

**THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE MEDIA IN ZAMBIAN SOCIETY: CASES OF
RADIO PHOENIX, HOT FM AND Q-FM.**

BY

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PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF MASS COMMUNICATION (MMC)**

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LUSAKA**

2011

DECLARATION

I Pauline Mwangala Mbangweta declare that this dissertation:

- a) Represents my own work
- b) Has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other University and
- c) Does not incorporate any published work or materials from another dissertation.

Signature: _____

Date : JANUARY, 2011

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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Pauline M. Mbangweta has been approved as fulfilling for the partial requirement for the award of the degree of masters of Mass Communication by the University of Zambia.

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ABSTRACT

The media industry in Zambia has been growing significantly since 1991 with the re-introduction of multi-party system. After the demise of the one party state, government liberalised the economy but instead of privatising state media, government liberalised the airwaves, allowing new entrants into the media fraternity. This culminated in the mushrooming of many broadcasting stations which saw the emergence of two types of radio broadcasting: commercial and community radio stations.

Although commercial radio stations started in Zambia 14 years ago with the first ever commercial radio station, radio Phoenix started in 1996, very little research has been done in the field of commercial broadcasting in Zambia, making it one of the areas about which the least is known. The medium has not received the level of academic attention or critical study focused on community radio and state-run broadcasters.

This study therefore seeks to be a significant step to developing a body of literature on the roles and functions of commercial radio stations in Zambia. It attempted to focus on the role commercial radio stations play in the Zambian society and their effects on the Zambian public discourse. The findings of this study by and large are that the coming into being of these radio stations has impacted positively on Zambia's young democracy as they offer an alternative voice to that of the state-run radio stations that has been in existence since 1941.

Grave sentiments were however expressed that most commercial radio stations' programmes are made up of excessive entertainment and politics, offering very little quality information on other important issues such as health, education, gender, environment, entrepreneurship and agriculture.

In this study, commercial radio, private radio stations and independent broadcasters are used interchangeably.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beautiful children, Ntombizine and Belemu Mudenda; to you I give my deepest expression of love and appreciation for being the light of my life. My thanks also to my sister Mwangala, my nieces, Sibeso, Mbuyu and Mwangala Stevens and my nephews, Lubasi, Ngula and Lubinda.

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