THE *CITY PRESS* REPRESENTATION OF CITIZEN ACTION ON HOUSING DELIVERY IN SOUTH AFRICA: 2005-2015

By

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DECLARATION

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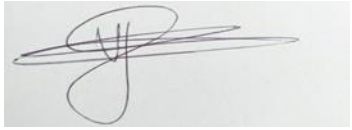

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DEDICATION

Lindelwa (*Malidi-lidi*) and Nomazizi (*S'dwedwe*) – many decades later, your spirits live on. I will always love you and nothing will ever make me forget you. My mother Nomhle, I thought you would live long enough to appreciate the fruits of my labour with me. My brother Themba, gone too soon. The leader of the tribe, my grand-mother, Mankomo – your spirit too lives on! To all my ancestors, here and beyond.

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ABSTRACT

Housing delivery has been in a state of crisis long before the realisation of democracy in South Africa and still remains a point of contention for the poor. Issues of service delivery, particularly housing delivery, have consistently made newspaper headlines in post-apartheid South Africa. Between 2004 and 2012, service delivery protests increased from 34% in 2005 to 173% in 2012. The *City Press*, a weekly newspaper, focused on the coverage of issues of development in South Africa, emerging as an important voice in reporting on citizen action related to service delivery in the country during this time. Therefore, the principal objective of this study was to investigate the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015.

With a view to providing insight into the role of the media in development, this study employed qualitative research methodology. Qualitative content analysis was utilised in studying the *City Press* editorials and the *City Press* individual journalist' opinion pieces and the newspaper news reports. In addition, past and present *City Press* journalists identified with reporting on developmental issues were interviewed. The development communication theory was explored as an appropriate theoretical framework for this study,

The investigation of the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery found that there were several complex issues and processes that negatively impacted the process of housing delivery during the second decade of South African democracy, including a scourge of corruption driven by inefficiencies administration of the housing delivery process. In that respect the study revealed that housing delivery has been hindered by many aspects, resulting in tensions and a strained relationship between the government and the poor citizens of South Africa. Furthermore, the study established that the *City Press* individual journalists played a significant role in the representation of citizen action through portraying housing delivery protests at key moments when these happened.

KEY TERMS

Representation; *City Press*; Citizen action; Housing delivery; Communication; Communication development; South Africa; Community; Democracy; Development.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AEC – Anti-Evictions Campaign
AENS – African Eye News Services
AG – Auditor General
ANC – African National Congress
ASGISA – Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa
CBOs – Community Based Organisations
CSO – Civil Society Organisations
DA – Democratic Alliance
DAG – Development Action Group
GEAR – Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GNU – Government of National Unity
HIV/AIDS – Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
MEC – Member of the Executive Council
MMP – Media Monitoring Project
NBRA – National Building Regulations Standard and Building Standards Act
NF – National Forum
NDP – National Development Plan
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP – New Growth Path
NHBRC – National Home Builders Registration Council
NYDF – National Youth Development Fund
NP – Nationalist Party
PCSA – Press Council of South Africa
PSA – Public Servants Association
RDP – Reconstruction and Development Programme
SAAN – South African Associated Newspapers
SACP – South African Communist Party
SANCO – South African National Civic Organisation
SANEF – South African Editors' Forum
SDG – Sustainable Development Goals
SECC – Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee
SIU – Special Investigate Unit

SMME – Small Medium and Micro sized Enterprises

TAC – Treatment Action Campaign

UDF – United Democratic Front

UNDP – United Nations Development Programme

WCAEC – Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign

WNC – Women National Congress

NWICO – New World Information and Communication Order

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and context

After South Africa's transition to democracy in 1994, the new democratically elected African National Congress-led (ANC) government embarked on a path of socio-economic transformation and development. This is the Nelson Mandela's administration and process that were largely referred to as the Government of National Unity (GNU), (Gumede, 2018:2). The GNU is a concept that, according to Mapuva (2010:246), denotes the bringing together of two or more oppositional political forces or parties "cobbling up arrangements to provide for co-existence". On the part of the ANC, it was to promote what Mapuva (2010:246) describes as embarking on a process of reconciliation, as a healing process, to coalesce and to work together with other parties. To that end, the South African GNU then "committed to effectively address problems of poverty and gross inequalities", thus adopting the development-focused Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as an economic mechanism to deal with socio-economic issues facing citizens', housing delivery, including among others (Mandela, 1994: i). A core focus area of the initial RDP sought to address various social issues facing the majority of the South African population. These are detailed in the RDP White Paper (1994) and include basic needs such as lack of adequate education and health care, and a shortage of jobs, water, electricity, nutrition, social welfare and housing (Chagunda, 2006:1). The delivery of adequate housing was a key component of this development agenda (Chagunda, 2006:1), with the ANC's first election manifesto stating that "A roof over one's head and reasonable living conditions are not a privilege. They are "a basic right for every human being" (Mandela, 1994:i).

The RDP, which was viewed as the cornerstone of the new government's development policy, "did not deliver as […] was expected" (Bailey, 2017:4). Instead, owing to lack of an efficient public service, the RDP failed and was soon replaced by a new policy which changed the trajectory of the country's development agenda (Bailey, 2017:4). The RDP was replaced with the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy in 1996 (Chagunda, 2006:1). This new policy was meant to stimulate faster economic growth and was aligned with the ANC manifesto slogan, namely "A better

life for all" (Manala, 2010:519). The GEAR strategy encompassed most of the social objectives of the RDP, including a focus on housing delivery (Terreblanche, 1999:4). However, following the shift from RDP to GEAR, criticisms emerged surrounding the government's inability to fulfil its initial social services, in particular housing promises (Chagunda, 2006:1). These critiques continued as various new development programmes, including the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative South Africa (Asgisa) as well as the New Growth Path (NGP), were adopted between 2005 and 2012 (Natrass, 2011:1). In early 2013, the government introduced the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP) as South Africa's long-term socio-economic development roadmap (Salga, 2011:1). Over the years, issues surrounding the continuation of poor living conditions and a lack of service delivery when it came to housing delivery, have continued to emerge (Wasserman, Chuma & Botha, 2018a:145).

Specifically, in the corridors of public service administration, a myriad of acute challenges transpired that negatively affected governance surrounding housing delivery and led to a plethora of insurmountable problems and major crises around the country (Franks, 2014:48; Chagunda, 2006:1). Franks (2014:48) and Mdlongwa (2014:34) observe that these challenges included high levels of overt corruption, maladministration, nepotism and wastefulness by government officials' not following regulations set by the Auditor-General (AG), vested personal interests by officials, and business links to government. These challenges have been some of the major stimulants of housing delivery protests in the country (Wasserman et al, 2018b:1). Dissatisfaction has been exacerbated by poor project planning and administration by incapacitated officials, including local government problems which have manifested in, *inter alia*, housing backlogs, misallocation of government subsidy houses, poor workmanship that is characterised by unfinished and/or poor-quality housing, ever-mushrooming informal settlements, unscrupulous developer- or contractor-built houses, and the framed formal housing delivery policies (Bradlow, Bolnick & Shearing, 2011:267). Bradlow et al (2011:267) argue that such discontent was further aggravated by the long-standing effects and legacy of both the colonial and apartheid systems.

Studies on government performance post-1994 highlight that public dissatisfaction with the government has not subsided, especially when it comes to the delivery of housing *(*Bradlow et al*,* 2011:267). While significant strides have been made at local level, it appears that the government still falls short of meeting its social obligations which tends to provoke negative responses from communities (Mbewana, 2012; Ngamlana, 2011; Robino, 2009). With the aforesaid challenges, civil society advocates have committed to mobilising citizens and other interest groups around demands for accountability and transparency from the government in the housing delivery sector (Heller, 2009:16; Tapscott & Thompson, 2013:279). These demands, together with continued dissatisfaction, have often led to (housing) delivery protests (Wasserman et al, 2018b:1). As Davis (2019:1) recently noted,

> When South Africans take to the streets to protest against their living conditions, calls for land and houses tend to dominate. And while the issue of land has been amplified over the past few years […] the issue of acceptable housing has been a constant and urgent demand since the dawn of democracy.

While citizen action and civil society protests have a long history in South Africa, citizen mobilisations, actions and protests around issues of housing delivery have been some of the biggest and most longstanding issues of contention since the beginning of democracy (Duncan, 2016:27). In addition to poor housing delivery, these protests highlighted underlying frustrations expressed by South African communities. These include high levels of unemployment, inadequate skills, social and economic inequalities, as well as mounting resentment about corruption (Parsley, 2012:5,18&23).

Cornwall and Gaventa (2001:1) argue that citizen action demonstrates that poor and marginalised citizens are not merely beneficiaries of state-delivered resources as the media sometimes portrays them. Instead, citizens are able to organise themselves, play a critical role in their own development by articulating their demands where necessary and “mobilise pressure for [social] change” (Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1).

The media tends to play an important role in this regard. The media is often perceived as the central feature in transforming power relations in a modern society such as

South Africa (Gumede, 2014:7). In this regard, the media has played a significant role in the reporting, framing and representation of housing-related citizen action in South Africa. Friedman (2006:18) observes that "the media […] entrenches rights – the rights to ensemble and express grievances […]". For instance, via the media, citizens have a democratic right to express their dissatisfaction through protests (Friedman, 2006:21). Likewise, Duncan (2016:142) suggests that it is the normative role of the media to assist citizens to exercise their rights through citizen action in order to strengthen democracy through the coverage of development, especially of housing delivery protests. Duncan believes that although "the huge media focus on violent [housing] delivery protests risks creating impressions that protests in South Africa are inherently violent". She (ibid, 2016:142) also argues that people are, in fact, acting on their rights, and that the South African Constitution 'recognises' citizen action by protesting as "an essential form of democratic expression". Importantly, indirectly and through the media, citizen action is protected "under the freedom of expression", as it is a way that citizens express their voices (Duncan, 2016:3). It is for that reason that Sujee (2014:1) affirms that during citizen protests, the presence of the media makes things better because it "allays fears" and sometimes encourages peaceful engagements because people construe the media's visibility as being "listened to". This notion stems from Sujee's (2014:1) observation from his experience and coverage of citizens' protesting about their rights with reference to housing in Kliptown in Johannesburg. Sujee's (2014:1) experience of engaging the people tells of an 'opportunity' for the media to observe how "mobilised and robust informal settlements communities" behave when they take action. In that case, the most relevant example of this scenario is *Abahlali Basemjodolo* movement which represents informal settlements or shack dwellers across the country (Gibson, 2008:683). *Abahlali Basemjondolo* will be discussed in detail later. Gumede (2014:7-8) builds on this idea and observes that in South Africa, as one of the "world's most unequal societies, the less equal tend to be less visible, more ignored and less likely to attract attention from politicians to help them". As such, Gumede (2014: 7-8) highlights that

> the voiceless depend on the media to not only find them, but to bring them into the civic conversation, so important to democracy. When the media brings in outsiders […] it helps to contribute to a social consensus that the injustices against them must be redressed.

In this regard, finding strategies to secure media coverage of poverty-related issues, including housing delivery, is becoming increasingly important (Gumede, 2014:8). The media as a "watchdog, guardian of the public interest and a conduit between the government and the governed" is well-placed to open up spaces and promote representation of critical voices and actions by citizens (Gumede, 2014:7). Therefore, by giving voice as well as exposure to information, "the media encourages a political culture" for citizens to take action, and contribute towards the trajectory of deepening their own democracy (Gumede, 2014:8).

The *City Press*, a weekly newspaper focused on the coverage of political developments in South Africa, has emerged as an important voice in reporting on citizens' action related to service delivery in the country (Kalane, 2018:212; Tsedu, 2007:4). As such, this study investigated the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015 and the implications that this representation had for development communication in the country.

1.2 Representation

Representation, in the context of the media, refers to portrayal of subjects – these may be communities, racial groups, ethnic groups, social groups, and individuals (Hall, 1985:99). Hall (ibid) further defines the concept 'representation' as the generation of images, ideas and concepts of objective reality, which are then packaged, disseminated and consumed as the real thing of which they really are but "mental substitutes". For Stewart (2008:35), whilst all human communication can be considered as various instances of representation, the most prominent tool and purveyor of representation in modern society is the media, in that much academic discussion of representation revolves around the media representation. To that end, Preziosi (1998:357) posits that there is no unmediated access to the real - it is through representations that we know the world; hence people rely on representation to interpret reality. At the same time, it cannot be said in a simple sense that a representation or an image "reflects' a reality", "distorts a reality", "stands in place" of an absent reality, or bears no relation to any reality 'whatsoever' (Preziosi, 1998:357). For that reason, reality is a matter of representation, and representation is, in turn, a matter of discourse (Preziosi, 1998:357). Against this backdrop an in-depth discussion and context on representation are contained in Chapter 2 of this study, the Literature

Review.

1.3 Ideology

In Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran and Woolacott (1982:10) ideology is defined as representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals with real conditions of their existence. Ideology is the way the symbolic form or text intersects with relations of power (Gurevitch et al, 1982:10). In addition to that, Minar (1961:318) further defines ideology as a commitment or an attachment and strong belief in something due to the value attached to it. According to Minar (1961:318), ideology "constitutes of a particular effective tool dealing with phenomena and relationships at certain levels of political behaviour that are important […]". Even though ideology is sometimes perceived as vague, it stands as a political system where an institution rests including "the mood and mode in which the governmental services are accepted or claimed" (Minar, 1961:318). Gurevitch et al (1982:10) conclude that the mass media products, through careful observation, include ideology and representation. In relation to that, Kuhar (2006:125) notes an ideology not only involves the issue of representation of social reality, but it also (or primarily) constructs identities particularly collective identities that of citizens in a specific nation.

Therefore, relative to that the *City Press* positioned itself as an anti-apartheid newspaper, referring to itself as the "People's Paper" and "Distinctly African" meaning that the newspaper had positioned itself in an ideology of resistance. Ideology may influence the way social attitudes are constructed and expressed, meaning that the way the *City Press* newspaper articulates and projects itself to the society is the way the newspaper believes and perceives itself.

This next discussion provides the historical background of the *City Press* as the case study chosen for this present research.

1.4 Preliminary study – the launch of the *City Press*

It is necessary to include a discussion on the historical context and background of the newspaper of interest in this study, the *City Press*, in order to illuminate the rationale behind this chosen case study. Also, the researcher is of the view that an

understanding of the historical context of the *City Press* enables a necessary appreciation and foregrounds the premise of this study.

1.3.1 The *City Press*

Kalane (2018:205) notes that by design, newspapers are "sharper, more colourful, more efficient, more immediate, more probing, more reaching and above all, braver and the *City Press* is in that league". While this is a pertinent observation made by Kalane, this statement is not used in this study to compare the print media which is the focus of this study to other forms of communication. It is for this reason that the print media, and in particular, the *City Press*, were selected as the core focus area of this study. Importantly, the researcher's interest in the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery was threefold.

Firstly, when it comes to the reporting of *politics* in South Africa, the *City Press* has kept up with current times and context, making it one of the more relevant and reliable weekly newspapers (Hartley, 2013:1). Hartley (ibid) further notes that the *City Press* comments and strong political voice on significant issues within the media terrain that effect the country's politics, have made it 'reliable' and the most influential newspaper in South Africa. Additionally, the newspaper's newsworthiness and coverage of politics "without fear or favour", have earned its credibility since it was first published at the height of apartheid in 1982 (Whitehead, 2007:6). Relatedly, Kalane (2018:51) adds that the newspaper's adoption of a firm political stance on matters affecting the downtrodden has resulted in its enjoying a wider and diverse reach. The newspaper's coverage spreads across all nine provinces of South Africa, including neighboring countries such as Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland (MDDA, 2009:48). Furthermore, the newspaper's historical and creative political role "appeal[s] to decision makers" that have helped shape cultural, political, economic and social paradigms in South Africa (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2007:3).

Secondly, the *City Press* commitment to *development* is in alignment to the significant impetus of this investigation (*City Press*, 2007:8). This commitment is articulated in the Charter by *Nasionale Pers* (*City Press*, 2007:8) which states that "The People's Paper", the *City Press* "endeavour[s] to further the […] development of a society in

which all citizens enjoy full participation". This is while at the same time, "the standard of good journalism will apply" (*City Press*, 2007:8).

Thirdly, when it comes to the fundamental requisite on the role of the media, being a *watchdog* is one area from which the publication derives its legitimacy (Wasserman et al, 2018a:154; Wasserman & De Beer. 2005:194). The *City Press* has played a significant role in championing this requisite role (Skjerdal, 2001:41). De Waal (2012:3) observes that "in its journalistic tradition", the *City Press* as one of the "major urban newspapers", has consistently played a watchdog role and kept important issues such as housing delivery on the government's agenda and delivery in check.

Right from the beginning, when the *City Press* newspaper was launched in 1982, it was met with high expectations that it would address the poor people's issues and, thus, recognised by Mlambo-Ngcuka (2007:3) as "the beacon of hope". The *City Press* was launched in March 1982 at the height of the apartheid regime when the political voice of the people of South Africa needed to be heard in order for them to play a role against the apartheid struggle and subsequently post-1994 (Kalane, 2018:44). First, it was known as the *Golden City Press* "borrowed from the moniker of the *City of Gold* or *Egoli"* (Kalane, 2018:44). However, later, the word '*Golden'* was dropped (Kalane, 2018:28). The *City Press* was quickly embraced by the likes of Archbishop Desmond Tutu who had "hope[d] […] the newspaper would interpret reality as blacks know it and express their aspirations" (Sesanti, 2015:125). Importantly, as a newspaper targeted at a black audience, "it was also hoped that opinion pieces by the *City Press* individual journalists would shed light [from] their stance […] on the issues […]", particularly those affecting South African citizens (Sesanti, 2015:125). Therefore, this is also the rationale behind exploring the use of hard news by the *City Press* in this study – because hard news carries public affair thus contributing to the to the process to bolster democracy. Importantly, some reasons for choosing hard news for this study are articulated by Motsaathebe (2020:25) where he explains the news values behind the selection of news stories to make them relevant to audiences receiving them. Firstly, what happens in the vicinity that is *nearness or proximity*, the way the news that is providing pertinent information needed by the majority where the audience can identify with the stories as they happen in their environment (Motsaathebe, 2020:25). Secondly, it is *timeliness*, that is, fresh events and issues being reported as well as

unusualness, that is, events or issues that do not always happen at all are some of news values that attract audience and make news more appealing to the audience. Lastly, *prominence*, that is, high-profile people and celebrities is what determine or makes news. Therefore, the *City Press* news that carries local public stories is more relatable to local people than a newspaper with international news. According to Kalane (2018:111) hard news is known as being highly perishable commodity, that begins as something of a "humdinger" then a story through the journalists works eventually becomes a newspaper. Likewise. the *City Press* editorials were chosen because these articulate exactly the stance and the opinions of the *City Press* newspaper on the subject pursued. The *City Press* journalists' opinion pieces on the other hand were chosen as the focus of investigation because they offer the authors' views on the topic which do not claim to be objective (Mulder, Inel Blendle & Tintarev, 2021:3). According to Mulder et al (2021:3) opinion pieces are strongly shaped by journalistic values (related to those mentioned above) and define how an article should be structured.

Sibiya (1992:1) has noted that the *City Press* newspaper identified itself as the "voice of the voiceless masses" in the country. Tsedu (2007:4) notes that the newspaper consciously played a role in the struggle against apartheid. The *City Press* was among the dominant newspapers of that era (De Beer, 2007:91; Fourie, 2003:66).

Initially the white publisher and owner of the *City Press*, Jim Bailey, ventured into publishing for blacks and co-owned it with the South African Associated Newspapers (SAAN) (Whitehead, 2007:6). In 1984, Bailey sold both the *City Press* newspaper and *Drum* magazine to *Nasionale Pers*, also known as *Naspers* (Whitehead, 2007:6). Naspers, founded in 1915 in Cape Town, primarily, and, specifically, catered for the Afrikaans community (Fourie, 2003:66). Later, when *Naspers* drifted away from apartheid politics and the National Party (NP), its interests extended to, and included both rural and suburban newspapers across South Africa (Kalane, 2018:66; Fourie, 2003:66). During the apartheid era, the South African media *ownership* was known for being "white-owned" despite being "aimed at black readers" (Mabote, 1996:319). Then post-democracy, perceptions abounded that the media industry had reached a "cross-roads", resulting in blacks buying into the white media (Mabote, 1996:319).

By 2015, “the biggest print media company by market size”, the Media24, a subsidiary that controls magazines and newspapers, including the *City Press*, of *Naspers* in Southern Africa, transformed from “an apartheid supporting newspaper Group to a South African multinational across the globe” (Rumney, 2015:67). This arm of the print media, according to Rumney (2015:67), “remains in the old paradigm of the liberal watchdog media”. In that respect, the *City Press* can be viewed among the mainstream media that over the years, pre and post-apartheid, as having played a robust and pivotal role of a watchdog that is assumed to be critical as well as the institutional function in democracy (Malila, Oelofsen, Garman & Wasserman, 2013:417; Skerjal, 2001:51).

Significantly, *Naspers* gave the *City Press* editorial freedom even to support political parties other than those traditionally supported by newspapers in the Naspers Group (De Beer, 2007:314). According to Kalane (2018:3), the *City Press* was already well-known for being “ferociously anti-apartheid and fiercely subversive in its editorial tone”. In 2004, veteran journalist, Mathatha Tsedu, joined the *City Press* as its editor (Motloung, 2007:1). Tsedu’s arrival at the *City Press*, which happens to fall within the period of investigation of this research, marked the newspaper’s transition from “The People’ Paper” to “Distinctly African” (*City Press*, 2007:9).

According to Tsedu (Sesanti, 2015:4; 2012:59; Gongo, 2007:14), “Distinctly African” meant that the paper not only changed the logo but its representation in both the political and social sphere of the African continent as a whole. The *City Press* became a world-class newspaper, attracting the “new white readership base” in a manner that it would become more inclusive of the rest of African continent (Kalane, 2018:205). From 2009 to 2016 a period that partly also falls under the period of investigation, Ferial Haffajee became the first black female editor of the *City Press* (Aref, 2016:1). What stood out in the *City Press editorship* and the entire media spectrum was the tenacity of the newspaper’s commitment to service (housing) delivery, for example, the *Andries Tatane’s Project*[1] discussed in the Literature Review and Findings and

[1] The Tatane Project named “in memory of the community activist, Andries Tatane whose death was captured on national television as he was shot by police during service delivery in Figsburg, Free State on April 11 [2011]” (*City Press* commentary, 2011:6). This project was initiated and implemented by the

Discussion, Chapters 2 and 5 of this study. This Project demonstrates the commitment of the *City Press* to issues of national development in South Africa. The evolution of the *City Press* engendered interest in and motivation for this research.

The next focus is the motivation for the research period 2005 to 2015.

1.3.2 The period 2005 to 2015

Relative to the country's milestones, the period 2005 to 2015 marked the second decade since the onset of South Africa's Constitutional Democracy. For Miraftab (2003:226) the period reflected an aspect of "shifting gears". Dubbed as a time "beyond the perils" of the first decade of democracy, this period was entered into with the hope that issues of housing delivery especially would be resolved (Miraftab, 2003:226). With this in mind, this study investigated the challenges or strides made in respect to housing delivery in the country between 2005 and 2015 through the lens of the *City Press* newspaper.

The years 2005 to 2015 were perceived as pertinent based on perspectives about the country's progress since the ushering in of democracy in 1994, especially on issues that involved national development relating to service delivery, and the provision of housing in post-apartheid South Africa (Miraftab, 2003:226). This is because since South Africa gained independence in 1994, all the ruling party manifestos (under the post-apartheid presidents, Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma), were consistent when it came to the promise of sustainable housing delivery for the poor and historically marginalised (Umrabulo, 2018:1; Zuma, 2009; Mbeki, 2004;1999; Mandela,1994). These promises were cross-cutting from during Mandela's tenure from 1993 to 1999, Mbeki's era from 1999-2008 and Zuma's from 2009-2018 (Umrabulo, 2018:1).

This next discussion looks at the problem statement and focus of this study.

City Press journalists between 2010 and 2015 (Ledwaba & Jika, 2011:6).

1.4 Problem statement and focus

This study sought to investigate the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. The focus was on a review of the *City Press* editorials, the *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* news reports that related specifically to citizen action on housing delivery. This study therefore investigated the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery. This is pursued against the backdrop that the media needs to identify trends between the increasing intensity of relations between public authorities (government) and the poor citizens, with particular reference to the provision of public services, specifically housing delivery (Pestoff, 2009:218-219). Curran's (2010:5) observation that the media reporting should provide a "mediatory role" that stabilises forms of associations and politics and reinforces citizen action through writing and printing information was taken into consideration in the pursuit of this study.

1.5 The objectives of the study

This study aimed to investigate the representation of citizen action on housing delivery by the *City Press* in South Africa from 2005 to 2015. This sought to understand how the *City Press* pursued the representation of citizen action of housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015 since this is an important aspect at the core of the country's development in its democracy. To accomplish this, the study aimed to:

1. investigate how the *City Press* represented citizen action on housing delivery;
2. examine how the *City Press* reported on how the local government in South Africa performed in their responsibility to implement housing delivery to South African communities; and
3. investigate the *City Press* representation of the role played by contractors or developers and whether they have enabled or undermined the delivery of quality and sustainable housing in the country.

1.6 Research question

The main research question of this study was: How did the *City Press* represent citizen action on housing delivery for national development in South Africa between the years 2005 and 2015?

In order to clarify this question and achieve its aims, the following research sub-questions were formulated:

1. What was the *City Press* own position with regard to citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa?
2. In what ways did the local government enhance or hinder citizen action on housing delivery in communities as represented by the *City Press* during the period 2005 to 2015?
3. How were the contributions of contractors' or developers' workmanship on citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa represented by the *City Press*?

1.7 Theoretical points of departure

This study employed **development communication** theory which is discussed and elucidated in detail in Chapter 3.

1.8 Research design and methodology

The study employed the case study as its research design, and the qualitative research methodology as its research methodology, both of which are discussed in detail in Chapter 4 of this study.

1.9 The purpose of the study

This study is aimed at making an impact and contributing to an understanding of the role played by the media in (national) development and its relationship to the development of a nascent democracy in the context of a free press. The assumption is that the results of this study can help to further engender relationships between government and communities and in effect offer ways that the government can galvanise its responsibilities to engage with communities. Furthermore, the findings of this study will be disseminated to support, facilitate and strengthen citizen action and housing delivery more positively and to minimize separation between the government and citizens.

1.10 Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of this study will contribute to the benefit of the South African society and the rest of the African continent regarding the critical role of the

media, particularly on representation of citizen action. There is a significant demand on the media to be more vocal and to hold the government accountable. At the same time the media has an obligation to inform and educate the citizens of its country. Importantly, the media stands to be the voice of the voiceless. Therefore, it is hoped the outcomes of this study, will uncover critical elements on how the media, specifically the *City Press*, represented citizen action on housing delivery. Thus, a new way of covering stories on the role played by citizens in consolidating their democracy through national development may be revealed and learnt from this research.

1.11 Limitations of the study

Lessons drawn from this study can be applied to other similar studies or cases. However, notions that are specific to the *City Press* organisation are neither applicable nor can they be applied to other news agencies or outlets.

1.12 Chapter outline

Chapter 1 is the *introductory chapter* of this thesis and outlines the background and the historical impetus of the *City Press*. The chapter further provides the rationale for the period under examination 2005 to 2015 as well as providing context on the research process of this study.

Chapter 2 of this thesis is devoted to *the literature review of this study*. The literature review concentrates on and defines pertinent concepts, including representation, in general and representation of the media, in particular. Additionally, this literature reviews the notion of the media (news) landscape within the context of African and Western paradigms.

Chapter 3 examines the *theoretical framework* which addresses the **development communication theory**.

Chapter 4 focuses on the research design and research methodology utilised for this study.

Chapter 5 provides the *findings* of this study.

Chapter 6 provides the *analysis of the findings* employing the theoretical framework.

Chapter 7 focuses on the *recommendations and conclusion* of this research.

1.13 Summary: Chapter 1

This chapter introduced and gave the background to this study. It then outlined the rationale of this study. The background for the *City Press* newspaper was provided as well as the justification for the years 2005 to 2015.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Hart (1998:8-9) defines a literature review as an attempt to “refigure and/or re-specify” an identified problem. Mouton (2001:86) defines a literature review as “a review of accumulated scholarship or available body of existing knowledge”. A literature review enables a researcher to investigate how other researchers have examined the research problem being pursued in a specific study as well as learning what these scholars “found empirically”, “theorised”, and how they “conceptualised” issues relevant to their similar studies (Mouton, 2001:86).

Essentially, any significant research contains a review of literature that defines key concepts as well as establishing “theoretical roots” and creating “links between elements of a study” (Kumar, 2005:31). This is done so that the author can contextualise findings without duplicating what is already written or known (ibid). Hart (1998:9) notes that a literature review is a strategy that gives a clear view to distant issues such as concepts and phenomena that are “abstract”. This means that a literature review provides clarity on conceptual issues that researchers had not taken note of before as well as illuminating the objectives of the research. Another key element of a literature review is to integrate ideas, experiences and theories of other scholars to form a synthesis of new insights (Hart, 1998:9). Therefore, in this chapter, elements are drawn from various sources, and a critical understanding of the existing literature is demonstrated in order to produce commanding research which provides a strong “benchmarking comparison” to existing and future studies (Creswell, 2009:25).

The purpose of this study is to investigate the representation of citizen action by the *City Press* with specific reference to housing delivery in South Africa between the years 2005 and 2015. Many scholars, including Hall (2013; 2009; 2003; 1998; 1997; 1985), Stewart (2008), Dwight and Hébert (2006), Frome (2006), Kuhar (2006) and Weedon, Tolson and Mort (1992), have conducted extensive research on the media representation, especially in relation to gender – specifically men gazing at women and vice-versa – gender stereotypes, social class, sexuality and age, minority groups, ethnic groups, disability, sexism and objectification. A wide range of research has also

been conducted on citizen action from a diverse spectrum of perspectives, including its connection to policy reforms; climate change; gender issues; HIV/AIDS; social problems, including violence against women; gay, lesbian and straight reproduction in the context of HIV/AIDS; and social security programmes (Benequista & Gaventa, 2012:5; Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1; Mathekga & Buccus, 2007:11-12; Young & McComas, 2006:628; Friedman, 2006:12; Friedman & Mottiar, 2004:12).

For the purpose of this research an examination of the media representation of 'citizen action' specifically related to housing delivery in South Africa was needed. In that respect, concepts related to 'representation', 'democracy', 'development' and 'citizen action', all within the context of the media or the press, were of particular significance for this study. Additionally, within the frame of this literature review, the role of the media was examined from a developing country perspective. Accordingly, this chapter is structured in a manner that examines these concepts in the following way: The first section of this chapter reviews the literature on South Africa's transition to democracy with transformation and development as focal points. This is because the research period of this study, namely 2005 – 2015, marked the second decade of South Africa's democracy. The second section explores the concept of citizen action in its various forms, particularly within the contexts of national development as well as framing citizen action in service delivery and housing delivery. Finally, this chapter examines democracy, development and citizen action against the backdrop of the role of the media. In this respect the role of the media is framed through the lens of the media representation. Hence, the concept of the media representation is a central object of viewing democracy and citizen action in this study.

In an attempt to understand the dynamics of democracy, development and citizen action in the country, this section begins with a discussion on South Africa's transition to democracy. Secondly, since South Africa's development is at the core of this research, relevant macro-economic policies that shape or have shaped South Africa's economic and social development are cross-examined to understand their impact on service delivery. While these policies are often viewed to be developmental in nature, it is important to examine whether they are developmental and people-centred and whether their positioning is suitable for the context of this nascent democracy. Thirdly and finally, the section concludes by discussing and reflecting on the successes and

failures of development agendas within the context of a democratic South Africa and within the period under investigation, namely 2005 to 2015. However, before discussing South Africa's transition to democracy, democracy is defined.

2.2.1 Defining democracy

Providing a single definition of the word 'democracy' is no easy task. Yet, various academics, scholars and theorists, including Keane (2013:90), Wasserman (2011:66), Hyden and Okigbo (2002:31), Street (2001:290), Zaffiro (2001:100-103), Dahlgren (2002:5), Kasoma (2000:83), Ogundimu (2002:209), Curran and Gurevitch (1991:82) and Keane (1991:169), have explored a plethora of approaches to explicate this form of politics known as democracy, and therefore have offered various explanations. Kasoma (2000:83) defines democracy as more or less "full participation of the citizens practicing their own governance […] that entails respect for the rule of the law" and involves a fully "accountable government". In line with Kasoma's definition, Opuamie-Ngoa (2010:132) observes that the hallmark of democracy is "the rule of the people by the people for the people". Opuamie-Ngoa (2010:132) further explains that the term 'democracy' is derived from the Greek words such as *demos*, which means 'people' and *kratos*, which means 'power'. Similarly, the Institute for Democratic Alternatives in South Africa (Idasa) (2009:1) defines democracy as simply "power to the people". The phrase "Power to the people" would become a mantra that was used during the days of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa, and the power of the chant drove apartheid to its demise (Idasa, 2009:1). This therefore explains the tenets of democracy that Edigheji (2005:3) identifies as involving accountability, transparency, political intolerance, regular free and fair elections, human rights, a multi-party system, the bill of rights and the rule of law.

The discussion on South Africa's transition to democracy is discussed next.

2.2.2 South Africa to democracy

As the African National Congress (ANC)-led government was ushered into a constitutional democracy following decades of colonialism and apartheid ideologies, it faced the monumental task of dismantling an array of beleaguered apartheid institutions (Heintz, 2003:1). A new environment, which included a new constitution, legalities and policies, was needed in order for these new institutions to function

optimally (ibid*)*. Importantly, the country had pressing needs to shift apartheid economic policies as it was faced with “staggering inequalities, widespread poverty, unequal access to social services, and an [unequal] economy” (ibid). Mathe (2002:16) observes that in any society, the rendering of social services is more than just the delivery of social security but includes a comprehensive system encompassing the provision of people’s basic needs, catering for the poor and vulnerable as well as providing a system for the development of different kinds of assets, for example, housing. Mathe (ibid) further notes that in any democracy, such services are necessary for the long-term sustainability of livelihoods in underprivileged communities.

According to Madlingozi (2007:78), Friedman (2006:1) and Mathe (2002:52), South Africa's transition period from apartheid rule to democracy between 1990 and 1994 was declared a miracle. As a result, the country became known as the ‘rainbow nation’ for its assimilation of diversity that imbued most South Africans (Botberg, 2014:17; Whitehead & Durrheim, 2016:1). According to Friedman (2006:1), following the declaration of the new dispensation in 1994, the nation has fashioned one of the most democratic and progressive constitutions in the world. This Constitution contains a supreme Bill of Rights which entrenches an impressive list of first-, second-, and third-generation rights (Madlingozi, 2007:78; Ballard, 2005:81). For Madlingozi (2007:78), given the tumultuous political history – with a volatile past – the transition saw “democratic institutions” being consolidated, including a robust and independent Constitutional Court, a much more vibrant media as well as social movements.

According to Ballard, Habib, Valodia and Zuem (2006:16), the archetypal social movements played a pivotal role in the precipitation and the defining terms of the country’s transition into democracy. Two of the most prominent social movement organisations that arose prior to democracy were the National Forum (NF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) (Thomas, 2010:211; Ballard, 2005:80; Kessel, 2001:32). The NF’s position was set against the backdrop of “black working class leading the force in the struggle against capitalism and race domination” (Thomas, 2010:211). Led largely by black students, the NF focused on the reinforcement of the black consciousness ideology in the country (Thomas, 2010:211). Despite the NF’s impact, the sturdiest, most commanding and most prominent pressure of political and

social defiance against the apartheid system came from the United Democratic Front (UDF) organisation (ibid).

In 1983, the UDF an active and effective national anti-apartheid movement (organisation) emerged as the dominant voice in the fight for democracy (Madlingozi, 2007:82; Ballard et al, 2006:14). With a coalition of over 600 affiliates – including civic associations, student and youth congresses, women's organisations, trade unions, church societies and a mass of struggle community organisations under its umbrella – the UDF thrust the country into a narrative of political climax (Madlingozi*,* 2007:82; Ballard et al, 2006:16; Ballard, 2005:80; Kessel, 2001:33*).* In 1987 the UDF adopted the Freedom Charter document as part of its guiding policy document, thereby aligning itself directly with the banned ANC. The UDF "focused on protests against apartheid […] popularising the programme and leadership of the ANC […] and developing […] a radical agenda for social change" (Kessel, 2001:32). As a forerunner of social protest at the time, the UDF began to attract trade unions' international community support. This spelt disruption for the country's economic, political and social status quo (Madlingozi, 2007:82; Kessel, 2001:35). As Madlingozi (2007:83) notes, the essence of the UDF struggles had to do with grassroots communities across race, class, religion or creed that were confronted with challenges of apartheid. While the UDF was instrumental in the downfall of the apartheid system, and the trajectory towards democracy, its influence soon began to wane, and the movement was officially dissolved in August 1991 (Kessel, 2001:50). The dissolution of the UDF led to the emergence of a range of non-union organisations, including the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO), the Women National Congress (WNC), the National Youth Development Fund (NYDF) and the tripartite alliance comprising the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) (Ballard, 2005:81). Through mass civic action and "mobilisation of support for a peaceful transition into democratic South Africa", these and other social movements played a significant role in the country's transition to democracy, thus, opening for development agenda for the people. These are discussed next (Kessel, 2001:32).

2.2.3 South Africa's development agenda

It has been argued that the state's policy apparatus in the post-apartheid era is perceived to have pursued a "developmental state" status (Gumede, 2010:1). In this regard, Gumede (2013a:3; 2010:1-2; 2008:9) describes a developmental state as "one that is active in pursuing its agenda [by] working with social partners and has the capacity and is appropriately organised for its predetermined developmental objectives". Edigheji (2005:5) notes that, principally, a democratic developmental state embodies the following four doctrines: electoral democracy, popular citizen participation in the development, governance processes and pursuing a trajectory of economic growth by the state. Additionally, Edigheji (2005:5) points out that a "developmental state" is necessary for both economic prosperity and socio-political "transformation". Similarly, for Gumede (2013a:3), a "developmental state" recurrently reinforces its human capacity and invests in social policies and programmes.

It is against these notions that the South African ANC-led government – post-liberation and right at the onset of its nation (re)building – has been observed as determining the path to becoming an inclusive, dynamic, participatory and developmental state (Gumede, 2013a:3). The assumption is that owing to the historical imperatives of apartheid, the ANC-led government, through a people-centred approach, had to align the people with the newly established mainstream economy (Gumede, 2013a:3). However, as Gumede (2013a:3) argues, given the developmental challenges confronting South Africa, it is yet to be viewed as a fully-fledged developmental state. Rather, it has been argued that South Africa is a "developmental state in the making" (Gumede, 2013a:3). Despite this, Gumede (2010:4) observes that at the helm of the ANC-led government, South Africa has gone through deliberate socio-economic policy changes in pursuit of the state's developmental goals. Despite this, Gumede (2010:1) further argues that South Africa is still riddled with socio-economic inequalities accompanied by a plethora of challenges as a result of three centuries of colonialism and almost four decades of apartheid legacy. Despite the country's making concerted efforts and strides economically, it has been argued that its socio-economic policies need to be tested against their developmental practices (Bailey, 2017:1; Gumede, 2010:1).

In order to address these challenges, several macro-economic policies or political economy interventions have been implemented and evolved in the country over time since 1994 (Gumede, 2013:2). These policy interventions include the Reconstruction Development Programme (RDP), Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA), the New Growth Path (NGP) and the National Development Plan (NDP) which were promoted as empowering and enabling the poor to improve their own livelihoods and living standards (Gumede, 2013:2). Within these macro-economic policies, only the RDP specifically overtly articulated its aim of addressing service delivery while the other three policies indirectly addressed such issues through targeting unemployment and poverty (Gumede, 2017:6; RDP White Paper, 2004).

Potentially there are some impressive achievements on the national development path. Rotberg (2014:9), Mc Lennan (2007:16) and Lodge (2002:57) argue that within a short space of time – specifically on delivery of social services, including housing, clean water, electrification, land reform, primary health care, and public works – demonstrable progress was evident. These scholars (ibid) concede that since 1994, the South African government has made some remarkable strides. Heintz (2003:5&6) also notes some significant gains in terms of "access to basic services and infrastructure – piped water, community taps, electrical service, and housing", as well as free public treatment for HIV/AIDS. On the other hand, while there has been some impressive economic growth in South Africa and across the rest of sub-Saharan Africa in the past ten years, some scholars lament that South Africa still lags behind on its promises for a better life for all (Rotberg, 2014:9; NDP 2030, 2012:216). According to Thomas (2010:237), Gumede (2015:1) and McLennan (2007:5), generally, parts of the population in the Global South still live in severe and abject poverty, including in South Africa. According to Madlingozi (2007:78), as far as development is concerned, "not much has changed for […] half the population is living below the poverty line and millions remain landless and ravaged by HIV/AIDS". In relation to this, it has been argued that while some economic growth has been achieved, growing levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment continue to characterise South African society (Ballard 2005: 81-83). In line with the foregoing observation, Gumede (2013a:1) points out that "development in South Africa still remains shallow", thus making development

a “pipe-dream”. This, Gumede (ibid) further argues, is due to inappropriate policies and poorly sequenced reforms that limited pace since 1994.

Whether the current policy, the NDP, can initiate a meaningful and economically sound environment for attaining national development goals remains to be seen (Nattrass, 2014:92). The rest of the policies since the advent of democracy seem to be confronted by a myriad of challenges. The macro-economic policies have not really made a significant impact on economic development or, consequently, to national development and service delivery (Ndhambi, 2015:76&77; Meyer, 2014:15). These neo-liberal macro-economic policies lacked economic freedom owing to pressures that have weakened the state economy, including globalisation, redistribution and development, international regulations and economic exchange rates (Duncan, 2016:30; Bond, 2000:51). Some opponents lament economic challenges that harshly impact on national priorities, thus hampering the state’s ability to remain sustainable (Nattrass, 2014:124). Consequently, these challenges impacted negatively on achieving national development objectives, including housing delivery, thus increasing the levels of inequality that were meant to be redressed in the first place (Nattrass, 2014:124).

These challenges of development have led to growing dissatisfaction with the lack of service delivery, mounting socio-economic challenges and continued disillusionment with the post-apartheid democracy. In particular, service delivery, or a lack thereof, became the “rallying point for protests” in the country (Nattrass, 2014:124). In that regard, Mc Lennan (2007:6) contends that improving service delivery “requires a new praxis, a more flexible approach, which builds on existing processes”, this including citizens’ taking more proactive action.

Accordingly, citizen action is discussed next.

2.3 Citizen action and democracy

Post-apartheid presidents of South Africa, including Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki and Jacob Zuma, were consistent in their interpretation of some of the goals cited in the ANC’s document, the *Freedom Charter,* drafted in Kliptown, Johannesburg in 1955 (Suttener, 2015:2). One of the goals framed in the *Freedom Charter* that is pertinent

to this study is the promise that, once the democratic government was installed, “there shall be houses, security and comfort [for all]” (Gumede, 2013a:2). The clause further emphasised that “all people shall have the right to choose where they want to be decently housed” and there would be freedom of movement and an end to apartheid’s denial of adequate housing to black people (Gumede, 2013a:2; Thomas, 2010:222; ANC Charter, 1955). As mentioned previously, South Africa’s unique history, pre- and post-apartheid, has always thrust the people into action mode in order to overcome the imbalances of inequality and poverty left by a legacy of apartheid (Madlingozi, 2007:78).

It is against this context that the following discussion on citizen action in relation to housing delivery is presented. This section begins by defining and explaining the idea of ‘citizen action’ and explores the concept in relation to democracy.

2.3.1 Defining citizen action

This section begins by making a distinction between ‘citizenship’, ‘citizen’, and “citizen action”. Benequista and Gaventa (2011:2-4) and Cornwall and Gaventa, (2001a:6; 2001b:32) define ‘citizenship’ as relating to any attempts by citizens to bring about change, to challenge exclusionary practices within society as well as being responsive to the possibility of democratic pluralism. In other words, ‘citizenship’ refers to a ‘legal equality’ and it involves commitment to processes such as ‘nation-building’, ‘social cohesion’ and ‘democratisation’ of a society (Benequista & Gaventa, 2011:2-4; Cornwall & Gaventa, 2001b:32-33). Günel and Pehlivan (2016:53) refer to the concept ‘citizenship’ as being ‘moral’ and link it to a ‘national identity’ with other individuals who serve the ‘national interest’. In comparison, the term ‘citizen’ is defined as a person who has rights and is legally equal to others, not merely as a ‘holder of rights’, but as a citizen who takes action to improve things in society (Benequista & Gaventa, 2011:4). Benequista and Gaventa (2011:4) emphasise that the concept also refers to anyone who has an idea of their own “home-land”.

Citizen action on the other hand, is made up of two words, namely ‘citizen’ and ‘action’. The word ‘citizen’ is explained above and ‘action’, according to Benequista and Gaventa (2011:3), means to act, to mobilise others, to advocate for a specific matter, to protest against, in order to bring new civic practices for social change, depending

on a specific critical issue/s. Both in seminal and social terms, ‘action’ is associated with ‘movement’ and in the context of this study, it can be deduced that it explicitly denotes “organised citizen/s who creatively ‘initiate’ changes” (Benequista & Gaventa, 2011:3). Further, ‘action’ means to ‘struggle’ – citizens go through experience that during the process of self-empowerment, which is a precondition for any nascent democratic society such as South Africa (Lemanski, 2008:399 & 404). For Gaventa and McGee (2010:1), this is especially true; if citizens wish to strengthen their own ‘community voice’ collectively, they take action to deter minority elites from discrimination, whether politically, socially and economically. Therefore, ‘citizen action’ can be defined as collective action by citizens (Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1). This is because in citizen action, citizens’ voices (their perspectives) must be seen, heard and understood by those in power (Yap, 2017:119; Benequista & Gaventa, 2011:3). Gaventa and McGee (2010:1) define citizen action as a process that is established within tenets of persistent citizen activism. Activism means that the process is reflected in the way citizens demonstrate their willingness to oppose deeply entrenched attitudes and actions by the government that potentially marginalise and divide the people according to social and economic classes (Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1). For Pantazioudou (2013:755), citizen action denotes “citizen-led”, “anti-hierarchical”, “horizontal network” by citizens, identified as “citizen-activism” that fights issues against and challenges of “economic crises”. Yap (2017:11) notes that the concept is coined from the backdrop of civil society where different “grass-roots activists” and “socialists” use the term variously, based on the context.

However, the essence of citizen action is that it inspires collective community action, for instance, during voting, campaigning and raising public awareness and group actions such as protests (Cornwall, Robins & Von Lieres, 2015:13; Berkhout & Jansen, 2012:156; Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1-2; Cornwall & Gaventa, 2001a:21-22; Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999:11). A good example is citizens who take action to protest or challenge injustices (unfairness) in order to improve their lives as individuals or as a collective (Gaventa & McGee, 2010:1). According to Jolobe (2014:2), a protest is an approach the fundamental purpose of which is to publicly express a discontent. This is common in both democracies or under authoritarian regimes to retaliate against perceived unfair situations so as to influence or enact a shift in state policies or policy change. Therefore, it can be deduced that in citizen action, citizens learn skills,

including advocating for effective policy influence and for cooperation in governance, in the process of development of public policy, programming and ways of seeking accountability that are essential for the realisation of democracy (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999:11).

Next, the history of citizen action in South Africa is discussed.

2.3.2 The history of citizen action in South Africa

Friedman and Mottiar (2004:26) note that nowadays what South Africa is observing and experiencing through the wave of protests is the representation of the South African history of citizen action dating as far back as the 1970s and 1980s. To emphasise this, noting the black people's historic fight for an end of minority rule, Friedman (2006:1) observes that

> the value of channels to enable citizens' [action] […] with government has been a canon of governance thinking in the new democracy for it has strong roots in the fight against apartheid. In their fight against apartheid's exclusion of the majority from decision-making, activists frequently demanded people's power.

Friedman's observation emphasises strong notions about the genesis of citizen action that Oliver and Oliver (2017:1) note as having roots way back since colonialism, even before the days of fighting apartheid in the days of migrations and invasions by black people. Duncan (2016:27) argues that civil society's long history of citizen action in South Africa emerged with mass mobilisation, actions and protests around issues of service delivery. Related to this, Friedman (2006:1) refers to mass mobilisation as a successful tool in the fight against the apartheid regime and an instrument for "winning [democratic] change" in South Africa.

Before the end of apartheid, citizen action in South Africa that includes protests, *toy-toying*, riots, strike actions, boycotts and arson, was labelled as terrorism by the Nationalist Party (NP) regime (Africa, 2015:127; Jolobe, 2014:2). Despite the banning of these forms of citizen action by the apartheid government, Friedman (2006:1) notes that South Africans refused to remain voiceless. South Africans continued to take to the streets to express their concerns and call for transformation, despite the often severe consequences that followed (Friedman, 2006:1). This commitment to

demanding participation in decision-making during the apartheid era had a significant influence on the popular notion that future policies needed to be negotiated with a range of social interests as solutions could never be imposed unilaterally. Thus, Friedman (2006:1) observes that the anti-apartheid 'struggle' informed the new government of the significance of incorporating both "grassroots citizens and affluent interests [alike] in decision-making". Therefore, the collective civil society had a role to play in the democratic South Africa. It is in that context that the civil society and civic action post-1994 are discussed next.

2.3.3 Civil society and civic action post 1994

On 27 April 1994, the dawn of a ground-breaking democracy brought a new chapter in the history of South Africa, fulfilling the dream of a legion of anti-apartheid movements and activists (Ballard et al, 2006:1). Following the 1994 election, a wave of euphoria gripped the country and the belief that the struggle against injustices and inequalities was over pervaded (Ballard et al, 2006:1). In that respect, "state/civil society engagements came to be largely defined by collaborative relations", thus quelling any perceptions of ongoing "social struggles" (Ballard et al, 2006:1; Ballard, 2005:82). To reinforce such collaboration and enable a positive political and fiscal environment, the Government of National Unity (GNU) facilitated a supportive relationship between the state and civic organisations (Ballard et al, 2006:1; Heintz, 2003:1). However, new social struggles emerged sooner than anticipated and "exploded in the immediate aftermath of the first general elections" due to dissatisfaction with issues directed at government policies, including the demarcation of places as well as crime (Ballard, 2006:1). Ballard et al (2006:2) contend that such challenges can be traced back to as early as Nelson Mandela's time, intensifying during Mbeki's era and eventually becoming perpetual during Zuma's period of administration. Most concerns of civil society came about because of the government's failure to meet basic needs and address socio-economic rights (Ballard et al, 2006:2).

To address some of these concerns, and also to represent the needs and voices of the disenfranchised masses, a range of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) were established as the core of civil society (Ballard et al, 2006:2). Benequista and Gaventa (2012:7) point out that in an emerging democracy such as South Africa, citizen action often emerges as a means to struggle

and draw attention to growing frustrations and instability. Ballard et al (2006:2) and Ballard (2005:78) identify three types of struggles that prompted civic and/or citizen action by civil society in South Africa in the early years of democracy. These were, firstly, those directed against government economic policies; secondly, failure to meet socio-economic rights, including basic needs such as housing. Later there was the *Abahlali Basemjondolo*[2] shack dwellers' movement based in provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape, struggles for housing, land, basic services and "the dignity of the poor" (Gibson, 2008:683). *Abahlali Basemjondolo* is one example of civil society organisations' and new social movements' struggling for the realisation of basic needs in the country. Thirdly, civic or citizen action emerged in reaction to the local enforcement of government policies. This includes the Anti-Evictions Campaign[3] (AEC) formed in 2000, an umbrella movement that consists of various community organisations from poor and marginalised areas around Cape Town. The AEC is where people share experiences of threats of evictions and dissatisfaction with local political representation that are all have reconstituted the struggles of civil society. The Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee[4] (SECC), established in 2000 and that campaigned for the provision of affordable or free electricity to the poor residents of Soweto township is another example of movements advocating and demonstrating against struggles around a lack of or the slow pace of service delivery (Duncan, 2016:15; Ngwane & Vilakazi, 2010:6; Madlingozi, 2007:87; Ballard et al, 2006:2; Ballard, 2005:85).

Madlingozi (2007:81) elucidates the growth of civic action in the country post-1994 and the government's reaction to it, when making the following observation:

> Because of the horrors occasioned by neoliberalism, poor communities throughout the country have banded together to challenge the effects of the state's macroeconomic policy and also to demand to be included in governance. The state's response to these poor communities has been at best to marginalise them and at worse to criminalise them.

Madlingozi (ibid) and Ballard et al (2006:1) point out that post-apartheid revolts were largely organised and mobilised by community organisations whilst some of them were

[2] *Abahlali Basemjondolo:* see Duncan (2016:36), Gill (2014:211).

[3] Anti-Evictions Campaign (AEC): see Duncan (2016:36), Madlingozi (2007:87), Ballard (2005:78&83).

[4] Soweto Electricity Crisis Committee (SECC): see Duncan (2016:15).

a result of spontaneous violent protests by poor communities against poor service delivery. Ballard et al (2006:1) observe that often communities are faced with similar challenges and are driven into solidarity by a common purpose. This purpose leads to activism and often results in action against the government, especially when it comes to issues relating to delivery and distribution (ibid). According to Friedman (2006:2), post-apartheid community organisations formed in the 1990s provided new spaces for popular democracy by empowering their participants to take their lives into their hands and organise themselves organically.

Highlighting the importance of these movements for democracy, Madlingozi (2007:81) notes that social movements have had to push for more inclusive and meaningful forms of direct and participatory democracy. Tapscott and Thompson (2013:369) and Lemanski (2008:393) argue that emphasis has had to be placed on participation. This, for Lemanski (2008:393), is because participation engenders human autonomy, and citizens develop control over their own development whilst eliminating “voiceless-ness and marginalisation”. With reference to participation in development, Amartya Sen (2009:2) notes that both political participation and/or dissent are “conducive to development” since participation is “foundational […] developmental […] and […] is freedom”. As Cornwall and Gaventa (2001:34) observe, in situations where complex and challenging questions are raised, citizens must demonstrate participation and willingness “to hear and respond”, rather than just “listening and nodding”.

Ultimately, Friedman and Mottiar (2004:13) conclude that post-apartheid social movements and civil society organisations added a welcome political plurality to South Africa's political landscape. This is because once a “united front” was formed it created robust collective actions and sustained synergy needed for meaningful engagements among community organisations (Friedman & Mottiar, 2004:39). In short, post-apartheid social movements and civil society organisations became arenas of free democratic debate, participation and independent mass-based mobilisation and struggle against slow service delivery (Friedman, 2006:19-20).

Against this backdrop, in the context of service delivery, citizen action and development are discussed next.

2.3.4 Citizen action and development – service delivery and growing discontent

Africa (2015:131) notes that, notwithstanding access to constitutional rights, a large majority of black South Africans remains disenfranchised in terms of access to basic resources. This, he (ibid) argues, is because of the failure of the ANC government to deliver on campaign promises such as creating jobs for the people, and, importantly, catering for basic needs such as housing. The failure to deliver, Africa (2015:131) further contends, results in growing discontent among the poor. Bond (2000:209) shares this notion and insists that the ANC's failure to re-dress the skewness of apartheid is due to its "adoption of neo-liberal economic and social policies" which have resulted in compounded challenges, including the effects of poverty, unemployment, low earnings and erratic economic growth. All of these have subsequently led to ongoing inequality and increased feelings of discontent (ibid).

Often, such challenges are responded to in the form of citizen action (protests) to publicly express experiences of deep-seated disillusionment or despondency (Jolobe, 2014:2). According to Jolobe (2014:2; 10), such protests draw attention to grievances against injustice and hope to stimulate remedial action. In these instances, protestors often seek a combination of sympathy and fear experienced through their sometimes violent action to achieve their objectives (Jolobe 2014:2; 10; Mathoho, 2012:3). Protests reflect "a need by communities to secure control" and active participation over decision-making. This habitually emerges in relation to "lack of service delivery" and is further perpetuated by a widespread "disconnect and lack of trust between communities and the state" (Jolobe, 2014:14).

Such a plethora of both violent and peaceful protests is consistently exposed via the media (this is discussed below) (Jolobe, 2014:2). Repeatedly, the people who engage in activities involving community actions such as protests are those who reside in informal settlements and who are also known as squatter or shack residents (Mdlongwa, 2014:34). This is despite these citizens being perceived as "government's high priority" and legitimately being on waiting lists for the promised RDP houses (Mdlongwa, 2014:34). Protest actions often arise out of frustration related to a lack of delivery of basic services and because poor people are threatened by the effects of issues relating to general health (i.e. cholera outbreaks due to flooding or standing water), the distance between shelter and communal lavatories, fires and a lack of

easily accessible drinking water (Gibson, 2008:704). Such challenges provoke discontent among the people, often leading to protest actions (Gibson, 2008:704).

In 2005, the Public Servants Association (PSA) confirmed 771 service delivery protests were reported nation-wide since they started post-1994 (PSA, 2015:1). Correspondingly, Jolobe (2014:3) notes that the frequency of service delivery protests increased between 2004 and 2014 from 34% in 2005 to 173% in 2012, dropping slightly in 2013 to 155%. In relation to this, the PSA (2015:1) highlighted three major causes of discontent that typically lead to service delivery protests in South Africa. Firstly, there is a huge gap in capacity since "South Africa does not have enough qualified public servants necessary to turn government plans […] into action". Instead, skilled professionals end up in "prestigious positions in central government […] (especially in) large metro[polises] […] [leaving local] municipalities without the requisite talent" to deliver services effectively (PSA, 2015:1). Secondly, a lack of resources within the municipalities prevents opportunities for providing quality service delivery. Lastly, lines of authority are often not clearly defined (PSA, 2015:1). This leads to a lack of responsibility and accountability. Moreover, too many unclear and uncoordinated government departments within layers of local, national, provincial spheres, special agents and the state lead to a lack of accountability or quality in the delivery of basic services (PSA, 2015:2).

The South African Bill of Rights specifically stipulates the rights of citizens to take action against the state. It states that if citizens believe their constitutional rights have been infringed upon, service delivery protests are legitimate forms of citizen action (Duncan, 2016:3; Mathoho, 2012:3). This is especially the case when attempts to follow legal routes to enforce service delivery fail. According to Mathoho (2012:3), while communities within some local municipalities have taken service delivery concerns to the court of law, these municipalities often fail to comply with the court orders imposed against them, worsening fragile relationships and threatening any possibility of meaningful engagements and participation between the government and the people (Mathoho, 2012:3). Accordingly, violence and criminal behaviour perceived as synonymous with protests such as incidents of burning of tyres, vandalising property, and the like, often result in protesters being labelled as "hooligans", "thugs", "mobs" and even "criminals" (Mathoho, 2012:3). Equally, Mdlongwa (2014:34) notes

a growing trend that people believe that the government will only pay attention if protests turn violent. Therefore, the highest number of violent service delivery protests by discontented citizens recorded fall within the 2013/14 period (Duncan, 2016:135; 165).

Ramjee and Van Donk (2011:11) argue that discontent is often aggravated by challenges that emanate from the local government and the state's ignoring issues raised by communities in relation to their needs. Therefore, protests are largely directed to state institutions and are usually erratic with a non-routine way of achieving an outcome "politically, socially or culturally" (Lancaster & Mtshali, 2014:1). Ballard and Rubin (2017:2) argue that such protests are often perceived as disrupting and disturbing the status quo in the interest of redressing an unjust situation. Similarly, according to Jolobe (2014:2), Goldstein (2008:1) and Shah (2005:40), service delivery protests in South Africa are one way to persuade the government to meet its moral obligation to alleviate poverty and facilitate economic growth.

A lack of access to housing is often the central reason for service delivery protests in South Africa (Joseph & Karuri-Sebina, 2014:2). Therefore, issues related to housing delivery and the citizen action that they inspire are discussed next.

2.3.5 Citizen action around housing delivery: a national crisis?

Housing delivery has been in a state of crisis since long before the realisation of democracy in South Africa and still remains a contentious issue for the poor (Ballard & Rubin, 2017:1; Strauss & Liebenberg, 2014:1; Bond, 2000:xviii). Ballard and Rubin (2017:1) note that "the ANC-led government repeatedly committed to providing poor households with houses". Nevertheless, political announcements and headline ideas elaborated on "a history of scaled up projects since 1990s; a desired quantity to ramp up the quantity of houses delivered with the expectation that large projects can cut through bureaucratic blockages". Relatedly, Ballard and Rubin (2017:1) observe that attempts by government to provide adequate housing opportunities often result in "poor allocation practices […] variable construction quality [and] questionable locations often far flung from opportunities". Relatedly, housing delivery has long been viewed as an enormous challenge, with the former Minister of Housing, Lindiwe Sisulu, admitting that

> nothing short of a total mobilisation of society around the issue of the provision of housing for the poor will solve the problems we confront in the short term […] nothing short of some kind of Marshall Plan will see us survive this challenge (Ballard & Rubin, 2017:2).

Highlighting widespread crises within the South African housing delivery programme in her paper, Rubin (2011:479) notes that the programme is opaque, clumsy and arbitrary. During a longitudinal study conducted via forty-six interviews with residents of Gauteng Province related to land management issues, Rubin (2011:480) found the programme to be "corrupt in almost all aspects, from the application to the actual delivery" of housing. She (ibid) further notes that respondents made various accusations including "allegations of nepotism and of bias favouring comrades and companions who fought alongside each other in the anti-apartheid struggle". The study found widespread perceptions that people in positions of power used their positions "to enrich themselves and to get their friends official appointments, for which they may not be qualified" (Rubin, 2011:480). Rubin's research found that the whole process of the housing delivery programme "is quite rotten" from "beginning to end" (Rubin, 2011:480). In this regard, Rubin's respondent admitted to "bribing government officials […] to get […] [an RDP] house illegally" (Rubin, 2011:481). Moreover, Rubin found evidence of *mshoshaphansi* (meaning 'underground operations') which included the illegal buying and selling of houses and title deeds from officials (Rubin, 2011: 480 & 481).

Similarly, Bradlow, Bolnick and Shearing (2011:267) note that even though 200 000 houses were being built per year, there were backlogs on delivery and "anger over shoddy building practices, patronage and corruption" erupted, leading to a crisis in housing. Therefore, Rubin (2011:480) associates the crisis in housing delivery with deep "historical accounts of corruption, clientelism and rent-seeking behaviour in the pre-and-post apartheid South African state". Correspondingly, Bradlow et al (2011:267) note that "the spatial development of new houses has enhanced rather than dismantled the apartheid legacy". Strauss and Liebenberg (2014:1) point out that "spatial justice" in South Africa "remain[s] elusive" and insist that "spatial inequality continues to hold profound implications for South Africa's urban poor". For that reason, the existing historical practices present skewness and contribute to the exacerbation of the housing crisis. Building on this idea, Strauss and Liebenberg (2014:1) concede

that the urban housing landscape remains dogged by challenging spatial inequalities due to unfair social exclusion of the poor from formal access to housing. This then manifests in intolerable conditions or crisis situations whereby marginalised masses are forcibly evicted, or their informal settlements demolished (Duncan, 2016:30; Strauss & Liebenberg, 2014:1; Birkinshaw, 2009:8). In some cases, residents are relocated from inner-city properties to poorly located or peripheral areas far away from amenities and resources (Strauss & Liebenberg, 2014:1; Bradlow et al, 2011:267).

Over and above these challenges, Birkinshaw (2009:6) adds that dissatisfaction related to housing delivery "is often placed on corrupt and inefficient politicians". He (ibid) argues that elites are seen to have power to control settlements while perceptions abound that informal settlements are "often controlled by authoritarian ANC members who are maintained in control for petty favours to deliver settlement as a vote bank" (Birkinshaw, 2009:6). Therefore, Birkanshaw (ibid) emphasises that the lack of consensus in these settlements often led to breakdowns in communication that consequently created tension among citizens and political leaders. As a result, Birkinshaw (2009:6) argues that political disorganisation exacerbates poor governance and accountability, thus subsequently fomenting crises in the delivery of housing for citizens living in informal settlements. To counter the crises, citizens often choose to step up and take action demonstrating ownership through initiatives towards housing development. In that context, the role of the media is discussed against the backdrop of democracy, development, and citizen action.

2.4 Democracy, development and citizen action – the role of the media

It has been argued that the media plays a critical role in the evolving and realisation of democracy (Wasserman et al, 2018a:147; Rodny-Gumede, 2017:10; Rodny-Gumede, 2015:132; Nduhura, 2010:3; Prah, 2010:5; Berger, 2007: 599; Fourie, 2007:205; Dahlgren, 2002:17; Mattes, 2002:23; Berger, 2000:3; Kasoma, 1997:295; Dunn, 1974:494). This is the case especially in the context of South Africa where identities have become more pluralised (Rodny-Gumede, 2017:10). This is also the case where "democracy is associated with development", specifically in a society that is more pluralised and rooted in "peace, unity, equality and development" (Marcus, Mease & Ottermoeller, 2001:116). Moreover, Kasoma (2000:13) observes that within an emerging democracy, the media serves a critical purpose "to mobilise marginalised

people" for the purpose of nation-building. For this reason, literature pertaining to the role of the media in respect of democracy, development and citizen action is the focus in this section. To begin with, a brief overview of the relationship between the media and democracy is provided. Following this, a discussion on the role of the media in development is presented. This is followed by an in-depth exploration of the various elements of media representation, including influences on representation, stereotyping and the media representation of citizen action.

In the context of this study, the media is regarded as being central to democracy as it plays a critical role in shaping communities' everyday experiences and thus forms a key part of how communities experience democracy (Plaut, 2018:151, Chuma, Wasserman, Bosch & Pointer, 2017:104; Ritter & Jones, 2018:1). Similarly, in South Africa, the media is seen to be playing a significant role in the evolution of democracy (Wasserman et al, 2018:147; Rodny-Gumede, 2017:10; 2015:132; Nduhura, 2010:3; Prah, 2010:5; Berger, 2007: 599; Fourie, 2007:205; Dahlgren, 2002:17; Mattes, 2002:23; Berger, 2000:3; Kasoma, 1997:295; Dunn, 1974:494).

Therefore, this next section discusses media, democracy and development within the context of the role of the media.

2.4.1 Media, democracy and development - the role of the media

The theory of the role of the media in democracy can be traced as far back as 1920 (Sebola, 2012:407). The role of the media is perceived as contradictory because on the one hand it can be used as a government's mouthpiece while on the other, it can be a facilitator of good governance and service delivery for the people (Sebola, 2012:408). Taking this notion into account, Sebola (2012:408) articulates the view that the media is the "middle-man" between the people and their government.

Wasserman and De Beer (2005:192) argue that while the media in pre- and post-apartheid South Africa has always been "vociferous", it has not been particularly vocal with reference to issues of national development under the democratically elected black leadership. Relatedly, Mojapelo (1998:125) notes that, under any circumstances, the role of the press "is in the front line of the battle to maintain democracy". Likewise, Wasserman and Garman (2012:39) argue that in new

democracies, the media has the responsibility to serve a critical role in order to "facilitate public debate that may shape policy, reorder societal hierarchies and renegotiate cultural identities [and] deepen the emerging democracy".

In Ansah's (1988:3) view, the search for the role of the media in modern African democracy has been ongoing since the 1980s. Firstly, Ansah (ibid) notes that there are countless controversies in Africa sparked by the belief that there has never been a benchmark of indigenous traditions to fall back on. This, Ansah (ibid) insists, makes the status of democracy ill-defined. This is largely because the press in African countries was dictated to and controlled by colonialists and their administrators (Kasoma, 2000:8). Secondly, complications related to the role of the media in African democracy are exacerbated by diverse opposing "ideological options" that range from "liberalism" to "multiparty politics" to "authoritarianism", with the latter perceived to be common in most scenarios in Africa (Ansah, 1988:3).

For Manoah and Khaguli (2009:20), since the 19th century, the role of the media in democracy has been determined and emphasised through its endorsement as the Fourth Estate[5]. According to Kasoma (1997:307), the Fourth Estate's key mandate is to check and counterbalance the arms that consist democratic government. That is, when things are misaligned in democracy, it is the responsibility of the press to "stand tall like the watchtower (and) sound alarms" (Kasoma, 1997:307). Kasoma (2000:40) argues that the media should adopt an "adversarial" or watchdog role, especially when it comes to fulfilling its commitments to the support of development in the country. In this regard, Kasoma (ibid) further notes two basic tenets for the media's watchdog role. The first is related to the media's role in ensuring democratic transparency, accountability and good governance (ibid*)*. Secondly, Kasoma (ibid) argues that in a

[5] Fourth Estate - The concept of the Fourth Estate or branch was coined by Edmund Burke in 1787 who referred to print media, newspapers although it includes the entire media (Manoah & Khaguli, 2009:20). The Fourth Estate follows the three other Estates, namely parliament, the judiciary and the executive and operating effectively and independently without one being dependent on the other and avoiding swaying one another (Kotze, 2012:231; Manoah & Khaguli, 2009:20; Kasoma, 2000:40). However, the media press defines and stipulates its key role but likewise is kept in check by laws of the executive, "enacted" by parliament known as the "alpha and omega of political reforms", and then "enforced" by the judiciary (Kasoma, 2000:40; Keane,1991:169).

democratic society, it is critical that the media informs the people about the government's "objectionable behaviours" such as corruption, misuse or abuse of power, and bad governance (Kasoma, 2000:40). Therefore, Chuma et al *(*2017:105) and Kasoma (2000:40) both note that it is in the best interest of the population to be aware of what the government is doing and not doing. For Manoah and Khaguli (2009:20), the media, as the fourth power's "critical vision", has to exemplify "an independent platform" for democratic deliberation and, if that fails, then its sole facilitative and monitorial role in society is useless (ibid).

Coronel (2003:4) argues that newspapers in the sphere of the Fourth Estate are the backbone of the media spectrum since they assume the position of holding other media accountable. Mattes (2002:33) observes that in South Africa, the support for democracy by its citizens "is modest", yet citizens expect to be supported by democracy. Mattes (ibid) explains that people "understand democracy to mean the delivery of a range of socio-economic goods and progress". The media, in this context, needs to take its social responsibility seriously by "teach[ing] the intrinsic value of democracy and equip citizens with more skills for meaningful participat[ion] in political issues" as well as providing reasons for participation (Mattes, 2002:34). Coronel (2003:4) and Kasoma (2000:40) point out that the media is responsible for representing and advocating for the interests of the citizens.

As well as being the chronicler of information, the media is compelled to act, not only as a critic of the state, but also to 'educate' and 'inform' the citizens (Manoah & Khaguli, 2009:21). Manoah and Khaguli (2009:21) are of the view that if citizens become informed, they cease to become merely 'consumers' of commercialised entertainment, tabloids and celebrities, exposed to scandals by government officials, but, instead, begin to make valuable contributions to the endorsement of democracy.

In Chuma et al's view (2017:105; 95), the media plays an important role as an agent of democratic discourse. However, they (ibid) also note that in South Africa, although the country has experienced multiple transformational periods from colonial rule to the dominance of the doctrine of apartheid and, more recently, the canon of a new democracy, democracy remains fragile. Furthermore, they (2017:106) emphasise that in order for the media to entrench the critical values required of a strong democracy,

participatory collaboration with civil society is needed. Tunca (2009:94) and Fourie (2010:155) also note that in its many roles, the media is the “only channel” to ensure that democracy can function in a developing democracy. Hence, Kehinde, Oyero and Nelson (2014:262) build on this notion and insist that as a social change agent, and in order to identify and facilitate ‘national interests’ and contribute towards the socio-economic development of its society, the media must apply a developmental approach to its representations.

With regard to development, Sen (1999:1) observes that national development is nothing but ‘freedom’, and that ‘freedom’ is for the citizens. Additionally, Sen (ibid) also notes that “freedom” depends on elements such as “social and economic arrangements” and “political and civil rights”. Sen (1999:4) further argues that development is an integrated process that involves the government, civic institutions, and political parties and includes open dialogues and debates, all of which are the underpinnings of the role of the media. In short, Sen (ibid) further argues that the media exists to contribute and expand human development and freedom. However, Sen (ibid) also argues that this freedom should be accompanied by the tenets of participatory freedom such as the absence of corruption and the role of trust in economic and political relationships (Sen, 1999:4).

The UN has “recognised the important role of the media to bring about good governance […] demanded by citizens across the globe” (Mezzalama, 1994:5). A report from a research study recently conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) establishes that inclusive governance and accountability via the media can be achieved in three ways (Jacob, 2019:17-42); firstly, through monitoring those in power and being vigilant regarding corruption and abuse of trust. This is because, “a strong, free and independent media leads to lower levels of corruption” (Jacob, 2019:35). The second is access to information by holding the government accountable (Jacob, 2019:36-7&42). The third way relates to the pluralised media providing a voice to the disenfranchised masses because “better informed citizens can better monitor actions of the incumbent politics”. This voice means that it must have value “as a mechanism to impact political processes and shape citizenship” (Wasserman & Garman, 2012:52). Additionally, the outcomes from the study by the UNDP revealed that when it comes to development, the media is supposed to act as

an instrument to advance national progress by advocacy and awareness-raising of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) agenda (United National Development Programme (UNDP), 2019:53).

The next section discusses the media and representation.

2.5 Media and representation

Since representation by the media is a key element in this study, an examination of this concept and related media practices is important. First, a definition of representation is needed.

2.5.1 Defining 'representation'

Representation is 'a key concept' in media studies (Hall, 2013:1). It is also one of the most complex and contentious terms ever discussed in Cultural Studies (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:73). The controversial debates around this concept involve fundamental questions such as 'who' is talking, in 'what' capacity, 'where' and 'how' is this happening, and 'for whom'? (Dahlgren, 2013:533; Hall, 2013:2). Hall (2013:2) points out that unless these questions are addressed, the message either becomes unclear or meaningless. For Dahlgren (2013:533), any meaningful response to these questions demonstrates what stands at the 'core of journalism and the representation of the news. Therefore, Price (1997:198) and Stewart (2008:35) define representation as a process that constructs and produces meaning and depicts a thing or person in order to liken it to something else. Hall (2013:2; 1985:103) explains that representation does two things: it represents and gives meaning. Derrida (1982:294) describes representation as an "equivocal word" that means "to represent or stand for something". Similarly, Saward (2006:184) defines representation as a full view of something – an object or an event presented in a three-dimensional (full) and complete format. Additionally, Saward (2006:184) compares representation to a photograph "captur[ed] in a freeze-form of a fragmentary, passing moment amongst others". In other words, Saward (2006:184) argues that representation is an elusive concept that can never fully capture the essence of a thing, animal, person or event, although representation plays a crucial role as an entry point for "gaining understanding [of] process[es], phenomena or people".

Therefore, Price (1997:198) argues that for someone to comprehend such a phenomenon, he or she should be able to understand that “re-presentation” shows that the writer is describing the “presentation” of an event, object or person but not in its original form. Hence, Hall (2013:171; 2003:15) postulates that a researcher must be familiar with the idea that representation as the “production of meaning by language and symbols” depicts abstract and “obscure” concepts, such as citizen action, to “produce and exchange” meaning. Hall (2013:172; 2013:3; 1985:103) points out that to become familiar with a concept, there is what is referred to as a “system of representation” or a “system of meaning”, termed “language representation”. In this system of representation, language is a prerequisite in the process of constructing meaning (Hall, 2013:172; 2009:15). That is because the shared conceptual map is interpreted through a common language where concepts and ideas are correlated through words, sounds or visual images (Hall, 2013:4; 2009:2&18). For instance, the use of words, sounds, and images is known as signs, and signs are organised into languages so that people are able to understand meaning and translate thoughts into words, sounds or images, or both (Hall, 2013:4; 2009:2). In that way people are able to express meaning and communicate their thoughts and feelings with other people in language (Hall, 2013:4). This language comes in many forms – through electronics, fashion, by hand, or through mechanics, gestures or facial expressions. For Hall, even music with its sounds and chords is a language (Hall, 2013:4). In essence, Hall (2013:172) explains that to appreciate representation, language must be available and accessible. But what influences representation in order for people to understand meaning? This question is the context of the next discussion.

2.5.2 What influences representation?

As already discussed, in Cultural Studies, representation is understood as the process that connects ‘meaning’ and language to culture (Hall, 1997:16). Since representation and ‘language’ have largely been explained in the preceding sections, it makes sense therefore that a discussion about a contextual connection between the ‘use of language’ in the form of signs and representation, is needed. This is in order to understand the influence of language on representation.

It was Ferdinand de Saussure, the Swiss founder of modern linguistics, who introduced the science of semiotics by means of which language is perceived as “a

system of signs" (Hall, 2013:27). De Saussure's work was published posthumously in the 1950s by two of his scholars in *Course de linguistique Générale* translated as Course in General Linguists. For him, semiotics considers language as a system of signs, rules and conventions, and explains how such signs are used for signification or how meaning can be constructed as part of social life (Hall, 2013:27). De Saussure also developed a method of systematic analysis and interpretation of all symbol texts, whereby the symbol is the signifier and the corresponding image the signified (Fourie, 2007a:43; McQuail, 2000:503).

Scholars cited below explain the work of these formal systems – the elements of language, the signifier, signified and referent as the following:

- The signifier or 'sound image' is the first element identified by De Saussure as a physical quality of a sign, namely a spoken or written word, the thing or the code that people read that symbolises something. For example, the flag or a photograph stands in the place of a referent, the object. The signifier pre-exists and has priority over the signified (Bennett, 1998:288).
- The signified or 'concept' is the second element identified by Saussure where the meaning is attached to the signifier by the recipient. It is abstract, impalpable and may vary from one person to the next (Hall, 2013:16; Fourie, 2007:43). Therefore, together the signifier and the signified form a sign. One example may refer to 'cool' as the signifier and as signified it stands for temperature.
- The referent refers to an object, idea or concept to which the sign is referring and what it denotes or stands for (Hall, 2013:16; Fourie, 2007a:43). A referent is something that is real, tangible or even concrete, for example, a television or a newspaper.

The essence of what is emphasised in the relationship between the signifier and signified is explained explicitly as "any signifier is empty until it is associated with a particular signified" (Lee, 2007:6). This, in a sense, implies that the "signified is the reality existing outside human cognition", and the "signifier is simply a tool for mediating this reality" (Lee, 2007:7). Although this notion is challenged in post-structuralism, it does acknowledge that "the nature and quality of a signified are, in

fact, largely determined by a signifier" (Lee, 2007:8). Therefore, the most salient point here is that language exists in society and is used to communicate and transmit meaning in social contexts (Sonderling, 2007: 84).

Since every society has a "dominant cultural order which is put in a message", language is seen as possessing power as it commands meaning (Hall, 2013:10&172). Language, presented in text form, is often the first encounter in a communication process, a message that is significant and exchanged (Sonderling, 2007:91). This is especially the case when it comes to the media. Print media in all its forms presents a message in text form that is composed of many signs and has formal structure, logic and organisation (ibid). In this regard, the media can be seen as a powerful medium to create and influence meaning. Relatedly, McQuail (2013:127) observes that in the structure and content of a news story, language is a powerful influence. Lastly, language is used for "(re)enforcement of political awareness and exchanges" in representation via the news (Sonderling, 2007: 85).

Based on the above discussion, an investigation of the relationship between representation and the media is provided next.

2.5.3 The representation of the news in the media

The media representation can be understood as a depiction, the likeness or constructed image of reality that is presented in the media (Hall, 2013:2; Stewart, 2008:35). This means that the media does not literally present reality but "re-presents" (to present again), co-creates as well as presenting reality through a selection of 'images', 'symbols' and 'signs' (Hall, 2003:15; Stewart, 2008:35). These 'signs' and 'symbols' are sometimes written 'words', 'produced images' or even 'objects' and stand to represent 'people', 'ideas' or 'objects' in the media (Hall, 2013:xvii).

Braham (1998:270) and Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran and Woolacott (1998:201) figuratively parallel media representation to a searchlight that "illuminates some areas" of an object whilst some areas are in the shadow. Thus, such a figurative context differentiates between objective reality and the media "as selective definers of that reality". Similarly, Bennett (1998:287) is of the view that when it comes to representation by the media, a dividing line can be drawn on one hand between the

media representation and the ‘reality’ or society on the other. Bennett (1998:287) argues that instead of the media being likened to a mirror, it should be likened to a "searchlight held up to society", that can show one side of the perspective – only what is placed in front of them. In that case, it means that the experience held on the other side of the mirror is placed or stands in the shadow and not revealed to the audience (Bennett, 1998:287). Bennett (ibid) further expounds that, like the mirror that projects one side of the reality in society, the media emerges as “secondary and is derivative”. In that regard, Braham (1998:270) argues that “it would be much more appropriate to visualise the media acting as a searchlight”. That is because what appears in the newspaper, for instance, is a small portion of what is happening in the world out there (ibid). Therefore, Gurevitch et al (1998:201) maintain that the process of mirroring or the analogy of a searchlight could imply a differentiation between “objective reality” and the media as “selective definers of reality”. According to Gurevitch et al (1998:201), this implies that the media decides what is real and can be signified.

Against this backdrop, Hall (2003:15) observes that the media representation is the basic need for communication and the essence of social construction because even though it does not reflect the original picture, its representation contributes to the shaping of societal reality. For Hall (2003:xvii), without representation, communication would be meaningless as people would be likely to lose the ability to communicate with one another. Similarly, media representation must be an “object of critical analysis”, and not just a presentation of facts, and should emphasise the value of re-presenting reality (ibid). To illustrate these notions, Hall (ibid) draws attention to something read or seen in a newspaper. Hall (ibid) explains that it cannot be seen as reality but can only be perceived as a version of reality. Similarly, Braham (1998:270) notes that the media practitioners select what goes into a newspaper and decide how to represent it. For example, where there is re-presentation and ‘gazing’ in a newspaper with men looking at women or vice-versa, a newspaper would portray the phenomenon as if it were genuine, natural or “unmediated” (Hall, 2013:xvii). Hall (2013:xxi) notes that no matter how normal media representation looks, the reality is that it is ‘constructed’.

In relation to the print media, Stewart (2008:35) illustrates the process of media representation when he describes a newspaper story going through a “selection of

reality" by editors, sub-editors and reporters to "re-present" a specific reality by observing that all journalists make their own assumptions on what will be of significance and interest to the readers, and through a selection process, a newspaper presents its product to its "target readers" (Stewart, 2008:35). In the end, the key purpose is for the media to make such a representation of reality so that people can better understand their own reality, society and the world in general (Stewart, 2008:35). Ouellette (2013:168) argues that the notion of the media representation "is not purely an academic affair", and involves many social dimensions, including class and race. Quellette (ibid) insists that it is certainly an uneven and contentious social relation. Ouellette points out that if it were not for social and political movements in Europe and the West in the 1960s and 1970s, an era during which representation was put under scrutiny, the media representation would not have emerged. Ouellette (ibid) further points out that the study of media representation only emerged after activists and academics were compelled to investigate whether contrasts, distortions and misrepresentation existed within the "marginalised and subordinated groups". For Ouellette (ibid) two issues that inspired such exercises included the media's "false representation" of groups of people (mentioned above), and the tendency by the media to create perceptions that misrepresented and carried misconceptions and stereotypes about these groups.

Berger (1988:8) notes that as is the case with people's points of reference – social, cultural, religious, economic and ideological notions – affect representation. This is because people first see, and then establish themselves in the world to make their own representation. Berger (1988:8) refers to "the conventions and politics of seeing" as misconceived "dimensions of representation", further observing that people "only see what [they] look at […] and situate [them]selves" within that reality. For instance, if journalists provide the "word" or "sign" to the people, "seeing comes before [the] word or sign" (Berger, 1988:8). Simply put, people see before they can make any interpretation of a situation (Berger, 1988:8).

O'Shaghnessy and Stadler (2006:73) note that all representation comes from people and carries their bias. Therefore, "what happens in the newspapers is a small proportion of what happens in the world". This is so since there is society on the one

side, and media representation of that society on the other (ibid). In this regard, it makes sense to delve into the process of representation of the news next.

2.5.4 The process of representation in the news

It is during the representation of the news that three vital processes, namely, agenda-setting, gatekeeping and framing, structurally organise the media products and influence the way information is presented (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:25). De Beer and Botha (2008:238), De Beer (2007:20) and O'Shaghnessy and Stadler (2006:73) define agenda-setting as the process by means of which producers set up the agenda based on issues that will be the central focus of the media and that audiences or readers will perceive to be important. It also refers to instances where media coverage uses its powerful ability to draw attention to a specific issue, event or person, and "puts [it] on the agenda" for public discussion and debate (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:73). Correspondingly, agenda-setting can be understood as a kind of manipulation or management of the media (news) where, for instance, a public figure or politician issues press releases such as a political policy statement or speech to encourage follow-up coverage by the media (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:73). Such acts set the agenda of the media.

Gatekeeping, on the other hand, refers to the process whereby the media controls what information gets included and whose voice is to be heard (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:25). Through this process, the message is controlled or influenced by a number of individuals, called gatekeepers, including journalists (De Beer, 2007:9). In this regard, McQuail (2013:184) observes that the media has the power to decide what news will go into the publication and in which order. This decision, according to McQuail (ibid), depends on the agenda set by gatekeepers such as the editor and/or sub-editor. Correspondingly, McQuail (2013:137) terms this as the news that either "mirrors" or "moulds" society. Notwithstanding, McQuail (2013:209) points out that journalists act as gatekeepers unconsciously and without political aim to give access and attention to voices and people with "power and purpose of their own, thus setting the agenda where power by decision-makers becomes (a) focus". This is despite the press being perceived and challenged as the key gatekeeper by alternative media, including platforms such as online and non-institutional sources such as Wikileaks or social media, or both (McQuail, 2013:214).

Lastly, De Beer and Botha (2008:238) define framing of the news as the “selection of certain thematically related news attributed for inclusion on the media agenda”. This is achieved when a specific news object is reconstructed and represented as a news report (De Beer & Botha, 2008:238). Furthermore, De Beer and Botha (2008:238) define framing as the creation of news contexts whereby audiences or readers of a newspaper may “locate, perceive, identify, and label” whatever is happening in their own world.

Time and space are other two additional dimensions that impact on the process of news representation. That is because the salience of story matter is a key factor in the setting of an agenda for positioning the story related to time and space. For example, Stewart (2008:52) observes that the short time span of a news story creates a bias against understanding and, to a large extent, the number of news stories in a small space and time can limit “deep understanding”. Likewise, when it comes to points of view, some may be given more time than others, particularly in newspapers where a “space given to a story determines its relative importance” (Stewart, 2008:52).

Stewart (2008:52) observes a tendency by newspapers that give space to the news and opinions that are aligned or agree with their own notions or ideologies. However, this is not the case in investigative newspapers as they are less likely to feature gossip, conjecture or a sensationalist story about a politician, a prominent figure or a celebrity on the front page (Stewart, 2008:52). These aspects that contribute to the selection process are specific “institutional procedures” that dictate, but also depend on the media organisations’ cultures – a *raison d’être* – which differ from news house to news house (Stewart, 2008:51). As such, Stewart (ibid) observes that the routine of news gathering refers to what makes news headlines, or the front page depends on the salience of the story or the reporters’ or journalists’ specific regular columns (Stewart, 2008:51). This process of cultural selection, Stewart (2008:51) points out, is one of the most “powerful filter[s]”. For McQuail (2013:127), this cultural selection is what creates and reinforces national boundaries, and even helps to “nurture” media systems. Specifically, visual selections which include images have more impact than prominent stories without images (McQuail, 2013:16; Stewart, 2008:51).

Finally, traditional news values also impact on the newsworthiness and representation of information (McQuail, 2013:15). The news values or newsworthiness depend on the elements of an issue or event that make it important enough to report on in the eyes of journalists. According to O'Shaghnessy and Stadler (2006:27), newsworthy features include conflict, relevance, locality, prominence, novelty and the magnitude of the story/ies. Additionally, O'Shaghnessy and Stadler (2006:27) and Stewart (2008:50) observe that to make the news even more newsworthy, it should involve characteristics of calamity, proximity, novelty, severity, impact, visual appeal or feature a celebrity. McQuail (2013:15) believes that by adopting traditional news values, the media, through representation, can avoid "distortions and disinformation," including, for example, stereotyping, which is discussed next.

2.5.5 Media representation and stereotyping

The term 'stereotype' was coined by Walter Lippmann, the author and journalist who committed himself to critiquing the media and democracy (Newman, 2009:7;10). The term can be traced back from its modern psychological meaning and justified as a form of 'misrepresentation, also known as an extreme form of representation (Newman, 2009:9). In his seminal text, *Public Opinion on Media Studies and Political Sciences*, Lippmann (in Newman, 2009:7) defines stereotypes as "distorted" pictures or images entrenched "in a person's mind" and are "derived culturally" but not predisposed to a personal background. Lippman (1922:8) goes on to explain that stereotypes are nothing but "habits of thought" or "pictures in our heads" that people use to capture their understanding of the world around them (Newman, 2009:7). Kidd (2016:26) defines a stereotype as a technique that is used to create "homogeneity of values and beliefs". Kidd (2016:26) and Kay, Matuszek and Munson (2015:2) note that where stereotyping is evident, "power imbalance" exists, specifically in cases where economic power or political power, or both persist. Such cases can be relatable to stereotypes about gender, male (masculinity) or female (femininity) as well as minority groups such as gays, lesbians and religious groups. For Newman (2009:7), stereotypes are motivated by economic, social and political prejudices that are prone to lead to resistance and (social) change. Newman (ibid) further clarifies this, pointing out that until people fully understand others, they create their own opinions and reality about them.

Kay et al (2015:1), Ross and Lester (2011:ix), Stewart (2008:37) and Fourie (2007:248) write about stereotypes as being subjective in nature, a social classifications of a group of people, over-simplified clichés and “highly generalised” signs. Further, stereotypes are regarded as inaccurate views that are repeated so many times that they become a “natural pattern” (Kay et al, 2015:1). For Hall (2013:247), people’s perceptions are based on “a few vivid, memorable” and “negative messages” represented by the media. Similarly, socially, stereotypes have proven to be dangerous, but, equally, unavoidable since these are deeply embedded in societies, often via the media (Kay et al, 2015:1).

Kidd (2016:27) points out that stereotyped images and messages are often coupled with under-representation or “unequal representation,” which is where representation is inconsistent or disproportionate to other well-represented news. This tends to deprive affected citizens of the opportunity to learn about their own society as they do not see themselves represented by the media (Kidd, 2016:27). Furthermore, it deprives such citizens of the opportunity to fight or struggle for their roles, thus putting them in positions of perpetual self-stereotyping (Kidd, 2016:27). Consequently, self-stereotyping leads citizens to perceive themselves inversely in relation to the larger context of the society. For instance, such practices in the United States (US) in the 1960s and 1970s during the era of the civil rights movements forced people to demand positive representation from the media (Stewart, 2008:38). Related protests led to more positive responses in the portrayal of black people (Stewart, 2008:38).

Similarly, South Africa is known for stereotyping identities as a result of institutionalised apartheid policies in the past which reified racial identities to unparalleled levels (Buiten, 2009:91; Durrheim, Quayle, Whitehead & Kriel, 2005:167-9; Adhikari, 2006:147). For instance, racist images which were used to “preserve white privilege by legitimating oppression”, including representation of “state violence by black protesters”, and “mindless stone throwing mobs”, including portrayals of police “appl[ying] force in civilised methods”, were ubiquitous in the apartheid media (Durrheim et al, 2005:169). These depictions entrenched stereotyping among cultural groups in the South African society. Against that context Buiten (2009:91), Durrhein et al (2007:168&170), Adhikari (2006:147) and the Media Monitoring Project (MMP) (1999:57) point out that, specifically with reference to race and gender, stereotypical

representation, both blatant and subtle, is still rife in the post-apartheid South African media.

With regard to racial stereotyping in the media, an investigation by the MMP found that the media has a tendency to reinforce racial stereotypes or prejudicial representation as “bad news stories”. For example, the MMP (1999:12) revealed that in the press, stories about racism in the police force and editorial comments on decisions by the government to ratify the convention making apartheid a crime against humanity have been reflected as such. Additionally, the study revealed the existing link in the media representation between the notions of black government being corrupt and “all blacks are criminals” and perpetuated the stereotype that all whites are racists (MMP, 1999:36).

This next section explores the media representation of citizen action.

2.5.6 Media representation of citizen action

Stuart-Weeks (2013:103) notes that the mass media plays a critical role in the relationship between the government and citizens. Therefore, the media representation can offer communities the opportunity to be involved in policy and service delivery processes (Stuart-Weeks, 2013:103). Taking this into account, and as discussed above, the media representation does not mirror society but rather offers a highly selective and constructed portrayal of its events (Bennett, 1998:287). When it comes to the media representation of citizen action, McQuail (2013:214) argues that the depictions of citizen action are a way in which the media links the people to the government, the greater population of the country and beyond. In other words, citizens’ interests or satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction should be reflected and re-presented by the media as support to the political system (McQuail, 2013:214). This means that in its role as the “watchdog” and the “mouthpiece” of the people, the media can allow citizens space to voice their concerns through its representation, fulfilling its role of social transformation (Whitten-Woodring & James, 2012:117).

Further, Friedman (2006:18) observes that only when the media portrays citizens’ reaction and strong resistance to those in positions of power can their voices be heard. Particularly, the effectiveness of citizens’ actions that manifest in mobilisation, activism

and sometimes advocacy rely largely on the representation of such action by the media (Benequista & Gaventa, 2012:4). Without the media intervention and accountability, it would be difficult for the citizens to engage the government meaningfully in matters affecting the quality of their lives (Benequista & Gaventa, 2012:4&5). Pettit, Salarzar and Dagron (2009:450) note that representation by the media offers a powerful strategy for development and social change. Thus, the media representations of conflicts where emerging movements advocating for citizenship, democracy, governance and development have demonstrated that citizens' voices are a critical method of communication (Pettit et al, 2009:449). Therefore, representation of these components of society in the media, particularly in relation to issues about the meaning of citizen action, should be central to the media content (Pettit et al, 2009:448). Pettit et al further postulate that such representation is the new form of expression in the context of citizen action as a form of community voice and participation, as well as a form of support in creating critical engagement with government, and subsequently strengthening citizenship in democracy.

Additionally, representation in the media is a means of amplifying the voices of marginalised people, an avenue and channel for them to influence decision-making and other dynamics, including framing their goals and demands (Pettit et al, 2009:450). Importantly, Pettit et al (2009:450) note that, broadly speaking, through its representation, the media has sustained, mobilised and bolstered social movements whilst at the same time advocating for the rights of the people. A good example is the impact that the media representation has had on the realisation of the rights of the citizens affected by HIV/AIDS in countries such as Brazil, Namibia and South Africa. Therefore, the media has a significant role to perform in mobilising vital organs of nations on behalf of the poor.

While the media has the potential to support citizen action and democratic processes, Coronel (2003:1) points out that the media in new democracies does not always live up to this ideal. As Opuamie-Ngoa (2010:135) observes, expectations abound that the media in its endeavour to support citizen action should "serve as platforms for vibrant and illuminating advocacy". Furthermore, and possibly the media should in a meaningful way cater for dialogue across diverse opinions and views of all citizens (Opuamie-Ngoa, 2010:135). Mathekga (2006:39) contends that a lack of proportional

representation in the media can lead to “an exercise of merely casting judgement between […] deeply or widely felt issues”. Mathekga (ibid) further notes this tendency during government elections where he observed that some media reports lacked the diversity in their representation of dissenting voices that is needed to ensure accountability.

Hence Malila, Oelofsen, Garman and Wasserman (2013:426) maintain that good reporting and representation by the media are supposed to be inclusive in order to generate citizen enthusiasm for democracy. Benequista and Gaventa (2012:9) and Heller (2001:137) support this notion and add that the media has a mandate to represent how citizens engage the state, whether through elections or other forms of participation, including the role of social movements, advocacy campaigns or collective action in building a responsive, accountable, and pro-poor state. Additionally, linked to the media representation, Benequista and Gaventa (2012:9) argue that social change takes place in various ways, including “protests outside sites of power [and] lobbying on the inside to shape public opinion”, as well as the engagement of experts in policy debate and contesting elites. However, serious representation is difficult to sustain and maintain in the media owing to competitiveness in the markets and the 51ensationalizing of stories which contributes to “public cynicism” (Coronel, 2001:1). To that effect, the media representation of citizen action in South Africa is discussed next.

2.5.7 Media representation of citizen action in South Africa

Wasserman and Garman (2012:40) observe that when it comes to the media in South Africa, despite the changes it has undergone and the role it has played as an agent of democratic discourse, questions of “how it should deepen democracy gains and facilitate citizen participation” or actions, still need to be demystified. Despite this, Friedman (2006:1) and Wassermann and Garman (2012:40) concur that the media has played a significant role in mobilising the marginalised communities of South Africa. The media became a strong methodology and a successful instrument of winning change over the past dispensation. Therefore, post- democracy, the Press Council of South Africa (PCSA) (2011:59) observes that, similar to the situation in most democracies, the media in South Africa has a responsibility to reflect the wider context of own society, including representation of the role played by citizens in strengthening

its democracy. The PCSA (2011:59) argues that in South Africa, the print media (newspapers) has played a significant role in shaping public opinion through its 're-presentation' of state affairs.

South Africa continues to be confronted with challenges of corruption, cronyism and looting of state coffers by the same people who supposedly implement state policies and development objectives (Karodia 2016:1). Contextual demands (i.e. poverty) remain persistent while poor service delivery continues to hamper the realisation of the needs of marginalised communities (Karodia 2016:1). This is despite commitments made in the Constitution and policies of national development that improving people's lives is a national priority (Gumede, 2017:13). Therefore, Friedman (2006:3; 5) argues that it is not surprising that poor citizens take action against unjust practices by government officials, as well as elite groups, and insist that they deliver on their mandates to care for the poor. According to Wasserman et al (2018:147), the media coverage of citizen actions in South Africa acts to either "amplify the voices of those citizens who have been left on the margins of the public sphere, or further silence them by portraying their protests as illegitimate or undemocratic".

The Treatment Action Campaign's (TAC) representation in the media is a classic example of the media playing a significant role in amplifying the voices of the marginalised by offering a platform for "public debates", as well as providing support (Friedman & Mottiar, 2004:31). This support was demonstrated particularly during the roll out of anti-retroviral drugs and education campaigns on HIV/AIDs during what is termed "civic disobedience", meaning to bring change to unjust policies imposed by political powers (Friedman & Mottiar, 2004:31). Friedman and Mottiar (2004:31) observe that the TAC's "civil disobedience campaign received a lot of coverage […] both locally and internationally and for the most part the media stayed on TAC's side". In that case, the struggle within critical spaces such as elections, campaigns, group actions and protests that contribute to democracy, demands equal attention and representation in the media (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999:11). That is because these actions from grassroots become effective if mass citizen participation constructs and yields positive solutions and alternatives in the presence of the media (Pantazioudou, 2013:758).

Gaventa and Valderrama (1999:11) observe that citizens will be stimulated and inspired if they can learn skills from the media such as advocating for effective policy influence, cooperation in governance and accountability in all spheres of the government. This notion is supported by Heller (2001:143) who notes that in South Africa, "the capacity of citizens to participate in policy-making and engage in public life is crucial for deepening democracy". On the other end of the spectrum, though, media representations can often act to delegitimise civic actions and protests (Pointer, 2015:2). This is also true in the media representation of housing delivery, which is discussed next.

2.5.8 Media representation on citizen action in housing delivery

Every now and then "the media announces that protests have increased" and highlights the negative consequences of the community or citizens' service or housing protests or both (Pointer, 2015:2). This type of reporting by the mainstream mass media contributes to a growing protest paradigm that dehumanises and demonises protesters (Pointer, 2015:2). Wasserman et al (2018:146), Chuma, Wasserman and Bosch (2017:1), Wasserman, Bosch and Chuma (2016:2), Pointer (2015:1), Pieterse and Van Donk (2013:19), Friedman (2011:111), and Alexander (2010:25 & 29) note that from the early 2000s there was an upswing of daily occurrences of service delivery protests, tackling, *inter alia*, issues relating to the limited roll-out of housing projects. Since then, an average of 2.1 protests per day was recorded in a five-year period between 2004 and 2009 (Alexander, 2010:25). In her study, Pointer (2015:1) reveals that in 2013 alone the media recorded 155 service delivery protests. Friedman (2011:111) and Alexander (2010:25) have branded these protests as the rebellion of the poor or the voiceless revolt.

According to Wasserman et al (2016:151), when it comes to citizen action in the form of protesting in democratic South Africa, representation varies from one media outlet to the other. Wasserman et al (2018:148&151) provide the following account of varied representations when they note the following:

> The label service [housing] delivery protests often used by the media undermines the ability of [the] media audiences to gain understanding of the wider context of these protests and to engage in the debates about what they mean for the post-apartheid dispensation […] some variation in how each

> newspaper covered the conflict [protests], with the *Mail & Guardian* portraying the most negative evaluation. The *Daily Sun* portrayed the protesters most positively, followed by the *Business Day* and *New Age*. Moreover, the *Mail & Guardian* described the protesters negatively, frequently referring to their incompetence, while interestingly *Business Day* described them as principled […] The *Mail & Guardian*, targeting a more middle-class audience, would thus be more critical (*sic*).

From these observations, Wasserman et al (2016:2), Pointer (2015:1-2) and Friedman (2011:112) argue that, as in the colonial and apartheid eras, service delivery protests by marginalised communities are still represented as unusual or mysterious sets of events and thus receive unfavourable or superficial media coverage. The actions of the poor have often been represented as a "wave of protests", implying an uncontrollable mass of protestors set to wreak havoc (Friedman, 2011:112). Additionally, the reporting often lacks depth and the context needed to explain the underlying issues that lead to the protests (Wasserman et al, 2016:2). In addition to this, "commercial pressures" of media houses result in the media's representing protests as "drama", that is, as an inconvenience to the middle class. In so doing, the media attracts the middle-class's interest and attention (Wasserman et al, 2016:2). Pointer (2015:ii) argues that the most prevalent representations on service (housing) delivery protests used by the South African print media in 2013 would reflect "the war/spectacle frame and the failed democracy frame followed by law/crime all of which serve "to delegitimise service delivery protests". This is often in contrast to the coverage of revolts of white suburban residents' grievances on service delivery that are often more likely to be extensive and receive salience in the mainstream press (Friedman, 2011:112). Friedman (2011:111-2), Pointer (2015:ii), and Tsheola and Sebola (2012:172) observe and agree that often frames as selected by the media tend to galvanise the delegitimisation of protests and criminalise protesters, thus signifying that South Africa is failing as a state. Moreover, the rights of South Africans to access social services, including housing, "[are] barely mentioned, and the voices of protesters hardly represented in the news articles" (Alexander, 2010:29). Consequently, the effects of inadequate representation by the media naturally "denigrate poor people", and mostly depict a distorted picture of the marginalised (Friedman, 2011:111; Alexander, 2010:25). This is largely to keep alive false claims about protest actions that go back to the era of "the apartheid system [that] governed the country" (Friedman, 2011:111).

Friedman (2011:111) decries the South African press's apathy when it comes to the coverage or lack thereof of the issues of the poor, including housing delivery protest actions. He notes that the mainstream press has done "very little" to report or represent or "make sense" of issues of citizens' service delivery protests. What scholars such as Wasserman et al (2018:150) found in their investigation of the print media coverage of service (housing) delivery is that most of the stories in the political section of newspapers are indicative of the fact that service-related protests are no longer front-page news. This finding demonstrates that as far as the media is concerned, community actions to demand their rights now lack salience and nuance, meaning that they are no longer at the top of the agenda as their importance is in-between (Wasserman et al*,* 2016:150). In this regard, and in relation to coverage of protest actions on housing delivery in the media, Friedman (2011:111) argues that the media coverage on protest actions portrays them as acts of violence. Although, as McKinnely (in Wasserman et al, 2018:148) points out, research indicates that only a minority of protests in South Africa have been violent, the media coverage often blows the protest action out of proportion and coverage is dominated by the few violent protests. Wasserman et al *(*2018:148) found that in that manner the media often acts to shapes the form of these protests. Even when there are few protesting citizens, the media portrays housing delivery protest actions as violent (Pointer, 2015:2; Friedman, 2011:111).

Often, most of these protests are organised by civil society organisations and therefore follow "calculated logic" (Friedman, 2011:111). It is only on sporadic occasions that these protests emerge in a spontaneous organic nature and are typified as the media often insinuates – as citizen action out of control (Wasserman et al, 2016:3). Correspondingly, Wasserman et al (2016:150) found that the media often tends to represent protestors as "action oriented", thus signifying protest actions as being of a violent nature. While this was evident in the mainstream press, they found that the tabloids, for example the *Daily Sun*, were more likely to take a bottom-up approach and provide a diversified representation of community protests on service delivery (Wasserman et al, 2016:150). Taking a bottom-up approach, the *Daily Sun* would seek out quotes on the ground as well as using citizens' names, thereby humanising the protestors and their lived experiences (Wasserman et al, 2016:150). Furthermore, a tabloid such as The *Daily Sun* would approach the officials and their sources to verify

the information (ibid). According to Wasserman et al (2016:150), tabloids' representation of housing delivery protests was found to be different from the modus operandi of the mainstream newspapers. In short, Wasserman et al's (2016:5) scrutinisation of the media representations of community protests indicates that the media either acts to serve to contribute to peaceful engagements, or 'exacerbates' violent conflicts (Wasserman et al, 2016:5).

Nleya (2014:11) postulates that "service [housing] delivery remains a central and symbolic part of actualising a meaningful life in poor urban [and rural] areas". As it stands, the media's representation of governance in South Africa depicts a grim picture of a lack of housing delivery which is central to service delivery grievances (Nleya, 2014:11).

2.6 Summary: Chapter 2

This chapter comprises a literature review. In the literature review, pertinent concepts fundamental and relevant to the study were explained and discussed in a manner that responds to the central research question. This includes South Africa's transformation and development, the concept of citizen action relative to South Africa's past and present situations, as well as the role of the media in relation to democracy, development and citizen action. Finally, the media and representation were also discussed as representation is also central to the study.

Next is Chapter 3 of this research, the Theoretical Framework.

CHAPTER 3
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

In the social sciences, discussions on theory provide an important underpinning for academic engagement, arguments and analysis (Green, 2014:34-35). A theoretical framework provides an 'anchor' or 'blueprint' for all aspects of research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:12). It is the basis from which all knowledge is constructed whilst also providing a structure and rationale for conducting research (Grant & Osanloo, 2014:12).

The concept, "theoretical framework", comprises two terms, namely 'theory' and 'framework'. Green (2014:34-35) and Anfarat and Mertz (2006:xiv) define theory as an "organised and systematic set of interrelated concepts or statements". Green (2014:34-35) explains it as the nature of relationships between two or more variables with the purpose of understanding a problem. For instance, this study investigated the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa. Furthermore, Green (2014:34-35) maintains that in social sciences, a good theory fulfils one primary purpose: it explains the meaning, nature, and challenges associated with a phenomenon that is usually experienced but not explained. Fourie (2007:103) adds that a scientific value of 'theory' is that it teaches people how to describe, interpret, understand, evaluate and predict a phenomenon. Related to this, the term 'framework' refers to the logical structure of meaning, and guides the development of a study (Green, 2014:34-35). All frameworks are based on recognised key concepts and their relationships.

A theoretical framework enhances the literature review of a specific study (Green, 2014:34-35). Grant and Osanloo (2014:16) suggest that qualitative research may begin with a structured or less structured theoretical framework to prevent the researcher from imposing pre-conceived notions on the outcomes.

This chapter pursues an extensive theoretical discussion, presenting a synthesis of the current arguments in the area of the development communication theory. To begin with, a background to the concept of development communication is provided,

followed by an overview of the development communication theory. This includes a definition of concepts, the historical foundations of the theory, and its position as a theory of the press. Hereafter, the role of the media in the development of democracy is highlighted before limitations of the development communication theory are discussed. Next, the concept of development journalism is explored with a view to highlighting the role that the media play in democratic development in South Africa and Africa as a whole. Finally, an examination of development communication in relation to civil society is provided.

It can be argued that since the four normative theories of the press have largely been proven to be inadequate (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng & White, 2010:160; Servaes, 2008:15), especially when it comes to developing nations, and given that development communication has elements of participation and nclusivity that are necessary for implementing development in a democratic developing country, development communication theory stands out as a befitting alternative theory to this study (Banda, 2006:2). The ensuing discussion justifies notions behind such suppositions and begins with the background of the theory concerned. However, before that, two concepts significant in this chapter, namely 'development' and 'communication' are briefly defined. The basic tenet of development communication theory upholds the view that each country is defined by its own context based on the national developmental goals and objectives of which economic development is the bedrock (Fourie, 2007:198). Consequently, in South Africa, where housing delivery is one of its national objectives, representation of citizen action in the context of housing delivery by the *City Press* newspaper plays a pivotal role in the manifestation of national identity and economic development.

Quebral (1975) defines development communication as

> the art and science of human communication applied to transformation of a country and people from poverty to a dynamic state of growth that makes possible greater equality and the larger fulfilment of the human potential (Sharma & Uniyal, 2017: 907).

Melkote and Steeves (2001:332), in concurrence with the definition above, delineate development communication as emancipating by "empowering" citizens that oppose

inequalities. The purpose of communication in development is advancing development for the purpose of citizens as well as creating a favourable environment for development to support specific “development objectives” (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:332). According to Golding (2005:166), the mass media is assumed to play a pivotal role in the construction of crucial development Communication principles as well as providing diversity in sources of political information. Suresh (2003:3) notes that there have been several conceptions associated with development communication, one of which is “development journalism”. This type of journalism and its role along with that of its journalists are at the heart of this study.

In post-1994 South Africa, the media often takes the blame by politicians for focussing on the ‘negative’ by failing to publicise milestones accomplished by the government in the context of housing delivery (Fourie, 2007:198). At the same time, citizens at grassroots level, specifically those that struggle for housing, demand that their voices are represented in the media (Fourie, 2007:198). Correlatively, there is a strong view that developing countries such as South Africa should advocate for the use of the media nationally such as the *City Press* newspaper, to promote systems of national identity and to contribute toward building and strengthening the nation’s democracy (Shadiq, 2015:1; Ashraf, 2014:41; Fourie, 2007:198; Carpentier, Lie and Servaes, 2003:1; Servaes & Lie, 2003:11&13).

Given these scenarios, various critical views about development communication theory assume that the media, as a catalyst for democracy, has both the responsibility and freedoms to obtain and distribute information during the process of communication (Fourie, 2007:198; Ngugi, 1995:10). There is also an assumption that the media will continuously live up to its expectations and anticipated mandates. In this regard, the basic premise of development communication theory is that the media should “employ a positive influence on the national development processes”, highlighting the ideals of economic development measures as imperative (Fourie, 2003:274). Moreover, Fourie (2003:274) reasons that “until the principle of economic development is achieved”, all media activity should remain subordinate to the development communication ideal. It can be argued that these views explicitly define the situation and needs within the South African context, especially framed around the vital role of the media and the link to national development.

Next the terms ‘development’ and ‘communication’ are defined.

3.2 Defining ‘development’ and ‘communication’

Sharma and Uniyal (2016:906), Ansah (1998:6) and Melkote (1982:3) all define ‘development’ in two ways. Firstly, drawing on Roger’s (1976) perspective, the afore-mentioned scholars (ibid) define development as a participatory process of social change in societies with the intention of bringing about both the social and the material to inspire equality, freedom as well as qualities that involve people gaining control over their environment. This emphasises both the outdated, materialistic concept of development as well as human dignity and people’s participation (Ansah, 1988:6; Melkote, 1982:3). Secondly, Ansah (1998:6) points out that development “implies the economic and social rights that can/should be pursued concurrently with political and civil rights”. Therefore, the ultimate goal of development is referred to as raising the quality of the people and consequently the betterment of society (Choudhury, 2011:2; Melkote, 1982:1).

Price (1997:139) defines ‘communication’ as a distribution of content to audiences (readers) whether it is symbolic or literal, through a message, to create a significant impact on a diverse public. Servaes (2008:15) notes that communication means that citizens are able to access content that is valuable for their engagement in particular matters that concern their development processes. Whether this content is informative, persuasive or entertaining, it must be presented as a form of a “commodity” in a marketplace that has “exchange value” (Choudhury, 2011:2). Sussman (1978:77) explains that effective communication to all sectors of the citizenry is the main tool of both “political and economic development”, and so the government is responsible for the assurance of the proper use of communication. In line with the above, Sharma and Uniyal (2016:906) and Choudhury (2011:2) observe that communication signifies the understanding and sharing of information to further the process of development. These definitions of communication align with the context of this study.

Since the concepts ‘development’ and ‘communication’ have been defined, in what follows the background to development communication theory is provided.

3.3 Background to development communication theory

development communication theory is referred to in several ways. Some scholars (Kumar, 2012:2; Mefalopulos, 2008:5; Suresh, 2003:3; Flor, 1992:1; MQuail, 1983:131) refer to it as “development media theory” while others refer to it as “development support communication” or “communication for development” or simply “development communication” and recently, ‘communication for social change’. For Kumar (2012:2), the shift in vocabulary explains it as part of the evolution of new approaches to the study of the media, and links relationships between the media procedures and social and political processes in society. In another example, McQuail (2010:183; 2005:184) describes this theory as the ‘communitarian theory’ of the media or ‘communitanism’, and insists that it should emphasise the role of the government to oversee the implementation of national development goals aligned with the “rights claimed” by communities.

According to McQuail (2007:198; 1994:131; 1987:119-121; 1983:94-97), development communication theory is embedded in the basic assumption that the media should make a positive contribution to the “national development” process. This means that the media cannot be seen in society as having “economic interests” to the extent that it becomes perceived as a “commodity” that usually precede the developmental needs of the society (McQuail, 1994:131). Likewise, if it becomes a case of the media not living up to the expectations of society, it becomes susceptible to freedom from government restrictions and censorship in the name of “protecting” development objectives (McQuail, 1994:131). If this happens, state resources such as subsidies and direct control of the media will be viewed as justified. Similarly, in McQuail’s (1983:131) view, this theory supports the restriction of the media in the interests of economic priority while at the same time upholding the right of the government to intervene in the media operations.

The core hypothesis of development communication theory is that the media is responsible for the development of citizens and consequently, their support of the processes of development (McQuail, 2005:491). The emphasis here is that if the media expects genuine contribution by the people, it must serve the people without “exploiting” them (McQuail, 2005:491). Primarily, the basic assumption is that the media operates free from “propaganda”, which is then suggestive that the media, as

a “prime tool for social change”, is expected to facilitate the process of communication among the people (McQuail, 2005:90). This could be true in an emerging democracy such as South Africa where issues which involve the active role of citizens, housing delivery being a pertinent example, often take centre stage.

McQuail (2010:183) supports this notion when he states that there is room for this theory to address the condition of struggle for basic human rights. In this respect, the theory can be used for “self-determination”, “critical consciousness”, and “social-conscience” by both members of society and their government alike (McQuail, 2010:183). Sharma and Uniyal (2016:906&7) build on this idea when they note that the theory is grounded on the premise that the needs of poorer nations and/or emerging democracies require that the media reinforce national programmes of development. That is, this theory argues that the media should pay specific attention to development issues affecting the people of Third World emerging democracies. In this regard, the media should adopt a diverse and pluralistic stance as well as representing all levels of the public sphere.

McQuail (2010:183; 2005:184) declares that by “nature”, this theory appreciates “the ethical imperative of the media to engage with the public it serves". This means that the media can revisit the “organic social form” in which the press plays an integrative, expressive and articulating role without self-interest, but in “partnership” with its communities (McQuail, 2010:183). Additionally, the rationale for employing this theory is that development communication is one of the theoretical frameworks that, according to Ostini and Fung (2002:41-42), re-interpret the media in relation to social and information orders in a contemporary developmental society. To scholars such as Christians et al (2010:160-1), development communication theory is critical in the study of the relationship between socio-economic change and the media.

To fully appreciate this theory in its entirety and its application to media research, it is important to examine its historical foundation in Siebert, Peterson and Schramm’s’ *Four Theories of the Press*. As such, a discussion on the historical foundations of the theory is provided below.

3.3.1. The historical foundations of development communication theory

development communication theory is the fifth of six normative theories named after the four theories of the press paradigm of Siebert et al (1956) (McQuail, 2005:176). In order to trace the thinking of recent scholars in providing clarity and context to this theoretical framework, the historical roots of development communication theory need to be located. To accomplish this, the four theories that preceded development communication theory need a brief explanation.

3.3.1.1 The four theories of the press

The four theories of the press, namely, soviet communist, authoritarian, libertarian and social responsibility theory precede the theory of development communication (Siebert et al, 1956:1; McQuail, 2005:177). These four theories emerged from the perspective of the First World and are viewed as reflecting that specific background (Merrill, 2002:131-2). The theories, known as the normative theories of the media, suggest how the media is expected to, or must operate under certain situations (Price, 1997:162). For Fourie (2005:166-7), they provide a yardstick against which the media performance, accountability and quality must be measured and controlled. Relatedly, McQuail (2010:175; 2005:176), Berry, Braman, Christians, Guback, Helle, Liebovich, Nerone & Rotzoll (1995:42), Flor (1982:4-5) and Siebert et al (1956:1) note that the main thesis observed behind these four theories is that the media imbues the economic, social, political and cultural character of an environment where it lives and operates. This means that the core principle of the media in any nation is to reflect both the political structures and social control systems where it operates.

Of the four theories, the Libertarian and Authoritarian are Siebert's construction and thinking, whilst Peterson contributed the social responsibility, and the soviet communist theory was provided by Schramm (Rantanen, 2017:3454; Siebert et al, 1956:1). The libertarian theory is rooted in the Cold War era, following the United States' escape from fascism, the autocracy of Eastern Europe, and the subsequent export of its liberalism and free-enterprise ideology (McQuail, 2005:177). Nowadays, it is known as the "free-press" theory because it identifies with the freedom of the press and insists that "ownership" should be free from government control and regulation (McQuail, 2005:177). This theory was influenced by classical thinkers such as John Milton from the seventeenth century, Thomas Jefferson from the eighteenth, and John

Stuart Mill from the nineteenth, who constructed the Libertarian theory explained below (Berry et al, 1995:1). According to Berry et al (1995:42), the theory assumes that it is the press that discovers the truth and has power to “check” the government.

The oldest of these four theories, the authoritarian theory was developed between the sixteenth and seventeenth century under what Siebert et al (1956:2) call the climate of the late Renaissance. This theory refers to the application of “censorship and punishment for the deviation of rules laid down by authorities” (McQuail, 1983:127). According to the theory, the media is viewed as a “tool of authority” to be used by kings, including dictatorial regimes in one-party states and military dictatorships, among others, to enforce their will on the people (McQuail, 2005:171; 1983127). The main purpose of this theory is “to protect the established social order and its agents [through] setting limits to media freedom” (McQuail, 1983:128). In its severe and repressive manifestation, the Authoritarian theory becomes the soviet communist theory (Berry et al, 1995:23).

Schramm’s soviet communist theory emerged at the height of the Cold War. Grounded in the twentieth century, this theory was influenced by the doctrines of early thinkers such as Marx, Lenin and Stalin (Geertsema, 2007:8; Berry et al, 1995:128). The theory assumes that only the government can influence, and the state possesses the power to publish content with news in the press (Geertsema, 2007:8). Consequently, this theory is premised on the notion that only government ownership, operation and control of the media can promote national development goals on behalf of the collective (Berry et al, 1995:127). Thus, it is perceived, particularly by detractors, that this theory is immersed in state ownership, censorship and propaganda (Siebert et al, 1956:105).

In comparison, the social responsibility theory assumes that in order to maintain the good of society, the freedom of the press needs to be restricted and the media has an obligation to society, its ownership being “public trust” or “stewardship” (McQuail, 2005:171). This theory requires that self-regulation and professionalism take precedence over collectivism. This, it argues, opens up space for the media to be truthful, accurate, fair, free, objective and relevant (Blankenberg, 1999:62; McQuail, 2010:175; 2005:172). According to this theory, the government has the power to

intervene in the freedom of the press when it intends to safeguard public interest. This theory also asserts that social responsibility comes before the media rights and freedom; hence it has been labelled as the modified version of the Libertarian theory (McQuail, 2010:171; 2005:172; Sibert et al, 1956:2).

These four theories are lauded for their great contribution to and influence on "teaching and thoughts about the press freedom" (Berry et al, 1995:1). However, these theories received criticism, specifically based on their suitability outside their Western or First World context.

3.3.1.2 The four theories of the press: a critique

Despite these four landmark theories offering historical context, countless criticisms have been levelled against them (Al-Ahmed, 2015:26). Central to the criticisms about these theories is their reflection of Western ideals and principles which tend to lack the flexibility needed to explain and analyse all current press systems (Fourie 2003; McQuail, 1983, Siebert 1981; Siebert et al, 1963). Notably, it has been observed that these theories are devoid of a connection to the realities facing African nations; therefore, they cannot be used to effectively explain challenges related to press freedom and development on the African continent (Rantanen, 2017:3454). This means that these theories cannot be used to provide a theoretical framework for this research.

In general, the four theories proved to be unsuccessful for countries with less developed democracies (ibid). Further observations of these normative collectives pointed to flaws and limitations and simultaneously prompted a "counterattack" and debate on whether to "rewrite" the theories (Nordenstreng 1997 in McQuail, 2010:176). This is because the central question that the media needs to respond to is "what [it] ought to do in society and how" and this is not addressed by these four theories (McQuail, 2010:176). According to Al-Ahmed (2015:26), in an African context, these four theories fail to address the basic inquiry of development, which is the prerequisite for African reality. Al-Ahmed (2015:26) further notes that since the attributes of these four theories are rooted in "Western philosophies and ideologies", and not in the Global South's "organisational experiences" and "procedures", they fail to provide relevant lessons, particularly for development communications in Africa. Widespread criticism

of these theories led to the development of two alternative theories that spoke more specifically to the developmental needs of the Third World. one of which is the development communication theory (the fifth theory).

Next is the focus on the development of the development communication theory.

3.3.1.3 Beyond the Four Theories: The birth of development communication theory

Taking the failure of the four theories into account, scholars and observers of communication theories, including Altschull (1984), McQuail (1983) and Hatchen (1981), articulated the view that the conceptualisation of an alternative theory that would take Third World development into account was needed (McQuail, 2010:155; McQuail, 2005:178). The development communication theory emerged in response to this need. For Servaes (2009:51; 2008:16), the "birth" of the development communication theory was "greeted" in the period of 1958 to 1986 with much "fervour and hope". Mefalopulos (2008:43), though, argues that globally, the theory can be traced back to soon after the World War II when intentions were focussed on industries and scientific advancements. The rich perceived the poor from undeveloped countries as at their mercy, which meant that the rich saw it as their mission to provide development and defeat poverty and ignorance among the people from poorer nations (Mefalopulos, 2008:43).

Flor (1982:6) traces the origins of the development communication theory as "developmental" in nature, and rooted in the philosophy of Gandhi (1961) and the writings of scholars such as Quebrall (1976), Freire (1970), Schramm (1965), Lerner (1958) and Lasswell (1948). This follows observations within the political nuances of the "developing" and "under-developed" nations, and the theory that foregrounds the "social transformation and basic needs" of that society (Moemeka, 1994:4). Specifically, this follows identification of the place for the mass media (communication) in development, "facilitated and reinforced" by Lerner in 1958 through his famous treatise, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (ibid). In this study, Lerner (1958) acknowledges the media's potential for democratic and political development and suggests that the media, through its ability to promote development, has prospects for empathy, which is the psychosocial element of a society (Ngugi, 1995:7; Moemeka, 1994:4). Both Sharma and Uniyal (2016:906) and Moemeka (1994:4) note that this

psychosocial element is a combination of both the spiritual and social aspects of a society. Therefore, for Lerner (1958), it is 'empathy' that inspires developing countries to endorse the positive use of the media to promote 'national development', 'self-sufficiency' and 'cultural identity' (Fourie, 2003:274).

McQuail (1994:131) supports the notion of empathy as a driving force behind an audience's involvement in the media and argues that this allows the media to become "the tool" for development at community level. Moemeka (1985:16) suggests that this empathy should be accompanied by the basic and overarching assumption of the media that states that there can be "no development without communication". Accordingly, Suresh (2003:3) suggests that the media should project this empathy and assume a reciprocal approach and role within society by establishing strong relations with its readers or audiences, even if this is at the cost of freedom of expression. Moreover, it is argued that a diverse and pluralistic media needs to represent all levels of the public sphere (Suresh, 2003:3).

Against this backdrop, this researcher concluded that the question of the role of the media in relation to the representation of citizen action that this study seeks to explore would be best explained and analysed against the background of the development communication theory. The media forms an important component of development communication. As such, the role of the media in democracy is now discussed against the backdrop of the development communication theory.

3.3.2 The role of the media in democracy: development communication theory perspectives

According to Marcus, Mease and Ottermoller (2001:105), democracy can be defined in three ways: Firstly, as bringing the government to the people; secondly, in terms of freedom – the freedom of speech, the freedom of movement and economic freedom; and, thirdly, in relation to peace, unity, equality and development (Marcus et al, 2001:116). Ayedun-Alumma (2011:65) defines democracy as a political system or style of government which vests power in the people, operationalised in the power of its citizens. According to Ayedun-Alumma (2011:65), democracy encourages building "consensus" as a mechanism for mediating the differences among the people in order to facilitate the exercise of power by the people. Also, democracy fosters the

expression of the will or perspective of sub-groups among the people, thereby embedding the culture and ideas of that community.

Hyden and Okigbo (2002:47) observe that the role of the media in development is more prominent now than it was in the 1950s as it fills the void in the political arena to the extent that it is often invited to take on the task of promoting democracy. According to Ogundimu (2002:235), the purpose of the media, particularly during democratisation in Africa, is that of influencing democratisation through its constraints and actions to find resolutions to its challenges and vice-versa. In Africa, for instance, the media must be creative toward political, economic and cultural issues by channelling the energy of the grassroots that invigorate and bolster the capacity of the people during democratisation and the strengthening of democracy (Ogundimu, 2002:235).

Ogundimu (2002:235) observes that it is common on the African continent and in the African context for the media to assume rigorous “adversarial, agenda-setting and watchdog” positions. Therefore, much like the Western European and the United States (US) press, to become effective and efficient, journalists have had to be confronted by and accept the idea that democracy comes from the process of struggle rather than “by design” (Ogundimu, 2002:235). Moreover, perceptions exist, especially in Southern Africa, that democracy is not about “consolidation” but about “contestation” (Ogundimu, 2002:235). It is further purported that in some parts of Africa, the press is used to compete, instead of instilling confidence in citizens, so that these citizens act decisively in political and social engagements. Additionally, in their own rights, citizens can become effective as “watchdogs”, “agenda-setters” and “advocates” (Ogundimu, 2002:235).

According to the theory of development communication, when it comes to ownership, the media should arguably be localised in order to determine the level of the press freedom (Ogundimu, 2002:236). This is because the freer and more independent the press, the more it can contribute to building and strengthening democracy. Whether ownership lies with government or the citizens in general, the media’s freedom should be contextualised within a holistic framework that acknowledges all dimensions of social contexts (Ogundimu, 2002:236).

Hyden and Okigbo (2002:45) argue that African governments are often reluctant to liberalise their press owing to their fear of what they perceive as being a threatening public outreach environment deemed too powerful to shape public opinion. As a result, such governments often resort to keeping tight control on licencing and emphasising entertainment and tabloids over political news, thus reducing any opportunities for development communication to occur (Hyden & Okigbo, 2002:45). In comparison, when it comes to the independent media, a lack of resources to create credible and effective investigative reporting often hampers their ability to contribute effectively towards development.

In the early 1990s, the media in Africa was characterised by interest in and arguments over the role of the media and press freedom in democratic processes, something that "the media projects" such as the monitoring of activities that are implemented by the government took seriously (Ronning, 1994:1). In addition, questions related to access to the media as well as the media-state relationship and the media's involvement in development abound (Ronning, 1994:1).

According to the development communication theory, the media came to occupy the role of a representative, and this is especially visible when it addresses citizens' concerns that relate to special interests and initiatives that drive development (Christians et al, 2010:160). Since the media often enjoys a level of political and economic support through its engagement with diverse actors of society that neither government nor political parties achieves, it has the potential to play an important role in communicating development-related ideals (Hyden & Okigbo, 2002:30). However, as Nyamnjoh (2005:2) notes, sometimes the media content is shaped by the imposed "hierarchy" as a result of "routinisation", "standardisation" and "homogenisation" by the national and cultural industries[6]***.*** Despite this, **development communication theory** purports that the media's responsibility, along with its professional values, should be

[6] The term 'cultural industries', coined by the theorists Adorno and Horkeheimer in 1979, derives from rising significance of markets in culture – it is the service or product based on culture, the civilisation of that specific context, society or nation, for example, television lifestyle (Garnham, 2005:17). In a cultural industry the media content is adapted to mass consumption to demonstrate the manipulation of the relationship between capitalism and ideology (Garnham, 2005:17).

aligned with the ideas of democracy, for example, by providing “informed agency” in Africa (Nyamnjoh, 2005:3).

Nyamnjoh (2005:1) further argues that despite varying degrees of influence, audiences are neither passive nor helpless in receiving the media message. Suffice it to say that the contribution of the media since the 1990s to the democratisation of the continent’s context through development occupies centre-stage (Nyamnjoh, 2005:1). However, Nyamnjoh (2005:2) cautions that this “illusion about democracy” should not mean that the elite from the Western political rhetoric or discourse must ignore or deny the possibility of inequality, inaccessibility and marginalisation. This is because democratic persuasions of the First World or the West may not be similar or applicable to the Third World owing to differences in the nature of democracy, thus determining contextual circumstances to prevail differently (Nyamnjoh, 2005:2). Nyamnjoh (ibid) further notes that effective democracy demands a systematic and constant interaction at all levels, across the spectrum of any transforming and developing society. Therefore, the next discussion looks at the role of the media and democracy in the contemporary period of the twenty-first century.

3.3.2.1 The role of the media in democracy beyond the years of 2000s

Sandbrook (1996:70) acknowledges that the role of the media in a democratic society constitutes a precursor of democracy that is valuable, legitimate, responsive and efficient. Through communication, the media mobilises people to take action against autocracy (ibid). Sandbrook (1996:75) suggests that for a developing country to become better established, the media must communicate to promote the hallmarks of democracy, including accountability and transparency in decision-making, whilst being responsive to government and legal processes. Fundamentally, through its reporting, the media must be the conduit for “effective democratic governance” and “ideological differentiation” for democracy to thrive (ibid).

Hyden and Leslie (2002:4) observe that in the past, African governments went out of their way to control the flow of the news to make information more attuned to what they perceived to be its priorities, namely the national development objectives. Today, in the modern context, the picture is different in that both the media and the citizens stand to challenge the status quo through determining the nature of news. Hence,

Hyden and Leslie (2002:5) and Mefalopulos (2008:43) observe that an inclusive and participatory approach requires that the news flows both vertically (top-down) and horizontally (two-ways) and offers civic education programmes and cultural changes aligned with the African context. Ungar (in Hyden and Okigbo, 2002:29) notes that an association between the media and democratisation is a complex task that requires both the acceptance of the media as a distinct "independent" variable and political reform as a "dependent" variable. Such a situation is perceived by Hyden and Okigbo (2002:30) as problematic to negotiate in a "monocratic state" that is prone to dictate and impose self-censorship and may even result in limiting the influence of journalism.

Nyamnjoh (2011:28) observes that in new democracies in Africa specifically, journalists are expected to be "disinterested", "objective", "balanced" and "fair" in gathering, processing and disseminating news and information. However, Nyamnjoh (ibid) warns that (development) journalists and other mainstream media practitioners are at risk if they adopt these trends by the "Western liberal democracy values" that make them seem high-handed or even repressive of their populations (Nyamnjoh, 2011:28). As a result, mainstream journalists are often accused of double standards: they claim one thing and do the opposite by "straddling various identity margins" and so lack scrupulousness (Nyamnjoh, 2011:28). Such behaviour taints the image of the media as it projects detachment from reality of the lives of ordinary people. Regrettably, Nyamnjoh (2011:29) further notes that this tendency is a common practice on the African continent. Nyamnjoh (2011:28) argues that this is because journalists emulate behaviours from Western canons, thinking that their intentions add value into how people communicate and share communication with one another. This leads us to taking a look at the critiques of the development communication theory in general.

3.3.3 A critique of development communication theory

As with most theories, the development communication theory is not without its critics. Servaes (2008:48) and Ogan (1980:3) criticise the theory for its adoption of the Western scholarship to address non-Western issues, thus ignoring "the idiosyncrasies" of the African way of theorisation in communication. Servaes (2008:46) further questions the testability and longevity of the theory. In that respect, Flor (1992:1) draws attention to the theory's credulity and insists that since the theory was

only developed in the twentieth century, many role players in the development communication fraternity, including theorists, scholars, communication experts and sociologists, view the theory as an “un-developed science” and paradigm. Furthermore, Flor (1992:1) points out that the theory is a “young science” that has yet to undergo a “baptism of fire”. By this, Flor means this theory has not been examined or interrogated enough to be considered as hard core in the arena of scientific frameworks.

Ong (1976:1) argues that since ‘development’ is often equated with “government propaganda”, the development communication theory may be perceived as a form of pro-government ideology. In addition to this, Xiaoge (2009:357) argues that the theory lacks “systematic” and “theoretical constructs” as well as “matching models” to describe and elucidate its different practices. Xiaoge, though, (2009:357) acknowledges that the development of different digital technologies has made the concept of this theory broader and more “participatory” than just an exclusive government agenda.

Despite these criticisms, the development communication theory has been lauded for its holistic representation of the relationship between citizens and their states, especially in matters related to people’s environment including physical, biological, socio-cultural and economic experiences that improve and uplift their standard of living (Melkote & Steeves, 2001:332). Moreover, as Mefalopulos (2008:43) notes, whatever perspective is embraced, development communication remains relevant among the top priorities in the social, economic and political agenda. Moemeka (1985:170) argues against such tenets and points to the ubiquitous methods of how the media is utilised in developing societies that have produced limited success. Moemeka (ibid) explains that such cases characterise the media as “centralised” and “tightly controlled”, and that the development communication theory only exists to push the government’s developmental agendas. Moreover, Moemeka (ibid) suggests that the media is then branded as the “long arm of the government” because it is viewed as adopting the media’s ‘to be’ and ‘to do’ attitude, as it is seen as being there to achieve the government’s national development plan rather than its own mandates. Such practices then make the media seem as merely there to convey national government information or simply as the bearer of messages rather than using “communication” in

a strategic manner (Moemeka, 1985:177). However, one of the basic tenets for the media assumes that it is up to the media to give “preference and provide information” and, where necessary, to share with people in similar contexts (ibid). For instance, the media may choose to impart information to countries with a similar political context and reality so that communication goes beyond just local context (ibid).

Since the focus of this study is on journalism, and journalism is part of communication, the theory was found to be appropriate. Therefore, taking that thinking into consideration, the next section looks specifically at development journalism, beginning with its historic foundations.

3.4 The historical foundations of development journalism

Some scholars have argued that development journalism is rooted in United States’ administrative and effects research (Odhiambo, 1991:19). Odhiambo (1991:19) states that the development journalism orientation of the mass media was “domiciled” early on in the twentieth century into the Third World and subsequently became an intellectual and political philosophy of underdeveloped or developing nations. On the other hand, Alam (2010:1) and Hanush and Upal (2015:3) explain that development journalism emerged in the 1960s and emanated from academics, theorists and journalists at the not-for-profit Press Foundation of Asia. They further argue that development journalism emerged in reaction to the concept of “development communication”. This form of journalism developed after many years of historical evolution of the development communication theory that inspired development on the continent (Servaes, 2008: 17; Banda, 2006:1). Relative to this view, the underpinning tenet of this form of journalism was conceptualised and coined by journalists and scholars from Third World countries, including Alan Chalkely, Juan Mercado and Nora Quebral from the Philippines. It was based on the trajectory of how the media is utilised for national development, particularly in poor Third World and developing countries (Tshabangu, 2013:313; Alam, 2010:1; Manyozo, 2006:79; Gunaratne, 1996:68).

Geertsema (2007:9) posits that development journalism emerged as a result of the media organisations’ “superficial reporting, [and] government practice of public relations by press releases” which did not really serve or do justice to development. Development journalism is considered to be an instrument for achieving social justice

and change through its emphasis on and highlighting of socio-economic issues (Geertsema, 2007:9). Such issues include several facets of poverty as well as a focus on poor citizens on the periphery; hence this journalism is also known as “community-oriented journalism” (Alam, 2010:1).

Development journalism came at a critical time in response to the ‘top-down’ conventional Western journalistic archetype that was seen as only serving government officials and the powerful elite (Geertsema, 2007:1). For Skjerdal (2011:59), development journalism is more fitting for the African context than the Asian, even though it was largely developed with the African, Latin American and Asian conditions in mind. For Hanush and Upal (2015:3), Geertsema (2007:1) and Altschull (1996:167), development journalism remains unique and relevant to most Third World and some developing countries, including the sub-Saharan nations such as Kenya, Mozambique and Ethiopia.

Banda (2007:154-155) notes that the concept of development journalism was conceptualised from a vintage point of development communication theory that passed through three historical moments. Banda (2007:155) and Melkote and Steeves (2001:332) point out that the first moment was the modernisation paradigm, which dominated from 1945 to 1965. This era was controlled by the notion that development occurred with the transfer of modernity, in the form of ‘technology’ and ‘socio-political culture’, from the developed to the underdeveloped world. This paradigm concluded that modernisation is equivalent to the Western industrial nations as development is to developing countries. To a large extent this was influenced by the two-step flow model of the media that aims to create space for opinion leaders to introduce modernising practices to societies (Banda, 2006:1; Seneviratne, 2007:4). The notion of modernisation created an assumption that once people become aware of their status as citizens, they would become ‘modern’ and changes would occur rapidly (Geertsema, 2007:11).

The second historical moment is the dependency-dissociation perspective associated with aspirations of developing nations for political, economic and cultural awareness and the subsequent detachment from Western ideological notions of ‘modernisation’ (Mefalopulos, 2008:44; Banda, 2006:2). The championing of the “revolutionary theory”

of the press by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and Julius Nyerere's *Ujaama's* journalism are classic examples (Tshabangu, 2013:315; Skjerdal, 2011:59). For example, during Ghana's struggle for independence, Nkrumah used his newspaper, *Accra Evening News*, to gain support for his political party (Tshabangu, 2013:315). As such, the theory marks the transference of the media regulation that manifested from the imperialist and colonial era to that of state control. Development journalism educated citizens about the advantages and disadvantages of "development" and initiatives, including local self-help projects (Skjerdal, 2011:58). Thus, development journalism gained its status in the new world information and communication order (NWICO) debate and campaign initiated by newly independent developing countries which soon brought into prominence the concept of development journalism (Skjerdal, 2011:59; Seneviratne, 2007:4; Gunaratne, 1996:65).

Lastly, the third moment is the "multiplicity paradigm" which was also referred to as "another development" or the "new paradigm", highlighting "cultural identity" and emphasising the value of citizen participation in all aspects of democracy and development (Servaes, 2008:17; Banda, 2006:4). This is perceived as emanating from Paulo Freire's "dialogical pedagogy" that emphasises "participatory communication" and 'conscientisation' of the citizenry (Geertsema, 2007:9). Talabi (2013:82) concludes that the progression to development journalism can be traced from a modernisation archetype to dependency-dissociation to participation and inclusivity which determines the value of development today.

Next is the definition of development journalism.

3.4.1 Defining development journalism

As with most social terms, the concept 'journalism' is not a clear-cut concept. Waisbord (2012:2) defines it as a complex, contradictory form of distribution of the news and information from sport to entertainment to crime and to development. According to Berger (2010:553), journalism is the circulation of news that can be reported in a form of a tabloid or sensational or hard-core investigative journalism.

Several views have been expressed about the nature and function of development journalism. Geertsema (2007:3) refers to it as "an interventionist" journalism whilst

other academics, including Talabi (2013:81), see it is an ‘alternative’ journalism, a “dissociation” from the Western world models of journalism. Similarly, Senevirnate (2007:1) and Skjerdal (2011:58) call it an “un-Western” journalism and a form of “development reporting”. However, in short, the main feature of development journalism is to report on issues of service delivery such as health, education, food security and housing, among other economic developments (Talabi, 2013:81; Tshabangu, 2013:314; Geertsema, 2007:2).

The term ‘development journalism’ is often viewed in two ways. Firstly, it is perceived as making a critical analysis of people’s living conditions in their local communities, whilst at the same time documenting government projects as well as suggesting how these projects can be implemented (Tshabangu, 2013:313). In that case, the purpose of the media becomes a critical element in support of the government’s implementation of national objectives, as well as in the distribution of “scarce” resources to communities (Geertsema, 2007:6). In this regard, the media acts as a patriotic catalystic third party to conflict between the government and communities. Importantly, development journalists interact with citizens through their reports on news that relates to social, economic and political circumstances that concern communities. In such times, “the news” in development journalism, is perceived through the lens of the country’s populace in which their needs are categorised as primary (food), secondary (housing) or tertiary (identity or culture) (Geertsema, 2007:6; Gunaratne, 1996:69).

Secondly, development journalism is regarded as operating in close symbiosis with the government, political parties and other authorities to achieve and fulfil economic growth (McQuail, 2005:175). In that respect, the government might disguise restrictions and control of the press by using development journalism as a propaganda tool (Tshabangu, 2013:323). In this type of development journalism, the development journalist, an “investigative journalist”, is viewed as “toeing the [state] line” (Tshabangu, 2013:323). When editors conform to this form of development journalism, it is assumed that they become susceptible to relinquishing their own “editorial autonomy” to state authorities, and, subsequently, jeopardising their constitutional right to freedom of the press (Fourie, 2010:151). In this case, once journalists have lose their autonomy, pervasive scepticism tends to emerge and often results in a lack of trust between governments, journalists and the people, frequently sparking

controversies (Skjerdal, 2012:642; Fourie, 2010:149). Fourie (2010:149) negates this form of development journalism, stating this is what was experienced by South African journalists under the authoritarian regime of apartheid.

Taking these two views into consideration, Alam (2010:1) points out that given the powerful influences that the media enjoys, and the significant role it plays in reporting, development should be derived from the practice of (development) journalism. Alam (ibid) further argues that in order for journalists' wishing to be recognised as vanguards of this type of journalism, they must be "ordinary people" who are able to implement development and, simultaneously maintain harmony, stability, consensus and partnership between the government and the media. In this way, journalism can be seen as a form of community-oriented journalism, and can arguably be used to close the gap between the privileged and the down-trodden (Talabi, 2013:83).

According to Gunaratne (1996:66), development journalism aims to advance journalism so it can reflect on the state of the media and the media freedom in a specific country. This is exemplified and characterised by the Ethiopian media where, regardless of the country being at odds in relation to the media independence and freedom, its policy clearly stipulates that the media should play a role in the country's development scheme (Skjerdal, 2011:59). It is in that spirit that Talabi (2013:82) concludes that development journalism should be pursued both as a tool for empowerment of society, while at the same time for the critical evaluation of development programmes. In relation to this, Nyamnjoh (2005:3) points to the predicament faced by many journalists in which, instead of being in service to 'liberal democracy', they are challenged with marrying 'rhetoric' with 'practice'. Another challenge relates to conflicting and competing ideas around the concept of democracy that invalidate the practice of development journalism and presuppose journalists as "autonomous servants of political truth" (Nyamnjoh, 2005:3).

In order to understand the complex nature of this form of journalism, it is important to explore its historical foundations. Since development journalism largely emerged in the Global South, its role in the African media landscape is significant. These issues are discussed in the next section.

3.4.2 Development journalism explained in the context of Africa

Tshabangu (2013:315) notes that in Africa specifically, theorists have argued that development journalism should promote Pan-Africanism, and also be utilised as a revolutionary 'tool' against colonial and Western imperialism. However, widespread accusations related to African governments' influence over the media practices and the press freedom have led to development journalism being branded as a "government-say-so" style of journalism (Alam, 2010:1; Geertsema, 2007:11; Ogan, 1980:3). For example, in Ghana, the Minister of Information, Kofi Totobi Quakyi, sparked controversy by declaring in 1990 that the country was in need of "journalists who [saw themselves] as contributors to national developments" but not watchdogs (Skjerdal, 2012:643). This means that journalists were not to uphold the sacrosanct role of being watchdogs but, should abide by the state's needs.

Odhiambo (1991:19) posits that historically, development journalism has played a critical role in exposing the 'troubled' socio-economic dimensions and realities of the African continent mired with the preconceptions and imperialists' concerns. This is because global relations have marginalised both development and the role of the media in sub-Saharan Africa (ibid). As a result, Odhiambo (ibid) further observes that development journalism emphasises the "functionalistic and normative attributes of the media institutions". This means that the media can be perceived as both an instrument for, and an aspect of socio-economic development.

Hadjor (1990:23) and Guranatne (1996:69) argue that development journalism, also labelled as Third World journalism, can be associated with concepts such as "liberation journalism", "revolutionary journalism", "black journalism" or "emancipatory journalism" which are synonymous with activism in the context of African political struggles. Subsequently, Hadjor (1990:23) postulates that representation by these concepts signifies that this journalism actively promotes and fights for the human rights of the disadvantaged. Moreover, Hadjor (1990:23) further observes that one of the basic responsibilities of the media is to align with social change. Hadjor (1990:23) and Skjerdal (2012:641) share the view that journalism for social change requires that a journalist must have experienced the struggles of an African context and simultaneously think like an African in order to be able to relate effectively to that environment. This sentiment is also shared by Alam (2010:1) who observes that their

(journalists') personal experience of society will subsequently expose them to learning to become genuine in mediating between the masses and the government.

Some scholars argue that in developing countries the press has hitherto been used to further government agendas (Tshabangu, 2013:315; Kasoma, 2000:12). For that reason, Geertsema (2007:2) suggests that both developing and under-developed countries may well adopt development journalism, albeit at the risk of power and control of the media in the hands of corrupt and inefficient government forces. In the South African context, Geertsema (2007:1) notes that journalism tends to combine First/Western and Third World journalistic practices. This, Geertsema (ibid) further argues, has led to the need to rethink the role of journalism in the contemporary context of development and nation building (Geertsema, 2007:1). In this regard, Blankenberg (1999:60) argues that a model of journalism in which development journalists must follow the path of mainstreaming and go beyond just marginalised grassroots development is needed.

At present, various models of development journalism exist. The five models highlighted by Talabi are discussed below.

3.4.3 Models of development journalism

Talabi (2013:83) offers five different models of development journalism as guidance to countries wishing to apply, or are already applying development journalism:

- *Investigative development journalism:* This is comparable to the Western style of investigative journalism. Here the media plays a dual role: to fulfil a watchdog role as well as reporting development projects in which freedom of the press remains central.
- *Benevolent authoritarian development journalism:* In this type of journalism a "systematic manipulation of information" occurs in favour of development (Talabi, 2013:83). This is where journalists critically examine the aims of national development and instruments to allow for rational discourse.
- *Socio-technological development journalism:* This adheres to the needs of the people and provides support so they can participate in their development processes and projects. Eventually, it motivates the audience (readers) to

creatively establish solutions for their own needs – primary, secondary and tertiary (such as those mentioned above).

- *Trend development journalism:* It is a journalism that depends on the goals set by the media of that society in respect of what is available for the media to contribute towards achieving national objectives in development.
- *Attraction of development journalism:* This model highlights the existing attraction of development for developing countries, especially where there is pervasive poverty. The dichotomy is that the press pushes government policies whilst being critical in reporting national and local needs.

These models of development journalism provide the development journalist with the basis for how to report development. However, Talabi (2013:85) points out that there is a shortcoming to these models. Firstly, the press is prone to being vulnerable and, in that case, either capitulates or sacrifices its prowess of a watchdog role. It may happen, more especially of under authoritarian regime, that the press "panders to the government, [and thus] loses its edge and becomes another government mouthpiece" (Talabi, 2013:85). In view of this, Talabi (ibid) warns that for these models to thrive, the media must avoid becoming the government's 'mouthpiece', but should remain "virulent underground and adopt a strong anti-government approach" (Talabi, 2013:85). Altschull (1996:166) warns that generally, journalism is going through "a crisis of conscience", where reporting needs to be rooted in and reflecting its own context.

While development journalism has been lauded by some scholars for its role in building development and democracy in Africa, it is not without criticism.

Next, a critique of development journalism is provided.

3.4.4 A critique against development journalism

Some scholars denote that this journalism is 'old-fashioned' or 'faded' and therefore needs to be replaced by either emancipatory journalism or public journalism which are viewed as contemporary (Skjerdal, 2011:58; Geertsema, 2007:11; Guranatne, 1996:69). During a Thomson Foundation workshop in the Philippines in 1968, a clash of conceptual scrutiny triggered strong criticism against development journalism, with

some academics referring to it as a non-authentic African journalism practice (Tshabangu, 2013: 313; Skjerdal, 2011:59; Gunaratne & Hasim, 1996:98). Ogundimu (2002:235) reveals that such an assumption is based on the notion that African journalists base their journalistic values on Western principles and ideals. The controversies have further sparked critical perceptions about the nature of this journalism, and it has been accused of conforming to the needs of the public policy of the day, thus appearing to be serving those in power instead of performing its fundamental roles (Geertsema, 2007:10).

Historically, development journalism was perceived as problematic because, as Odhiambo (1991:17) observes, it lacked "organic relevance" to make it legitimately pertinent specifically for sub-Saharan African journalists. Furthermore, Odhiambo (ibid) further observes that the concept of 'development' stimulates "blind patriotism" and that 'blind patriotism' can encourage people to view things on one side, without disputing and/or accepting questionable issues or even encouraging intolerance of criticism (Odhiambo, 1991:17). The value of patriotism can only be encouraged when, for instance, it transcends exclusion and discrimination (Africa, 2015:127). However, based on challenges of the socio-political climate in the region (Africa), the development journalism is a "welcome departure from the Western mass media paradigms" (Odhiambo, 1991:17). Nowadays, a lack of specialists for development journalism, coupled with the demand for sufficient time and resources for effective implementation, impedes reasonable audience engagement (Piontek, 2016:51). Additionally, for it to be executed successfully, development journalism requires to be carefully formulated, planned and managed (Piontek, 2016:53). Moreover, new trends emerge such as authoritarian rule which is now replaced by democracy of which people have to be full participants and determinants (Piontek, 2016:53).

In terms of South Africa, according to Geertsema (2007:12), a lack of experience and/or training tends to limit the effectiveness of this form of journalism. For instance, in a study conducted on behalf of the South African Editors' Forum (SANEF) in 2004, news editors commented on the lack of journalists' skills and training that impact on "critical thinking in reporting" (Geertsema, 2007:12). This skills gap hinders credible reporting or journalism. Notwithstanding, Tshabangu (2013:312) is in agreement with Geertsema (2007:12) about the potential danger of development journalism being

used as a tool to promote government ideologies and agendas. These scholars thus maintain that for the press to be autonomous and effective, it must always be independent of government control. Skjerdal (2011:60) points to one example in the military regime of Buhari in Nigeria, where from 1983 to 1985, it used development journalism in its official policy as a weapon to restrict operations of the independent media. Similarly, authoritarian governments in Asia have limited critical reporting of government activities by the local media under the guise of development journalism (Skjerdal, 2011:59). Accordingly, it can be argued that the "social change journalist" will become more poised to adopt an "interventionist" approach that is a prerequisite for development journalism to occur (Geertsema, 2007:12). However, Skjerdal (2011:60) observes that not everyone is 'enthusiastic' about this stance; some criticise it because it is related to other "interventionist journalism" ideologies such as 'advocacy', 'liberation' and 'revolutionary'.

While various opinions on the role and impact of development communication theory and development journalism have emerged, the media and journalists are not the only proponents seen to impact on this form of communication. Civil society, in its position as a critical catalyst between the government and the people, also plays a significant role in development. As such, the impact of civil society on development communication is discussed next.

3.5 Development communication and civil society: civil society, whose mouthpiece?

McQuail (2000:492) explains that social theory describes civil society as forms of organisations that offer recourse to "totalitarianism" or "communist rule" acting on an intermediary basis between the state and its citizens. For Dahlgren (2002:4), civil society refers to a space for citizens to take action and participate in their democracy, this space being in both political and social science spheres. Therefore, any decline in this participation by citizens means a weak democracy. According to McQuail (2000:492), the basis of civil society requires that independent voluntary collective associations must operate free of constraints and interference by other actors in the social sphere. As such, civil society can be seen to occupy a similar role to the media which is largely considered as one of the institutions pre-conditioned by freedom of association and expression (ibid). For Fukuyama (2001:11), the absence of civil society means the absence of democracy. In other words, civil society protects people

from government constraints and interference by making sure citizens have their liberty to enjoy. Importantly, civil society instils confidence in citizens to organise themselves as collectives so they can achieve their own development goals (Fukuyama, 2001:11).

In development communication and media studies, the purpose of a well-functioning civil society is to fulfil the prerequisite of having a dynamic "political and constitutional defence" along with a constitutional and democratically elected parliament (Ronning, 1994:12). Ronning (1994:12) explains that a well-established civil society is characterised by strong independent organisations that represent social, political, professional and cultural groups, including communicative community structures. Hence, it can be argued that civil society, in the form of organised citizens, is the driving force of development through citizen action (Ronning, 1994:12). Blankenberg (1999:52) supports this notion by arguing that civil society is the citizens apart from the state (government institutions) which has more clout to keep development alive.

In order to use the media to empower citizens, Mefalopolos (2008:23) and Ronning (1994:14) suggest certain ways that can assist in developing a self-organising civil society and, at the same time, make the state accountable. These are:

- through a variety of NGOs and social movements and
- via the communication media.

Like global organisations, South African NGOs play a critical role in pressuring the government to make changes in areas such as global warming, gender rights, and HIV/AIDS (Weideman, 2015: 1-2; Habib 2003:2). One organisation, known as *Abahlali Basemjondolo,* advocates and mobilises the government on behalf of citizens dwelling in informal settlements across the country for better implementation of national development through housing delivery (Rubin, 2011:480). Rubin (2011:480 & 482) points out that such acts require more visibility regarding the role of promoting national development by the media in development journalism. This is because counter debates point to these local NGOs as less effective in fostering democracy or respect for human rights owing to a lack of a strong power base that is expected to be seen on the media (Hyden & Okigbo, 2002:47). Hyden and Okigbo (2002:47) suggest that

at other times not being a member of an organisation to play such a powerful role, or using the same kind of “bottom-up” approach, is required. Sometimes emerging local organisations could be challenged by lack of resources, experience, technological and professional capabilities necessary for being effective in performing an influential public role (Hyden & Okigbo, 2002:47). However, despite working hard to improve playing the ‘watchdog role’, teaming up with the media, and informing the public on issues of efficacy, credibility and general interest, sometimes these organisations do not measure up to bureaucratic expectations (Hyden & Okigbo, 2002:47). Although there is an assumption that civil society exists, the media is understood to be speaking to the ruling elites (Blankenberg, 1999:52).

A summary of the chapter is provided next.

3.6 Summary: Chapter 3

This chapter specifically examined the development communication framework as well as theoretical concepts pertinent to the interpretation of the theory as this study’s theoretical framework. The chapter traced the genesis of the development communication theory and the validity of the theory by tracing historical foundations, particularly in context of the objectives of this study. Also, the theory has been interrogated against the backdrop of the development communication journalism since this study sought to interrogate journalistic tenets and principles driving the newspaper being investigated in this study. The role of media and the connection between the media and democracy are embedded as specific interests in order to make a significant input and provide insights in ongoing debates for strengthening the transforming democracy in post-apartheid South Africa.

The next chapter focus on the research design and methodology of this study.

CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology chosen for this study. Kumar (2014:29 & 381) defines research design as a type of inquiry in which the researcher indicates the plan of various approaches to be used in solving the research problem. In short, it sets out specific details of the investigation (Kumar, 2014:29). Kumar (ibid) notes that the purpose of selecting a specific research design is to provide direction for the study through deciding, describing, justifying and explaining how the researcher will come to answer the overall research question. Ultimately, a research design allows the researcher to validate the findings, associations and suppositions of the study (ibid).

A research methodology is defined as a systematic and purposeful plan to solve a problem and reflects how the research will produce data (Creswell, 2009:65). It refers to specific techniques used in the research that are used to identify, select, process and analyse data in a study (Creswell, 2009:65). The purpose of a research methodology is to make sure that objectives are achieved (ibid).

This chapter commences with a brief explanation of qualitative case studies as a form of research design. Subsequently the research methodology is explored. Finally, the data collection techniques used in the study, namely content analysis and interviews, are examined and discussed.

According to Creswell (2009:4), qualitative research is an approach that allows researchers to explore and make sense, that is, create meaning, of a complex “social and human problem”. Through the investigation of how the *City Press* journalists experience and represent housing delivery, this study aimed to create greater meaning around the issues relating to housing delivery in South Africa. To achieve that, the main research question of this study was: How did the *City Press* represent citizen action on housing delivery for national development in South Africa between the years 2005 and 2015?

And, to clarify this research question and achieve its aims, the following research sub-questions were formulated:

1. What was the *City Press* own position with regard to citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa?
2. In what ways did the local government enhance or hinder citizen action on housing delivery in communities as represented by the *City Press* during the period 2005 to 2015?
3. How were the contributions of contractors' or developers' workmanship on citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa represented by the *City Press*?

Scott and Garner (2013:32) note that all scientific studies answer a question. In other words, a good research question 'motivates' and 'structures' data collection so that the end-product, the data, is not merely a report of observations, but a meaningful study (Scott & Garner, 2013:32). Furthermore, Scott and Garner (ibid) further point out that a research question allows the researcher to organise the study in a consistent and coherent manner.

The major or central question of this study is the following:

How did the *City Press* represent citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between the years 2005 and 2015?

The sub-questions below helped to illuminate and provide clarity on the central research question and simultaneously serve as interview questions. All the questions were posed specifically within the context of the role played by the *City Press* during the research period.

1. What is the *City Press* understanding of citizen action with particular reference to housing delivery?
2. How did the *City Press* represent citizen action with specific reference to housing delivery?
3. What was the *City Press* perception of the role of the media in development?
4. How did the *City Press* position itself, if at all, in the developmental role of the media, with particular reference to citizen action in housing delivery?

5. What role, if any, did the *City Press* play in supporting citizen action in housing delivery?
6. How did the *City Press* represent citizen participation in housing delivery in South Africa?
7. In which ways did the local government enhance or hinder housing delivery in communities as represented by the *City Press* during the period (2005 to 2015)?
8. How did the *City Press* represent the contribution by contractors' workmanship on housing delivery?

These questions are attached in Addendum A.

With a view to exploring the above, the study commences with restating the definition of a research design and identifies the research design chosen for this study. Following the discussion on the research design, the definition of research methodology is restated, and the research methodology chosen for this study is identified.

4.2 Research Design: case study

Creswell (2014:12) defines a research design as a plan or 'blueprint' that assists in determining the 'path' to be followed before the data collection or analysis begins, a path that will allow the researcher to respond logically to the research question as unambiguously as possible. Often, the research design and research methodology are erroneously confused. However, as Creswell (2009:12) points out, these are two different concepts as will be demonstrated below. For the purpose of this research, to achieve the research's objective/s, a 'case study' has been identified as an appropriate research design. A case study research design is considered to be "a robust research method particularly when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required" (Zainal, 2007:1). In that case, such rigour provides an understanding of the in-depth of a case in its natural setting, the complexity and context (Zainal, 2007:1).

A defining quality of case studies as suggested by Guest, Namey and Mitchell (2013:10), is their focus on exploring the "unique quality" of the research topic. Zainal (2007:1) suggests that a case study "allows the exploration and understanding of

complex issues" to a point that the researcher is able to view the multi-dimensions of the participants' perspectives and behaviour. Additionally, as Creswell (2014:15) explains, case studies are popular forms of research design in fields where an in-depth analysis of a particular case or situation is likely to yield qualitative data. Owing to the sustained period of research time, case studies provide researchers with the opportunity to collect detailed and extensive data, depending on the data collection procedure selected for a specific study (Creswell, 2014:15).

Creswell (2009:130-131) identifies the following three types of case studies, namely the explanatory, descriptive and exploratory case studies:

- Exploratory case studies answer questions related to "What?" or "Who?".
- Descriptive case studies investigate an interpersonal event often describing a culture or sub-culture after a certain time has lapsed. The aim is often to discover a key phenomenon. Therefore, research questions may begin with the words "What?" or "How?" so as "to convey an open and an emerging design".
- Explanatory case studies respond to questions of "How?" or "Why?". The focus here is on a real-life situation.

However, having chosen the case study as a research design of this thesis, this researcher is not oblivious to the fact that the case study research is perceived by some scholars as a debatable approach to data collection (Zainal, 2007:1; Mouton, 2001:149). There are a number of criticisms levelled against the case study research design. Chief among those criticisms is that a limitation exists where a case study is based on only one case; its generalisability becomes questionable (Creswell, 2009:64). This study has employed elements of both explanatory and exploratory case studies. While the case study research design has been highlighted as an important strategy for gaining an in-depth insight into a specific situation, Leedy and Ormond (2015:272) point out some limitation related to this form of a research design, namely the absence of, or inclination to lack to rigour as well as challenges that are associated with data analysis, especially in a single case study. Furthermore, Leedy and Ormond (2015:272) observe that this gap in rigour is perceived as resulting in very little basis for generalisations of findings and conclusions. Contrary to such observation, May (2011:220 & 233) argues that despite its inclusion of "bias" and "subjectivity", a case study is in fact a rigorous, valid and reliable research tool. Creswell (2013:100&102) agrees, and suggests that as long as a case study is extensive and draws data from

various sources such as a combination of interviews, observations and documents, it remains reliable.

Creswell (2009:190) further observes that, until the qualitative researcher sets up a detailed case study protocol, a database as well as clear steps of procedures of the case study, the qualitative validity or the accuracy of the findings are not guaranteed. Creswell (ibid) further notes that the summary from claims and interpretations from the researcher's own experiences and observations known as "naturalistic generalisation" also add value to the validity of a case study.

The next section discusses research methodology.

4.3 Research Methodology

In this study, the qualitative research methodology was employed. This section not only discusses the qualitative research methodology but also defines the research methodology in general, then defines the quantitative research methodology, and ultimately the qualitative research methodology which is the main focus of this study.

Kothari (2004:8) defines research methodology as "a systematic way of solving a research problem" and a basis to be followed in research. The process in research methodology involves identifying, collecting, selecting and processing the information or data for a study with the purpose of presenting it in a conceptual and coherent manner (Kothari, 2004:8). For Kumar (2014:8), the purpose of a research methodology is to guide the researcher in answering two basic questions: How was the data collected? How was it analysed? A clearly stated research methodology increases the chances of the "reliability and validity" of a study (Kothari, 2004:8).

In social science research there are three major research methodologies for collecting, analysing and interpreting data: the 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' research methodologies, as well as "triangulation" or mixed methods (Creswell, 2013:54; Scott & Garner, 2013:9). The use of two or more forms of evidence for a study – in the case of this study, interviews and content analysis – is known as 'triangulation' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:453-454). Denzin and Lincoln (2005:453-454) define triangulation as a process of using multiple methods and views to clarify meaning and verify

interpretations in a study. They assert that triangulation encourages “credibility” through continuous “descriptions and interpretations” throughout the study by responding to research questions whilst using different procedures (Denzin & Lincoln 2005:443). Similarly, Scott and Garner (2013:185) observe that triangulation as a phenomenon serves to improve the researcher’s understanding of the context. Simultaneously, in using triangulation, the goal is to establish consistencies and inconsistences in the data (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:279). For Denzin and Lincoln (2005:454), a vital requirement for triangulation means avoiding the clash that causes ‘redundancy’ between data gathering and challenges of explanations.

Thus, for the purpose of this study, triangulation presents the researcher with the experience of diversity in perceptions and different realities both during interviews and content data gathering (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:453-454). Denzin and Lincoln (2005:454) note that during triangulation, one “ambiguity can be tolerated”, whilst working on reducing the likelihood of misinterpretation to heed the responsibility of validity. For each technique, different facets of the same symbolic and/or empirical reality are revealed. However, through the process of triangulation, researchers obtain a better substantive picture of reality that results in richer theoretical concepts and verification of the study. While triangulation offers numerous advantages, limitations related to inconsistencies and contradictions, as well as time constraints and costs, nevertheless exist (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:279). However, any weaknesses in triangulation can be both compensated for and overcome by its strengths whilst striving for validity, trustworthiness or reliability, credibility, confirmability and rigour (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:106).

Quantitative research methodology is defined as being precise and focusing on accurate measurement aspects of the social world through using numbers, values, percentages and ratios to express “statistical procedures” (Berg, 2004:11). Quantitative research methodology emphasises statistical testing of empirical hypotheses (Berg, 2004:11), thus yielding data that is numerical in nature (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:389). Quantitative methodologies are often perceived as assuming a ‘rigid manner’ because by their nature they are highly structured, numerical and have a close-ended format (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest & Namey, 2011:3). The qualitative research methodology is discussed next.

Leedy and Ormond (2015:24) and Creswell (2009:196) describe qualitative research firstly, as focusing on phenomena happening, or that happened, in a natural setting where actual events or human behaviour occur, and theories or hypotheses are not established a priori. Secondly, they define this methodology as that which encapsulates, scrutinises and analyses the 'complexity' of that phenomena but only to simplify it in the end (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:269). In other words, where there is limited or unknown information about a topic or relevant theory, qualitative research helps to provide clarity, thus closing the gap (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:24). As a result, qualitative research methodologies are used in many academic disciplines including anthropology, sociology, psychology, biology, history, political science and the like.

Another important characteristic of the qualitative approach mentioned by Leedy and Ormond (2015:24) is that both the process and product of the outcome are equally observed. This encourages a researcher's deep involvement in how things occur in order to appreciate nuances of realities that keep emerging during the course of the study (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:24; Creswell, 2014:185; 2009:196). But, unlike the quantitative data that categorises statistical data where variables exist in a natural ordered scale, a qualitative study does not indicate "ordinal values" (Guest *et al*, 2013:3). Instead, the qualitative methodology captures data in social contexts in various ways without relying on numbers (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2014:22). That means that it yields information which is not to be reduced to numbers as well as involving an in-depth examination of a complex phenomenon (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:388).

Merriam (2009:13) explains that in a qualitative study, a researcher is interested in understanding the meaning that people have constructed, that is, how people make sense of the experiences that they have of their world. Additionally, Berg (2004:9) observes that objects, events or situations do not give meaning on their own; meaning is "deliberated through human interaction". Berg (2004:11) further explains that to dig deeper into another person's perceptions and "subjective understanding" provides meaning. In short, qualitative research can be described as scientific research possessing strong features that seek answers to questions, collect evidence and produce findings that are not pre-determined, but which are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study (Mack et al, 2011:2). This methodology denotes

that a multi-dimensional approach to aspects of the study, including concepts, meanings, definitions and descriptions of things, must be taken into consideration (Berg, 2004:3).

Some valid criticisms have been levelled against the qualitative approach. To begin with, it can be time-consuming (Berg, 2004:3). Not only is this the case because of the rigour that the methodology requires owing to the volume of data, but also during the process of "data collection, transcribing, coding, interpreting and analysing the data" (Guest et al, 2013:25). Secondly, the designing stages tend to take longer because they require "clarity of goals". Furthermore, when presented with "analytic strategies", the assumption is that when it comes to technology, qualitative methodologies are not as sophisticated as quantitative methods (Berg, 2004:2). Notwithstanding these criticisms, owing to the nature of this study the researcher has adopted a qualitative approach to this study. Since qualitative research participants are best positioned to describe events, exhibit an understanding of the situation and express feelings in their own words (Creswell, 2013:4), this study uses a qualitative research methodology to make the representation of the *City Press* "more visible" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:3). The qualitative research allows for the inclusion of many data collection methods and analysis techniques as well as theoretical frameworks (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:24; Guest et al, 2013:3). Such procedures include participants' observations, individual in-depth interviews and focus groups as well as content analysis (Ritchie et al, 2014:22).

As part of this qualitative research methodology, interviews and content analysis are used as data collection techniques. These techniques are discussed in the section that follows.

4.4 Data collection

Kothari (2014:32) defines data collection as a systemic process and approach that is used for collecting, measuring and analysing data of a specific study. The essential aim of collecting data is to capture 'quality evidence' that may lead to a 'credible' and a 'conclusive' study (Kothari, 2014:32). Similarly, Mouton (2001:104-107) explains that the purpose of undertaking a data collection is to obtain "a complete and accurate picture of the area of interest" because the data collection phase is a critical step of a research study. During a data collection phase, the researcher is presented with a

choice to select suitable and specific techniques depending on the nature and aim of the study (Kothari, 2004:96; Mouton, 2001:99). In terms of data collection, one of the core elements that researchers need to be cognisant of is how they will gain access from the gatekeepers for their study (Creswell, 2013:145).

4.4.1 Data collection techniques

Qualitative data collection techniques are both 'inductive' and 'flexible' in nature (Creswell, 2014:66). Inductive means that the researcher applies inferences from observations (Mouton, 2001:117). Therefore, in-depth probing is viewed as a "quintessential feature" and a *sine qua non* attribute for this form of data collection (Guest et al*,* 2013:4). In order to facilitate the in-depth probing of the research question, interviews and content analysis have been selected as the primary techniques for data collection. These two techniques are discussed below.

4.4.1.1 Interviews

According to Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014:55), interviewing of participants remains "a core and effective" method of data collection. This is partly because during the process of responding to research questions, interviews tend to provide understanding of individual perspectives and subsequently offer "depth focus" to the study (Ritchie et al, 2014:56). Additionally, if qualitative interviews are conducted well, they place emphasis on open-ended, non-leading questions, thus allowing for a focus on the personal experiences of the participant while at the same time establishing a good rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee (King & Horrocks, 2010:2). Guest et al (2013:4) add that the open-ended nature of qualitative questioning helps in making it ideal for establishing "inquiry validity". What is most advantageous during interviews, according to Guest et al (2013:23), is the researcher's ability to probe into responses and subsequently elicit detailed descriptions that include explanations of personal experiences, beliefs and follow-ups. More advantageous is that the process then leads to building a deeper understanding of the topic, whilst placing the researcher at an advantage when presenting "issues of face validity" (Guest et al, 2013:23). This, however, can only be achieved when a researcher handles the process of interviewing in a "humane" or "transcendent" manner (Denzin & Lincon 2005:443).

Kumar (2014:182-3) notes that the interviewing technique has disadvantages too. Firstly, it can be time-consuming and expensive, especially if respondents are dispersed in different areas. Secondly, the quality of data depends on the quality of interfacing, meaning that both the interviewer and the interviewee equally influence the quality of data and information. Thirdly, the quality of data may vary depending on the responses of interviewees while too much diversity may also influence the outcome of the study. Lastly, the interviewer's biases and/or background may influence either how the researcher frames questions or translates responses. Despite these shortcomings, Kothari (2004:99) notes that interviewing is an "art" guided by "scientific tenets" that make it useful when the researcher "aims to discover underlying motives" in a pre-determined situation. It is for these reasons that the researcher has employed the qualitative interview method to interface with, and probe the *City Press* journalists to gain insights into the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015.

In social research there are different types of interviews. These include structured, semi-structured, unstructured and focus groups. A brief description of each of these types of interviews is discussed below.

4.4.1.1.1 Types of interviews

Bless, Higson-Smith and Sithole (2016:194-5), May (2011:132) and Berg (2009:105) explain the types of interviews as follows:

- *Structured or standardised interviews* are associated with surveys and are popular with telephonic interviewing. These interviews tend to rely on the use of questionnaires as data collection instruments (Berg, 2009:105). Structured interviews may, for instance, be used for political purposes to test policy, or used in market research. In a structured interview, the uniform questions and the uniform structure allow for effective comparability (May, 2013:132-133). A shortcoming with this kind of interview is the use of blanket questions. Since researchers generally know what they are looking for when they use this method, they largely assume that interviewees have had the same experiences and, consequently, either limit expression of opinions or leave no room for variation in dynamics (Berg, 2009:105).

- In *semi-structured or semi-standardised interview*s, questions are constructed to provide the interviewer with the latitude to probe beyond the set questions (May, 2011:135). In these interviews, the interviewer is looking for clarification and elaboration on responses, whilst exploring the participants' experiences. Since the participants are provided space to explain and provide meaning in their own terms, the researcher is provided with an opportunity to understand "content and context" (Berg, 2009:106). Therefore, this method allows the researcher to gain in-depth information from diverse responses. Similarly, in-depth interviews are advantageous since they allow the researcher to focus on questioning research areas that are pre-established (Guest et al, 2013:32). While this type of interviews provides the researcher with a greater depth of understanding of certain situations, May (2011:134) warns that the freewheeling nature can be detrimental to the "aims of standardisation and comparability".
- *Unstructured or unstandardised interviews* are open-ended in character. They have the ability to challenge pre-conceived notions while at the same time opening up space for the participants' frame of reference (Berg, 2009:107). This method gives interviewees the freedom to express their own views, experiences and opinions. It provides qualitative depth by allowing participants to draw 'ideas and meanings' from their own understanding (Berg, 2009:107). Importantly, the participant's point of view is taken into consideration, including quantitative life history, biography and oral history during the interview (Berg, 2009:107; May 2011:137). This means that a level of flexibility exists while meaning is being discovered or unfolds. Although this method gives the researcher the opportunity to gain deeper insights, sometimes participants will digress from the research topic (Berg, 2009:107).
- *Group interviews and focus groups.* A group interview means that the researcher is able to collect data from a collective of people with similar experience in a common situation rather than interviewing an individual (Kumar, 2014:193). In a facilitated group discussion, for instance, the researcher prompts the group by raising questions to stimulate discussion among the group members. This kind of interviewing allows the interviewer to explore norms and standards. It is a valuable tool of investigation, and participants are

explicitly encouraged to talk without relying on the interviewer for guidance (May, 2011:137-139). In this form of interview, the entire group has the freedom to guide the conversation by provoking elaboration and clarification if they wish to. This interview is used in an array of different contexts and elicits different perspectives on the same issue (May, 2011:137-139).

In order to gain in-depth responses and insights into the personal views of *City Press* journalists who reported on citizen action related to housing delivery between 2005 and 2015, this research opted for a semi-structured or semi-standardised approach to interviews.

The interviews took place over a period of four months between September 2017 and December 2017. Interview arrangements were made in advance via email and follow-ups were made telephonically. The interviews with the *City Press* journalists who worked during the period under investigation were conducted face-to-face in Johannesburg. Participants who were unable to meet face-to-face were interviewed telephonically. The researcher took notes as well as using a recorder to record responses and respondents gave their consent to be recorded. The use of a recorder was for backing up recorded data as well as minimising too many interruptions when asking follow-up questions during conversations. The eight questions posed to respondents were the same for all respondents. All interviewees were given an opportunity to confirm or dispute the transcription, that is, authenticate and verify their responses. This researcher did this by sending the recorded answers in a written form back to them. This was done in order to consolidate answers but also for ethical reasons. Two respondents made a few factual corrections. Such input brings awareness to the researcher about flexibility and "reflexivity" (Creswell, 2014:247).

Creswell (2014:247) and Patton (2002, 64-65) define 'reflexivity' as an authentic self-reflection by the researcher on an ongoing basis during the course of an investigation. Creswell (2014:247) adds that whilst the researcher applies critical thinking and engagement, in reflexivity s/he becomes "self-questioning and self-understanding". Practising "reflexivity" through self-awareness is done to stop and/or minimise personal values, political, philosophical, religious or social biases, judgement, ideological background and own voice during interviews (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015:278;

Creswell, 2014:186; Patton, 2002:65). This also helped to ensure that any potential biases did not influence or impact on the outcomes of the research.

Throughout the process of interviewing, interviewees were provided with a choice to either continue with the research or discontinue at any point where they felt discomfort. They were also free to decline to respond to any question with which they felt uncomfortable. This freedom to participate is in accordance with the requirements of the University of South Africa's (Unisa) Ethics Committee from which Ethical Clearance to conduct the study was requested and permission was granted. In addition to this, Unisa's Code of Ethics and conduct by researchers allows interviewees the freedom to withdraw at will before, during, or after interviews. Moreover, according to Unisa's Ethical Committee and policy requirement, permission to conduct the study was further sought and obtained from the *City Press* editor. Two letters were sent to the *City Press*, one from the researcher during the process of formulating the topic and, the other, drafted by Mrs Soekie Van Gass, the Communication Science post-graduate coordinator. This was sent prior to the commencement of the interviews.

Having discussed the interview technique or research method, the next discussion relates to the content analysis research method or technique.

4.4.1.2 Content analysis

Leedy and Ormond (2015:102) define content analysis as a research technique that examines the content of material or text such as magazines, advertisements, artefacts and newspaper clippings. The contents are then analysed in a systematic and detailed manner. Kumar (2014:296) defines content analysis as a process of identifying "main themes" that unfold, for example, in newspaper articles written over a selected period. Although content analysis is traditionally used as a quantitative method to allow researchers to look across a large number or a 'sea' of texts, involving counting and measuring quantities of items such as words, phrases or images, it is also recognised as a qualitative data collection technique (Berg & Lune, 2012:182; Hesmondhalgh, 2006:120). Content analysis as qualitative data collection is done in order to obtain a comprehensive sense of a type of reporting found in the newspaper across a wide range of readers (Berg & Lune, 2012:182; Hesmondhalgh, 2006:120). Additionally,

content analysis is mainly a coding operation which assists in “detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material to identify patterns, themes assumptions and meanings” (Berg & Lune, 2012:182). In general, the purpose of this technique is to identify patterns, themes or even biases within the working material (Leedy & Ormond, 2015:102). Also, the aim of using this method was to obtain a good broad sense of the type of reporting or representation of a leading newspaper in South Africa, mentioned above under research methodology. Rose, Spinks and Canhoto (2015:2) also point out that content analysis, a well-established research method, is applied in a wide range of social science topics that are qualitative in nature, including media reporting. Generally, qualitative content analysis helps with sifting through data whilst organising a large volume of data into a systematic manageable fashion (Rose et al, 2015:2). It is worth noting that in communication research, content analysis is used in two ways: firstly, as a data collection method through collecting transcripts, and, secondly, as a method of textual analysis of mass media content and transcripts of discussions (Du Plooy, 2002:191).

Rose et al (2015:2) identify two types of qualitative content analyses, namely manifest and latent content analysis:

- *Manifest content analysis* refers to the appearance of a particular word or content in a textual material. In this analysis, content is *visible* and refers to straightforward appearance of words or content.
- *Latent content analysis* is defined as the process of interpretation of content. This kind of analysis focuses on the discovery of the underlying *meaning* of words or content. The meaning is usually *implicit* and may lie behind manifest content. The meaning may therefore not be easily accessible.

Content analysis can also be used for investigating features of a text, namely the substantive (or content) and the form (or formal features) of a text (Rose et al, 2015:2). With the substantive (or content) features, the researcher looks at the message, what the content is saying while the form (or formal features) focuses on its representation (Rose et al, 2015:2). In terms of this research, the substantive analysis looks at what is being said about citizen action related to housing delivery while the form analysis explores how the *City Press* represents citizen action on housing delivery.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary driver of data collection whilst the focus is on the participants' perceptions, experiences and their take on the meaning of their lives (Creswell, 2009:196). Such meaning is the driving force for this study. Therefore, the meaning behind the editorials, opinion pieces and news reports written by the *City Press* individual journalists who covered stories on citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa was sought in order to establish their contribution to democracy and development. This search for meaning was conducted by analysing data collected via the content analysis technique. Analysis was performed through the use of coding.

Creswell (2014:197-8) defines coding as a process of organising the data into pieces of text, bracketing them and then attaching labels, names, tags or categories to these pieces of data. Similarly, Kumar (2014:365) explains the process of coding as assigning "numerical values" to different categories of responses to a specific question. Rose *et al* (2015:1) explain that coding follows a specific structured and systematic way of categorising a group of procedures that involves a classification of parts of the text that the study is presenting with. For Kumar (2014:365), this process is conducted for the purpose of analysing these categories or themes. This technique involves taking the data gathered during data collection, for example, oral or written transcripts or segments, putting it into segments or chunks and categorising it – whether it is a group of pictures or paragraphs – and then giving the segment a specific label or name. Most importantly, in coding, when the process is followed correctly, conclusions can be drawn (Creswell, 2014:98; Barbour, 2014:261).

Engelson (2017:151) argues that some researchers are sceptical about using coding as a method of qualitative analysis. In particular she notes that critical, interpretive and poststructuralist researchers have even called for it to be "abandoned" (Engelson 2017:151). However, she maintains that for a researcher who wants to code successfully, he or she needs to understand their own written data, whether it is field notes or interview transcripts. This is especially the case for social constructionists. Despite the shortcomings noted, they must consider seeing distinguishable patterns in qualitative data during coding as providing a valuable meaning for data analysis (Engelson, 2017:151).

In this study coding was accomplished by categorising text and counting frequencies of patterns as they appeared in the newspaper under review, namely the *City Press* (Babbie, 2013:335; Guest et al, 2013:3). While counting is known to be a quantitative methodology of content analysis, it was deemed appropriate with the aim of obtaining a broader and clearer sense of the type of reporting found in the *City Press* during the selected period. As such, through reading and analysing a series of transcripts, editorials, opinion pieces and news reports from the *City Press* newspaper on housing delivery from 2005 to 2015, thematic patterns were developed (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003:31).

Therefore, through the process of counting and coding editorials, opinion pieces and news reports, linkages were established between categories and systems. This as a result, the following three themes emerged: citizen participation, local government and developers or contractors. Various sub-themes also emerged. Under citizen participation, sub-themes include ‘housing protests’ and ‘informal settlements’. Sub-themes related to local government are ‘housing allocation’ and ‘housing backlogs’ while in relation to the contractors’ theme, ‘workmanship’ and ‘administration’ emerged as sub-themes.

While this this exercise was time-consuming (Silverman, 2011:467), as Auerbach and Silverstein (2003:32) postulate, this technique minimised the paralysis by the “sea of data”. The material analysed was selected from 555 copies of the *City Press* published between January 2005 and December 2015. There were 52 copies of the *City Press* per year from 2005 to 2015 and editorials, opinion pieces and news reports written by the *City Press* journalists were selected which specifically focussed on citizen participation, local government and issues on developers or contractors within the selected period.

Of the 555 copies of newspapers consulted, these constituted 12 *City Press* editorials, 23 opinion pieces by *City Press* individual journalists and 63 newspaper reports

As discussed, semi-structured interviews and content analysis formed the basis for data collection in this study. The process of coding as a form of organising data for

analysis was completed manually since managing and organising the data by hand proved to be useful.

A brief discussion of the population and sampling methods is provided as follows:

4.5 The population and sampling methods

This section begins by defining the population for this study.

4.5.1 Accessible population

In research, the term ‘population’ is used differently from the general everyday usage. In everyday speak, the term ‘population’ means a large group of people (Creswell, 2009:12). In a scientific research study, the term ‘population’ is defined as a “set of elements (containing) common characteristics defined by sampling criteria as determined by the researcher” (Creswell, 2009:12). In qualitative research there are two types of population: “target or universe and accessible population”. Target population, also referred to as theoretical population, refers to the whole group of people or objects to which the researcher wishes to generalise the study findings and conclusions (Kumar, 2005:165). In comparison, accessible population is defined as a fraction of the population to which the researcher has realistic access, and it may be a subset of the target population (Kumar, 2005:165). For the purpose of this research therefore accessible population is recognised as valid, since a subset of the entire *City Press* journalists’ population was selected for interviews based on their availability and willingness to participate in the data collection phase.

This next section looks at sampling methods.

4.5.2 Sampling procedures

Before identifying and describing the sort of sampling procedure this research has chosen to follow, it is necessary to establish the rationale behind the concept of a ‘sample Auerbach’. As mentioned by Guetterman (2015:3), the qualitative researcher has to move beyond “How many?”, and address the questions of “Why?” and “How?”. In both qualitative and quantitative research, sampling is defined as a process of identifying and selecting a small number of data sources for the analysis (Guetterman, 2015:3). This representation is done in order “to yield the most information and have

the greatest impact on the development of knowledge" of the research (Guetterman, 2015:3). For that reason, a sample is therefore chosen to help conduct a rigorous and systematic research in order "to refine sampling recommendations by providing an empirical basis" (Guetterman, 2015:1). Rose et al (2015:4) explain that sampling involves the "identification and selection" of the material or "bounded system" intended for analysis as long as the collection of the material (data) is an "analysable presentation". In other words, as Merriam (2009:80) explains it, the researcher must first choose a case also called "single unit", followed by sampling within the case'. In this instance the 'case' is the *City Press* newspaper and the sample comprises the journalists who work/ed for the *City Press* newspaper.

A sample is the subset of the population from which the data is collected with the aim of making generalisations (De Vaus, 2010:184). According to De Vaus (2010:184), the best way in qualitative research to achieve representative samples and make generalisations of the data is through probability sampling. Therefore, there are two types of sampling methods, namely probability and non-probability (Babbie, 2010:191). The probability sampling entails using a deliberate, unbiased process so that each sample unit in a group has an equal chance of being selected (Guetterman, 2015:1; Shoukat & Parveen, 2017:3). Additionally, probability sample design ensures that if the researcher were to repeat the study on a number of different samples drawn from a given population, the findings would not differ from the true population figures by a specified amount (Babbie, 2010:191). Therefore, in the view of De Vaus (2010:184), the best way in qualitative research to achieve representative samples and make generalisations of the data is through probability sampling.

Shoukat and Parveen (2017:5-6) argue that whilst quantitative research uses probability sampling, qualitative research employs non-probability sampling. Shoukat and Parveen (2017:7) define non-probability sampling as the choice of the sample group being left to the researcher; therefore, the element of bias always shows up in such studies. Shoukat and Parveen (2017:6-8) identify the four types of non-probability sampling techniques, namely convenience, quota, purposive and snowball sampling.

- Convenience or availability sampling: This type of sampling is described as a "non-probability sampling design that is guided by convenience of the researcher regarding selecting the potential respondents" (Kumar, 2014:244;

Bless *et al,* 2016:176). It is mostly used in quantitative studies because it is not representative and depends on “generalisation” which is significant in qualitative studies.

- Quota sampling: In this sampling, accessibility to participants is key and decided on beforehand, depending on their characteristics relating to the research question (Mack et al, 2011:4, Kumar, 2014:243). Of significance is the consideration of respondents’ demographics at the designing stages of the study (Mack et al, 2011:4; Kumar, 2014:243).
- Purposive or judgment sampling: The most critical question for this sampling is who can provide the best information. Here, the basic aim is to achieve the objectives of the study. That makes the researcher appear biased in the selection of sampling units while seeking a balance in the representation of the population. As such, the availability of resources is vital (Mack et al, 2011:4; Kumar, 2014:243)
- Snowball or “chain referral” sampling: Here a sample is drawn by approaching one subject or participant of the population who will lead to the referral of other subjects with similar features or characteristics (Kumar, 2014:244-5). This sampling is often used to find a “hidden population that is not easily accessible” (Mack et al, 2011:5).

Having examined the above, the purposive or judgmental sampling was selected as the most appropriate form of sampling to be employed in this study (Hayes, 2011:1). The sample for this study is made up of *City Press* journalists, the *City Press* editorials, the *City Press* individual journalists’ opinion pieces and the news reports focusing on housing delivery in South Africa during the period under investigation. According to Schudt and Roh (2014:531), editors and journalists are bound to provide context as they promote an understanding of news to an audience while influencing the minds of message recipients.

The *City Press* consists of a large community and organisation, with a large population of journalists, past and present, who have contributed to the publication for many years. Sampling was therefore guided by the “research questions and characteristics” of the study population (Mack et al, 2011:5). In this regard a sample of 10 journalists

was drawn from the *City Press*, past and present. The following journalists were selected to participate in this study for three reasons. Firstly, they were working for the *City Press* during the period under investigation; secondly, they have either covered stories focusing on the representation of citizen action on housing delivery in the *City Press* or in one way or another have played a significant role in the portrayal of these stories; and, thirdly, they were available to be interviewed during the time of the study.

The names of the respondents and reasons for their selection are listed as follows:

- Lucas Ledwaba has been working as a journalist since 1994 and worked at the *City Press* between the years 2000 and 2017. He is currently working on a freelance basis, covering social issues including housing delivery as well as responding to the demands from the ground to cover stories on service delivery.

- Dumisane Lubisi is a seasoned investigative reporter. He has worked at the *City Press* for over 10 years and has been a journalist since 1997. Lubisi worked as an investigative journalist and since 2010 has been an executive director at *City Press*. Lubisi has served as a deputy to previous and current editors, placing him in a decision-making position of the organisation. Lubisi has worked as a political journalist with the African Eye News Services (AENS) bureau in Mbombela, Mpumalanga which reports for the *City Press* newspaper, covering stories on local and provincial government stories, including housing delivery.

- Vivian Mooki worked for the *City Press* for a year and a half, between 2007 and 2008. She was responsible for reporting general news on housing delivery around Gauteng Province.

- Sabelo Ndlangisa worked for the *City Press* as a journalist from 2007 to 2014. He covered social policy stories and areas of government policy, including service delivery.

- Phumla Oliphant worked for the *City Press* for six years between 2006 and 2011. She joined the *City Press* as she could identify with the concept with

which the newspaper was positioning itself as a driving force, namely “Distinctly African”. Oliphant reported stories “not from a point of view as doom and gloom”, but as a deliberate attempt to report “stories of excellence”, including stories on housing delivery.

- Sizwe Sama Yende joined the *City Press* in 2005. Between 2004 and 2006 he worked as bureau chief for the Limpopo Province. Currently, Sama Yende is working as a correspondent for the *City Press* in Mpumalanga Province.

- Mathatha Tsedu worked for the *City Press* from 2004 to 2009 as an editor-in-chief. He believed that the *City Press*, as a “Distinctly African” newspaper, should reflect national and continental glory and disgrace.

- Cedric Mboyisa practised as a journalist for the period from May 2004 until October 2006. In that period Mboyisa worked for the *City Press* as a political writer, covering stories, including housing delivery, from October 2010 to October 2011.

4.6 Summary: Chapter 4

This chapter provided a detailed discussion on the research design, methodology and data collection techniques that were used in this study. Following a qualitative approach, the researcher attempted to create meaning though a case study analysis of the representation of citizen action housing delivery by the *City Press* between 2005 and 2015. Data for the study was collected through the use of semi-structured interviews and content analysis. The population and sampling methods were also discussed. The resultant findings of the research are highlighted and discussed in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 5
RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of this research which examines the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. The findings are presented in three strands. The chapter commences with a background of the themes and sub-themes that emerged in relation to the topic of the research. Hereafter, the chapter presents details of the findings from the data sourced from the *City Press* editorials, individual journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* reports published between January 2005 and December 2015. Finally, findings are presented from the interviews with *City Press* journalists who authored opinion pieces related to the topic.

5.2 Background

As mentioned above, in this section the researcher provides a background of the issues or, for this study, themes that emerged in relation to the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery between 2005 and 2015. Berg and Lune (2012:99) posit that by examining text in content analysis, themes and patterns emerge which may be used to answer questions. Therefore, by so doing, the researcher was able to identify the themes and sub-themes for this study. Berg and Lune (2012:99) note that, content analysis performed in communication, especially in a study over a long period of time tend to reflect trends in a specific society**.** Additionally, content analysis that dictates that in order to achieve the conceptual study of a study, the researcher must demonstrate themes presented by field notes (from interviews) as well as from narrative textual accounts including newspapers (Berg & Lune, 2012:99). Furthermore, in a qualitative research study, the significance in determining these themes is that once recurring themes or patterns emerge from identified data, these can help find areas that can be explored further to make meaning in a study as well as answering the research questions (Maxwell, 2012:237; Creswell, 2009:15). These meaningful themes and sub-themes help identify meaning connections, relationships and trends that are essential for common conceptual development that is critical for data analysis (Maxwell, 2012:239; Creswell, 2009:16).

The three major themes identified include citizen participation, local government and contractors or developers. The sub-themes are dealt with according to the order of these outlined themes, i.e. the order in which the data was collected. Within each of these themes, various sub-themes emerged. Within the theme of citizen participation, the sub-themes of 'informal settlements' and 'housing delivery protests' were identified. Under the theme of local government, "housing allocation" and "housing backlogs" emerged as key sub-themes. Also identified as sub-themes were "administration" and "workmanship" within the developers or contractors' theme. Each of these themes and sub-themes is expanded upon in the order outlined above. Coding that was mentioned in detail in the previous chapter was employed in organising and categorising text into themes and sub-themes as well as into different categories of responses to specific questions during interviews. The first theme, namely citizen participation, is discussed below.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Citizen participation

In South Africa, the delivery of low-cost or low-income housing, also referred to as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) or subsidy housing, had performed "below expectation due to several factors" (Zunguzane, Smallwood & Emuze, 2012:29). This had caused significant tension between citizens or beneficiaries or residents, the government and the service providers. Citizen participation in the housing delivery process emerged as a core theme of this study. Further, for this study citizen participation refers to 'citizen power', a "redistribution of power that enables the 'have-nots' or poor citizens presently excluded from economic processes to be deliberately included in the future" (Arnstein, 2007:216). Simply put, the terms "self-help" and "citizen involvement" describe the meaning of this concept or process (Arnstein, 2007:216). Arnstein (2007:216) explains citizen participation as "the corner-stone and an extension of democracy as it is applauded and revered by everyone". Fourie (2001:216) notes that "bringing government to the people [through participation] is crucial for reconstruction and development" in South Africa. It contributes towards improving service delivery, including housing, whilst opening up opportunities for citizens to have the "capacity to act" (Thompson, 2011:2). It is, therefore, crucial to introduce the role of participation and action by citizens in discussions such as housing delivery. According to Adeogun and Taiwo (2011:63), "citizen participation" amid crises in housing delivery is a household slogan in South

Africa. This type of participation, Thompson notes (2011:2), not only involves “militant activism” or stance by citizens, but also more positive forms of participation, especially in partnership with civil society organisations.

It is against this backdrop that the two sub-themes, informal settlements, as well as housing delivery protests in South Africa became focal points. The meanings of these two sub-themes in relation to this study are explained below.

5.2.1.1 Sub-Theme 1: Informal settlements

According to Tshitereke (2009:1), most urban populations found in developing countries, estimated at more than one billion citizens, live in informal settlements and makeshift structures. These informal settlements include tents, plastic shelters, hostels and shacks in slums, squatter(s) camps, shanty towns or *hokkies*[7]. In this study, an ‘informal settlement’ refers to informal structures or settlements as opposed to brick and mortar structures. While the demand for urban housing in South Africa is high, accessibility to the formal housing market is a challenge for a large majority of the population (Tapscott & Thompson, 2013:372). This is due to “poverty, high levels of unemployment” and the historical skewness of the legacy left in urban development by apartheid (Tshitereke, 2009:1; Ncwadi & Dangazalana, 2006:186). Owing to this lack of access to formal housing, De Beer (1989:72) and Van Wyk (2011:50) explain that people often resort to other means such as informal ‘self-help’ housing. Tshitereke (2009:1) notes that in 2009, three out of 10 households lived in informal settlements in South Africa. According to Tomlinson (2015:2), by 2015, a total of 2 225 informal settlements existed in South Africa. Of these, the largest numbers were in Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. Chilemba (2015:3) observes that “people usually erect such informal structures on land for which they have no legal [permission for] occupation”. This, Chilemba (ibid) further notes, is “due to [a] lack of access to housing”. According to Turok (2011:1), most of the shacks or slums in Africa are “in and around city centres due to emergent urbanisation and/or migration from rural to urban areas by people seeking employment in the cities”. People living in these spontaneous or informal settlements cannot afford to live in already established

[7] *Hokkie* - in English meaning a “cage”. The term is an Afrikaans slang used by citizens - a word denoting a shack or back-yard room (Omar, 2015:128).

townships[8] and become dependent on the government for the provision of housing (ibid). Ratshitanga (2017:64) observes that 56.4% of the black population cannot afford standard housing without being subsidised or provided housing by the government. Related to the sub-theme of informal settlements are the issues of evictions and demolitions. Some of the major challenges facing South Africans who erect informal structures on land which belongs to private people, entities, local government and municipalities are forced evictions and demolitions without a court order (Chilemba, 2015:3; De Beer, 1989:80).

According to Tomlinson (2015:2), a lack of formal housing and its related challenges is largely a result of "insufficient service delivery". Tomlinson (2015: 2–3) further notes that this might be a reflection on the inadequacies of policy implementation and the ignoring of concepts such as "free-housing". Therefore, in relation to citizen participation, informal settlements are where citizens actively participate in order to effectively engage and mostly challenge the government, particularly in relation to housing delivery and where mobilised citizens resort to housing delivery protests (Tseola & Sebola 2012:237; Charlton, 2004:3). Citizen participation in relation to housing delivery protests is the second sub-theme in this section and is discussed next.

5.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2: Housing delivery protests

In this study the terms 'housing delivery protests' and 'service delivery protests' are used interchangeably because often the issue of housing demand and delivery is central to service delivery protests (Nealer, 2007:148). Nealer (2007:155) argues that service relates to the provision of public satisfaction, both tangible and intangible, including electricity, water and housing. Nealer (ibid) further argues that when it comes to housing, the overarching objective in service delivery is "to make sure that all citizens have equal access to housing opportunities". Adeogun and Taiwo (2011:63)

[8] Township – For the convenience of this study, Bond (2000:xxvi) cites the term as referring to black or African townships framed within the context of "urban movement[…]lower income[…]urban development and social policy". Historically, black townships or settlements in South Africa were established in terms of the Black Urban Area Consolidation Act in 1923 for black migrants and labourers and located away from urban cities and far from economic opportunities (Strauss & Liebenberg, 2014:3).

argue that, specifically in South Africa, the absence of meaningful citizen participation in the service delivery process impacts negatively on its overall success. That is, a lack of meaningful citizen participation often sparks crises that typically manifest in violent protests. In relation to this, Tomlinson (2015:3) notes that an absence of effective participation builds on the "participation-protest continuum". This continuum, Tomlinson (ibid) further explains, is due to citizens' losing interest and faith in the idea of participation to the extent that they perceive protest action as a solution. According to Duncan (2016:3), this is the reason why people resort to the right to protest, a right that is protected by the South African Constitution under the "freedom of assembly". The Constitution regards the right to protest as "a democratic expression rather than a threat to democracy" (Duncan, 2016:3). Against this background, and in addition to citizen participation, the role of local government and the challenges it confronts in relation to citizen action, emerged as another key theme in this research. The theme of local government and its related sub-themes, namely housing allocation and housing backlog in the process of housing delivery in South Africa, are discussed next.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Local government

There are three spheres of government in South Africa, namely, the national, provincial and local government, which are distinctive, interrelated and interdependent in their functioning (Tau, 2013:152). Pottie (2003:136) explains that in addition to the co-operative governance with the national and provincial government spheres, in attempting to meet the developmental needs of the people, including housing, the local government had "assumed critical status". This is mainly because the local government is directly under political pressure from "the citizens, interest groups and the national government" to deliver services, including housing (Pottie, 2003:137). Housing is specifically meant to address the basic need for shelter and security; therefore, expectations abound, coupled with pressures because "the people are living in the bleakest of circumstances" (Van Wyk, 2011:58). The provincial government holds the power to delegate these responsibilities to the local government (municipality) if it is accredited (ibid*).* In short, local government has varying degrees of responsibilities related to housing delivery, which can be summarised as the following:

- The local government is responsible for the coordination and implementation of housing efforts at the local level with national and provincial housing legislation while coordinating the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) (Pottie, 2003:138);
- The local government is also responsible for the provision of service delivery, including the implementation and delivery of low-income housing (Ncwadi & Dangalazana, 2006:186; Mzini, Masike & Maoba, 2013:161). This process is perceived as "obligatory in development" (Mzini et al, 2013:161);
- In the local government, "the municipalities oversee the delivery of housing and have the role to provide information on availability and accessing of housing" (Van Wyk, 2011:58); and
- The municipality is compelled "to determine its priorities with regard to its overall planning and housing programme" (Van Wyk, 2011:58), as stated in the Constitution, the White Paper and the Housing Delivery Policy.

Whilst meaningful project management in housing delivery is a crucial deliverable of local government, various challenges "to deliver on housing mandates" have arisen (Tomlinson, 2015:6). Two of these challenges, namely housing allocation and housing backlogs, emerged as sub-themes of local government and are discussed in the sections to follow.

5.2.2.1 Sub-theme 1: Housing allocation

In accordance with Section 9 (1) of the National Housing Act of 1997, every municipality, as part of the process of integrated planning, must take all practical and necessary steps to ensure that inhabitants of its area of jurisdiction are allocated adequate housing on a progressive basis (Government Gazette, 1997:25). Therefore, all municipalities are accountable for identifying suitable land, and subsequently "planning, facilitating, initiating, managing and allocating" housing development in their area of jurisdiction (Government Gazette, 1997:25). In South Africa, housing subsidy scheme applications by citizens are approved following the provincial government's approval of projects and the allocation of the necessary revenue (Tomlinson, 2015:6).

The subsidy process also involves other resources, including hiring and managing of building contractors and administering of the subsidy scheme (ibid). However, Tomlinson (2015:6) observes, as the demand for housing increases, so too are the

complexities of housing exacerbated by challenges of capacity at local government or municipality level. These challenges are threefold. Firstly, at local government level there tends to be a lack of education related to citizens' rights in terms of housing. Secondly, housing delivery processes appear to be too complex for many people implementing the processes to comprehend, and, finally, and most importantly, in relation to this study, there are challenges related to transparency regarding housing allocation (Tissington, Munschi, Mirugu-Mukundu & Durojaye, 2013:68). In this regard, Tissington et al (ibid) observe that people understand "the process of application but not allocation". Tissington et al (ibid) further note that the growth of an informal settlement usually occurs during the planning and building phase at which point people put up informal structures to "jump the queue" (ibid). Lack of community consultation or participation in the process leading up to allocation of housing opens a gap for the delivery, resulting in disorder (ibid). However, rampant corruption also often results in sellers and/or buyers being professionals, including foreign nationals, who do not qualify for the houses (Tissington et al, 2013:68-69; Manala, 2010:521). These challenges therefore result in endless housing backlogs in South Africa. This issue is discussed below.

5.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2: Housing backlog

Wilsenach (1983:139) observes that various hindrances in the provisioning of adequate and inexpensive housing result in endless backlogs and perpetual waiting lists for public housing. At the core, it had always been "a question of an imbalance between supply and demand" for housing (Ibid). Tomlinson (2015:1) postulates that although the South African government has provided more than three million housing units since democracy, based on the number of citizens on the national waiting list by 2015, the housing backlog had increased from 1,5 million to 2,5 million. Tomlinson (2015:16) further predicts that "it will take about 20 years to build free houses for 2.1 million people on the waiting list". This housing backlog is coupled with challenges related to the growing number of informal settlements, backyards shacks and hostels across the country (Tomlinson, 2015:2). Relatedly, widespread corruption, shortage of skills, nepotism and political agendas within the housing administration departments further compound the housing backlog (Tomlinson, 2015:16). According to Ngwakwe (2012:319), another challenge that directly impacts on the quality and delivery of

housing in the country is related to the role that contractors or developers play in the provision of RDP housing.

Therefore, the role of contractors or developers is the final theme identified, and is discussed below, including the sub-themes, namely administration and workmanship.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Contractors and/or developers

Buys and Le Roux (2013:78) note that in South Africa, contractors or developers are facing serious challenges, including a steep decline in employment which, for the past 20 years, has contributed to the slow delivery in housing. According to Buys and Le Roux (2013:79), these challenges have become serious "in the entire spectrum of housing", despite the "technical information and legislation on good house construction that is available". Ncwadi and Dangalazana (2006:186) add that since the "construction industry is an important player in the economy of South Africa aim[ed] at empowering previously disadvantaged individuals", emerging contractors, including young individuals and women who are not financially established developers, often employ unskilled labourers. This is a problem as the inexperience of emerging contractors often leads to poor artisan capacity and poor-quality workmanship (ibid). Given that the construction industry plays a critical role in the country's economy,

> the South African government is the single largest client, representing [almost half] of the entire domestic construction expenditure in the country (Ncwadi & Dangalazana, 2006:186).

It is thus critical for the (local) government to lend support to the process of growing the emerging construction businesses, including influencing the banks' lending policies with regard to small, medium and micro-sized enterprises (SMME) (Ncwadi & Dangalazana, 2006:196). Consequently, the government's support reduces the unemployment rate and skills gap in the construction industry in the country (ibid). Therefore, a study conducted by Ncwadi and Dangalazana (2006:186 &197) reveals that a great deal of work must be done in line with emerging contractors employed to work on RDP houses to improve their operations, particularly in programmes such as special education and training, tender processes, and project and financial management. Correspondingly, policy makers have had to consider unconventional money lending schemes for contractors, encourage franchising and collaborations

amongst contractors (ibid). Two major issues related to the theme of contractors or developers have emerged as sub-themes, namely administration and workmanship. These are discussed below.

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Administration by contractors or developers

Administration by developers is perceived as a key component of the effective delivery of housing in South Africa (Ncwadi & Dangalazana, 2006:186 &197). Administration in this context means management and the role of developers in facilitating, administering and rendering their services in the process of housing delivery (Ncwadi & Dangalazana, 2006:186&197). This includes tendering processes to the government for the implementation of housing delivery. Tomlinson (2015:6), Mottiar and Bond (2012:315-318) and Zunguzane et al (2012:28) agree on three critical administration challenges that impact directly on citizen dissatisfaction with housing delivery. Firstly, bungled administration and procurement during tendering processes allow corruption to flourish (Mottiar & Bond, 2012:315 & 318; Lategan, 2012:46). This is especially the case when developers use communities to fight over tenders (ibid). Secondly, unregistered or unaccredited developers commit irregularities through fraud, claims of non-delivery or incomplete projects, or lack commitment in the implementation of quality standards in low-cost housing delivery (Tomlinson, 2015:6). In this regard, Zunguzane et al (2012:29) allude to a

> lack of involvement of professional designers, inadequate information or incorrect designs issued by architects and engineers as well as contractors not understanding building regulations.

The last issue that is rife during the recruitment and employment of workers is nepotism. This often evokes friction among community members and leads to service delivery protests (Zunguzane et al*,* 2012:28). In addition,

> fraud, delays, absentee contractors, ghost houses, [manipulation] of waiting lists and shoddy workmanship are chronic impediments to the proper delivery of housing (Ndaba, 2010:1).

The sub-theme, workmanship, is discussed next.

5.2.3.2 Sub-theme 2: Workmanship by developers

South Africa's former Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, noted that one of the major problems causing a shortfall in the delivery of housing by the government "is the poor quality of homes being built" due to shoddy workmanship (Lund in Tomlinson, 2015:1). Zunguzane, Smallwood and Emuze (2012:21) agree that poor workmanship and management in housing construction have contributed vastly to housing delivery challenges in the country. This, they note, was evidenced in the large number of houses failing to meet 'quality expectations' and the subsequent consequences that this poor quality has had for all stakeholders involved, including the recipients of the houses (Zunguzane et al, 2012:19). In their study, which investigated the use of technologies by developers across the country, they found that four out of five developers who admitted to "ha[ving] used construction methods that were not certified". These methods, including "the inability of the houses to withstand extreme weather conditions" result in poor workmanship (Zunguzane et al, 2012:24). To this end, Buys and Le Roux (2013:79) note that defects occur due to inefficient and/or unqualified construction developers and the government's erratic quantitative focus on housing.

In the section that follows the *City Press* responses to the issues of citizen action related to housing delivery in the *City Press* editorials, newspaper journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* reports during the period under review, namely between 2005 and 2015 are presented.

5.3 Section 1

Research Findings - The *City Press* editorials, newspaper journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* newspaper's reports

In this section the *City Press* editorials are referenced as '*City Press* Comments'. Individual journalists' opinion pieces are referenced according to individual journalists' surnames. The first issue to be focussed on is citizen participation with sub-themes, namely informal settlements and housing delivery protests.

5.3.1 Citizen participation

In this study, citizen participation is structured into two components, namely informal settlements and housing delivery protests. The *City Press* newspaper's responses to issues related to informal settlements is presented next.

5.3.1.1 Informal settlements

This following section examines the *City Press* editorials, the journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* reports on informal settlements.

5.3.1.1.1 The *City Press* on living conditions in the informal settlements

More than a decade into democracy, the *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2010:4) described the plight of the poor living in informal settlements as "dire and hopeless". Moreover, "the frustration and anger shown by the people" became palpable as they still lived in squalid conditions in the informal settlements (ibid). In 2005, the *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2005a:22) unequivocally criticised the government by pointing out that, exactly 11 years into the new South African democracy, "the people [were] as invisible as the place [informal settlement] itself, their history a long one". The editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2005a:22) was similarly critical about informal settlement living conditions, and aptly pointed out that, for as far back as 2005, the conditions under which the poor people were living in informal settlements have "[been] deplorable and inhumane". Similarly, the *City Press* (Taunyane, 2005:18) reported about the Sinoxolo informal settlement, Johannesburg, underlining that conditions were so bad "the streets covered with litter and a stream of filthy water from the laundry done by the women around the settlement". Further, the *City Press* (Taunyane, 2005:18) indicated that "the settlement [was] tell[ing] a grim story of poverty and survival [and] a heavy stench engulf[ed] the area". Likewise, the *City Press* (Matlala, 2009:4) reported that in Kliptown, "[…] a stream of dirty water [ran] past most shacks in the informal settlement, producing an intolerable stench". Despite that grim reality, in contrast the *City Press* (Matlala, 2009:4) revealed that "a stone's throw away lies the Walter Sisulu Square project, boast[ing] houses for mixed-income earners, and the square itself has a monument, museum and retail malls". The report (Matlala, 2009:4) stated that this was a contradiction because

> Kliptown is the settlement where the 1955 Freedom Charter was adopted at the Congress of the People for the people. The Charter had promised the provision of shelter (housing) at the dawn of democracy.

However, the gap was so glaring that Mabeba (2006:1), in an opinion piece, had disapprovingly retorted that "people [were] living in pigst[ies]". Rapitso (2005a:19), in an opinion piece, was also critical, noting that the destitute in the informal settlements were living under "desperate circumstances" at a time when some politicians, such as the former Premier of Gauteng, Mbhazima Shilowa, were singing the praises of their (ANC) government about the progress on service delivery. In an opinion piece, Rapitso (ibid) openly criticised Shilowa's sentiments and wrote that "when Mbhazima Shilowa said that Gauteng had become a better place to live in, he clearly did not have the poor residents of Diepkloof settlements in mind". This followed Shilowa's utterances, according to Rapitso (2005a:19), when during his tenure, Shilowa expressed the view that the government had made good strides in service (housing) delivery and the government had improved the poor citizens' living conditions in the country. After spending the night in the Diepkloof settlement, Rapitso (2005a:19) "discovered the appalling conditions to (sic) which people [were] subjected to".

In addition, like Rapitso, other *City Press* journalists noted and reported several similar stories of citizens living in informal settlements or structures across the country. Oliphant (2007:4), in an opinion piece, noted that owing to homelessness, "squatters [saw] church sites as promised land". Rapitso (2006:19) pointed out that "the mushrooming of a plastic village in North West emphasise[d] the grim reality of a country gripped by a pressing housing crisis". Further, Rapitso expressed dissatisfaction with the fact that "up to 10 people share[d] an informal structure of a few square metres". Rapitso (2005b:19) noted with frustration that "in the overpopulated Joe Slovo camp near Langa there were 18 big tents" as homes for the poor. In addition, the *City Press* (Nandipha, 2006:28) reported that owing to desperation for housing, the "homeless found solace in Madiba's old office". Rapitso (2005a:19) pointed out that "homes [had] broken windows, with no electricity and dirty toilets". Rapitso (2005b:19) further criticised the fact that "some [poor citizens] live[d] in ramshackle mud-houses". In addition to these challenges around informal structures, the *City Press* (Taunyane, 2005:18) emphasised that when fire broke out in/destroyed their settlement, "shack dwellers started all over". For that reason, in his

opinion piece, Molefe (2007a:23) criticised and put the blame squarely on the government, noting that

> what has complicated the matter could be that service [housing] delivery promises were made to the communit[ies] but not fulfilled, thereby creating political frustration and anger.

Next is a discussion about government's unfulfilled promises.

5.3.1.1.2 The *City Press* on government's unfulfilled promises

The *City Press* (Matlala, 2009:4) reported that the government "always [had] the same empty promises". The *City Press* (Oliphant 2009a:10) further reported that the

> Gauteng department of human settlements [was] not [going to] be able to solve its housing problems in the next five years […] [even] if the department [was] able to commit itself to building 35 000 houses for the next five years, it still [would] not get through 440 000 housing backlogs [because] the number of people wanting homes continue[d] to grow.

The *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009a:10) also reported that the "department [was] adamant that it [was] making strides in delivering on its promises". The *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009b:6) revealed that the "officials led a helicopter tour around Gauteng housing projects to show off 'the progress' they have made". The *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009b:6) further contended that the government was being presumptuous if it assumed it had "good news in the battle to build houses" when in fact "there [was] still a long way to go". It is for that reason that the *City Press* (Matlala, 2009:4) reported that residents were tired of listening to "the same empty promises" by the government that had not been fulfilled since 1994. Similarly, Molefe (2007b:8), in an opinion piece, challenged the government to stop making "empty promises" to the poor and to "deliver services". In his criticism, Molefe (2007b:8) pointed out that former MEC Nomvula Mokonyane's promises to deliver more houses were "the same old song". Molefe (ibid) also noted that the former Gauteng Housing Minister "Mokonyane's budget vote speech echoes what she had promised in the past". Molefe (2007b:8) further underlined that "the RDP housing sector is the backbone for the housing needs of the poor people [even though] it [was] still faced with major challenges". Botha (2008:7) also weighed in on criticisms towards the government officials, including the former housing minister, Mokonyane, for constantly making promises that were almost never fulfilled. Recalling the interview she had previously had with Mokonyane, Botha

(2008:7) pointed out that Mokonyane's utterances were nothing "short of a repeat of promises made by the former [housing] minister [Lindiwe] Sisulu" three years earlier, in 2005. It was for a similar reason that Molefe (2007a:23) openly criticised the politicians' and the government's tendency not to fulfil promises made to poor communities. Molefe (2007a:23) argued that "the strong belief that authorities overlook the poor may be what lies at the heart of violent protests that have gripped some parts of the country". In an opinion piece, Sibanyoni (2007:6) also pointed out that "families [were] promised homes but [got] pit toilets instead". For Sibanyoni (2007:6), the

> Sam Shilowa Transit Camp, a dusty corrugated iron shacks settlement, is one of the five informal settlements housing where about R215 million [was] spent but not a single house [had] been built by Gauteng Department of Housing.

Therefore, lack of fulfilment of promises by government could be the reason for poor people occupying land illegally, an act which was perceived as illegal by authorities (Sibanyoni, 2007:6). Below is the *City Press* coverage of illegal occupation of land.

5.3.1.1.3 Citizens erect informal settlements on illegal land – the *City Press* journalists' opinions and the *City Press* reports

On the issue of the illegal occupation of land, the *City Press* drew attention to the reality that across the country, most poor residents in informal settlements were facing evictions regardless of their qualifying for housing. The *City Press* (Saldinger, 2006a:10) reported that it was for this reason that "many people [were being] duped into buying land" illegally. In the Western Cape, for example, the *City Press* (Mtyala, 2005:9) reported that the "District Six squatters' row began over illegal purchased land". According to the report (Mtyala, 2005:9), the "residents and city council [were] in dispute over land" that had been illegally purchased by residents. Additionally, the *City Press* (Mtyala, 2005:9) reported when evicted by law-enforcement, "squatters in District [remained] adamant that they were not moving from the area despite the Cape Town's city council's order they should be out of the area within two weeks". According to the report (Mtyala, 2005:9), the officials' reaction was the reason that "tempers flared up [when] the residents of District Six land claimants [were] threatened by the Cape Town city council's order to court to prevent the establishment of the squatter camp housing 34 families".

Likewise, three years later, in 2010 in the Western Cape, another *City Press* report (Luhanga, 2010a:12) revealed that "the City [of Cape Town was] using law enforcement to infringe on people's rights". This, according to the report (ibid), was following "violent clashes [that] erupted [following] the City demolish[ing] 29 unoccupied structures erected illegally on Sanpark's land". According to the *City Press* report (ibid),

> the demolitions and the attendant violence came after community members threatened [and] shouted down at the former premier Helen Zille and the former mayor, Dan Plato, during a meeting with the residents.

The *City Press* (Luhanga, 2010a:12) reported that "the police [had] fired rubber bullets to disperse the crowd and 58 protesters were arrested for public violence". The *City Press* (ibid) also reported that this time the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) also condemned the actions of the city whilst questioning the adequacy in accessing information to facilitate public engagement processes. Similarly, in Gauteng, residents were left homeless following evictions from illegal purchased land. The *City Press* (Saldinger, 2006:10) reported that "30 000 people who were illegally sold land and built shacks on it close to Protea Glen in Soweto" were reportedly "left homeless after evictions". This was after the report (ibid) noted that "the Johannesburg High Court granted the request of the land-owners, Township Realtors (SA), to have squatters evicted". The *City Press* (ibid) further reported that "many of the residents who received orders [we]re illiterate" and only heard from "other community members" that they had "to vacate the land". The report (ibid) disclosed that "squatters [had] bought [the] land from men who posed as owners". Nevertheless, the occupation of land was illegal on the part of the residents. In 2007, in an opinion piece Molefe (2007c:7) cautioned the authorities that "some people [were] illegally occupy[ing] land and later demand[ed] housing and other services [whilst] others [sold] or rent[ed] out their RDP houses and remain[ed] in shacks". According to Molefe (2007a:23), housing authorities had warned the residents that "land invasions will not be tolerated as they disrupt plans to deal with the housing backlog which [stood] at 2.2 million".

The *City Press* (Ngcobo, 2006:7) reported that "women and children [were] spending cold and rainy nights in the veld following the Mkhondo municipality's alleged failure to provide alternative accommodation after evicting them". The *City Press* report

(Ngcobo, 2006:7) further revealed that “women [and] children [were] dumped in the veld without shelter”. This was despite the council’s promise to abandon its evictions. Three weeks earlier, the *City Press* (Ngcobo, 2006:7) reported that the Piet Retief Municipality in Mpumalanga had applied for a court order to evict the residents of Ward 13, arguing that the people had occupied the land illegally. The *City Press* (ibid) report revealed that “the municipality had failed to live up to its promises which convinced the Pretoria High Court to grant the order”. The *City Press* (ibid) further reported the municipality for failing “to find suitable accommodation for the evicted residents”. A similar case of illegal land sale was also reported in Gauteng (ibid).

In Gauteng, the *City Press* (Nini, 2007:7) reported that “more than 200 people fell prey to an illegal land and housing sale scam that involved unscrupulous Gauteng housing developers”. According to the report (Nini, 2007:7), in the week of April 29, 2007, “the three independent housing developers made a brief appearance in [the] Johannesburg Specialised Commercial Crimes court to face more than 200 charges of fraud and corruption”, including the illegal selling of land. From what the *City Press* (Nini, 2007:7) reported, the “three developers were so crooked [that they were] alleged to have selected their own beneficiaries who were not on the provincial housing waiting list to occupy RDP houses”.

Next is the coverage of the poor residents against the government in court.

5.3.1.1.4 The poor stand up to the government over evictions - the *City Press* journalists

According to the *City Press* report (Ka Nzapheza 2007a:12), it became clear that the poor were determined in resisting evictions and willing to face the government in court. The newspaper (Ka Nzapheza 2007a:12) reported that in 2007, following a standoff at the Cape High Court, for a week, “the Joe Slovo squatter camp remained under heavy police guard”. It was further reported by the *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12) that “about 2 000 protesters set up burning barricades and littered the road with debris during an anti-eviction protest”. Moreover, the *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12) reported that

> the residents were involved in violent clashes with the police, which saw scores shot with rubber bullets and others arrested as they resisted

> attempts by the government to move them from their squalid living conditions to Delft to make way for new houses.

Later in December 2007, the newspaper (Ka Nzapheza, 2007b:8) revealed that "the court delay[ed] ruling on shanty town" regarding the Joe Slovo settlement. According to the report (Ka Nzapheza, 2007b:8), the residents were given what the *City Press* called a "Christmas reprieve". The *City Press* (ibid) further reported that the state of the relationship between the government and the residents was "threaten[ing] the state's (multibillion) Gateway housing project"; however, the citizens were unrelenting. In his remarks about the evictions of residents by the government, Ndlangisa (2008a:8) cautioned the government that "relocating residents does [not] always work".

In 2009, two years after the evictions in the Gateway Project, residents were still dissatisfied and decided to take the government to the Constitutional Court yet again (Nkuna, 2009:10). In his opinion piece, Nkuna (2009:10) criticised the removal of residents, pointing out that "most residents ha[d] refused to move [from Joe Slovo] to a temporary area in Delft, 40 km away" and decided to wait for the Constitutional Court's pending decision. In 2010, resistance and fights over evictions continued. The *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza, 2010a:12) reported about "the squatters deadlocked in court as they vowed to resist state plans to move them by force". According to the report (Ka Nzapheza, 2010a:12), "thousands of Joe Slovo shack dwellers thronged the Cape High Court in a bid to oppose attempts by the government to move them to Delft while it builds them houses". With the Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign (WCAEC) on their side, the *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza, 2010a:12) further reported that "the 4000 residents of Joe Slovo, ironically named after the new South Africa's first housing minister, want[ed] the government to build them RDP houses without them having to move". The *City Press* (ibid) further reported the scale of evictions and court battles, as well as the civil society organisation, the Development Action Group (DAG)'s challenging of "the government's top-down approach that undermined the sustainability of housing delivery". According to the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007d:31) report, evictions of residents living in informal structures demonstrated that the government had turned its back on poor people.

The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007d:31) reported that "poor people both in Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg inner cities [were] accusing their respective municipalities of trying to kick them out". The newspaper (ibid) further reported that "the [Pietermaritzburg] municipality had [made] attempt[s] on several occasions but [was] met with resistance from the residents, who want[ed] low cost houses to be built for them […]". According to the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007d:31), "the resulting animosity between these groups [was] best reflected by the ongoing stand-off between local authorities and the residents who believe[d] the municipality ha[d] adopted a strategy to kick poor people out of the inner city". The newspaper's report (ibid) revealed that "the magistrates' court ruled against the application for eviction by the municipality". This is despite "the municipality['s] [seeking] to justify the evictions on the basis that the settlement [was] located on a dangerous flood zone". In addition, the newspaper (Molefe, 2007d:31) reported that "the situation in Pietermaritzburg [was] a replica of what [was] happening in the Johannesburg inner-city, where people [were] arguing that the municipality [had] failed to factor in their housing needs in its inner-city regeneration programme" but instead evicted them. The *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza 2010a:12) also reported that that "evictions or threats featured as main method for so-called for informal settlement or slum eradication".

Furthermore, the *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza, 2010a:12) reported that "the government justif[ied] evictions [as] essential for development and protection of the public". The *City Press* (Molefe, 2006a:29) reported on several eviction cases involving the poor facing the government in court. In October, 2006, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2006a:29) reported that the Johannesburg's city council took actions and "evict[ed] residents from 'bad buildings'". The newspaper (Molefe, 2006a:29) brought to light that the council justified evictions as a "key component of the inner-city regeneration programme and hundreds of people [were] kicked out without being provided alternative accommodation". These inner-city evictions in Johannesburg as reported by the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12) were carried "after the council had applied for the eviction of 300 occupants of the six bad buildings under the National Building Regulations Standard and the Building Standards Act 103 of 1997 (NBRA)". The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12) contended that the move (evictions) only spelt disaster because it "brought the programme to its knees […] through the Johannesburg High Court

judgement which also served as an indictment of the city's housing programme". The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12) exposed the council as it

> conducted evictions under National Building Regulations Standard and Building Standards Act (NBRA) instead of the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act of 1998 which demands that alternative accommodation be provided for evictees.

In an opinion piece, Molefe (2007a:23) argued that the inner-city residents should not have been evicted without having been provided with alternative housing.

In February 2007, the city squatters squared up to council. Having observed the standoff between the government and the residents, the *City Press* (Molefe 2007e:12) reported that "both sides made strong arguments in the Appeal Court" in Bloemfontein. It was in this context that the newspaper (ibid) revealed that "the Johannesburg City Council [had] engaged in a vociferous legal battle to protect its policy that drives inner-city revitalisation". The *City Press* (ibid) stated that poor residents became scapegoats for evictions. In its report, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12) described the state of affairs as "dangerous living" because the dwellers were not relenting but fighting back against the city council's demands to evict them.

In August 2007 the inner-city dwellers sought intervention from the Constitutional Court. The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007g:12) reported that the "housing delivery again [came] under [the] spotlight when slum dwellers in Johannesburg, the inner-city shack dwellers [went] to the Constitutional Court to argue their right to government's subsidised shelter in the inner city". The *City Press* (Molefe 2007g:12) reported that "the case [came] at a time when many townships and informal settlements [were] gripped by violent protests [where] residents' demands includ[ed] the speedy delivery of housing". The *City Press* (Molefe 2007g:12) was convinced that it was "the landmark case that [was going] to determine the parameters of capital-driven [housing] development in urban centres". The *City Press* (ibid) further noted that "some of these evictees had been evicted as many as six times from the inner-city buildings". The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007a:23) underlined that "broken dreams [were] at the heart of service delivery protests".

Housing delivery protests are subsequently outlined.

5.3.1.2 Housing delivery protests

The *City Press* editorials, the newspaper's journalists' opinion pieces and the reports on citizen participation in relation to housing deliver protests that occurred during the period under review are presented below.

5.3.1.2.1 The *City Press* draws attention to the scale of housing delivery protests

The housing delivery protests irked the former housing minister, Lindiwe Sisulu (Seepe, 2005:8). In May 2005, the newspaper (Seepe, 2005a:8) reported that "the protests [had] taken place in three provinces - Free State, Northern Cape and Western Cape". The *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) reported that a week before, "most of the protests were confined to the townships of Gugulethu and Khayelitsha". In addition, the report (Seepe, 2005a:8) revealed that often the scale of protests reportedly happened in anticipation of "the local government elections that [were] upcoming later in the year". Earlier, in February 2005, in an opinion piece Mokoena (2005a:19) pointed out to a rapid wave of service delivery protests across the Free State Province "that spread to towns including Memel, Ezenzele, Vrede, Kestel, Ventersburg, Zastron, and in other areas of the country". At the same time Mokoena (2005a:19) argued that

> protests against poor service delivery in a democratic South Africa did not start in Free State. Gauteng has had the Diepsloot problem [where] protests spun out of control … [where] residents barricaded streets, burnt tyres and municipal office block and stoned vehicles in protest against corruption and delays in the provision of houses and a reported threat to evict[ions].

In addition to his observation about places protesting for housing, Mokoena (2005b:19) observed that even "Phomolong, [also in the Free State] once [a] quiet township, [was] in turmoil". In his opinion piece, Mokoena (2005b:19) underscored that "Phomolong is where multiple families shared toilets and only had street lights but no basic electricity in their [informal] settlements". The informal settlement "residents were protesting against poor service delivery and demanding to see the [former] premier, Beatrice Marshoff of Free State" (Mokoena, 2005b:19). Owing to their frequency, the protests were becoming "a common sight" (ibid). Mokoena (ibid) noted that

> a plume from a pile of burnt tyres curls above the small settlement in Phomolong in the Free State. Police arrive. A few warning shots are fired. The crowd disperses, usually after an acrimonious verbal battle. It is a scene emerging from the new form of struggle against poor service delivery, invariably led by concerned groups or social movements on behalf of the residents of several areas across the province.

In Mokoena's (ibid) opinion, "the sporadic emergence of the [social movement] groups, who claim to represent the interests of the people, remain[ed]", although "traditionally, parliamentarians see themselves as custodians and embodiment of the interests of the people - provincial legislators, councillors and civic leaders follow after that". These were the observations that led Mokoena (2005a:19) to ask whether "there [could] be a peaceful co-existence between these entities?" The *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2010:2) reported that protests were exacerbated by the government's attitude toward the citizens' actions. That is because, the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2010:2) reported, "when communities voice their grievances, government officials dismiss them as mere politics with the people's discontent ignored". Hence, the scale of protests is observed in poor communities.

For Mooki (2007:2), there was "a litany of service (housing) delivery protests" in Gauteng Province. Mooki (2007:2) observed that in 2007 "frequent service delivery protests occurred over a period of three months between July and September". Mooki (2007:2) noted that the protesters in Gauteng were "up in arms" in protest against the lack of service delivery, including "waiting for housing for decades". Additionally, Mooki (2007:2) noted "disgruntled hostel dwellers took to the streets in protests for poor service delivery in Dobsonville". When Rapitso (2007:23) visited those "on the frontline to see why they [were] angry", she observed that "the protests that have erupted over service delivery in places like Khutsong and Klipspruit spilt over to hostels". In Rapitso's (2007:23) view, the people's "voices desperate to be heard". Rapitso (ibid) further noted that "the basis for the protests became clearer when we [journalists] spent time with a family" in one of the units. In addition, Rapitso (2007:23) observed that "getting to the unit – a stream of water [ran] through the road bringing with it an unpleasant stench from burst pipes" that pervaded the settlement. This was due to "the lack of basic services that ma[de] life miserable for the 5000-people living in the hostel" (Rapitso, 2007:23). Rapitso (2007:23) argued that "whatever the case, one

thing [was] certain - the people of Mzimhlophe settlement [were] spitting fire and [had] threatened more protests".

In July 2007, an investigation regarding protests led by the *City Press* team, particularly in informal settlements in the Johannesburg area which included areas such as Khutsong and Klipspruit, found that "when the people feel unheard and [when the poor] people's basic services are not delivered by the government - all hell break[s] loose" (Rapitso, 2007:23). According to Rapitso (2007:23), the people in various informal settlements were lamenting to the *City Press* journalists that "when we protest, they shoot us and threaten to arrest us, but we are not afraid because even Mandela had to go to jail to achieve freedom". When the *City Press* journalists (Ndlangisa, Sama Yende & Mboyisa, 2011:4) released the numbers of service (housing) delivery protests from 2010, they identified one hundred and eleven "hotspots" from all nine provinces of which "close to 50% of protests occurred in Metro areas". These journalists confirmed that municipalities had experienced service delivery protests since 2004.

Similarly, in 2014, the *City Press* counted 2 947 service delivery protests over a period of three months, and 3 258 between January 2009 and August 2014 with an average of 32 per day since November 2013 (Du Plessis, Ndlangisa & Saba, 2014:1). These three journalists argued that, instead of addressing the 'burning issue' of the scale of service delivery protests in the country, that for instance in Gauteng alone were counted to 32 per day, the president voided them and went home in Kwa-Zulu Natal to rest (Du Plessis, Ndlangisa & Saba 2014:1). The journalists underscored that "Zuma sidesteps flames" (Du Plessis, Ndlangisa & Saba, 2014:1). Therefore, the reasons for these protests are discussed next.

5.3.1.2.2 Reasons behind the housing delivery protests – according to *City Press* journalists

For Molefe (2007c:7), "protests are genuine people's grievances but largely motivated [by] their [basic] needs […] councillors face the wrath of communities because they are at the coalface". For Molefe (2007c:7), the reason was that "local government [led by councillors] is the sphere closest to the people in terms of delivery", making councillors the closest targets "when angry residents violently protest against poor

service delivery". Molefe (2007c:7) mentioned that such views were also reflected in the progress review document published by the government on the housing delivery programme by local government in communities. The document confirmed that "after the first 10 years of democracy, targets set by the municipalities were not met" (Molefe, 2007c:7). In addition, Molefe (2007a:23) remarked that the ruling party (the ANC)'s response to the housing delivery situation was being "politically motivated", indicating that "they [ANC] were not taking the grievances of the poor seriously". In that respect, the *City Press* (Ncanca, 2005:26) reported that "fiery protesters demand[ed] answers". The *City Press* (Ncanca, 2005:26) also reported that the reason behind Free State protests was that "slow service [housing] delivery enraged" the residents. Furthermore, the *City Press* (Ncanca, 2005:26) reported that the residents resisted as "the heavy presence of police did not intimidate the [protesting] youth who burnt tyres on the streets and threw stones at the Casspirs". Likewise, in March 2007, the North West community was protesting against poor service (housing) delivery. The *City Press* (Nandipha, 2007:21) also noted that the reason behind the protests was that residents were expressing discontent over the pace of service delivery when

> the youth play[ed] hide and seek, stone-throwing at moving traffic and rubber-bullet firing by police since Monday […] the youth of Boikhutso outside Lichtenberg in the North West have been violently protesting for proper service delivery. They barricaded streets with rocks and burned tyres, stadium benches, gates street poles and road signs. On Wednesday morning the violence intensified when, as early as 8 am the township was in flames, with the youth burning what little infrastructure there is. It was mayhem […].

Confronted by these scenes, the *City Press* (Nandipha, 2007:21) reported that the protest "scenes [were] reminiscent of June 16, 1976". However, this time the Boikhutso youth protest actions were demanding that "RDP houses be built within a short period of time […]" (Nandipha, 2007:21). Likewise, the *City Press* (Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2008:9) reported that it was a case of dissatisfaction over service delivery, including housing.

The *City Press* (Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2008:9) reported that "in the past two years, the country [had] seen violent protests over lack of service [housing] delivery". Also, from the *City Press* report (Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2008:9) it was revealed that the "state fear[ed] [an] uproar over service (housing) delivery". That is because earlier that year, in May 2008, "residents of Emfuleni Local Municipality in Vanderbijlpark, Gauteng [were running] amok, burned tyres and blockaded roads over lack of sanitation, water and

housing" (Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2008:9). Also, Lubisi and Mapiloko observed that "fed up […] Khutsong residents in Merafong, North West, marched to municipal offices to protest against lack of service delivery in the area". In Molefe's (2007c:7) view, unfulfilled promises "create[d] political chagrin and anger".

The next section examines the various ways in which the *City Press* and its journalists have represented the role of the local government in black communities within the context of housing allocation and backlog on housing delivery.

5.3.2 Local government

When the newspaper team visited the Eastern Cape following the former president Thabo Mbeki's election campaign trail in 2004, the *City Press* (Msomi, 2006a:21) reported that it was the "same place, same old problems". The *City Press* (ibid) reported that despite the fact that it had been over two years since the former president's visit, "most communities that the president visited were yet complaining about lack of service delivery at local government level due to corrupt councillors, lack of opportunities and shortage of housing". Similarly, Mokoena (2005a:19) observed that "a small town in the Free State [had] become another potent example of the lack of service delivery by local government".

5.3.2.1 The *City Press* on challenges in local government

It is against this context that the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) warned the government that "all is not well in local government and municipalities – a sphere closest to the people" and responsible for the execution of basic services. In the report (Molefe, 2007f:21) explained that a lack of service delivery was still haunting the country's local government and municipalities many years into the democratic South Africa. In 2006, the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2006:10) had underlined that "the state governance was deteriorating as a number of departments were underperforming […], among many irregularities wasted millions of taxpayers' funds and failed to deliver on their targets". During an interview with the *City Press* (Lubisi, 2008:26), the Auditor-General (AG), Terrence Nombembe, cautioned that, for the situation to improve, "the municipalities [needed to] get the basics right".

The *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) uncovered that it was typical of how issues were being handled in municipalities and that this was evidenced by things not working according to plan, mainly with housing delivery. The *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) further reported that "shacks in the area by far outnumber normal houses, despite an effort by the local municipality to get a few RDP houses off the ground". For that reason, Hlongwa (2007:10) cast the blame for the delays in housing development on building materials, pointing out that "housing project delivery plundered [as] crime, theft and vandalism cripple[d] development". This is also confirmed by the *City Press* report (Masinga & Ndlovu, 2008:14) that a "housing project [fell] apart [because] incomplete structures [were] invaded by drug peddlers and prostitutes". The *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2007a:10) added that a "lack of skilled personnel and capacity are to blame for lack of service delivery" that then exacerbated challenges. The *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2013:27) noted that all these challenges had a negative impact on housing, including (mis)allocation, resulting in housing backlogs.

Allocations in housing delivery are discussed next.

5.3.2.2 The *City Press* on bungling allocation of RDP houses

The *City Press* drew attention to residents who had lost out on RDP houses because of mix-ups, irregularities and bungling during housing allocations. The *City Press* (Molefe, 2005:4) reported that "irregularities were found in house allocations". For instance, a woman had "los[t] out in [the] RDP house mix-up" (ibid). In addition to that observation, the *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2006:2) highlighted that on top of gross irregularities in the allocation of houses in the local government, "lack of proper administration systems and skills, executive leadership and capacity" were making things worse. According to a *City Press* report (Molefe, 2005:4), "the RDP house was allocated to someone else and a bigger structure had replaced the RDP house". The *City Press* (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) also disclosed that the bungling of houses during allocation occurred because "RDP housing scams were rife". The *City Press* (ibid) further reported that instead of allocating the houses to the rightful owners, namely the poor, "officials [were] renting out houses to the poor". Additionally, houses were either allocated wrongfully to people who did not qualify for the government housing subsidy, or they were left incomplete by contractors (this is discussed below). In that case, the *City Press* (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) reported that they

had learnt from the former Auditor-General in the Western Cape, Shauket Fakie, who had raised concerns alleging that the “provincial departments and municipalities [wrongfully] allocate[ed] houses to themselves, their relatives or use[d] these [houses] to make money for themselves”.

The *City Press* (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) reported and quoted Fakie, citing a case of misconduct in the Western Cape where almost R4.9 million in irregularities was allocated in housing subsidies. The newspaper (ibid) revealed that in the status report by the Housing Subsidy System, “about 1708 applicants had died before their subsidies were approved but monies were paid out”. The report (ibid) explained that R2.6 million in subsidies was paid to applicants who were already deceased, and these subsidies were approved and claimed by civil servants. In Gauteng, the *City Press* (ibid) reported that “2 188 applicants employed by the government received subsidy approvals while earning more than R42 000 a year”. The *City Press* (ibid) further revealed that the housing subsidy system was fraught to the point that in “other provinces, grannies who could not get RDP houses were complain[ing] about councillors who were allocating RDP houses to their young girlfriends”. For many, being allocated and “owning an RDP house is still a pipe-dream while for others it is a manna” (Molema, 2009b:6).

On different occasions, the *City Press* (Masinga, 2009a:4; Matlala, 2008:4; ka Nzapheza, 2007:12; Masinga, 2007:9; Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) reported on the bungling and wrongful allocation of government (RDP) houses to government officials, adding that mayors and councillors had created tensions, frustration and anger among poor people waiting for their RDP houses. A *City Press* (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) investigation revealed that “the problems in the allocation of the low-cost housing are many […] most common [was] the problem of officials in provincial departments and municipalities [ward councillors] allocating houses to themselves, their relatives or using these to make money for themselves”. The *City Press* (Masinga, 2007:9) reported that “a ward councillor [had] converted an RDP house into a private garage for her car”. This enraged the residents as the ward councillor did not qualify for the house. Consequently, in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Limpopo, the *City Press* (Masinga, 2007:9) reported on the wrongful allocation of RDP houses to undeserving people, specifically at the local government

level. This followed a report (Masinga, 2007:9) of a ward councillor claiming that she was “entitled” to an RDP house “to use it to park her car”. Responding to the *City Press* (Masinga, 2007:9) report, a government official explained that “to qualify for an RDP house, a person or a couple must have joint income of less than R3500 a month [and] may not be public servant”. In Molema’s (2009b:6) view, “having an RDP house mean[t] easy money for many people who [were] renting houses out”. This is discussed in the following section.

5.3.2.2.1 The *City Press* on illegal renting of RDP houses

According to a *City Press* (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6) report, “the provision and management of RDP houses for the poor has become a new turf for corrupt officials”. This followed a report that some ward councillors were renting out RDP houses. In the Eastern Cape, a councillor was investigated for renting out low-cost houses to the poor for R200 a month. The *City Press* (ibid) was in possession of documents implicating the councillor from King Dalindyebo Municipality who “[had] allegedly been collecting rent of about R300 per month or R50 per week for RDP houses” from poor people.

In 2009, three years later, Molema (2009c:6) noted the involvement of civil servants in renting RDP houses to poor residents for between R300 and R500 monthly in Gauteng Province. This included the areas of Garankuwa, Winterveldt and Lethlabile. During an interview with the *City Press* (Molema, 2009a:6), Mokonyane (former housing minister in Gauteng) was asked about residents (poor people) that were renting out the houses as well as residents that were erecting illegal shacks in the backyards of their RDP houses to make money. In her response, Mokonyane (ibid) explained that the government had to “enforce law” and fight “shack-lords”. On this issue, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2006b:10) reported that “the move [was] likely to trigger negative reaction given that many people [were] unemployed and their families depend[ed] on income from shack-renters”.

Additionally, although the above-mentioned issues related to allocation, challenges connected to housing delivery backlogs also emerged as a source of frustration for the poor. These challenges and their coverage by the *City Press* are presented in the sub-section to follow.

5.3.2.2.2 The *City Press* on housing delivery backlog

In his opinion piece, Msomi (2006b:23) underscored that the "fault-lines of apartheid serve as a grim reality of the new South Africa" and that this was also reflected in backlogs in housing delivery. The *City Press* (Dlamini, 2008:4) also revealed that there were such housing backlogs in Gauteng that the people felt let down by the government as they had been waiting to be allocated proper houses since before 1994. Further, the *City Press* (ibid) reported that because of housing delivery backlogs, some residents had "lived in shacks for more than 17 years". In the Eastern Cape, the *City Press* (Sokana, 2009:10) reported that the province was still facing a huge housing delivery backlog legacy and challenges from the apartheid era, including shoddy workmanship, mismanagement of funds, lack of capacity and underspending. According to the report (ibid), in 2008 challenges were so severe that the province had to set up a task team comprising national and provincial officials to deal with the overwhelming backlog.

The *City Press* (ibid) revealed that a report sent to Cabinet conceded that "the province failed housing delivery", as the figures for decreased from 37 000 in 2004/05 to 11 750 between 2007/08. Fifteen years into democracy, the *City Press* report (Sokana, 2009:10) noted that, according to "the provincial department in the Eastern Cape Province, one of the poorest in the country, [had] a backlog of nearly 80 000. People in the informal settlements in and around East London said they had been on the waiting list for more than 10 years".

Likewise, in the same year, namely 2009, the *City Press* (Nkuna, 2009:10) reported that the Western Cape was facing the worst situation of "an acute housing backlog of 400 000". Luhanga (2009a:7) confirmed this observation and warned that "the City [of Cape Town] has a housing waiting list of 400 000 and is accused of not functioning well". The housing backlog in the Western Cape government was due to an influx of residents migrating from other provinces across the country seeking a better life in the province (ibid). The report (ibid) further revealed that "with an estimated influx of 2 000 new people every month, the number of houses being built by all spheres of government seem[s] unlikely to significantly dent [effect] the backlog". Moreover, the *City Press* (ibid) reported that "the city [of Cape Town] [was]

home to 223 informal settlements […]" which meant that the housing backlog was massive.

Ntingi (2006:3) also criticised the record of a housing backlog of 150 000 in the Mpumalanga Province. A *City Press* (Masinga, 2009b:10) report revealed that "the Mpumalanga department of human settlements [was] not certain how many low-cost houses [needed] to be built, because waiting lists at municipalities [were] so outdated". The former chief director of housing and technical services, Belinda Mojapelo, informed the *City Press* (Masinga, 2009b:10) that "the province had relied on national census and community survey figures from Statistics South Africa to determine housing backlogs". Accordingly, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007g:12) reported that unscrupulous developers were contributing to housing backlogs and hampering RDP housing delivery that was already being stalled by bureaucracy.

This is discussed under 'Developers' which is the following theme.

The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) brought to light that the housing department and local government in the North West were still in denial about the housing backlog. Also, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) noted that instead of dealing with the backlog, North West officials were accusing each other that "individuals [had] hidden agendas", denying that there was a "link between housing backlog (service delivery) and protests". This was despite Bloemhof, Zeerust and other parts of the province, as the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) reported, being "on fire [with] angry residents violently protesting against slow service delivery", including housing backlogs. The newspaper (Molefe, 2007f:21) further brought to the fore that "Salga's assessment of the 284 municipalities across the country show[ed] that [housing] delivery targets [were] set, and raise[d] high expectations of residents, [which were] seldom achieved".

Earlier, in 2006, the *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) had reported on similar challenges in the municipalities, highlighting the fact that the former local and provincial minister, Sydney Mufamadi, "denied there was a crisis in local government". The *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) revealed that the government was over-relying on "Project Consolidate [that] was established in 2004 with the aim

of bettering people's lives and to turn around struggling municipalities by improving service delivery". However, as the *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) also revealed, "its success [was] debatable". The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) revealed that the Project Consolidates' "critics [had] since pointed out that it did not live [up] to its expectations" to save ailing municipalities. In the previous year, namely2006, Molefe (2006a:29) had reported that the housing backlog stood at 300 000 in Johannesburg. However, two years later, in March 2008, the *City Press* (Matlala, 2008:4) reported that the housing department had "600 000 people on Gauteng's waiting list". In the previous year, in 2007, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007h:12) had revealed that for "Gauteng to address the housing backlog, 60 000 RDP units [would] have to be built every year".

Having examined the local government regarding housing backlogs, the subsequent section looks at the stance of the *City Press* on the developers' administration and workmanship.

5.3.3 The *City Press* on developers/contractors

According to a report by the *City Press* (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1) "many beneficiaries who should have received their houses long ago [were] still fac[ing] an agonising wait in their makeshift houses". The *City Press* (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1) revealed that outcomes to the delays that the newspaper uncovered from a survey conducted in April 2005

> found that the country's housing-provision machinery [was] facing serious impediments which include[d] corruption, substandard workmanship, no adherence to legislation and policy frameworks, misallocation of units, under-expenditure of allocated budgets and crime-related incidents by government officials and industry related business-people.

The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007h:12) revealed that the "delivery of RDP houses has been stalled as a result of unscrupulous developers and bureaucracy […]". Against this backdrop, the next section explores the major theme regarding the role that developers played in housing delivery. It is presented into two sub-themes, namely administration and workmanship. Therefore, the next discussion begins with the issues on administration with respect to developers or contractors.

5.3.3.1 The *City Press* on administration of tender process in housing delivery

In 2008, the *City Press* (Sibanyoni, 2008:2) reported that "construction companies swindled in government tender scams". Three years earlier, in 2005, the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005b:1) had published a series of reports that exposed tender biases. Earlier in 2005, the *City Press* (ibid) had brought to the public's attention that in the North West Province, "[t]ender 'bias' delays housing project". Additionally, the report *City Press* (ibid) made the public aware that "the whole mishandling of tender process [had] flung housing delivery into disarray". The *City Press* (ibid) informed the public how the administration of "a R100 million housing development project in the North West ha[d] been thrown into disarray following allegations of tender irregularities and favouritism by senior officials in the province". Also, the exposé (ibid) highlighted that the "low-cost housing project [which] should have started in May" had not commenced.

Thus, the *City Press* (ibid) enabled the public to be aware that "at the centre of the controversy were allegations" against the former provincial MEC for local government and housing, Phenye Vilakazi, who allegedly "bypassed the tender procedures laid out by the North West Housing Corperation". The *City Press* (ibid) story exposed the "unlawful and irregular awarding of tenders to companies in violation of the Housing Corporation's tender policies and framework". The story (ibid) sensitised the South African public to appreciate that "a damning forensic investigation into the activities of the North West Housing Corporation uncovered 14 companies linked to several senior officials of the corporation which have been doing business with the organisation". It (ibid) also revealed that the officials allegedly "conducted [a] closed tender process when the tenders should have been open". Furthermore, the newspaper (ibid) shed light on "a forensic investigation into the corperation activities had uncovered several incidents of misconduct and falsification of information".

In a third instance, in October 2005, the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005c:5) reported that the former "North West housing executives faced [the] rap at the housing departmental inquiry suspension". On this occasion, the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005c:5) revealed that officials were being held accountable as they "fac[ed] charges of fraud and corruption on suspicion of running several companies which benefitted from irregular tenders awarded without [the] Housing Board's endorsement". Also, the *City Press* (Sibanyoni, 2008:2) brought to the public's notice that because of "tender scams through illicit

administration, […] thousands [of rands] go down the drain". In 2007, Sibanyoni (2007:6) warned the government officials that "allegations have surfaced that the people mandated to oversee the tendering process for the [housing] projects awarded themselves some of those tenders".

A few months later, in August 2007, a R500-million tender scandal came to light. This time the tender scam was uncovered by the *City Press* (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1). The investigation (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1) revealed that "those involved in the transactions included several senior officials who colluded in the allocation of tenders of their associates". It also (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1) pointed out that "questionable transactions involving more than R500 million of government tenders in Limpopo". This "phenomenon known locally as Zulu fee [involved] a bribe [that was] invariably set at R500 000 cash" (ibid). Furthermore, the newspaper's team (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1) revealed that in Limpopo "tenders had become a type of *mogodisano* (stokvel) where politicians and civil servants openly passed one another tender jobs".
A discussion on corruption on housing delivery follows next.

5.3.3.1.1 The *City Press* on corruption in housing delivery

The *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2006:2) warned the government that "RDP houses rot needed to be stopped". It was after the RDP housing scandal erupted that the *City Press* (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1) exposed that "corruption and the sheer incompetence of bureaucrats [was] frustrating the construction of low-cost houses". Ahead of the *City Press* warning, the newspaper's team (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1) had reported that corruption by officials had resulted in "the roll-over of more than R320 million in the five provinces". The results, according to the report (ibid), revealed "about 20 000 houses that were supposed to have been built during the previous financial year were not erected". The newspaper (ibid) reported that this was despite the poor "still waiting for roofs over their heads [and] thousands [were] living in shacks due to corruption in housing". In 2008, Ndlangisa (2008:1b) also voiced the criticism that "fraud, corruption and unscrupulous developers have cost the National Housing Department R2-billion to refinance the completion of unfinished RDP houses that were either abandoned or not built at all". For its part, the *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2008:14) underlined

that the “Gauteng department of housing failed to conduct inspections of projects before paying developers”. A year before, in 2007, the *City Press* (Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1) had exposed a “R2 billion housing scandal” as a result of which “crooked developers” left the state with a “finance headache”. Challenges in housing stemmed from “the problem [that] ha[d] its roots in massive fraud scams by developers who colluded with some of the country’s Housing Department officials to siphon off millions of rands for work not done” (ibid). The *City Press* (ibid) further reported that

> fraud and corruption by developers in collusion with housing department officials [we]re among the key factors for the collapse of hundreds of low-cost housing projects throughout the country. As a result, the government [was] spending more than R2 billion to refinance the completion of the low-cost houses that were abandoned by unscrupulous developers across the country since the dawn of democracy.

In addition, the report (ibid) noted that “across the country, developers left swathes of foundation slabs or mere toilets while others, built [low-cost] houses but could not put on the roofs as they feverishly guarded their profits”. In some cases, as the *City Press* (ibid) reported, houses were never built, but developers were paid. Relatedly, the newspaper (ibid) also revealed that “top officials were paid for awarding contracts to associates”. Thus, the *City Press* (ibid) exposed that fraud and corruption involving Housing Department officials who colluded with developers were among the key factors for “the collapse of hundreds of low-cost housing projects throughout the country”.

The following section examines the issue of incomplete houses as pointed out by the *City Press*.

5.3.3.1.2 The *City Press* explains that houses are left incomplete

In March 2005, the *City Press* (*City Press* Comment, 2005b:6) noted that a decision was taken by the Mpumalanga Housing Department to “freeze all housing projects” because contractors failed to meet deadlines or mismanaged their contracts”. The newspaper’s editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2005b:6) explained that this was because “sixty per cent of the 12 310 houses that were expected to be built by June 2005 [were] either incomplete or trenches for foundations have not been dug yet”. Moreover, the editorial comment (*City Press* Comment, 2005b:6) observed that the move raised more

concerns because “whilst the province was freezing houses, there have been various demonstrations by communities demanding housing, making the problem a national crisis”. In the first week of July 2007, a report that was leaked by auditors to the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2007b:12) reportedly explained that during the tenure of the former head of the local housing department, Pandelani Ramagoma, “Limpopo [was] facing the burden of completing 25 898 incomplete houses at a cost of R780 million”. The *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2007b:12) revealed that “massive irregularities were uncovered in [the] RDP housing project […]”. Furthermore, the report (ibid) revealed that “houses in Limpopo have been abandoned by contractors since 2006 due to the lax control measures in the local government and housing department”. The report (ibid) noted that because of lax attitudes by authorities, “fed up beneficiaries decided to occupy their stands in self-built shack[s] because the contractors abandoned the [housing] project before [they were] finished”. The *City Press* editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2007:1) stated that “payments to developers who did not even put down a single brick” and “payments made to developers who fraudulently claimed to have built more than they actually had” resulted in houses not being completed. Furthermore, the *City Press* editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2007:1) noted that these challenges were exacerbated by developers “[who] neglected projects, unresolved land issues and political unrest”. In addition, the editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2007:1) observed that challenges included “delays in processing approvals of environmental impact assessment studies, funds diverted from approved housing projects […] and price increase in material supply resulting in housing subsidy being eroded by [the] impact of inflation”.

In July 2008, the *City Press* (Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2008:5) reported that “thousands of people across the country [we]re still living in shacks because the government failed to finish houses that were left incomplete by unscrupulous developers”. The newspaper (ibid) further revealed that “houses were not built but the developers were paid after officials fraudulently approved them”. At the same time, the *City Press* (ibid) brought to the public’s notice that “some of the projects proved to be too expensive to complete due to escalating prices of building materials”. In 2009, the *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009c:7) highlighted that housing projects were put on hold in Orange Farm, Johannesburg, and that “residents left in the dark [had no idea] why construction work [had] grounded to a halt”. According to the *City Press* report (ibid), this was despite

“the Gauteng department of housing claiming success in its delivery of housing [when] construction at Orange Farm, Dube and Diepkloof has stopped”. Earlier in the week of March 2009, a *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009c:7) story revealed that “at Orange Farm extension 14 title deeds [were] given to residents [despite] houses remaining unfinished” and that they comprised “only half built outer shells”. What the newspaper exposed was that “it had been more than two years since construction on the houses stopped”.

The issue of shoddy workmanship is discussed next.

5.3.3.2 The *City Press* on shoddy workmanship

In 2008, a *City Press* report (Hlongwa & Rampedi, 2008:7) noted that “shoddy RDP houses offer no protection [especially] from bad weather”. According to the report (Hlongwa & Rampedi, 2008:7), in a settlement in Durban, a “storm wreak[ed] death and destruction due to shoddy workmanship in RDP housing”. This means that the RDP houses were so poorly built that they could not withstand the bad weather that caused “death and destruction” (ibid). Earlier, in 2006, the *City Press* (Waldner, 2006:10) also revealed that the “underdeveloped system of Garankuwa View, North West could not cope”. This means that the present structures were not adequately developed for the essential standard of living. Moreover, despite “the suburb hav[ing] a grand name, [the] five-year-old houses [were] falling apart” because they were “wet and muddy” (ibid). This was proof that shoddy workmanship led to “many of the houses dangerously tottering on open foundations” (ibid).

In 2007, the *City Press* (Waldner, 2007:8) revealed that “[shoddy] workmanship and materials flouted building rules”, thereby causing frustration for housing beneficiaries. For that reason, the *City Press* (ibid) reported that “hundreds of shack-dwellers [who] have been waiting anxiously to move into their low-cost houses” were left disappointed. Further, the *City Press* (Hlongwa & Rampedi, 2008:7) brought to the fore that “more than 600 houses constructed [were] so defective that Tshwane metro council refused to issue occupation certificates”. Similarly, the *City Press* (Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1) uncovered “common problems in several provinces on shoddy workmanship and rising inflation, especially where projects took longer to complete and prices for building materials skyrocketed”. Also, the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2007b:12)

highlighted that skyrocketing prices for building material exacerbated challenges in housing by overwhelming the developers. Consequently, low-cost houses were either shoddily built or left incomplete. The other challenge that the *City Press* (Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1) revealed was the "provinces racing against time to ensure all houses were finished before a 2008 deadline set by the [former] housing minister Lindiwe Sisulu". Likewise, the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2007c:1) pointed out that "shoddy workmanship in the building of RDP houses [was] a common problem across all provinces countrywide". The *City Press* (Sama Yende 2007c:1; Ndlangisa & Matlala, 2008:4) also exposed the fact that in many provinces, some contractors were "paid large amounts of money for either incomplete work or shoddy workmanship".

Whilst shoddy workmanship seemed to be largely ignored and/or uncontrolled, the *City Press* (Sithole, 2006:12) revealed that in Mpumalanga, "shoddy building contractors were canned". This exposure by the newspaper (Sithole, 2006:12) followed the "officials claiming [that] small companies lack[ed] capacity to deliver". The report (Sithole, 2006:12) noted that, owing to poor quality and grievances by recipients, the Mpumalanga government decided it "[would] no longer award housing contracts to emerging or small contractors because of growing public complaints about the quality". The newspaper (Sithole, 2006:12) reported that the province was "[being] forced to demolish 14 houses that were so shoddily built they were deemed a public hazard". Two years later, in 2008, the *City Press* (Masinga & Ndlovu, 2008:14) reported that the whole housing project was falling apart following the Mpumalanga provincial government's firing of a construction company involved in its pioneering project. This was following the report's (Masinga & Ndlovu, 2008:14) revelation of "how an initiative by former president Thabo Mbeki to showcase how low-cost housing could integrate young and lower-income families into existing families" fell apart.

In 2009, the *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009d:1) uncovered two shortcomings indicating that it was the government's fault that houses were either built shoddily or falling apart. Firstly, the *City Press* (ibid) reported that "houses were not safe [because] for the past 10 years the government built homes on untested ground". According to the report (Oliphant, 2009d:1), this "failure" on the governments' part indicated that "the first vital construction step was omitted: the houses were built on ground that was not tested by engineers to ensure its sustainability for construction". This was also highlighted in the

City Press editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2008:14) that pointed out to the Gauteng housing department that it "failed to conduct inspections before paying developers".

Secondly, the *City Press* report (Oliphant, 2009d:1) highlighted that "the *City Press* discovered that more than 50% of government housing projects undertaken in the country during the past 10 years [had] not been registered with the housing regulatory body [NHBRC]" and that pointed to failure of norms and standards (Oliphant 2009d:1). Furthermore, the report (Oliphant, 2009d:1) revealed that it was only in 2009 that "for the first in 10 years the government provided the NHBRC with the list of projects". In 2008, the *City Press* (Mooki, 2008:14) reported that "the Gauteng Housing Department paid out more than R1.6-million for low-cost housing projects that were never built or left incomplete". According to the report (ibid), investigations on irregularities across all housing departments, it found that "the Gauteng Housing Department failed to inspect completed houses before paying developers". This was despite the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2006:6) reporting about stern warnings sent by the national government in October 2006 in which "the government threatened to restrain dodgy builders with contracts".

In summary, the foregoing section has provided an account of the *City Press* reports, its own comments, and the newspaper's individual journalists' perspectives on major issues identified as prominent on housing delivery in South Africa between the period of 2005 and 2015.

The next section provides an account of interviews held with the *City Press* journalists.

5.4 Section II – Interviews

5.4.1 Introduction

This interview section gives an account of the responses of the *City Press* journalists to the research interview questions referred to in the previous chapter: the research design and methodology. These questions are also attached as an addendum in the Appendix section. The last names of the *City Press* journalists are presented in alphabetical order and reasons for their selection for participation have been provided in the previous chapter.

5.4.1.1 On defining and explaining the *City Press* understanding of citizen action with particular reference to housing delivery in South Africa

The former *City Press* editor, Mathatha Tsedu (2017), pointed out that "the role of the media was that of being a development conduit and we [the newspaper] saw ourselves as a Distinctly African publication". In that regard, the newspaper "embraced its own Africanness and anything and everything that denigrated an African person was rejected" (Tsedu, 2017). Furthermore, "the newspaper was reminding government of its unfulfilled promises and thus enforcing its watchdog role" (Tsedu, 2017). When it came to service delivery, Tsedu (2017) explained that the *City Press* had "resolved that we [the *City Press*] would be the ones who said so, when things were done, or partially done and/or not done and then the newspaper would ask: Why was it so? Why was that the case?" For Tsedu (2017), these questions would be directed to the government.

Lubisi (2017) supported the notion that the newspaper adopted a developmental role and he explained that "back in 2005 the country turned 11 years old - new country, new democracy and so our [the *City Press* journalists'] role was to look for what stories to cover and to show that there is development in the country." In short, Lubisi (2017) viewed the newspaper as having adopted "a developmental and a watchdog role". Similarly, Sama Yende (2017) argued that journalists have had to take poor people's complaints, verify the facts, and report on these "so that the authorities would take the right direction". To fulfil this developmental and watchdog role, *City Press* journalists indicated that they had to work closely with communities and locally self-appointed leaders who would call on them to report on community issues. Likewise, Mooki (2017), Ledwaba (2017*)*, Lubisi (2017) and Ndlangisa (2017) recognised that journalists had a duty to speak for the voiceless, for people who could not speak for themselves, and that the newspaper was an important platform for their stories to reach the mainstream. Lubisi (2017), in emphasising the newspaper's important role in holding the government to account, noted that this was because "some [citizens] have been on the waiting list for almost 20 years".

Therefore, the *City Press* journalists, namely Ledwaba (2017), Lubisi (2017), Mboyisa (2017), Mooki (2017), Ndlangisa (2017), Oliphant (2017), Tsedu (2017) and Sama Yende (2017) expressed a common view of their understanding of citizen action on

housing delivery as dissatisfaction and complaints directed to authorities whilst expressing their problems with housing delivery. To that effect, Tsedu (2017) explained that “citizen action is when members of the public embark on a course of action such as a protest and march to voice their concerns or grievances to the government”. Lubisi (2017) defined citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa as “activism to demand a right - an action on the part of community, which was the role that the citizens play in reaction to the government’s delivery of housing”.

For Tsedu (2017), it was an understanding of the role that citizens play, which was to “proactively demand housing that has not been supplied and [this] is the participation [in] how the government can help and implement housing delivery”. Furthermore, in terms of citizen action, “the government is held accountable for the promises it made with housing for older, vulnerable and disabled persons and those citizens who cannot afford houses themselves because the issue of housing in South Africa is part of the policy and our democracy” (Tsedu, 2017). Citizen action, in Ndlangisa (2017)’s view, is “to prod the state to realise the rights enshrined in the Constitution and in the Bill of Rights”.

In her view of the issue, Oliphant (2017) noted that citizen action on housing delivery “was crucial to see to it that policies were implemented in a qualitative way”. Furthermore, Mooki (2017) and Sama Yende (2017) perceived housing as central to service delivery and, accordingly, in their retaliation of waiting for unfulfilled promises, they resorted to taking a stand through protests. Mooki (ibid) cited the example of the “Grootboom case” which was a class action conducted through housing delivery citizen action. This landmark case was “named after Irene Grootboom, an activist who led protests and challenged the government in the Constitutional Court, Cape Town for provision of adequate housing”. Ledwaba (2017), Lubisi (2017), Mooki (2017), Ndlangisa (2017), Oliphant (2017), Tsedu (2017) and Zama Yende (2017) noted that citizen action which was known as citizens’ active response against the background of an understanding of their collective rights toward the government’s role in housing delivery in South Africa is well justified. Tsedu (2017), for instance, mentioned that the citizens were desperate and so were asking “When do we get houses? And emphasising, “We need houses”. In that way the citizens were taking action by highlighting their demands for housing delivery.

5.4.1.2 On the *City Press* covering of the citizen action with reference to housing delivery in South Africa

The *City Press* journalists had contrasting views on the issue of covering citizen action on housing delivery, with some journalists agreeing that the *City Press* did not have a section or person dedicated to housing delivery per se. Instead, the newspaper aligned the issue of housing within the context of service delivery while a few confirmed that there was not enough activism (citizen action). Mooki (2017) in particular mentioned that in the Gauteng Province, the *City Press* focussed specifically on service delivery and added that a "special edition focusing on grassroots was relevant in terms of housing delivery challenges". Together with Mboyisa (2017) and Ndlangisa (2017), Tsedu (2017) pointed out that the *City Press* did not have a dedicated housing delivery person with a special focus on the issue as this was part of other deliverables (general service delivery) including roads, health, electricity and education because housing was mainly an issue in urban areas and not in rural parts.

Neither Tsedu (2017) nor Oliphant (2017) had any firm memory of the *City Press* focusing on housing delivery on its own. Tsedu (2017) noted that "people needed houses because housing was a big issue, particularly in the urban areas". More than in the rural areas, the demand for and need to own houses by poor people was much higher in the urban areas (Tsedu, 2017). For Oliphant (2017), the focus in the newspaper had "no course of action to cover housing delivery on its own or a deliberate attempt to do so although we went to different places, holding the government accountable". Furthermore, Oliphant (2017) also questioned the role of the *City Press* on citizen action in housing delivery, adding that there were "no political campaigns with communities organised to demand houses even presently, to say this was what the government had done, or explain how much it had cost the government to respond to people's housing demands". In Oliphant's (2017) view, during her time with the newspaper the *City Press* did not make enough time as far as leading campaigns demanding of the government to publicly account what it had achieved and what it was still going to achieve on housing delivery. On the other hand, "the government had not had a campaign explaining what they have done in terms of housing delivery" (Oliphant, 2017).

However, in contrast, Lubisi (2017) underlined that "post-2010, we [*City Press* journalists] covered stories where people have been taken out of waiting lists as well as stories of people who received houses and then sold them". Furthermore, the newspaper listened to citizens' stories in which they could express their dissatisfaction and frustrations over the "slow process of housing delivery and allocation" (Lubisi, 2017). In line with this view, Mooki (2017) recalled that even "before we [the journalists] engaged with communities to collect stories, we conducted research to see where money had been misused and what the money was used for". Also, what the *City Press* did, as Ledwaba (2017) and Mooki (2017) explained, "was to make certain that the bulk of the coverage was dedicated to grassroots communities on service delivery" in general. One such example was the Tatane Project, a community initiative which turned violent, resulting in the killing of Andries Tatane (Ledwaba, 2017). The Tatane Project was covered by various journalists, and it encompassed issues of service delivery brought by locals. Without these journalists these issues might never have been reported (ibid). In that regard, Lubisi (2017) explained that the *City Press* "did not tell stories for the sake of telling stories; stories were told purposefully, with an intention behind [them]".

5.4.1.3 On the role that the *City Press* played in supporting citizen action on housing delivery

As mentioned above, in Lubisi's (2017) view, what set the newspaper apart from the rest of South Africa's publications was that "it did not cover stories for the sake of stories" but wanted to portray stories "to see the finality of the project". The *City Press* journalists would go and research community issues and the government's response to these issues (ibid). Accordingly, the *City Press* would write the story "to expose corruption" (Lubisi, 2017). In line with Lubisi's view, Mooki (2017) mentioned that "corrupt officials pocketed money and would sell houses to the highest bidder". Lubisi (2017) explained that "prior to publishing stories it was important for the *City Press* to know what the government needed to do to fix the problems or issues under investigation". For example, "people would be given new houses but [within] less than a week the houses would be cracking because of sub-standard quality" (Lubisi, 2017). Therefore, "we ma[d]e sure that the story was not just left hanging – we ma[d]e sure that it [the story was] finalised" (Lubisi, 2017).

However, Ndlangisa (2017) had a contrasting view, pointing out that “most often the news was driven by personalities”. Because of “limited resources”, issues would be a case of “out of sight, out of mind” (Ndlangisa, 2017). For Ledwaba (2017), “millions of people were experiencing challenges, so the *City Press* newspaper printed names of people and managed to put pressure on officials to listen to people’s voice[s] on the ground”. Lubisi (2017) and Mooki (2017) supported and echoed the idea that the one thing the *City Press* was proud of was telling people’s stories and reporting in support of citizens’ actions. This was “achieved by getting answers for the people” (Mooki, 2017). Mooki (ibid) added that the *City Press* published stories and pictures “to expose and show that South African people are robbed of their rights” (Mooki, 2017). Similarly, Ndlangisa (2017) recalled that between 2007 and 2008, the *City Press* would occasionally dedicate a two-page feature on issues relating to service delivery, including housing, packaged as “Feature on Housing”. Despite the agreements by the journalists mentioned above about the newspaper’ role in support of citizen action on housing delivery, Sama Yende (2017) and Mboyisa (2017) held contrasting views. Sama Yende (2017) declared that “the role of following up on promises actively was limited”, whilst Mboyisa (2017) pointed out that “the paper never took or adopted an activist stance” on housing delivery.

5.4.1.4 On the extent to which the *City Press* participated in drawing attention to housing delivery issues

The concept of citizen participation was being used widely in the South African context (Ledwaba, 2017). For Ledwaba (2017), it meant that “ordinary people take interest or action to advance community interest”. In the context of the *City Press*, it meant that the newspaper allowed the people “to express frustration, their challenges and expectations through the platform [the newspaper]” (ibid). As “a vanguard of the people, the newspaper has had to assume a leadership stance in restoring the people’s pride and dignity through its representation of their stories” (Lubisi, 2017). Additionally, Lubisi’s (2017) quest was to determine the impact the newspaper had on the ordinary people’s lives. Lubisi (2017) pointed out that a journalist could tell people’s stories effectively “by going through their lives”, living their lives for a day or two, experiencing their hardship. This exercise, Lubisi (2017) pointed out, was done across the provinces. Lubisi (2017) implied that “by spending time in the communities,

journalists got first-hand experience of the citizens' hardships, thus making their representations authentic" (Lubisi, 2017).

In Oliphant's (2017) view, "for the ANC government in 1994 things were as basic as people only wanted water, electricity, housing and […] most people who received [these] were happy". As time went by, questions relating to the quality of the houses provided were raised, especially when "contractors started making business to beat the system through build[ing] with limited funds as there was no M&E [Monitoring and Evaluation] systems" (Oliphant, 2017). As a result, "citizens raised their voices at the time when the RDP was only one bed-roomed" (Oliphant, 2017). But things evolved, and in "a developmental state you find people start[ing] to respond when the government comes and asks: How were the houses?" (Oliphant, 2017). In terms of the media's participation, Oliphant (2017) viewed the responses of the poor people and the media's response to the voices of the poor as a sign of participation. The poor people responded through writing letters to the media, and the media responded by writing their stories (ibid). Therefore, there was a chance for "the government to improve issues such as housing" (Oliphant, 2017). Despite his observation of the media's role in the provision of a platform for citizen participation, Oliphant (2017) also regarded citizen participation in terms of *imbizo* (gatherings). This type of participation, she stated, occurred when people talked directly to the government and the government listened to the people (Oliphant, 2017).

In response to the question about the 'demonstration' of citizen action by the *City Press* on housing delivery in South Africa, Sama Yende (2017) observed that participation occurred "case by case"; however, he noted that "sometimes it passed by without the *City Press* reporting". Here he referred to service delivery protests taking place but not being covered by the newspaper. However, Sama Yende (2017) explained that from 2010 to 2015, the Tatane project was a focus area of the newspaper's reporting, largely because "many communities in the country were focused only on that". In another account, Tsedu (2017) explained that

> citizens acted and as they *toy-toyied* it would be covered quite extensively as far as possible, with varying degrees of intensity due to geographic areas and proximity to national media in the country. The *City Press* had the advantage where it had correspondents in provinces across the country; that enabled us to cover big issues around the country.

Sama Yende (2017) indicated that the "*City Press* [went] with what [was] in the public interest at the time".

5.4.1.5 On the ways in which the local government enhanced or hindered housing delivery in communities as represented by the *City Press* during the period under investigation

The *City Press* challenged the governments' explanations on this and exposed wrongdoing as well as inefficiency "through going back to local government to report the situation from the ground" (Ledwaba, 2017). The case of the Tatane Project was another example. Defining the role of local government in housing delivery, Lubisi (2017) noted that while the "building of houses is the commitment of provinces, not the municipality, […] the local municipality must provide the land and services such as water, put up sewers and tar". Echoing this view, Oliphant (2017) noted that "it was the responsibility of local government that had to go and check the land if it was in good condition", and for the municipality to provide a report prior to construction that the place would be habitable. Despite the important role of the *City Press* in housing delivery, Oliphant (2017) was of the view that "no-one was holding the municipality accountable for housing." This, she said, "was not only the problem of the human settlement but *yingxaki* (a problem) across the government" (Oliphant, 2017). Lubisi (2017) added to this, noting that "corruption at local government level had had a negative impact on housing delivery across the country – during allocation and within the department". For Lubisi (2017), "corruption reflects on the country and not the department". Sama Yende (2017) also emphasised that in housing, "the beneficiary list was in [a] shambles due to corruption […] and those with political affiliation jumped the queue". Tsedu (2017) expressed a similar view, noting that "the impact of local government differed from area to area depending on whether the political party running the municipality was the same as the one running it at the provincial or national level". Tsedu (2017) argued that at "local level, housing delivery could revert to a form of political competition which is prominent in Cape Town, where the Democratic Alliance (DA) runs the city, but nationally the Housing Ministry is run by the ANC which creates competition about who would claim glory of delivery".

5.4.1.6 On the *City Press* representation of the contribution by contractors' workmanship on housing delivery

For some journalists, the role of the *City Press* newspaper was to act as a watchdog of society and expose any wrongdoing. In line with this view, Ledwaba (2017) argued that the role of the media is "to be a watchdog, not to be a praise singer for people who are not doing what they are supposed to do". That meant that the newspaper had played a watchdog role by "exposing poor workmanship, corruption, incomplete projects […] people paid millions without having done their work, delivered or acted on their mandate" (Ledwada, 2017). Lubisi (2017) echoed this view, pointing out that "contractors could gain experience from delivering RDP houses. They were not efficient and most often their work ethic was questionable". Owing to poor workmanship in the building of houses, "the government was perceived as not having done well in housing delivery". Despite this, Lubisi (2017) noted that housing delivery had contributed immensely to the upliftment of black contractors across the country.

For Mooki (2017) and Sama Yende (2017), corruption by contractors was one of the main hindrances to housing delivery. Mooki (2017) emphasised that "it is pointless to receive a house that is going to collapse, […] a common thing in Gauteng where houses crack and crumble because they are not built properly". In addition, as much as "the government cracks [the whip], more must be done" (Mooki, 2017). Tsedu (2017) believed that he personally had "a responsibility to expose these and other unethical practices". Therefore, "through the coverage, the *City Press* did uncover the emergence of contradictions [and] allegations in relation to poor workmanship by contractors" (Tsedu, 2017). One example was that "some houses were so poorly built that if "you leaned on it, the house would fall or houses could be blown away by a slight whiff of wind'" (Tsedu, 2017).

Ndlangisa (2017) supported the views about poorly built houses by developers or contractors and noted similar instances of poor workmanship in RDP houses in the Eastern Cape. Ndlangisa (2017) pointed out that "people were complaining about poor workmanship and effects of dolomite" in their houses. Likewise, Ndlangisa (2017) recalled that the complaints were evident when the poor people in particular voiced their unhappiness "about political actors attracting attention while contractors were building houses on the roof of hell affected by mother nature – because the houses were not strong". Ndlangisa (2017) was making a point that the poor quality of houses

exposed the poor and vulnerable to unsafe weather while the politicians were boasting about the number of housing they had delivered. The politicians ignored the quality and workmanship by contractors and effects; they were only concerned about the number of houses built (Ndlangisa, 2017). Similarly, Oliphant (2017) suggested that "as much as the *City Press* was promoting black excellence, the media needed to hold contractors accountable for taxpayers' money". Oliphant (2017) nevertheless admitted that "journalists do not always follow through on accountability. Though we knew houses were cracking and so on, I did not think we held the contractors accountable". That is because "we never go there – the journalists take the easy way out, chasing deadlines" (Oliphant, 2017). Sama Yende (2017) echoed Oliphant's sentiments, adding that "we chase the big story and the big story is not an ordinary man who does not have a house". For Sama Yende (2017), the *City Press* was more concerned about an important story that was selling to the public domain and readers and, often, that important story was not about the poor or common person. The main stories that made profit were about famous personalities and politicians (Sama Yende, 2017).

5.4.1.7 On the journalists' perceptions of the role of the media on development

The *City Press* journalists, Ledwaba (2017), Mboyisa (2017), Oliphant (2017) and Lubisi (2017) suggested that one of the critical roles of the media is to act as a watchdog. For Mboyisa (2017) and Oliphant (2017), the Fourth Estate is required to report news accurately, fairly and objectively. They believed "development and [the] watchdog role go together" (Lubisi, 2017). Therefore, the *City Press* journalists largely agreed on the importance of the watchdog role of the media. They also expressed the importance of getting the "government's side of the story to find out why it had failed to deliver on its promises" (Lubisi, 2017). In support of this, Oliphant (2007) mentioned that "during the era of development, there was an element where the *City Press* told the people that it was writing their stories with the pay off-line 'Distinctly African'". The era of development was the time when the newspaper had its focus mainly on development. Both Oliphant, 2017 and Ledwaba (2017) agreed that this was the period during which the *City Press* positioned itself as a mainstream Sunday paper. The "*City Press* reports at grassroots level were giving development a human face" (Ledwaba, 2017). Ledwaba (2017) believed strongly that "the *City Press* was the only newspaper that dedicated resources, edition and editorial space to issues of development – whereas other publications were reporting development at a higher

level". He further stated that the *City Press was* reporting at "grassroots" level, thus giving the newspaper a "developmental and human face that appeal[s] to local people (Ledwaba, 2017). Related to this, Ndlangisa (2017) noted that the *City Press* was positioned as a newspaper that provided citizens "with information about development and not about political parties in support of the country's democracy and development".

5.4.1.8 On how the *City Press* positioned itself if at all, in the developmental role of the media, with reference to citizen action in housing delivery

The *City Press* journalists' responses on the developmental role of the media related to citizen action on housing delivery indicate that they were mindful about this role in their coverage. For Tsedu (2017), when adopting the "watchdog role" in relation to housing delivery, journalists needed "to look at whether promises have been accomplished and to follow up and highlight the plight of the people." Tsedu (ibid) further argued that "it did not help for the government to make promises and not deliver". Also, Tsedu (ibid) pointed out "the poor quality of RDP houses during the emergence of the 'tenderpreneurs' in the sector". 'Tenderpreneurs' is a term or concept used when developers pitch for tenders. In this regard, 'tenderpreneurs' would just do a slab and the next day are gone when they are paid the full amount" (Tsedu, 2017).

Thus, as a result, the *City Press* reported on several such stories around the country, whilst also giving a voice to protesters and communities that were exposing that housing delivery was not really happening (Ledwaba 2017; Mooki, 2007; Tsedu, 2017). In so doing, Ledwaba (2017) explained that the *City Press* positioned itself as "an unofficial voice of people". For instance, in the Free State Province, the Tatane Project was implemented, and the violent protests in Balfour went on for weeks on end, when other publications and journalists had already moved on (Ledwaba, 2017). Ledwaba (2017) strongly argued that housing was central to service delivery in post-apartheid South Africa, observing that "the ANC had made promises to millions of people, in particular those deprived of housing and everything else revolved around housing". Related to this, the *City Press* coverage of the Tatane Project in the Free State highlighted citizen action and protest hotspots connected to this housing project.

For Mooki (2017), what was significant when it came to housing delivery was that the *City Press* "advocated for residents through conducting research to get answers for people as some were old or illiterate or poor". In support of this view, Ndlangisa (2017) stated that over time, the newspaper formed think tanks and in those think tanks discussions focused on issues concerning development, specifically policies and service delivery, including areas of health and housing (Ndlangisa, 2017). Lubisi (2017) mentioned that the presence of the *City Press* journalists in most provinces gave the publication "a great advantage to represent its stance on the developmental role of the *City Press* in citizen action on housing delivery." For Lubisi, reporting on protests was "not about supporting citizen action, but it was about reporting what the communities were going through" (Lubisi, 2017).

5.5 Summary: Chapter 5

The chapter started off by providing background on the themes and sub-themes identified by the researcher in investigating the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery between 2005 and 2015. This chapter has provided an account of the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery over the stated period through the newspaper's editorials, individual opinion pieces and the newspaper's reports. Additionally, in response to the research question, the chapter reflects findings of the data collected from the perspectives of individual interviews conducted with eight journalists who covered stories over the period under review.

The next chapter entails the analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the journalists' opinion pieces and the newspaper's reports, including the analysis of responses from the interviews conducted with the selected *City Press* journalists mentioned above.

CHAPTER 6
DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents “data analysis” of this study. Data analysis in this study refers to the examination of this study’s findings (presented in the previous chapter), using the theoretical framework/s as a tool/s of analysis”. This analysis is presented in two-fold. First is the analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the *City Press* journalists’ opinion pieces and the *City Press* reports. Second is an analysis of individual interviews conducted with the *City Press* journalists who worked for the newspaper and covered stories on citizen action on housing delivery between 2005 and 2015. Therefore, the study is to consider the same issue from varied standpoints.

In analysing the research findings, the theory of development communication is employed. This theory was chosen as a theoretical framework to analyse how the *City Press* journalists lived up to, or failed in their representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between the years of 2005 and 2015.

The point of departure in this chapter is a re-articulation of the definition of the theoretical framework and an explanation of how it is applied in analysing the *City Press* journalists’ representation of some of the major challenges faced by South Africa on the issue of housing delivery during the research period. The theory is used to analyse how the *City Press* represented the following identified themes: citizen participation, local government and developers or contractors.

To this end, the next section looks back briefly at the definition of the theoretical framework employed in this study.

6.2 Theoretical framework

An in-depth discussion of the theory employed in this study was presented in Chapter 3, the Theoretical Framework chapter of this thesis. Here, only a brief definition is provided for the purpose of contextualisation in this chapter. Therefore, the development communication theory is defined next.

6.2.1 Defining development communication theory

The development communication theory is premised on the idea that communication can be utilised by various types of the media for the purpose of advancing the process of development for the citizens of a specific country (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:907; Choudhury, 2011:3; Khalid, 2010:2; Waisbord,2005:77). In other words, the theory was developed for, and relates to communication activities in the media to bring about development or social transformation to improve the lives of the citizens of a specific nation (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:907; Choudhury, 2011:1&3; Khalid, 2010:2; Waisbord, 2005:77). Similarly, Servaes (1995:39) explains that development communication is the "communication media in the context of development that is generally used to support development initiatives through the dissemination of news (or messages) to encourage citizens in development-oriented projects". Therefore, the development communication paradigm "engages stakeholders and policy makers to establish conducive environments and assess risks and opportunities through the promotion of information exchange to achieve sustainable development" (ibid). In that regard, Sharma and Uniyal (2016:908) and Bird (2010:4) point out that whilst fulfilling its watchdog role, the media (mass communication) needs to perform at its peak. In short, Sharma and Uniyal (2016:908) and Bird (2010:4) suggest that the development communication perspective holds the viewpoint that in order to achieve its developmental function the media has the following responsibilities:

- To inform: The media supports people to become aware about, and develop a consensus on state development issues as well as understanding social, political and economic influences, specifically in developing countries. The media should be made cognisant of areas that hinder the process of development.
- To instruct: The mass media, including the print media, utilised as a strategy for communication in development, can instruct, educate and/or teach the citizens basic skills important for advancing their standard/s of living in a developing world.
- To participate: Voluntary and continuous participation by citizens of the country is important for continual development. Debates and dialogues through the media are therefore necessary for development.

Sharma and Uniyal (2016:906) explain that the media plays a pivotal role in the circulation of information and knowledge through providing forums for discussion of key issues. In addition, it teaches ideas and skills for better life, and further creates bases for consensus for stability of the state, especially around purposes of development. In addition, Servaes (1995:39) posits that people's participation in the media challenges existing hierarchies as well as contributing to the planning and production of media content. In this context, the development communication perspective is assumed to be a participatory approach used as an emancipation communication tool that contributes to community empowerment (Choudhury, 2011:1; Khalid, 2010: 1; Jacobson & Storey, 2006:99; Waisbord, 2005:84; Melkote & Steeves, 2001:337).

Against this backdrop, the development communication theory emerges as appropriate for analysing the role of the *City Press* editorials, the *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and the news reports during the research period of 2005 to 2015.

Next is the first section of this analysis.

6.3 Section I

Analysis of the *City Press* editorials, *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and the news reports

This section provides a content analysis of the *City Press* editorials and the *City Press* journalists' opinion pieces, including the *City Press* reports. The analysis follows the sequential format presented in the preceding findings chapter, and pays specific attention to the themes under review, namely citizen participation, local government and developers or contractors.

6.3.1 Citizen participation – development communication analysis

This section discusses the first focus of this study, namely citizen participation. In this study the issue of citizen participation is divided into two facets as laid out in the preceding chapter, namely the informal settlements and housing delivery protests.

6.3.1.1 Informal settlements

One can say that during the period under examination, the *City Press* fulfilled the development communication theory's expectation of the role of the media of informing South African citizens on the issues of socio-economic challenges on development. The newspaper did so by pointing out challenges particularly relating to the "crisis in housing delivery" including the 'poverty" faced by South African citizens living in informal settlements (*City Press* Comment, 2010:4). This was further represented by the *City Press* editorial (*City Press* Comment, 2010:4) in their argument that citizens were confronted with "dire and hopeless living conditions" in informal settlements across the country. In that regard, the *City Press* demonstrated socio-economic challenges by pointing out living conditions in informal settlements and describing these as "deplorable and inhumane" (Ibid). In their opinion pieces, *City Press* journalists used words and phrases such as "grim story of poverty and survival" (Taunyane, 2005:18), "homelessness" (Oliphant, 2007:4) and "poverty" (Matlala, 2009:4) to represent the experiences of people affected by the housing crisis. This demonstrates the critical position of the *City Press* when it came to housing delivery. In addition, it reveals how the newspaper and its journalists used their position as a watchdog to confront and criticise the government, particularly in relation to participation by poor citizens.

The findings also revealed that through the *City Press* representation of the participation by citizens, as well as the slow or lack of participation by the government in the housing delivery process, as prescribed by the development communication approach of engaging directly with the homeless, the *City Press* journalists were able to witness the dire housing needs of the poor first-hand. In addition, through its direct engagement, the *City Press* was able to provide an authentic representation of the residents' stories, namely their plights of homelessness and the desperation which drove them to live in informal structures such as "church sites" (Oliphant, 2007:4), "old offices" (Nandipha, 2006:28), "mud-houses" and even "plastic houses" (Rapitso, 2005a:19) with no access to basic amenities. Through its direct engagement, it can be argued that the *City Press* was not only criticising the government for the sake of it but was using its platform to demonstrate the residents' participation in the housing process from their own point of view, thereby highlighting their observations related to housing delivery. From a development communication perspective, these findings

indicate that the *City Press* adopted the dual role of the media, namely to inform the government, and well as being a watchdog. In this way the *City Press* journalists were able to contextualise the relationship between the government and the citizens. At the same time they also exposed the effects of socio-economic challenges that persisted in creating the bifurcation between the haves and have nots in the second decade of South African democracy beyond the apartheid years.

The issue of contextualisation was also accomplished by the *City Press* editorial (*City Press* Comment 2005a:22) when it revealed that the invisibility of the people in the informal settlements was reminiscent of 'their history', the reference being to the apartheid era. The *City Press* journalist, George Matlala (2009:4), also contextualised this when he referred to the ruling party's 1955 Freedom Charter that had "promised" the people provision of shelter (free housing) at the dawn of democracy. In this respect, Tapsott and Thompson (2013:375) and Heintz (2003:1) posited that despite the huge demand for housing, just as in the years of apartheid, the second decade of democracy saw ordinary citizens continuing to be confronted with the lack of access to basic public services. The *City Press* journalist, Russel Molefe (2007a:23) decried, as well as implied, the contrast that housing delivery was catastrophic, and if not worse, under the black administration and new dispensation (democracy) than it was during the apartheid era. The findings further drew attention to the *City Press* support of the notion that in a democratic South Africa, poor people's desperations and demands under the rule of the ANC are often driven by underlying unfulfilled promises and high expectations that are ubiquitous closer to the period of political elections (Benequista & Gaventa, 2012:9; Molefe, 2007a:23; Seepe, 2005a:8; Heller, 2001:137).

In this regard, the study results specify a correlation between the government's unfulfilled promises on the one hand, and the democratic paradigm narrative on the other. This correlation can be viewed in the sequence of events where the democratic government promises free subsidy houses to the poor, the poor vote for the government driven by high expectations to receive houses, but often the promises are left unfulfilled for long periods of time (Molefe, 2007b:8). The correlation can also be seen when Molefe (2007b:8) drew attention to the budget vote speech of the former MEC for housing in Gauteng, Nomvula Mokonyane in which she reiterated promises about housing hitherto made to the poor by other officials, including former Housing

Minister, Lindiwe Sisulu. The citizens' "dreams are broken" by such endless unfulfilled promises **(**Molefe, 2007b:8). Once promises are not fulfilled, the citizens take action and demand their democratic rights to houses (Rapitso, 2007:23).

In the literature review chapter, the tenets of democracy were emphasised as *"*accountability, transparency, political intolerance, regular free and fair elections, and human rights" (Edigheji, 2005:3). The literature underlined the role of the media in democracy from the standpoint of development, positioning the media as key to the transformation of communities' everyday experiences, particularly when it comes to dealing with poverty and inequalities in housing delivery (Heintz, 2003:1). Therefore, as part of a democratic society, the media ought to hold the government accountable by being "adversarial" or playing a watchdog role, and simultaneously teaching and informing citizens about any wrongdoings, including government corruption (Kasoma, 2000:40&46). These arguments are supported by the development communication theory. Through their representation of the lack of fulfilment of promises of transformation that continued into the second decade of democracy, the *City Press* appears to have embraced its watchdog role. This is evident when Sibanyoni (2007:6) informed readers about the rampant corruption related to housing delivery (analysed below) and, significantly, why promises were often not fulfilled by the government.

The data indicated that during this study period, important but arguably overwhelming challenges facing housing delivery were not appropriately addressed by the government. One of the results was the illegal occupation or invasion of land by poor citizens (Saldinger, 2006:10). An examination of the *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and news reports revealed that between 2005 to 2010, a persistent, but risky pattern emerged when the government evicted or relocated the poor citizens (Ka Nzapheza, 2010a:12; Ndlangisa, 2008:8; Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12; Molefe, 2007a:23; 2007d:31; 2007e:12; 2007g:12; 2006:29; Ngcobo, 2006:7; Saldinger, 2006:10; Mtyala, 2005:9). The study revealed that when these evictions took place, residents were often left without any provision of alternative housing or any suitable accommodation for the evictees (ibid). This means that once evicted, citizens were either left to face the risk of "homelessness", or compelled to buy and/or sell land illegally (Oliphant, 2007:4).

The *City Press* (Ngcobo, 2006:7) reported the evictions of citizens by exposing the serious infringement and violation of human rights that occurred during the process and highlighted the abuse of "women and children [who were] spending cold and rainy nights in the veld". Ndlangisa (2008:8) warned the government that "evictions of citizens do not always work". In addition, the *City Press* report (Saldinger, 2006a:10) revealed and drew attention to growing trend whereby evicted citizens became desperate victims by being swindled by criminals, including government officials. These criminals, including government officials, preyed on the poor people's vulnerability and encouraged the people's involvement in buying and/or selling land illegally (Saldinger, 2006:10). Thus, this pattern further perpetuates the risk of a vicious cycle whereby evictees are exposed to the peril of being scammed by criminals. One explicit example was mentioned in a report (Saldinger, 2006:10) which pointed out that "many people were duped into buying land" in the Western Cape. A similar incident was when the *City Press* (Mtyala, 2005:9) observed that a squabble had erupted between citizen and authorities in the Western Cape where citizens were sold and had bought land illegally.

Significantly, in another report the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007c:7) not only highlighted that the residents were being scammed, but also simultaneously, through its reporting, sent a message to the government that some residents would invade the land in order to have access to basic services or rent and/or sell the land to generate income. The findings also suggested that the *City Press* (Mtyala, 2005:9) found that informal settlements were established by residents who were breaking the law through the illegal occupation or invasion of the land. This report (Mtyala, 2005:9) was highlighted by the *City Press* journalist, Russel Molefe (2007a:23) when he underlined the fact that, despite the citizens being warned and threats being sent by housing authorities and law enforcement agencies, a cycle developed with poor citizens persisting with illegal occupations and the government unyielding on eviction practices.

The findings further indicated a causal correlation between the residents' dissatisfaction and antagonistic relationships with government officials. The research findings, for instance, suggest that a dynamic of conflict between government representatives, namely the police, and poor residents has been established over the evictions of residents, specifically from makeshift homes in informal settlements (Ka

Nzapheza, 2007a:12). According to the *City Press* report (Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12), when residents clashed with the police in informal settlements, things often tended to end up in “violent clashes”. A good case in point reported by the *City Press* (Nkuna 2009:10; Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12) was during the Gateway Project where rubber bullets were used and citizens were arrested when they resisted evictions by the police. Citizens vowed to face the government in court (ibid).

Regarding the issue of evictions, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007d:31; 2007e:12; 2007g:12; 2006:29) representation of the court stalemates between the government and the citizens exposed the relationship between the two parties. Twice in 2007 the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12; 2007d:31) reported on stalemates in court between the government and evicted citizens. The first time, the *City Press* Molefe, 2007e:12) reported that in Johannesburg “residents squared up” to the government and the second time, “each made strong arguments in the Appeal Court”. Similarly, the *City Press* (Ka Nzapheza 2010a:12) had revealed to the readers that “thousands of Joe Slovo shack dwellers thronged the Cape High Court in a bid to oppose attempts by the government to [evict] them to Delft”. The data from these reports suggests that the poor citizens or the informal settlement dwellers were portrayed by journalists as offering strong opposition against the government’s evictions or removals. Moreover, in some instances these residents were identified by name and were thus given a direct voice as opposed to being mentioned as an ordinary collective. This representation contradicts Alexander’s (2010:29) assumption that “the rights of South Africans to access social services, including housing, [are] barely mentioned” in the media and the “voices of protesters” are hardly represented in the news articles.

The *City Press* (Molefe, 2007e:12; 2006a:29) further reported that under the new eviction laws, the Prevention of Illegal Eviction and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act of 1998 was the most preferred because it was lawful and eligible, and demanded an alternative as opposed to the National Building Regulations Standard and Building Standards Act (NBRA). Therefore, it is plausible to suggest that, based on these representations, the *City Press* was attempting to draw attention to the idea that evicting residents without following the right procedures and legislations infringed on the rights of the poor citizens. Therefore, the data as reported in the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) suggested that there was proof that when poor people sought responses to

their demands for housing, they attracted the government's attention through housing delivery protests. This is highlighted next.

6.3.1.2 Housing delivery protests

Based on the findings of the study, it became apparent that *City Press* editorials, the newspaper's individual opinion pieces, and the newspaper's reports played a significant role in drawing attention to the wave of violent protests that emerged across the country between 2005 and 2015 due to lack of or slow housing delivery. This was exposed by the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) as well as expressed by Mokoena (2005a:19). The data indicates that the *City Press* provided a diverse and critical account of the scale of violent housing delivery protests. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the newspaper based its observations and reporting on three protest focus areas, namely hotspots (exactly where the protests occurred), frequency (the rate and moments of occurrence) and rationale (why these happened) (Ndlangisa, Sama Yende & Mboyisa, 2011:4; Sama Yende, 2010:2; Mooki, 2007:2; Mokoena, 2005a:19; Seepe, 2005a:8). As a result of these focus areas the position of the *City Press* in highlighting the issue of housing delivery protests did not change, particularly when the newspaper reported on the scale of violent protests across the country. In this regard, the *City Press* report (Seepe 2005a:8) criticised the government's propensity to perceive the scale of service delivery protests as an annoyance instead of an indicator of the challenges prevailing in housing delivery and social development. In addition to the scale of the protests, the findings also highlighted the inclination of the *City Press* to represent housing delivery protests as largely violent in nature.

To this end, 'violent protests' became a recurring theme in the *City Press* news reports and individual journalists' opinion pieces, particularly when it came to the representation of the expression of poor citizens' 'voices' of discontent. In this respect, the *City Press* reports (Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12; 2007b:8) portrayed citizens' articulation of their grievances surrounding the government's responses to housing delivery through the signification of "violent protests". To emphasise the violent nature of housing delivery protests, in the reports (Luhanga, 2010a:12; Nkunda, 2009:3; Molefe, 2007f:21) and in the opinion piece by Rapitso (2007:23), the phrase 'violent protests' was used multiple times in the same reports and opinion piece. This approach was repeated in a number of other news reports (Nkunda, 2009:3; Luhanga,

2010a:12) and in Rapitso's (2007:23) opinion piece. According to Rapitso's (2007:23) perceptions of the 'violent' nature of protests, these were the results of "unheard and desperate voices". In some way they were used as an outlet by the poor to send a message to the government informing them of their plan to make the country ungovernable if their needs were not met.

While this finding supports Wasserman, Chuma and Bosch's (2018a:153) argument that newspapers in South Africa have afforded their readers an account of "unfolding conflict from a 'bottom-up' perspective in a way that gives voices and agency" to the citizens, McKinely's (Wasserman et al, 2018:148) argument that newspapers in South Africa tend to only cover "those few protests that have been violent" also stands out as important here. Based on the findings of this research, the *City Press* seemed to pay particular attention to both the protests that turned violent as well as the peaceful housing delivery actions. In that case, when the *City Press* represented an expression of discontent by citizens, more emphasis was placed on mentioning protests that turned violent (Nandipha, 2007:21). The *City Press* did so by using wording such as "the violence intensified […] the township was in flames" (Nandipha, 2007:21), "the police fired rubber bullets to disperse the violent crowd", "violent clashes erupted", "58 protesters were arrested for public violence" (Luhanga, 2010a:12), "angry residents violently protesting against slow service delivery" (Molefe, 2007f:21), and "the people of Mzimhlophe [were] spitting fire and threatened more protests" (Rapitso, 2007:23). Therefore, by exposing citizens' frustrations and violent actions, the *City Press* was in support of the development communication approach which suggests that the media not only informs the reader on the issues related to development, but also needs to hint the government where and when issues require serious attention, and that actions need to be taken to remedy the situation. In other words, the watchdog role of the media is ongoing.

Nonetheless, from the point of view of Wasserman et al (2018:148), the symbiotic relationship that exists between protest actions and the media representation seems to suggest that the media coverage frequently shapes the form that protests take. However, in the case of the *City Press*, the newspaper coverage did not explicitly suggest what form of protests they were, but instead reported on the protests as they were observed on the ground. Nevertheless, it has been observed that these protests

were often violent in nature. Moreover, the fact that the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) was able to state specific locations and the actual periods when the protests took place indicates that there was clarity on what the *City Press* was representing and portraying regarding the communities' housing delivery protests. The *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) indicated that protests were typically carried out by the "poor people from the townships" or urban areas and often occurred "closer to the time of elections", particularly the local government elections.

Given the history of protests actions within the South African context, Madlingozi (2007:78) and Friedman and Mottiar (2004:26) note that service delivery protests are often perceived to be fundamentally politically driven. Natrass (2014:124) notes that in South Africa service (housing) delivery is perceived as the "rallying point of protests", since tension often arise because of the slow or absence of delivery. Yet, as was alluded to in the *City Press* reports (Sama Yende, 2010:2; Molefe, 2007d:31), there is a tendency for the government to downplay service delivery protests or negate the socio-economic challenges underpinning these protests in poor and grassroot communities. A significant finding related to development communication theory was that the *City Press* (Matlala, 2009:4) reported the fact that even in the second decade of democracy, the government had not lived up to its promise to deliver on houses, therefore poor citizens "embark on a course of action such as a protest to voice their grievances". Mooki (2007:2) explained that some residents even stated that they had been "waiting for housing for decades" and were "tired of waiting" for the government. Further, Mooki (2007:2) pointed out that when "the poor do not receive services they resort to violent protest actions". Based on that, the *City Press* has played the role of giving voices to people involved in protest action as prescribed by the development communication theory (Wasserman et al, 2018:147).

Pointer (2015:ii) and Tsheola and Sebola (2012:172) argue that in South Africa the media tends to frame protest activity in a way that galvanises the delegitimisation of protests and criminalises protesters as unruly mobs, thus portraying them as irrational citizens who lack the participatory spirit for democratic deliberation. For Pointer (ibid) and Tsheola and Sebola (ibid), such representations by the media imply that poor citizens in South Africa who are desperate for housing are unruly crowds. Furthermore, they argue that such representation perpetuates significations of South Africa as a

failing state. Based on the data collected during this study, the representation by the *City Press* of citizen action on housing delivery did not support their argument. On the contrary, poor communities' voices and grievances during community protests received salient and extensive attention from the *City Press* journalists. For instance, Molefe (2007a:23) unreservedly criticised the politicians and the government for their propensity to "overlook the poor", and further argued that such partiality "may be what lies at the heart of violent protests". Likewise, Sibanyoni (2007:6) reminded the readers that violent protests were caused by "lack of fulfilment of promises by government". Therefore, protests are a form of expression of discontented voices.

In terms of the representation of the relationship between main actors' voices involved in conflict during protests (i.e. the citizens and the government), the citizens were represented as action-oriented, taking charge of their demands in line with their actions. The *City Press* (Nandipha, 2007:21) did fulfil the role of the media to give a voice to the actual individuals; it portrayed citizen action as poor citizens' voices through protests. For instance, the newspaper reported (Nandipha, 2007:21) that in Boikhutso, residents "demanded RDP houses be built within the short period of time […]" by engaging in protests. Concurrently, the *City Press* (Molefe 2006b:10) portrayed the government as holding power by reporting about Nomvula Mokonyane who had made stern warnings to the poor to "enforce law" and "fight shack lords" because the citizens were renting out and/or selling RDP houses illegally. Another case is Rapitso (2005a:19) when she referred to Mbhazima Shilowa, since he was the government representative who had told the citizens that "Gauteng had become a better place to live in" when in fact it was not. Following the Housing Minister Lindiwe Sisulu's comments about the housing delivery protests, the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) reported that "protests irked Sisulu". These instances demonstrated that the *City Press* made representations of the voices of main actors from both sides, namely the government and the poor. Moreover, such representations were portrayed because the government was constantly challenged by the poor people for failing to meet their demands for efficient housing delivery.

Therefore, the *City Press*, in its portrayal of violent protests in housing delivery, fulfilled its mission and succeeded in disseminating information on engagement in dialogues and/or debates by actors, including the poor citizens and the government (Sharma &

Uniyal, 2016:908, Bird, 2010:4). As Sharma and Uniyal (2016:908) and Bird (2010:4) argue, once the space for engagement in debate and dialogue is created and exists, the potential to work toward a more conducive and stabilised nation will arise, as outlined by the theory. Therefore, through presenting the government's voice, the newspaper demonstrated the watchdog role of the media as informed by the development communication theory. The *City Press* also did so when the newspaper (Msomi, 2006:21) reported that when the former President Thabo Mbeki visited communities in the Eastern Cape before local elections, "the poor people complained of corrupt councillors and shortage of housing". In referring to that, the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005a:8) had reported that protests had reportedly taken place in anticipation of "the local government elections".

In addition, through its watchdog role, the *City Press* uncovered the role played by the police force and law enforcement during service delivery protests in communities. It did so by providing readers with accounts of how community interactions with law enforcement often sparked violent protests. Such a context is reflected by the newspaper (Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12) in the report where it was stated that

> the residents were involved in violent clashes with the police, which saw scores shot with rubber bullets others arrested as they resisted attempts by the government to move them from their squalid living conditions to Delft to make way for new houses.

Wasserman et al *(*2018:148) argue that for protests to be perceived as violent, "participants engage in physical acts which either cause physical harm or could result in this [physical harm]". The representation of service delivery-related confrontation in the *City Press* provided readers with clarity on the relationship between the poor and the police. A typical example was the *City Press* description of a service delivery protest as an "acrimonious verbal battle" between the police and the poor, suggesting conflict between the residents and police (Mokoena, 2005a:19). Moreover, the report by the *City Press* (Ncanca, 2005:26) stating "the arrival of the police force […]" and "heavy police presence" suggested a shift to an antagonistic and violent atmosphere. For the *City Press* (Nandipha, 2007:21), this was reminiscent of the apartheid era, particularly on June 16, 1976 known nowadays as Youth Day, when students who were protesting against Bantu Education were gunned down by apartheid's South

African Police (SAP). The *City Press* (Nandipha, 2007:21) reported violent scenes with "the youth burning what little infrastructure there is" and demanding change. In this case the housing delivery issue was similar to those anti-apartheid years when and in a similar way, there was strong criticism by the media.

The findings of this study revealed that during the period under review the governments' responses toward citizens' protests were met with strong criticism in the newspaper reports (Luhanga, 2010a:12; Matlala, 2009:4; Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12; 2007b:8; Molefe, 2007c:7; Nandipha, 2007:21; Sibanyoni, 2007:6; Msomi, 2006:21). The government's response toward the protest action received attention in the newspaper reports after it had highlighted the key role that poor people's discontent played in the fuelling of housing (service) delivery protests. That is, it revealed that the reasons behind citizens' protests were largely related to high expectations, ambitious plans, and slow delivery. The statement that "after the first 10 years of democracy targets set by the municipalities were not met" is indicative of that the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007c:7) was again unimpressed.

In this section, citizen participation was analysed in relation to informal settlements and the housing delivery protests. With respect to this theme, data analysis revealed that the *City Press* lived up to the expectations of the development communication theory in the sense that it explained the link between challenges in the housing delivery and the performance or role played by the government or lack thereof. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the *City Press* succeeded positioning citizen action expressed in terms of housing delivery protests as an indication of discontent's voice.

The next section is an analysis of the findings of the *City Press* and its journalists' representation of the local government.

6.3.2 Local government

In the previous chapter, the issue of local government was divided into two sub-themes, namely (a) allocation, and (b) backlog on housing delivery. This analysis section follows a similar structure.

An examination of the *City Press* editorials, the newspaper's individual journalists' opinion pieces and reports (Molefe, 2007h:21; Sama Yende, 2006:10) revealed that between 2005 and 2010, the cycle of challenges that had 'haunted municipalities' at the local government level during the apartheid era had not diminished in the democratic South Africa. Such arguments imply that when it came to housing delivery within the local government, things had remained almost unchanged since the apartheid regime. The *City Press* reports (Msomi, 2006:21; Dhlamini, 2006a:32) highlighted that local government was faced with the same old patterns of challenges as experienced during the apartheid years, particularly when it came to housing allocation to the poor.

6.3.2.1 Housing allocation

In the context of the development communication theory, what was significant to note from one report (Molefe, 2007h:21) was that it clearly pointed out that certain aspects in the allocation of houses were not going well or were not aligned with the plans for the allocation of houses at municipalities and local government level.

With respect to the findings about local government, the issue of unachieved or unmet targets as well as reasons for the slow pace or lack of the housing delivery is well documented. To highlight such ineffectiveness, the *City Press* (Sama Yende, 2011:4; 2006:10) used phrasing such as "the state governance is deteriorating", "departments are underperforming", and "protests stem from control of wards". Lubisi (2008:26) urged the government to "get the basics right". This wording highlights the newspaper's intention to draw attention to the shortcomings of this sphere of government. Not only did the *City Press* make these observations, but it also criticised the government's *modus operandi*, specifically during the process of housing allocation.

A recurrent challenge made by the *City Press* was related to the mystery surrounding the actual recipients of government houses, namely the rightful owners deserving of subsidy houses. The research findings of this thesis highlighted wording such as 'bungling', 'misallocation', 'mix-up' and 'irregularities', showing that the newspaper made a concerted effort to reveal the misdemeanours of the local government in handling the allocations of housing (Molefe, 2005:4). It can be argued that the results

confirmed the development communication theory's mentioned above, that in order to create the base for consensus and stability of the state, mainly for purposes of development, any imposing hazards must be revealed and communicated through the media and with the poor people.

Furthermore, the results revealed that when it came to development by the state, the government was exposed as being privy to the officials' unethical behaviour, yet unwilling to impose consequences. Even more striking was the revelation made by the *City Press* journalists (Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6), who blew the whistle on state officials reported specifically in the Western Cape, who allocated houses to themselves. The data further showed that across the country, the houses were either sold, rented or allocated to foreign nationals or to other high-profile government officials, including mayors and councillors, families or other ordinary citizens who did not qualify to benefit from the government scheme (Masinga, 2009a:4; Matlala, 2008:4; Ka Nzapheza, 2007a:12; Masinga, 2007:9; Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6; Molefe, 2005:4). Further, the *City Press* journalists revealed that often these allocations remained unspecified and/or unaccounted for in the allocation of houses at local government level, thereby yielding serious ramifications in housing delivery. The *City Press* (Molefe, 2005:4) had reported on the ramifications as caused by negligence and corrupt activities by government authorities in the local government. These revelations mentioned here confirm that when it came to the local government and its handling of allocations and backlogs in housing delivery, the *City Press* was unimpressed.

A contextual and noticeable feature presented by the *City Press* journalists is the use of additional sources to balance and present both sides of the story which is a significant aspect of news reporting (Gurevitch, Bennett, Curran & Woolacot, 1998:201). An example of a deliberate effort on the part of the journalists to include other voices or actors to apply balance is demonstrated by inclusion of the former Auditor-General in the Western Cape, Shauket Fakie, and the Auditor-General (AG), Terrence Nombembe, on the issue of accountability regarding the mishandling of taxpayers' money (Lubisi, 2008:26; Zuzile, Mapiloko & Kgosana, 2006:6). The results also suggest that civil society organisations (CSOs) such as the Development Action Group (DAG) were also included in the discussions based on the government's top-

down approach. This use of multiple sources and multiple viewpoints highlights the *City Press* subscribing of the development communication perspective as a participatory approach to be used as a tool for the emancipation of citizens (Choudhury, 2011:1; Khalid, 2010: 1; Jacobson & Storey, 2006:99; Waisbord, 2005:84; Melkote & Steeves, 2001:337).

Therefore, against that background, the *City Press* succeeded and revealed the trajectory of the Development Communication theory of the media which notes the significance of engaging stakeholders, including policy makers and other role players to create an atmosphere that is conducive for development initiatives.

This discussion leads to housing backlog analysis.

6.3.2.2 Housing backlog

One can state that within the period under review, the *City Press* fulfilled the development communication theory expectation about the role of the media in informing South African citizens about development, specifically around the issue of backlog in housing delivery. The *City Press* did so by openly criticising the government. As McQuail (2013:214) posits, when it comes to the role of the media and development, links between poor people's aspirations and the governments' must be sought, since these stabilise political systems. Based on the findings of this study, it can be argued that instead of presenting the links between the poor's aspirations and the housing delivery, the *City Press* paid particular attention to the "fault-lines" of the past that continues to linger when it comes to the case of housing backlog (Sokana, 2009:10).

The *City Press* (Nkuna, 2009:10; Matlala, 2008:4) also indicated that compared to other provinces, the Gauteng and Western Cape provinces had the worst situation with the highest numbers in housing backlogs. The newspaper further revealed the authorities' defence of this and their attribution of the backlogs in these provinces to an influx of residents from other provinces since the two provinces were thriving economically compared to the other seven provinces. The findings of this study highlight the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) exposure of the government's denial and draw attention to the ambiguity surrounding housing backlogs by the local

governments across the country, as well as their rejection of the notion that a correlation exists between the housing backlog and housing delivery protests.

Thus, it can be argued that the newspaper, in its representation of housing delivery backlogs, succeeded in revealing the correlation between the issue of backlogs in relation to protests. Natrass (2014:124), along with Bradlow, Bolnick and Shearing (2011:267), argues that service delivery is the rallying point for protests; therefore, when there are challenges such as housing backlogs threatening the citizen's developmental needs, the poor often take action. Therefore, through its representation, the *City Press* endorsed this idea. Furthermore, the findings of this study show that in its reporting, the newspaper (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) adopted a firm view that South Africa's housing situation was in a crisis. This is despite the *City Press* (Dhlamini, 2006a:32) reporting that the powers that be were in denial, specifically during the former local and provincial minister, Sydney Mufamadi's tenure. This was confirmed by Rapitso's (2006:19) statement when she announced that the state was "gripped by [a] housing crisis". It is of specific interest that despite the government's denying the fact of a crisis in housing delivery being at crisis point, it was reported by the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21). It was documented that the authorities sought strategies to remedy crises such as Project Consolidate, and invested millions of rands to mitigate and curb the crisis they were denying. Interestingly, the *City Press* (Molefe, 2007f:21) reported that the Project Consolidate strategy did not remedy challenges or yield any positive results; instead, it opened up further controversy surrounding the housing delivery programme.

In summary, these findings suggest that the *City Press* embraced a developmental approach as well as fulfilling its mediatory role of instructing and informing its readership about backlogs in housing delivery (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:908). Likewise, through the content analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the newspaper's individual journalists' opinion pieces and newspaper reports, the newspaper was able to draw attention to the multiple challenges existing in the area of housing delivery in South Africa.

The next section is an analysis of the issue of developers, also referred to as contractors in the *City Press* newspaper.

6.3.3 Developers/contractors

With regard to the representation of administration and workmanship in housing delivery, the *City Press* adopted a noticeably firm and critical stance against the government and provided significant evidence of its ineffectiveness. Throughout the analyses of the newspaper on issues of workmanship and administration in housing delivery, a common theme of government officials' unethical behaviour and subsequent hindrance of development emerged. Under this theme, government authorities' *modus operandi*, when it came to housing delivery, was largely presented as controversial.

This is discussed in the next sub-themes.

6.3.3.1 Administration

As pointed out in the Research Findings' chapter (Chapter 5) of this study, a team of *City Press* journalists, namely Makhudu Sefara, Mandla Zulu, Russel Molefe, Matefu Mokoena, Dan Dhlamini and AENS (2005:1) confirmed an existing view in their report, namely that many poor South Africans were still stuck in makeshift houses and informal settlements because of serious hindrances by deceitful developers or contractors responsible for housing delivery. Maladministration associated with the administration of construction processes was a core focus of the *City Press* when reporting on housing delivery. It was found that the *City Press* journalists (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1) exposed the role played by developers in the process of housing development. Most salient in their representation is the exposure of incidents of dodgy dealings of government officials with unscrupulous developers. One such example is when the *City Press* (Nini, 2007:7) emphasised that the "developers were so crooked" that they were "alleged to have selected their own beneficiaries who were not on the provincial housing waiting list to occupy RDP houses".

Tomlinson (2015:6) suggests that in terms of the facilitation of the allocation of the government's housing, the allocation of subsidy housing is supposedly handled by the local government's leadership, including ward councillors and the mayor, after the approval of houses by the provincial government. In that regard, the *City Press* representation revealed that developers played a prominent role in the allocation of

housing when ideally the process of housing delivery should be handled by the government in collaboration with developers, and with the full participation of the residents. Based on this, Tomlinson (2015:6) further notes that the practice points to the reason for this unscrupulous behaviour, namely skills gap and lack of education that is aimed at the empowerment of all those involved in the process of allocating houses. Correspondingly, the underpinning rationale to the collective involvement, according to the development communication perspective, is to educate and emancipate all actors, including the poor citizens (beneficiaries) (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:908; Bird, 2010:4). Therefore, the *City Press* succeeded in exposing the unscrupulous behaviour of the local government authorities along with the developers in the delivery of housing.

Not only did the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005b:1) report to the public about the unscrupulous nature of some developers, but also contextualised the relationship between the chaos caused by maladministration during the tender processes, and the grave causal effects of the delays in housing delivery. This is revealed in the statement in the *City Press* (Seepe, 2005b:1) that “allegations of tender irregularities and favouritism by senior officials” were the results of the delays in housing that evoke chaos. Additionally, the newspaper (Seepe, 2005b:1) demonstrated the exercise of contextualisation by writing about illegitimate awarding of tenders when it reported that “the whole mishandling of tender process flung housing delivery into disarray”. The *City Press* (Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1; Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dhlamini & AENS, 2005:1) reported that corruption in housing delivery where government officials, in collusion with the contractors, awarded themselves tenders for the construction of subsidy houses was one of the gravest challenges facing the democratic government. In general, the newspaper was not content with the way government officials handled the process of tenders during the administration of housing delivery. The subject of corruption is another cross-cutting theme.

Regarding the representation and framing of corruption, the analysis of this theme shows that it received salient and prominent attention by the *City Press* in that its coverage appeared on the front pages of the newspaper (Sibanyoni, 2008:2; Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1; Seepe, 2005b:1 Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Zuzile, Mokoena, Dhlamini & AENS). Importantly, the headlines portrayed the disconcerting nature of

corruption in housing delivery across the country (Sibanyoni, 2008:2; Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1; Seepe, 2005b:1; Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Zuzile, Mokoena, Dhlamini & AENS). Some of these headlines read “construction companies swindled in government tender scams” (Sibanyoni, 2008:2), a “R500-m tender scandal” (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1), “R2 billion housing scandal - Crooked developers had left state with finance headache” (Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1) and “RDP housing scandal erupts” (Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Zuzile, Mokoena, Dhlamini & AENS, 2005:1&2). Additionally, more headlines read “Serious delays in housing projects” (Seepe, 2005b:1) and President “Zuma sidesteps flames” (Du Plessis, Ndlangisa & Saba, 2014:1). These observations were in line with the argument by Stewart (2008:51) with reference to representation (key to this study) that “what makes news-headlines, or the front-page news depends on the salience of the story for reporters’ or journalists’ specific regular columns”. The more the salient, nuanced and extensive the coverage of the story, the better it demonstrates the agenda, and therefore the better the story is received by the audience (readers) (Stewart, 2008:51; Wasserman *et al*, 2016:150). Therefore, these headlines were in line with Stewart’s (2008:51) ideas about the salience of the stories these findings have confirmed. Also, it is in line with Stewart’s (2008:51) observation that “cultural selection is one of the most ‘powerful filter[s]’ in representation of news” which was one of the findings in this study on the *City Press* representation of stories on housing delivery.

The theme of “self-interest” emerged, and was signified in several ways in the newspaper’s reports and opinion pieces (Ndlangisa, 2008:1; Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1; Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1). When the issue of “self-serving” and/or “greed” came to light between 2005 and 2008, it emerged in varied forms; however, it was most closely connected to developers’ administration. To highlight this issue, the newspaper reported the news from the angle of “fraud and corruption” (Ndlangisa, 2008:1; Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1; Lubisi, Mapiloko & Sefara, 2007:1). Correspondingly, Mokoena (2005b:19) shared the view that pervasive ‘corruption’ presented impressions to citizens that, when government officials colluded with the developers, during administration of tenders, it was a form of promoting their ‘self-interests’ or ‘self-serving’ only to enrich themselves instead of upholding the interest of the people. Based on this, it can be argued that the *City Press* was unafraid to expose the scourge of corruption and greed

by most stakeholders involved in housing delivery, including the government officials, residents and developers. This is especially the case since the government failed to exercise its powers to apply corrective measures. Correspondingly, by pointing out the government's failure to deal decisively with corruption by other government officials, Gaventa and McGee (2010:1) note that such corruption could have negative implications on social, political and economic dimensions of the state. Similarly, negative ramifications thus affect the support for development and nation-building and can consequently disturb the status quo as demonstrated under the service (housing) delivery protests sub-theme. Moreover, the process of housing delivery would be hindered. In that case, and in hind-sight, the mis-alignment between policy framework procedures and crime-related incidents due to corruption by officials and developers had a negative impact on the production of RDP houses in that shoddy workmanship became pervasive (Seepe, 2005b:1; Sefara, Zulu, Molefe, Mokoena, Dlamini & AENS, 2005:1).

It is against this background that the analysis on workmanship is reflected on in the next sub-theme.

6.3.3.2 Workmanship

The *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009d:1) exposed incapacity as a core element of ineffectiveness that resulted in shoddy, clumsy and poor workmanship by developers. In some instances, the incapacity was accordingly attributed to a lack of expertise to perform scientific or geographic evidence before, during, and after construction. Moreover, the *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009d:1) uncovered that developers, due to their inability to understand construction laws, showed incapacity when they violated significant regulations, namely, to test the ground prior to the erection of RDP houses, and to register houses with the regulatory body, the NHBRC. Instead, it was uncovered in the data that developers colluded with government officials which resulted in the delivery of inferior structures not approved by the standard body. Moreover, the data indicated that a "lack of skilled personnel and capacity as well as constraints with governance within the municipalities are to blame for lack of service delivery" (Sama Yende, 2007:10). Tomlinson (2015:6) highlights that a lack of "commitment in the implementation of quality standards in low-cost housing" is what hinders delivery. Therefore, the *City Press* (Oliphant, 2009d:1; Sama Yende, 2007:10) seem to have

adopted that view as well as the suggestion by Zunguzane, Smallwood and Emuze (2012:29) which relates to the significance of the involvement of professional experts, including designers and architects, in the stages of building houses from planning to implementation to allocation of the houses. That is because, according to Zunguzane et al (2012:29), the implications may be that contractors may either not be able to understand construction regulations or may be prone to ignoring norms and standards that are mandatory for the construction of houses.

Despite some stories portraying residents as a 'collective', individual voices came through when residents were given the opportunity to speak for themselves. Furthermore, the unearthing of fraud and corruption showed that the *City Press* went beyond its developmental role and stretched itself to deliver on its mandate as a watchdog (Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko, 2007:1). An example of this was provided through an in-depth investigation that exposed "top government officials" who played a role in causing a financial dilemma by swindling the state through being "paid for awarding contracts to associates" *(*Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko*,* 2007:1). This report by the *City Press* (Lubisi, Sefara & Mapiloko, 2007:1) emphasised that fraud and corruption involving housing department officials who collude with developers were among the key factors impacting the collapse of hundreds of low-cost housing projects countrywide. Based on this report, it can be argued that the *City Press* carried out its investigations in order to support the information provided by sources as well as strengthening its own evidence. This is demonstrated *inter alia* the reasons why the houses were often left incomplete by developers across the country (*City Press* Comment, 2007:1; Sefara, Lubisi & Mapiloko*,* 2007:1).

This foregoing section has analysed findings from the *City Press* editorials, individual journalists' opinion pieces and news reports in relation to citizen action on housing delivery issues during 2005 and 2015. The particular focus was on themes including citizen participation, the local government, and developers/contractors with the sub-themes mentioned above. Having examined such findings, the next section analyses the individual interviews held with the newspaper journalists in response to the fundamental and overarching research questions of this study.

6.4 Section II - Interview Analysis

6.4.1 Introduction

This section analyses the responses given to the interview questions outlined in Chapter Four – Research Design and Methodology (also attached as Addendum A). As mentioned in Chapter 4, the second part of this study included interviews with eight *City Press* journalists. In order to ensure coherence in this section, the journalists' responses to interview questions are analysed according to their relevance and connectedness to the core themes explored earlier. In addition, as mentioned above, the theoretical framework employed is the development communication theory.

6.4.2 Development communication analysis

According to Waisbord (2000:1), the development communication perspective is focused on the application of communication strategies and principles for the purpose of development and social transformation. Waisbord (2000:2) further argues that the media provides a platform for such communication by removing constraints that stand in the way of a more equal and participatory society. The themes that were explored during the interviews were the watchdog role of the media, and the agenda-setting role of the media. Primarily, though, the themes that were the core of this study were citizen participation, local government and developers or contractors, the same themes that were investigated when the content of the *City Press* reports were examined. Below the analysis of the interviews with the individual *City Press* journalists begins with the watchdog role of the media.

6.4.2.1 The role of the media – a watchdog role

The development communication perspective prescribes that the media be adversarial and act as a watchdog, that is the eyes and ears of a specific country (Friedman, 2011:107, Kasoma 2000:40). The theme of the 'watchdog' emerged recurrently during the interviews with the *City Press* journalists, particularly Lucas Ledwaba (2017), Cedric Mboyisa (2017), Dumisane Lubisi (2017), Mathatha Tsedu, (2017), Sizwe Sama Yende (2017), Vivian Mooki (2017), Lumka Oliphant (2017) and Sabelo Ndlangisa (2017). The above-cited journalists' responses indicated that there was a high level of rigorous and radical commitment to a 'watchdog role' at the *City Press*. This commitment emerged largely in three areas; firstly, when journalists responded to questions related to the representation of contractors or developers on housing

delivery; secondly, when they were asked about the role of the media in the representation of development; and thirdly, when journalists were asked to explain the way that the *City Press* positioned itself when it came to developments in housing delivery.

Lubisi (2017) underscored the view that "development and watchdog roles go together". With reference to the development and watchdog role of the media, Tsedu (2017) explained that he had a personal "responsibility to expose unethical practices". Furthermore, Tsedu recalled that "the issue of housing delivery in South Africa is part of the policy and central to our democracy", therefore inferring holding the government accountable as vital. Mooki (2017) also stressed that it was significant for the newspaper to play a watchdog role because "corrupt officials, in collusion with contractors, pocketed money and would sell houses to the highest bidder". Another example was expressed by Lubisi (2017) when he declared that the *City Press* had discovered that "people were paid millions but did not do their work, deliver or act on their mandate".

Despite agreeing with the discussed viewpoints that the *City Press* did adopt the watchdog role regarding the part played by contractors on housing delivery, Oliphant (2017) had a different view on the *City Press* watchdog's role on local government. In her response to the question about the *City Press* representation of the watchdog role in relation to the role of the local government on housing delivery, Oliphant (2017) noted that "no-one was holding the municipalities accountable for housing". She justified her observation by pointing out that prior to construction, "it is the responsibility of local government to go and check if the land it is in [a] good condition". In his response to the same question, Ledwaba (2017) recalled that by "going back to local government [municipal authorities] to report the situation from the ground", the newspaper highlighted the watchdog role. The way that the *City Press* emphasised this role, according to Oliphant's (2017) perception, was in contrast to the watchdog role as prescribed by the development communication theory and mentioned above. Moreover, as Kasoma (2000:40) suggests, as a watchdog, the media has to act in an adversarial manner. Based on the above-cited journalists' responses, it can be argued that during the research period, the *City Press* adopted a largely watchdog role and used its investigative capacity to put pressure on the government to live up to its own

promises to pursue development. In addition to this, the interviews revealed that the adoption of a watchdog role by the *City Press* enabled them to be an "unofficial voice of the people" (Ledwaba, 2017).

6.4.2.1.1 The *City Press* an "Unofficial voice of the people"

The issue of the 'voice' was another feature embedded in the newspaper (Tsedu, 2017). Tsedu (2017) recalled that "the public embark on a course of action such as a protest and march to voice their concerns or grievances to the government". In their responses to the question about the ways in which local government and municipalities helped or hindered the housing delivery process, Mooki (2017), Ledwaba (2017*)*, Lubisi (2017) and Ndlangisa (2017) acknowledged that journalists have a role to be the voice for the voiceless, that is, to speak for the people who are unable to stand up to the powers that be, and speak for themselves. With specific reference to the allocation of houses, Sama Yende (2017) observed that "the beneficiary list was in shambles due to corruption like those with political affiliation jumped the queue". Acknowledgement of the role of the media as a voice for the voiceless found expression in Oliphant's (2017) observation that "citizens raised their voices at the time when the RDP was only one bedroom" and when Ledwaba (2017) explained that the *City Press* "printed names of people and managed to put pressure on officials to listen to people's voice on the ground".

As a result of this identity (to be an unofficial voice of the people) by some journalists, the newspaper became an important platform for poor people's stories, including the voices of protestors, to reach mainstream society (Ledwaba 2017; Mooki, 2007; Tsedu, 2017). This finding aligns significantly with the development communication perspective which advocates for voluntary and continuous participation by the citizens in the process of development and in the absence of such participation (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:908). In this regard the media is required to take a proactive role and intercede on behalf of poor people (ibid). When the citizens participate in their own development initiatives, they become empowered and, in a way, become contributors in the transformation of a country that is working on becoming a more equal and participatory society (Waisbord, 2000:2). Moreover, as the theory suggests, voluntary and continuous participation by citizens of a country is important for continuous development (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:906).

As mentioned above, the other significant finding that emerged during the responses by participants was the Fourth Estate which is discussed next.

6.4.2.2 The *City Press* – the Fourth Estate

The role of the media in democracy is emphasised to the extent that the media is regarded as the Fourth Estate (Manoah & Khaguli, 2009:4). As prescribed by the development communication approach, one of the predetermined developmental objectives recommends that in a nascent democracy, the most significant purpose of the media is for the Fourth Estate to oversee "economic prosperity and socio-political transformation" (Lemanski, 2008:399). According to Gumede (2010:1), in a developmental state this transformation can be supported by the press through their focus on human capacity, investment, social policies and programmes. In response to these views, during the interview with Lubisi (2017), he recalled that "back in 2005 the country turned 11 years old – new country, new democracy and so our [the *City Press*] role was to look for what stories to cover and to show that there is development in the country". In addition to this, Lubisi (2017) underlined that the presence of the *City Press* journalists in most provinces gave the publication "a great advantage to represent its stance as the Fourth Estate and developmental role of the *City Press*". Lubisi (2017) further pointed out that when it came to reporting on protest action, it was "not about supporting citizen action, but it was about reality of reporting what the communities were going through".

Lubisi (2017)'s views were consistent with the perspectives of Coronel (2003:4) and Kasoma (1997:307) who suggest that a key mandate of the Fourth Estate is to keep "state organs that comprise of democratic government in check and counterbalance their arms". Relatedly, Coronel (2003:4) and Kasoma (1997:307) recommend that the Fourth Estate should not only hold other Estates such as (parliament, executive and judiciary) accountable, but also hold each other accountable. Specifically, the print media should take responsibility for holding the print media accountable for reporting on important issues affecting the communities. In other words, as much as the mainstream media reports issues on elites truthfully, accurately and in a balanced way, so the media is expected to emphasise and reflect the same approach when reporting on the plight of poor citizens.

Ledwaba (2017) emphasised that the *City Press* was committed to the coverage of grassroots stories "in support of the country's democracy and development". In her response to the question about the coverage of citizen action in housing delivery, Mooki's (2017) position implied that the *City Press* was committed and dedicated to ensuring a special representation of and focus on the coverage of community stories. Mooki (2017) explained that the newspaper "made certain that the bulk of the coverage was dedicated to grassroots communities on service delivery in general". Ledwaba's (2017) response to the question about the role of media on development was that "the *City Press* is the only newspaper that dedicated resources, edition[s] and editorial space to issues of development, whereas other publications were reporting development at a higher level".

Ledwaba's experiences of a largely high level or top-down coverage of service delivery protests in the country is supported by Wasserman et al (2016:5) who argue that the while the representation of poor people's stories in tabloid newspapers is often reported from the bottom-up, the majority of mainstream news media in the country represent stories in the opposite way. Friedman (2011:107) also alludes to this form of reporting and cited mainstream newspapers' appeal to elites as the reason for a lack of divergent voices.

Although the issue of grassroots coverage was recurrent in some of the interviews, Mboyisa (2017) and Oliphant (2017) stated that the most fundamental expectation of the newspaper as a part of the Fourth Estate was to report news accurately, fairly and objectively.

Another noticeable theme that emerged as a result of the interviews with the *City Press* journalists was related to the newspaper's inclination towards a deeply embedded agenda-setting role when it came to the representation of citizen action on housing delivery. This is discussed next.

6.4.2.3 Agenda-setting and the *City Press*

Although there were no questions directly related to agenda-setting during the course of the interviews, it became clear that the issue of agenda-setting was an important dimension with regard to the salience of community issues and the creation of public awareness. As observed by O'Shaghnessy and Stadler (2006:73), the issue of

agenda-setting provides the media with a powerful tool to influence both the government and the readers on how to view a specific subject or issue. In short, the setting of an agenda determines the importance placed on an issue and thus prescribes how much the reader can learn about that specific subject (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:73). In accordance with O'Shaghnessy and Stadler's observations, Mooki (2017), in her response about the coverage of citizen action with reference to housing delivery in South Africa, underlined that it was significant "to make certain that the bulk of the coverage was dedicated to grassroots communities on service delivery". To underscore her response, Mooki (2017) recalled that, particularly in Gauteng Province, the *City Press* had a "special edition focusing on the grassroots", adding that "the newspaper published stories and pictures to expose that South African people were robbed of their rights" of housing.

Other *City Press* journalists made an example of the Tatane Project, a campaign aimed at focussing on service delivery challenges in municipalities and local government. The Tatane Project was covered by several journalists in a seven-part series over a period of five years, namely from 2010 to 2015 (Ledwaba, 2017; Mooki, 2017; Lubisi, 2017). Ledwaba (2017) pointed that had it not been for the *City Press* journalists' prioritising and focusing on the exposure of issues within the Tatane Project that were based on "service delivery challenges brought by locals, [such] issues might never have been reported". Correspondingly, Lubisi (2017) had highlighted that *City Press* "did not tell stories for the sake of telling stories - stories were told purposefully, with an intention behind".

Yet, while some journalists indicated that the *City Press* had a specific focus when it came to the representation of citizen action on housing delivery, others offered contradictory accounts. In comparison to Mooki's response that special focus was placed on the 'grassroots' coverage, Mboyisa (2017), Ndlangisa (2017), Oliphant (2017) and Tsedu (2017) noted that there was no specific space exclusively given to housing delivery in the newspaper. Instead, they indicated that housing delivery was encompassed within the context of other basic services delivery, including health, education, electricity and water, among others. In that case, Ndlangisa (2017) recalled that between 2007 and 2008, the *City Press* would occasionally dedicate a two-page

feature on issues relating to service delivery, including housing that was packaged as a “feature on housing”. Sama Yende (2017) pointed out that “the role of following up on promises actively was limited. Sometimes service delivery protests passed by without the *City Press* reporting”. Similarly, Ndlangisa (2017) pointed out that when it came to covering certain stories, “limited resources” compelled the organisation to assume a case of “out of sight out of mind”. Sama Yende (2017), on the *City Press* representation of the contribution by contractors’ workmanship on housing delivery, recalled that journalists “chased the big story and the big story is not an ordinary man who does not have a house”. Sama Yende’s (2017) statement indicated that although the passion was there for the *City Press* to serve and report from the grassroots’ point of view, insufficiency of resources stood in the way of focussing and reporting exclusively on grassroots stories.

Similarly, on the *City Press* support of citizen action on housing delivery, Mboyisa (2017) noted that despite the *City Press* commitment to reporting about grassroots, “the paper never took or adopted an activist stance”. In line with Sama Yende’s (2017) observation, Mboyisa (2017) confirmed that despite the *City Press* declaration of being rooted in the grassroots in the communities, in his view there was no sense of activism by the newspaper. Gaventa and McGee (2010:1) posit that for activism to prevail, there have to be tangible results from shifting the paradigm of a government deeply entrenched in ‘attitudes’ and ‘actions’, as well as fighting issues and challenges of economic crises. Therefore, the effectiveness of citizens’ actions that manifest in activism rely largely on the representation by the media (Benequista & Gaventa, 2012:4).

The final theme that emerged during the interview questions was connected to the newspaper’s role in support of national development. A discussion on this is provided next.

6.4.2.4 The *City Press* and the national development

National development is another theme that emerged during the interviews. Ledwaba (2017), Lubisi (2017), Mboyisa (2017), Mooki (2017), Ndlangisa (2017), Oliphant (2017), Sama Yende (2017) and Tsedu (2017) noted that given the citizens’ dissatisfaction, complaints directed at authorities often went unanswered and often

resulted in violent protests. From the responses articulated by the journalists, what emerged was that the level of commitment to both the Tatane Project and the Grootboom case (mentioned in the previous chapter) to realise the citizen's Constitutional or human rights through housing delivery demonstrated the newspaper's commitment to national development. This correlates with the enunciation by Talabi (2013:83) when he posits that the media has the potential to provide tools to allow for rational discourse, particularly to realise aspirations linked to human rights.

Based on the research participants' engagement with the poor communities during the two main initiatives, the Tatane Project and the Grootboom case, it can be argued that the *City Press* created opportunities for debate and dialogue with the poor communities whilst also challenging the government around the implementation of policies, specifically on housing delivery (Oliphant, 2017; Mooki, 2017; Sama Yende, 2017). Relatedly, Ndlangisa (2017) explained that by exposing citizen action, the newspaper was fulfilling its mandate "to prod the state to realise the rights enshrined in the Constitution and in the Bill of Rights". These responses clearly demonstrated the newspaper's support for the national development process which suggest that the media must serve the majority of the poor as well as challenging the status quo in favour of their basic needs (Hyden & Leslie, 2002:4). Furthermore, these responses align with the development communication perspective which calls for the media's congruence with national development goals and advocates for the media to make the news more attuned to the plight of the poor.

To highlight this view about the role of the *City Press* in relation to national development, Ndlangisa (2017) recalled that "over time the newspaper has had think tanks on health as well as housing and issues of service delivery and policy were covered in these think tanks". Here, Ndlangisa (2017) demonstrates the newspaper's commitment to going the extra mile when it came to issues of national development. Oliphant (2017) emphasised the developmental role of the newspaper when she said that the role of the *City Press* was that of being "a development conduit and we saw ourselves as a Distinctly African publication". Mooki (2017) pointed out that poor "people were being robbed of their rights" by not receiving houses; therefore, the *City Press* had to support their endeavours through covering citizen action in the

newspaper. The analyses of the responses of all participants, but specifically, Ledwaba (2017), Lubisi (2017), Mooki (2017), Ndlangisa (2017), Oliphant (2017), Sama Yende (2017) and Tsedu (2017), pointed to citizen action as poor people's understanding of their collective human right, specifically directed at housing delivery.

These observations are in alignment with McQuail's (2010:183) argument that the national development goals must be aligned with the "rights claimed" by communities. Further, McQuail (2010:183) suggests that the media has to be certain that through its actions, poor communities do not perceive it as the 'commodity' but the 'asset' to the communities. This means that the media has to be seen by the communities as their allies mainly in pursuit of proliferating national development goals on behalf of the collective (Berry, Braman, Christians, Guback, Helle, Liebovich, Nerone & Rotzoll, 1995:42).

Taking the foregoing observations into cognisance, it can be argued that the *City Press* journalists' responses demonstrated that they were committed and dedicated to community issues, including service delivery. However, limitations pointing to issues of resources that Ndlangisa (2017) mentioned, as well as issues related to profit and finances for organisational sustainability that Sama Yende (2017) and Tsedu (2017) alluded to, sometimes stood in the way of these values.

6.5 Summary: Chapter 6

This chapter was divided into two sections: the first section focused on the analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the newspaper's individual journalists' opinion pieces, and the newspaper's reports, whilst the second section comprised the analysis of the individual journalist' perceptions on the research questions posed during interviews with them. In both sections the development communication theory was employed as a tool of analysis. Likewise, the three key themes, namely citizen participation, local government and developers, also termed contractors, were analysed in the two sections.

The next chapter provides concluding remarks and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This study sought to investigate the *City Press* representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa specifically between the years 2005 and 2015. This study was aimed at making an impact on and contributing to an understanding of the role played by the media in (national) development and its relationship to the development of a nascent democracy. With a view to investigating the newspaper's representation of citizen action on housing delivery, and its subsequent impact on development, a qualitative analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* news reports was conducted. Methods adopted as part of the qualitative research included content analysis of selected texts as well as interviews with select *City Press* journalists.

This study drew attention to some of the key issues affecting housing delivery in the country, namely citizen participation, local government and developers or contractors. In addition to highlighting key issues impacting on housing delivery in the country, this study portrayed the role of the mainstream media, namely the *City Press*, in exposing the relationship between the government and poor citizens in the post-democracy era. This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations of this study.

7.2 Literature review

Since this study investigated the representation of citizen action on housing delivery by the *City Press* newspaper, the literature review involved the examination of research related to the role of the media in development, democracy, citizen action and representation. In particular, the literature review explored the role of the media in the representation of citizen action on housing delivery during the transition from the historic era of apartheid to democracy as well as the role of the media in development in South Africa. Furthermore, this study paid specific attention to and reviewed the media representation in respect of citizen action pre- and post-apartheid in South Africa. This was largely conducted within the context that the media should "act as both the watchdog and the mouthpiece for the poor citizens" (Whitten-Woodring & James, 2012:117). In this regard, scholars including Benequista and Gaventa (2012:4)

and Pettit, Salarzar and Dagron (2009; 450) argue that representation by the media offers a powerful strategy for the depiction of development and social change. As such, based on the purpose of this study, it was considered essential to examine perceptions on the representation of citizen action by the media, specifically the *City Press* newspaper.

The next sub-section summarises the theoretical framework employed in this research.

7.3 Theoretical framework

In this study, development communication theory was employed to explore the ramifications of the representation of development by the media and analyse how the *City Press* represented the citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa. The definition of and discussions on this theory were presented in depth, particularly in Chapter 3. The development communication theory was selected based on its relevance coupled with the advantage that it focussed on the media as being responsible for the processes of development and the support of development of citizens (McQuail, 2007:198; Fourie, 2003:274). The researcher recognised the argument postulated by Moemeka (1985:170) that in instances where the media is "centralised and tightly controlled", it may be perceived as an extension in service of the government objectives, meaning that the media is there to serve and achieve the government's goals and objectives. In that respect, the study adopted the point of departure highlighted by McQuail which argues that the media can be utilised as a "prime tool for social change" in emergent democracies such as that of South Africa (McQuail, 2005:491).

Next, is the research design of this study.

7.4 Research design and methodology

Based on the purpose and research question/s, a case study research design was employed in this study. Specifically, a qualitative research methodology was employed which included content analysis and individual interviews techniques.

Next are the conclusions reached in this research.

7.5 Conclusions on the position of the *City Press* on the identified key issues in citizen action on housing delivery

This section provides conclusions on the position on representation taken by the *City Press* in citizen action on housing delivery over the period 2005 to 2015. This section is divided into two sections. The first presents conclusions related to the content analysis of the *City Press* editorials, the the *City Press* individual journalists' opinion pieces and the *City Press* news reports. The second presents conclusions related to the journalists' interviews.

7.5.1 The *City Press* editorial, individual journalists' opinion pieces and news reports' content

7.5.1.1 Citizen participation

From the perspective of the development communication theory, overall, the *City Press* fulfilled its role by exposing overwhelming socio-economic challenges concerning housing delivery faced by citizens during the period of study. This included drawing attention to the high prevalence of poverty and deplorable hard-hitting squalid conditions of poor citizens living in informal settlements. In line with citizen participation, specifically in relation to housing delivery protests, the study concludes that the *City Press* unequivocally informed its readers and consequently the government about the ramifications of 'violent protests' and emphasised their impact on South African society. Significantly, **based on the content analysis and interviews in this study**, the *City Press* **strove to articulate** the typical presence, frequency and intensity of such housing delivery protests as well as their impact and effects on the poor communities in which they occurred.

The discussion on local government conclusions follows.

7.5.1.2 Local government

Juxtaposed to the historic patterns pertaining to citizen action on housing delivery challenges pre- and post-democratic South Africa, the *City Press* representations of citizen action of housing delivery revealed that the approach used by the local government (municipalities) in post-apartheid South Africa was similar to that of pre-democracy. As a result, such overwhelming challenges continued to undermine the dignity of the poor citizens of South Africa in particular owing to vast shortages or lack

of housing. To that end, the *City Press* newspaper exposed the misdemeanours of the local government, specifically in the manoeuvring of housing allocations and (mis)handling of backlogs in housing delivery.

To arrive at these key conclusions, this research demonstrated that the *City Press* newspaper used multiple sources, approached stories from several angles, and included voices from the government and poor citizens' perspectives to present a balanced coverage of stories. The *City Press* not only exposed local government authorities who committed malpractices in the delivery of housing, but also exposed poor citizens for their wrongdoings. The *City Press* reported on instances where poor residents either sold and/or rented out their subsidy houses and/or bought or sold land illegally to build informal settlements. It is against this backdrop that the study concludes that the *City Press* adopted a development communication approach to its representation of local government involvement in citizen action on housing delivery.

Next, conclusions related to the *City Press* representation of the influence of developers and contractors on citizen action on housing delivery are provided.

7.5.1.3 Developers/contractors

Through its editorials, the newspaper journalists' opinion pieces, and the news reports, the *City Press* had **striven to fulfil** expectations by the development communication theory on the role of the media to expose corruption. In light of the argument put forward by the development communication approach on the role of the media to perform at its peak, inform and play a watchdog role, in particular on the issue of corruption in housing delivery, the *City Press* evidently articulated its position without fear or favour (Sharma & Uniyal, 2016:908; Bird, 2010:4). The study exposed a widespread and embedded culture of corruption between government officials and contractors involved in housing delivery. Serious conspiracies related to corrupt interactions between government officials and developers (contractors) featured prominently in the *City Press* newspaper between 2005 and 2015. The representation of such actions, namely collusions, were characterised as deceitful deals and maladministration during tender processes, and involved the misspending of some huge amounts of taxpayers' monies. These illegal transactions, together with shoddy workmanship, had negative implications for the quality of the houses built for poor

citizens. This corruption and poor quality created significant discontent and aggravated the housing delivery crises in the country. On that basis, this investigation concludes that the *City Press* fulfilled the expectation of the development communication perspective that suggests that the media must consistently focus on the application of communication strategies and ethos for the purpose of development and social transformation in societies (Waisbord, 2000:1).

The conclusions based on the interviews conducted are discussed next.

7.6 Interviews

Based on the interviews conducted with the *City Press* individual journalists, this study concludes that through its representation of citizen action on housing delivery, the *City Press* **strove to adopt** a watchdog role of the media. This is particularly evident in its attempts to uphold the public interest and support the interests of the poor citizens of South Africa. This study revealed existing crises around the issue of housing delivery in South Africa that have often resulted in complex controversies between the government and the citizens. On the basis of the interviews, this research concludes that the *City Press* demonstrated a high level of robust and rigorous commitment to their 'watchdog role'*.* Significantly, interviews in this research revealed that the *City Press* played an adversarial role in relation to the government in its approach to representing citizen action on housing delivery. The newspaper's stance is reflected in the way its journalists represented housing delivery protests by identifying numbers, the prevalence of protests and specific protest areas. In doing so, the *City Press* exposed the ways in which the government failed to deliver on its mandate to provide housing delivery to the needy in South Africa. This conclusion is justified by Tsedu's (2017) emphasis that he had a personal "responsibility to expose unethical practices", especially since "the issue of housing delivery in South Africa is part of the policy and central to our democracy". Relatedly, Lubisi (2017) highlighted the newspaper's view that the two aspects, namely (a) watchdog and (b) development roles were often perceived as interfacing or interlinked to one another.

From the development communication theory perspective, the study revealed the commitment demonstrated by the *City Press* individual journalists on the issue of national development. Through mobilising and advocating for better delivery of

housing for the downtrodden, whilst also defending human dignity and rights, the *City Press* journalists projected the role of the media in development.

7.7 Concluding arguments

In this final phase of this study, it is important to revisit the key focus of this research since it has followed diverse trajectories leading to this stage. This research set out to investigate the *City Press* the representation of citizen action on housing delivery in the second decade of South Africa's democracy, specifically between 2005 and 2015. In other words, this study sought to determine whether the *City Press* purposefully and intentionally made representations on the issues of development specificallyrelated to housing delivery in South Africa.

As the nation advanced into the second decade of democracy, the position of the media evolved into a more critical role and issues related to development began to occupy the media agenda (O'Shaghnessy & Stadler, 2006:73). The RDP economic policy was regarded as the keystone to developmental policy, as well as other economic policies (mentioned in Chapter 1). The RDP policy failed to drive the service delivery explicitly regarding housing, although it had been consistently purported that housing was at the forefront of and central to service delivery.

Against this backdrop, this study sought to investigate the position of the *City Press* regarding its role in the representation of citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa between 2005 and 2015. When it comes to development, and specifically service (housing) delivery in South African, the input by the *City Press* was of utmost significance as it renders an imperative mandate to demonstrate support to the poor through being the voice for the voiceless. Moreover, the strengthening of democratic participation via the voices of those on the periphery of the socio-economic status of the South African society has to be sustained in the post-authoritarian and now nascent democracy. In this regard, unless the voices of the poor citizens are included in the struggle for service delivery and development, protests and citizen action related to a lack of delivery will remain a part of the South African developmental landscape (Duncan, 2016:3). As a result, deep-seated dissatisfaction and despondency remain pervasive among the poor and often manifest in violent housing delivery protests.

Therefore, this study concludes that the implication was that in order to support the watchdog and developmental agenda adopted by the journalists, the *City Press* advocated for the poor. The newspaper was confident and strategic in its reporting related to housing delivery as a development initiative and demonstrated a clear understanding of its role in the realisation of the housing delivery process.

On the basis of the interviews with the individual journalists of the *City Press*, this study concludes that the *City Press* had a defined watchdog role. The journalists themselves expressed the view that during the period under review, the newspaper had evolved from 'The People's Paper' into a 'Distinctly African' newspaper upholding the watchdog role as its core mandate.

The study concludes that the *City Press* uncovered rampant and overt corruption that stemmed from inefficiencies in the public service administration corridors and manifested in political crisis in service delivery, including the housing sector. Significantly, by exposing corruption, the newspaper was able to point out where and how taxpayers' money was being squandered by politicians and government bureaucrats along with the developers during the process of housing delivery. This kind of action, namely the exposure of corruption, was an indication that the *City Press* newspaper was cognisant of its role in the national development and the relevance of the media in addressing key issues related to development. To a greater degree, through its exemplifying this watchdog role, the *City Press* demonstrated it had a firm grasp of its mandates and thus succeeded in exposing the government's approach, which this study concludes as a top-down approach to development as opposed to being a people-centred, people-driven bottom-up approach.

7.8 Limitations to the study

This study has looked at one mainstream newspaper in South Africa, namely the *City Press*. The limitation therefore means then that conclusions were drawn from this single publication. However, there are other several mainstream newspapers in the country that have reported on the topic of this study.

Next are the recommendations of this study.

7.9 Recommendations for future studies

This study has focussed on the period between 2005 and 2015. Much has transpired in South Africa since then and the time in which this study is concluded, namely 2020. It is recommended that a future study be carried out that covers the period 2015 to 2020.

Further studies into how other South African print media outlets represented citizen action on housing delivery in South Africa would provide an opportunity for a comparison of representations within this period, something that could be used to assess the overall position of the South African media landscape in terms of service (housing) delivery and development during the study period.

7.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter focussed on the conclusions and recommendations of this study. The conclusions were based on the chapters that preceded this chapter. This necessitated brief summaries of the literature review, theoretical frameworks, research design and methodology, findings and data analysis which informed the entire study.

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ADDENDA

Addendum A: Interview questions

The sub-questions below helped to provide clarity on the central research question while simultaneously serving as interview questions. All the questions were posed specifically within the context of the role played by the *City Press* during the research period.

1. What is *City Press* understanding of citizen action, with particular reference to housing delivery?
2. How did the *City Press* represent citizen action with specific reference to housing delivery?
3. What was the *City Press* perception of the role of the media in development?
4. How did the *City Press* position itself, if at all, in the developmental role of the media, with particular reference to citizen action in housing delivery?
5. What role, if any, did the *City Press* play in supporting citizen action in housing delivery?
6. How did the *City Press* represent citizen participation in housing delivery in South Africa?
7. In which ways did the local government enhance or hinder housing delivery in communities as represented by the *City Press* during the period 2005 to 2015?
8. How did the *City Press* newspaper represent the contribution by contractors' workmanship on housing delivery?