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Examining Investigative Journalism Practice in Public Print Media Houses in Lusaka: A Case Study of Lusaka Public Print Media Houses, Lusaka District

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Abstract

This study investigated the practice of investigative journalism within public print media establishments in Lusaka, Zambia. The research aimed to assess the presence of investigative journalism in the Zambian public media, gauge the extent to which it is utilized, identify factors hindering its practice, and propose mechanisms to promote its adoption within public print media outlets. The study involved a sample of 50 respondents from diverse categories, surveyed through self-administered questionnaires. The respondents were selected using systematic sampling, and data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed a gender distribution of approximately 40% females and 60% males among the respondents. In terms of educational attainment, 6% possessed high school certificates, while the majority (39%) held bachelor's degree certificates. Regarding the practice of investigative journalism in private print media in Lusaka, 55% of respondents acknowledged its existence, with only 15% suggesting it is practiced to a limited extent. In terms of its existence in Zambia overall, 65% of respondents affirmed its presence, while 35% expressed disagreement. The results of the study indicate that a significant majority of the respondents, constituting 50%, advocated for effective training or capacity building as a key factor that would enable public media houses to engage in investigative

journalism. Additionally, 35% of the respondents emphasized the importance of providing favorable working conditions. A smaller percentage, 5%, highlighted the significance of robust media networks, while 10% suggested that supportive media organizations, such as MISA, would play a crucial role in fostering the practice of investigative journalism in Zambia. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of the recommendations, pointing to the diverse strategies that can contribute to the enhancement of investigative journalism within the Zambian media landscape. The study recommends fostering open discussions and awareness campaigns to educate the public on the significance of freedom of information in Zambia. Urgent action is advised to enact progressive media legislation and repeal existing laws that impede media and information freedoms. Civil society organizations in Zambia should explore alternative and more robust strategies to exert pressure on the government for the passage of the Freedom of Information Bill. It is further suggested that the Freedom of Information Bill be translated into local languages to ensure accessibility for those with limited proficiency in English, thus enhancing comprehension and appreciation of its contents. Additionally, the Zambian government is urged to prioritize the safety of journalists during their professional duties and research endeavors.

Keywords: Investigative Journalism, Public Print, Media and Translated

1. Introduction

The print media plays a crucial role in promoting democracy and development, not only by reporting news and setting agendas, but also by fostering a sense of civic duty among citizens, encouraging political participation, and mobilizing the populace for nation-building. In Africa, where media weakness has been identified as a barrier to democratization (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 2017), specific characteristics are needed for the media to effectively fulfill these responsibilities. This includes being attuned to both commercial interests and professional responsibilities, being vigilant in safeguarding the national interest while also willing to challenge the state when necessary, and being committed to upholding democratic ideals.

People's daily lives are heavily influenced by mass media, with a significant amount of time spent interacting with it (Daniel, 1982; Thomas, 2017). Investigative journalism is crucial worldwide, as abuse of power is prevalent across the globe. Examples include the arbitrary use of global power by the United States and China's exploitation of resources in third world countries without adhering to laws (Tong and Sparks, 2009) [43]. In Africa, leaders are criticized for abusing their power through long stays in office or engaging in corruption.

The media's role in democracy and development, particularly in the context of a free press, has been extensively discussed (Keane, 2021; Altschull, 1995 [4]; Schultz, 2018; Lawson, 2002; Sawant, 2002; Ojo, 2003; Melber, 2014). According to traditional liberal theory, the media serves as a check on state excesses, with a primary role as a watchdog (Curran, 2022). This watchdog role is emphasized by Ronning (2015), who argues that democracy relies on principles like freedom of expression and the responsibility of both leaders and the governed.

Freedom of information is essential for a functioning democracy, allowing access to government records and promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance (Matibini, 2015). Evan (2015) underscores that democracy cannot thrive without freedom of information. The free flow of information is crucial for informed decision-making and the successful development of a country. Zambia currently lacks a Freedom of Information Act, despite efforts by media lobby groups to introduce one in Parliament in 2002. In Africa, especially since the second wave of democratization in the late 1980s, the media has played a significant role in various aspects of democratization, including civic and political education, raising political awareness, facilitating public debate, and ensuring transparency in governance (Thorne, 1998; Duncan and Seleokane, 1998; Olukotun, 2002; Tettey, 2001; Fleshman, 2005; Madamombe, 2005; Uzodike and Whetto, 2006). While government-owned media are often seen as biased towards the ruling government, privately owned media claim to provide more objective reporting. African leaders have expressed concerns about the media's tendency to adopt confrontational stances against their governments (Sesanti, 2015: 129).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

When the media faces restrictive rules and legislation, it often portrays itself as a martyr and seeks public and international support. This leads to a cycle of accusations and counter-accusations between the government and the media in Africa, which not only stirs up tensions locally but also undermines democracy, domestic peace, investor confidence, and the potential for political and economic growth. This antagonistic relationship contrasts with Hachten's (1992) idea of a non-hostile relationship between the media and government in authoritarian and development contexts. For instance, a former Ministry of Health official was recently jailed for embezzling public funds meant for citizens' access to quality healthcare. When investigative journalists exposed a scam involving the theft of millions of dollars, donors demanded reimbursement and suspended aid to the government for at least two years. Additionally, the Financial Intelligence Unit uncovered a significant outflow of funds from the country, primarily through illegal means. There are numerous issues in Zambia, such as sexual

exploitation and worker abuse, that demand attention from investigative journalism. Its role should be to act as a check against power-hungry entities, both corporations and government, and to provide informative, rather than sensationalized, reporting. Unfortunately, there appears to be a scarcity of investigative journalism these days, as it is often seen as less profitable. Zambia is one of the African countries where unethical behavior is prevalent among professionals and businesspeople (Auditor General's Report, 2015). Investigative journalism has the potential to combat various forms of malpractice and unethical behavior, but it's crucial to assess the extent to which private newspapers are engaging in this type of reporting. Despite the proliferation of public print media in Zambia, little is known about their commitment to conducting investigative journalism.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

1. The general objective of the study is to explore investigative journalism practice in private print media houses in Lusaka.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

1. To assess if investigative journalism exists in Zambian public media
2. To determine the extent to which investigative journalism is practiced by the public media.
3. To examine factors that hinder investigative journalism by public media.
4. To establish channels that will make public print houses practice investigative journalism in their duties.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

1.4.1 Agenda-Setting Theory

In contrast to the radical perspectives of the direct effects model, the agenda-setting theory posits that the mass media plays a crucial role in shaping the issues that capture public attention, rather than reflecting public opinion (Hanson, 2017). According to this theory, the issues receiving the most media coverage become the focal points of public discourse, debate, and calls for action. In essence, the media determines the subjects and narratives that occupy the public's thoughts. When the media neglects a particular issue, it becomes marginalized in the public consciousness (Hanson, 2017).

Critics who assert that a specific media outlet has an agenda are drawing upon the agenda-setting theory, which encompasses a spectrum of perceived biases, from a liberal slant in news media to the promotion of cutthroat capitalist ethics in films. For instance, the theory explains phenomena like the shift in public opinion against smoking. Before the mass media adopted an anti-smoking stance, smoking was predominantly considered a personal health matter. Through widespread promotion of anti-smoking sentiments via advertisements, public relations campaigns, and various media channels, the media transformed smoking into a public health concern, moving it from the realm of personal health (Dearing & Rogers, 1996).

Recent news coverage has prominently featured natural disasters. However, as media attention diminishes, so does public interest. Scholars specializing in agenda-setting research delve into the salience, or relative importance, of an issue, seeking to comprehend the factors influencing its significance. The relative salience of an issue determines its

place in the public agenda, thereby impacting the creation of public policies (Dearing & Rogers, 1996).

On the other hand, practitioners of the uses and gratifications theory explore how the public consumes media, asserting that individuals use media to fulfill specific needs or desires (Papacharissi, 2009). For instance, watching a show like *Dancing With the Stars* while simultaneously engaging with friends on Twitter satisfies the needs for entertainment and social interaction. The internet is utilized for diverse purposes, such as seeking entertainment, information, communication, or self-expression, each fulfilling specific needs that shape media usage (Papacharissi, 2009).

Uses and gratifications studies delve into the motives behind media consumption and the associated consequences. For example, the analysis of the relationship between media and violence utilizes the uses and gratifications theory to uncover nuanced circumstances surrounding violent media consumption, revealing that individuals with aggressive tendencies are drawn to such content (Papacharissi, 2019)

2. Literature Review

2.1 Investigative Journalism and its Role in Zambia:

The selection of investigative journalism as the object of study primarily centers around the concept of public interest, a term often invoked but not precisely defined. The Press Complaints Commission's "Code of Practice" in 2007 provides a comprehensive interpretation, outlining that public interest encompasses detecting or exposing crime, protecting public health and safety, and preventing the public from being misled by individuals or organizations. A socially significant event is defined as one that directly or indirectly impacts people's lives, distinguishing it from information satisfying mere public curiosity (Neuman, 2006).

The overarching purpose of investigative journalism is articulated as the detection and publication of latent facts related to offenses of public interest. Further refinement of its goals includes revealing the individuals responsible for the offenses and addressing abuses, infringements of laws, and societal norms (Ullman, 2005). The multifaceted nature of investigative journalism is evident in the diverse goals pursued by different journalists, ranging from resisting unlawful actions to discrediting individuals for various motives.

Investigative journalism, according to Rimsky (2011), requires exploring and presenting issues from various perspectives to fulfill the major requirement of staying objective and unbiased. The functions of investigative journalism are studied through an examination of the main functions of mass media and an analysis of numerous examples of journalistic investigations from the Russian press between 1990 and 2000. Drawing on S. Korkonosenko's "subject approach" to journalism functions, investigative journalism aligns with integrative and cognitive functions concerning the social system or society. This is evident in investigative journalists' efforts to unite within professional communities, fostering cooperation, and creating a common informational space (Rimsky, 2001).

In relation to specific social institutes and groups, investigative journalism exhibits the ability to influence attitudes akin to propaganda, with the distribution of legal knowledge and moral values. However, the application of agitation in investigative journalism is limited, as reporters

do not aim to set an example. Investigative journalism is most authentic when it refrains from exhibiting signs of propaganda or agitation, maintaining its focus on objective reporting and information dissemination.

The organizational function in investigative journalism diverges from other functions by directly aiming to bring about shifts in social practice and the behavior of social groups and organizations. This function aligns organically with the goals and challenges of investigative journalism, closely associated with the cognitive function carried out by the press in relation to society. A seminal example illustrating how journalism can effect societal change remains the Watergate investigation, showcasing the transformative power of investigative reporting.

In the realm of individual functions, investigative journalism serves multiple roles that depend on the personal characteristics of individuals. These roles include promoting socialization, ideological and emotional connections, organizational activity, and psychological relaxation (entertainment, relaxation, psycho hygiene). Investigative journalism contributes to the cognition of the environment by enabling people to correct their behavior. A peculiar form of connection function is observed as individuals, whether enforcing or breaking the law, engage with investigative journalism. For instance, the Russian newspaper "Vash Taynij Sovetnik" focused on the criminal world and corruption, providing material that not only attracted the attention of police officers but also intrigued criminals, shaping their strategies and behavior.

Investigative journalism often aims to achieve justice, yet cases where investigations lead to the punishment of offenders are rare. The reader's experience after consuming investigative journalism may result in cognitive dissonance—a feeling of conflict arising when faced with psychologically inconsistent knowledge about the same subject. This can lead to discomfort, imbalance, and a desire to resolve the dissonance (Roshin, 1989).

In a collection of investigative journalism, such as "The Clean Pens," readers may consistently experience cognitive dissonance and frustration. The extreme display of dissonance can lead to psychological conditions, including pressure, uneasiness, despair, and anger. Paradoxically, the anger and irritation caused by the articles can transform into contrasting emotions, such as a sense of gloomy satisfaction and even gloating. Investigative journalism, despite its serious mission, is gradually evolving into a form of entertainment, driven by commercial pressures. The hedonistic function emerges as a leading aspect, explaining the conflicting nature of investigative journalistic products. The pursuit of hedonistic pleasure, although not aligned with the primary mission of investigative journalism, becomes a significant driving force.

2.2 Investigative Journalism and its Existence in Media

Investigative journalism plays a crucial role in various regions, including the European Union (EU), where it exists primarily in private media. According to a review by Rafał Mańko (2013), investigative journalism in the EU serves its duty by exposing corruption and revealing government misdeeds. However, the landscape of investigative journalism has undergone changes, with newspapers, wire services, and freelance journalists traditionally leading such endeavors. The decline in advertising revenue has led to financial challenges for private news services, hindering

their ability to fund time-consuming investigative journalism. Consequently, news organizations increasingly collaborate, sometimes internationally, relying on public support and benefactors for funding. The growth of media conglomerates in the U.S. since the 1980s has coincided with significant budget cuts for investigative journalism, raising concerns about its decline on commercial airwaves (Rafał Mańko, 2013).

Ettema (2009) emphasizes the significance of investigative journalism as a tool to combat organized crime, corruption, and abuse of power, particularly in regions like Southeast Europe, where corruption has deeply entrenched itself in society. Despite financial pressures and a lack of funding, investigative journalism remains crucial in holding those in power accountable. Established media outlets have, in recent years, stepped back from quality investigative journalism due to various reasons, including political influence and economic pressure. As a response, skilled journalists dissatisfied with conflicts of interest have left mainstream outlets to establish or join investigative reporting centers.

Chambers (2009) notes that these investigative reporting centers have become crucial in uncovering corruption at the highest levels of government, revealing collusion between politics and special interests, bribery, public spending, and theft of national resources. However, the powerful and influential individuals targeted by investigative journalism often push back, attempting to discredit journalists and turn them into public enemies.

In Africa, investigative journalists predominantly work for private media companies, with a few exceptions working for public broadcasters and government-run newspapers. The power of investigative journalism in Africa lies in its ability to disrupt the status quo and challenge vested interests. Anya Schiffrin, the director of the technology, media, and communications program at Columbia University, highlights the inherent ability of the media to impact modern African societies, emphasizing the disruptive potential that investigative journalism holds.

The importance of journalism, particularly investigative journalism, in society has been a subject of discussion among scholars. Rosensteel and Kovach argue that the primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing. Investigative journalism plays a crucial role in this context by reporting on government, business, and powerful institutions, thereby empowering citizens to make informed decisions.

In a democratic setup, investigative journalism's purpose is deeply rooted in providing citizens with information through watchdog activities. It serves as a tool for the public to hold those in power accountable, exposing malfeasance, and contributing to the strength of the press as an institution. High-impact investigative journalism enhances media credibility and support among the public, as it demonstrates a commitment to serving the public interest.

Overall, investigative journalism exists not only to uncover corruption but also to be the voice of the voiceless, working alongside the less powerful and forgotten members of society. It plays a vital role in upholding democratic values, promoting transparency, and holding individuals and institutions accountable for their actions.

The challenges faced by investigative journalism in various countries, including Zambia, are multifaceted. One significant obstacle is media ownership, a concern that

aligns with Chambers' assertion that the fate of investigative journalism is closely tied to the dynamics of media ownership and control. Altschull's theory of media ownership, which correlates media content with the interests of those financing the media, supports this perspective. Bagdikian, in the context of the American media landscape, argues that media ownership has become increasingly concentrated since the 1980s, with a few powerful conglomerates monopolizing news organizations. This concentration has global implications, as some conglomerates own media outlets worldwide. As of 2003, the world's largest media firms included Time Warner, The Walt Disney Company, Murdoch's News Corporation, Viacom, and Bertelsmann (Bagdikian, 2007).

Chambers adds that the convergence of telecommunications, press, and broadcasting, coupled with the integration between electronic hardware and software industries, has led to not only media concentration but also a rapidly expanding global 'information economy.' The implications of media ownership concentration go beyond national borders, affecting the global flow of information.

Despite these challenges, journalists in private media, including Zambia, have embraced data journalism and collaborated on projects that involve collecting and disseminating data to the public. This approach has empowered citizens by providing detailed information on various subjects, from politicians' assets to spending on special interest subsidies. Data journalism has garnered international recognition and awards for journalists in the region, showcasing the potential impact of collaborative investigative efforts.

In Zambia, private media have emphasized the role of investigative journalism, with efforts to embrace new media technologies dating back to the 1970s. However, significant progress was achieved in the late 2000s due to adjustments in policy, regulatory frameworks, and commercial aspects. The liberal reforms and structural adjustment programs introduced by international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank played a role in shaping the media landscape. The establishment of the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA) in 2003 as an independent agency for regulating communication industries, including the media, marked a milestone in telecoms liberalization.

2.3 Factors Inhibiting Investigative Journalism by Private Media

In the Middle East, political structures have hindered the media from serving as a public-interest tool, transforming it into a government mouthpiece. The Arab press is often referred to as the 'Loyalist Press' due to its inclination to echo governmental narratives, leading the public to lose faith in the media's ability to hold government officials accountable (Rugh, 2011). Notably, in Saudi Arabia, where the king wields legislative and executive powers, the government's influence over the media is substantial. Governmental interference restricts media content, preventing reporting on politically sensitive issues. Al-Shamiry (1992) contends that Saudi Arabia utilizes censorship to maintain stability and limit freedom of the press.

The Saudi press remains ostensibly independent, but its autonomy is contingent upon avoiding topics perceived as contrary to the government's interests. Criticism of Islam or

the royal family, for instance, is rarely published, exemplified by the dismissal of an editor for criticizing Islamic judges in 2002 (Rugh, 2011). The Ministry of Culture and Information holds the authority to close newspapers, creating a climate of fear and self-censorship among journalists. The government's power extends to certifying the appointment of editors in chief and controlling funding, further influencing editorial policies. Most broadcast media, including TV and radio, are government-owned, providing additional avenues for control.

Government control over media extends to online content, with censorship of web pages and warnings against accessing politically sensitive websites. This extensive control fosters a reluctance within the media to challenge the government, limiting investigative journalism. The Saudi Ministry of Culture and Information's jurisdiction over press offenses diminishes journalistic objectivity, reinforcing the cautious approach of journalists and editors. Journalists in Saudi Arabia often exercise self-censorship, particularly when critiquing the government or prominent religious figures (AlFahad, 2015). While some recent developments suggest a slight opening for criticism within the press, the overall landscape remains one of constrained freedom (AlFahad, 2015).

The Saudi system exerts significant pressure on journalists, editors, and media outlets, encouraging conformity to the government's narrative. Rugh (2004) notes that censorship is not heavily employed as the press is already attuned to issues aligning with the government's stance. The Saudi press, therefore, leans towards self-regulation to avoid repercussions from the editor in chief, Ministry of Culture and Information, or other influential groups. As a result, the media in Saudi Arabia has been criticized for functioning more as a government 'cheerleader' than a watchdog for the public (Al-Kahtani, 1999).

External perceptions reflect a lack of press freedom in Saudi Arabia (Freedom House Report, 2006). The complex relationship between the government and the media demands support for governmental policies while media financiers, often closely tied to the ruling family, can operate with relative impunity, financing media through advertising and subsidies. This intricate dynamic further hampers the potential for independent investigative journalism in the country (Hallin & Mancini, 2011).

Despite implementing certain political and economic reforms related to press freedom, the Saudi government's efforts are considered inadequate due to the absence of clear-cut laws safeguarding freedom of the press. This deficiency facilitates interference from influential entities, particularly the government and religious leaders, impeding journalists' work. The lack of a democratic political culture in Saudi Arabia further legitimizes government intervention in the press (Awad, 2010).

The impact of political systems on journalism is particularly pronounced in less democratic countries, and this study focuses on understanding the political challenges affecting investigative journalism in Saudi Arabia (Awad, 2010). Investigative journalism, closely linked to watchdog journalism, is seen as a vital tool for monitoring power and revealing democratic deficiencies. However, the conditions necessary for effective watchdog journalism, such as low political parallelism and high journalistic professionalism, are often lacking in countries like Saudi Arabia (Waisbord, 2000; Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

The study acknowledges that investigative journalism faces obstacles in Saudi Arabia compared to Anglo-American contexts. Economic factors, such as a less remunerative news market and the impact of the late 2000s economic recession, contribute to the challenge. The question of why publishers should allocate resources to investigative journalism becomes crucial, especially when economic gains are not apparent. Some publishers invest in what is termed 'pseudo-investigative journalism,' primarily serving private interests rather than pursuing the uncovering of hidden truths (Stetka & Ornebring, 2013).

Corruption becomes a prevalent theme in pseudo-investigative journalism, utilized to attack adversaries and support the interests of media owners. The concept of 'kompromat,' spreading compromising information to damage reputations, is evident in these countries, reflecting a broader media landscape where ownership often lies with powerful business figures with political ambitions (Ledeneva, 2006; Zielonka, 2015).

The interconnected relationship between political, economic, and media spheres characterizes these countries, fostering practices like 'media capture' and 'partisan polyvalence.' Rather than aligning with political factions, media in these contexts often establish connections with individual politicians or businessmen for protection and other advantages (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2008; McCargo, 2012).

The need to emphasize both the commonalities and distinctions among the countries under investigation is crucial. Previous research indicates that Italian and Romanian journalism shares a strong political foundation, primarily exerted through ownership connections and the appointment of trusted individuals within governing circles (Gambaro and Puglisi, 2009; Greskovits, 2015). Furthermore, studies highlight the influence of business actors investing in advertising, irrespective of political affiliations, to shape journalistic activities in both Italy and Romania (Gambaro and Puglisi, 2009; Greskovits, 2015).

Similarly, in Hungary, political interference in the publishing market differs from direct political parallelism due to the post-communist privatization process. Here, state investments in the advertising market serve as a means of pressuring journalistic newsrooms, enabling the government to support compliant communication agencies while withholding resources from more adversarial ones (Stetka, 2012). This pattern is mirrored in Latvia, where politicians, especially during pre-election periods, influence media coverage through public companies under their control investing in advertising spaces (Balcytiene, 2015).

Across the examined countries, particularly in Eastern Europe, journalists face significant pressures, either directly from owners or through interference from political and economic actors, often manifesting as physical threats or other forms of abuse (Koltsova, 2006).

In the region, investigative reporters frequently experience harassment from officials who perceive them as enemies of the state. Government-controlled media outlets play a role in scrutinizing journalists' private lives and denouncing or ridiculing them. However, these efforts may inadvertently stimulate more investigative journalism, as journalists in Southeast Europe have discovered the power of collaboration. Networks such as the Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN), the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), and the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) provide

platforms for collaboration, facilitating secure and efficient communication among journalists (Ettema, 2009).

Global investigative journalism conferences and regional events have further fostered collaboration, enabling journalists to transcend borders and target common criminal activities such as money laundering and arms dealing (Ettema, 2009). Training initiatives, like the BIRN Summer School, contribute to improving journalists' skills in the region. Journalists are increasingly partnering with NGOs, sharing information, assisting in evidence gathering, and jointly distributing reports, thereby amplifying their impact (Awad, 2010).

In 2014, journalists and media outlets encountered heightened harassment and physical attacks during their work and as retaliation for their reporting, contributing to an overall climate of increased intimidation. Community and privately owned radio stations, particularly those critical of the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) party, faced intensified threats and harassment from local government officials and PF party cadres. Incidents such as the raid on Sun FM in Copperbelt Province and the threat to assault the news editor at Breeze FM in Chipata exemplify the challenges journalists faced, especially after hosting opposition figures or criticizing local officials (MISA, 2018).

Investigative journalism, characterized by in-depth exploration of topics like serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing, often involves extensive research over months or years (Ettema, 2009). Historically conducted by newspapers, wire services, and freelance journalists, the decline in advertising income has posed challenges for traditional news services to fund such time-consuming investigative work. Collaboration among news organizations, both nationally and internationally, has become a growing trend, exemplified by initiatives like the Panama Papers and Paradise Papers, as well as organizations like ProPublica relying on public and benefactor support (Ettema, 2009).

In the U.S., the rise of conglomerates since the 1980s coincided with significant budget cuts for investigative journalism. A 2002 study noted a near disappearance of investigative journalism from commercial airwaves, reflecting conflicts of interest between media conglomerates' revenue sources and the pursuit of unbiased reporting (AlFahad, 2015).

Press freedom in sub-Saharan Africa varies, with instances of governments attempting to control narratives and suppress investigative reporting. For example, in Cameroon, the government targeted journalists covering the separatist rebellion, while in Zambia, arrests of reporters and closures of media platforms limited press freedom. However, despite challenging environments, journalists in the region produced noteworthy investigations, as seen in the exposure of corruption in football in Ghana and Botswana-based reporting on Mugabe's failure to stop killings (Kasoma, 2010; AlFahad, 2015).

Investigative journalism in print media faces various challenges in Zambia, including funding constraints, ethical concerns, and pressure to meet deadlines. Limited financial support hampers journalists' ability to conduct extensive investigations, while low levels of media ethics and potential ethical compromises for financial gain pose additional hurdles. Meeting deadlines is another challenge, with employers sometimes pressuring journalists to abandon stories due to perceived delays (MISA, 2018; Pitts, 2009

[35]).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Overview

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the chosen methods and technical components of the study. It encompasses the research design, target population, sample design, data collection instruments, data analysis, and data presentation.

3.2 Research Design

The research adopts a dual qualitative and quantitative approach, involving public news media organizations, governance, and development stakeholders. The study comprises a sample size of fifty (50) respondents across various categories, employing both random and systematic sampling methods. The accountability role of journalism is emphasized, highlighting its capacity to reveal concealed information. Investigative journalism is urged to prioritize uncovering the truth without succumbing to influences that may seek to manipulate its revelations.

3.3 Target Population/Study Population

The study population refers to a well-defined group under investigation, which, in this case, focuses on publicly owned newspapers—specifically, the Times of Zambia and the Daily Mail.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sampling, defined as the process of selecting participants from the population of interest, was conducted with a sample size of 50 journalists from public newspapers. Sampling units included individual journalists and media heads in the private sector. Purposive random sampling, chosen for its suitability in cases where precise quantitative figures of the target population are unknown, was employed. Probability sampling was considered ideal for achieving a homogeneous sample, ensuring units shared similar traits.

3.5 Data Collection

Both primary and secondary data collection techniques were employed. Primary data, collected through structured questionnaires and interviews, was the primary focus. Structured questionnaires and interviews served as complementary instruments, with questionnaires being the main tool. Secondary data was obtained through a review of relevant materials such as print and electronic media, dissertations, books, articles on NGP, and related reports.

3.6 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis and descriptive statistical analysis were employed for data analysis. Thematic analysis involved categorizing words and phrases emerging from interviews into major themes. This approach aimed to reveal the prevailing patterns and themes in the research findings. Data from questionnaires were manually coded, synthesized, and quantified using SPSS, presenting results in tables of frequency and percentages as descriptive statistics in Microsoft Word.

3.7 Data Validation

Data validation involved cross-checking facts and figures from personal interviews with various respondents across different categories. Primary data was compared with

secondary data, and similarities and differences were analyzed, classified, and interpreted to ensure the validity and reliability of the research data.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

The ideal approach would have involved a large-scale survey, but due to constraints in financial resources and time, the researcher opted for a small-scale survey with a limited number of respondents.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations play a crucial role in research, aiming to safeguard participants from psychological and physical harm. The researcher took into account various ethical considerations to ensure the protection and respect of participants' personal integrity. This included the use of an introductory letter, provision of consent forms to respondents, ensuring anonymity, and maintaining strict confidentiality of the collected data for academic purposes.

In adherence to ethical principles, the following measures were implemented:

- **Confidentiality:** Respondents were assured that the information collected would be strictly used for academic purposes and treated with the utmost confidentiality.
- **Anonymity:** The names of respondents were not collected, and their private details were not disclosed in the research report to maintain their anonymity.
- **Informed Consent:** Targeted respondents received an introductory letter explaining the significance of the research, emphasizing the importance of their participation. They were given the option to either participate or opt out, ensuring informed consent was obtained.

4. Data Presentation

4.1 Overview

This chapter focuses on the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data. The initial section examines the response rate of the respondents, followed by the presentation of respondent profiles. The subsequent section delves into the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of relationships investigated, aligning with the study's objectives:

1. To assess the existence of investigative journalism in Zambian public media.
2. To determine the extent to which investigative journalism is practiced by the public media.
3. To examine factors hindering investigative journalism by public media.
4. To establish channels that encourage public print houses to engage in investigative journalism.

4.2 Profiles of the Respondents

This section provides a comprehensive profile of the respondents, considering factors such as gender, age, level of education, business duration, number of employees, and business type. The profiling process is based on the research instruments used in the study.

4.2.1 Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Data was collected regarding the gender of the respondents to analyze the distribution between males and females. The

study deems this analysis crucial for comparing the participation levels of entrepreneurs in business enterprises in Zambia. The selection of respondents did not exhibit preferential treatment based on gender.

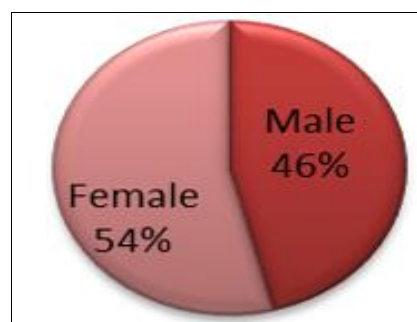


Fig 1: Gender distribution of respondents

4.2.2 Distribution of Respondents by Age

Respondents indicated their age group in years. This was done to comprehend the age distribution of the respondents. Age groups were put into three categories: 20 – 25 years, 26 – 30 years, and 31 – 35 years and above 36. The results were as shown in Fig 2 below

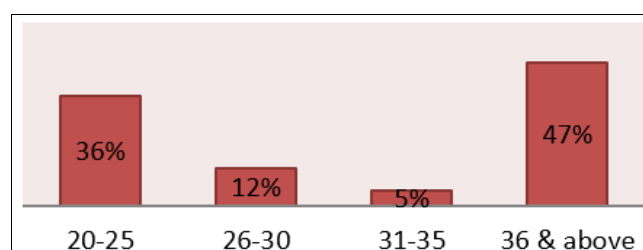


Fig 2: Distribution of respondents by age

4.2.3 Level of Education and years of experience

Each respondent was asked to indicate their highest education level. This was considered important in this study in respect to responding to the questions as well as understanding if investigative journalism exists in Zambia. The options that were provided in this item were: high school; certificate; diploma; bachelor's degree; post graduate degree; and others. The responses were as shown in Fig 3 below. The figure below shows that those who worked as journalist below 4 years were the majority as they accounted for 50% whilst those that taught between 5 and 9 years were 30% and those above 10 years in teaching service accounted for 20%.

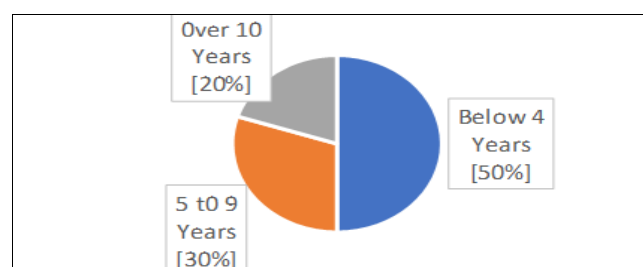


Fig 3: Distribution of respondents years of experience

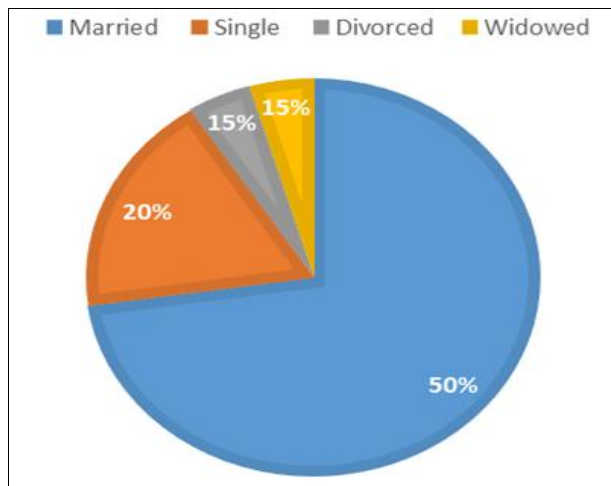


Fig 4: Distribution of the respondents marital status

The study showed that 50% of the respondents were married whilst 20% were single and 15% were divorced and the widowed accounted for 15%.

4.3 Results by Objectives

4.3.1 Does investigative journalism exist in Zambian public media

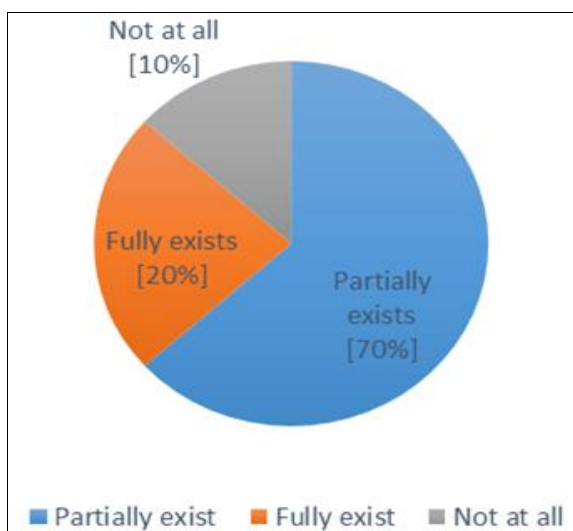


Fig 5: Investigative journalism existence in Zambia

The study showed that over 70% of respondents reported that investigative journalism exists while 20% indicated that it fully exists and 10% state they did not know at all. See the figure below.

4.3.2 Extent of which investigative journalism is practiced by the public media

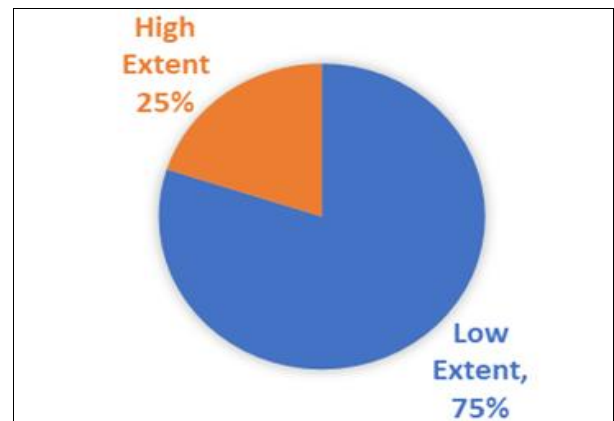


Fig 6: Shows the distribution of the extent at which investigative journalism is practiced by public media

The findings revealed that 25% of the respondents believe that it is being practiced to a higher extent, 75% believe it is to a low extent.

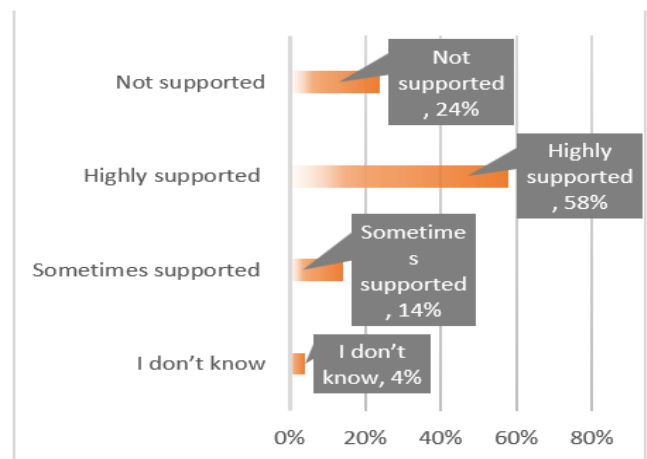


Fig 7: Shows how investigative journalism is supported by institutions

The findings revealed that 58% said investigative journalism is supported by institutions, 24% said not supported, 14% said sometimes supported and 4% said they did not know.

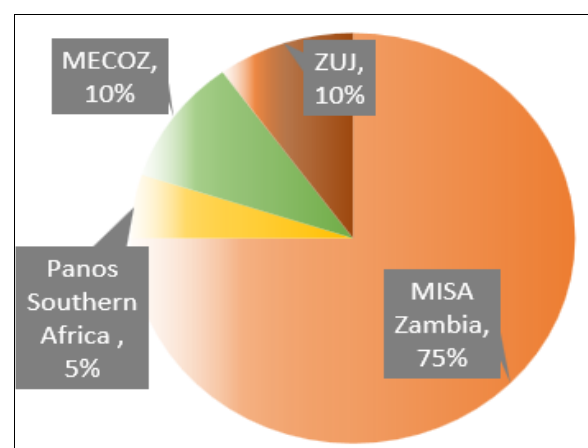


Fig 8: Institutions that support investigative journalism

On Institutions that support investigative journalism, The findings showed that MISA had 75%, ZUI 10%, MECOZ 10%, PANOS, 5%

4.3.3 Factors that hinder investigative journalism by public media

The findings showed that poor working conditions and inadequate training are the leading hindrances at 44% and 37% respectively. Lack of supportive media bodies stood at 13% whilst lack of self-esteem stood at 6%.

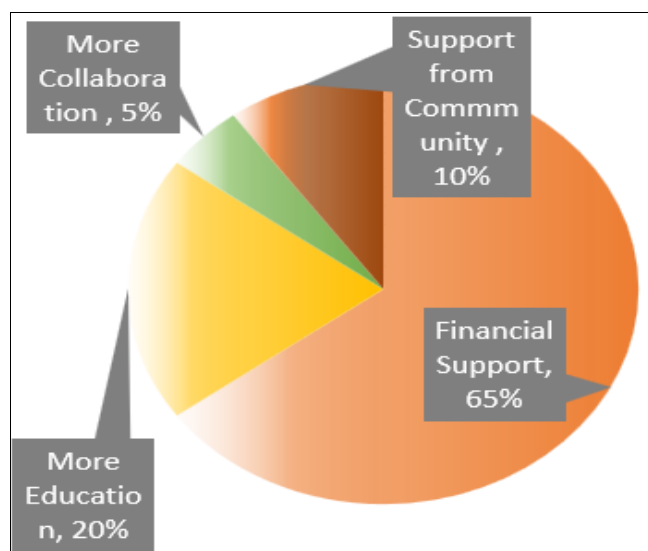


Fig 9: How media institutions can enhance investigative journalism

On how media institutions can enhance investigative journalism The findings showed that financial support stood at 65%, 20% said more education, support from the community 10% and more collaboration at 5%.

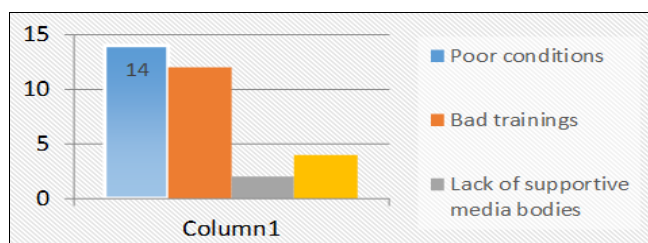


Fig 10: Distribution of factors that hinder investigative journalism

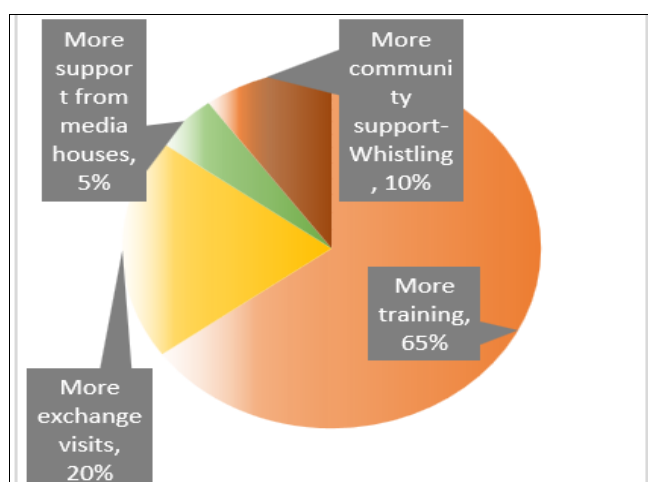


Fig 11: What is supposed to be done to enhance investigative journalism by media houses

On what is supposed to be done to enhance investigative journalism by media houses. The findings showed that more trainings are supposed to be done stood at 65%, exchange visits at 20%, More support from media houses at 5% and community support in terms of whistle blowers at 10%.

4.3.4 Recommendations that will make public print houses practice investigative journalism in their duties.

The results of the study indicate that a significant majority of the respondents, constituting 50%, advocated for effective training or capacity building as a key factor that would enable public media houses to engage in investigative journalism. Additionally, 35% of the respondents emphasized the importance of providing favorable working conditions. A smaller percentage, 5%, highlighted the significance of robust media networks, while 10% suggested that supportive media organizations, such as MISA, would play a crucial role in fostering the practice of investigative journalism in Zambia. These findings underscore the multifaceted nature of the recommendations, pointing to the diverse strategies that can contribute to the enhancement of investigative journalism within the Zambian media landscape.

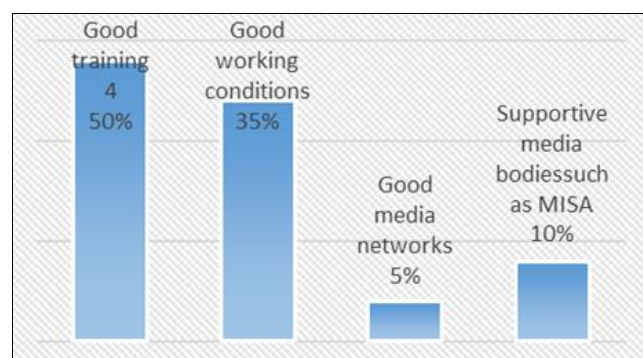


Fig 12: Distribution of respondents recommendation to practice investigative journalism

4.4 Findings and Discussions

4.4.1 Does investigative journalism exist in Zambian public media?

The research findings revealed that more than 70% of survey participants acknowledged the existence of investigative journalism, with 20% affirming its full existence and 10% expressing uncertainty. To enhance their investigative reporting, journalists should acquaint themselves with government monitoring mechanisms for public finance and expenditure. Familiarity with legislation such as the Public Finance Act and the Zambia National Tender Board Act is crucial. The annual audits conducted by the Auditor General (AG) serve as valuable starting points for comprehending expenditure patterns. Despite the complexity of accounting terminology, media outlets can enlist the assistance of experts to decipher technical language, underscoring the necessity for training in investigative journalism.

It is imperative for journalists to establish stronger ties with civil-society organizations, including entities like TIZ and Integrity Foundation, dedicated to monitoring public accountability. Collaboration should extend to public oversight bodies like Parliamentary committees, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and the Task Force on Corruption. Structured partnerships between the media and watchdog institutions, facilitated by professional

associations like the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Zambia and the Press Association of Zambia (PAZA), are essential.

Journalists and media institutions ought to adopt a participatory approach, prioritizing citizen involvement in the journalistic process. Embracing a citizen-centered attitude places citizens at the forefront of media investigations, fostering reconnection with the public and revitalizing civic and political interest. This approach, akin to civic/public journalism, views journalists as citizens first and professionals second, making public finance mismanagement a shared concern. Cultivating such an ethos requires journalism education incorporating a robust communitarian ethic that values citizen participation over elitist journalism.

The challenging media and information laws in Zambia contribute to an environment where public finance management is veiled in secrecy. Despite annual reports by the AG, the fact that the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee occasionally holds closed-door hearings suggests a reluctance to expose government shortcomings publicly. This complexity is exacerbated by a commercialized media landscape, diminishing active citizen engagement in governance. Media coverage tends to focus more on elite actions than on citizen perspectives. However, amidst these challenges, it is evident that public funds are being misused. Initiatives like President Mwanawasa's task force on corruption underscore the media's crucial role in holding public officials accountable in Zambia's transitional democracy.

4.4.2 Extent of which investigative journalism is practiced by the public media

The study indicates the extent to which investigative journalism is practiced by public media, revealing that 25% of respondents believe it is practiced to a higher extent, while 75% perceive it to be at a lower extent. Media regulation is primarily situated within the media institutions themselves, with intra-institutional practices reflecting the politico-legal context. During the One-Party State era, the state-owned media echoed the ruling party's ideology, a trend that persists despite Zambia's transition to a multiparty democracy. Private media, traditionally counter-hegemonic, now grapple with mercantilist exploitation, defining their role in terms of profit motives and self-regulation centered on accountability to themselves and market imperatives.

Although notions of 'social responsibility' are invoked, evidence suggests that the media, both state-owned and private, are inclined toward a 'watchdog' role rather than being subject to scrutiny. This 'libertarian' perspective sidelines broader citizen participation in media work, restricting journalism to professionals and reinforcing media objectivity, often at the expense of civic and political engagement. The media's association with elites—politicians, the wealthy, police, clergy—hinders the amplification of vox populi, the voice of the people, and the emergence of alternative forms of journalism like civic journalism.

The crux of the matter lies in the imperative for the media to embrace audience inclusivity, fostering active civic and political engagement. Public campaigns should advocate for self-regulation mechanisms aligned with the public interest, compelling the media to be accountable not only to market forces or state elites but primarily to the citizenry. This heightened accountability could position the media on a

moral high ground, empowering them to advocate for transparency and accountability in the management of the country's resources on behalf of the citizenry.

4.4.3 Factors that hinder investigative journalism by public media

The study reveals that poor working conditions and inadequate training are the primary impediments, each cited by 45% of respondents. Lack of supportive media bodies is identified by 10%, while lack of self-esteem stands at 5%. In terms of media performance and conduct, polarization is notably high, particularly in the coverage of political parties leading up to the August 2016 general elections, as indicated in the MISA Zambia media monitoring report. The report highlights disproportionate coverage favoring the ruling party (PF) across all public media, with ZNBC TV1 and ZNBC Radio 2 allocating the least coverage to the opposition party (UPND). ZNBC faces criticism for its perceived bias, prompting concerns about the effectiveness of the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) in curbing such abuses.

Stakeholders question the IBA's role in addressing media polarization despite issuing directives for impartiality. The call for the IBA to be legislatively empowered to regulate ZNBC, a major player in the broadcast industry, is emphasized to create a level playing field. Uniform regulations, irrespective of ownership, are advocated for fair sector governance. Concerns are raised about the potential impact of media polarization on the nation's image and donor confidence. Professor Oliver Saasa underscores the importance of a free and independent media, asserting that a muzzled media may deter responsible donors from supporting Zambia's economic development goals.

Professor Saasa contends that democracy relies on accurate and sufficient information, emphasizing the role of a free media in informing citizens and holding leaders accountable. In a libertarian media framework, the expectation is that media will contest ideas, criticize those in power, and contribute to the democratic process. The removal of an independent press compromises the essence of democracy, as it diminishes the vital role media plays in providing diverse perspectives and fostering informed citizenry.

4.4.4 Channels that will make public print houses practice investigative journalism in their duties.

Although this brand of journalism is still relatively new and undeveloped in Zambia and other third-world countries, it is fast gaining recognition as a valuable tool for public policy reform. The fact pointed out above, that investigative reporting is relatively new to Zambia, means the country lacks an entrenched culture of hard-nosed, muck-raking journalism, and Zambian media practitioners have no historical or existing frame of reference to serve as a guide when it comes to undertaking this kind of enterprise. They are forced to grope in the dark and learn the nuts and bolts of the trade by trial and error in the field. As a result, many have churned out half-baked stories in the name of investigative reporting and, quite often, with serious legal consequences for them and their media organizations. It is, therefore, important that anyone venturing into this kind of journalism understand its distinguishing characteristics as well as its potential consequences for the subject of investigation, public policy makers, society, and the reporter and his or her organization. That is the motive and justification for this book. This marks the first attempt to put

together in book form, some practical steps and suggestions meant to help both the novice and the veteran as they embark on investigative assignments in the uncharted waters of investigative journalism in Zambia. However, one must hasten to caution that this is not a definitive "textbook" on the subject. It is merely intended to point out typical scenarios, the challenges they pose, and how the "investigator" might respond to such eventualities in the field.

5. Conclusion

Information is indispensable to societal development, serving as the cornerstone of journalism. However, the acquisition and use of information pose crucial questions that involve the entire populace. This is why laws regulating journalism exist, with a primary objective being the safeguarding of society from media excesses and its subversive potential. In Zambia, instances abound where individuals with limited access to the media have suffered unjust portrayals, negatively impacting their public image. Media ethics, grounded in moral principles, play a pivotal role in addressing such challenges.

Ethics, encompassing moral principles that distinguish between desirable and undesirable activities, are vital in journalism and all aspects of life. Journalists must guard against self-serving and injurious attitudes in their coverage of news and events. Upholding ethical standards enhances the respect for journalism in Zambia and contributes to an improved image of journalists as individuals genuinely pursuing the public interest. Good journalism has historically contributed to the development of nations by promoting worthy causes and mobilizing society to achieve developmental goals.

The social responsibility of the media is crucial in ensuring the exposure of crime and generating a public response to help prevent or reduce its recurrence. While investigative reporting is challenging, journalists, acting as watchdogs for the public, should strive to achieve this. Establishing successful partnerships between the government, stakeholders, and the media is essential. This involves creating a framework for developing communication policies and ongoing training for diverse media representatives to ensure accurate reporting and effective investigations.

In essence, the actions of Zambian journalists, guided by timeless ethics such as truth-telling, objectivity, and accuracy, have profound consequences for the kind of society the country will become. Upholding ethical standards not only benefits journalists but also contributes to the well-being of the entire Zambian population.

5.1 Recommendations

The government should develop sound policies that promote transparency within community groups and encourage proactive interaction. These policies can foster open communication, collaboration, and shared responsibility among community members.

Additionally, the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) should initiate media literacy education programs designed to empower and inform the public about effectively utilizing the media for crime prevention and control. These programs can educate individuals on discerning reliable information, understanding media messages, and engaging with media platforms responsibly. By enhancing media literacy, MISA can contribute to a more informed and vigilant public,

actively participating in efforts to prevent and address crime within their communities.

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