on scandals, sex, entertainment and violence. Such an approach to information dissemination can only be adopted by a people who have reached unprecedented stages of development through use and abuse of other people's resources, people who are now obsessed with enjoying the proceeds of what was amassed over centuries of exploitation of other people and nations. Such an approach therefore cannot be taken up by societies that still have to work to realise development in all spheres of life as well as sustain human lives. At this point in time Zimbabwe has to adopt strategies that help her find her feet and her space on the global developmental arena. As such, media through coverage of issues that help foster and sustain that development has to play a leading role. Thus, media in indigenous languages that can best be understood by the masses has to take up that role. Once media in indigenous languages adopts that stance, there will be very little room for coverage of the violence, sex and scandalous issues, instead research and coverage of indigenous knowledge systems that can best place Zimbabwe as an active player in global issues will dominate. The best that can be harnessed to bail out the nation from deprivation will thus take up the stage in media in indigenous languages.

It gives the impression that this social ill, has becoming one of the major burning issues affecting 21<sup>st</sup> century Zimbabwe. The best that the Zimbabwean heritage has bequeathed to its people is what is expected in these newspapers so that the pride in being Zimbabwean is quickly restored within the society. Stories that place the nation on a favourable position as an equal player on the global arena will greatly help revive that pride and positive self-esteem that was battered through the colonial oppressive systems.

There is surely nothing wrong with critiquing social ills that characterise the communities under the spotlight, but as the experts and readers have already highlighted, there are other burning issues that need to be attended to that are occurring in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which invariably have the propensity of affecting the Zimbabwean society.

This idea of uncontrollable drives is what is captured as well in the story that was published in *uMthunywa* August 28 2015, where a Pastor is said to be using satanic means of getting

intimate with members of his congregation (*umbobobo/mubobobo*). The Pastor who belongs to the Sabbath Apostolic Way Church is said to be masquerading as a shepherd of the sheep of God yet he himself is the wolf that intends to ravage that flock. He is said to be in possession of charms that enable him to be intimated with members of his congregation without their knowledge. It is argued that the pastor even goes to the extent of using this ‘*umbobobo*’ on children as young as nine years

### **5.8.3 Human Sacrifice for Riches**

*UMthunywa* of 5-11 October has a story, “*Ngifuna ibele lesalukazi*” (I need the breast of an old woman). In this story, a man who is suspected of having abducted a child, killed and took certain organs from the corpse is said to be in search of a breast of an old woman to be able to buy another car to add to his fleet. The man is said to have many expensive cars, yet he is unemployed.

In this story, the paper paints a picture of the selfishness and self-centered nature that has gripped people as a result of the love for material possessions. The story paints a picture of the extent to which people can now be heartless in their quest for material things.

### **5.9 The Manipulation of the Christian Gospel**

According to Ani, and Ajaegbo, 2014, Africans do not know how to live without religion. They celebrate life religiously and they never embark on anything without religion. For them, that explains the easy march to the politicisation and the commercialisation of religion. This observation by Ani and Ajaegbo tries to summarise the manipulation that the Christian religion has gone through at the hands profit oriented individuals. This manipulation of this faith has received extensive coverage from both *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. In fact, the strength of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* lies in their ability to uncover actions of members of the society who take advantage of the people’s faith.

*Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have revealed that churches like banks, pharmaceutical companies, hospitals have become big business in modern times. This argument concurs with Ani and Ajaegbo's (2014) contention that all over the world marketing God is fast becoming top bracket business. What the stories covered in the two newspapers have revealed is that through the proliferation of churches people are being attacked spiritually and subjected to mental slavery. Some self-proclaimed prophets have dubbed people and fleeced them of their hard-earned properties. Hence the story titles such as "Chiporofitachave neprofit" (being a prophet has become profitable) and "*Unodyiwa nemaPerefita*" (you will be devoured by hyena-prophets). The term *perefita* in this case is used as a derogative and satiric name for the self-proclaimed prophet.

### **5.9.1 The Emergence of a Cunning Christian 'Leadership'**

As has already been mentioned, colonialism brought with it various systems and institutions. It brought in a new religion which quickly replaced the African belief systems and greatly worked towards the castigation, suppression and subjugation of the African spirituality (Ngugi, 1986). It was this religion of conquest that worked towards the creation of an African spiritual void as many people found themselves being converted and baptised in this new religion. The coming of the new religion resulted in the setting in of a spiritual void which intensified the fears and insecurity of the people. This scenario that was characterised by fear and insecurity exposed people to possible manipulation and abuse. It made them easy targets of the new religion which was a tool of economic subjugation and instilling a slave mentality (Fanon, 1967; Ngugi, 1986). Thus, the stories on Christianity covered in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* reflects a new breed of Christian "leadership" that has taken advantage of the fears, insecurity and spiritual void that has engrossed people, to pursue their selfish economic agenda.

Like the *Kwayedza*, *uMthunywa* also covers issues that have to do with unscrupulous prophets who appear, as already been said to be pursuing their own personal economic gains than the spread of the true gospel of God.

*UMthunywa*, July 23 2015 has an editorial comment on the operations of these leaders. Like its *Kwayedza* counterpart, *uMthunywa* observes that there has been an emergence of unscrupulous prophets, a phenomenon which now makes it very difficult to trust these church people since most of them have predators preying on the lives of their followers. The story explains that many people who go to churches, particularly the spiritual ones, would be experiencing problems and they believe that the prayers of the prophets will salvage them from these burdens. Unfortunately, the comment explains, these very people who are supposed to lead people to the throne of God have turned out to be the very beasts that devour them. The comment makes reference to one prophet from South Africa who was demanding that people eat live snake as a measure of exhibiting their faith. He forced the congregation to eat the snakes because by his Grace they had turned into chocolate. The comment questions the logic behind this unheard of behaviour of consuming snakes. It even questions the nature of the spirits that are propelling these unheard-of activities. The comment also goes on to make reference again of another church leader who in 2014 persuaded his congregation to eat grass as a sign of showing their unwavering faith in God.

The phenomenon of prophet is traced back to the old golden days in this article, where prophets would foretell things that would happen in the lives of people as opposed to the current prophets who are bent on destroying human relations as they would pronounce that one member of the family or community is being bewitched by the other. The article questions why such a great difference now exists between the current and the old prophets. The commentary goes on to advise people to avoid being hoodwinked by these prophets who are solely bent on pursuing personal fame and material resources. It advises people to be critical of their prophets, and explains that the Bible clearly distinguishes the true from the false prophets.

The comment further explains that it is the responsibility of the congregates to see whether the pastors and prophets who preach in their churches are not wolves in the coats of sheep. A true prophet, the article argues, is seen through the products of his/her works. His/her everyday live explains whether he/she is working for the Almighty God or for some other spirits. The comment further explores the phenomenon of church leaders who castigate

congregates for failure to pay their tithes (*chegumi*) claiming that they bring poverty to the church. According to this article in *uMthunywa*, such prophets only serve to show the world that they are the agents of other beings and not God because their operations are unscrupulous. The article therefore conscientises people to be aware of such prophets or Pastors because it is only such vigilance on the part of the communities that can help the nation overcome corrupt tendencies.

*UMthunywa* 13 August 2015 issue covered a story entitled: “*Umfundisi odlisa abantu inyoka ubalekela ukudliswa amagundwane*” (The pastor who forced congregates to eat snakes runs away after being forced to eat rats). In this story members of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) political party are said to have burnt and destroyed the tent belonging to a Pastor (23) who had become notorious for forcing people to eat snakes in Soshanguve, North Tshwane in South Africa. It is said that they attacked this pastor of the End Time Ministries and demanded that he eat rats just as much as he has always forced his congregates to eat snakes. The story states that pictures of rioting political activist holding rats and a burning the tent were shown on IANN7. On this same footage, pictures of members of the congregation lying on the ground eating grass and other eating their clothes and hairs were unveiled. The story continues to point out that this pastor would allegedly ride on the backs of the congregates, demand that they remove all their clothes, after which he would feed them with snakes and rat tails.

In the story, “*Chiporofita chawe neprofit* (being a prophet is now profitable) (*Kwayedza Gunyana* 11-172015)”, the story gives the idea that establishment of churches and preaching the gospel of prosperity has now become big business that competes favourably or even outclasses the conventional business practices that are commonly known. Commenting on the issue of churches and prophecy, the story states that like political figure and wealthy business people, church leaders now are moving around with strongly built, muscular men (*mamonya*) to protect them. They now advertise their healing powers more than they preach the gospel. The story makes it clear that these men who claim to represent God are responding to people’s desire for miracles, “*vave kuda kunzwa chiprofita chine profit*”, more than the gospel which, from their perspectives, might not have any immediate rewards for them.

What emerges from this story is that the church leaders are not at all interested in the survival of the congregation, but their personal survival even if it means that has to be achieved at the expense of the congregation. To clearly put this point across, the story makes reference to Martin Luther who in 1517 observed that the clergy men of his time had become slaves and staunch worshippers of the god of materialism, they had become very lazy to work for themselves to the point that they resolved to making congregates pay for confession. What this story is implying is that the new church leadership that has emerged is equally lazy to work for itself, hence the use of religious grounded strategies to make believers do the working for them and bringing the proceeds to the church. In “*Chiporofitachave neprofit*” reference is made to one church leader who was said to be producing a type of soap that he purported to have the power to cleanse the followers of all their sins.

The story concludes by stating categorically that real deliverance from God is priceless and free. The story warns the readers to beware of robbers who present themselves to believers guised as religious people. The story concludes with the statement “*chenjerai imbwa, chenjerai mbavha, batai zvikwama zvenyu*” (Beware of dogs, beware of thieves, protect your wallets) (*Kwayedza Gunyana* 11-17 2015).

The idea being projected here is that the prophets and new class of clergymen are synonymous to vicious dogs that are waiting in ambush to pounce on desperate people. They are ferocious and seasoned raiders, particularly targeting suffering people’s pockets. Their mission is neither to spread the gospel nor to save the interests of the people they purport to be leading, but to loot and poach their hard-earned cash and other resources.

Furthermore, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* reveal that the Christian religion has been infiltrated by unscrupulous characters, thieves and thugs who have taken advantage of people’s faith and at most the desperation of the people, resulting in many people losing their hard-earned wealth and cash.

*Kwayedza*, (August 22 -28 2014:7) has a story of three self-proclaimed prophets who were arrested for possessing a big snake. The three were on their way to Goromonzi where they intended to “remove” a snake that had “wreaked havoc” and purportedly caused deaths, illnesses and all forms of suffering in one family. The family was asked to pay \$12 for the purchase of a cloth that was going to be used for the ritual, \$100 for buying a sheep, and \$20 for fuel for the journey to Goromonzi where the ‘removal’ of the snake was going to take place. Prior to this intended journey, the story states, these same prophets had fooled the family into believing that they had removed a snake from their house in Kuwadzana. For ‘removing’ that snake, they demanded \$600 payment. The family paid \$300 out of the total on the spot.

After this presumed ‘removal’ of the snake in Kuwadzana, the three prophets then told the family that there was yet another snake in their home area, Goromonzi, which also needed to be eliminated. Unfortunately, when they got to Goromonzi, one of the family members became very vigilant and observant that he noticed one of the trio attempting to smuggle a snake into one of the rooms. This led to the questioning and ultimate arrest of the three. The three young men confessed that they had taken the snake from Mukuvisi Woodlands and that they were using it to siphon people of their hard-earned cash. Like in the previous cited story, *Kwayedza* has a comment on these prophets who are reaping where they have not sown anything and getting hefty rewards where they have invested nothing.

*Maporofita enhema awandisa, imbavha idzi. Tinoti vanhu vangwarire maporofita aya uye isu semapurisa ticharamba tichisunga ny’any’a idzi kusvika dzapera, hatinete.*

(False prophets are on the increase. We encourage people to be vigilant, as the police force, we will continue arresting these criminals until we get rid of all of them, we will not tire) (August 22 -28 2014:7).

The cunning dispossession of the people of their hard-earned cash is perpetuated through well-orchestrated strategies of brainwashing. This brainwashing is captured in both *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*. The thugs, in the form of religious healers, target people who are heaving under the burden of problems, illness and bereavement. As has already been alluded to in the analysis of responses to the questionnaires, the people experiencing these problems

believe that their problems could be explained spiritually. This belief sets the fertile ground against which these people are duped. The two papers through their publications empowers the community by conscientising the readers of the existence of these low-lying predators that prey for their cash and their livestock. The titles of the covered stories carry the weight of the message that the readers are expected to receive. For example, there are titles such as “*chiporofita chave neprofit*” surely prophecy cannot share the same boat with profiteering, these are supposed to be two irreconcilable concepts that have unfortunately been cunningly made to co-exist.

*UMthunywa* has its own share of coverage of issues that have to do with the abuse of the Christian religion. In the issue, August 28 2015, there is a story of a Pastor who is said to be using satanic means of getting intimate with members of his congregation (*Umbobobo/mubobobo*). The Pastor who belongs to the Sabbath Apostolic Way Church is said to be masquerading as a shepherd of the sheep of God yet he himself is the beast that intends to ravage that flock. He is said to be in possession of charms that enable him to be intimated with members of his congregation without their knowledge. It is argued that the pastor even goes to the extent of using this ‘*mbobobo*’ on children as young as nine years.

### **5.10 Analysis of the Cartoons in *Kwayedza*.**

Cartoons are a prominent feature of the two newspapers. Generally, cartoons tend to be viewed as peripheral issues whose main role is humour creation for the readers (Mohammed, 2014). Cartoons usually are illustrations within which a comment on current events or personalities is embedded. Through the cartoon, the artist uses his/her artistic skills such as hyperbole and satire to question authority as well as draw people’s attention to corruption and many other social ills. The majority of the cartoons in the sampled *Kwayedza* and to some extent *uMthunywa* issues are based on the spirituality of the Zimbabwean people. They satirise the beliefs of the people in an attempt to draw their attention to the anomalous situation that now characterise the religious sector. The cartoons hammer on the corruption, the deception and insensitive behaviour that have become the norm within these religious circles and belief systems of the communities. It has to be noted, however, that cartoons have

categories. Nonetheless, this section of the study will mainly concentrate on the editorial cartoons.

### **5.10.1 Defining Cartoons**

Mohammad (2014) defines cartoons as a pictorial parody or imitation which through the use of caricature, analogy and juxtaposition sharpens the public's view of a contemporary or topical issue, event, political or social trend. Nze (1988) sees cartoons as instruments of social and political commentary. According to Mohammed (2014:36) "the cartoon serves as a capsule version of editorial opinion meant for the reading public to swallow and probably get some societal ills cured". Like in all other print media products, the cartoons in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* are not only meant to create humour, but to ginger up the reasoning capacity of the readers and spur them into demanding positive change in the prevailing socio-religious structures.

### **5.10.2 The Editorial Cartoon**

Editorial cartoons are pictorial comments that are published in a newspaper or magazine referring to current political or social issues. Originally, the word cartoon was used in the 19<sup>th</sup> century referring to a series of humorous and satirical drawings published in or the *London Charivari* in 1841(Naughty,2010). This art realised a high degree of expansion during the World War II period. This expansion was realised as a result of the power of the pictorial message to both those who were barely illiterate and those to whom English was inaccessible. What is most striking about an editorial cartoon is the irony that characterise it as it acts as a visual metaphor to illustrate a political or social point of view. What also is striking in cartoons is the idea that meaning becomes more powerful through pictures because these are more like real life than words (Naughty, 2010).

Under normal circumstances, the editorial cartoon is always related to some aspect of current events and usually has a political focus. In the sampled *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*

publications, the cartoons are not so much of commentaries on the political situations and personalities, but they generally castigate the misdeeds of the highly placed religious personalities. By exposing the hypocrisy of the religious leaders, the cartoons are acting as social commentators, work towards addressing and correcting the social ills for the purposes of empowering the masses. According to Mohammed (2014) cartoons are rehearsals or problems and solutions. The cartoonists act as the voice of the people, speaking for and representing the opinion of the people. Reading through the cartoons of the sampled papers, one gets a glimpse of the topical socio-religious issues that characterise the era in which they were published.

### **5.10.3 Sampled Cartoons**

From the *Kwayedza* newspapers published during the period January 2014 -December 2015 cartoons were sampled. These cartoons are presented and analysed in this section of the study. What however is inescapable is the idea that most of the sampled cartoons are centred on the abuse of religion and religious authority at the expense of the poor suffering masses. Of most significant is the fact that most of the cartoons revolve around churches and traditional healers.

Historical records have shown a direct link between the church and the slave trade and even the colonisation of Africa (Ngugi, 1986; Rodney, 1973; Chinweizu, 1987). Through the use of the church, Africa was crippled spiritually. Against this historical reality, *Kwayedza* and *UMthunywa* in their handling of the church are taking cognisance of their agenda of liberating people from mental slavery. In light of this, the two newspapers have through their cartoons shown that churches have mushroomed and again adopted the mental slavery strategy to rip people of their hard-earned cash. This time, the newspapers have revealed, the oppressors and enslavers are no longer the members of the settler regime, but fellow Zimbabweans who are imbued with the spirit of individualism and selfishness.

These papers have dared question the status quo within this religious sector, where unscrupulous leaders manipulate verses from the Bible to hoodwink the congregates. The leaders have turned their churches into exploitative machinery to ensure effective control of their followers and the way they think and behave. The result has been nothing, but confusion as the different church leaders struggle to amass large followings by blackmailing other religious groups, their leadership as well as doctrines. This confusion comes in the sense that the different denominations purport to be praying to the same God yet they never agree on various strategies of bringing themselves closer to their common target - God. Hence the cartoon depicting women expressing the confusion that has been puddled by these various persuasive and intolerant groupings:



**Cartoon 1: Source** (*Kwayedza*, 2-8 Ndira 2015.)

### 5.10.3.1 Analysis of Cartoon 1.

Literally translated, the woman is saying, when one thinks of worshipping, he/she develops a headache because of the diversity of the churches and confusing different doctrines. What

this cartoon implies is that some churches persuade people to join their congregation by discouraging them to join fellow churches next to them, accusing the worshippers of using snakes in their holy oils. The maligned denomination, on the other hand, offers a counter accusation modelled around persuasive narratives, accusing the other of using powers derived from beneath the seas in their prayers. Now which is the best church to join as a new worshipper?

This cartoon paints a picture of the Christian religion having been turned into a battle field where church leaders are battling for the souls of possible followers to the point of even confusing the possible congregates. The churches are apparently involved in a mud-smearing game, accusing one another of using powers other than those obtained from the Almighty God. The confusion is reflected through the use of the phrase “*unototemwa nemusoro*” (you develop a headache). The struggle to wrestle the possible congregants is expressed through “*huyai kuchechi kwedu*” (come to our church). This statement appears to be coming from the multiplicity of Christian denominations that are found in the communities and apparently, each denomination has grounds against which to persuade people and lure them to its side. Hence the statements: “*nekuti ukovanonamata ne nyoka dziri mumafuta*” (because at that church they use the powers of snakes in oils) and “*nekuti avo vano shandisa simba rinobva pasi pemvura pakunamata kwavo*” (because at that church they use aquatic powers in their worshipping). The possible positive features that are expected to lure the prospective congregants all point to the idea of a situation where there is accusation of one Christian organisation by another on the grounds of the source of the “spirit and powers” that are made use of. This explains the concluding question “*saka kwakanaka kuyenda ndekupi?*” - an expression of the worst confusion that has ever been experienced within religious sector - confusion that emanate from questions as to the source of the spiritual powers that are being used by the different churches.

The confusion that is captured in this cartoon represent the extent to which the new religion has disoriented the Zimbabweans spiritually and ultimately disempowered the masses. Instead of being a unifying force, a force that brings individuals, families, communities and regional states together as did the African religion that brought the whole of the sub-Saharan

region to the *Njelele* shrine at Matopo hills in pursuit of a common goal, the Christianity is proving to be divisive, intolerant and good at fanning differences as a strategy for winning souls in the multiplex versioned religion.

Furthermore, this cartoon challenges the idea of various denominations within a religion that purports to be the same. It tries to challenge the incompatibility of the different groups creating room for debate on the topic within the public sphere. It opens up the weak points in the behaviour of these religious people making them look ridiculous and absurd. Such cartoons have the power to awaken the readers and make them look at these religious groupings using different lenses from the ordinary one they would have been using. By calling for alternative perspectives towards the Christian religious groups, *Kwayedza* is actually empowering the readers with analytic skills and techniques for use in viewing life situations.

The idea of Christianity being a fighting ground is further expressed in cartoon 2 where the leadership is left with no option but to strategise on how to keep their heads above water in this highly contentious Christian religion turf.



**Cartoon 2: Source** (*Kwayedza, Gumiguru* 24-30 2014).

Literally translated the church leader is saying, for our congregation to grow as it has done, it is because of the poverty, deprivation and the various problems confronting members of the congregation. Please, I beg you *Madzibaba* (man of God), do not teach people to be resourceful.

### 5.10.3.2 Analysis of Cartoon 2

In this cartoon, two members of one of the Apostolic Faith Churches are discussing the growth that has been experienced in their congregation. They both are well aware that this dramatic growth is a direct result of the problems that are being faced by people within the communities. The people are coming to their church not because they really want to worship God as such, but because of material poverty. They are coming to the church to momentarily seek refuge from the poverty ridden life out there. The leaders hence plead with each other

never to give the problem-stricken people within the community clues to getting money, since such a move will empower them and ultimately give them no reason for consulting the faith healers. This cartoon questions the ethics of these religious leaders. It mirrors the ethics-deprived nature of the new crop of leadership that has decided to be self-centred as opposed to being followers centred.

While this could be a cartoon that could be shared over the fences as people share the latest news in the locations and at water points in rural areas, the major point that is coming out here is that of warning people to start thinking of ways of bailing themselves from the poverty that is driving them to the Apostolic churches. It reveals that the majority of the people in Zimbabwe, through the cunning gospel preachers, are diverted from focusing on solving their economic challenges. They are diverted from engaging the realities of their historical circumstances and as such are left with no option, but to look up to the ‘healing powers’ of the pastors, the prophets and the priests for solutions.

This cartoon satirises the church leaders as it exposes them as manipulative people who thrive on the suffering of the people and as such would do anything to ensure that the people remain in their problems so that their relevance and services continue to be on demand. Hence the emphasis, “*Ndapota zvangu, musadzidzise vanhu kutsvaka mari Madzibaba*” (I beg you *Madzibaba* (man-of-God), do not teach people strategies for making money). Like the imperialists, the cartoon implies, the church, through its leadership, continues to convince its spiritual followers to clutch onto the Bible and its message while they pocket all the money, the livestock and valuables. Paradoxically, the followers become so obsessed with prayer meetings, crusades in anticipation for a miracle fortune to occur in their lives at a time when the leaders are actually gaining real fortune on earth from their unquestioning offerings in the form of money and other valuables. This thus promotes the mushrooming of the churches and in a way enriching the leadership. The role of the general masses as agents of their own social-political change is underscored in the whole Christian equation, people have to consult the men-of-God for deliverance and the leadership would want that status quo to be maintained and jealously guarded, since they have learnt the skills of manipulating people’s problems for their economic gains as indicated in cartoon 3:



**Cartoon 3: Source** (Kwayedza, 10-16 Kubvumbi 2015).

Literally translated, the first cartoon is saying: I never knew that every problem could be turned into money spinning vibrant business. Madzibaba Joramu is giving people who are going to South Africa Prayer tokens to protect them from being victims of the xenophobia going on in that country.

### 5.10.3.3 Analysis of Cartoon 3

The cartoon summarises the strategies by which the new churches have devised mechanisms of tethering congregants for purposes of continuously siphoning their hard-earned money. In this cartoon, the faith healers found yet a new niche and source of relevance in the xenophobia attacks that were going on in South Africa. Cross-border traders were at the mercy of the situation and people like *Madzibaba* Joramu seized the opportunity by providing “*minamoto*” (prayers in the form of objects that are carried around for spiritual protection, mostly stones). The cartoon is conscientising the people that the so-called problems that befall communities or nations are in actual fact sources of opportunities that can be tapped for personal or even national advancement. While the cartoon appears to be satirising the way the

cross-border traders are duped by *Madzibaba Joram*, it is also making a smart statement about people who have not been mentally colonised. From the cartoon, *Madzibaba Joram*, has no need to go to a foreign nation in order to survive, he uses his creativity and ingenuity to get resources from the crisis-strapped people who believe they cannot survive without going to South Africa. He takes advantage of the desperation as well as the belief in divine intervention of the cross-borders to achieve his own personal goal.

Cartoon 4 zooms the image of the church to try and reveal what actually happens within the institution itself. In this cartoon, there is evidence that the mental slavery that the congregants have been subjected to is equally gripping some of the “prophets”. These people deliberately decide, even against their conscience, not to visit conventional health institutions or seek alternative medical assistance from traditional healers, for the love of appearing Godly before everyone else. The female prophet who is the subject of cartoon number 4, while being very willing to get assistance from any source, would rather have the help rendered to her secretly for fear of the reaction of fellow members of the church.



**Cartoon 4: Source** (*Kwayedza*, 12-18 *Chikumi* 2015).

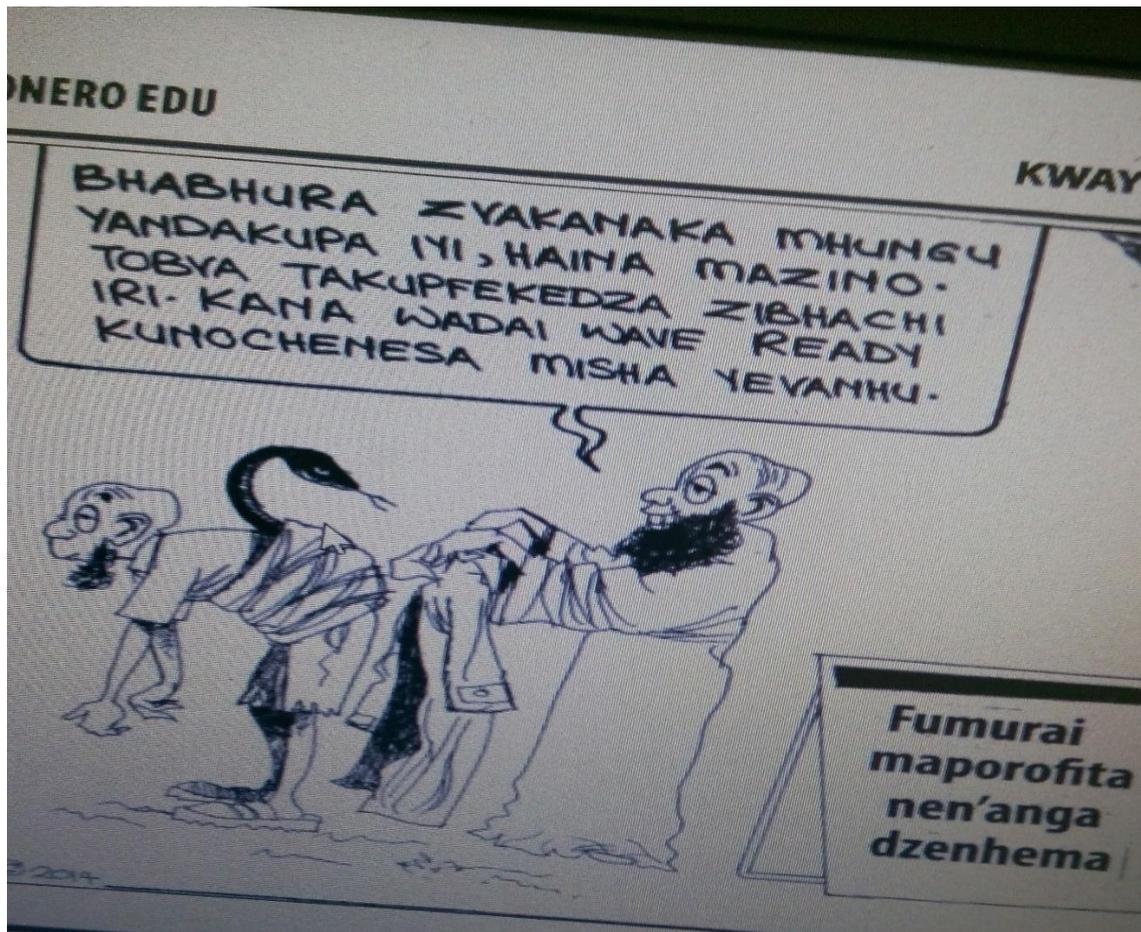
Literally translated in cartoon 4 the prophet woman is saying, please do not publish in your newspaper the problem that I am suffering from, that of having a continuously swelling stomach, I will be bewitched by other prophets at our church in Norton. In response, one of journalists' questions: Are you saying you are a prophet who comes from a church where there are prophets who bewitch others in church?

#### **5.10.3.4 Analysis of Cartoon 4**

This cartoon is based on a story of a woman prophet who developed a growth in her womb (fibroids); she endured this problem for more than four years up to the point when *Kwayedza* journalists paid her a visit. While this woman had faith in the healing powers of the conventional medical fraternity as well as the alternative traditional medicine, she was not keen on letting the crew publish her problem in *Kwayedza*. Her worry was that some of the prophets at her congregation would bewitch her “*ndinogadzirwa nemamwe maporofita ekumasowe kwedu kuNorton*” (I might get bewitched by fellow prophets within our church in Norton). It is ironic that these prophets are known for assisting people who have problems, yet the same prophets are being implicated in witchcraft. This explains the statement “*muporofita anobva kuchechi kune maporofita anoroya vamwe muchechi*” (...a prophet who comes from a church where prophets bewitch each other).

What the cartoon is implying is that the prophets in this particular church are not different from the witches whose activities they purport to be working against. The cartoon is sarcastic of the class of Christian leaders who have come to be known as prophets. It ridicules them, questions the conception of the faith healers, and launches pungent attacks on the situation and personalities involved (Mohamed, 2014).

Cartoon 5 further elaborates the extent to which unscrupulous prophets have gone out to strategically line their pockets with money and valuables taken from the suffering and mentally enslaved congregants.



**Cartoon 5:** Source (*Kwayedza, Gumiguru 17-23 2014*)

Literary translated the church leader in the cartoon “*Fumurai maporofita nen’anga dzenhema*” (Expose false prophets and traditional healers) is saying: Strap this snake that I have given you carefully on your back, it has been defanged. Then I can help you put on this jacket. Having done this, you are now ready to go onto home cleansing missions.

### 5.10.3.5 Analysis of Cartoon 5

This cartoon is published under the title “*fumurai maporofita nen’anga dzenhema*” (expose the false prophets and false traditional healers). As the cartoon headline implies, the cartoon is drawn against a background of fake and unscrupulous prophets and false traditional healers. In the pictorial presentation, we have two apostolic church male members conniving to conceal a snake that is purportedly supposed to be taken to some identified homesteads where the people will be duped into believing that they had been harbouring a serpent that had been

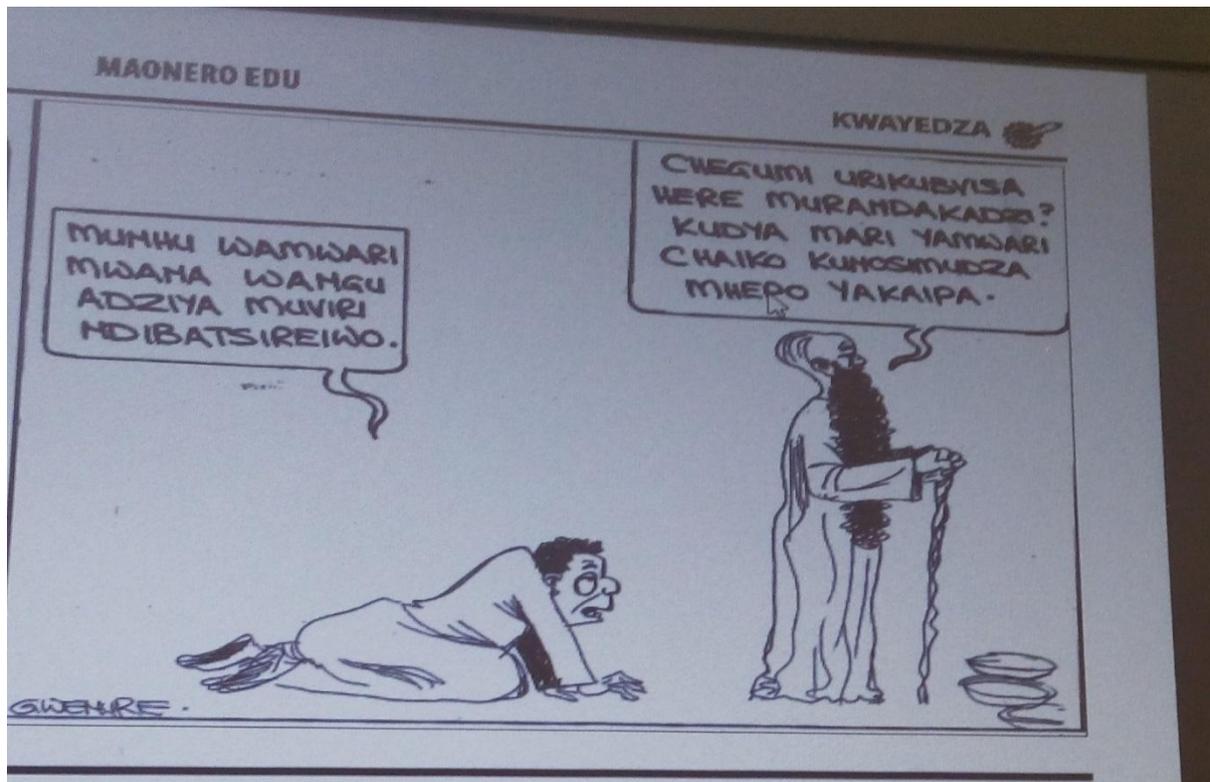
posing problems to the members of the family. In the cartoon, there is use of phrases such as “*bhabhura zvakankana mhungu yandakupa iyi, haina mazino. Tobva tazo kupfekedza zibhachi iri. Kana wadai wava ready kuno chenesa misha yevanhu*”. (Strap this snake that have I given you carefully on your back, it does not have any fangs. Then I can help you put on this jacket. Having done this, you are now ready to go onto home cleansing missions).

The cartoon shows a de-fanged snake being strapped on a fake prophet’s back in transit to the place where it will be presumed to have been resident prior to the arrival of the prophet. The irony is striking, the prophet is said to be ready to cleanse the homes; cleansing the home of the menace and mess that he would have brought into the clean homes. The irony is in the sense that the homes only become unclean with the arrival of the prophet. The prophet is cleansing what he himself has brought into the home. The unclean, greedy, evil minded and fake prophet is cleansing the innocent and harmless victims of religious beliefs and in turn demand that they pay him for that. This cartoon is actually echoing what came out in one of the stories covered in *Kwayedza* that has already been discussed in the section that dealt with the content analysis of stories covered in the two newspapers. In this particular story, three young men were caught with a snake which they intended to use for a cleansing process in Goromonzi.

This cartoon can also be viewed as a mirror or reflection of the nature of the economic situation in the nation, where because of the high unemployment rate and an upsurge in social inequalities, young energetic people in the society find alternative means of survival in wayward religious practices. In their desperation for survival, and with no safety nests to seek refuge, they take advantage of fellow distressed members of society in a survival of the fittest style. Judging from the age of the member being inducted into the field of deceiving people, the cartoonist is passing the statement that the youths are part of the most vulnerable groups in this economic dispensation that the nation has found itself in. The statement being raised by the cartoon is that economic policies that would be adopted in any moves to address the prevailing predicament have to take cognisance of the youths if ever they are going to participate positively in the development agenda of Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, the adult member of the church who is presented grooming the young jobless member of the congregation is illustrative of the lack of purposeful leadership that is expected to act as the architect and engineer of transformative change and development. While the poor people are languishing in poverty, hunger, squalid conditions and ill-health, the leadership, as represented by the elderly Apostolic Faith man, is working out effective strategies for self-enrichment.

The next cartoon concentrates on the attributes that characterise the relationship between the church leadership and the congregants. The cartoon gives the impression that provision of spiritual assistance within the church context is conditional, with only those who are paying their tithes being the ones who are eligible for assistance.



**Cartoon 6: Source** (*Kwayedza*, 17-23 *Gumiguru* 2014).

Literally translated the old barefooted parent is saying: man-of-God, my child has fallen ill can you please help me? The church leader in turn responds: Have you paid you tithes? Making use of God's money in itself invites evil spirits.

### 5.10.3.6 Analysis of Cartoon 6

Cartoon number 6 presented satirises the behaviour of the christian prophet. It presents them as falling short of living up to the gospel that they preach. The church leaders are the very people who preach the gospel of helping those who are in need, but ironically, the prophet in this cartoon is turning his back to a desperate woman whose child desperately needs help. Paradoxically, the religious leader has to ask the woman if she has been paying her tithes (*chegumi*). There is use of words such as “*chegumi urikubvisa here murandakadzi. Kudya mari yamwari chaiko kunosimudza mhepo*”. (Have you paid your tithes woman? The consumption of God’s money in itself invites evil spirits). This stance that is taken by the man-of-God in this cartoon would raise questions, the woman never mentions that she needs money, she probably might be requesting the prophet to pray for her child. Secondly tithes are voluntarily paid, the church has no obligation to carry a whip to force people to pay the money. Again, as stated before, there is evidence of the commercialisation of the relationship between the church leader and his followers. Proving that the modern religious leaders are more interested in money and corrupting religion than in saving the people.

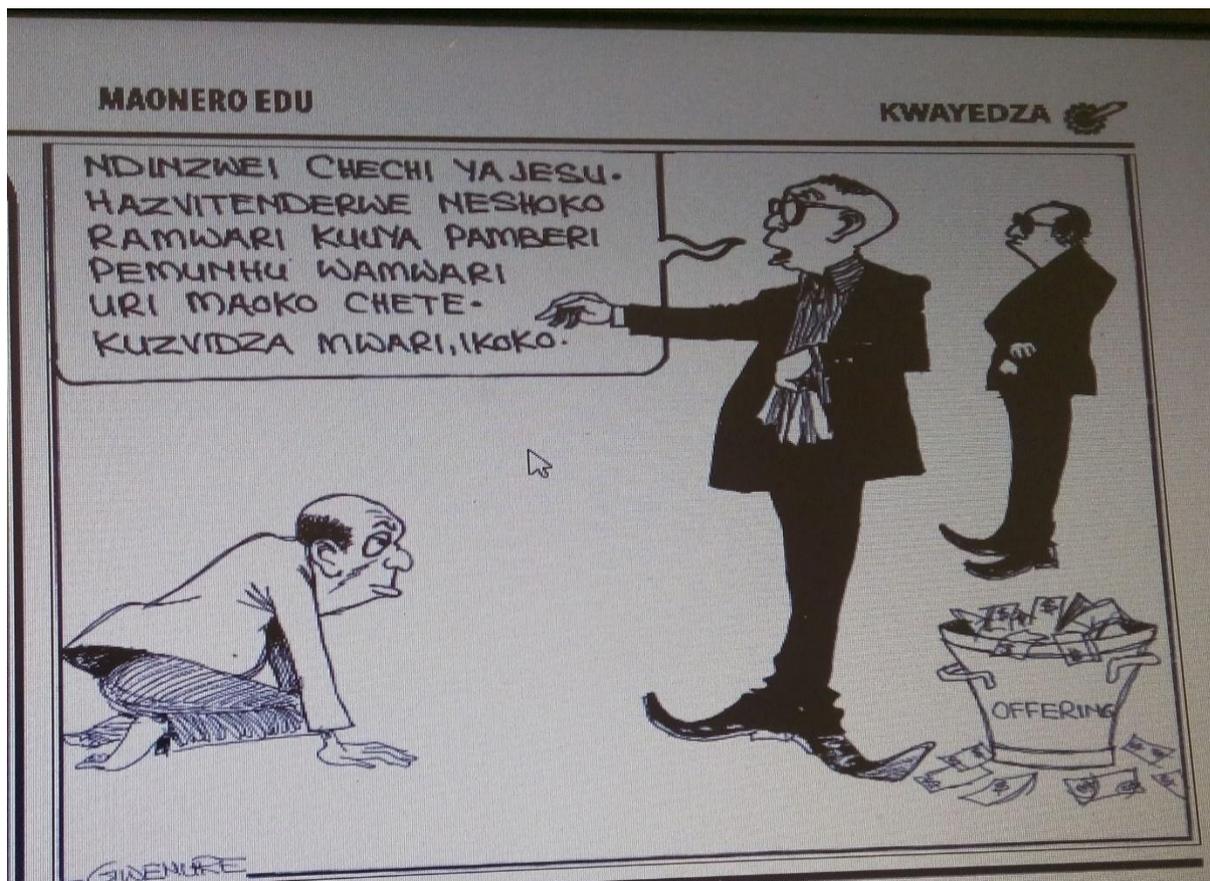
What the cartoonist is expressing is the fact that the God that people are supposed to be worshiping is not a materialistic one, but rather one whose heart should be with all the people. It is a God who hungers for people’s salvation regardless of their economic status. It is unfortunate that the people who read these papers might not have given cartoons such a this one, the seriousness that they deserve. If such cartoons are accorded the scrutiny they deserve, readers would be empowered to see the other side of these religious people which is very difficult to see at close range.

*Kwayedza* moves from the Apostolic Faith Church to the pentecostal churches. In this category of Christian dinominations, the paper scrutinises the idea of the prosperity doctrine in light of its abuse by the leadership in that category of churches.

In cartoon 7 the newspaper reflects on the lived experiences in these pentecostal churches that preach the gospel of prosperity. Through this cartoon, the newspaper summarises the prosperity gospel. In a nutshell, this is a gospel that is grounded on the belief that economic blessings are God-given. This gospel has its origins in the United States of America where there is a record of many wealthy people. In this gospel, illness is not a biological problem, neither is poverty a product of oppressive and depriving systems. Instead these situations are attributed to the devil that prevents people from accessing and enjoying their God-given blessings. Of late, the gospel has pread across the globe. The doctrine of the prosperity gospel drifts around the idea that a follower who has faith in the Lord and gives donations to the church enhances his/her wealth. Emphasis in this gospel is wealth and at the centre of the sermons is the question of getting rich. As such, it has won the hearts of many poor people who see prospects of becoming rich in giving the limited resources that they possess. This belief in economic empowerment through divine intervention encourages the followers to part with their hard earned resources in the name of offerings. This explains the existence of the pail of offerings in the cartoon. The overflowing container labelled offerings is representing the philosophy that drives and propels the prosperity gospel. In this gospel material wealth is associated with God's blessings and support. The smartly dressed pastor or apostle (looking very rich) represents the leadership in this church, while the miserable man on his knees represents the suffering and gullible believers within the church. The poor man is mirroring the degradation of human dignity that comes with excessive poverty. He represents the nastiest effects of poverty which amounts to denial of the oldman's essence of humanity. Viewed from another angle, the poverty that is captured in the cartoon can be seen as metaphorically representing the spiritual poverty that the religious organisations as well as people within the nations have found themselves immersed in. It captures the moral depravity within post-colonial Zimbabwe. In these cartoons, the cartoonist is expressing the idea that in the present day Zimbabwe, the problem is not so much in the unequal distribution of material resources, instead, it is the people's psychological and spiritual failure to understand their situations as well as their own thought systems.

The satiric presentation of the relationship between the prosperity gospel preacher and the follower if read with the critical eye that it deserves has a propensity of arousing disillusionment and disappointment on the part of the people who subscribe to it. The

cartoon summarises how the gospel has contributed to the enrichment of the few who are in leadership positions from the limited resources of the poor. The spread of this gospel is coupled to the development of individualisms at the expense of communalism. The gospel strengthened the need to be served, within the the church leadership, instead of serving the needs of the people. Above all, the spread created a need to promote a big and favourable image of the church more than the image of God.



**Cartoon 7: Source** (*Kwayedza*, 21-27 Mbudzi 2014).

Literally translated the church leader is saying: Hear me church of Jesus, the word of God does not permit people to come before the man-of-God empty handed, that is despising God.

### **5.10.3.7 Analysis of Cartoon 7**

What is being presented here in a satiric manner is the unfeeling nature of the people who purport to be working for God. The cartoon is expressing that pastors have become staunch preachers of the gospel not because they are in search for the spiritual salvation of people, but because the gospel has proved to be the greatest armament ever designed to enhance effective control of the thought systems of people and ultimately manipulate them financially, politically and even culturally (Cabral, 1974). In the cartoons, the Biblical doctrines are manipulated by the hungry and ferocious money-mongers, who call themselves pastors or prophets, and have in most cases managed to lead people astray and ultimately siphon their resources. In a way, the cartoonist is painting a vivid image of the insensitivity and insincerity of the church leaders to the needs of their congregants whom they have vowed to serve.

The pail of offerings which is overflowing with different denominations of notes, as indicated in the cartoon, is enough evidence to illustrate the gluttony of the new generation of pastors. The cartoon in general and the overflowing container of offerings in particular, capture the most common characteristic of the modern-day Zimbabwean prophet who lead the extravagant lifestyles. The illustration is enough to paint a picture of a pastor who is selfish and enjoying luxuries.

Furthermore, the cartoon at the centre of this discussion is illustrative of the type of prophets and pastors who now do everything based on the amount of seed-money that one brings. Without the seed-money, the pastor or prophet would deprive the congregants of the blessings and the word of God. The church has truly become big business, with each part playing a role in the transactions that are characteristic of this new type of business.

The God who is commonly known, from both the Christian and the African perspective, is popular for His passion for assisting the needy, unfortunately the man-of-God in this cartoon is a glutton, he has a vessel full of all kinds of notes, and he is dressed expensively and moves

with a body-guard. Ironically, he is expecting the poor barefooted, skinny old man who looks starved to bring offerings to the altar. For the pastor, coming before the man-of-God empty handed is a sign of contempt to God. This cartoon recreates the two distinct classes that have emerged within the Christian religion. There is the class that comprises the clergy, the people who have assumed the position of the rich people. They have access to resources, particularly money by virtue of their leadership positions in the church. The type of dress that they have clearly explains it all; they dress in suits and move around with bodyguards for protection. The other class is that of the poor worshippers who have to work flat out to get money to bring for offertory. In a way, the church has robbed in the capitalist ideology to the pulpit. With this introduction also comes the god of capitalism (materialism) in the church. With the gospel, a gimmick to reap the poor of their hard-earned property is set in motion.

What is striking in cartoon 7 is that the pastor already has money in excess as symbolised by the overflowing pail of offerings, yet his insatiable desire continues to make him see the poor miserable old man as a potential source of additional offerings. The Pastor makes it mandatory for the congregants to bring something to church and declares that it is a crime to come before a man-of-god empty-handed. Again, the distinct social classes that have been created by the coming in of the new form of Christianity is very conspicuous in this cartoon, with those who have “the divine right” to amass wealth (the pastors, their advisers and bodyguards) on the other hand and the poor miserable bare-footed peasants or unemployed people on the other hand.

The offering pail is being used for personal enrichment at the expense of the poverty-stricken members of the congregation. The pastors in Zimbabwe have symbolically resuscitated the psychological/mental subjugation that was characteristic of the materialistic world which they now represent. Taking the empowerment discourse in this context, surely there is no other powerful way of emancipating people that could be as effective as exposing the social inequalities that characterise the religious arena. It is this kind of awareness that makes people ready to take action to reverse the unpleasant power relations. Unfortunately, this powerful critique is only confined to the religious domain and never transferred to other domains of life such as the politics, economics and the legal among other.

What emerges from the presentation of cartoon 7 and cartoon 8 is a situation where church leaders have turned themselves into mini Gods in relation to their congregations. The cartoons are a clear articulation of individualism in the churches. The leaders have totally lost the importance of relationality and communality that form the pillar of African thought and life as espoused by Mbiti (1987) when he states that whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual within the context of the community. Participating in the community, Mbiti (1997) argues, gives a person a place of belonging, an identity, human dignity and personhood. Interdependence is highly valued and individualism castigated. As such in this communality, personal identity is intricately tied to the identity of other members within the community. This is where the African sees herself as a communal being, a “being-there-with- others,” to quote African theologian Penoukou as cited in Mbiti (1991). In summary, the two cartoons depict church leaders who have lost the guiding principles of ethical behaviour as espoused in the African communal set-up. These cartoons actually prove correct the participants who stated that the two newspapers in indigenous languages reflect issues which are occurring or are being experienced by people in the Zimbabwean society. This is being experienced by a lot of people who resort to the various church denominations, which subscribe to the gospel of prosperity, with the hope of getting salvation. If only people could read and listen to the satiric comments that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* pass on issues of materialistic church leaders, they would really be empowered and emancipated from the suffocating grip of the unscrupulous fake prophets.

Through the cartoons based on Christian leadership, *Kwayedza* is revealing the fact that the post-colonial nation is going through cycles. The church which during colonialism was used to psychologically mollify the Zimbabweans into accepting their colonially determined position on the lowest rung of the social classes, is again being used to soothe them into being fleeced of their limited resources. The preachers that are captured in the cartoons are a living version of the Roman Catholic priests who were sent on a mission by King Leopold II to interpret the gospel in ways that best protected the interests of the metropolis. Like missionaries that preached poverty as a gateway to heavenly glory, the pastors are bent on making people prepared to part with their riches in return for God’s blessings. As a result, the

pastors' and prophets' lavishness is stolen from the poverty-stricken and suffering people. As for the spread and easy acceptance of the gospel of prosperity, the cartoons may be trying to explore the extent to which Africa is now bonded to European materialism. We are confronted, within the church, with survival of the fittest situation where the ultimate goal of each of those who assumes leadership is amassing wealth. In a sense, the editorial cartoons are expressing the idea that, with respect to the Christian ideology, independence has not brought in any change, people continue to close their eyes in prayer as those leading in the prayers unceremoniously swindle what rightfully belongs to them. The church structures remain just like the colonial structures that were inherited at independence.

Even though the editorial team at Zimpapers has distanced *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* from being political commentators, the situation that is being captured in the cartoons may be viewed as a mirror reflection of what prevails in the political set-up in the postcolonial state. The church in this context can be viewed as an institution within the nation that resembles the situation and activities prevailing in the larger cosmos, the nation. They paint a picture of the new political leadership that assumes the tastes and sensibilities of the former colonial master and use all means necessary to line their pockets. They amass wealth taking advantage of the desperation and suffering of the people. In this context, the crawling miserable man in the cartoon would thus represent the suffering, disappointed and disillusioned masses in the postcolonial set-up. He is an iconographic epitome of the mass gullibility and vulnerability that characterise most ailing economies and failed states in the postcolonial scenario. In this socio-political economy, people do anything to survive. Hence the leaders' dodgy ways of syphoning people's hard earned cash. The prophet or apostle in the cartoon would be a living version of MP Pfende in *The Honourable*. The Member Parliament who assumed the lifestyles of the former colonial master while the masses are hunger-stricken in their constituencies. The pastor or apostle is a living version of the unscrupulous elements who are taking advantage of the desperation that has crept into people. In summary, the cartoonist is painting a picture of the socio-political fabric that is being threatened with collapse in the postcolonial Zimbabwe.

#### 5.10.4.1 Cartoons Based on the Traditional Belief Systems

After exploring and satirising the gospel of prosperity and the kind of relations that emerge from the beliefs that inform the gospel, *Kwayedza* goes on to reflect on the traditional healers. In the presentation of cartoon 9, 10 and 11, the traditional belief systems are not spared the scrutiny that is subjected to the Christian belief system. At the centre of the sampled cartoons based on indigenous belief systems is the concept of *tsikamutanda* (step-on-the-log). In these cartoons, *tsikamutanda* is presented as a deviation from the traditional Shona religious practices of healing and divination. As already highlighted in the discussion on the African spirituality, diviners never used to traverse the length and breadth of the whole country searching for evil-doers or ailing people. In fact, people used to frequent the place of the diviner and not the other way around. That explains why people from the whole of Southern Africa would converge at the Njelele shrine for their religious ceremonies. The high priest resided at the shrine and as mentioned had no business with people outside the confinements of this sacred place. In the same vein, any true traditional practitioner medical practitioner, as expressed in the cartoons on *tsikamutanda* would not turn into an itinerant in search of clients. In fact, the traditional medical practitioners who have resorted to being nomads in search of ailing people or evil-doers are tantamount to roaming ferocious beasts of prey as highlighted in the cartoon that follows. They cannot be separated from the colonial missionaries who traversed the globe with the aim of recruiting new believers.

## ZVIKARA...



SHUMBA IKAPFUURA  
NEPAMUSHA PANOSARA  
MAKUVA PAMWECHETE  
NEMAYANGA.



NATSIKAMUTANDA,  
AKAPFUURA NEPAMUSHA  
PANOSARA MAKUVA  
NEMAYANGA.

GWENURE

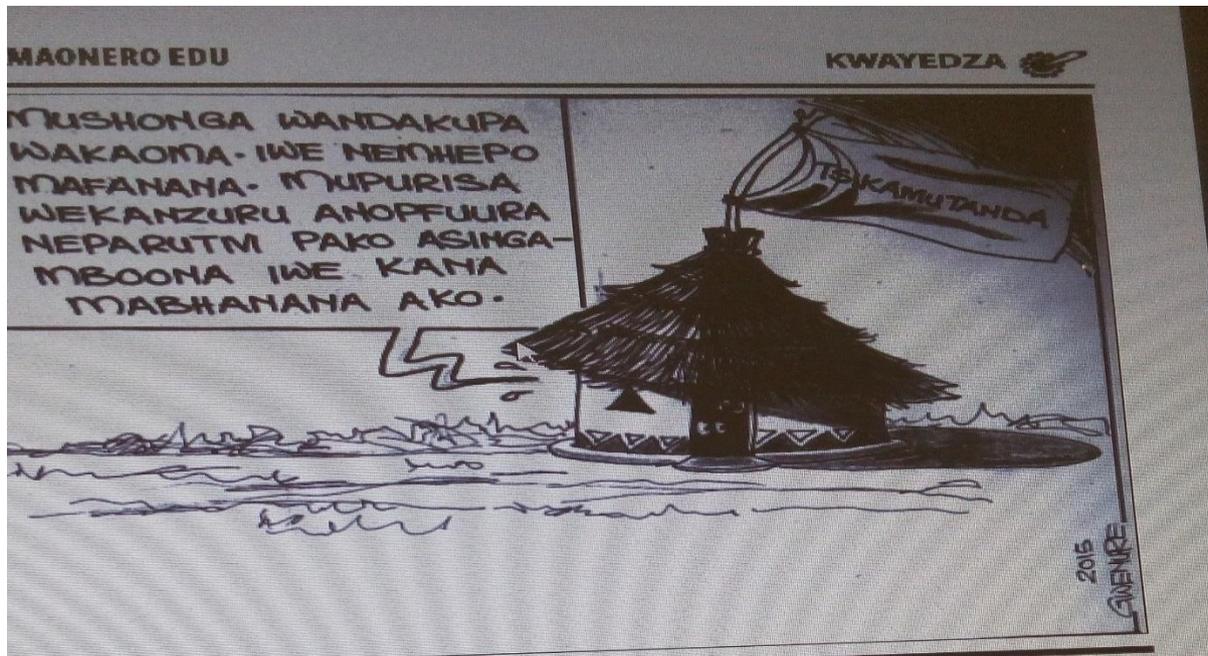
**Cartoon 9: Source (Kwayedza, 12-18 Chikumi 2015)**

Literally translated, the cartoon says: If a lion passes through a home it leaves a trail of destruction, a high death toll and many people wounded. In the same vein, if a traditional healer known as “*tsikamutanda*” (stand-on-the-log) passes through a home it equally leaves a trail of destruction, a high death toll.

#### 5.10.4.2 Analysis of Cartoon 9

The title of the cartoon equates the traditional healers, who have come to name themselves “*tsikamutanda*” (stand-on-the-log) to vicious predators “*zvikara*” (vicious predators). The

traditional healer as presented here has turned into a vicious wild animal that preys on innocent villagers. This kind of healer is not different from the self-proclaimed prophets who take advantage of people's problems as illustrated in cartoon 10.



**Cartoon 10:** Source (*Kwayedza*, 3-9 *Chikunguru* 2015)

#### 5.10.4.4 Analysis of Cartoon 11

Taking advantage of the desperate vendors who are facing difficulties from the municipal police, the traditional healers have also found their own niche in this problem. As if to argue that in every crisis there are hidden opportunities for success, the “*Tsikamutanda*” finds his bread and butter in this crisis-ridden situation as vendors run around in an attempt to fend for their families. *Tsikamutanda* thus, is earning his survival out of the misery of the poor vendors who are suffering at the hands of the Harare Municipal Police. In this cartoon, the traditional healer promises his client that with the charms and herbs he has supplied, the Harare Municipal Police will be blinded to the vendor’s presence on the streets in the city centre. The municipal police, the “*Tsikamutanda*” argues, will pass by the vendor without even noticing him or the bananas that he will be selling by the roadside.

In cartoon 11, entitled “*Varoyi vawanda: Mambo Zimunya*” (Witches are on the increase: Chief Zimunya), there is this message:



**Cartoon 11:** Source (*Kwayedza*, 19-25 2015)

Literally translated the cartoon is saying: Get yourself prepared grandson so that we relocate and start operating in Chief Zimunya’s area.

#### 5.10.4.5 Analysis of Cartoon 11

The announcement of an increase in witches in the Zimunya’s area has created an opportunity that is ready for capitalisation for the healers. This explains why the healer is informing the assistant to prepare for relocation so that they can venture into these green pastures that have unveiled themselves in the form of Zimunya’s area. Again, the editorial cartoon is mocking the new breed of healers that has turned itself into nomads. As already stated, in a normal indigenous set-up, the people flock from all corners of the nation in search of help from the healers and never the other way around. This is actually a misrepresentation of the operations of diviners and healers in the indigenous set-up. Unfortunately, this breed of healers is getting accommodation and blessings from the traditional leaders such as chiefs, thus leaving the vulnerable masses with no persons in authority to protect them. In this particular cartoon, Chief Zimunya represents the leadership in society that is watching poor people being abused and fleeced of their hard-earned property in the pretext of witch-hunting. In fact, it is on

record that these bogus healers actually connive with the traditional leaders (the chiefs or village heads). This explains why the government in Zimbabwe has now declared this practice of witch hunting by the *Tsikamuundas* criminal and illegal. Tradition never allowed such a thing. *Kwayedza* needs to be credited for exposing this. Furthermore, the healer in the cartoon claims that the nomadic lifestyle they have adopted is a way of wealth searching, hence the statement *tonoshava*. *Kushava* is a Shona concept which means to search for wealth in foreign lands. This further reflects the distortions that have occurred to the indigenous concept of healers and healing in the present-day situation. The material benefits that the healer got from the practice were tokens of appreciation from people who would have been effectively assisted or cured. Healers never demanded payment from people they assisted because they had a social obligation to assist the community. This explains why a traditional healer, in spite of the amount of possessions he/she could accumulate would be found barefooted. Their role was to sacrifice all the comfort to serve their people. Unfortunately, the *Tsikamutandas* in contemporary Zimbabwe can even be seen to be moving in posh cars and even applying very expensive perfumes when culturally their lives were not supposed to be luxurious ones.

Looking at all the cartoons that have been sampled, there is evidence that the credibility of religious practices is increasingly being sarcastically questioned by the newspaper, due to the activities of some criminals, who have learnt to hide under the canopy of religion to commit a lot of unimaginable violent ‘crimes’ thereby debasing the central role of religion as a resort of man in time of troubles.

Viewed from a different perspective, the message in all the cartoons, particularly those which are based on the faith healers, also dabbles into the economic morass in the nation. They point to the fact that levels of desperation among the general citizens in Zimbabwe have reached alarming levels to a point where people become so vulnerable and gullible. This mass gullibility and vulnerability in the nation is an index of the economic crisis in the nation that has threatened to tear the social moral fabric. When the economy is down, desperation creeps in and unscrupulous elements take advantage. In addition, people do anything in order to survive. The cartoonist is unwittingly making a political and economic statement. The

leadership under spotlight here is not just the church leadership; it is leadership in general; including politicians who take advantage of the poor. The church is only a metaphorical or iconographic representation of leadership in Zimbabwe today.

If taken from another angle, the cartoons could be viewed as reflecting upon a leadership that is depraved. They mirror a crop of leaders, be they political, religious or cultural who are devoid of ethical principles in their conduct. The behaviour of the church leaders, as has already been alluded to, are just a tip of the iceberg representing the larger image of the nature of the leadership that has taken over postcolonial Zimbabwe in all spheres. This leadership cuts across all spheres of human existence, from the political leadership right up to the religious leaders. They are the kind of leaders who treat the people they lead as a means to their own ends. They advance personal ambitions at the expense of the very people whose ambitions they must ensure successful realisation. Their behaviour is actually anathema to what is expected of a typical leader in the real African context that is, being able to nurture followers in becoming aware of their own needs, values and purposes. In a sense, a leader in the African set-up has to be empowering to those that fall under his jurisdiction. Instead in the cartoon on the apostolic sect leaders who decide to keep their congregants ignorant of their potentials as well as alternative resources available to them in life, readers are confronted with a selfish, wicked breed of leaders who make a killing from the suffering of the masses. The leaders reflect a leadership that has no obligations or responsibilities to the people they lead. Hence there is lack of honesty and empathy for the poor suffering people. This probably could be a result of the colonial system within which they were brought up as espoused by the post-colonial theory that posits that the people in postcolonial nations have internalised the norms and values of their former colonial masters. They were groomed in an individualistic and capitalist environment where to be successful was to be above the level of the rest of ones' fellows. The capitalist scenario promoted self-elevation and self-aggrandisement at the expense of communal development and empowerment. In a way, the cartoon mirrors the tragic disillusionment that characterise post-colonial Zimbabwe. They express the leadership's tendency towards tyranny as revealed by the obvious exploitation of the general people by those who have assumed leadership posts as revealed in the diverse religious leaders that are at the centre of the editorial cartoons presented in *Kwayedza*. These religious leaders are not just representing what is happening in the religious sector, but

experiences of those who are leading and those who are being led in all spheres of human existence in post-colonial Zimbabwe. It is an expression of the loss of ethics and celebrated cultural values that are underpinned by *Ubuntu/Hunhu*. It is this loss that was started with the elimination of the icons of Zimbabwean cultural values and norms, in the form of the Nehandas, the Chief priest at Njele, and Kaguvi among others. This systematic elimination witnessed the imposition of leaders who satisfied and protected the interests of the colonial enterprise. For that reason, the tragedy in contemporary Zimbabwe is the loss of values more than the shortage of money. This tragic situation can thus have resulted in the nation plunging into a bottomless abyss of suffering, helplessness and meaninglessness. This explains why religion no longer has a pivotal role in poverty alleviation in the nation, instead the church leaders systematically fuel poverty hiding their eyes behind the pages of the Bible. As an institution, religion deliberately decides never to direct the attention of the victims of suffering to the sources of their plight and turns a blind eye to the shattered social moral fibre that exacerbates the suffering.

## **5.11 Conclusion**

The chapter has presented the research findings. It has summarised the data that was obtained from interviews that were carried out with the personnel at the Zimpapers as well as those carried out among the newspaper vendors. Data collected through questionnaires have also been presented. The chapter finally presented data that was collected through the analysis of the content of selected issues of the two newspapers.

What emerged from the findings is that the two newspapers were introduced to create an environment where the Zimbabwean community had access and ownership of what they consumed as media products. They had to present the socio-political, economic, science and technological world of the Zimbabweans in dialogue with their tradition, their present-day experiences as well as their projection into the future. This way, it was believed Zimbabwe will be helped to escape from the cultural death-grip of the west.

With such a responsibility placed on them, the findings revealed that the two newspaper experienced successes and failure in the process. The major successful score that was made by the two papers was placing the two indigenous languages on the public sphere. With the launching of the two newspapers, Zimbabwe managed to make a bold political statement by addressing the linguistic rights of the Shona and the Ndebele people after almost a century of playing second fiddle as a result of the English hegemony. Furthermore, the papers managed to restore the democratic rights of the indigenous people. With the two newspapers on the media market, the local people could now participate on the public sphere. In addition, the establishment of the newspapers reversed the centre-periphery mode of communication that had characterised the Zimbabwean media terrain. This implied that news could now be collected from the rural areas, the high-density areas and spotlight the experiences of the people whose presence had been denied by the colonial media systems. This was a positive move since the colonial media systems had never accorded African experiences any space unless the experiences had a bearing on safeguarding and perpetuation of colonial interests.

With respect to the question of Zimbabwean cultural heritage, the papers have to take a bold stance on the Zimbabwean culture and heritage otherwise they risk being the greatest threat to African culture and spirituality. What this implies is that, *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza*, being the only newspapers of their kind need to be custodians of Zimbabwean culture and heritage in its multifacetedness.

To buttress their position as custodians of the Zimbabwean cultural tradition, the two papers had columns to celebrate the virtues of and uphold the integrity of the African woman. To this effect, *Kwayedza* has the African woman of the week/month/year column. This column goes a long way towards empowering the African women through instilling confidence and pride in being an African woman. The papers also have columns on totems, which also help in reinforcing the Zimbabwean people's identity. The coverage on totems pays great attention to the history of and identity of the Zimbabwean people. In the process, it attempts to foster within the readers the kind of self-awareness and conscience that is supportive of the African revival. In fact, the coverage of totems challenges the denial of historicity of Africans on which the colonial enterprise is premised.

However, the new contested terrain had its own challenges to the new players. Unfortunately, even after highlighting critical cultural issues, the journalists fail to provide the indigenous 'expert systems' and assist in 'opinion building' on raised issues, from a Zimbabwean perspective, for the benefit of the readers. Even after presenting a potentially empowering story, little effort is made to convince the readers that the local alternative is just as good as the conventional western oriented variety. For instance, when it comes to the question of indigenous local dishes, the journalist fails to maintain consistence and ultimately sacrifices the indigenous recipes for western one such as Christmas chocolate and sponge cakes. Furthermore, even in situations where success stories on traditional medicine have been covered, little effort is made to build a strong opinion for the use of these forms of medicine. As the only newspapers publishing in local languages, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* need to provide a platform from which the virtues of the Zimbabwean culture are showcased, the food, the skills, the technology, the medicine, hospitality and patience of the people among many other issues.

The two papers also covered stories on the history and memory of the nation. With regards the coverage of the Heroes Day, the papers have made their fair contribution in the positive direction. However, a scrutiny of the column *ziva-ibva waziva* revealed that presentation of political-historical milestone in the history of the nation is simplistic and lacks the rigour, depth and breadth that would effectively empower the readers. This, the study found out, could be a result of the genre that the papers adopted, the tabloid. The tabloid specialises on easy to read and understand style of coverage. It shies away from dense presentation of issues and assumes that readers are too busy to go through thickets of texts in the name of reading news.

The two newspapers have also covered issues of African spirituality. In this field, they covered issues and the rites associated with burying the dead and respecting burial places. They have also covered stories on witchcraft. It is, however unfortunate that the stories on witchcraft tended to dominate all the publications of the two newspapers to the point of

overshadowing other aspects of African spirituality that could work towards empowering the Zimbabweans as they grapple with global challenges.

The study has also scrutinised the editorial cartoons in some of the sampled issues of *Kwayedza* in particular. It found out that more than 80% of the editorial cartoons in the sampled *Kwayedza* publications were centred on religious dispositions. They are satiric of both the traditional as well as the Christian religious leaders who take advantage of the suffering people to line up their pockets. With regards to stimulating debate around the area, the two newspapers have to be credited. They managed to empower the readers to adopt a critical position. In this section, the rigour and depth that most participants had accused the papers of lacking is actually available.

The study also found out that there was a demand for papers in local languages that catered for both the serious news in the form of political and economic news such as that found in spreadsheets and the human social interest stories. In fact, newspapers in indigenous languages cannot afford not to anchor their trajectory on current affairs, otherwise they risk playing second fiddle on the global media arena. They have to accord room for issues on economic, political and science and technology in their coverage. That way the papers will become the laboratory for socio-economic transformation, contributing towards the creation of new narratives that interrogate the current relationships for socio-economic transformation. Ultimately the newspapers would reveal the umbilical cord that exists between media and socio-economic development. That way the papers would avoid labouring on what participants have viewed as mediocre and less relevant issues. In summary, the research is proposing that the two newspapers are the media platforms that have been availed to indigenous people for purposes of narrating the story of their lives, therefore they have to make effective use of it and write their stories well. This way, they will capture the spirit and ethos of the true Zimbabwean and effectively counter the colonial discourses on Zimbabwe which were bent on promoting the capitalist project in the nation and Africa at large.

## **Chapter Six: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the study and the conclusions that emerged from the research findings. Furthermore, recommendations to serve as possible solutions to the problems will be suggested. Thus, the chapter consists of three main components: the summary, conclusions and the recommendations.

### **6.2 Summary and Conclusion**

The study investigated the extent to which the use of indigenous languages has managed to empower Zimbabweans who read *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. It employed the post-colonial theory to explore the empowering capacity of the two newspapers.

Chapter 1 of the study sets the background against which the research is carried out. It highlights that there is evidence of a limited presence of indigenous languages in Zimbabwe on the media terrain, generally. Interestingly, in terms of radio stations in Zimbabwe, only two broadcast primarily in indigenous languages - National FM and Radio Zimbabwe. With regards to the print section of the media, only two newspapers publish in local languages - *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. This demonstrates a conspicuous deficiency of media products in these languages on the market place of ideas. Chapter 1 attributes this anomaly to the hegemonic tendencies of the colonial languages which saw indigenous languages being relegated to secondary status, hence the deprived space on the global linguistic terrain. The dominance of English has thus suffocated the local languages and reduced the possibilities of them getting a space on the 21<sup>st</sup> century public sphere. The chapter also explored the legal instruments that were put in place to elevate the status of local languages such as the Education Act of 1987 and the amendments that followed thereafter, the Nziramasanga recommendations up to the 2013 Constitutional Amendment Act which granted 16 indigenous languages official status.

It is in chapter 1 where the language question is linked to the field of media. In this respect, the chapter posits that the media fraternity has a responsibility of promoting linguistic diversity and linguistic normalisation in post-colonial situations where colonial languages have persistently enjoyed hegemony. Using the indigenous languages, the chapter shows, would elevate the language from being perceived as pre-modern and enhance their acceptance as part of the new identity politics within the current global dispensation. Through the use of indigenous languages in the media, there would be a promotion of unrestricted communal communication, public participation that constitutes the engine that is driving the turbines of economic, political and even the general media fraternity globally. In short, the chapter sets the tone for the analysis of the two newspapers, *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* against the convictions of the empowering potential of indigenous languages.

Chapter 2 of the study provides a review of related literature. This chapter posits that language is not just a medium of interaction. Rather, it is culturally embedded and an ideological tool. Language, thus, is perceived as a very powerful tool of control. This explains the colonial systems' imposition of their language on their colonies. Making the subjects use their language of dominance was the surest way of taming them for effective manipulation and exploitation. With the imposition of English came the relegation of the languages to the linguistics and above all media periphery, leaving English enjoying linguistic hegemony. It is against this linguistic reality that Chapter 2 advocates that African communities have to revive and uphold their indigenous languages if they are to be considered as equally empowered players on the global market place. For this chapter, continued preference for English is actually an act of promoting capitalism and the imperialist pursuit. As such, the communities have to wriggle out of the hegemonic English language yoke and use their languages in all domains of life - law, business, politics, and education, to allow them to effectively and democratically participate on the global arena.

Chapter 2 further highlighted that, because of the colonial experience, Africa has failed to untangle herself from the hegemonic hold of colonial languages. This explains why its media fraternity has chosen them as the languages of disseminating information. This, according to the chapter, explains why communication systems in Nigeria, East Africa, South Africa and

Zimbabwe, just to mention a few, are predominantly in English. The chapter reveals that media products in local languages even in the various sampled former colonial nations are just a drop in the media ocean. The majority of media products are in English. This scenario, Chapter 2 has shown, invariably relegates the local languages to the linguistic doldrums.

Chapter three presented the theoretical framework informing the study. The chapter explored the postcolonial theory. It highlights that the postcolonial theory is concerned with the impact of colonialism on dominated cultures. Using this theory, the study interrogated the effects of European linguistic imperialism on the Zimbabwean indigenous languages, with specific reference to their use in the public sphere.

Chapter four of the study presented the methodology used for carrying out the study. It explained how and why the study employed a mixed methodology approach for purposes of carrying out the research. The mixed methodology approach involves the utilisation of multiple approaches in the process of grappling with the emancipatory capacity of these indigenous languages in newspapers. The idea behind the choice of the mixed research methodology was to exploit elements of both the qualitative and the quantitative research paradigms so that results mutually complemented each other in search of the accurate viewpoint hence conclusion.

This chapter contends that research on social issues is replete with complex and multiplex social phenomena that cannot be simply untangled through single frame explorations. Furthermore, the choice of the approach is also premised on the idea that the media terrain and its operations are a contested terrain. As such, knowledge and information obtained from these sources are bound to assume multiple realities. It was thus the contention of the study that these complex and multiple realities can therefore be understood using a cocktail of approaches rather than adopt a single approach. Furthermore, the conclusions arrived at through a combination of different methods enriched and improved understanding of the phenomena under study. The chapter thus concluded that adoption of such an approach would

foster fresh ideas about them, while at the same time generating answers to questions that may be difficult to answer using a single method.

The study used the survey and content analysis research methods. For the survey, the study used the questionnaire and the interview data collection tools. The population for the survey constituted experts in the fields of language, language policy and media; personnel from Zimpapers; newspaper vendors and readers of the two newspapers. The population of the newspaper comprised all the publications of *uMthunywa* and *Kwayedza* for the period January 2014 to December 2015. Through a process of random sampling, 20% of 208 publications was selected as a sample for the study.

Chapter five presented the research findings, analysed and discussed them. In this chapter, the study established that the two newspapers in indigenous languages were established primarily to promote the Zimbabwean cultural heritage and traditions which had suffered relegation, denigration and demonisation at the hands of the colonial system. The general idea propelling the focus on cultural heritage was the fact that culture is the foundation, guidepost, and point of departure for a modern liberated society. As such, it had to be used as the root from which modern life systems had to derive nourishment. Since their launch, the papers were supposed to collect stories, which in their variety of disciplines would collect memorable thoughts, utterances and achievements of the entire Zimbabwean community.

In their pursuit of the set agenda, the papers have columns that address cultural issues. They have columns on indigenous foods and dishes which present various recipes for preparing the meals. They also present different totems in the Zimbabwean community, a pointer to the vitality of preserving and celebrating Zimbabwean identity. To further reinforce the cultural re-awakening agenda and empower the people with a strong and unwavering self-belief and pride, a column on the African woman of the year is run in every issue of *Kwayedza*.

The papers also carry stories on the history and memory of Zimbabweans. The study, however, found out that the coverage on this aspect was simplistic and did not adopt an analytical approach to the historical milestones of the nation. The study contends that the role

of re-awakening Africa and recreating its historical past on the part of newspapers in indigenous languages cannot be over-emphasised. And, if it is to be done, the task needs to be done in an impeccable manner without compromising the significance of each and every historical milestone.

The papers have also covered stories on African spirituality. In this category, reports covered traditional medicine and traditional practice and practitioners, sacred mountains, traditional sites and trees, the burying of the dead and witchcraft. Taken from the mandate of the papers, such coverage was targeted at fostering within readers, a sense and belief in their cultural heritage. This was aimed to enhance the promotion of confidence in the African identity. In spite of this noble agenda, the papers appeared to have looked at the world with lenses tainted with Eurocentric perceptions. This partly explains the stereotyped presentation of some aspects of the Zimbabwean traditional life, such as traditional medicine, traditional healers, and even African spirituality. At some points, the coverage nearly denigrated the core of indigenous knowledge systems, which constitutes the backbone of Zimbabwean cultural heritage as revealed in the coverage of, for example, indigenous medicine and African spirituality. These aspects of the African people's lives have registered a record of successfully addressing and resolving challenges of people in Africa. Yet, the coverage in the two newspapers is not asserting the position of this medicine on the global medical fraternity.

Furthermore, African spirituality is taken in a proscriptive sense. Generally, spirituality can be interpreted for progressive purposes. Unfortunately, the study found out that version of spirituality that is given recognition in the two newspapers is that spirituality for preying on other human beings. While the study acknowledges that this negative spirituality is actually part of the lived realities of Zimbabwean people, it postulates that a more positive opinion of Africa is called for from these newspapers. The study suggests that the stories risk being viewed as equally contributing to the dehumanisation of Africans by deliberately picking out on deviant forms of behaviour and projecting them as the norm. The papers, thus, risk poisoning the very patient they are attempting to resuscitate from dosages of close to a century of imperialist toxins. The papers thus have a danger of being reduced to collaborators

in the perpetuation of the Zimbabwean cultural domination as they are found reinforcing the myth of the heart of darkness where the law of the jungle reigns supreme.

The research also found that the newspapers do not cover a wide spectrum of issues and topics. The papers lacked coverage on issues to do with current political issues, global events, business news and classifieds. This failure to address a wide range of areas, the study found out, is a result of the genre that the two newspapers fall within (the tabloid) which places emphasis on social interest issues and at the expense of economic, politicians and their leadership squabbles and many other issues that are critical of the nation survival in the new dispensation of the global world.

One of the major successes of the two papers in their agenda to emancipate the Zimbabwean population was the ability to introduce and sustain papers in indigenous languages on the media fraternity in post-colonial Zimbabwe. The study found that in its project to broaden the public sphere and make information accessible to people the print media was key. Disseminating news using indigenous languages was, thus, viewed as having a great potential to develop the languages and expose them to enrichment through use in higher domains. In this respect, the two newspapers managed to legitimise the language stance that had been adopted at independence, promoting local languages.

An appraisal of the papers would prove that they are found wanting in effectively spotlighting local languages on the media fraternity. The limited coverage in terms of domains, the research found, has resulted in most readers being forced to resort to media produced in English in search of information which they would otherwise have enjoyed reading in their mother tongue. As such, the presence of the languages on the media markets is left overshadowed by products in English. What emerges is that while the idea of placing the local languages in the media domain was noble, the performance of the languages in question on the media terrain illustrates that little has been achieved in addressing the main agent of colonisation that remains entrenched in our daily routines, the English language.

With regards to the question of enhancing the indigenous languages on the media terrain, the study thus concludes that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* have to be loaded with the best information on Zimbabwean cultural values and norms. Above all, their coverage has to be holistic to avoid giving an impression of inadequacy and incapacity of the indigenous languages to handle issues of political, economic, scientific and technological manner among other fields at both national and global levels. In this way, the coverage avoids running into the trap of indirectly campaigning for the continued use and hegemony of English for purposes of accessing critical national and global information.

Extending the realm of news coverage would help showcase indigenous languages as potential and powerful channels for conveying socio-economic, political, science and technological knowledge to the people. In this way, readers would get to know and appreciate that any language, even the indigenous languages - not just English - can be a useful key for unlocking knowledge and news on issues on higher domains. With such conviction in place, the lobbying for a paradigm shift towards indigenous languages, carried out by scholars for decades, would start bearing fruit as newspapers that publish in local languages start gaining respect as serious and authentic sources of knowledge and information. They become the first ports of call for news and information, and thus marking a critical milestone in the achievement of the post-independence agenda of extending the public sphere in Zimbabwe.

As alluded to in chapter five, newspapers in indigenous languages cannot afford to ignore the trajectory on current affairs. Otherwise, they risk playing second fiddle in a fast globalising media arena. They have to, without fail, also cover issues on economics, politics, science and technology. In fact, they have to be the people's reliable laboratory for socio-economic transformation. In this way, they will be empowered to contribute towards the creation of new narratives that interrogate the current relationships for socio-economic transformation. The newspapers should reveal the umbilical cord that exists between media and socio-economic development. This would be a sure way of diverting from what experts have viewed as mediocrity and alleged playful topics.

The study confirms that the indigenous language papers are playing a far more critical role than previously acknowledged in raising national pride in the identities of Zimbabweans. This finding is a clear departure from the original assumptions of the study, proving that, despite their scantiness, these papers have provided a sterling model for further envelopment of the diverse indigenous language into the broader national development train. However, a comment needs to be made also with regards to the nature of identity projected. To a large measure, it may be fair to argue, that the nature of identity articulated has tended to be of a limited or confined sense. In this pronouncement, one is reminded of the Indian philosopher Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi who pointed out that he will open the windows to his hut to allow the winds of the outside world to freshen up the ideas inside but he proclaimed that he would do it in such a way that the windows are not too wide to allow the winds to blow away the hut. This analogue is a clear pointer that identity, as indeed development itself, feeds off the fruitful changes from elsewhere. Survival itself is strongly predicated on the capacity for adaptation. It may be said that *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*, tend to promote an identity steeped in nostalgia than a vibrant acknowledgement that culture is the 'here and now.' In Raymond Williams' terms, culture is 'a whole way of life' – our food, drink, dress, music, religious habits, and so on (Williams, 1960). Clearly, while preserving the ways of the past, the past may not fully represent Zimbabwean culture, but simply Zimbabwean tradition. As it is, daily, Zimbabweans continue to make and live culture. This worrisome observation may point to a need to revamp the original mission statement of the papers to embrace and celebrate a wider view of society which is both all-encompassing and contemporary. Admittedly, more and more experiences elsewhere are proving that extreme nationalism, indeed nostalgic formations, are highly delicate to survive the storm of globalisation which, unlike the 1980s, when that paper cut its teeth, is now a force too strong to ignore or reverse.

It is commendable that both papers have played a path-breaking role in raising the profile of African indigenous languages, empowering many to express themselves through their mother tongues. The two papers have succeeded, among others, by appealing to a functional use of the medium. In this sense, the paper has carried valuable well-researched information useful for school curriculum-specific columns and public education generally. Examples include *Denhe Reruzivo* (Knowledge Keg) *Duramazwi* (Shona Dictionary), *Ziva -ibva waziva* (Know- get to know it), *Chishona Chakanaka* (Standard Shona), *Tsumo nemadimikira*

(Proverbs and Idioms) among others. While the papers publishing in indigenous languages remain minimal, there seem to be a strongly impelling argument for the opening of more indigenous languages papers, across the length and breadth of the nation, admittedly feeding off the fairly useful model charted by *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*.

A clear role for the media is its primed link to development. Here, the two newspapers have to be credited with providing spaces for public debate and public participation. It is in debate that the best ideas for society's development are aired, honed, refashioned and adopted for the good of all society (Habermas, 1990). In this respect, *Kwayedza*, for example, carries public spaces or columns like *Tiudzei (Let us Know)*, for reader feedback on different topics covered. In *Maonero Edu*, (Our viewpoint), *Fembera Fembera Tione* (Predict the Answer), the paper is not only providing its own viewpoint, but is actively dialoguing with its readers. This is a commendable function. However, it is observed that debate and popular involvement have tended to be proscribed to 'soft tissue' news beats or topics. Columns on social relationships, games of an entertaining nature and so on, have provided a veneer of debate in a medium potentially laden with vast communicative power. Hard power topics like national politics, economics, science and technology, are skirted around at best or ignored at worst. Given the communicative potential of indigenous languages, the study concludes this observed gap needs to be plugged by the inclusion of these serious but relevant topics in people's lives. Also, given the challenging economic fortunes of the country, for fifty cents (cover price), one should be able to access a full summary of the important news happening in the country and beyond.

The study also looked at editorial cartoons, particularly in *Kwayedza*. An examination of cartoons showed that the paper managed to create an environment for nurturing what in media circles is called a critical mass. Creating a critical mass refers to a situation where media empowers the audiences to think critically about certain phenomena. By sarcastically addressing the operations of bogus traditional healers and bogus prophets, the paper succeeds in capacitating readers with important knowledge enabling them to survive in the current environment infested by criminals manipulating people's faith and taking advantage of their suffering.

### 6.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that the two newspapers be widely accessible and inclusive. In spite of the spirit that gave birth to the newspapers, that of making news available to the masses as and when needed, some sections of the Shona and Ndebele-speaking communities remain locked out of the news platform. For instance, there was concern that the two newspapers do not cover news from the whole nation such that *Kwayedza* confines itself to Mashonaland while *uMthunywa* concentrates on Matebeleland region. Furthermore, there is no evidence of any availability of a brail version of the two papers in local languages. In light of these concerns, and taking the idea of empowerment on board, the newspapers are expected to be available and accessible to previously marginalised people.

Great strides have been made to bring both Shona and Ndebele to the public sphere, as the two newspapers have championed the cause of the two indigenous languages. Unfortunately, the general performance of the two newspapers on this public domain, as illustrated in the nature of coverage of stories, deprives the languages of the enhancement through use in debates of discursive nature. The languages could only benefit in this respect if the breadth and depth of the two papers become equivalent to, if not surpass, that of mainstream newspapers that are published in any former colonial languages. Because of these limitations, the media-linguistic terrain remains unaltered as people continue to flock to newspapers published in English to get holistic and gratifying coverage of national and global events. As such, newspapers published in English have continued to be the medium of communication thereby impacting negatively on the development, appreciation and recognition of local languages in Zimbabwe.

In light of this reality, the study recommends a conversion of *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* from the tabloid genre to a fusion or co-existence of both elements of the tabloid and elements of the spreadsheet. This hybrid has been referred to as broadloid. This is a spreadsheet-cum-tabloid format. In this way, the nation will witness intellectuals, farmers, rural people, urbanites, in fact the whole spectrum of the Zimbabweans being tethered to the mother tongue-papers. With such a genre, the elite will get their own dose of issues of an intellectual discursive nature, the ordinary people will get their human-interest stories, the business people would get their dose of commercial news while the politicians get their thirst for

information gratified. What the study is proposing is that the issues of spirituality, environmental issues, science and technological matters, politics, religion all constitute the lived realities of the Zimbabweans in this 21<sup>st</sup> century. As such, they all equally need to be captured in the debates and discourses that ensue on the 21<sup>st</sup> century public sphere of the media. This suggested conversion, could be a viable solution in a media environment where there are only two newspapers in local languages. In this way, the public sphere would have been extended to include other linguistic players in the real sense.

The study also recommends investing, on the part of the media fraternity, in general and the media practitioners in particular, in in-depth research on African indigenous knowledge systems and African spirituality. Such kind of research would help in effectively empowering the once subjugated Africans by reporting in a manner that corrects perceptions and colonial ideologies especially in connection with indigenous languages and the knowledge systems that are embedded in them. With regards the question of African spirituality, there is evidence of a wide coverage of the activities of traditional healers, prophets, and witches in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa*. Of course, from the African perspective, these more than mythical stories are real: witchcraft, sorcery, goblins, snakes that vomit money, among many other mesmerising things are believed to exist. What, therefore, needs to be done by the newspapers in indigenous languages is not to adopt the Eurocentric perspectives and perceptions to these phenomena, that rubbish and make a mockery of them. There is a need for news coverage that is nourished and given sustenance by the Zimbabwean real traditions. This, therefore, implies that the reporters for these newspapers need to engage into actual research to try and help the masses understand the principles behind these activities and even relate to the contemporary scientific knowledge. Such a move will result in the society's movement from knowledge level to wisdom level, by virtue of understanding the principles that govern African spirituality.

In this way, the papers would assist Zimbabweans regain their dignity and status as culturally independent Africans. They would record and disseminate the best of the people's norms and values. That way, they will empower their readership, because it has been proved beyond doubt that the mother tongue is the most effective means of communication for any group of

people at any given time (Bamgbose 1991; Mutasa, 2006). In short, the study recommends intensive and extensive research that would enable news coverage that engages, probes, assesses and reveals the Zimbabwean experiences in all their rich diversity.

The other recommendation that came out of the research on the two newspapers is the need to develop the local languages. It emerged that Shona and Ndebele are the major indigenous languages that have found their way into the public domain. There is need to develop orthographies of at least some of the indigenous languages. That way, the nation avoids a scenario where Shona and Ndebele continue to be the only indigenous languages that are used for challenging the dominance of English on the media terrain. In fact, the existence of these two languages only might be used as a weapon for accusing the nation of promoting and upholding linguistic imperialism in the form of the domination of all the other indigenous languages by Shona and Ndebele. In a way, the public sphere has to be extended further to accommodate other mother tongues in Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, the study recommends that the media fraternity has to pursue and re-define the terms of reference of these media entities that collect and disseminate news in indigenous languages. This would help *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* to effectively accomplish their task of rooting out all the colonial and negative perceptions of Zimbabwe in particular and Africa in general and ultimately laying new seeds for the emancipation and empowerment of the people.

With regards to the question of the history and memory of the nation, the study recommends that the media discourse as presented in *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* must shape the Zimbabwean agenda and tell the Zimbabwean story. Through *Kwayedza* and *uMthunywa* masses must get the story of Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean people's achievements and the strides the nation has made to date. The two newspapers have no option but to give readers the history of Zimbabwe and Zimbabwe's cultural heritage since they disseminate information in the languages understood by the majority of the masses. More so, considering

the idea that indigenous languages are the most effective languages for communicating with the masses, with them nothing is ever lost in translation.

In a nutshell, it has to be highlighted that the agenda for celebrating being Zimbabwean has already been set for the two newspapers. All that is needed is doing it well through effectively riding on the advantage of the indigenous languages for the benefit of the local people. When this is done well, the newspapers in indigenous languages will provide a resistant media discourse that protects and provides for African interest. They would provide a critical model in which Western neo-colonialism is resisted and fought. They would, thus, act like ‘anti-bodies’ resisting and dispelling new and modified forms of Western imperialism.

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- The Patriot*,4 -11 August 2016.
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- Kwayedza*,24-30 *Gumiguru*2014.
- Kwayedza*, 31*Gumiguru* 6 *Mbudzi*2014.
- Kwayedza*,5-11*Gunyana* 2014.
- Kwayedza*,14 -20 *Mbudzi* 2014.
- Kwayedza*,10-16*Gumiguru* 2014.
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- Kwayedza*,26*Gunyana* -2 *Gumiguru* 2014.

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*Kwayedza*, 20-26 *Mbudzi* 2015.  
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*Kwayedza*, 12-18 *Chikumi* 2015.  
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*uMthunywa*, 8 October 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 10-17 October 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 23-30 July 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 28 October-4 November 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 13-20 August 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 22-28 October 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 19-25 November 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 26-November-2 December 2015.  
*uMthunywa*, 14-20 April, 2016.  
*uMthunywa* 18-24 November 2015

### **Interviewees**

Interviewee X2, 25 May 2026.  
Interviewee V1, 1 April 2016.  
Interviewee V3, 1 April 2016.  
Interviewee V3, 1 April 2016.  
Interviewee V8, 1 April 2016.  
Interviewee V4, 21 March 2016.

### **Questionnaire Participants**

Participant X1, 1 April 2016.

Participant A, 17 April, 2016

Participant B, 19 April 2016

Participant B, 19 April 2016

Participant G, 20 April 2016

Participant C, 22 April 2016

Participant I, 20 April 2016

Participant H, 25 April 2016

Participant E, 22 April 2016

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A**

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE FOR EXPERTS IN LANGUAGE ISSUES, LANGUAGE POLICY PLANNING AND THE MEDIA DISCIPLINE.**

TO: THE INFORMANT

I am Chipo Chirimuuta, and I am a doctoral candidate studying, with the University of South Africa, in the Department of African Languages at. In fulfilment of the requirements of this degree, I am carrying out research indigenous languages and the media. The title of the study is *Empowering Zimbabweans Through the use of Indigenous Languages in the Media: A Case of Selected Newspapers*.

The study tries to find out how the people read newspapers in indigenous languages; their motives for visiting these news sources; the frequency with which they pay these visits to the media platforms; how much the newspapers in indigenous languages have enlightened them on political issues in Zimbabwe; how much the newspapers in indigenous languages have allowed them to have their voices, their views and concerns heard; and finally the relevance of the newspapers in indigenous languages to their political, economic and social lives amid this fast changing global world and information systems. The question of accessibility and reliability of the news sources will also be sought. The instrument will also attempt to find out if the newspapers in indigenous languages have really provided the people with alternative platforms where they can participate politically and economically without fear on the national and global media terrain. Your knowledge, experiences and opinions are a critical ingredient to the success of this research study. May you also be assured that the information that will be obtained from you will be held with the strictest confidence and that it will only be used solely for purposes of this research study and nothing else. You are, therefore, being kindly requested to answer the questions that follow. May you kindly assist by responding to the questions that follow.

## SECTION A

Place a tick in the boxes against the correct response.

### 1 Biographical information

a) Gender:  Female  Male

b) Age:

21 – 30 years old	
31 – 40 years old	
41 -50 years old	
50 years and above	

c) Highest Academic qualification:

First Degree	
Master's degree	
Doctorate	

2 What is your mother language?

3 How often do you read Kwayedza?

Have never seen Kwayedza	
Never read Kwayedza	
I read Kwayedza when I come across it	
Read Kwayedza at least once in a fortnight	
Read Kwayedza every week	

4 Are the stories covered in Kwayedza/Umthunywa relevant to your everyday life experiences?

Not linked to the current life experiences of Zimbabweans	
Partially linked to the life experiences	
Linked to the traditional way of life	
Closely related to the life experiences of many people	

- 5 Do the stories in *Kwayedza*/*Umthunywa* provide coverage that caters for everything that a reader would look for in Print media?

Not at all	
To a lesser extent	
To a greater extent	
Absolutely	

6. Give reasons for the answer you have provided for question 5
7. From a media expert or language expert perspective, what kind of coverage is expected of *Kwayedza* or *Umthunywa* as papers that represent the voice of the majority?

## SECTION B

8. Comment on *Kwayedza*'s/ *Umthunywa*'s ability to provide timely, accurate, impartial and comprehensive information to the widest possible audience, in a form and content best suited to the audience.
9. Media should also be about recognising the importance of the perspectives we are ignorant of or often ignore. Do you think *Kwayedza*/ *Umthunywa* helps us tune in to these "unheard voices", providing a platform for neglected or ignored voices.
10. Do you think the use of indigenous languages in media is a solution to the shortage of media products among the indigenous people who are not proficient in English?
11. The media typically foster debates in the public arena, challenging ideas, the status quo, debunking myths and discussing taboo topics. Do you think that *Kwayedza*/*Umthunywa* has managed to do this?
12. Does the presence of newspapers in indigenous languages on the Zimbabwean media fraternity make the media platform a democracy?
13. Is the use of these indigenous languages in the publication of these two newspapers helping in any way to bail the indigenous languages from the doldrums of the media-linguistic terrain?

14. Does the use of local languages on its own translate to the emancipation of people's lives.
  
15. If the answer is no, what other factors should be considered to ensure maximum empowerment through the use of media?

## **Appendix B**

### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR NEWSPAPER VENDORS.**

TO: THE INFORMANT

I am Chipo Chirimuuta, and I am a doctoral candidate studying, with the University of South Africa, in the Department of African Languages. In fulfilment of the requirements of this degree, I am carrying out a research indigenous languages and the media. The title of the study is *Empowering Zimbabweans Through the use of Indigenous Languages in the Media: A Case of Selected Newspapers*.

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1. For how long have you worked as a uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza vendor?
2. Which other newspapers do you sell?
3. Compared to other newspapers that you sell, what is your comment uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza sales.
4. How many uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza copies are you allocated on a weekly basis?

5. How long do they take to be sold out?
6. As a newspaper vendor do you personally read uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza?
7. What could be motivating you into reading uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza?
8. Which section of uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza do you enjoy?
9. Do uMthunywa and Kwayedza have the same sections as those found in other newspapers?
  
10. After reading uMthunywa and/or Kwayedza do you feel satisfied that you have you have found everything that you expect from any press such that you will not need to read any other different newspapers?
11. What could be the possible reason?
12. Does your family enjoy reading uMthunywa or Kwayedza?
13. How many people are there in your family?
14. Any other Comment