

**Research Report for MM (P&DM) degree at Wits
University, School of Governance on Public
Participation and the use of Social Media in the
South African Parliament.**

By

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the use of social media in parliamentary processes of public participation, especially when processing legislation. It first identifies the tools that make social media platforms available through ICT infrastructure and its projected growth in the future. This is important in order to understand the current access to the Internet by citizens and future projections of the Internet as a basis for social media platforms. The use of social media will be more easily promoted when citizens have greater access, hence the need to first consider issues of access.

The literature review reveals limited information on the use of social media for public participation by parliaments. Neo-Marxist theory informs a theoretical framework of the study, as participation is viewed as an empowerment process for citizens. The use of social media can be enhanced, especially when all citizens have access to the Internet and will thus have access to social media. While the current methods of public participation are working, there is opportunity for enhancement.

Qualitative research methodology was used for this study. A questionnaire was used to collect data that was analysed and interpreted to provide the findings of this study. It is out of the information received that it was clear that, the current use of social media by the parliament of the Republic of South Africa is limited to information-sharing rather than engagement platforms, and not all Members of Parliament are active on social media. There is only one account for Parliament on Facebook and one account on Twitter. There is thus a need for an increased presence of Parliament in the social media platforms.

DECLARATION ON PLAGIARISM

I, **Mmamoloko Tryphosa Kubayi**, Student number **337538**, hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work, submitted as a requirement for MM (P&DM) in fulfilment of all requirements of the School of Governance at the University of the Witwatersrand. This work is undertaken solely for the purposes of this degree and has not been submitted for any other qualification at any other university.

Signature: _____

Mmamoloko Tryphosa Kubayi

Date: _____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my mother, Ruth Langa, for her love and sacrifice.

Pheladi, you have said we must spread our wings – *ke a leboga*.

To my brothers, David and Bigboy, to my sisters Mapule and Lerato.
To my son, Nhlanhla.

To all of you – thank you for your constant understanding and unwavering support.

To all young black women: All things are possible if you put your mind to it and believe!

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To the Monitors at the Parliamentary Monitoring Group, thank you for your support and the time you took to participate in this research ... in Xitsonga we say *Nakhensa*.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The South African Parliament is mandated by the Constitution to engage with the public when processing legislation. The questions that arise should be whether government or parliament is doing enough to carry out the mandate bestowed on it by the Constitution? Are the current participation processes and methods adequate in view of the changing nature of communication and the development of new communication tools? Are the current methods used by Parliament effective and yielding the required results? Leston-Bandeira and Bender (2013: 281-297) reflects that Ps over the years have started using social media platforms as a tool to improve public participation. There is a need to review the current public participation processes and explore new channels or platforms that will enhance parliament's public participation processes.

Comments and inputs received from citizens are minimal, in particular from young people who constitute the majority of the population in South Africa (Census 2011). The Constitutional Court has ruled against Parliament after processing complaints presented by citizens. Their argument was that Parliament did not consult sufficiently to solicit public inputs when processing legislation. The challenge is therefore to increase public participation, but also to ensure that it is meaningful participation.

During 2014, the State of the Nation address debate on social media, and on Facebook in particular, was alive with the discussion surrounding the debate itself. With the advent of democracy and the increased importance and use of technological development, communication has shifted the focus to social media, moving away from the traditional methods of

communication. However, Parliament has not increased the usage of social media as a platform for public engagement. Currently social media plays a very limited role when processing legislation. Participation and discussion on legislation takes place in the public domain in most cases when a particular group or organisation has a specific interest, for example, the Protection of State Information Bill, dubbed the “Secrecy Bill” in the public domain. These organisations tend to mobilize society either for or against that particular legislation. However, many pieces of legislation are passed without any national discourse on them taking place.

The research investigated factors that contribute to low levels of public participation by citizens during the legislation process, and analyses the findings to determine recommendations and strategies to improve public participation when processing legislation.

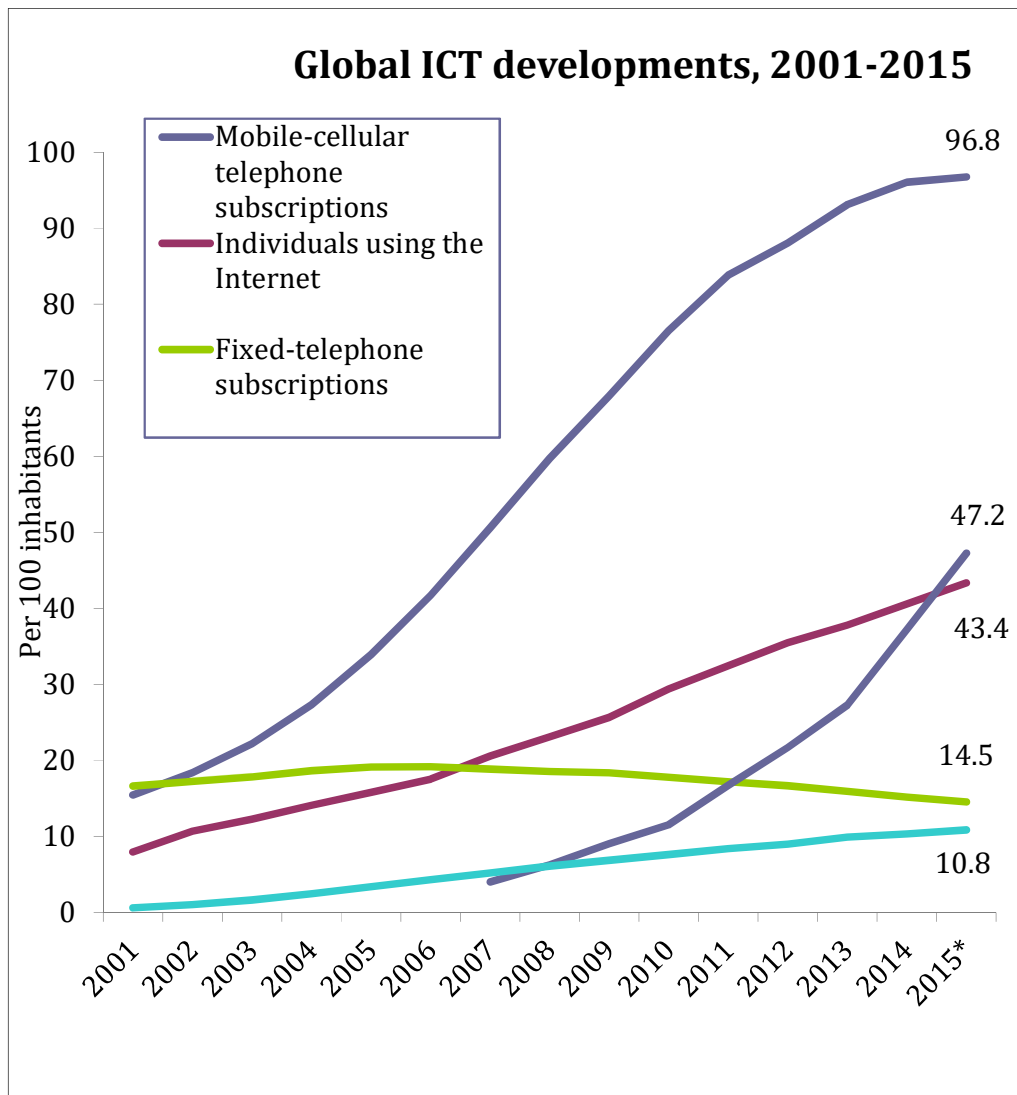
1.2 BACKGROUND TO INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

1.2.1 Global Analysis

According to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), there is a significant increase in the numbers of Internet users worldwide. Diagram 1 below taken from ITU research indicates the status of global Internet access. According to the ITU press statement released on May 26, 2015, “Internet user penetration increased seven-fold since 2000: Between 2000 and 2015, Internet penetration has increased almost seven-fold from 6.5 to 43 per cent of the global population. The proportion of households with Internet access at home advanced from 18 per cent in 2005 to 46 per cent in 2015. ITU figures also indicate that four billion people in the developing world remain offline. Of the nearly one billion people living in the Least Developing Countries (LDCs), 851 million do not use the Internet” (ITU Press Statement, May 26, 2015).

ITU produced a report in 2011 that looked at regulatory challenges posed by the use of social media. It was indicated at that time that the global use of social media was on the rise: Facebook had 750 million users, Twitter had 200 million users and Linked In had 120 million users. Information on current statistics on the use of social media was not readily available. Internet usage thus becomes a tool to estimate the use of social media.

Diagram 1: Increase in Internet Usage



Source: ITU, 26 May: 2015

1.2.2 Continental Analysis

In 2012, among the countries surveyed by Research ICT Africa (RIA), South Africa had the highest percentage of Internet users (33.7%) followed by Botswana (27%) and in third place Kenya (26.6%). Ethiopia and Tanzania had the lowest user percentages at 2.7% and 3.5% respectively. Internet usage gives an indication of how many people will have access to social media platforms as these are available through the internet.

Use of social media such as blogs, Twitter and Facebook is widespread in Kenya where its use is regarded as the highest in Africa. There are concerns in Kenya that if measures are not taken on the use of social media it may be used to spread hate campaigns, especially before and during political elections. Such concerns are also linked to government and parliamentary use of social media as a platform to engage the citizens. President Uhuru Kenyatta is highly active on both Twitter and Facebook in communicating his views, using these platforms not only to engage the electorate but also to communicate his programme and diary.

In August 2012 the Communications Commission of Kenya (CCK) issued guidelines to be followed before releasing a Short Message Service communication aimed at mass distribution for a political purpose. The guidelines mandate the mobile network operators to scrutinize any political messages before release, obligating operators to not disseminate the information if the message does not conform to the regulations. Amongst other things, the mobile operator must receive the message 48 hours before the expected time of dissemination in order to be transmitted. Kenya has 81.4% of its citizens signed up to at least one social media platform.

1.2.3 South African Analysis

The advancement of economies over centuries has been catalysed by technological innovation of various kinds. Technological innovation in the 20th century led to a highly mechanized global economy, supported by international telecommunications networks. By the end of the 20th century technological innovation in the electronic communications sector was capable of supporting business innovation across the broad services sector, influencing efficiency and growth in international trade and services sectors.

In the period 1996 to 2013, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) infrastructure, services and content, in particular electronic communications services (telecommunications and broadcasting), have come to be viewed as facilitators of growth, contributing to the improvement of welfare, enabling traditional merchandise trade, and offering new opportunities.

The global telecommunications revolution presents opportunities for economic transformation in the broad services sector, including delivery of services such as mobile telecommunications, and electronic data communications on the Internet. The shift to a digital broadcasting environment makes economic services and transactions relatively accessible to low-income users, high-income users, large firms and Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) alike, although local access and usage prices in South Africa remain high when compared to world prices.

It has long been held that South Africa has the largest Internet economy in Africa. This is a positive result emanating from government's vision of a connected society. At the end of 2011 South Africa had approximately 8.5 million Internet users. This represented no less than a 25 per cent increase over the 2010 figure of 6.8 million, maintaining a high growth rate fuelled by the explosion of smartphones in the South African market (World Wide Worx Research, 2012).

The current penetration rate is 34 per cent, which translates into 17 million South Africans. This growth brings Internet penetration in South Africa to approximately 17 per cent overall. Despite rapid growth, however, it still lags behind Egypt's 21.6 million users with 26 per cent penetration and Morocco's 15.6 million users representing 49 per cent penetration. In each of these countries the high Internet penetration is a consequence of heavy use of the Internet on cell phones, but it should be borne in mind that physical Internet access infrastructure is less developed in these countries, and quality of access is relatively poor. Social network use (such as Mxit, Facebook and WhatsApp) has exploded, with Facebook users growing from 12 million in 2006 to over a billion (Internet World Stats, 2013).

Table 1: South Africa: Broadband Subscribers

Company Name	Subscriber Numbers	Company Market Share %
Telkom (ADSL)	875 000	11 %
Noetel (CDMA)	150 000	2 %
iBurst	50 000	1 %
MTN (3G)	2 000 000	24 %
Vodacom (3G)	5 000 000	61 %
Cell C	170 000	2 %
Total	8 245 000	

Source: Wits Link Centre

Most recent figures, as at 31 March 2013, indicate 870 505 ADSL subscribers for Telkom and 14 386 000 "active data customers" for Vodacom 1003. MTN reports 7,7 million "3G devices" on their network as at 31 December 2012. There are also a number of companies active in the wholesale provision of terrestrial fibre.

1.3. MANDATE OF PORTFOLIO OF PARLIAMENT

Chapter 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (the Constitution) gives a mandate to the Portfolio Committee to legislate, conduct oversight over the Executive and also facilitate public participation. The Committee is a sector-specific “engine room” of Parliament’s oversight and legislative work. The National Assembly (NA) appoints members to a number of Portfolio Committees to exercise oversight over the various national government departments. The role of the Portfolio Committees, amongst others, is to consider Bills, deal with departmental budget votes, oversee the implementation of the work of the departments it is responsible for, enquire and make recommendations about any aspect of the departments, including structures, functionality and policies, process and pass legislation; and facilitate public participation in Parliament relating to issues of oversight and legislation.

The work of the Committee is not restricted to government. The Committee may also investigate any matter of public interest that falls within its area of responsibility. This is done through public hearings, stakeholder engagements, seminars and committee meetings.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The South African Parliament is mandated by the Constitution to engage the public when processing legislation. The question arises whether current methods used by Parliament are effective and yield the required results. Leston-Bandeira and Bender (2013: 281-297) reflects that parliaments over the years have started using social media platforms as a tool to improve public participation. There is a need to explore whether these platforms can add value to public participation processes of the South African Parliament.

Inputs received from citizens are minimal especially from young people who are the majority of the population (Census 2011). The Constitutional Court, for example, ruled against Parliament after processing complaints presented by a group of citizens. An example of this is a Constitutional Court judgment on a Case of Doctors for Life International vs the Speaker of the National Assembly and Others. Judge Ngcobo noted that, "Parliament has discretion to decide on how to fulfil the duty to facilitate public involvement in law-making process". It is within this judgment that the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) as another section of Parliament was found not to have fulfilled its constitutional obligation of public participation when processing the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Act and Traditional Health Practitioners Act (CCT12/05: 17/08/2006) The challenge is to increase public participation but also to ensure that it is meaningful participation.

During the 2014 State of the Nation address, there was extensive debate on social media. With the advent of democracy and the increased importance and use of technological development, communication has shifted focus to social media, moving away from the traditional methods of communication. However, Parliament has not increased the usage of social media as a platform for public engagement and currently social media plays a limited role when processing legislation.

Participation and discussion on legislation takes place in the public domain in most cases when a particular group or organisation has a specific interest, such as the Protection of State Information Bill or the "Secrecy Bill" where the Right2Know campaign took a lead in mobilizing society against the Bill. These organisations tend to mobilize society either for or against that particular legislation. However, many pieces of legislation are passed without national discourse being applied.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the research is to investigate whether social media can enhance participation by citizens on Parliament's legislative processes, and also to analyze the findings in order to recommend strategies to improve public participation in Parliament activities when processing legislation. The research will then recommend ways to enhance public participation through social media and strengthen the work of Parliament, especially in Committees.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research aims to address the following questions:

- a) How is Public Participation defined in the legislative process?
- b) Determine current methods of public participation in the legislative process?
- c) Will the use of social media increase citizen participation in the legislative process?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study expects to provide insight into why after 21 years of democracy the Parliament of South Africa is not fully responsive to public participation processes. It aims to provide the leadership of Parliament and Members of Parliament with insight on new global trends on public participation that will enhance policy decisions on public participation.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a brief understanding of the mandate of Parliament and its committees. This is in relation to the processing of legislation. It further

reflects on the constitutional mandate and the challenges that Parliament faces in relation to fulfilling this mandate as an institution.

The chapter further reflects on ICT in relation to South African penetration and accessibility for the majority of citizens. The focus is to determine how many citizens have access to ICT and internet as social media is provided through this platform. Finally, the projections of internet penetration are explored as this assists the decision-making process which shows a growing trend on internet penetration. This suggests that the majority of people in South Africa will have access to the Internet and this is information that should be used to inform policy decisions.

The chapter further indicates the intention of the study regarding the use of social media by the Parliament of South Africa in order to solicit public participation when processing legislation. The questions that will be answered by the study will assist in policy decisions. Chapter two will focus on review of the selected relevant literature in public participation through social media.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will examine the definition of literature review and the importance of it when conducting a study. It will also look at the significance of conducting literature review and the formulation of the theoretical perspectives to support the study. Public participation and its importance will be explained. The theoretical perspective on public participation is of importance in particular within the context of the South African history and the apartheid era.

The focus will be on both international and national trends on the use of social media for public participation. There are various social media platforms and the most popular and widely used should be identified. Articles that have been written within this study will be examined as to whether they support use of social media as a tool for public participation. Information on future projections of social media will be highlighted to provide a basis for investigation on the need for policy decisions.

2.2 DEFINITION OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review's main purpose is to examine information that has been written on the topic under study. It is a critical process as it indicates whether there is a gap for the area selected and looks further at different views on that particular topic. Wagner, Garner and Kawulick (2012: 29) defines literature review as, "an interpretation of a selection of relevant published and/or unpublished information that is available on a specific topic from one

of four modes that optimally involves summarization, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of the information.”

2.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review provides an overview of what has been researched about the subject matter. According to Neuman (2006: 111), “A literature review is based on the assumption that knowledge accumulates and that people learn from and build on what others have done.” He further explains the goals of literature review in four points, namely:

- a) To demonstrate familiarity with a body of knowledge and establish credibility;
- b) To show the path of prior research and how a current project is linked to it;
- c) To integrate and summarize what is known in an area; and
- d) To learn from others and stimulate new ideas.

The literature review for this particular study will attempt to understand the research done on the use of social media to enhance public participation. It will look at the broad use of social media in any form of public participation and move specifically to the use of social media in public participation.

2.4 DEFINING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

“Public participation’ means to involve those who are affected by a decision in the decision-making process. It promotes sustainable decisions by providing participants with the information they need to be involved in a meaningful way, and it communicates to participants how their input affects the decision” (Griffin, Abdel-Monem, Tomkins, Richardson and Jorgensen, 2015).

2.5 PROJECTIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is currently not widely used to enhance public participation. There are concerns internationally that many citizens do not participate in parliamentary activities. This happens even with legislation that will affect their own lives.

According to the National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 2012: 190),

“... by 2013, ICT will underpin the development of a dynamic and connected information society and a vibrant knowledge economy that is more inclusive and prosperous. A seamless information infrastructure will be universally available and accessible and will meet the needs of the citizens, business and public sector, providing access to the creation and consumption of a wide range of converged services required for effective economic and social participation at a cost and quality at least equal to South Africa’s main peers and competitors. ICT will continue to reduce spatial exclusion, enabling seamless participation by the majority in the global ICT system, not simply as users but as content developers and application innovators”.

There is currently legislation in the South African government that citizens still contest on the basis that they were not consulted. It can be argued that this was caused by a lack of response from citizens when Parliament calls for participation on legislation. Another factor could be that the method used by Parliament to request inputs might be unknown to citizens.

The challenge that the South African Parliament faces is the need to increase participation by citizens especially when it comes to processing legislation. This will reduce the extent of unhappiness or even court challenges. Fox (2009) in her article for the Hansard Society named

engagement and participation: what the public want and how our politicians need to respond, acknowledges that traditional methods of public engagement are not the solution as citizens have lost trust and confidence in their public representatives.

The issue is whether public representatives conduct public participation honestly seeking inputs or whether it is just a process to comply with the law or other requirements. For public representatives who genuinely seek inputs from citizens, they need to find creative ways of ensuring that citizens trust that their inputs are valuable. In light of the above, the question remains whether social media, and especially Facebook, can help public representatives to address such a gap? Can social media notify citizens about inputs to be made on a bill? Can inputs received through social media be regarded as valid inputs to be incorporated into the process of passing legislation?

2.6 INTERNATIONAL TRENDS IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Public participation varies from one country to the other. There are currently no best practices that have been adopted globally on public participation. Literature shows that the challenge of public participation is common across countries including western countries as experienced in South Africa.

According to Innes and Booher (2004), participation in government process has declined, including the participation of citizens electing their representatives, as they felt that it would not change their lives. Innes and Booher (2004) further highlights that the public participation process has over the years built up anger and mistrust by citizens as they felt that their views were not being considered. Over time the United States has identified better ways of getting citizens involved in government process. This was seen again during the 2013 federal budget process. President Obama used

social media, specifically Twitter and Facebook, to urge public representatives from various constituencies to inform the voting and influence the outcome of the Federal budget vote.

Andersen and Medaglia (2009) in their study of online media campaigns to analyze the new trend of seeking public participation by public representatives found that during the 2007 general election in Denmark, some candidates used social media to solicit votes. This emphasises the extent to which the use of ICT for public participation is growing. They chose to focus on the use of social media, especially Facebook, for campaigning during elections by two top candidates running for the position of the Prime Minister. They found that social media, especially Facebook, played a less critical role in canvassing votes in Denmark, but highlighted that the majority of the people who interacted with the candidates had already had contact with them through party structures. The conclusion of the study does not indicate that Facebook adds value to the prospect of the candidate winning or increasing votes.

A study by Effing, van Hilegersberg and Huibers (2011), "Social media and political participation", assessed the use of social media in election campaigns by politicians in the Netherlands, and reflects new trends in the use of social media to canvass votes. Unlike Denmark, the study shows that the politicians who used social media effectively and well achieved better voting results. This is an indication of moving from traditional methods on citizen engagement to new trends through social media platforms.

Shulman, Schlosberg, Zavestoski and Courard-Hauri (2003) examines the rule-making process in the United States. The focus is the shift from conservative rule-making processes to "E-Rulemaking" processes, in the form of getting public inputs using ICT. He explains that the debate suggests that this will save time and money.

Shulman, Schlosberg, Zavestoski and Courard-Hauri (2003) suggests that the promoters of the use of electronic platforms do not justify the use for democratization but for cost-cutting measures. The concern is that from this point of view, an electronic platform can be compromised in the eyes of citizens if it is not seen to enhance public participation. Public representatives will view the process sceptically as a tool aimed at avoiding a thorough process.

2.7 NATIONAL TRENDS IN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Loyns (1998) examined the South African access to ICT, and whether Parliament can utilize ICT to enhance democracy, drawing on the context of 1998 when South Africans had limited access to ICT. It suggests that Parliament would need to combine both old methods of communicating with citizens with the introduction of technology to ensure that the majority of South African citizens are able to interact with Parliament.

It can be argued that the situation has changed since 1998, as reflected by Census 2011 which indicated that most South Africans have access to cell phones and use these to access Internet and social media platforms such as Facebook.

2.8 THEORIES OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Theoretical perspective on every discipline is necessary and various theorists have explained why it is important to have public participation as a form of citizenry involvement in decision-making processes. This study focuses on three theories: Public Choice theory, Post-Fordist theory and Neo-Marxist theory, and selects the most suitable theory to be used.

2.8.1 Public Choice Theory

According to Felkins (1997), public choice theory sees participation through the actions of the bureaucrats and politicians. He argues that public choice theory emphasizes that actions can be viewed to serve the self-interests of both politicians and the government officials. It is a process undertaken for compliance with not much meaning attached to it. To a certain extent the inputs received will not influence the outcome. Public choice theory views public participation as good developmental project practice in the interest of the drivers of the process and project.

In the South African context, legislation makes it an obligation on both the executive and the legislature to consult and receive inputs from citizens when developing legislation. In this regard, it will mean that inputs are sought by politicians and government employees as compliance with the legislative requirements and not to effect meaningful changes to the proposals. This theory therefore becomes unsuitable or undesirable to recommend when processing legislation

2.8.2 Post-Fordist Theory

Post-Fordist theory sees participation as a good governance process. According to Jessop (2013), Post-Fordist theory is defined in four ways:

1. As a labour process: post-Fordism can be defined as a flexible production process based on flexible machines or systems and an appropriately flexible workforce.
2. As a stable mode of macro-economic growth, any virtuous post-Fordist circle would reflect the newly dominant form of labour process as well as changes in international economic relations.
3. As a social mode of economic regulation, post-Fordism would involve commitment to supply-side innovation and flexibility in each of the main areas of regulation.

4. The post-Fordist 'mode of socialization' emphasizes the post-Fordist world as being structured through national or regional rivalries in a race for societal modernization as well as through a global production system. If this marginalizes the state's role in national level demand management, it increases its role in the constant and continuous restructuring of the supply-side.

This approach emphasizes communication rather than command and is more applicable in a situation where class-based political parties are on the decline and social movements are on the rise which are based on religion, region, gender and race. This approach is not suitable for this study as the South African society is more diverse and participation in the decision-making process is not on the basis of social movement.

2.8.3 Neo-Marxist Theory

The Neo-Marxist theory is best understood from a Marxist point of view, because its intention is to close the gaps in the Marxist theory. Marxist theory defines society as divided based on class, emphasizes the difference in interests between the working class and the bourgeoisie whose interest is to make profit and protect capitalism at the expense of the exploited working class. While the working class works to ensure there is production, the capitalist society's drive is profit which is not shared equitably with the working class.

Marxist theory focuses on class struggle and class consciousness as tools that will allow the working class to protect their interests. According to Wright (2004: 14) there are categories through which people's actions can be understood from a Marxist point of view:

- (a) Class interests: These are the material interests of people derived from their location within class relations. "Material interests" include a range of issues like standard of living, working conditions, level of

labour, leisure, and material security.

- (b) Class consciousness: the subjective awareness people have of their class interests and the conditions for advancing them.
- (c) Class practices: The activities engaged in by individuals, both as separate persons and as members of collectives, in pursuit of class interests.
- (d) Class formations: The collectives that people form in order to facilitate the pursuit of class interests.
- (e) Class struggle: Conflicts between the practices of individuals and collectives in pursuit of opposing class interests.

It is understood that if the working class is conscious and understands the class struggle they will be able to defend their interest at all levels. Neo-Marxist approach emphasises that within the class struggle the ruling class used labelling of certain people to maintain control over the working class; it was used to solve the crisis of capitalism.

Neo-Marxist approach views public participation in society as an empowering tool. This is in the context that all classes of society will be engaged and have a voice and that the ruling class will not impose its dominant view on others, especially the working class. It is within this context that the Neo-Marxist theory forms the theoretical framework of this study.

2.9 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.9.1 Neo-Marxist Theory

Kwame Nkrumah, in his analysis of class struggle from 1970 (Turok, 2011), highlights the development of oppression in the African continent commencing with the seizure of land from Africans by the Europeans that led to the development of two sectors of the economy. The Europeans

oppressed Africans after taking their land with natural resources, leading to Africans having no option but to sell their labour as a form of survival.

Farming was destroyed and Africans found themselves at the mercy of the Europeans. The Europeans developed their capital with Africans as the labour supply. Nkrumah further argues that this led to the class struggle as defined by Marx and eventually to race struggle. In the South African context, one context of the race struggle was the Apartheid system. The United Nations declared apartheid a crime against humanity as this system divided society on the basis of race and ensured that White people maintained their privilege while the majority of Black people suffered at the hands of an illegitimate government. Black people had no rights and were denied the opportunity to contribute to the decisions that affected them.

The historical background of African colonization and Apartheid in South Africa gives the context of the selection of Neo-Marxism as a theoretical perspective of this study. It is best understood in the context of the proclamations made at the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People in Kliptown, Johannesburg in 1955, “that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the people” (www.anc.org.za).

This theory of public participation emphasizes participation in the decision-making process as an empowerment tool for citizens. It is a process where citizens believe and understand that they have power in the decisions of the country. Public participation through the use of social media must thus ensure that it is inclusive and does not perpetuate the undermining of the working class and serve as a reaffirmation of the bourgeoisie.

There is a possibility of continued exclusion of the working class in decision-making processes when using social media, especially in relation to access

to Internet, which is the platform where social media is provided. The basic understanding that is provided by the theories above is that the working class is a class with less access to resources, and in the South African context, access to Internet and use of social media can be viewed as a luxury where a majority of people struggle to meet basic needs. In this context when policy makers embark on a public participation process they should understand that it is a tool of empowerment and not a compliance process.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The literature suggests that many governments and institutions are looking at ways to improve public participation. It is also evident that some of the countries are starting to use various social media platforms to engage with their citizens.

The chapter examines public participation theory and develops a theoretical perspective for the study. The theories identified are explicit; however, in the historical context of South Africa the Neo-Marxist theory is most relevant for the study.

There is a gap in literature, specifically on the use of social media as a platform for public participation when processing legislation in parliaments. The research will assist in providing information in relation to the role of the South African Parliament and its use of social media when processing legislation.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a literature review was discussed on the use of social media by Parliament. This Chapter will focus on the research design, methodology and approaches that were used to collect and analyze data obtain in this study and will link with the literature review in the previous chapter. The methods and approaches in this study will support the investigation.

It is important to firstly understand methodology and how it will be applied to the study. This is a critical part of the study as methods chosen and their applicability to the study will influence the outcome and lessons that can be learned and recommendations made for future researchers.

According to Wagner, Garner and Kawulick (2012: 51),

A paradigm is informed by philosophical assumptions about three things, the nature of the reality= ontology, ways of knowing = axiology and ethics and value systems= epistemology. A paradigm thus leads us to ask certain questions and use appropriate approaches to systematic enquiry and that is called methodology. How should we study the world?

This chapter will explain in detail different research designs and methods available and more importantly explain the selected methodology for this study. It will give details of how the study will be conducted and how data will be interpreted and analyzed. This draws on the guidance of the previous

two chapters that explain the background of the study and the theoretical perspective that shapes the study.

3.2 DEFINING RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Research methodology is defined as, “a systematic process of collecting and logically analyzing information for some purpose” (Moodley, 2001:30), and that there is no single method that is perfect for collecting and analyzing data.

There are three types of research methodologies: quantitative, qualitative and mixed method. Creswell (2009: 4) defines qualitative research as, “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem.” Quantitative research is defined as, “a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables.” Mixed methods research is, “an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms.”

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Cooper and Schindler (2001: 75), a research design is defined as the “blueprint” for fulfilling objectives and answering questions that pertain to a problem or phenomenon that is being investigated. According to Hussey and Hussey (1997: 117), determining a research design consists of firstly identifying the research problem, then determining the purpose of research, then developing a theoretical framework, defining research questions, defining terms, identifying limitations of the study, choosing methodology and lastly determining the expected outcome.

3.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative research design refers to the, “design where data is collected in the form of words and observations as opposed to numbers, and analyses are based on the interpretation of data collected as opposed to statistical analyses” (Partington, 2003: 109). This approach is used to gain insight into people’s attitudes, behaviour, value system, concerns, motivations, inspirations, culture or lifestyle. It is used to inform business decisions, policy formation, communication and research. (Qhosola, 2011: 45). Qualitative approach can be applied to a study of current and past events. When applied to the past it is called historical research and when applied to current event it is called qualitative research.

3.5 QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The quantitative research design places emphasis on using formalized standard questions and pre-determined response options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents (Hair, Bush and Ortinao: 2000: 216) This design is applied in order to describe current conditions or to investigate relationships, including cause-and-effect relationships and results in casual, comparative or experimental research, depending on whether the relationship is studied after the fact or in a controlled environment (Letsoalo, 2008: 54)

Quantitative research methods emphasise the use of formalized standard questions and pre-determined responses options in questionnaires or surveys administered to large numbers of respondents. A further argument against the use of quantitative research methods, especially when studying human behaviour or human activities, has been put forward by those who are in support of qualitative research methods. Those in support of qualitative research methods cite the possible undue influence of the researcher within the study especially with observation or questionnaires

that are administered by the researcher where participants may respond in the manner that they think it will please the researcher. (Hair, Bush and Ortinao: 2000: 216).

The qualitative research method was selected for the purpose of this study, in the form of a questionnaire to the participants. The questionnaire will be explained later to show its relevance and the logic for it to be selected as a method for this study. It is important to note, however, the shortcomings of the method chosen and understand the mitigating factors of the study in ensuring that accurate results are obtained.

3.6 APPROACHES TO RESEARCH METHODS

There are three approaches to research methods: Positivist, Interpretive and Critical. According to Neuman (2006: 82, 88, 95):

- a) Positivist social science “is an organized method for combining deductive logic with precise empirical observations of individual behaviour in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity.”
- b) Interpretive social Science “is the systematic analysis of social meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understanding and interpretation of how people create and maintain their social worlds.”
- c) Critical social science “is a critical process of inquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structures in the material world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves”.

3.7 STUDY POPULATION

According to Steyn, Smith, du Toit and Strashein (2003: 16), the study population refers to, “the total group of persons or universal collection of items or elements to which the study relates”. Dumisa (2010: 39) defines population as a full group of participants from whom the researcher wants to generalize the findings of the study. This study focuses on the parliamentary portfolio committees of the Parliament of South Africa and the monitors who monitor the work of Parliament are the population of the study. The researcher used a sample of monitors from the Parliamentary Monitoring Group to conduct the study.

3.8 SAMPLING

Research can be complex and time-consuming, and when trying to understand something it is important to identify the population that will be studied and how the study is going to be undertaken. There are two sampling methods, namely non-probability sampling and probability sampling. Non-probability methods are accidental, convenience, purposive, quota, snowball and volunteer. Probability methods are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and multi-stage cluster sampling. Saunders, Lewis, Phillip and Thornhill (2003) indicates the Challenges that are encountered when it is not feasible to survey the entire population and states that sample surveys are a valid alternative following the firstly when it is practical to survey the whole population. Secondly, the researcher has budget constraints to survey the entire population and lastly when the researcher has collected all data but needs results quickly.

Probability sampling was used and simple random sampling method was used. After careful assessment of everyone involved in the processing legislation, monitors of the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (PMG) were selected to be participants of the study. The PMG is a non-governmental

organisation (NGO) that conducts objective work and for the purpose of the study, the researcher felt that monitors would be objective and give honest responses. A questionnaire was sent to PMG to circulate to all monitors who are permanently employed to respond. Part-time monitors were not requested to respond.

3.8.1 Probability Sampling

Cooper and Schindler (2001: 166) maintains that probability sampling is based on the concept of random selection in which each sampling unit in the defined target population has a known, one-zero probability of being selected for the sample. It is further stated that with probability sampling, every element has at least some chance of being part of the sample. Neither of these conditions generally holds for non-probability sampling.

3.8.1.1 Simple Random Sampling

A sample is drawn from the population in such a way that each element of that population has the same chance of being drawn during the first and each successive draw. Since this method is not always a good reflection of the population as a whole, it is not always the best sampling method to use (Holiday, 2002: 60).

3.8.1.2 Stratified Random Sampling

This refers to the process by which the sample is selected to include elements from each of the segments within the population (Cooper and Schindler, 2006: 416). The sampling is divided into sub-groups called strata, after dividing the sampling frame. The researcher draws a random sample from each sub-population.

3.8.1.3 Systematic Sampling

In this approach, every Zth element in the population is sampled, starting with the random start of an element in the range of 1 to Z. The Zth element is determined by dividing the population by the sample size to obtain a skip pattern applied to the sampling frame (Cooper and Schindler, 2006: 415).

3.8.2 Non-Probability Sampling

According to De Vos and Fouche (1998: 295), non-probability sampling is a type of sampling technique whereby all the units of a population do not have an equal chance of being selected in the sample. It may further be divided into convenience sampling where sampling units are selected as per the convenience of the researcher. Purposive sampling is explained as the units selected in a sample because they possess some required characteristics such as technical skill. Non-probability sampling indicates that the selections for the sample are not made at random. Steyn (2008: 58) explains that in non-probability sampling, each element of analysis in the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.

3.8.2.1 Haphazard Sampling

This type of sampling method is cheap and quick and includes things such as interviewing people on the streets.

3.8.2.2 Accidental Sampling

This is the convenient type of sampling, as members of the population that are readily available for research purposes can become participants. If the research is about learners in general, for example, then the sample will comprise those learners who happen to show up in class.

3.8.2.3 Snowball Sampling

This method is based on the analogy of a snowball that starts small but becomes larger as it rolls and picks up additional snow. De Vos and Fouche (1998: 72) argues that snowball sampling refers to a process where a few individuals from a relevant population are approached, and then those individuals act as informants and identify people from the same population for inclusion in the sample.

3.8.2.4 Purposive Sampling

This sampling method is used when the researcher relies on personal experience or previous research findings to deliberately obtain units of analysis in such a manner that the sample they obtain may be regarded as being representative of the relevant population (Bestwell, 2004: 69).

3.9 DATA COLLECTION AND INSTRUMENTS

Data collection method is critical and there are various ways of collecting data in a quantitative research survey, including email, telephone, personal interviews, group administration and questionnaires.

3.9.1 Interviews

Interviews are regarded as the predominant method of data collection in qualitative research to establish meanings that ostensibly reside with the participants (De Vos and Fouche, 1998: 285). According to Brakes (2004: 8), the reliability of an interview is influenced by four variables, namely the interviewer, the interviewee, the measuring instrument and the research context.

3.9.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a set of questions and scales designed to generate enough primary raw data to achieve the information requirements that underpin the research objectives (Hair, Bush and Ortinao, 2000: 440; 661). The advantage of using a questionnaire is that it can be used for both open and closed ended questions. It is cheaper and less time-consuming than conducting interviews and a very large sample can be taken (Hussey & Hussey, 1997: 162). A questionnaire is a form of instrument prepared and distributed to secure responses to certain questions. A questionnaire is an important instrument in normatic survey research and is useful for gathering information from widely scattered sources. The questionnaire comes into use where one cannot readily and personally see all the people from whom responses are expected (Letsoalo, 2003: 33).

A questionnaire was developed and sent to monitors electronically through their management. Each monitor e-mailed the completed questionnaire. This method allowed respondents to give valuable input without compromising their work. This was not an anonymous process but was rather intended to ensure that if there was clarity needed from participants it could be obtained.

3.10 DATA PRESENTATION

Data is presented in tables and graphs for analysis and this assisted in interpretation results. Analysis and interpretation was done through explanation using percentages.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis refers to the process of breaking down in order to understand an object, phenomenon, entity, process or event that the researcher will be investigating. Saunders, Lewis, Phillip and Thornhill (2003: 234) and De

Vos, and Fouche (1998: 333) maintain that data analysis is viewed as the bringing of order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. In this regard, the main objective of the study was to investigate the use of social media by parliamentary committees. A selected sample of monitors were identified to respond to the questionnaire from the researcher.

The study used data collected through questionnaires and processed using Excel spreadsheets.

3.12. RELIABILITY

Reliability is whether the research methods and instruments are reliable and whether they would produce the same results when another researcher conducts the same study. According to Bestwell (2004:85), reliability is established when testing and re-testing gets the same results and when the same respondents give the same score under similar conditions. The outcome of the research should be able to hold if another researcher conducts similar research.

The researcher eliminated biasness by distributing the questionnaire to monitors who have no personal interest in protecting the institution or themselves. They are not directly involved in the parliamentary committee work and this ensured reliability. These are independent observers of Parliament's work, especially that of the committees.

3.13 VALIDITY

According to Mondy and Noe (2005: 173), validity is defined as, "the extent to which a test measures what it claims to measure". To achieve content validity, all components of the intended construct to be measured must be included. Motsiri (2008: 3) states that the instrument used in collection of

data must be constructed in such a way that they collect valid data required in order to answer the research questions as closely as possible.

The researcher sent a test questionnaire to the head of monitors to test the validity of the questionnaire and positive feedback was received which allowed the questionnaire to be finalized and sent to all participants who are monitors of parliamentary committees.

3.14 RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

The study was limited by the sample size as PMG as an NGO does not have many monitors and they are not specifically allocated to any one committee. The second limitation of the study is that the area of study, namely use of social media within parliamentary processes, is not a common thing.

3.15 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, is widely accepted, and which offer rules and behaviour expectations about the most correct conduct for experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students (Mawila, 2006: 47).

Ethical consideration is important when conducting research. A researcher needs to ensure that he/she does not mislead the participants but is open about the intention of the research and how the research outcome will be handled.

A letter was sent to the Speaker of Parliament to inform her about the study as the head of the institution. A letter was sent to the executive of the PMG to request permission to send the questionnaire to monitors, which was

granted. An e-mail that accompanied the questionnaire explained what the study was about and its purpose and was sent for the attention of all monitors. The e-mail further explained that monitors are not obliged to answer the questions and that their participation is voluntary. Lastly, a call was made to the head of monitors to ensure that everyone understood the purpose of the study and that participation was indeed voluntary.

3.16 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

While questionnaires allow for anonymity, the researcher ensured that there was no anonymity in the study. The topic of the study is not a sensitive one and has no potential to put the participants at risk. There was no need for anonymity. A letter that ensured that monitors understood the purpose of the study assisted, as they did not have a concern about including their names on the questionnaire.

3.17 PROFESSIONAL CODE OF ETHICS

Ethical issues in research are both important and ambiguous, and most professional associations have developed and published formal codes of conduct describing what is considered acceptable professional behaviour. The researcher ensured that professional conduct was adhered to when interacting with participants in the study.

3.18 GATEKEEPING

According to Wagner, Kawulich and Garner (64: 2012), "Gatekeepers are those people who enable researchers to gain entry into an organisation or community to conduct research". This suggests gatekeepers will often block access in order to protect certain interests or more seriously to hide certain information. It can also be viewed as people who are using authority to

ensure that the researcher understands who is in power or in charge of the institution.

3.19 CONCLUSION

In this chapter different research paradigms, approaches, methods and techniques employed in collecting and analyzing data were discussed. The population of the study and sampling methods used were described and the choice of research design and their applicability to the study were discussed. This chapter highlights that all approaches, methods and techniques are relevant as long as they are used appropriately.

Chapter four focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The applicability and relevance of the data collected in the study is examined to ascertain the importance and need of social media as a tool for public participation by parliamentary committees during the process of developing and enacting legislation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explained the methodology to be used to collect data and analyze it. In this chapter data collection will be explained, and analysis and interpretation of the results will be done. It will address the empirical investigation, and the methods and techniques used in collecting and analyzing the data for the study.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION

A questionnaire was used to collect data for the purposes of this study. A questionnaire was used, which is a set of questions and scales designed to generate enough primary raw data for attaining the information requirements that inform the research objectives (Hair, Bush and Ortinao, 2000: 440; 661). The advantage of using a questionnaire is that it can be used for both open and closed ended questions. It is cheaper and less time-consuming than conducting interviews and a very large sample can be taken (Hussey & Hussey, 1997: 162). It is a form of instrument prepared and distributed to secure responses to certain questions and is an important instrument in normatic-survey research since it is useful for gathering information from widely scattered sources.

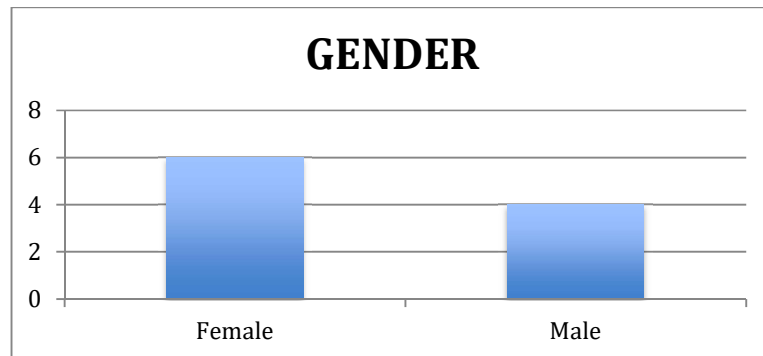
A questionnaire was circulated to 10 participants who comprised males and females who are parliamentary committee monitors, and who monitor the work of parliamentary committees. The Parliamentary Monitory Group (PMG) employs the monitors, and is an NGO that is independent from Parliament. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, namely Part 1

which was the biography of participants, Part 2 which was focused on the experience of the legislative processes, and Part 3 which focused on future use of social media.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

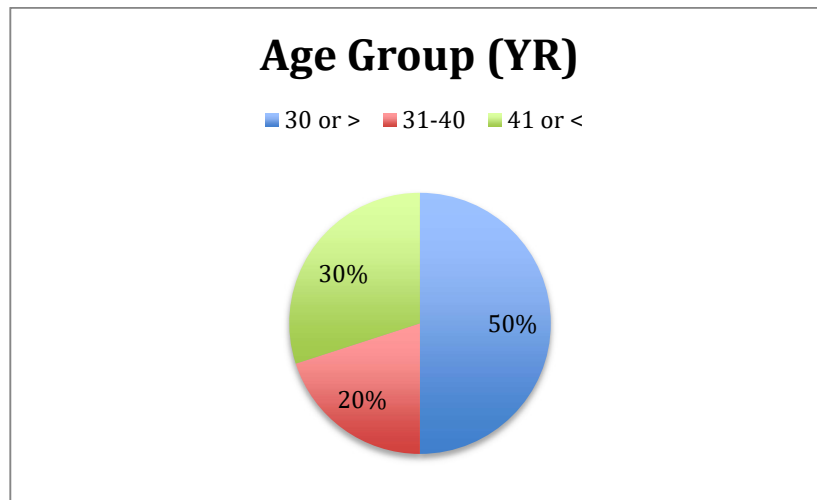
Data received through the questionnaires was captured on an Excel spreadsheet. All participants responded positively and sent completed questionnaires. The analysis of data is presented through tables and interpretation and analysis of the information provided by participants is explained in a narrative format. The tables and graphs show findings in percentages (%) and the total frequencies (Fx) which reflect the total number of respondents.

4.3.1 Summary Information of participants by Gender



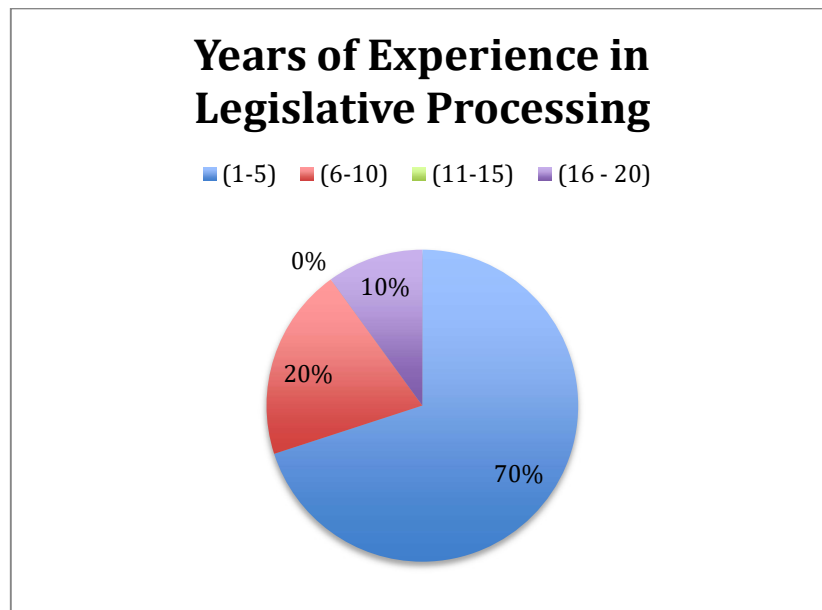
The table above reflects a summary of participants in gender representation. Data received reflects that 60% of the participants were female and 40% were male. There was no deliberate attempt to ensure fair gender representation and this respondent profile is based on the profile of monitors at the PMG. It is clear from the table above that the majority of the participants in the study are women.

4.3.2 Summary Information of Participants by Age group



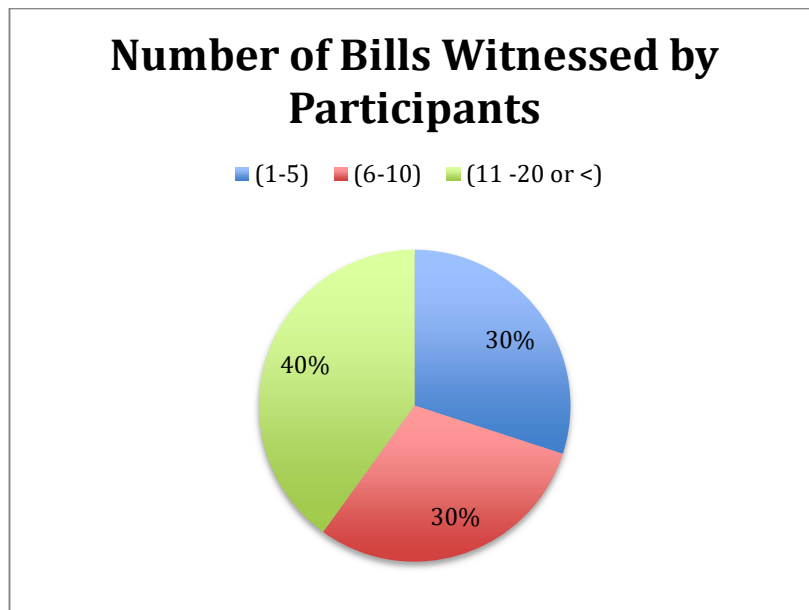
The graph above gives a profile of the age group of the respondents. Data received reflects that 50% of the participants are in the category of 30 years and below in age, while 30% of the participants are in the category of 41 years and above. Lastly 20% of the participants are between 31 years and 40 years of age. There was no attempt to influence this representation from respondents. This data is based on the demographic of the country and the perception that it is mainly the youth that is highly active on social media. The graph above clearly shows a high percentage of young people who participated in the study.

4.3.3 Summary Information of Participants by Years of Work Experience



The graph above reflects the number of years each participant has been observing legislation. This graph indicates whether or not the participants have knowledge about the legislative process to qualify them to participate. Data received reflects that 70% of participants have between 1 year and 5 years of experience, 20% of the participants have between 6 and 10 years of experience and 10% of the participants have between 16 and 20 years of experience. No-one amongst the participants' fell into the category of 11 to 15 years of experience. Based on the data above it is clear that participants have observed legislation and that it can be concluded that they are in a position to comment about the process of passing legislation in Parliament.

4.3.4 Summary of Number of Bills witnessed by Participants in Parliament.

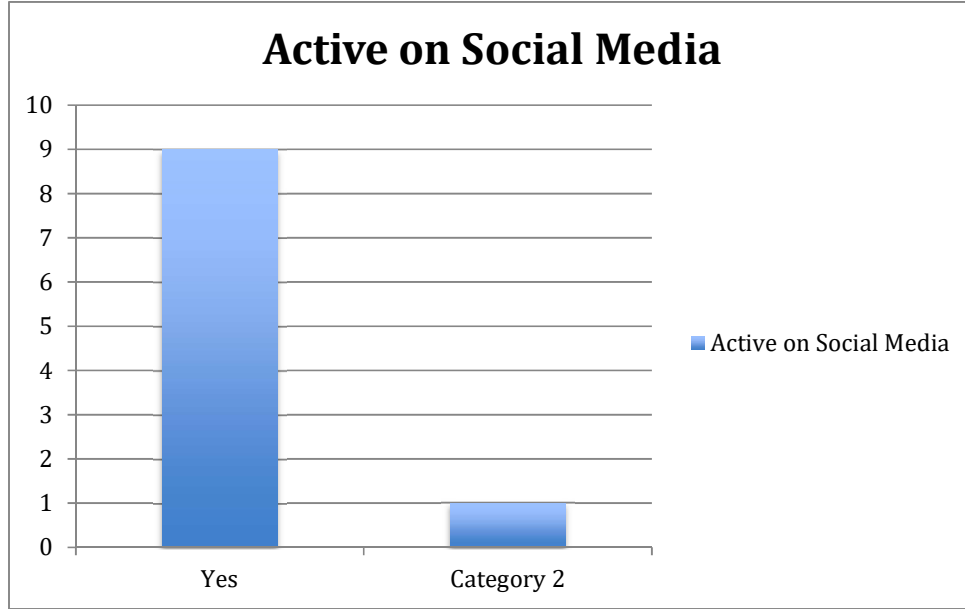


The graph above indicates the number of bills participants observed being passed by Parliament. This provides an indication of their relevance to participate in the study. Data received reflects that 40% of the participants witnessed between 11 and above 20 bills being processed by Parliament, 30% witnessed between 6 and 10 bills being processed by Parliament and a further 30% of participants witnessed between 1 and 5 bills being processed by Parliament. This data reflects that the participants are in a position to comment about the process of bills being passed in Parliament.

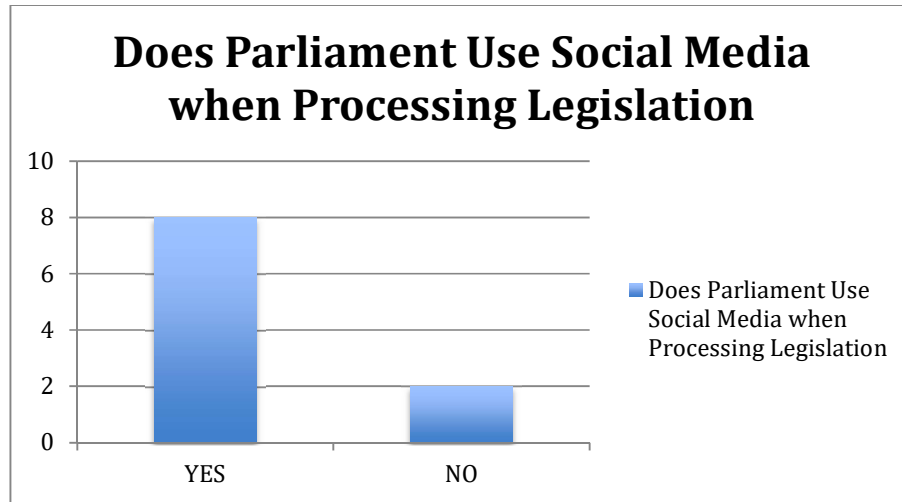
4.3.5 Use of Social Media by Participants

Participants were asked if they were active on social media, as this would give an indication of their comprehensive understanding of social media and their ability to offer give credible views on the study. Data received indicates that 90% of the participants are active on social media while 10% of the participants were not active on social media. It can be concluded that 10%

of the participants are likely not to have seen Parliament's presence in social media although they may have accessed social media through a third party.



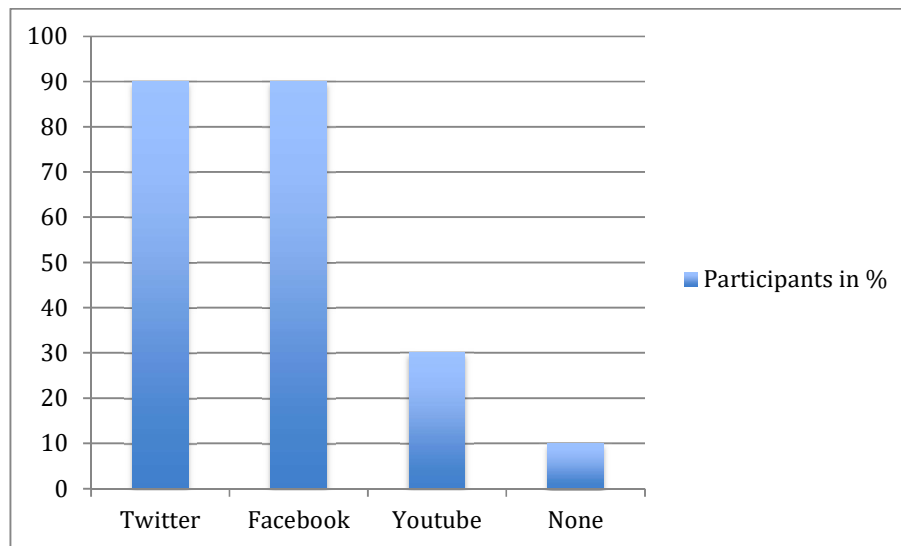
4.3.6 Summary of Whether or Not Parliament is currently Using Social Media



The researcher focused on the main aspect of the study, which is the use of social media by Parliament when processing legislation. Participants were asked if they have witnessed the use of social media by Parliament

when processing bills. Data received reflects that 80% of the participants confirmed that they have witnessed the use of social media by parliament while 20% of participants said they had not. It is important to note that based on this data 10% of the participants indicated that they are not active on social media. There is a thus some correlation between their use of social media and their observation of Parliament's use of social media.

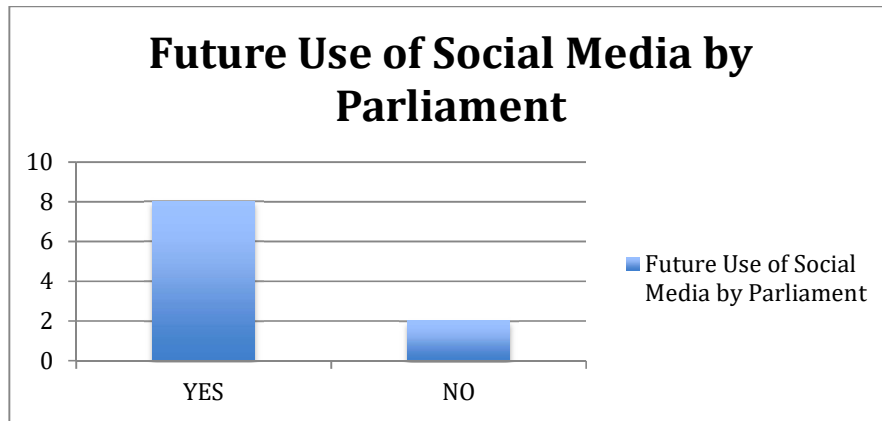
4.3.7 Type of Social Media used by Parliament for Input



The above table reflects the use of social media platforms as indicated by participants. The researcher allowed participants to indicate which social media platforms they had observed Parliament using. The data received indicated that 90% of the participants have witnessed the use of both Twitter and Facebook, while within that 90%, 30% of them included You Tube as a platform used as well by Parliament. However, 10% of the participants did not comment about social media platform used and this correlates with the 10% of the respondents that is not active on social media.

4.3.8 Should Parliament use Social Media while processing legislation?

Participants were asked if Parliament should use social media in future when processing legislation. Data reflected above indicates that 80% of participants emphasized the use of social media while cautioning that not all sectors of the society have access to social media and therefore it is still important for Parliament to continue to use the mainstream media. However, 20% of the participants discouraged the use of social media and indicated its weaknesses in relation to inclusivity which has potential to isolate rural and poorer communities in particular. This provides a correlation between those who witnessed Parliament use social media with those who believed that Parliament needs to use social media in the future.



4.4 SUMMARY OF OVERALL DATA

The data above shows a correlation between participants who are on social media and their support for the use of social media. This may be attributed to the fact that they understand the value of social media and are able to associate it with the efficient operations of Parliament. It may also be possible that based on data received, participants below the age of 40 are those in the majority with regard to participation on social media and support for the use of social media by Parliament.

The support of the future use of social media by Parliament for public participation when processing legislation is high amongst the participants; this confirms the growing global trends in the use of social media including by the corporate sector to market their products. The presence of advertising space within social media reflects the number of active citizens on social media. It is important to note this trend and see how best Parliament can optimize technology to its benefit and the benefit of the country at large.

4.5 CONSIDERATIONS WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

4.5.1 Benefits of Using Social Media

Parliament is an institution whose function is to strengthen the voice of citizens through their public representatives who are Members of Parliament. This is done through proportional representative systems via political parties. While Parliament is comprised of public representatives, the perceptions of the public about its accessibility and consultation are not necessarily positive.

There are citizens who feel that decisions are taken without Parliament seeking their views on the matter. It is important to note that from a legal and compliance point of view, Parliament most of the time is found to have complied and met the minimum requirements of consultation. It is either because individuals do not have access to the medium which Parliament uses to request inputs or simply because of ignorance regarding processes. The danger about this public perception of Parliament is that it creates doubts about the institution and it erodes trust amongst citizens, which is important to maintain for good governance. Furthermore, it creates the threat of de-legitimizing decisions taken by Parliament, which is a situation that can have negative consequences.

The use of social media is wide and popular in many areas and this tool can assist in improving perceptions of Parliament. Public participation can assist with changing the perceptions of those who are able to defend the institutional processes because they would have participated and this will assist in eliminating reputational risk for Parliament.

Social media will allow for more direct contact and immediate responses from Parliament to citizens. It will help to close the gap between citizens and Parliament and reduce costs of communicating with the public. The increased use of social media by Parliament will allow for prompt interaction on specific matters and serve to limit inaccurate reporting.

Social media platforms can assist Parliament to select a target audience for a particular matter and allows greater scope for understanding the interests of citizens on specific matters.

4.5.2 Legal Complications

The challenge with regard to social media, and which may present a concern for Parliament, is that on social media it is possible for people to use fake identification by creating fake profiles. Consultation on matters regarding the country must be with citizens only and the challenge is that fake profiles on social media could undermine this. It will thus be necessary for Parliament to create within the legal framework of the country guidelines mechanisms to ensure the legitimacy of such public participation through social media.

4.5.3 Privacy and Confidentiality

Parliament is required to ensure that information received from public the must at all times must be treated with confidentiality. A social media platform removes the confidentiality of the engagement with public. It is important for

parliament when using social media to give guidance on how confidential information can be given during public participation.

4.5.4 Authorization to Use

It is important for the institution to identify people who are appropriately capacitated and authorized to engage with the public on social media. This will allow those person familiar with the issues to be engaged with and will ensure accountability should a complaint be lodged on the basis of that engagement.

4.5.5 Offensive Language

The challenge with social media is that it is easy for people to use offensive language and make defamatory statements. Thus only authorized persons may communicate with citizens and they must be able to caution those using offensive language and defamatory statements and to manage such situations with skill. It is important for Parliament's representatives on social media to always conduct themselves in a professional and neutral manner.

4.5.6 Inclusivity

Social media must not be used by Parliament as a tool of exclusion of those citizens who may not have access and are not able to use it. It is important to take into account the literacy levels of the targeted audience. It is critical for Parliament, on the basis of the data provided in this study, to ensure other modes of public participation are still used so that no-one is excluded.

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the data received from participants through tables and graphs and provides an analysis of the information. The above information reflects that participants were familiar with the subject being

investigated and have had exposure to Parliament's work and also understand what social media platforms are. The findings concern the use of social media by Parliament for public participation when processing legislation. The findings reflect the current use of social media by Parliament and the three platforms being used, which are Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

Chapter five will reflect the overview of the study, the findings, conclusions and recommendations that can be considered by policy makers to improve their working environment.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the presentation of data received from participants who had completed the questionnaire. The chapter also provided information by means of graphs and tables.

This chapter will focus on interpreting data as presented in chapter four and will provide an analysis of the results on the basis of the research topic and problem statement of the study. Recommendations and conclusions will then be presented in the final chapter.

5.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

In his analysis of class struggle from 1970, Nkrumah highlights the development of oppression in the African continent (Turok, 2011) which started with the seizure of land by the Europeans from Africans and led to the development of two sectors of the economy. European colonisers seized land belonging to Africans and coerced them into then selling their labour in order to survive.

It is understood that subsistence farming was destroyed in this process and Africans then found themselves at a disadvantage in relation to colonial interests. The Europeans developed their capital with Africans as the main labour supply. Nkrumah further argues that this led to the class struggle as defined by Marx and eventually contributed to race struggle.

Drawing on the Neo-Marxist paradigm is thus appropriate to discuss public participation in decision-making processes as an empowerment tool for citizens in South Africa. It is a process where citizens understand that they have power in the decision-making processes of the country. Public participation through the use of social media must therefore be inclusive and not perpetuate the exclusion of the working class. The use of social media lends itself to the exclusion of the working class in decision-making where not everyone will have equal access to the Internet. The working class tends to have less access to resources and in the South African context access to Internet cannot be taken for granted. This context is important for policy makers to consider in implementing public participation processes as a tool of empowerment rather than merely promoting compliance.

5.3 ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

The current legislative process includes public participation as an important tool to ensure citizen views are included when passing legislation. Public participation implies that citizens are involved in the processes that relate to decisions that affect them. Since the implementation of democratic government in 1994, many legislative and broad policy processes have been designed to be inclusive of citizens and it is understood that decisions will be taken on the basis of majority support. This was one outcome of the consultation process that saw South Africa develop a constitution based on the rule of law and with established institutions to support democracy. The State was separated into three arms: the Executive, the Legislature (parliament), and the Judiciary. These arms of the state are independent of each other and all three have a duty to ensure that democracy is entrenched and protected.

Parliament currently issues notices for comment when processing legislation and citizens are encouraged to submit written or make verbal submissions on the content of the bill before it can be passed. In the greater part of the legislation passed, consultation has been undertaken thoroughly. The current system of consultation by the National Assembly and then later by the National Council of Provinces provides further opportunity for input and lobbying for a particular position to have greater traction than another. There is also an opportunity for those who are able to attend proceedings to follow the processes and understand why a particular view is popular or was adopted, rather than another. The other area of information dissemination is live broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings which provides an opportunity for citizens to see what is happening and which legislation is being passed and why.

The current use of social media by Parliament has been through information sharing rather than engagement. It is a method used to notify the public about the business of committees to a limited extent and more broadly to share information about the various houses of Parliament. When processing legislation, social media is increasingly being used to communicate information about the process, how to get involved and how to engage and receive feedback.

This method of communication has assisted in promoting awareness of the work of Parliament and to encourage citizens to develop a stronger interest in the business of Parliament than in previous years. This growing awareness is expected to assist in enhancing democracy as more citizens demand accountability and are able to assess whether their public representatives are fulfilling their mandate.

Parliament has Facebook and Twitter accounts that are active, but not all Members of Parliament have an active social media presence. It is not possible for a single account to deal in an informative way with all issues

that are before Parliament. There are at present no social media accounts for committees, and interaction with a portfolio committee is presently done only through members' personal accounts and in their personal capacity.

5.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The South African Parliament is mandated by the Constitution to engage the public when processing legislation. The question arises whether current methods used by Parliament are effective and yield the required results. Leston-Bandeira and Bender (2013: 281-297) reflects that parliaments over the years have started using social media platforms as a tool to improve public participation. There is a need to explore whether these platforms can add value to the public participation processes of the South African Parliament.

Inputs received from citizens are minimal, especially from young people who comprise the majority of the population (Census 2011). The Constitutional Court has ruled against Parliament after processing complaints presented by a group of citizens. An example of this is a Constitutional Court judgment on a Case of Doctors for Life International vs. the Speaker of the National Assembly and Others. Judge Ngcobo observed that, "Parliament has discretion to decide on how to fulfil the duty to facilitate public involvement in law-making process". It is within this judgment that the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) as another section of Parliament was found not to have fulfilled its constitutional obligation of public participation when processing the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Amendment Act and the Traditional Health Practitioners Act (CCT12/05: 17/08/2006) The challenge is therefore to increase public participation but also to ensure that it is meaningful participation.

During the 2014 State of the Nation address there was extensive debate on social media. With the advent of democracy and the increased importance

and use of technological development, communication has shifted focus to social media, moving away from the traditional methods of communication. However, Parliament has not increased its use of social media as a platform for public engagement and social media plays a limited role when processing legislation.

Participation and discussion on legislation takes place in the public domain in most cases when a particular group or organisation has a specific interest, such as the Protection of State Information Bill or the “Secrecy Bill” where the Right2Know campaign took a lead in mobilizing society against the Bill. These organisations tend to mobilize society either for or against particular legislation. However, many pieces of legislation are passed without national discourse being applied.

5.5 FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED ON USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The South African parliament has historically been dominated by white males, and with the advance of democracy many women over time became part of the institution. It is during the 4th and 5th sittings of parliament that the number of young members of parliament increased across political parties. This brought about a change in how parliament as an institution conducted its business and furthermore presented a challenge to the traditional methods of communication between parliament and citizens. The growing number of young public representatives who are relatively more advanced with regard to technology provides an opportunity for parliament to look at more creative ways of conducting its business.

Social media is a platform of communication that changes the traditional methods of communication. It is fast, the message is spread immediately to the intended recipients, and feedback can be received immediately. Through one of its committees, parliament can ensure that government implements its plans on broadband implementation as this will further

benefit the institution and the citizens. Social media reduces the cost of communication as it can reduce the cost of committees having to place advertisements in newspapers and then be obliged to later transport people to make representation to committees.

Increasing Parliament's use of social media will allow the message to be communicated as it is and not be summarized or interpreted to only the benefit of the communicator. This tool will allow parliament to be in control of its messages to citizens and there will be fewer concerns regarding misquoting or misrepresentation. Social media challenges the boundaries of conservative media and allows for direct linkages with citizens without the impediment of gatekeepers or go-betweens. This means that the messages cannot be diluted or manipulated.

It is important to keep in mind that public participation in the context of South Africa must be seen as an empowerment tool as explained in the theoretical framework of this study. This approach is based on historical injustices that many people experienced under the apartheid government. Social media, when used by parliament, must be mindful to not exclude citizens but to ensure their maximum participation with the legislation processes.

5.6 ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Analysis of the social media landscape is important so that parliament can determine whether targeted audiences have access to social media platforms when taking a decision to engage society through social media. Furthermore, the analysis will assist with projections of the future which will inform better planning on how the institution can increase its usage and areas of concern that must be addressed. When using social media it is also important to ensure the language of use is relevant and readily understood by all citizens.

The South African government intends to implement broadband which will ensure that more citizens have access to Internet and that more services are provided online. This provides an opportunity for the South African parliament to utilize social media as an online platform to engage citizens since the e-governance platforms will allow parliament to be online and engage with citizens.

5.7 SOCIAL MEDIA EQUITY

The term social media usage is based on the understanding of the audience as a target group, rather than a specific message that targets everyone. Social media equity is important to ensure that relevant stakeholders who need to be informed about legislation process are aware of the process. Social media can therefore not be used as a tool to exclude a particular sector of society.

There is a need to ensure that citizens receive training on how to engage parliament on social media. It must not be assumed that all citizens will know and understand how to use social media effectively in order to engage parliament effectively through those platforms. There is a need for parliament to continuously consider citizens who may be semi-literate or illiterate and find creative mechanisms that will enable them to participate through easier methods.

5.8 SOCIAL MEDIA AND PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITY

Parliament is an institution for all South Africans, including all vulnerable groups. When developing social media as a tool for public participation, it is important to remember that there is a deaf community, a blind community and other communities living with various disabilities. Social media guidelines for public participation will have to incorporate braille, a facility

for voice and other options that are mainly used for disabled communities in the country.

5.9 INTEGRATION OF LIVE-STREAMING INTO SOCIAL MEDIA

Live-streaming plays a critical role in communication in modern society as this is a platform where a discussion or a debate can be viewed by citizens live from Parliament. Currently the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa provides live-streaming daily on Parliamentary sitting, and this could be extended to committee meetings.

Social media users tend to access these platforms through smart phones and this provides an opportunity for live-streaming. Parliament does this through providing a link to social media users to access plenary discussions which will enable citizens to be better informed on issues that affect them. Integration of live-streaming together with social media as a component of communication and public participation is important and can add value to the work of parliament. More importantly it can help to close the gap between parliament and citizens.

5.10 UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, while it increases effectiveness like any use of technology, can have unintended consequences such as loss of jobs. In this case the staff members employed by parliament to facilitate public participation might become unemployed as politicians can directly interact with citizens through social media and there will be no need for co-ordinators of public participation.

Another unintended consequence of social media as a tool for public participation is the removal of personal interaction. The interaction might become cold and might not allow space for building of positive relationships

between parliament, especially between individual politicians and citizens. This could contribute to a situation where citizens are aggrieved that they seem to interact with machines rather than with individuals.

5.11 CONCLUSION

The chapter analysed the current environment of Parliament in relation to the use of social media, using the results acquired through the data received to understand the current situation in Parliament. Parliament uses social media for information rather than public engagement, and it may be concluded that there is at present no public participation through social media by Parliament when processing legislation, but only communication of information around the process.

The chapter further examines the extent to which the current method of public participation is working and acknowledges that there is a need for improvement through utilising technology advances so as to identify innovative ways of communication. This will inform the parliament of the future, where technology will be central to parliamentary operations.

Greater use of social media and technology will provide a voice to all citizens including vulnerable groups. When developing social media as a tool for public participation, it is important to remember that there are many communities of people who have a disability or are differently abled. Social media guidelines as a tool for public participation will need to incorporate appropriate technology and tools to address this.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations on the study. It reviews the purpose of the study and provides a summary of previous chapters. The chapter makes recommendations regarding national, continental and international communications and identifies potential areas for further study.

6.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the research was to investigate whether social media can enhance participation by citizens on Parliament's legislative process, and to analyze the findings in order to recommend strategies to improve public participation in Parliamentary activities when processing legislation. It also recommends ways to enhance public participation through social media and strengthen the work of Parliament especially in Parliamentary committees.

6.3 SUMMARY OF INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The chapter provides an overview of public participation in South Africa relating to the work of Parliament that led to the study being undertaken. It focuses on the mandate of parliamentary committees based on the Constitution and provides demographic information about the country.

The international and continental analysis focuses on research information on access to ICT platforms by the majority of citizens, as this will allow access to social media. Both international and continental statistics

provided by the ITU shows that the majority of the population does not have access to the Internet. What the research shows is the potential growth, which is an opportunity and reflects growth in social media platforms. This predicted growth provides an opportunity for creative and innovative ways of engaging citizens.

The chapter provides an analysis of access to ICT in South Africa, as well as Internet and by extension, social media platforms. Information reflects that only 17% of people in South Africa have access to Internet. It is expected that with the implementation of broadband access, access will improve overall.

Chapter one provides the problem statement of the study as being the need to improve public participation in Parliament using social media as a platform. This linked to the purpose of the study and the research question. The significance of the study is also explained.

The chapter provides an overview of the study, including the literature review, the research methodology and the findings of the study with regard to the use of social media as a tool for public participation by parliamentary committees when processing legislation.

6.4 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter focused on literature review and explained literature review, and the significance of literature review as it seeks to understand the topic and work done previously on the topic. It further defines public participation as one of the critical issues within the topic of the study.

The chapter examines international trends on the use of social media with examples of countries such as the United States, Denmark and Netherlands and their use of social media to interact with citizens. It is clear that the use

of social media is growing in these countries and that politicians and public representatives use social media extensively to interact with citizens. The chapter identified that there was limited information on the South African use of ICT by Parliament to enhance democracy and nothing was found on the use of social media by Parliament itself.

The theoretical framework of the study was developed based on theories of public participation. The first theory that was explained was Public choice theory that mainly argues that actions of those conducting public participation can be viewed as serving self-interest. The second theory is Post-Fordist theory of public participation which argues that public participation is viewed as a good governance process, and is largely a compliance process.

The last theory explained is the Neo-Marxist theory, which formed the theoretical framework of the study. Neo-Marxist theory sees public participation as an empowerment process where participants have a voice. Based on the historical background of South Africa, this theory is relevant as it addresses issues of inclusion of all citizens by Parliament. This chapter is important for the entire study as it provides the framework for the study.

6.5 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the research methodology is explained and a clear indication provided of what was used for the purpose of the study. Research methodologies and research design were defined. Qualitative and quantitative research methodology was explained. The three approaches to research methods were also explained, namely positivist social science, interpretive social science, and critical social science.

The chapter explained both probability and non-probability sampling and all methods that fall under non-probability sampling. Methods of probability sampling were also explained.

Population of the study was explained as being the monitors at the Parliamentary Monitoring Group. Simple random sampling was selected for the study as a probability sampling method. It is important to note that all sampling methods were explained so that for the relevance of the selected method for the study was clear.

The chapter further deals with data collection methods and the instruments available to collect data. It important to note that under qualitative research methods, data can be collected using various methods such as questionnaires or interviews. In this case a questionnaire was used to collect data. The chapter explains data presentation and the methods available for data analysis for the study.

Reliability and validity of the information received in the study is important. It was explained how the study ensured reliability of the information received and validity of the information was explained. The limits of the study related to the number of monitors employed by PMG. The ethical considerations of the study were presented as being a critical component in particular for academic studies.

6.6 SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

In this chapter data received from the participants was presented. This was a questionnaire to PMG monitors who monitor the committees of parliament and record all activities of parliament. The data analysis and interpretation was given using graphs and tables for ease of understanding. A narrative explanation after every graph or table was provided and was used to

determine findings, which are explained in chapter five. This contributed to the recommendations and identified future research topics.

6.7 SUMMARY OF INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Chapter five explained the conceptual framework to give context to the interpretation and analysis of the findings. It affirmed the Neo-Marxist theory as the cornerstone of the theoretical framework. The chapter provided analysis of the current situation in parliament in relation to the use of social media for public participation when processing legislation. The analysis is based on the data presented in chapter four which further identified areas of improvement by parliament.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PARLIAMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA AND SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Parliament is mandated by the Constitution to engage the public when processing legislation. The question arises of whether current methods used by Parliament are effective and yield the required results. Parliaments have begun to use social media platforms as a tool to improve public participation. The study explored whether such platforms can add value to the public participation processes of Parliament.

With the advent of democracy and the increased importance and use of technological developments, communication has shifted focus to social media, moving away from the traditional methods of communication. However, Parliament has not increased its usage of social media as a platform for public engagement and at present social media plays a limited role when legislation is developed.

Participation in, and discussion on, legislation takes place in the public domain in most cases when a particular group or organisation has a strong

interest, such as the Secrecy Bill or Protection of State Information Bill which generated strong media interest and where social media was widely utilised to mobilise opposition to the Bill. However, many pieces of legislation are passed without any national discourse being undertaken.

It is therefore recommended that Parliament increases its use of social media to enhance public participation. While the study concludes that Parliament does use social media, it is believed that the traditional methods of enhancing public participation should not be abandoned. This is because not all South Africans have access to the Internet as the platform for social media.

It is further recommended that Parliament develops a social media account for each committee, where citizens can interact with the portfolio committee when processing legislation and other matters. This account should not be in the names of individuals so that if there is a change of members the citizens can continue to interact with the portfolio committee with ease. This will further enhance the use of social media but also allow for improvements where weaknesses may be detected.

Parliament should develop social media guidelines which will govern use of social media and delegation of authority in relation to management of accounts.

6.9 RECOMMENDATIONS TO AFRICAN COUNTRIES

The continental analysis as reflected in both chapter one and chapter two is important. The analysis focuses on the opportunities available that will increase access to the Internet by African citizens which will contribute to access to the social media platforms that are the focus of the study.

It is clear that many African citizens do not yet have access to social media as highlighted by the ITU research but there are opportunities to be innovative using technology expansion. There was limited information on the use of social media by African parliaments but even so, recommendations should be made so that the future opportunities are not overlooked.

Social media brings direct access with citizens and with the projections of the growing trends of Internet and social media it will be critical for African parliaments to take the opportunity to interact with citizens within their countries. The use of social media in Africa with often poor levels of literacy and lack of ICT infrastructure should be undertaken in conjunction with the traditional methods of engaging citizens. It must not be used in isolation until it is evident that all citizens have access to social media platforms. Social media in the African continent can be used as a tool to engage what is termed the middle class, or those who are busy and may not have time to attend public meetings but have resources and infrastructure to participate through a social media platform in order to express their views. It is important that parliaments do not use social media as a tool of exclusion and drawing on the Neo-Marxist theory emphasise that public participation is a tool of empowerment where citizens have input into policy that will affect them.

6.10 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Access to Internet globally is increasing, reflecting 46% access to Internet based on ITU research, which implies similar access to social media platforms. Based on 2011 information, Facebook had 750 million users, Twitter had 200 million users and Linked I had 120 million users, and it is expected that these statistics will have increased significantly since then.

Growing use of technology and awareness of these platforms indicates that the numbers would have increased significantly. Chapter two reviewed studies on international use of social media although information was limited. There appears to be, based on information available, a growing trend in the use of social media to interact with citizens.

Parliaments with ICT infrastructure should use the opportunity that technology provides to interact more with their citizens and they can ensure that social media becomes a cost-effective mechanism to interact with citizens to obtain their views on legislation that is being processed.

It is also important to caution parliaments that social media platforms should not be used as the sole platform to engage citizens. Public participation theories clearly define unwanted methods and citizen empowerment for every country is important as explained by Neo-Marxist theory.

6.11 FURTHER RESEARCH

Public inputs during the process of passing legislation in parliament are a legal process and it is important for parliaments to understand that the inputs from its citizens are valid and relevant. The study was unable to further investigate the legal standing of the inputs received, because it is easy for a person to create a fake profile and identity on social media.

A person or an organization may create many profiles on social media and make many submissions to parliament, which may seem to be from many people whereas it would be only from one person. This will present a challenge especially when parliament is trying to ascertain the support or lack of support from citizens. It is with this background and information that it is important for further study to be undertaken that will further examine the use of social media and public participation when processing legislation.

6.12 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to investigate whether social media can enhance participation by citizens on parliament's legislative process. It is evident that there is an opportunity created by the existence of social media to enhance public participation with the Parliament of South Africa.

The study will assist Parliament's presiding officers, chairpersons of committees and support staff of parliament to note the importance of social media. The study will further guide and assist to incorporate the findings of the study to future enhance public participation policy by the South African Parliament, the SADC countries and the international community.

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