

**A STUDY OF OWNERSHIP, PHILOSOPHY, AND EDITORIAL
POLICY OF THE *ZAMBIA DAILY MAIL***

By

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment
of the requirements of the award of Master of Mass Communication
(MMC)

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DECLARATION

I, Stephen Chileshe, solemnly declare that this dissertation has not been submitted for a degree in this university or any other university. I further declare that the information contained is my own research and where material is borrowed due attribution is made.

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APPROVAL

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ABSTRACT

The effect of media ownership on media operations and content has continued to draw attention in communication studies both from theoretical and policy perspectives. This is against a backdrop of some previous studies suggesting that Journalists' autonomy and perception of issues are defined within boundaries set by media owners. Such revelations have encouraged communication scholars to continue probing media ownership structures so as to unveil how this influence is exercised in a bid to help guide national and international media policies.

It was in this context that this study was set-up to explore the subject further by interrogating the ownership structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and examine if there were weaknesses which could be used by owners to influence the operations and ultimately content of the media house. The study used qualitative method as a primary methodology whereas a quantitative method was employed as a secondary methodology to survey the *Zambia Daily Mail* Journalists who deal with hard news. Qualitative data was analysed using themes while SPSS was used for quantitative data.

The study has revealed that despite efforts by successive governments to improve the *Zambia Daily Mail* environment both internal and external, there are still some weaknesses in the ownership structure which needed attention. The researcher posits that it was these weaknesses which are responsible for fluctuations in terms of the *Zambia Daily Mail* autonomy and quality of content. The researcher argues that unless the identified weaknesses are worked on, the *Zambia Daily Mail* autonomy will continue to depend on the good will of those in government at any given time.

The study recommends that the *Zambia Daily Mail* properly defines its operational philosophy and ensures that the philosophy is accurately unpacked into the editorial policy. This would allow for proper management and accountability of the media house contrary to the current prevailing where the media house exhibits a mixture of philosophies. Further, some stakeholders featured in the study proposed that the autonomy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* would be assured if it was partially or completely privatised. However, considering evidence presented in this study, the researcher cautions against such a move on the basis that the *public service principles* that the Zambian people desire from the *Zambia Daily Mail*, are only practical under state ownership due to the funding model which requires such media houses to be *non-profit* making.

DEDICATION

To my lovely mum, Margaret P. Kabwebwe and sister Jane C. Chitalu for believing in me and sacrificing a lot for me to reach this far. They saw in me something that I probably couldn't even see myself at the time. Mere words cannot express my gratitude to you mum and sis but suffice to mention that I really cherish your role in the person I have become. God richly and mightily bless you!!!!!!

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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATION

UNZA	University of Zambia
MISA ZM	Media Institute for Southern Africa Zambia Chapter
MLC	Media Liaison Committee
IBA	Independent Broadcasting Authority
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
USA	United States of America
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TV	Television
MIBS	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services
ZANA	Zambia News Agency
ZANIS	Zambia News and Information Services
TVZ	Television Zambia
ZICTA	Zambia Information and Communication Technology Authority
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
NRBS	Northern Rhodesia Broadcasting Services
ZBC	Zambia Broadcasting Corporation
UNIP	United National Independence Party

PSM	Public Service Media
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
MDI	Media Development Indicator
MMD	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
PF	Patriotic Front
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition Party
KANU	Kenya African National Union Party
NMG	Nation Media Group
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
UK	United Kingdom
HSS	School of Humanities and Social Sciences
DRGS	Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies
MFNP	Ministry of Finance and National Planning
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
PFOC	Press Freedom Organising Committee

CHAPTER ONE

1.0.0 Introduction

The importance and impact of the media, print or electronic, cannot be overlooked in the world of today. In democratic societies, the media are even referred to as the fourth arm of government; after the *Executive, Legislature and Judiciary* (Matibini, 2006). This is because one of the key premises of democracy is adequate participation of citizens in governance. The media help citizens to achieve this premise by providing them with information on which they are most likely to base their participation in governance and other societal issues.

Goldberg (2001) observes that the impact of investigative reporting in the Watergate scandal and the role of the media in the exposure of Enron's accounting irregularities, among other legendary episodes, buttress the view that the media can make a difference. As a result, allegations of distortion, unfairness, untruthfulness, inaccuracy and unbalanced media content; are today greeted with hand wringing as a threat to government and even society as a whole (ibid). This implies that society expects media content to be fair, balanced, objective, accurate, truthful, and inclusive in order to give a clear picture of what is happening in a given country and at a particular time. This is exemplified in a study titled *The Media We Want: The Kenya Media Vulnerability Study* commissioned by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) and conducted by Peter Oriare, Rosemary Okello-Orlale and Wilson Ugangu in Kenya, in which it was concluded as follows;

Kenyans desire a free, independent, assertive, vibrant and responsible media that would effectively advance democracy, human rights, good governance and socio-economic transformation...Such media would provide platforms for campaigning against the culture of impunity that is a key challenge to Kenya's political and socio-economic transformation, (Peter et al., 2010:9).

However, standards set by society are not the only factors considered by media houses in content production and general media operations. Studies have shown that there are several factors both internal and external to media houses which influence content production and general operations (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996). Accordingly, these factors are responsible for the way content of a given media house is (ibid). The tasks in content production as well as media operation studies therefore remain those of identifying these factors, and also establishing the degree of influence that each factor has on content production and general media operations. One such factor identified

by some scholars is ownership, which according to Strinati is as important as the media itself;

The mass media industry is crucial for the creation of reliable information, knowledge, ideology and propaganda in contemporary capitalist societies, but so are its structure of ownership and control, (Strinati 1995).

Mobb (2002) also supports Strinati's exaltation of ownership when he concludes that media owners have a potential to decide what sort of information an audience will be allowed to receive.

Although the media have been traditionally held in such a high esteem, revelations from some previous studies suggesting that Journalists' perspective to issues are shaped by the type of media ownership they work for, have made some stakeholders to question how accurate the media depict society and consequently, their relevance to democracy which is premised on information and not misinformation.

This is because people's perception of reality or events, on which they are most likely to base their decisions, is at the mercy of the accuracy and completeness of the source reporting to them (Fishman, 1980). The implication is that if citizens are presented with wrong information, they are likely to make wrong decisions. And consequently, for citizens to fully participate in governance and make meaningful contributions, they must be presented with all necessary as well as accurate information available.

Thus, suggestions of ownership influence on media operations have encouraged communication scholars to continue probing the subject in a bid to ascertain how the said influence is exercised in order to help guide national and international policies. This study was set-up to explore this subject further and in the context of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. This report is thus an account detailing the findings of a study into the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership structure and how it affects operations and ultimately content of the media house.

1.1.0 Background

1.1.1 Media Ownership and Control in General

Media ownership is a source of comment, debate, interest group lobbying and government review around the world. In most countries, legal regulations concerning media ownership and cross-media ownership are intended to foster the development of a diverse mix of public, private and

community media at all levels. High ownership concentration is feared as a risk to media pluralism that can impact on editorial independence through an undue influence by commercial or political owners; creating challenges in distribution and other operational areas (Mobb, 2002). In the study of ownership and control therefore it is essential to identify key indicators that can cover a wide range of issues regarding supply, distribution and access to the media (ibid). Thus, debate over the importance of media ownership and control has traditionally been framed in terms of the significance of a separation between ownership and management roles within media houses (ibid).

1.1.2 Types of Media Ownership Structures in the World

There are three main types of media ownership in the world (Article 19, 2009 and Achchhami, 2011). These include *state*, *private*, and *community* owned media houses. The existence of each of these types of ownership in a given country and the content thereof depends on a number of factors, but to a larger extent, the type of political system; which in turn determines the type of market system which a country will follow (Ostini and Fung, 2002; Altmeyden, 2006; and Giddens, 1992).

1.1.3 State-Owned Media Houses

State-owned media houses are those whose shares are in the hands of the state; the state also funds the operations through grants and, in case of TV and radio, may also allow a charge on users (Chirambo, 2011). These media houses may be the sole media outlets or may exist in competition with private and community media, depending on a political system.

There are two types of state-owned media houses in terms of operational philosophies; those owned and controlled or run by the state as well as those owned by the state but run by an independent Board of director (Article 19, 2009). For example, scholars have documented that in China the government owns and directly controls the media (*the media is in effect, state-run*); while the BBC has been cited as being state-owned, but overseen by a Board of Governors who, although appointed by the government, have a degree of independence from both the state and direct political control (ibid). The two types of state-owned media houses can be found in almost all political systems of the world and by implication in almost all the market systems.

1.1.3.0 Public Service Media Houses

'Public service' is not a type of media ownership per se but rather a set of normative principles on which state-owned media houses are operated in democratic societies. According to UNESCO (2011), the mission of media houses operated on public service principles is to promote pluralism, transparency and unbiased information distribution so that citizens can develop their own informed opinions about societal issues. This type of media operational philosophy is thus meant to complement commercial media houses by covering informational needs and interests that are not satisfied by the commercial media (ibid). To achieve this task, public service media houses' content cover a wide range of interests and needs of all sectors in society. This diversity further complements and shapes operations of private media houses—public service media houses are supposed to be models for other types of ownership and operational philosophies. This is because public service media houses are not supposed to have specific vested interests to satisfy, but rather their loyalty is expected to be with the general public.

According to the UNESCO Media Development Indicators (MDI) Framework (ibid), “a public service media house is expected to be *non-partisan, non-profit*, with a public interest remit.” Consequently, public service media houses require legal protection from interference, particularly of a commercial or political nature, in respect of their governance, budget and editorial decision making. This is because the original public service media model is based on an independent and transparent system of governance concerning several areas, such as editorial line, appointment of managers and finance (ibid).

Characteristics of a public service media house, according to Barendt (1995), can thus be summarised as follows:

1. geographical availability,
2. concern for national identity and culture,
3. independence from the state and commercial interests,
4. impartiality of programs and programs' range, and

5. substantial financing by a general charge on users, in case of TV and radio.

1.1.3.1 State-Owned and Controlled Media Houses

This is the original operational structure of state-owned media houses dating to as back as the 15th century when the press was strictly controlled by governments and the church. The term state media is often used in contrast to private or independent media, which has no direct control from any political party (Achchhami, 2011). State-owned and controlled media houses have a rather more prescriptive content; that of telling the people what to think. This is because such media houses are under no pressure to attract high ratings or generate advertising revenue. The state usually censors content which it deems illegal, immoral or unfavourable to the government and likewise regulates any programming related to the media (ibid). In countries where state media houses are strictly controlled, Journalists may even be required to be members or affiliated with the ruling party. According to Achchhami (ibid), State-owned and controlled media are used to:

1. Promote the regime in a favourable light,
2. Vilify opposition to the government by launching smear campaigns
3. Give skewed coverage to opposition views, and
4. To act as a mouthpiece to advocate a regime's ideology.

Additionally, state-controlled media may only report on legislation after it has already become law to stifle any debate. The media legitimises its presence by emphasising "national unity" against domestic or foreign "aggressors". Further, state media usually enjoy increased funding and subsidy compared to private media counterparts.

1.1.4 Private - Owned Media Houses

These are media houses owned by individuals, families, organisations and private companies (Chris, 2010). This type of ownership is pronounced in libertarian political systems [‘pure’ or mixed economic systems—where factors of production are mostly in the hands of private entities] because of the emphasis in such societies on the decentralisation of power. These media houses exist in competition with mostly state-owned/public service media houses. They are assumed to have better media content brought about by the fear of losing market shares to competitors (Article

19, 2009). Furthermore, large media houses achieve efficiency through the *economies of scale*, and as such there is need to attract more audience to the publication or broadcast so as to increase advertising sells. Lastly, the very fact that these media houses are not owned by the state allows perspectives that dissent from official sources to be shared.

However, other scholars have argued that they also get caught up in unethical practices in their quest for profit through what is termed as *commercialisation* of the media—everything that sells is assured of space regardless of the outcome (Ibid and McQuail, 2006). The media from a professional point of view should not only give whatever the public demands, sometimes those demands have to be carefully weighed against the ultimate goal/s of a given society. For example, most large private media houses are accused of thriving on *sensationalism* because that is what ‘people’ appears to be interested in, but ethics of the profession as well as standards of most societies would advise otherwise.

1.1.5 Community Owned Media Houses

The Zambia's principal IBA Act of 2002 defines community broadcasting as “a broadcasting service which is fully controlled by a non-profit entity and carried on for non-profitable purposes; serves a particular community; encourages members of the community served by it or persons associated with or promoting the interests of such community to participate in the selection and provision of programmes to be broadcast; and may be funded by donations, grants, sponsorship or advertising or membership fees, or by a combination of any of them,” (IBA Act, 2002).

Further, Section 24(3) of the same Act defines religious broadcasters as one which reflects religious beliefs and needs of the people and should provide a community broadcasting service dealing specifically with religious issues; be informative, educational and entertaining; focus on the provision of programmes that highlight grassroots’ community issues including, developmental issues, health care, basic information and general educational and environmental affairs and other spiritual matters; and promote the development of a sense of common religious purpose and improve the quality of life.

From the definitions above, it can be observed that the concept of community media is mostly applied to electronic media. However, the principles behind this type of media ownership have also been extended to print media. Thus the definitions above can be summed up as follows:

A community media is a domestic entity generally serving the interest of a community and this includes several types of media houses such as educational and religious media. These are not for profit making media houses but started by donations and sustained through community voluntary services, (Shawn, 2005).

Community media houses play an important role in fostering media pluralism. Absence or insufficient community media—characterised by lack of investment in the sector, high entry barriers, marginal reach and lack of public support in some countries may severely impact on media pluralism. Table 1.0.0 gives a summary of the three main types of media ownership and their normative philosophies.

Table 1.0.0: Summary of Media Ownership Types and Ideal Philosophies

Type of ownership	Operational model and autonomy	Normative philosophy
State (State-controlled)	Controlled by the state (Autonomy defined by the state)	To act as a platform for state Propaganda
State (Public service)	Run by an independent board (Autonomy defined by wider society through national legal system)	To provide impartial and professional coverage to all citizens (Reflects reality as it is)
Private (commercial)	Almost all decisions shaped by profit motives (Autonomy defined by financiers)	To maximize profit
Private (Ideological)	Promote certain causes in society(Autonomy defined by both the financiers and the owners ideology) NB: <i>A combination of the two models is the most prominent</i>	To see the ideology achieved as well as profit maximisation (profits secondary)
Community(including Religious Media Houses)	Community involved at all levels(autonomy defined by the community)	To act as a platform for Community educational, information sharing and entertainment
<i>Source: Article 19, 2009, State versus private ownership: A look at the implications for local media Freedom. Available at www.article19.org/pdfs/publications. Accessed on 20th October, 2012: IBA Act NO 17 of 2002.</i>		

1.1.6 Trends of Media Ownership and Control in Zambia

In trying to understand the trend of media ownership and control in Zambia, it is important to divide the time from 1906, when the first newspaper was published, to 2013 into political phases that the country has gone through. This is because, like pointed out in section (1.1.2); media ownership, operations and control are directly linked to the political system of a given country. To this end, the four political phases that Zambia has gone through since 1906 are the Pre-independence, First Republic, Second Republic, and the Third Republic.

1.1.7 Media Ownership and Control before Independence (1906-1964)

There were about thirteen (13) documented different newspapers that were published in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) between 1906 and 1964, as well as one (1) radio station (Kasoma, 1986). Ten (10) or 71 percent of these media houses were privately owned by individual/s and companies; two (2) or 14.5 percent by the colonial government; and two (2) or 14.5 percent by the church (ibid).

Makungu, (2004) observes that media houses before independence were established to advance the owners interests—in almost all cases those interests were of political nature. For example, Welensky used the *Northern News* to advance his Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, while Moore used his *Livingstone Mail* to win a position to the National Legislation Council (Kasoma, 1986). Throughout the pre-independence era, media owners had a direct documented influence on what was published in their publications, and in fact some owners like Scot, Moore, and even Welensky were also editors of their publications (ibid).

1.1.8 Media Ownership and Control in the First Republic (1964-1975)

Kasoma (ibid), reports that a major change in newspaper ownership structure took place in 1964 after Northern Rhodesia became an independent Republic of Zambia. This followed the pull out of Argus Group, a South African-based newspaper publisher and its Southern Rhodesia-based subsidiary, the Rhodesia Printing and Publishing Company from the new nation—Zambia. Kasoma (ibid) observes that this sudden pull out by Argus Group was probably because of fear that the pro-White record of their newspaper was going to have repercussions in the attitude of the new black government towards them. Further, Kasoma (1986) notes that they also wanted to avoid

embarrassment since they were based in countries which Zambia's new leaders considered unfriendly.

The pull out by Argus Group provided an opportunity for new entrants into Zambia's media industry. Lonrho, another private entity, took advantage of this opportunity and quickly acquired the *Northern News*, a daily newspaper at the time, which was until this takeover owned by Argus Group (ibid). Lonrho had prior to this move acquired the *Zambia Times* and its Sunday sister the *Zambia News*. However, Lonrho discontinued the *Zambia News* and incorporated the *Zambia Times* into the *Northern News*, which afterwards was renamed the *Times of Zambia* (ibid).

On its part, the Zambian government acquired the *Central African Mail* which later became the *Zambia Daily Mail*. This move was necessitated by the fact that government didn't want to allow a situation where all media houses in the country were in the hands of the private sector (ibid). As a result, the Zambian government took over all the media related companies that were in the hands of the colonial government and in addition bought the *Central African Mail*. Further, the government established the Zambia Information Service (ZIS) and *Zambia News Agency* (ZANA) with the earlier meant to be the information wing of government.

Kasoma (1986), further recounts that due to the urgency of organising the country free of conflicts, the government started paying more attention to the operations of the media than before leading to the first media conference which was addressed by President Kaunda in 1973.

The period from 1964 to 1973 therefore saw only two main types of ownership remaining—that of the state (including the *Zambia Daily Mail*, ZBS, and ZANA) and a private Lonrho (*Times of Zambia*) as major players in the media industry. However, despite the 1:4 ratio of private to state-owned media ownership during this period, *Times of Zambia* was able to take on the state owned media houses by provided critical checks and balances to government. This could probably be attributed to its strong editorial independence, strong financial support, as well as good infrastructure at the time.

1.1.9 Media Ownership and Control in the Second Republic (1973-1991)

The Second Republic, as established by the recommendations of the Chona Commission in 1972, came with among other things a one party participatory democracy. The rationale advanced for this

move was to ensure national unity and development. Consequently, this became a prelude to a planned economy in which government was to oversee almost, if not all, factors of production, the media inclusive. By 1975, government announced that it had bought the *Times of Zambia*, the only major private Newspaper at the time (Kasoma, 1986).

The role of the media in the Zambian society was thus re-defined by President Kaunda in his Watershed speech as follows:

1. *The Times of Zambia* was to reflect official party and government thinking,
2. The *Sunday Times of Zambia* was to carry in-depth analysis on the party and government as well as the nation in general,
3. *Zambia News Agency (ZANA)* was to collect news about the whole nation,
4. *Television Zambia (TVZ)* was, apart from dissemination of information, express in-depth the various cultural aspects of the nation, apart from entertainment, and
5. Radio to continue dissemination of information, providing entertainment and education in all its important cultural aspects (As quoted by Makungu, 2009 from Moore, 1991 p68).

Ironically, although the speech is applicable to all state-owned media houses, President Kaunda singled out the *Times of Zambia* in the speech, probably because the announced takeover of the media house appeared to have not been completed at the time—the takeover came into effect in 1983. Consequently, it seemed the *Zambia Daily Mail* was to take the proclamations as implied—in fact it should have been already operating on the same or at least similar principles having been a state-owned paper shortly after independence. For example, Makayi (1997) summarises the Watershed Speech as follows:

...all Journalists in the state-owned *Zambia Daily Mail*, the *Times of Zambia*, the *Sunday Times of Zambia*, ZANA and ZBS were to reflect the official thinking of the Party and its Government.

Government had, however, media ownership consolidation sealed in 1983 when it took over all the shares in the *Times of Zambia*. Hence from 1983 to 1991, all major mass media outlets were in the hands of government with the exception of the church press which came and disappear, and though

some of these church presses did make some impact, it was not much to outweigh state-owned media houses at the time. It suffices to mention, however, that the state-owned media houses of this period tried to provide checks and balances to government (Kasoma, 1986).

1.1.10 Media Ownership and Control in the Third Republic

According to Ndlela (2007), the demise of the Soviet Union in the late 1980s led to a series of changes in the global political and economic order. Instead, Western liberalism emerged as a dominant political ideology which also led to the elevation of democracy as the sole legitimate system of governance in the world (ibid). This change in political landscape subsequently led to the introduction of mixed or what others thought as ‘pure’ market economies (*all economies are mixed*), in which states across the globe were expected to play minimal roles in the running of economies while the private sector was expected to take a driving seat (ibid). This consequently, meant privatisation of most institutions that were initially owned by governments—ideally the media were to be no exception (ibid). For example, the MMD before coming into power in 1991 had promised that once in government, it was going to privatise media houses which were in the hands of the state (Hamasaka, 2008).

However, in the media sector, most countries, including Zambia, rather preferred opening up the industry to the private sector while they (the state) held on to those media houses they had owned before the 1990s (Chirwa, 1997). This, in the case of Zambia saw the establishment of the Post Newspaper and Radio Christian Voice as some of the first media houses to enter the Zambian media industry after the liberalisation of the air waves. By 2013, Zambia had over 70 radio stations, 10 Television stations, and over 400 registered publications—though most of the publications are not active.

For media houses which remained in the hands of the state, attempts were made thereafter to operate them on the public service media model. In the case of Zambia, this led to the review of several legislations as well as development of other legislations. Among the pieces of legislations developed in Zambia was the IBA Act NO.17 of 2002, while those reviewed included the Printed Publication Act and ZNBC (Amendment) Act of 1989. The IBA Act was however not operationalised for over a decade until July 2013.

1.1.11 Brief history of the *Zambia Daily Mail*

The *Zambia Daily Mail* started as the *African Mail* in 1960, and was founded by Alexander Scott, David Astor, and Richard Hall. The paper was founded on pro-African principles making it the second at the time after the *African Life* (Kasoma, 1986). However, Kasoma describes the *African Mail* as being better than the *African Life* both in content and layout. The paper gave wide coverage to African nationalists locally and abroad by devoting much space to telling Africans in Northern Rhodesia what their brothers in other countries had achieved in terms of fighting for political freedom. This information was published in a regular full-page feature called *Inside Africa*.

Kasoma (ibid), reports that the *African Mail* received a good response in Northern Rhodesia and beyond such that in 1965, the paper changed its name to the *Central African Mail*; a move that was intended to incorporate the other two members of the Federation namely, Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia. For example, a Southern Rhodesia edition was also introduced thereafter.

The editorial policy of the *African Mail* was generally to support UNIP which was the principle African political party in Northern Rhodesia at the time although the support was qualified—support was based on merits of what UNIP leaders did or said. If for instance, the UNIP leadership did or said something that the paper thought was not appropriate, they were sharply criticised (ibid). The *African Mail* strongly opposed Welensky and the Federation, such that as early as the 1961 rumours had leaked that Welensky was thinking of sending his soldiers to move into the Mail's offices, arrest the editor and close the paper down. Instead, he later resorted to sue the paper for criminal libel, a case which never took off. The Northern Rhodesian government is reported to have been unofficially sympathetic to the *Central African Mail* concerning its stance on Welensky and his Federation.

In 1965, the first Zambian government under President Kaunda bought the *Central African Mail*. Two years later, it became a semi-weekly paper called the *Zambia Mail*. In 1969, it finally became the *Zambia Daily Mail* (Kasoma, 1986).

Although the ownership and operational structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* were well known from independence into the early years of the third republic, government efforts to transform the media organisation into a public service media has left some 'confusion' among stakeholders as to whether that transformation has already taken place or not. For example, most arguments about the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and even the sister media organisations—ZNBC and the

Times of Zambia, are centred on the understanding that they are supposed to operate under the public service media model. This provides a challenge in terms of reaching a consensus if it turns out that the *Zambia Daily Mail* is still a state-owned and run media house. Hence, this study starts by establishing who the actual owners of the *Zambia Daily Mail* are, and then moves to interrogate how the owners exercise their right to influence the operations of the media house.

This information about the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership could have been easily obtained from the National Archives of Zambia and Registrar of Society, but the researcher opted to do a survey also among experts to find out what they knew about the ownership so as to appreciate the magnitude of the problem.

1.1.12 Statement of the problem

The effect of media ownership on media operations and content has continued to draw attention in communication studies both from theoretical and policy perspectives. This is against a backdrop of some previous studies suggesting that journalists' autonomy and perception of issues were actually defined within boundaries set by media owners (Okech, 2009; Herman and Chomsky, 2002; Gans, 1979 and Gitlin, 1980). This has prompted communication scholars to continue probing media ownership structures so as to divulge just how this influence is exercised in a bid to help guide policy.

The said ownership influence take various forms ranging from subtle hints about desirable topics or subjects of coverage to direct censorship and coercion of editorial staff (Altmeyden, 2006 and Giddens 1992). Further, owners are also said to influence content and form of media content through their decisions to employ certain personnel, by funding special projects, leave openings in the structures and by providing a media platform for ideological interest groups (Seaton, 1997).

Concerns are therefore expressed about this supposed increasing control of mass mediated information flows and about how democracy can function if the information that citizens rely on continues to be tainted by the influence of media owners (McChesney, 2000). For example, stakeholders accuse the *Zambia Daily Mail* of being pro-government thereby implying operations and content which are in favour of the state.

This study sets out to explore the subject of media ownership further by interrogating the

ownership structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and examine if there were weaknesses within it which could be used by the owners to influence the operations and ultimately content of the media house.

1.1.13 Rationale

Although studies have been done on ownership in other parts of the world, very few studies have been conducted in Zambia on the subject in a holistic manner. Most studies in the Zambian context have taken this topic as part of another topic and usually when looking at media freedom as well as the development of the media in the country. Further, some previous studies have relied on content analysis which has an element of measurement error. Berelson (1952) argues that content analysis assumes that the study of manifest content is meaningful. This assumption, he observes, requires that the content be accepted as a “common meeting ground” for the communicator, the audience, and the analyst—the content analyst assumes that the “meanings” he ascribes to the content, by assigning it to certain categories, correspond to the “meanings” intended by the communicator and/or the way it’s understood by the audience (ibid). There are chances, however, that the meaning assigned by the analyst may not be the intended one by the communicator or given by the receiver. The alternative therefore remains that of talking to practitioners and experts themselves to get the insight of how internal media structures are organized and how they impact on operations.

In trying to overcome the above identified shortcomings of some previous studies, this study focused on three main areas, namely to look at ownership structure in a holistic manner, to approach the study by getting first-hand information from practitioners and experts, and consequently establishing if weaknesses existed within the structure which could be used by owners to influence operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

1.1.14 Objectives of the Study

Understanding how ownership has influenced the philosophy on which the *Zambia Daily Mail* is founded and operated as well as how the philosophy is operationalised to guide operations and content production, is important for stakeholders to appreciate why the *Zambia Daily Mail*

operations and content are the way they are. This study done from 1st September 2013 to 30th December 2013 in Lusaka involving five institutions, namely the *Zambia Daily Mail*, MLC, MISA ZM, UNZA, National Archives of Zambia as well as practicing and retired journalists was designed to unveil such information.

The main objective was thus to interrogate the ownership structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* so as to determine if there were weaknesses within it which could be used by the owners to influence operations and ultimately content. In order to achieve this, specific objectives were to:

1. establish the ownership of *Zambia Daily Mail*,
2. examine the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*,
3. analyse the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*,
4. examine the connection between philosophy and editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*,
5. explore the connection of the editorial policy and content of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, and
6. investigate the factors considered by the *Zambia Daily Mail* in content production

1.1.15 Research Questions

During the study, the researcher asked the following questions:

1. What is the nature of the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership?
2. What is the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*?
3. What is the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*?
4. How does the *Zambia Daily Mail* philosophy influences its editorial policy?
5. What is the relationship between the editorial policy and content of the *Zambia Daily Mail*?
6. What is the measure of standard for selecting content at the *Zambia Daily Mail*?

CHAPTER TWO

2.0.0 Literature review

2.1.0 Overview

Media ownership and its impact on media operation have been studied for many years by both communication and sociologist scholars among others. Cho, et al (2004) observe, that from both theoretical and policy perspectives, the effect of ownership on media content has attracted a great amount of attention in communication studies though there seems to be no consensus on these effects because of mixed results. Further, theories of Political-economy and resource-dependence tend to imply that corporate ownership of the mass media shapes its content so as to further the corporation's interests (ibid).

This literature review provides a foundation on which the study was built by availing a chronological order of some events that have led to ownership studies.

2.1.1 Genesis of Ownership Studies

Early communication studies considered the mass media as passive entities in the communication process and therefore non-problematic. According to early communication scholars like Lasswell, the media were nothing more than pipes or conduits through which bits of information flow—neutral transmitters of messages linking senders to receivers (Reese, 2001). The Westley and MacLean's model, for example, portrays the media "as the agents" serving the audience in selecting and transmitting non-purposively the information they require, especially when the information is beyond their (the audience's) immediate reach (Westley and MacLean, 1957).

Basing the argument on the writings of Altheide, Reese (2001) further reports that this media-as-channel philosophy was also being amplified by the Journalists themselves. For example, Richard Salant of CBS News is reported to have remarked, "*We don't make the news; we report it,*" "*Our reporters do not cover stories from their point of view—they are presenting them from nobody's point of view*" (Altheide, 1976). As a result, most early communication researchers rather confined themselves to the *effects* that media messages had on the audience rather than the process by which the content was made.

It was not until the middle 20th century that some scholars, like David (1950) and Warren (1955), started extending communication studies to factors both internal and external to media houses that surrounded content production. This approach was then different, like observed above, from the traditional effects studies that had dominated communication research before the 1950s, as Shoemaker and Reese observed:

...This perspective is different from that commonly taken in books about mass communication research, which tend to use media content as a starting point. Such studies typically ask: By what process is the message received and understood by the audience? What effects do the media have on the audience? Instead of taking media content as a given, we ask: What factors inside and outside media organisations affect media content? (Shoemaker and Reese 1996).

The assumption that there were various factors that surrounded content production in media houses was thus based on the understanding that the media environment was itself *problematic* and something that needed to be *understood* and *predicted* through an awareness of the underlying forces (Reese, 2001). This realisation was a clear rejection of the passive media notion propagated by early communication scholars.

Consequently, in trying to understand media operations and content production process, scholars started looking at factors that shaped the content of media houses. These factors were later established to range from societal, institutional, organisational, and normative (ibid). This came to form a basis for studies into specific factors, like ownership, in an effort to appreciate how each affected content production and media operations in general.

2.1.2 Media operations Levels of Analysis

The numerous numbers of factors involved in content production seem to imply that a better way to understand how a media symbolic environment is shaped, or “constructed,” is to find a way of classifying the many kinds of forces at work. One such classification is the hierarchy of Influences model that describes multiple levels of influence that impinge on the media simultaneously (Shoemaker & Reese (1996). Shoemaker & Reese (ibid) suggest how influence at one level may interact with the other at another level, for example, the personal bias of individual Journalists may affect their reporting while the news organisation and its employees, in turn, must function within other institutional relationships and ideological boundaries set by the larger society (ibid).

This model organises various theoretical perspectives on the shaping of media content, including the suggested categories of Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980).

2.1.3 Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980) Studies

Although communication scholars had acknowledged the fact that the media environment was something that needed proper understanding through systematic studies as early as the 1950s, it was not until the late 1970s and early 80s that two sociologist scholars, Gans and Gitlin respectively, made a breakthrough in coming up with various levels of analysing influences on media operations (Shoemaker and Reese 1996). This hierarchy of influences model establishes five possible levels of how to analyse the influences on media content and operations as discussed below:

In no particular order, the first level of analysis identified by Gans and Gitlin was *media workers’ socialisation and attitudes*. Shoemaker and Reese, see this as a communicator centred approach which emphasises the psychological factors impinging on an individual’s work—professional, personal, and political among others (ibid).

The second level of analysis was the *media organisations structures and routines*. This approach argues that content emerges directly from the nature of how media work is organised. The organisational routines within which an individual operates form a structure, constraining action while also enabling it (ibid). On this basis, McQuail (2005) suggests that the first question on media organisations should be that of establishing the level of freedom the media have in relation to society, and how much freedom is available within media houses. The second is that of establishing media organisational routines and procedures for selecting and processing content.

Other *social institutions and forces* were also named as another level of analysis in understanding media operations and content production. This approach, as Shoemaker and Reese (1996) observe, finds the major impact located in external factors media houses and the communicators. Such factors include economic, political, and cultural. Further, audience pressures on content production can also be located in the “market” explanation of “giving the public what it wants”

The last level of analysis was the *ideological position*. The assumption here was that media owners were under pressure to support the status quo—to support the interests of those holding positions of power in society. This was the case because media owners also expected some favours from those in power (Okech, 2009).

Understanding these levels of analysis, as Reese (2001) points out is very important as it provides a guide to research. It helps explain key concepts on which research should be based and unloads those multiple levels of meaning. Reese (ibid) further, stresses that such a model is even more important for Journalism studies because it helps to untie many of the criticisms of media performance, identifies their implicit normative and theoretical assumptions, and suggests appropriate kinds of evidence. For example, conservative media critics have located the source of bias with the individual Journalists, calling for more balance in hiring practices and regularly scolding specific Journalists (ibid). On the other hand, it is observed that *creativity and professionalism of Journalists ends up routinized once they join whichever media house*.

2.2.0 Review of Ownership Studies

Since the 1950s, communication, sociologists, and political science scholars among others have addressed different aspects of media operations and content. In this review however attention is paid to studies that were meant to address the influence of ownership on media operations and content, in an effort to subject the findings to the *Zambian context* and in particular with regard to the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

One of the earliest studies to isolate ownership as having influence on media content and operations was done by Altschull in 1984. In this study, Altschull established that the content of the media was directly related to the interests of those who financed the media (Altschull, 1984). By implication this meant the autonomy of media outlets was given within the boundaries of the ownership philosophy. Altschull (ibid) contends, that where the media outlet is commercially

owned, the content is likely to reflect the point of view of the owners and advertisers, while where the media fits into what Altschull calls an “interest pattern,” the content mirrors the concerns and objectives of whoever is providing the finance (ibid).

Several scholars have tried to build on Altschull's findings over the past decades in an effort to fit the findings into today's political and economic prevailing. Among such scholars are Shoemaker and Reese, who in their theory of media ownership and content have confirmed Altschull's findings. Shoemaker and Reese's (1991) conclude that owners of media houses have the ultimate power over operations and content. They contend that the primary focus of a media house owned by a publicly held corporation is to make a profit, and *objectivity is seen as a way of attracting the readers desired by advertisers* (ibid). They further argue that media content is built into the economic objective of the entire media house. They however caution that although in some rare cases, the owners may choose to make profit secondary to an ideological goal, such as promoting a particular agenda, a media house cannot indefinitely ignore the economic goal, especially when that media house is owned by stockholders. As a consequence, *public service is in most cases forfeited for the sake of either profitability or ideological stance* (ibid).

Shoemaker and Reese (ibid) have also found that media houses funded primarily by commercial sources are far more likely to use objectivity and newsworthiness as their principal standards in making news judgments. The reason, they said, is that a commercial media outlet is more responsive to its audience and advertisers, both of whom desire these qualities. Accordingly, media houses financed by “interest” sources were far less likely to place great emphasis on objectivity and newsworthiness. Instead, their content is more likely to reflect the thinking of the special interest group or groups that control them. Thus, Shoemaker and Mayfield explain, “Media content” is “the product of the complex set of ideological forces held by those who fund the mass media” (Shoemaker & Mayfield, 1987).

In mediating the message, Shoemaker and Reese (1991), also stress the important role ownership plays in media operations. They argue that, “although news departments may be organisationally buffered from the larger firm, content is still controlled indirectly through hiring and promotion practices” For example; newspapers usually endorse political candidates who echo the owner's or the publisher's political attitude (ibid). They argue that ownership has become such a powerful

force behind media houses that not only editorials and columns but also the coverage of news and features reflect the political beliefs or interest of the owners.

Further, Curran & Seaton (1997) observe that some owners of national newspapers in Britain have clearly used their titles to further their own political or commercial aims at the expense of balanced and responsible Journalism. For example, previous studies have reported the tendency of at least some owners like Victor Mathews (Owner of *the Express titles* from 1977 to 1985), the late Robert Maxwell (owner of *the Mirror titles* from 1984 until 1991) and Rupert Murdoch (Current owner of the Sun, The News of the World and the Times) – to intervene in editorial decisions in such a way as to dictate and standardise the political lines of their newspapers (Doyle, 2002). Doyle also argues that editorial interference by owners has frequently been indirect, for example through the selection of key personnel, or through the establishment of a culture of obedience and self-censorship as well as direct censorship through literally rewriting editorial leaders (Okech 2009 as quoted from Doyle, 2002).

Research conducted in relation to other European countries such as France, Germany and Italy also confirms that direct and indirect editorial interference by media owners, with detrimental consequences for media diversity, is by no means confined to the newspaper industry or UK media proprietors but also to other countries and electronic media (Doyle, 2002). The tendency by Robert Hersant (*owner of the second largest media company in France and with additional media interests in Belgium and elsewhere*) to intervene and standardise news and editorial content across many of the titles within his control for political or commercial reasons has been highlighted by several writers as an example outside the UK (Coleridge, 1993; Tunstall & Palmer, 1991). Another good example is Silvio Berlusconi who has been cited as using his three TV stations with capacity to reach 40 percent of the Italian audience to give support to his own political party in Italy during the March 1994 elections (Graham & Davies, 1997).

Based on these examples and other studies, Doyle (2002) concludes that ownership of the media matters because it affects the way in which the media industry is able to manage the resources available for the provision of media content. The performance of the media industry is thus, at least partly, dependent on the ownership configuration. Restrictions on ownership could, for example, result in replication of resources which prevents the industry from capitalising on all potential

economies of scale (ibid).

In the African context, Steve Okech in his master's thesis titled *The Impact of Ownership on Media content: An exploratory case study of National Media Group and Standard Newspaper Group*, all of Kenya also concludes that ownership patterns influenced media messages in Kenya (Okech, 2009). He observes that of particular interest was the fact that both editorials of the featured newspapers were considerably slanted in favour of views preferred by the owners (ibid). He concluded that it was evident that The Nation Newspaper was more inclined to the opposition NARC Party, while The Standard Newspaper supported then ruling KANU Party. Coverage of both newspapers according to Okech therefore gave more articles to candidates from their parties of choice, and when covering an opposing candidate, in most cases, they resorted to negative coverage.

Also related to the factor of ownership was the relationship between media owners and the polity in Kenya. The media as witnessed in the case of Britain in previous chapters gave coverage to top political figures in the hope that when they assume positions of power; several concessions would be given in return to their thriving businesses. Okech (ibid) contends that the emergent winner NARC Party indeed gave several concessions in terms of an enabling business environment to NMG after the 2002 elections. They were given licenses to broadcast countrywide, a feat they had unsuccessfully sought under the disposed KANU regime for several years (Ibid). This enabled the media house to rapidly expand both its radio and television franchise to all parts of the country, formerly a preserve of the government controlled national broadcaster – KBC.

Based on this literature therefore it appears that owners have a potential to decide what sort of information an audience will be allowed to receive. For example, Mobb (2002) points out that private owners may decide not to publish something critical of their company, whereas state-owned media houses may be subject to political control and censorship over what they can broadcast or publish.

The said influences of ownership on media content has been found to take various forms ranging from subtle hints about desirable topics or subjects of coverage to direct censorship and coercion of editorial staff (Altmeyden, 2006 and Giddens, 1992). Further, owners may influence content and form of media content through their decisions to employ certain personnel, by funding special

projects, and by providing a media platform for ideological interest groups (Seaton, 1997). This usually occurs in subtle ways, through the appointment of senior management and, in turn, the selection of stories and the way in which information is presented to the public.

The public is frequently unaware of information that should but does not come to its attention. For example, some scholars have cited the time when *nine* promoted itself as the major television news network and was owned by the Packer family, who had strong financial interests in casinos; it has been observed that it was unlikely that *nine* could have screened weighty content on serious social problems that have resulted from the proliferation and promotion of legal gambling. In his recently published book, *'Rupert Murdoch - An investigation of political power'*, David McKnight (Associate Professor and a Senior Research Fellow at the Journalism and Media Research Centre at the University of NSW) has also provided an insight into Rupert Murdoch's use of his media empire to further his political agenda over the past decades.

Based on these examples as well as other experiences from across the world, concerns have been expressed about increasing corporate control of mass mediated information flows and about how democracy can function if the information that citizens rely on continues to be tainted by the influence of media owners (Bagdikian, 2000).

Although there seem to be this consensus about the influence of ownership on media content and operations, there are still other scholars who argue that the influence is not so obvious (Golding & Murdock, 1996). Golding and Murdock, for examples, argue that *owners, advertisers and key political personnel cannot always have their way into the media operations because there are structures which would limit their overall dominance* (ibid). The scholars explain that understanding the nature and workings of those structures should be the concern of scholars; this was the primary objective of this study.

2.3.0 Media Ownership Studies in Zambia

2.3.1 Hamasaka's Study

Hamasaka did a study titled the *impact of the broadcast legislative reforms on the newsroom staff's perceptions of the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC)'s editorial operation and news content*. In this study, Hamasaka attempted to examine if legislative reforms in the media

since in 1991 have had impact on ZNBC Journalists and ultimately content. In trying to probe the subject, Hamasaka used a triangulated methodology involving content analysis and a survey among Journalists.

He reported that Journalists at ZNBC still perceived the state has having influence on the selection of content. Hamasaka documents that Journalists featured in the study complained of the state's (owners) continuous intervention in the editorial lines of the institution and that sometimes this was done through the state's appointed gatekeepers. Thus he concludes that the legislative reforms since the 1990s have had little impact on the way ZNBC processed news hence recommended that there is a need to fully implement all legislations related to ZNBC in its transformation into a truly public service media.

2.3.2 Other Studies from Zambia

There are quite a number of studies and scholarly writings about the media in Zambia. However, few of such studies have addressed the subject of media ownership structure in a holistic manner. Most of them have taken the subject as part of another topic and mostly in the discussion of media freedoms and development in the country. Studies such as *The Press in Zambia* by Kasoma, the *State of the Media in Zambia* by Makungu, and the impact of decentralisation on state media system in Zambia; the case of Times of Zambia among others, all discuss at length the subject of media ownership and in fact seem to indirectly implicate owners as having a role in media operations and content in the country (Kasoma, 2001; Chirambo, 2011 and Makungu, 2003). For example, both Kasoma and Makungu discuss how the white settlers used their newspapers to advance their political interests before independence as well as how the Kaunda government re-defined the role of state-owned media houses after independence (ibid). Further, Chirambo concluded that the media environment of the first and second republic has not changed much in the third republic, and as such similar conditions continue to undermine media reforms.

2.3.4 Gaps in the Studies

None of the studies reviewed addressed the subject of ownership influence on media operations in light of the philosophies on which media houses are founded. This leaves a void when trying to understand why content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is the way it is. For example, by focusing on the newsroom staff perceptions, Hamasaka only managed to help us understand that there was

ownership influence in content production at ZNBC. Although he cites the use of gatekeepers as one way the owners managed to influence the media house, he couldn't clearly elaborate why media managers bowed to intimidations from the owners. This study intended to go further by answering the why question.

Most studies from Zambia thus have not addressed the subject of ownership structure in holistic manners. Insight into the role of ownership in the content production and general operations of the media in Zambia are thus drawn from studies like the ones cited here and studies done in other countries. Changes in ownership as well as management also provide insight into how media ownership does influence operations and content.

Therefore most discussions, debates, and even lobbying in the area of media ownership and control in the country appears to be based on mere observations of ownership changes, and presentations made by experts who draw on studies done in other countries and the few from within Zambia.

While these approaches may provide an insight into the internal media environment, Thompson (1990) argues that they are inadequate in providing a holistic picture with regard to all aspects involved in media operations and content production. He contends that in order to understand media in modern culture, there is need to examine media in specific social-historical contexts, consider the relevant cultural objects, and then interpret how they are connected (ibid). This means that trying to understand the media environment based on studies done in other countries may not yield accurate results owing to differences in cultural, economic and political set-ups (ibid). Further, conducting holistic ownership studies help to ask important questions that can avail enough information needed for successful understanding of the media environment. Such potential research questions would help activists, Journalists and the public understand what vested interests control what they see, hear and read—this was the mandate of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0.0 Methodology

3.0.1 Introduction

This Chapter explains how the research questions were investigated. The section is therefore aimed at demonstrating that acceptable scientific methods were followed throughout the study and thus the results are valid. The primary methodology was qualitative but a quantitative survey was also employed as a secondary methodology. The reason for adopting triangulation research methodology was to try and facilitate for benefits of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies as well as to try and strike a balance in information collection.

Triangulation method denotes the use of several methods, sometimes both qualitative and quantitative, in order to understand a research problem (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000). It implies that accounts produced from one source can be compared and contrasted to those of another through the use of complementary research methods (Hansen et al, 1998). Consistencies can be recognised and interpreted, discrepancies or differences can be pursued further, but all in pursuit of deeper, and more valid interpretations. Triangulation can be carried out in a variety of ways –across time, space, personnel, settings, organisations, methods, and researchers (Hansen et al, 1998).

Hansen et al (ibid) however, caution researchers to carefully compare data sources from institutional sources with those accessed from documents, observation and other bodies of literature

in order to arrive at a realistic understanding and interpretation of the situation.

Although qualitative approach is the primary methodology of this current study, it has a weakness of data being interpreted by the researcher. This sometimes may lead to a researcher interpreting the data in a subjective way. To caution this weakness, the researcher employed a quantitative survey as well as document review methods to provide a counter balance to how qualitative data was interpreted.

3.1.0 Research Design

The research design used was both exploratory and descriptive. As such, it concentrated on collection of data through in-depth interviews from practicing Journalists, retired Journalists, editors, as well as media experts, and used descriptive techniques in analysing the data.

3.2.0 Research Methods

Qualitative methods:

Nine in-depth interviews were conducted with media experts and Journalists. In this study, the qualitative method was used to gather information through in-depth interviews and document review. In addition to what, where, and when, qualitative method allowed the researcher to bring out the respondent's interpretations of the questions that were put to them. The method also emphasised the understanding of verbal narratives of respondents. To help get the in-depth thoughts of respondents, open ended questions were used in qualitative method. This was appropriate for this study since it was investigating factors behind the nature of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. To this effect, ten in-depth interviews were conducted.

A quantitative survey involving practicing Journalists at the *Zambia Daily Mail* was also conducted. The quantitative survey involved 20 out of an approximated 40 practicing journalists at the *Zambia Daily Mail* Lusaka. The journalists the survey were asked a series of questions about the ownership, philosophy, and editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

Secondary sources of data were reviewed. These were Websites, libraries, and information databases which were regularly consulted throughout the study, *Zambia Daily Mail* copies for the month of September 2013 obtained from the *Zambia Daily Mail* Library and UNZA, and as well

as Documents of registrations from the National Archives of Zambia. The three sources provided a wealth of information used in this work.

3.3.0 Data Collection Methods

3.3.1 Primary Sources of Data

Data collection involved structured questionnaires administered to the *Zambia Daily Mail* Journalists for a quantitative survey. Qualitative interviews were conducted on one on one basis using open ended questions with one senior editor from the *Zambia Daily Mail*, retired Journalists, and experts from various media bodies who provided primary data. The researcher used a recorder, note book, pencils and pens to record the responses to in-depth interview questions. This allowed the researcher to refer back to the information for clarification during data interpretation and writing of the report.

3.3.2 Secondary Sources of Data

Throughout this study, the researcher reviewed various documents related to media ownership and control as well as content production. The researcher also reviewed articles which appeared on front page of the *Zambia Daily Mail* for 30 days from 1st September 2013 to 30th September 2013. This was meant to give the researcher an insight into the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. During this review of the *Zambia Daily Mail* articles, focus was paid to the type of stories that dominated the front page, sources quoted, actors, receivers of the actions as well as the general context in which the articles were written. This gave the researcher adequate background knowledge into the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. As indicated earlier, data sources included;

1. Websites, libraries, and information databases which were regularly consulted throughout the study,
2. *Zambia Daily Mail* copies for the month of September 2013 obtained from the *Zambia Daily Mail* Library and UNZA, and
3. Documents of registrations from the National Archives of Zambia.

3.4.0 Study Place

The study was conducted in Lusaka between 1st October 2013 and 30th December 2013. Institutions that were featured in this study included *Zambia Daily Mail*, MISA ZM, NCR, National Archives of Zambia and UNZA. Retired journalists also came from within Lusaka. Lusaka was used as a base because this is where the HQs for *Zambia Daily Mail*, MLC, National Archive of Zambia, as well as MISA ZM are found.

3.5.0 Sample Size

3.5.1 Qualitative Method Sample

The sample was with eight respondents, details of whom are indicated below.

3.5.4 Quantitative Survey Sample

This research, like pointed out above, also employed a quantitative survey involving 20 out of an approximated 40 practicing journalists at the *Zambia Daily Mail* Lusaka. The journalists who featured in a quantitative survey were asked a series of questions about the ownership, philosophy, and editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. Further, respondents were also probed on their experiences as well as opinions on the operations of the media house. This methodology was employed to facilitate the views of the actual receivers of the impact of the said variables. It also provided as a counter check to how qualitative data was interpreted.

3.6.0 Sampling Technique

3.6.1 Qualitative Method

Purposive sampling was used to select the various categories of experts with interest in the development and operations of the media in Zambia. This method allowed the researcher to identify key players with vast knowledge and understanding of the media in the country.

Thus nine In-depth interviews were conducted with the following people;

1. then MISA Zambia Executive Director,
2. A former MLC Chairperson and 2014 PFOC Chairperson,

3. then UNZA Mass Communication Acting HOD,
4. *Zambia Daily Mail* Deputy Director (also Editorial Director),
5. National Archives of Zambia information Officer,
6. A former ZNBC reporter and Producer,
7. Three ZNBC producers,
8. A former *Zambia Daily Mail* editor,

As Chirambo (2011) observed, the depth of information to be collected in in-depth interviews is more important than the number of participants featured. In this wisdom the researcher had to limit the number of participants to ten in order to have enough time of getting first-hand as well as detailed information of how these experts, practitioners and former practitioners viewed, experienced and understood the influence of ownership, philosophy, and editorial policy on the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

Data obtained through in-depth interviews were analysed using pre-ordinate coding system—the researcher identified topical themes to look for in the interpretation of data.

3.6.2 Quantitative Method

Stratified purposive sampling was used to select the *News desk, Sunday Mail desk, and the Sub-editors desks* of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. Self-administered questionnaires were then distributed to all journalists on these desks averaging to 7 per desk. There were a number of reasons for adopting this method of sampling as outlined below;

Firstly, the structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* in terms Journalists placement is in strata form, namely the News desk, Business desk, Features desk, Sport and entertainment desk, Sunday Mail desk, and Sub-editors' desk. However, the News desk, Sunday Mail desk, and Sub-editor's desks are more directly involved in issues related to policy and control. It was therefore important to target them if the study was going to get close to how ownership influenced the *Zambia Daily Mail* operations.

Secondly, not all workers at the *Zambia Daily Mail* are Journalists by profession. It was therefore

going to be difficult to use other methods like simple random sampling as this was likely to pick even other professionals. In trying to understand ownership influence on media operations, it is important to specifically target people with vast knowledge and experience on media operation and content production process (Mouton and Marais' 1996).

Thirdly, and most importantly, most criticisms about the operations and content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* relate to the news content. It was therefore important to feature people who are directly responsible for news production.

3.7.0 Data analysis

Data from self-administered questionnaires was entered in Microsoft excel and then analysed using SPSS. Descriptive proportions were generated to provide an overview of the characteristics of interest which included graphs, cumulative frequencies, among others. These formed a basis for interpretation of variables.

3.8.0 Ethical Considerations/Consent

There were not many ethical issues in this study except the informed consent of all participants. As Chirambo (2011) observed, people are sceptical taking part in studies of this nature for fear of being victimised by their superiors. Therefore where participants demanded to remain anonymous, this was granted and observed throughout the study. Further, the researcher committed to keep such participants anonymous even after the study. It is however gratifying to report that not so many cases were recorded of participants demanding anonymity, except for journalists working for other media houses since they did not have blessings of their superiors to take part in the study—the researcher referred to them by their positions instead of actual names in this report.

3.9.0 Limitation of the Study

1. One of the limitations to this study is that the researcher didn't obtain information from end users of the *Zambia Daily Mail* who are the readers. This information could have been vital in completing the understanding of media content. However, the researcher couldn't prioritise the end users because the study was not very much on what the readers thought about the content and operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail* but on why the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is the way it is. This type of data was likely to be obtained from the practitioners themselves as well as experts.

2. Some of the primary information was collected from workers of *Zambia Daily Mail*. This could have affected the objectivity of the data collected. Getting data from them was however a 'necessary evil' as they are the recipients of the impact of ownership, philosophy, and editorial policies' in their work. Qualitative method, which is the primary methodology, as well as document review, however, helped to caution the possible subjectivity from the practicing Journalists.

3. When the study was designed, it intended to establish the connection between the editorial policy and content. However, this was not done because there was no formalised and written down editorial policy at the Institution during the time the study was conducted.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0.0 Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This chapter examines communication theories and concepts relevant to media ownership and control, as well as content production. The main concepts used in this study which require definitions and explanations are Mass Media, media houses, media ownership, philosophy, editorial policy, as well as media content. These concepts were the subjects of investigation in this study, hence defining and explaining them is in order for a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

4.1.0 Mass Media

By medium is meant a device used to transmit information across time and space (McQuail, 1994). Media is the plural of medium. Mass media therefore refers to institutions that mediate mass communication such as radio, TV, newspapers, and magazines among others—mass communication itself being defined as, “a process in which professional communicators design and use mass media to disseminate messages widely, rapidly, and continuously in order to arouse intended meanings in large, diverse, and selectively attending audience in an attempt to influence them in a variety of ways” (Dennis and Defleur, 1998). A single mass media is also referred to as a media house.

In this study, the media house of interest was the *Zambia Daily Mail* but other media houses such

as the *Times of Zambia*, ZNBC, among others are referred to in the course of the report. The concern in this respect was to establish how the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership structure manifests in the operations of the media house.

4.1.0 Media Ownership

An owner is a person who possesses something, and has moral as well as legal rights to use it in whichever way s/he feels fit, for example, s/he may choose to sell or even destroy the property owned (Macfie and Raphael, 1982). This legal right gives an owner power and authority to use, rent, transfer, and destroy what s/he possess. On this basis, media ownership refers to person/s, group/s, and institution/s that possess a media house—Individuals or institutions that possess the property used in the running of a media house; define the core business of a media house; oversee the operations and use of funds generated, as well as provides funds for recapitalisation among other things.

Like discussed in chapter one, a media house may be owned by individuals, group of individuals, community, and also by the state. This study was set out to establish not only who owned the *Zambia Daily Mail* but also how the owners exercise their moral and legal rights to influence the operations of the media house.

4.1.1 Media Philosophy

Philosophy in relation to the media tries to explain the moral position from which a media house will look at issues—it refers to a theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principle for behaviour. Media houses, just like other institutions in society, have ways of looking at issues and ideally, it is from these perspectives that content and general operational pattern image (Tunstall 1971). The philosophies are broadly classified in two main areas namely, revenue and non-revenue.

Non-revenue philosophies relate to prestige, serving community, exercising influence and power in society or achieving some normative end in general (ibid). Such media houses will have an agenda or a philosophical stance that they would love to see achieved regardless of the cost involved. For examples, when the *Zambia Daily Mail* endorsed then MMD government in 2011, the issue of sales and profit marking seemed to have been a least of its concern. Examples of media institutions operating on non-revenue philosophies include religious, public service and community media.

On the contrary, media houses founded on revenue principles are likely to operate on purely business basics, one of which is profit maximisation. To such media houses the media is just a business like any other, and as such they try by all means to satisfy the market by giving the market what it wants. Other scholars have argued that such media houses strive to have better content, but others contend that in their quest to satisfy the market, commercial media houses end up becoming unethical—this is referred to as the *commercialisation* of the media (McQuail, 2005).

In amplifying on these media philosophies, Wanyande (1995) and Stremlau (2009) proposed two motives for investing in the media industry namely, commerce and politics. They argue that in some instances, these motives would stand alone—those in business will see the media as an avenue to profits; while politicians will see the sector as an efficient means of electoral publicity.

The interconnection between the two motives is properly illustrated by Abdi and Deane's (2010) findings that media ownership reduces the extent of political spending while increasing the extent of political influence. This explains why politicians want to be close to media houses and/ or media owners. While these two motives benefit the politician and investors, Namwaya (2010) shows from across various mainstream media houses that the benefits could also be accruing to the media practitioners through bribes, even if this is in most cases intermittent.

Based on these classifications, McQuail (2004) suggests that the first question on media houses should be that of establishing the level of freedom the media have in relation to society, and how much freedom is available within media houses. The second is that of establishing media houses' routines and procedures for selecting and processing content.

The task of this study was thus to clearly establish the operational philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and show how the philosophy influences the general operations of the media house.

4.1.2 Editorial Policy

Editorial policy refers to statements and guidelines set forth by the editor or editorial board of a media house—it provides rules on how to select items to be published or broadcast by a particular media house (www.reference.md). Ideally, an editorial policy is supposed to carry the general philosophy that the owners put in place to define the core business of a media house. An editorial policy is thus supposed to operationalise the general philosophy by spelling out the dos and don'ts,

as well as how tasks are to be carried out. Some of the things that are supposed to be spelled out through an editorial policy include the reason the media house exists; the standard of work to be published; whose values the content should carry—what is acceptable for publication; what to avoid and how content is to be shaped (ibid).

In this respect, this study was concerned with establishing the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, observe the presence of the values identified above, and establish a connection between the policy and the philosophy of the media house.

4.1.3 Media Content

Shoemaker & Reese (1996) define media content as, “*a complete quantitative and qualitative range of verbal and visual information distributed by the mass media.*” This means just about everything and anything that appears in the media, for example, news, documentaries, and entertainment, among others.

Quantitative information includes those attributes of media content that can be measured or counted, like the number of seconds a television news story lasts, or the number of column inches a newspaper story uses (ibid). Other things that can be counted are a number of newspaper stories about a particular topic, individuals, or region that appear within a given time period, the number of magazine photographs that show Zambia’s politicians, or the number of times a particular news stories refers to government or opposition (ibid).

The qualitative aspect refers to values that stories carry as well as ethical concern, for example, is the story biased or not biased, fair or unfair, objective or subjective, truthful or untruthful, and accurate or inaccurate among other things (ibid).

Thus the study looked at both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the *Zambia Daily Mail* content. For example, under the quantitative aspect, experts were asked to assess public accessibility to the *Zambia Daily Mail* and coverage of divergent views or dissent views. The qualitative aspects involved experts and practitioners commenting on the overall content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* in terms of truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, fairness and balance among others issues. This provided the researcher with a general picture of the *Zambia Daily Mail* internal organisation.

4.2.0 Theoretical Framework

Media management and regulation is a source of concern for governments, interest groups and the public around the world. This is against the background that the media are powerful tools that can contribute positively or negatively to the goals set by a given society. As a result, one of the most problematic topics in communication has been that of establishing the best way/s to manage media systems—while some sections of society have advanced a view that the media need freedom to operate, authorities and other sections believe the media is too lethal to be given too much freedom (Article 19, 1995).

The task for communication scholars has therefore been to guide this debate through informed studies which could provide empirical evidence on media operations. It was in this spirit that Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, as early as the 1950s, developed the theories of the press to account for how a political ideology of a given country affected media operations.

4.2.1 Theories of the Press

In 1956, three professors, namely Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Wilbur Schramm developed what was then referred to as the *Four Theories of the Press* (Siebert et al., 1956). These theories, like mentioned above, were designed to account for political environments in which media houses operated as well as how these political ideologies affected media autonomy and operations. The theories included Authoritarianism, Libertarianism, Social-Responsibility, and Soviet-Totalitarianism. One of the main arguments of the *Four Theories of the Press* is that media operations and autonomy is generally shaped or defined by the type of a political system. Scholars have since expanded on the Four Theories through additions of other theories to the list.

According to Siebert et al. , (ibid) the role of the press in an *Authoritarian* system is to act as an instrument for effecting government policies, though not necessarily government owned—whoever gets the state patent or permission is allowed to publish, especially with regard to the print media. The electronic media is, however, mostly under state ownership. Consequently, criticisms of political machinery and officials in power by the media are forbidden in an Authoritarian political system. The theory dates to as far back as the 16th and 17th century England when the press was

expected to support the absolute powers of the Monarch, his government, or both (ibid).

On the contrary, Siebert al. et. (ibid) report, that the media in a *Libertarian* system exist to provide checks and balances to the state and this ideology is most pronounced in democratic societies. The role of the media is to help citizens discover the truth through a free market place of ideas in which anyone can publish. It is from this background that the press acquired its status of being the *fourth arm of government*.

However, the Libertarian system also came with abuses by media practitioners leading to the development of the *Social-Responsibility* model which was meant to caution the abuses. The theory posits that media professionals can only do their work properly if they are reminded of their duties time after time through some legislation that will ensure they use their freedom with responsibility. It is developed on the Libertarian framework and therefore embraces most elements of *Libertarianism*. It has to be stated here that most governments in democratic societies rather prefer this model probably because it provides them with a chance to protect ordinary citizens by retaining some control over the media industry through legislations.

The fourth theory was the *Soviet-Communist Theory*. Under this theory the role of the media was to contribute to the success of the state. To achieve this task, only party members were allowed to own the media, and later on these media houses were expected to submit to state control in terms of content and general operations. This theory is traced back to Marx, Lenin and Stalin.

Since the 1950s, the *Four Theories of the Press* have been very instrumental in guiding communication scholars, students, media professionals and other stakeholders in understanding how a political environment shapes the overall media atmosphere. It is argued that no article or study dealing with the philosophical base for journalism practice can be complete without a reference to the *Four Theories of the Press*.

4.3.0 Review of Theories

This research was grounded in the *Political-Economic Theory of Communication*.

4.3.1 Definition of the Political-economic Theory

The term Political-economy, like most Social Science concepts, has several definitions, but for the

purpose of this study, a definition by Mosco which places the theory into context with this study is used. The strength of this definition is that it gives Political-economy the necessary breadth to encompass almost all human activities including communication. This helps in identifying processes at work in all forms of life and to assess their differences and inter-relationships (Haraway, 2003; Meadowcroft, 2005; Rosewarne, 2002).

According to Mosco (2009), “*Political-economy is the study of the social relations, particularly the power relations that mutually constitute the production, distribution, and consumption of resources.*” The theory thus looks at issues of control and survival. The control aspect deals with issues relating to the internal organisation of individuals and group members. In this respect, Control processes are broadly political in that they involve the social organisation of relationships within a community or organisation (ibid). On the other hand, the survival aspect tries to account for the means by which what is needed is produced (ibid). Accordingly, Survival processes are fundamentally economic because they are concerned with the production of what a society needs to reproduce itself.

4.3.2 Background to the Political-economic Theory

The term Political-economy, as observed by Chirambo (2011), can be traced back to James Steuart in the eighteenth century. Steuart used the term in his 1767 *Inquiry into the Principles of Political-economy*, in which he related the term *economy* to the art of providing for the needs of a family with prudence (ibid). Using this approach, Steuart suggested that the entire economy was directed by the *Head of the Estate* who sets the laws of his economy and was therefore both lord and steward (ibid). Drawing on the writings of Sedgwick, Chirambo reports that Steuart distinguished domestic economy from political economy in the following way:

Political economy is vested in a state but is not entirely the preserve of the statesman. The statesman essentially is challenged to consider a diversity of operations, circumstances, habits and customs of people and introduce a range of institutions to manage social-political relations in the distribution of resources, (Sedgwick, 1883:15).

However, Smith (1910:241-250), saw it differently, when In his book *Wealth of Nations* showed a statesman as providing an enabling environment for empowering the people to generate wealth.

This was a clear rejection of the original ideas propagated by the likes of Steuart as noted by Waterman (2002: 14-15). The main themes of Smith's theory for advancement of modern society politically and economically therefore include the following:

1. Free competition with regard to distribution,
2. Proportionate reward to service,
3. Self-reliance,
4. Intellectual freedom,
5. Division of labour,
6. Non-interference, and
7. Limitation of government control

It has thus been concluded that the foundation of modern liberalism is Smith's doctrine, and also this goes to liberalisation and its application to the communication sector (ibid); Adam Smith is hence credited with establishing the analytical distinction between the normative sense of Political-economy, which his predecessors understood as a system of policy design that would increase riches and power of a country; and a positive, more orthodox sense embracing an open-ended inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations (Chirambo, 2011).

Chirambo (ibid) further, reports that scholars such as David Ricardo were also rooted in Smithian thinking, but distinguished their ideas from Smith's by suggesting some forms of legislative controls to markets to safeguard the well-being of the poor (Sedgwick, 1883). The 19th century hence, saw a number of philosophical revolutionaries led by Smith, John Stuart Mill, and Ricardo through their varying views and confluence of ideas begin to shape the body of theory representing classical Political-economy (Chirambo, 2011). However, it is Karl Marx, the socialist scholar, who seems to have provided the most holistic analysis of Political-economy that has to this day interdisciplinary remit (ibid).

Marxian Political-economy is hence seen as being basically Smithian with modifications to key assumptions in order to predict spontaneous disorder and the fall of capitalism brought about by

self-interested individual capitalists (ibid). His pre-occupation with the class struggle and the place of the worker in the universe controlled by powerful capitalist forces lures scholars into interrogating the context of labour relations and rights in industry even as political and economic systems change (Waterman, 2002).

Sussman (1999) is instructive when he argues that the Marxian or neo-Marxian tradition of political economy provides for what he calls “the intellectual self-defence of working people and a call to resistance and action for the kind of social change that put people and common welfare ahead of personal and private accumulation and privilege”.

Chirambo (2011) concluded that while Smithian and Ricardian doctrines are anchored by the notion of free markets and comparative advantage, Marxian Political-economy is seen as not only holistic but is also rooted in philosophy, social theory and economics; and, in addition addresses class conflict (Milward 2000). The distinctive and holistic nature of Marx’s Political-economy renders it relevant to all aspects of social theory. The thrust of Milward argument, in aid of Marx, addresses the idea that understanding any system requires that one comprehends “*the systemic whole*”.

In truth, Marx places the economic system as the primary foundation upon which all aspects of society are framed, including existing forms of social consciousness. Political and legal systems will vary depending on the economic structures. For him, in the capitalist system the notion of “freedom” and “representative democracy”, is all but an illusion conjured by the dominant class to serve their interests and perpetuate class relations formed out of relations of production, (Chirambo, 2011).

Similarly, the legal system serves the ruling class who would have the means to seek effective representation as opposed to disadvantaged citizens (Milward, 2000:21).

According to Chirambo (2011), for Marx, not only is the legal structure in capitalism semi-autonomous, all super-structures are born of the economic structure which conditions power relations within society, and this include media institutions. In Marxian philosophy, change in society can only be accorded through a change in the relations of production and thus through a change in the economic structure.

4.3.4 Characteristics of the Political -economic Theory

Political-economy has four main characteristics relevant to this study, namely, *social change and historical transformation; totality of social relations; moral philosophy; and a balance between capitalist enterprises and public intervention.*

With reference to *social change and historical transformation*, Political-economy seeks to identify four processes central to the critical Political-economy of culture and these include the growth of the media, the expansion of corporate reach, commodification, and the changing role of state and government intervention (Chirambo, 2011; Golding and Murdock 1996). In this respect, Political -economy from a communication perspective, considers matters of control, ownership and complex relationships between the media industry as well as social elites (Boyd-Barret & Newbold; 1995). In amplifying on these processes, Mosco (1995) suggests three entry points of analysing the Political-economy of Communication, namely *commodification, spatialisation and structuration.*

As quoted by Chirambo (2011), Golding & Murdock (1996) describe *commodification* as “the process of transforming goods which are valued for their use, into commodities valued for their worth on the market.” Further, Mosco (1995) argues that there is a connection between the type of media product, the structure of corporate control, and the nature of the labour process. This line of thought is important to this study as it seeks to interrogate issues surrounding content production process at the *Zambia Daily Mail.*

Spatialisation on the other hand, refers to the process of overcoming the constraints of time and space in social life (ibid). Technological advances facilitate the swift movement of goods, services and people across enormous distances. Related phenomena such as globalisation and industrial restructuring are viewed as impacting on state activity in four ways, *commercialisation, Privatisation, Liberalisation, and structuration.* Of interest to this study is the need to establish whether the *Zambia Daily Mail* takes advantage of these to operate effectively and efficiently.

Structuration refers to a connection between capital and labour; particularly, in terms of how labour organises and positions itself as an autonomous force within the relationship. Of great interest to this study is Masco’s (ibid) analysis of the hegemonic process of individuation, which he defines as ‘the process of social actors, capital and labour, particularly as individual subjects whose value is connected to individual rights, individual expression, the individual exercise of political

responsibility of voting and the individual freedom of consumption' (Chirambo, 2011).

Totality of social relationships as a characteristic of Political-economic theory refers to the study of the social relations, and in particular the power relations that influence the production, distribution and consumption of resources, including communication resources (Mosco, 1995). This characteristic is very important to this study as it tries to establish the power relations in the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

Moral philosophy provides a third characteristic of Political-economic theory. This refers to social values and to conceptions of appropriate social practices (Mosco, 2009). The goal of this particular form of analysis is to clarify and make explicit the moral positions of economic and political economic perspectives, particularly because moral viewpoints are often masked in these perspectives. This study seeks to explore the moral basis of the *Zambia Daily Mail* operations, and therefore this characteristic provided a good entry point. Political-economy of Communication, according to Golding and Murdock (1991), goes beyond technical issues of efficiency to engage with basic moral questions of justice, equity and the public good. These moral questions are at the centre stage of the debate about the *Zambia Daily Mail* and its operations, hence worthy of investigations.

The fourth characteristic of a Political-economy approach is *praxis*, which refers to striking a balance between capitalist enterprises and the public intervention. This, as an idea which is deeply rooted in the history of philosophy and one which has found several paths in communication studies, including Marxian theory, the Frankfurt School of critical thought, and the "action-research" tradition best embodied in Sociology (Mosco, 2009). Most generally, *praxis* refers to human activity and specifically to the free and creative activity by which people produce and change the world, including changing themselves.

This characteristic provides a contextual framework for examining whether the *Zambia Daily Mail* pay attention to the concerns of the public about its operations and content.

4.3.3 Political-economic Theory of Communication

As quoted by Chirambo, Sussman (1997) observes that "...contrary to administrative approach to communication studies which is occupied with the skills and techniques of communicative

exchange, Political-economy concerns itself with the unveiling of the constitution of power and hegemonic practices in terms of communicative control and ideological legitimacy.” In this context, the study of communication seeks, among other things, to understand the link between institutional organisation of production, power and ideology (Sussman, 1999). As further observed by Mosco (2000), Political-economy captures the sense of *ownership, control, media behaviour, labour rights* and the power relations governing the distribution of communication resources and conflict over them—it is the body of theory from which communication scholars gather knowledge and methods for understanding the rules and regulatory structures that define the parameters for expression (Meehan, 2007). This understanding allows for the appreciation of the nature of media products (ibid).

In theorising Political-economy from a communicative perspective, Sussman (1999) traces the Critical Sociology of Communication to the Marxian age where there was recognition that modern communications and transportation were integral to the corporate industrial complex. McQuail (1994) emphasises this point by observing that the media houses have come to be understood over time by scholars as being part and parcel of the economic system with close links to the political system. In this sense, the theory provides an opportunity to look at media ownership in a holistic manner as this study intended.

4.2.0 Relevance of the Theory to the Study

Political-economy as an analytical framework provides an opportunity in this study to interrogate historical processes and their impact on media systems; and in this case, the changes in ownership and the consequences on communicational rights. It provides a framework for investigating the responsiveness of media owners to citizen actions and demands for ethical media products—whether owners leave rooms in their philosophies to adjust based on consumer demands and why?

The economic perspective of this framework is concerned with the survival of media houses—how do they survive and at what cost? For, example, if a media house is founded on non-revenue philosophy, how is it sustained?

Further, since the term Political-economic Theory in communication refers to the examination of

the institutional aspects of the media and telecommunication systems as areas of study focusing on the aspects of human communication, the theory provides an entry point into the examinations of relationships among owners, labour, consumers, advertisers, structures of production, and the state; as well as the power embedded in these relationships. Rather than effects, it looks at how people use and construct messages. Thus the theory helped the researcher to unlock the embedded relationship of the *Zambia Daily Mail* owners to the structure of production and content.

According to McQuail (1996), Critical Political- economic theory, “identifies a critical approach that focuses primarily on the relationship between economic structures and the dynamics of media industries as well as the ideological content of the media”. This implies that media houses have to be considered as part of an economic system, with close links to political system. On this basis, Graham (1979) concludes that media content could therefore be accounted for by the exchange value of different kinds of content, under conditions of pressure to expand markets, and by the underlying economic interests of owners and decision markers.

Murdock and Golding (1977) note that the consequences are reduction of independent media sources, concentration on the largest market, avoidance of risks, and reduced investments in less profitable media tasks such as investigative reporting and documentary film making. They conclude that the effects of economic forces worked consistently to exclude those voices lacking economic power or resources. They further observe that the underlying logic of cost operated systematically, consolidating the positions of groups already established in the main mass media markets and exclude those groups who lacked the capital base for successful entry. Thus the voices that survive largely belong to those least likely to criticise the prevailing distribution of wealth and power (ibid). Conversely, those most likely to challenge these arrangements are unable to publicise their dissent or opposition because they cannot command resources needed for effective communication to a broad audience.

This formulation has a certain practical value in communication and specifically to this study because it calls for attention to fundamental forces and processes at work in the media industry. It emphasises how a media house produces content, how it deals with those who distribute the product and market it, as well as how consumers decide about what to watch, read, or listen to. It also considers how consumer decisions are fed back into the process of producing new products.

This theory therefore provided a contextual framework for understanding the role ownership plays in the *Zambia Daily Mail* operations.

4.3.0 Some Limitations of the Political-Economic Theory

Political-economic theory does have some weakness that have identified by some scholars. These include but not limited to the following:

1. The theory presents a very 'strong effects' model, thereby denying any sense of audience resistance or critical intelligence. Thus, when using the theory, researchers should bear in mind the Two-Step-Flow model and other effects theories so as to strike a balance;
2. Tendency to proceed as if mass mediated communication were the only hegemonic force. When using the theory, researchers should bear in mind all theories that discuss audience resistance to media messages as well as these which address various sources of information available to society, and
3. That the theory tends to oversimplify the process of production in the media. Thus when using the theory, researchers should bear in mind the fact that media operations are a complex arrangement involving a number of forces both internal and external.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0.0 Data Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion

5.1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings of a study into the ownership and control of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. The main aim of this study was to explore the ownership of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and to analyse how it affected operations and content of the media house. As stated in chapter four, the study was an exploratory and descriptive one which employed a triangulated methodology in order to strike a balance in information gathering from people who were knowledgeable and experienced on the topic—those directly involved in the

collection, processing and dissemination of information as well as experts in media operations and management.

Data analysis was done using SPSS for quantitative data while Qualitative data was analysed using thematic method; the themes including *ownership, philosophy, editorial policy, and measure of standard*. After the coding of quantitative data, descriptive proportions were generated using SPSS to provide an overview of the characteristics of interest, while the coded qualitative data was interpreted by the researcher, and the two formed the basis for analysis, interpretation and discussion of the variables of interest.

The resulting data is presented in detail using various tables, graphs, and charts given in this chapter. The details of the findings are also given in the discussions which follow the tables, graphs, and charts. Data from document review is also incorporated in the discussions of the findings and these also form a core of this study as it highlights methods and processes of content production and the role ownership plays in content production and general media operations both in Zambia as well as other country based on what surveys and scholars have documented.

5.2.0 Presentation of the findings

5.3.0 Description of the Samples

The sample for a quantitative survey comprised of 20 Journalists from the *Zambia Daily Mail* Lusaka out of an average of 40 who were selected using stratified purposive sampling. For qualitative interviews, 10 participants from various institutions were selected using purposive sampling. Below are the findings.

5.4.0 General Demographics of Participants in a Quantitative Survey

Table 1.0.0: Age of Quantitative Survey Participants

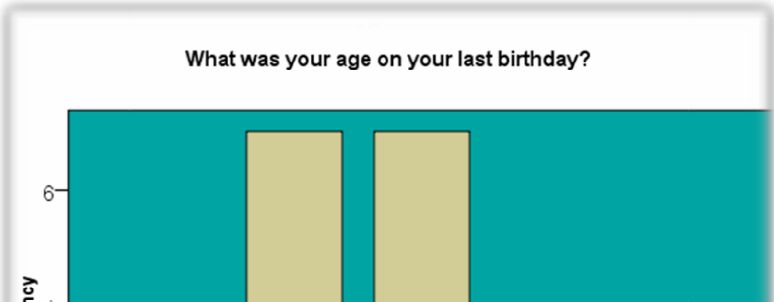


Table 1.1.0a shows that the age of participants in a quantitative survey ranged from 20 to 39; with 3 participants aged between 20 and 24, 7 participants aged between 25 and 29, 7 participants aged between 30 and 34, as well as 1 participant aged between 35 and 39. Two participants didn't respond to this question.

Table 1.0.1: Sex of Quantitative Survey Participants

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Male	10	50.0	50.0	50.0
Female	9	45.0	45.0	95.0
Non response	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

In terms of sex, table 1.1.0b shows that 50 percent or 10 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey were males, 45 percent or 9 out of 20 females and 5 percent or 1 out 20 participants didn't respond to the question.

Table 1.0.2: Education of Participants in a Quantitative Survey

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	College	9	45.0	45.0	45.0
	University	10	50.0	50.0	95.0
	Non response	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

The table above shows that 45 percent or 9 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey are educated up to diploma level while 50 percent or 10 out of 20 have gone up to degrees level. 5 percent or 1 out 20 participants didn't respond to the question.

5.5.0 Ownership of the *Zambia Daily Mail*

Data collected from in-depth interviews shows that 7 out of 10 participants believe that the *Zambia Daily Mail* is state-owned, while the other 3 think it was a ‘public’ media. When queried further, some of the participants who had earlier indicated that the media house was state- owned also said there is no difference between a ‘state’ and ‘public’ media house—the two terms could be used interchangeably.

Further, records of registrations obtained from the *National Archives of Zambia*, as of 30th November 2013, also indicated that the *Zambia Daily Mail* is state or government-owned through the MFNP.

Table 1.1.0: Participants Knowledge of the *Zambia Daily Mail* Philosophy

Are you familiar with the philosophy of your media house?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	19	95.0	95.0	95.0
	No	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.2.0 above, shows that 95 percent or 19 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey indicated that they were familiar with the philosophy on which the *Zambia Daily Mail* is founded and is supposed to be operated, while 5 percent or 1 out of 20 said they didn’t know the philosophy.

On the contrary, participants in in-depth interviews were not categorical in their response to this question as most of them felt there is a mixture of philosophies within the *Zambia Daily Mail* structure.

Table 1.1.1: The Zambia Daily Mail Philosophy

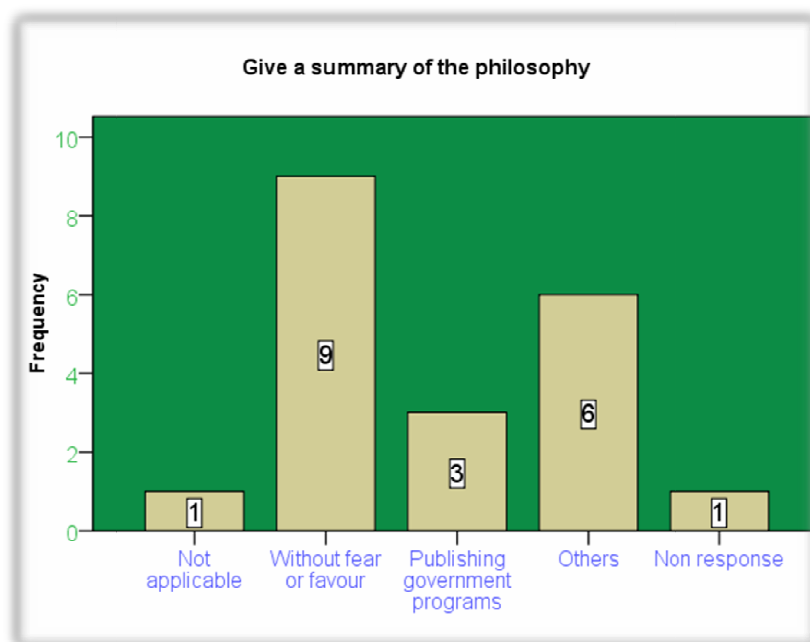
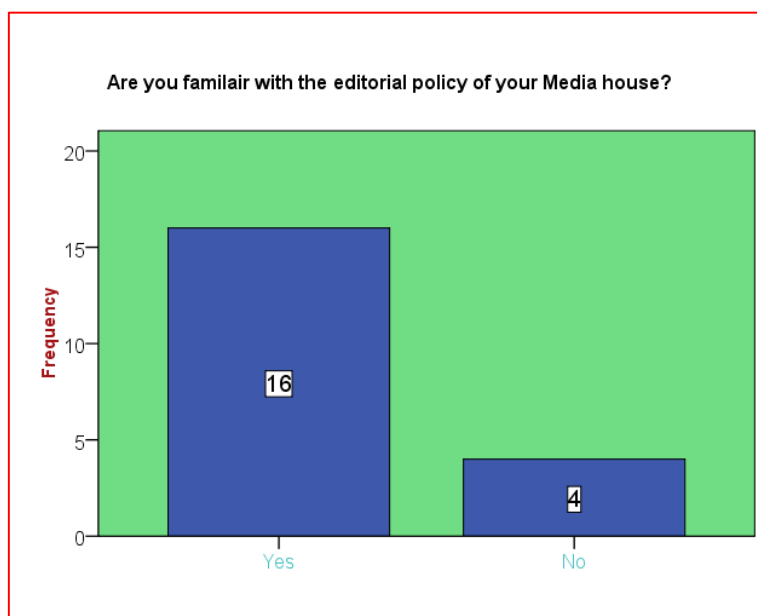


Table 1.2.1 above shows that 47.37 percent or 9 out of 19 respondents who in table 1.2.0 had said they were familiar with the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* also indicated that it was built around the motto-“*without fear or favour*”. 15 percent or 3 out of 19 of those who indicated that they knew the philosophy said it was to “*publicise government policies and programs*”, 31.58 percent or 6 out of 19 indicated other concepts which included among others things objectivity, truthfulness, fairness, and accuracy. This question was not applicable to one respondent who had earlier indicated that they were not familiar with the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

In the same way, 9 out of 9 participants in in-depth interviews indicated that the ideal philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is supposed to be built around its motto-“*without fear of favour*”—which, according to them, meant *impartiality* in content and operations. They however argued that on the contrary the *Zambia Daily Mail* appeared to exhibit a mixture of philosophies. They argued the media house is controlled by the state though it claims to be a public service media. This assertion was justified by referring to the *Zambia Daily Mail* content which most of the participants argued were mainly about the state and also written in favour of the state.

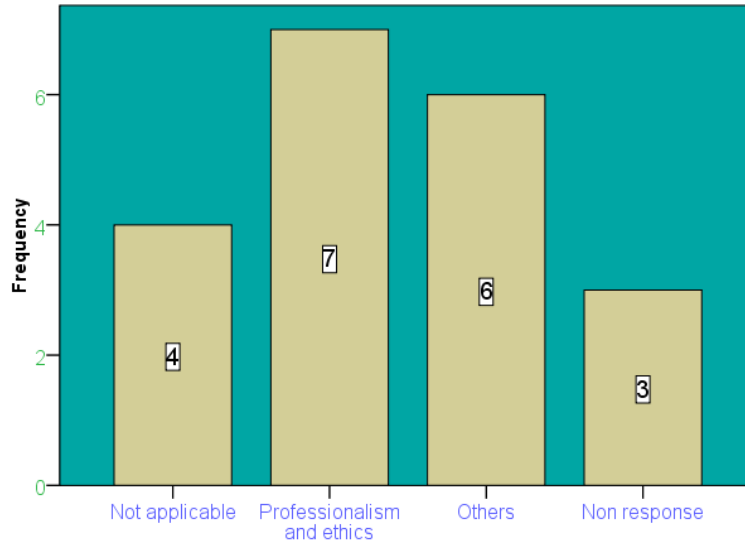
Table 1.2.0: Participants' knowledge of Zambia Daily Mail Editorial Policy



According to the data in table 1.3.0 above, 80 percent or 16 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey indicated that they were familiar with the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*; while 20 percent or 4 out of 20 said they were not familiar with the policy.

On the contrary, the majority of participants in in-depth interviews indicated that they didn't know the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

Table 1.2.1: The Zambia Daily Mail Editorial Policy



However, when queried further, 43.57 percent or 7 out of 16 of those who said they were familiar with the policy gave responses that were related to professionalism and ethics as the summary of the policy, 37.5 percent or 6 out of 16 indicated isolated concepts that were not directly related to professionalism and ethics which included to educate, inform, truthfulness, excellence, reporting without fear or favour, objectivity, and public service, while 18.75 percent or 3 out of 16 did not respond to this follow up question. The follow up question was not applicable to 4 respondents who had earlier indicated that they were not familiar with the editorial policy.

On the contrary, 8 out of 9 participants in in-depth interviews indicated that they were not familiar with the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*; 1 out 9 comprising the Editorial Director of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, made clear the position concerning the existence of the policy at the institution namely, that *the media institution has had no formalised and written down editorial policy at the time of this study*.

Table 1.3.0: Connection between the Philosophy and Editorial Policy

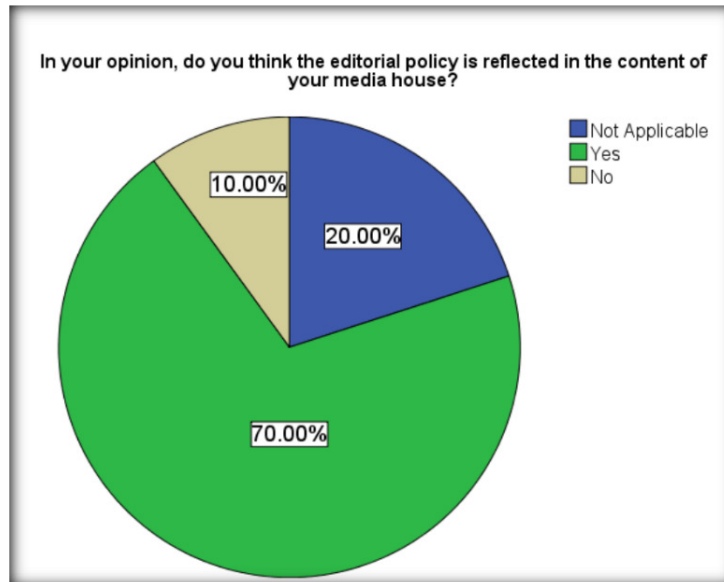
Do you think there is a connection between the philosophy and editorial policy of your media house?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Not applicable	4	20.0	20.0	20.0
Yes	14	70.0	70.0	90.0
No	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Table 1.4.0 shows that 70 percent or 14 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey believe that there is a connection between the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* (as manifested in the motto) and the editorial policy, 10 percent or 2 out of 20 believe there is no connection, while the question was not applicable to 20 percent or 4 out of 20 participants who had earlier indicated that they didn't know the editorial policy.

Further, 8 out of 9 participants in in-depth interviews could not comment on the connection because, like alluded to above, they were not familiar or had never heard of a formalised *Zambia Daily Mail* editorial policy at the time the study was conducted. However, the editorial director from the *Zambia Daily Mail* indicated that the informal policies that guided operations were built into the philosophy of the institution.

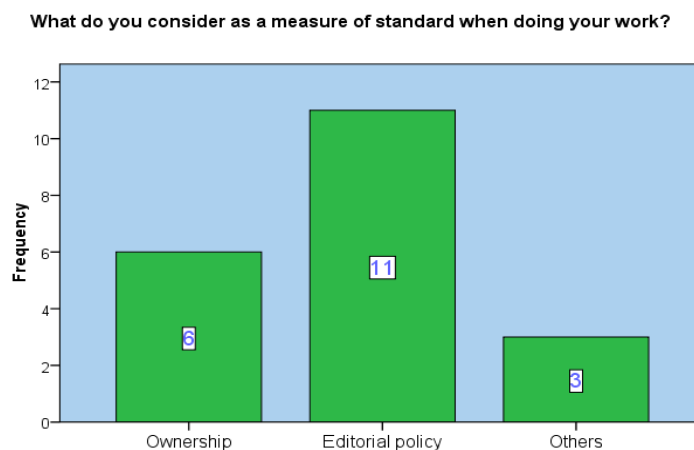
Table 1.4.0: connection of the Editorial Policy to the Content of the Zambia Daily Mail



The chart above shows that 70 percent or 14 out of 20 participants in the quantitative survey believe the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* reflected the “editorial policy”, 10 percent or 2 out of 20 think the content is not built into any standardised policy, while the question was not applicable to 20 percent or 4 out of 20 participants who had earlier indicated that they were not familiar with the editorial policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

Further, most participants in in-depth interviews believe the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is modelled to suit the interests of the state and that it only reflected government position or perspective to issues. They could not, however, discuss the content in relation to the editorial policy since they had earlier indicated that they were not familiar with the policy.

Table 1.5.0: Standards for Selecting Content



According to the data in table 1.6.0 above, 55 percent or 11 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey indicated that they considered the institutions’ editorial policy has a measure of standard when doing their work; 30 percent or 6 out of 20 cited ownership as being at the back of their minds when doing their work, while 15 percent or 3 out of 20 indicated other factors that included Journalists’ own beliefs, the Zambian culture and the audience.

In addition to the findings above, 8 out of 9 participants in in-depth interviews argued that the state (the owners) still influenced the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and its general operations in various ways which included its involvement in the appointment of the Board. The Editorial Director, however, argued the media institution was trying to operate professionally.

2.0.0 Other Pointers to Ownership Influence

Table 1.6.0: Change of Ownership versus Change of Approach to Work

		If you worked for a media house with a different ownership, would you change the way you do your Work?			Total
		Yes	No	Non response	
What is your sex?	Male	8	2	0	10
	Female	6	2	1	9
	Non Response	1	0	0	1
Total		15	4	1	20

The table above shows an overwhelming 75 percent or 15 out of 20 participants in a quantitative survey indicating that they would change their approach to work including how they looked at issues if they worked for a media house with a different ownership. 20 percent or 4 out of 20 participants argued they will not change, while 5 percent or 1 out of 20 did not respond to this question. When queried further as to why they will change, 33.33 percent or 5 out of 15 of those who said they will change indicated ownership philosophy as the reason they will change, 60 percent or 9 out of 15 from the same group indicated they will change to suit the editorial policy of the media house they will go to, while 6.67 percent or 1 out of 15 did not respond to this follow up question. The graph doesn't show any significant deviation of views between males and females on this question.

Similarly, 9 out of 9 of participants in in-depth interviews indicated Journalists do change their approaches to work when they go to a media house with a different ownership.

Table 1.7.0: Change of Ownership versus Ethics

		In your opinion, do you think it is possible for Journalists to remain ethical regardless of the media house They work for?		
		Y	N	Total
What is the highest level of education you have attained?	College	6	3	9
	University	7	3	10
	Non response	1	0	1
Total		14	6	20

Ethics in this context refers to accuracy, objectivity, fairness, truthfulness, and balance among other elements. The study showed that 68.8 percent or 11 out of 16 participants in a survey indicated this is possible while 38.2 percent or 5 out of 16 think this is not achievable. The study showed no significant deviation of views among participants in terms of education level attained.

In the same way, most participants in in-depth interviews think remaining ethical is a personal choice that each Journalist has to make based on a number of factors. They however argued that the choice could be made much easier if the media environment they are working for is able to provide a suitable environment for them to remain ethical.

5.4.0 Discussion of the Findings

5.4.1 Ownership of the *Zambia Daily Mail*

The results from in-depth interviews on stakeholders' understanding of the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership partly confirm the earlier concern advanced in the introductory part of this dissertation namely, that there were misunderstandings about the true nature of the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership and its operational philosophy among some stakeholders in the country. Although the majority of participants had rightly indicated that the media house is state-owned, a follow up question that asked them to distinguish between a 'state' and 'public' media saw some of them equating the two concepts.

One reason that emerged from the study for this misunderstanding was the belief that all institutions that were in the hands of the state or government automatically became public institutions. Although this may be true in other sectors, strictly speaking it's not the case with the media industry where *public service* doesn't necessarily refer to the type of ownership but rather a set of normative principles aimed at putting the general public first in all areas of operations (Article 19, 2009).

Further, the mix-up in terms of stakeholders understanding of 'state' and 'public' concepts as well as the general ownership of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is further complicated by the efforts discussed also in the introductory part of this dissertation, whereby after the 1990s, attempts were made in several countries, including Zambia, to transform media houses that were once in the hands of the state into public service media houses. For example, the Windhoek declaration of 1991 called on African governments to free the media houses they had held before the 1990s to ensure press freedom;

...Consistent with article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the establishment, maintenance and fostering of an independent, pluralistic and free press is essential to the development and maintenance of democracy in a nation, and for economic development,

By an independent press, we mean a press independent from governmental, political or economic control or from control of materials and infrastructure essential for the production and dissemination of newspapers, magazines and periodicals, (Windhoek declaration, 1991).

While these efforts may have succeeded in some regions, Ndlela (2009) is resolute in his conclusion that the attempts failed in the case of Southern Africa (with the exception of South Africa) because these countries lacked the necessary culture, political and economic structures needed at the time for the public service media model to succeed. Instead, Ndlela (ibid) concludes that a 'false' public service media model emerged in the region which borrowed some elements of a public service media model and incorporated them in state-owned and controlled media model. This hybrid model left out the core elements or principles on which the public service media model is founded. Such core principles, like pointed, out earlier in this dissertation include among other things;

1. geographical availability,
2. concern for national identity and culture,
3. Independent from the state and commercial interests,
4. impartiality of programs and programs' range, and
5. Non-profit motive.

The 'false' public service media model that emerged in the region allowed the state to continue exerting heavy hands of influence in the running of state media houses while in pronouncements and some legislation indicated the need for a public service model. However, since most of the legislations were not supported by fundamental changes in legal systems, most of these legislations have remained 'white elephants' in the region including Zambia.

Thus the confirmation from this study that there is a mix-up among stakeholders in terms of their understanding of the true nature of the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership as well as the interpretation of 'state' and 'public' in relation to ownership is consistent with Ndlela's (ibid) observation that the Southern African region is surrounded by general misconceptions and misunderstandings about the mission, mandate, and role of the public service media model. In case of Zambia, this explains why some stakeholders interchangeably and synonymously refer to the *Zambia Daily Mail* as either public or state media.

This finding poses interesting but serious challenges with regard to the management of the *Zambia*

Daily Mail. This is because the misunderstanding makes it difficult to reach a consensus on issues related to the management and performance of the media house. For example, most of the participants featured in in-depth interviews assessed the *Zambia Daily Mail* content and operations using a public service media model.

Consequently, they also concluded that the media house was failing to fulfil its ‘mandate’;

“...*Zambia Daily Mail* as a ‘public service’ media is supposed to provide fair coverage to all Zambians,” remarked then MISA ZM Executive Director, H. Macha.

Interestingly, the same participants argued that the *Zambia Daily Mail* was operating like a state-owned and controlled media house, which in fact is one of the operational models used by the media house. For example, the *Zambia Daily Mail* Editorial Director describes the mandate of the media house as follows;

“...The mandate of *Zambia Daily Mail* is to publicise and explain government programs and policies,” Mr. Mbewe-*Zambia Daily Mail* Editorial Director.

These arguments show that if stakeholders had adequate knowledge of the true nature of the *Zambia Daily Mail* ownership as well as its operational philosophies, then there will be little conflict between the media house and its stakeholders. The editorial director’s position in this case, is also consistent with the findings of this study that the *Zambia Daily Mail* is state-owned and that the structure also allows for state-control.

5.4.2 The Philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*

The aim of this question was to clarify and make clear the moral position from which the *Zambia Daily Mail* operates. Consequently, the question was also going to help define the operational structure of the media house. According to the Political-economic theory, a media philosophy acts a window into the perspective from which a media house looks at issues and ultimately this shapes operations and content (Chirambo, 2009).

The study revealed that there is a general ‘consensus’ among participants in both in-depth interviews and quantitative survey, that the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is ideally manifested in its motto-“*without fear or favour*” —a philosophy which according to participants implied *impartiality in content and operations*. This means the *Zambia Daily Mail* is supposed to

be founded on a philosophy of offering a 'public service'. This philosophy is ideal for a media house which operates on the public service media model. This shouldn't come as a surprise given the *Zambia Daily Mail* was founded under the Westminster media model of the British Empire (Kasoma, 2001). Most media houses founded by the British colonial masters were in principle modelled on the public service model though the model was not practiced by most of the colonial media houses.

Although participants had established *without fear or favour* as a window to the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, the majority of participants in in-depth interviews also indicated that it was not practiced, but that the state-run model was the most prominent operational philosophy at the institution. The study concluded that while the ownership remained state, the operational philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is not properly defined, instead, the media house exhibits traits of three operational philosophies namely, *state-run*, *public service*, and *private commercial*.

State-owned and run model manifests itself in the state or government involvement in the appointment of the board as indicated by participants in in-depth interviews; the fact that the Board reports to the minister; and in the mandate of the *Zambia Daily Mail* as given by the editorial director, which is to publicise government policies and programs. Participants feel these parameters intimidate the board as well management at the *Zambia Daily Mail*. This finding is consistent with Doyle (2002) who posits that the influence of media owners has often been indirect such as through selection of key personnel, which subsequently establishes the culture of obedience and self-censorship. It's thus important to mention here that government needs not necessarily give directives to the Board or top management on what to do, but the mere presence of the above parameters in the structure of the *media house* is good enough to indirectly influence management to operate in a way favourable to government.

The public service model reveals itself in government pronouncements about the need for the *Zambia Daily Mail* to operate independently and also in the existence of the Board. It's however the position of some participants in this study that although the *Zambia Daily Mail* has a Board in place, its appointment is still very much government driven thereby compromising on its independence. Thus, the strides made by the paper have for a long time been hampered by the lack of adequate legal support for the Board to discharge its duties independently. For example, in the

run up to 2011 general elections, the Board was still in place, but it watched helplessly as then MMD government tossed the *Zambia Daily Mail* to and fro with impunity due to lack of a strong legal support for the Board. The autonomy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is thus at the mercy of the people in government, as observed by the former MLC Chairperson;

...the effectiveness of the Board as well as the general autonomy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, will to a large extent continue to depend on the type of people in power and the time...for example, is the *Zambia Daily Mail* going to continue enjoying the autonomy it has enjoyed since the PF came into power, if PF was to be voted out of office in 2016?... or is the PF government itself going to continue allowing the *Zambia Daily Mail* the same autonomy as the country approaches 2016? Asked Henry Kabwe-Former MLC Chairperson and 2014 PFOC Chairperson?

The private commercial model appears mostly in calls by government and stakeholders for the *Zambia Daily Mail* to operate profitably. The editorial director from the *Zambia Daily Mail* also confirmed this when he disclosed that government as well as some stakeholders expected the media house to stand on its own financially though it continued to receive some grants from government. It is important to mention that this call is completely in contrast with both the state-owned and controlled as well as the public service models, which demand such media houses to be *non-profit making*.

The manifestation of features from these three operational philosophies within the structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, possess serious challenges in terms of management and accountability of the media house. This also opens up the *Zambia Daily Mail* to abuse, for example, government at any time may use the state-owned and controlled model (the case of 2011) to interfere with the operations, while management may use all the three models to avoid accountability. The 'confusion' over the operating philosophy thus provides a scapegoat to both management and the owners (the state).

Although the history of the *Zambia Daily Mail* shows that there were times, especially in the second republic, when the media house tried to operate in accordance with the motto- "*without fear or favour*" by providing critical checks and balances to government, the consistency to the motto has not been guaranteed over the years because of the mixed operational philosophies. The checks and balances provided by the media house in the second republic could thus be accredited more to individuals in management at the time, and not to both internal and external structures supporting

them. Expecting the current crop of Journalists at the *Zambia Daily Mail* to do the same, despite all fundamental changes that have taken place in economic and political spheres since the second republic, will be rather asking for too much—especially that such undertakings, as reported by most media commentators including Kasoma (1986), came at a cost such as loss of jobs.

Moreover, studies have now shown that educated and principled Journalists self-select themselves into media houses when they have a choice—they will go for media houses they agree with on principles or the ones they think are neutral in their coverage and operations. It's important to stress that this is a matter of personal conviction and it does not have to be accepted by the entire society. Therefore if a Journalist believes he/she is more comfortable with state-owned and controlled media house, they will work with a free conscious within that type of ownership. A former ZNBC reporter and producer elaborates;

...I don't regret having worked for a state-owned and run media organisation...if I was to work again, I will still prefer a state-owned media organisation, remarked Lt. Col Kunda (Rtd), a former ZNBC reporter and producer.

According to Golding and Murdock media organisational structures helped to restrain owners from interfering with operations and content of media houses. However, this study has demonstrated that in order to restrain owners, the structure must first exist and designed to withstand the influence otherwise it could also be used to facilitate the same influence, as is the case with the *Zambia Daily Mail*.

5.4.3 Connection between the Philosophy and Ownership

As demonstrated in table 1.0.0 in the introductory part of this dissertation, there are three main types of media ownership, namely state, private, and community. These types of ownership have normative operational structures on which their philosophies are supposed to be modelled. For example, state-owned, which the *Zambia Daily Mail* has been established to be, are expected to be operated as either state-run or public service. Therefore, the motto established by participants as a window to the ideal philosophy of the media house (without fear or favour), is in tune with the public service model, and hence connects with a state-owned media.

In the case of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, however, the challenge is only that of deciding which operational to link to the type of ownership because of the mixed operational philosophies

established in this study. However, it should suffice to mention that both the motto- “without fear or favour” (Public service operational model) and the mandate of publicising government programs and policies (state-run operational model) are all in line with state-owned media houses.

5.4.4 The Editorial Policy of the *Zambia Daily Mail*

The aim of this question was to establish how the philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is put into practice through the editorial policy. Editorial policy, like pointed out earlier in this dissertation, spells out the *Dos* and *Don'ts* of a media house based on the type of ownership as well as the philosophy on which a media house is founded. The editorial policy is thus supposed to unpack the philosophy.

The study revealed that the *Zambia Daily Mail* has had no formalised and written down editorial policy until December 2013, about four weeks after this study was conducted—the editorial director of the *Zambia Daily Mail* had, however, indicated during the interview that the policy was developed but was awaiting to be launched, which was done in December, 2013.

The findings that the *Zambia Daily Mail* has had no formalised and written down editorial policy until December, 2013, explains why stakeholders featured in in-depth interviews indicated that they were not familiar with the editorial policy of the media house. Further, although 80 percent of Journalists from the *Zambia Daily Mail* indicated earlier that they were familiar with the editorial policy, a follow up question asking them to give a summary of the policy confirmed the media house had no coordinated and written down policy—Journalists ended up giving various versions of what each thought was the editorial policy. Among the concepts they gave were ethics, professionalism, publishing government programs, and integrity.

According to the editorial director, the values that were supposed to be carried by the editorial policy were until December, 2013 passed on, if and when they were needed, from the superiors to the juniors *through the word of mouth*. When queried about the effectiveness of this arrangement, Mr. Mbewe assured that it does work just like in societies with no written laws;

...It's like in some societies where there are no written laws, the elders in such societies pass on laws from one generation to the other through the word of mouth, remarked Mr. Mbewe-Zambia Daily Mail Editorial Director.

But participants in in-depth interviews don't agree with this assurance;

“...Passing policies or values through word of mouth is a recipe for abuse since there will be no formal and written down reference point,” observed Mr. Nkandu -then Acting HOD, Mass Communication UNZA.

The revelation that the *Zambia Daily Mail* didn't have a formalised and written down editorial policy until December, 2013 may thus explain to some extent why successive governments found it easier to control the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*—without a formalised and written down reference point, it should have been very hard for the Board and top management to resist any form of directive from the state. It's, however, important to mention that a formalised and written down editorial policy has since been launched at the *Zambia Daily Mail*. The editorial policy was launched four weeks after this study was conducted, and a summary of the policy reads as follows;

...*Zambia Daily Mail* through its editorial policy commits itself to recognise, respect, and uphold the highest possible professional ethical conducts through good judgment, adherence to Journalistic principles, practices and processes that enhance impartiality, accuracy, and integrity and also uphold the interest of the public all times. The paper shall also ensure the interests of the shareholders are protected.

Since this policy was launched weeks after the study was conducted, it was not possible to look at its practical application as the research had intended in its conception—very little has thus been done in this study to go into details about the practical aspects of the policy; relating the policy to content. The challenge from this policy appears to be that of striking a balance between the *public interest* and the *interests of shareholders* the policy talks about—this appears to always have been the challenge with the *Zambia Daily Mail*. The study, however, concludes that outside the above contradiction, the developed editorial policy has the needed elements for a public service media model which are likely to be obscured if the two interests are not properly defined.

In conclusion, the scanty knowledge about the existence of a formalised and written down editorial policy among the *Zambia Daily Mail* Journalists before December, 2013 also raises serious concerns about the level of orientation into the media house. This is because if they had gone

through adequate orientation, they should have been able to clearly state that there was no written down editorial policy, just like the editorial director had done. This supposed lack of adequate orientation into the *Zambia Daily Mail* may have serious implication on the performance of Journalists at the media house. This is because they are likely to be detached from the core values of the institution due to lack of adequate knowledge about the entire organisational structure and values—workers of an organisation are more likely to fully carry the values of the organisation if they are properly orientated into the values and cultures of that organisation.

5.4.5 Connection of the Philosophy to the newly launched Editorial Policy

Philosophies are abstract, and therefore must be refined further for practical purposes. In the media industry, this happens at the editorial policy level. It's thus expected that the philosophical theme of a media house should have strong connections with the editorial policy—the editorial policy should unpack the philosophy.

In the case of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, this study concludes that the recently launched editorial policy to a larger extent shows strong links to the motto—“without fear or favour”, which most participants in both the quantitative survey and in-depth interviews believe is the ideal philosophy of the *media house*. However, the connection is complicated by the seemingly contradiction between the mandate of the *Zambia Daily Mail* and its motto, implying the contradiction is carried over to the editorial policy. The mandate, however, is in harmony with the last part of the summarised editorial policy above which talks of protecting the interests of the owners (the state).

It will, therefore, be interesting to see how effective this policy will be given the similarities it has with the motto, which participants feel is not fully practiced or applied to the *Zambia Daily Mail* operations. This means the effectiveness of the policy may require some fundamental changes in the operational philosophy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* which should see the media house elevate only one operational philosophy to guide operations. Without such changes, it is unlikely that the editorial policy will have any meaningful bearing on the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*. This implies the policy risks suffering the same fate the motto has suffered for decades—non-influential in the operations of the media house. However, it suffices to conclude in this study that the policy provides good starting point in the quest to transform the *Zambia Daily Mail* into a truly public service media house.

5.4.6 Connection of the recently launched Editorial Policy to Content

Since the editorial policy was not in place at the time the study was conducted, it was not possible for participants to examine the content of the *Zambia Daily Mail* in the light of the policy. Further, even after it was launched in December, 2013, still it could not be used to analyse the content because there is need to observe the pattern before concluding on whether its effective or not. Therefore connections of the policy to the content are mere inferences based on some facts already established in this study with regards to the motto, in which the policy appears to have been built. One such fact is that the study first established a connection between the editorial policy and the motto of the *Zambia Daily Mail*—the two emphasise elements of a truly public service media house. If this connection is anything to go by, then there may be an agent need for some fundamental changes in the operational structures of the *Zambia Daily Mail* in order for the policy to have any meaningful impact on content production and general operations of the media house. This is because if it is built into the motto which has no connections with the content, as most participants argued how then is it going to work? Unless off course it has to override the mandate of the *Zambia Daily Mail* as a state - owned and arguably run media house.

However, the responses by most Journalists from the *Zambia Daily Mail* that the content reflects the informal policies used before December, 2013 is true in the sense that no content can be processed from without—content has to be built on some guidelines. In this case the directives that were given to reporters by management through editors.

5.4.7 Measure of Standard

This question provided an insight into content production process and general operations at the *Zambia Daily Mail*. The fact that the majority of participants indicated editorial policy as a measure of standard for selecting content makes reading interesting because at the time the policy was not formalised and written down. Like established above guidelines on how to go about with work were passed on through the word of mouth. By implication, this means the editorial policy being referred to by the Journalists are the values passed on to them by their superiors. These are what most stakeholders in in-depth interviews seem to refer to as directives from the superiors.

The concern in this respect is where the directives were starting from—where did the top

management get their directives? Participants in in-depth interviews are very categorical on this issue—it was from the owners (government) but are also quick to mention that such directives appeared to have reduced significantly after the 2011 general election. Probably, this explains why the *Zambia Daily Mail* has even moved to develop an editorial policy to guide its operations.

Further, the fact that another 30 percent of participants indicated ownership as a standard for selecting content is a testimony that ownership is also felt at content production level. Other concepts that were named included the audience, ethics and Journalists own beliefs.

Thus the standards for selecting content at the *Zambia Daily Mail* established in this study are as follows:

1. Editorial policy,
2. Ownership,
3. Audience,
4. Ethics, and
5. Own beliefs

Although all the five factors above were mentioned in the study, the emphasis seems to be on the editorial policy and ownership. The mentioning of ownership as one of the factors influencing the content and operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail* is consistent with Doyle's (2002) findings that media ownership mattered because it affected the way in which the media industry was able to manage resources available for provision of media content. Dayle (ibid), concluded that the performance of the media industry is thus, at least partly, dependent on the ownership configurations. Mobb (2002) is even more instructive when he concluded that privately owned media house might not be able to publish something critical of their company, whereas state-owned media houses may be subject to political control and censorship over what they can broadcast or publish.

Further, the mentioning of Journalists own beliefs and audience align with Shoemaker and Reese's (1996) conclusion that these factors were among those which shaped media content. Ethics appears to be an addition to what has already being established in most of the previous studies.

5.5.0 Other Pointers to Ownership Influence on the *Zambia Daily Mail*

5.5.1 Change of Ownership and Approach to Work

The results obtained from both in-depth interviews and a quantitative survey indicate that change of how Journalists do their work and how they look at issues is inevitable when they cross to a media house with a different ownership. Just like a change in ownership structure of a media house shed some light into the influence that media owners have on media operations, a change in approach to work by Journalists, including how they look at issues when they change a type of ownership, can also provide an insight into how ownership shape their thinking and distort their professional look at issues around them. In amplifying on this point, a participant in in-depth interviews puts it this way;

...Journalists can fit into any media house—they can work for a private, state, and even community media houses, and just fit perfectly...the change in approach to their work therefore remains as a result of the policies within a media environment, Mr. Macha-a former MISA ZM Executive Director

Therefore the revelation from the *Zambia Daily Mail* Journalists that they are most likely to change their approach to work if they changed the type of ownership is a clear indication that they feel the influence of ownership in their work. This finding further supports the findings above on the measure of standard in which ownership was cited by some of the *Zambia Daily Mail* Journalists as a measure of standard for doing their work. As a result of ownership influence, Journalists who are educated and principled, self-select themselves into media houses which fit into what they believe in, those they perceive to be objective and balanced or those doing something they think is for the benefit of the majority;

“...If I find something else to do, I can leave ZNBC,” remarked a ZNBC reporter and producer.

Alternatively, where it appears none of the media houses available fit in the criteria above;

educated and principled communicators rather resort to go into other related fields such Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing. This is probably one of the explanations, outside the conditions of service that account for degree holders Journalists in Zambia shunning the media industry, especially when they have alternatives available. Even those with diplomas and certificates who started in the media industry are likely to move away once they upgrade their qualifications.

5.5.2 Ethics and change of Ownership Type

Although the majority of respondents in both the quantitative survey and in-depth interviews indicated this was possible, they also indicated in a follow-up question that this was a matter of individual choice, and that it may also come at a cost. The point in the Zambian context is that media houses have no uniform code of ethics which makes ethical standards difficult to apply uniformly to all Journalists. Instead, each media house is asked to develop its own code of ethics, which most likely will have to conform to ownership type, philosophy and many other in-house policies. This makes it difficult for individual Journalists to remain ethical.

“Remaining ethical is possible, but very difficult,” observes a ZNBC reporter

For example, suppose a Journalist is working for a media house that does not cover a certain grouping, as a matter of policy, how will that Journalist balance the story when writing something related to that particular group? Therefore, ethics in the Zambian context has to also be defined according to a media house.

Although participants agree it is a personal choice, factors to consider such as the possibility of losing a job, make going for a right choice hectic and almost impossible, hence in the end the choice is not that much of individual Journalist, but the media owners . The way out still remains Journalists self-selecting themselves in media houses which fit into their own beliefs and convictions but off course this is only possible when they have a choice.

“If I find something else to do, why should I remain with ZNBC?” Asked a ZNBC producer.

5.6.0 How *the Zambia Daily Mail* Owners Influence its Content and Operations

Like pointed out from the onset of this dissertation, the overall purpose of this study was to

explore the ownership of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, and establish how the ownership shaped the content and operations of the media house. In trying to go about such a topic, Chirambo (2011) cautions that most people are not willing to speak freely concerning such subjects, especially those serving in the same media house. Further, Doyle argues that editorial interference by owners has frequently been indirect, for example, through the selection of key personnel, or through the establishment of a culture of obedience and self-censorship as well as direct censorship i.e. through literally rewriting editorial leaders (Doyle, 2002, as quoted by Okech2009).

Therefore, to establish evidence of ownership influence, it is important to look for loopholes in the media structure which are likely to help owners find way into a media house. The research questions should then be built around such loopholes. In this regard, after asking a series of questions on ownership and its influence on the operations of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, the study established the methods given below as ways through which successive governments found their way into operations of the media house.

5.6.1 Involvement in the Appointment of the Board

It is believed among most participants in in-depth interviews that the state still plays a key role in the appointment of top management of the *Zambia Daily Mail* through its direct link with the Board—the Board is appointed by the Minister-MIBS who also has the power to dissolve it at any time. Further, participants were of the view that the state's involvement in the appointment of top management is made visible by the fact that almost every time there is a change of government, change at top management of the *Zambia Daily Mail* becomes inevitable. Although others may argue that the contracts end at the same time there is a change of government, the question will be, how is possible that not even one had performed well to have their contracts renewed?

Participants feel this involvement of the state in the appointment of the Board and through the Board top management wins the state loyalty from those appointed. Further, the fact that the Board is answerable to MIBS is also a source of concern among stakeholders. Most participants feel this reduces the Board to a department of the Ministry.

These findings are consistent with Shoemaker and Reese's (1991) observation that media owner's direct involvement in the appointment of top management provides them with an entry point into the operations of a given media house. This is because any worker of an organisation is

supposed to be answerable to the appointing authority and in most cases, the appointee can only suggest but not command or dictate to the appointing authority, hence the saying “*you can't bite the finger that feeds you*”. Therefore, it is not practical to expect a top management appointed by the owners of any given media house to start operating on values contrary to those of the owners. It has to be mentioned that this arrangement is not only unique to media houses but to all institutions because the owners, like established earlier in this dissertation, are the ones who come up with the philosophical theme on which an organisation is going to base its operations—any person they are going to engage will therefore be expected to promote the same philosophical values.

Participants in in-depth interviews believe this problem can be overcome if the Board of the *Zambia Daily Mail* was to be either appointed by a representative appointment committee appointed by the Minister but answerable to a Parliamentary Select Committee. Under the two arrangements, the Board is then expected to be more autonomous in the appointment of top management and consequently this will ensure the autonomy of the media house in terms of operations.

However, some participant acknowledged that the *Zambia Daily Mail* and its sister media houses-ZNBC and *Times of Zambia* have enjoyed some level of autonomy since the PF came into government in 2011. They however caution that true and sustainable autonomy will only come through strong legal support for the Boards *because the state use of the media depends on the type of the people in government and also on the time*—is the *Zambia Daily Mail* going to continue on the same path as we head to 2016 election and beyond in case PF was to be voted out of power?

In trying to establish evidence of ownership influence on content production and general media operations, Seaton (1997) argues that owners' heavy hand in hiring and dismissing of top management is evidence of how they plan to exercise their influence over media content and general media operations by winning the loyalty of those appointed to such positions— individuals in top management are likely to have soft spots to the appointing authority.

Owners may influence content and form of media content through their decisions to employ certain personnel, by funding special projects, and by providing a media platform for ideological interest groups, Seaton (ibid) observed.

And Shoemaker and Reese conclude that although news departments may be organisationally buffered from the larger firm, content is still controlled indirectly through hiring and promotion practices”.

The findings of this study is therefore consistent with Seaton, Shoemaker and Reese, Doyle, and Okech’s findings on how ownership influenced content through hiring and firing practices.

5.6.2 The Existence of Three Operational Philosophies

Like pointed out above, the *Zambia Daily Mail* exhibits traits of a state-owned and controlled media house, public service media house, and private commercial media house in its operational structure. On the state part, the media house is owned by the state, the state funds the operations through grants, and the *Zambia Daily Mail's* mandate remains that of publishing government programs and policies. For the public service aspect, the media house exhibits some elements in its structure that points to this framework including the existence of a Board, pronouncements by the state on the need for the *Zambia Daily Mail* to reflect national identity and the need to remain ethical and professional. The commercial side of the paper comes in the work of calls for the *Zambia Daily Mail's* to operate as a viable business and sustain itself.

This trio operational philosophies open up the *Zambia Daily Mail* to ownership manipulation as the owners may decide to use any of the three types if and when it fits them—that is why the *Zambia Daily Mail* was all of a suddenly operated on state-owned and fully controlled in 2011 probably the first time in its history that the media house was used by the state to such an extent;

...the *Zambia Daily Mail* sunk to its lowest point in history in 2011...If I am to rate Zambia Daily Mail's performance during the run-up to 2011 general elections, I will give it 0 on a scale of 100, remarked Henry Kabwe -a former MLC Chairperson.

I stopped reading the *Zambia Daily Mail* along time...”revealed a former ZNBC Reporter and producer.

While some stakeholders may express a surprise to what became of the *Zambia Daily Mail* during the 2011 election, it shouldn’t surprise communication scholars because the structure even today allows for such things to happen anytime, and therefore there are still chances that if the

structure is not properly looked into, the *Zambia Daily Mail* may see a repeat of what happened in 2011 somewhere in the future—given that there is no guarantee the government that will come after PF will be interested in the autonomy of the media house. Also there is no telling how the PF government itself will work with the media house as the nation heard for 2016 general elections and beyond. Like established earlier, ownership influence on media content and operations can only be reduced through adequate legal structure which should limit the owner's direct involvement in the running of a media house.

5.6.3 Lack of Editorial Policy in the Past

The lack of a formalised and written down editorial policy until December, 2013 could have also been used as an entry point in the past by the owners (the state) to have a leeway into the *Zambia Daily Mail* operations and in particular to guide content production. This is because without a formalised and written down editorial policy, management as well as Journalists had no concrete reference point, except what was given to them during their orientation and time after time guidelines by the employers who in this case is the state. A word of mouth transmission of values might have been used in the past and indeed it helped societies to get to where they are today, but one thing for sure is that it cannot be relied on as it depends on time and individuals involved—some individuals may manipulate the information for their own good.

It remains to be seen, however, how the newly launched editorial policy will help the *Zambia Daily Mail* withstand pressure from the owners, the state.

5.6.4 Scheduled Assignments

The influence of the owners (government) on the *Zambia Daily Mail* content has not been always direct but also through scheduled assignments. During the time the researcher was doing this study at the *Zambia Daily Mail*, an observation was made to the effect that the media house received quite a lot of scheduled assignments from government and quasi-government institutions. This is in addition to routine assignments at the courts and Parliament when it is sitting. Against limited time within a day, limited staff (averaging to about 7 per desk), and limited space available in the newspaper in each edition; these assignments acted as an indirect influence by the owners on what should go into the paper. In line with the mandate, which is to publicise government policies and

programs, management ended up prioritising most of these scheduled assignments since at the end of the day whatever those in government do may be related to governance.

Although this may not be intentional by the state, it most likely puts a lot of pressure on management to consider other assignments—while all mainstream media houses receive almost the same volume of scheduled assignments, balancing these assignments with other events happening as well as Journalists own initiatives require a lot of autonomy on the part of top management. Further, this reduces creativity among Journalists in terms of initiating their own ideas based on what they come across around them—in most cases, the scheduled assignments are far beyond the staff levels that it becomes unnecessary for reporters to generate their own news ideas.

The difference between a media house in which there is too much ownership control and the one with minimal control is that in the latter management has a flexibility to decide whether a scheduled assignment coming from the owners has some credibility or not, but in case of the former, this doesn't matter. As a result and in line with its mandate of publishing government programs and policies, the *Zambia Daily Mail* ends up with majority hard news stories from government and government agencies. On the part of the staff and even management, under these conditions, there is little they can do to change the almost predictable type of content they have to publish unless there are fundamental legal changes to the structure of the media house.

According to Gans (1979) and Gitlin (1980), content emerges directly from the way a media house is organised, and that the organisational routines within which an individual Journalist operates form a structure, constraining action while also enabling it. Further, McQuail (2004) observes, that freedom of flexibility available within a given media house as well as routines and procedures for selecting and processing content, are also determinants of the extent to which Journalists can go in terms of creativity and ultimately the overall content. For example, almost all the scheduled assessments the *Zambia Daily Mail* receives from government and government agencies are also received by mainstream private media houses, but the latter have the flexibility and so they don't publish or even cover every scheduled assignment they receive from government and government agencies.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0.0 Conclusion

One of the key aspects to the proper management of the media industry in Zambia is through a thorough understanding of ownership structure. This knowledge will give stakeholders ideas of how much is being achieved in terms of public enlightenment, which is a vital ingredient for both personal and national development. As Murdock (1991:4) posits, the structure of media ownership is a critical determinant of how a media system will act. For example, it is easy to doubt that a media system that is dominated by private ownership can guarantee diversity of information and arguments required for effective citizenship, and therefore the evolution of a democratic culture that is premised on participation (ibid).

This study set out to provide an insight into how much as well as the type of information that is in the public domain in Zambia by exploring the ownership structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail*, and establishing how the ownership structure shaped what the public were allowed to know through the media house.

The study has established that there are *gaps* in the structure of the *Zambia Daily Mail* which have made it easier for the owners (the state) to interfere with the content and general operations of the media house. The mere fact that these gaps are embedded in the structure of the media house; ensures that the owners can, at any time, step in and use the media house in whichever way they feel like. The study argues that it is for this reason the autonomy of the *Zambia Daily Mail* has for a long time been fluctuating—depending on the type of people in government and the time. For example, the study established that the general mood among participants is that the *Zambia Daily Mail* has experienced some level of autonomy since the PF came into power, but also caution how this autonomy may not last for a long time since it is not supported by strong legal provisions.

The researcher further, contends that the lasting autonomy for the *Zambia Daily Mail* will only be assured through fundamental changes to the operational structure which should see the media house be transformed into a ‘truly’ public service media house—it’s only such types of media houses which have no worries of who is in government and what time it is in the history of a nation because they are adequately protected by the law.

6.1.0 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher seriously recommends the following:

1. The *Zambia Daily Mail* must define its operational philosophy instead of a mixture used currently. This will help in terms of accountability and management of the media house.
2. In order for a public service media model to work in Zambia, government must speed up the review of the almost obscured 1996 National Communication Policy through a comprehensive and consultative process which will see the policy becoming active and accepted by all stakeholders so that it takes up the role of guiding the media system in the country from the state.
3. Media regulators must strengthen enforcement of compliance to ensure media houses abide by a registered ownership type and promised philosophy. This will allow for a proper assessment of what kind of information the public is receiving at any given time—predictability of what is happening in the information market will be guaranteed and this will make planning for the sector, much easier.
4. Registration of media houses should no longer be based on the traditional clichés of informing, entertaining, and educating but rather on more elaborate revelations of moral philosophies on which media houses are founded and would be operated. This will allow for accountability and also ease enforcement of compliance.
5. Diversity in ownership must also be assured so that people are given the opportunity to get close to the reality of what is happening around them through a combination of information from various media outlets.
6. Regulators must see to it that media houses have editorial policies formalised and written down. This will allow for accountability and may limit direct interference by media owners.
7. Policy makers must ensure print media registration and management become more organised—the present system is very porous and provide no guidance to publications, hence the print media is very difficult to manage in the country.

6.1.1 Areas for Further Studies

1. Having established evidence of ownership influence on content production in this research, it is important that future studies do a comprehensive study of ownership configuration in the country. This type of study will help establish how much and what type of information is available to the public, as well as identify areas that will require agent attention in terms of ownership distribution.
2. Future studies can also look at such issues as the effectiveness of compliance mechanisms in the management of the media industry in the country. This will allow a more predictable media system that will in turn ensure proper planning by policymakers.
3. Finally, future studies must explore how best media bodies can be structured and organised to help bring all media houses and Journalists under one code of ethics that will allow uniform standards to be applied to all Journalists.

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