

'Not news worthy?': A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF PRINT MEDIA'S RESPONSE TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION MESSAGES.

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand

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Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Masters of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.

Signature of Candidate

Date

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To God be the Glory – Romans 11:36

His love and unfailing presence in my life enabled me to run this race.

To the Wits University Journalism Department for giving me an opportunity to do research

To my supervisor, Alan Finlay whose expressions of perplexity forced me to clarify my ideas

ABSTRACT

This study examines print media response to the South African government's development communication messages, taking as a case study the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH). Comparing media reports on the public health sector with media releases from the GDoH in 2012, the study finds media reports privilege negative issues such as hospital negligence rather than government healthcare news. In this context print media reporting of government healthcare initiatives, characterised by news values with socially and morally negative connotations, is attributed to the libertarian-inclined watchdog role the media assumes in South Africa. The watchdog role assumed by the media is shown to be an operative factor conditioning content of news reports. As a result news values evident in the media releases are contradicted by contrary news value emphasis in the media. The study finds that by negatively framing content offering contradictory evidence, the media denies the newsworthiness of government development reports. Ultimately, an evaluation of the literature regarding normative media theories and media sociology leads the researcher to suggest that a libertarian-inclined media that reveals corruption is not incompatible with a socially responsible media that objectively reports developmental achievements. However, in practice this does not occur.

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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

1.1. AIM

The aim of my research is to interrogate the apparent gap between the South African government's development communication imperative regarding healthcare and the lack of take up by the print media. I will achieve this by:

1. examining government intentions in using the mass media for development communication
2. critically analysing discrepancies between information given by government communicators and what is ultimately published in the commercial print media.
3. evaluating my findings in the context of literature regarding media and development communication theories.

1.2. RATIONALE

The media is a critical component of the developmental state and South Africa is in a crisis of poverty and other social ills. In this context the media and how it reports on government issues is significant and needs to be understood. Furthermore, there is an assumption that a gap exists between government development communication intentions and print media output and this needs to be verified and researched. There is the contention that the media has a different kind of social responsibility to that of more developed countries. If this is so the viability of libertarian-inclined media operations in post-colonial contexts, and specifically in a developmental state may be questionable.

While the relationship between media and state in South Africa has been abundantly researched, to my knowledge media response to government messages has not been examined in a context of media sociology, considering news values in the formation of news. Previous studies have adopted a critical political economy of the media perspective, focusing on media conglomeration and ownership. Studies analysing media content have highlighted media criticism of government through discourse analysis (Skjerdal, 2001).

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media?
2. How does one account for this discrepancy?
3. What does this tell us about the state of journalism and development communication in South Africa?

1.4. BACKGROUND TO STUDY

1.4.0. Introduction

In this section I discuss South Africa's advent to democracy in 1995 and the expectations of the new government led by the African National Congress (ANC) regarding media support and collaboration. Looking at assumptions (ANC discussion documents, 2009; 2010; Comtask report, 1996, chapter 2) that the South African government is dissatisfied with media uptake of its development communication messages, I describe the communication imperatives the first democratic government faced when it came to power. (Comtask report, 1996, p.10).

This background supports discrepancies noted between government communication intention and print media output. The urgency felt by government to fulfil its democratic obligations to the people of the country proved a significant factor in its expectations of the mass media. (Comtask report, 1996 p. 13)

I point out that the same libertarian normative stance, characterised by the watchdog function of holding officials to account (Christians et al.,2009) under which banner the media contested apartheid, persisted with the new democratic government. I also note that the perceived adversarial media attitude has become a point of attrition between government and the commercial media in South Africa.

1.4.1. Historical background

The African National Conference (ANC) faced a daunting task when it was elected in 1994 after centuries of oppression first by colonialism and then apartheid rule.¹ The political imperative was social and economic development to uplift a repressed majority and rebuild a country. The binding objective was a participatory democracy that included all citizens. Communication channels needed to be forged and the mass media galvanised in a massive information drive to reach people. (Comtask Report 1996, p.13).

To get to grips with what lay ahead, in 1995 the then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki commissioned a team of experts from different sectors to produce what became known as the Comtask report. With a view to radically improving government communication, the report examined the relationship between the state and the media and specifically the consequences of monopoly media ownership.

In 1998 a new flagship department, Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) was established to coordinate development communication. The priority was a targeted information drive with coordinated messages and a beneficial relationship with the mass media.

With its constitutionally decreed development communication policy to reach and inform stakeholders of government initiatives, the South African government from the start perceived the media as an important channel. (Comtask report, 1996)

At the first Government Communicators' Consultative Conference held in May 1998, Dr Essop Pahad (then Deputy Minister in the Office of the President) emphasised the need for an inclusive development communication drive to inform citizens. He said:

Our task, hand in hand with partners in the communication industry, including the media, is to ensure that this right is indeed realised in practical life. It is to see to it that all South Africans receive comment and information that enable them to make

¹ Colonial rule started when the Dutch East India Company established a settlement in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. Racial segregation was instituted in 1910 and in 1948 saw the rise of apartheid. <http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/unit.php?id=65-24E-2> retrieved 14 January 2014

rational choices about their lives. It is to see to it that they themselves can pass on information and views about their activities as they change their lives for the better. They have got the right to know, and to be heard. (History and Background of GCIS)

From the 1996 Comtask Report to date both government and ANC party documents, albeit it at times antagonistically², have always flagged the mass media as a necessary player if the state was to achieve its developmental aim.³ This need has been highlighted in ANC communication policy documents.

Vusi Mona, till February 2013 GCIS Deputy CEO: Communication & Content, reiterates this point:

The mass media has always been a very important platform through which government wants to (and does) communicate to the public. The Comtask report which was a precursor to the establishment of GCIS has a lot to say on the role of the mass media.⁴ (Mona, 2012)

1.4.2. Government expectations of the mass media post-1994

Given the significant role the media had played in alerting the outside world to the atrocities of apartheid (Touwen, 2011), government expected the media would be supportive of the new democracy.

² Examples of perceived negativity of the media towards government abound. In a discourse analysis of 102 newspaper articles between 1996 and 1999, Skjerdal (2001) traces allegations by ANC-led government leadership that the press had not transformed to meet the conditions of the new democracy. In October 1996 President Mandela criticized named senior black journalists for being lapdogs of their white owners. Then at the 50th ANC congress in Mafikeng December 1997 Mandela suggested that the so-called white media were part of a counter-revolutionary force. President Thabo Mbeki attacked the press for "lack of patriotism and positive reporting on government actions" ("Threatened by Mbeki" 14 June 1996). The Sunday Independent (Seloane, 21 September 1997) quoted then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki as saying "the democratic press should not be so critical". At a business conference in Swaziland 29 May 1996, Mpumalanga Premier Mathews Phosa agreed that journalists preferred to highlight negative developments rather than cooperating with government initiatives. "They never let facts stand in the way of a good story and always concentrate on the negative issues (Phosa says – 30 May 1996).

³ From the 1996 Comtask report to ANC discussion documents as recent as 2011 the developmental role of the mass media is emphasised. (ANC Discussion Document, 2002; ANC Discussion Document, 2011).

⁴ Mona, V. (2012) former GCIS Deputy Ceo: 10 April

As the Comtask (1996) saw it, government and media would join forces to promote the new democracy in the spirit of development communication. (Comtask, 1996, chapter 2). Furthermore, the Comtask report promoted media freedom, recommending that government media communications be restructured to embrace constitutional principles of freedom of expression and transparency. This new openness appeared a given after the secrecy and restriction of information that marked the apartheid regime.

Government's media strategy is multi-pronged and includes channels such as Izimbizo (gatherings), functions, community meetings and public broadcasts (Comtask, 1996). However, persistent references in discussion documents, as well as reproaches by government leaders against print media's failure to promote development, imply that harnessing the power of media penetration has been a predominant objective of the ANC and the government it leads. (ANC discussion document, 2002)

It was perceived by many in the ruling ANC that contrary to government policy the print media were not communicating development adequately. The Comtask scrutinised the relationship between media and government, concluding that media ownership affected government communication and information dissemination. (Comtask report, 1996, chapter 2).

If one examines the progression from 1994 to present day, despite the Comtask recommendation that media support be elicited to inform citizens, government relations with the mass media have consistently deteriorated. The print media appeared to be pursuing a libertarian, watchdog normative model. (Christians et al., 2009, p.123) Government advocated a social responsibility model whereby the media which would be less critical and more promotional of what government was doing for people. This is repeatedly observed by government leaders.

That the mass media was becoming perceived as a hostile entity was summed up in an analysis published in Business day⁵ (Mokoli, 2012)

⁵ Mokoli, S. 2012. Business Day: 5 December.

The African National Congress (ANC) has decided to analyse the behaviour of the news media — down to the “attitudes of individual journalists” — as it searches for an answer to what sees it as unflattering publicity. ANC secretary-general Gwede Mantashe — who called the print media the party’s main opposition — backs up what has the potential of being construed as a media intimidation threat with the party’s research.

Government leaders hoped to see state initiatives, policies and messages “brand positioned” through the mass media. In June 2011 the then CEO of Government Communication and Information Systems, GCIS, Jimmy Manyi’s frustration with what he perceived as media neglect to positively brand government initiatives led to the threat to withhold advertising.

A year before Business Day analyst Linda Ensor, (10 June 2011), reported⁶:

The Cabinet has decided to consolidate all media spending by government departments — worth about R1bn a year — under the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS) to achieve economies of scale and "more bang for its buck". The new approach of centralisation — which is being duplicated throughout government as the ruling African National Congress constructs its notion of a "development state" — would also ensure that there was consistent adherence to the government brand, Cabinet spokesman Jimmy Manyi said yesterday at a post-Cabinet media briefing. “GCIS has assiduously pursued a brand positioning in its relationship with the mass media. This is supported by GCIS proposals, speeches and media releases.” To promote better branding Manyi will centralise advertising expenditure.

The government was concerned, he said, that its message was not getting through to the populace.

This contextualises the significance with which the ANC led government considers the influence of the mass media on society. Currently the state spends approximately 8% of the budget on communication and all national, provincial and local government spheres have

⁶ Ensor.L. 2011. Business Day: 10 June.

communication departments. The media is recipient of government information and notification of events, functions, achievements are sent out every day. (Thusong Government Services, GCIS; Estimates of National Expenditure 2013. National Treasury 2013)

1.4.3. Normative perspective of the South African media

Coming from apparently opposing normative perspectives (Skjerdal 2001, p.45) the media was merely continuing its surveillance of the socio-political environment, observed by Christians et al.(2009, p.123). It was the watchdog of the new democracy, the role it had undertaken when reporting apartheid atrocities, often under duress and threat of punitive measures.(Touwen, 2011)

Curran (2000, p.19) offers insight into the discord. He points out that media professionalism implied intrinsic beliefs and values laid down by guidelines derived from democratic tenets of professional autonomy. These included freedom of expression and “the public’s right to know” which overrode the obligation to report on government projects.

Deuze (2011, p.20, 21) points out that criticism perceived to originate from outside and corporate intervention is filtered through the concern to be autonomous and to tell the story as the journalist sees it. He refers to research by McDevitt et al. (2002) showing that the notion of autonomy is a building block of the journalist’s professional identity. He describes a “shared occupational ideology among news-workers which functions to self-legitimise their position in society.” Specific among these values is that the public service the journalist provides is to serve as watchdogs or “news-hounds”, active collectors and disseminators of information.

The implication is that the Comtask report might have been proposing a dissonance when it advocated media freedom alongside nation building. This study examines this possible contradiction, questioning the viability of libertarian inclined media operations in post-colonial contexts, and specifically in a developmental state.

At the same time many media theorists acknowledge conflict between government and the media as normal, even desirable. Ben Bradlee, editor of the Washington Post at the time of

the Watergate scandal, at a gala dinner hosted for delegates at the Commonwealth Press Union in Somerset West October 1996, said:

Show me a government that is satisfied with its press, and I will show you an autocracy. Show me a press that is satisfied with its government and I will show you a lifeless and ill-informed people. (Skjerdal, 2001, citing Streek, 1996)

In the same year Nigel Bruce⁷ wrote in Financial Mail (14 June, 1996):

All governments have an uneasy relationship with the media, unless they are censored and restricted as they were under P W Botha.

Even so it should be born in mind that the ANC-led government had a decreed development communication imperative to reach stakeholders and specifically the previously disadvantaged. This manifesto is reflected in their recorded struggle heritage and has translated into a strong brand positioning. (ANC Discussion Documents, 2002, 2004).

The expectation was that the media would assume a social responsibility role in the new democracy and serve as a critical component of the developmental state. De Beer (1998, p.18) postulates that the “political philosophy of a state” influences the structure and functioning of the media system. The implication would be that the development communication imperative of the South African government would take precedence over the libertarian-inclined, watchdog role the media assumes.

1.5. Reporting the public health sector – is it good news or bad news?

In order to interrogate the above potential dissonance, the public health sector is the arena of my research. I scrutinise data in the form of media releases from the Gauteng Department of Health (GdoH) and print media reports that appeared in The Star and the Sowetan in 2012.

The aim of this section is to provide a balanced view of the public health sector which will serve as a benchmark to media reports. Looking at the “good”, a picture emerges of a sector

⁷ Bruce, N. 1996. Financial Mail: 14 June.

that has made noteworthy strides in the restructuring of the healthcare system to provide equitable services for an entire populations and not just a privileged minority. (Harrison, 2009).

My interest in this study arose out of an observation that print media coverage of public sector hospitals is predominantly negative and sensational, leading to and reinforcing the conviction that “you go to a public hospital to die”.(Jaffe, 2013)⁸ Yet officials interviewed working within the sector sustain that much has been achieved there are areas of excellence the public is not aware of.

The children’s oncology ward at Charlotte Maxeke is a highly functional unit with an excellent success rate. (Jaffe, 2013).

The official spokesperson⁹ for the political opposition in Gauteng admits:

Government has achieved wonders in primary health care that people don’t know about. Great strides have been made in containing the spread of HIV/AID and preventing mother to child transmission through the use of ARVs. (Bloom, 2013)

Figures recently released by the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and Aids, UNAIDS show that government's increased roll-out of the antiretroviral (ARV) therapy programme had averted an estimated 780 000 deaths between 2004 and 2012. An estimated 2.7 million people receive antiretroviral drugs in South Africa, making it the largest ARV programme in the world. UNAIDS country co-ordinator for South Africa Dr Catherine Sozi, confirmed that between 2004 and 2012, the number of new HIV infections fell from an estimated 540 000 to 370 000. The number of Aids deaths fell by 30% from 330 000 in 2004 to 240 000 in 2012, and were projected to fall to below 150 000 in 2016. (SAPA, 2014)¹⁰

Interviews with public sector officials who experienced the restructuring of the Public Healthcare system after apartheid highlight the normative discrepancy between

⁸ Jaffe, J. 2013. Radiologist at Charlotte Maxeke: 25 December.

⁹ Bloom, J. 2013. Democratic Alliance Gauteng spokesperson: 12 December.

¹⁰ SAPA, 2014. Times Live: 17 January

government expectations and media response. (De Beer 1998, p.18). It is commonly held among public sector health officials that media reports devalue achievements in transforming an unequal system to one that caters to all people.¹¹ The dismay at perceived unfair media representation is captured in an interview (Joseph, 2013).

My role has been in the dismantling of apartheid and transformation of the health sector. This is a very pivotal role I've been involved in since 80's. We've needed to establish institutions that would contribute to the transformation of the health care system. These things are not being reported. They are clouded by the media's agenda setting and need to reveal what is wrong and write what sells. I understand the media has a commercial imperative to generate income. However I don't agree with the way the media reports on the healthcare system. They are not interested in reporting development. There is a tremendous lack of awareness and understanding of what is taking place. Our media write to destroy trust and that is a total contradiction of what we decided to do as a democracy. (Joseph, 2013)

As this research shows, the print media privilege what goes wrong in South African hospitals on a day to day basis. Government, however, would expect the media to report on human resource and structural achievements in the health sector since 1994. Government's view is that given the obstacles, specifically inadequate human and structural resources previously designed to cater to the needs of 20% of the population, a noteworthy transformation has taken place in the public healthcare sector. (Horwitz, 2009)

During the apartheid era there were 14 different health departments. They were divided on a racial and geographically contrived basis of "homelands" where different ethnicities had been forcedly settled. The system was enormously expensive, characterised by duplication, fragmentation and inequality. The white population received superior health care while the black population made do with inferior overcrowded resources. (Horwitz, 2009)

¹¹ Joseph, D. 2013. Chief Director, Human Resources at GDoH till August 2013: 31 January.

Government's task since 1994 has been to dismantle and totally restructure this apartheid healthcare system. While transformation is fully underway, high levels of poverty and unemployment mean health care remains largely the burden of the state.

Today even though 11% of the national budget goes to health expenditure,¹² the public sector, which caters to 80% of the population, is stretched and under-resourced. Ndlovu et al. (2013) note that the South African government intends to spend 11 % of its consolidated budget on health between 2013/14 and 2015/16. However this is still below funding levels committed by African countries as part of the 2001 Abuja Declaration in which signatories pledged 15% of government funding to health.

This two-tiered system is not only inequitable and inaccessible to a large portion of South Africans, but institutions in the public sector have suffered poor management, underfunding and deteriorating infrastructure. While access has improved, the quality of health care has fallen. (Harrison, 2009). The situation is compounded by public health challenges, including the burden of diseases such as HIV and tuberculosis (TB), and a shortage of key medical personnel.

Horowitz (2009) looking at the National Treasury Fiscal Review for 2011, noted that of the total budget R120.8-billion (48.5%) went to the private sector which covers 16.2% of the population or 8.2-million people, many of whom have medical cover. R122.4-billion (49.2%) went to the public sector, which constituted 84% of the population, or 42-million people, who are indigent or unemployed or earning too little to afford medical aid.

However, a National Health Insurance (NHI) was introduced in 2012 to bring about reform that will improve service provision and health care delivery. It will promote equity and efficiency to ensure that all South Africans have access to affordable, quality health care services regardless of their employment status and ability to make a direct monetary contribution to the NHI Fund. R1-billion has been allocated to its pilot projects in different provinces.

¹² Health-e. Article. <http://www.health-e.org.za/2014/01/13/research-trends-national-provincial-health-hiv-budgets-south-africa>. downloaded 7 February 2014

Known as the "10-point plan",¹³ the strategic programme aims to improve health systems, including the functionality and management of the system through stringent budget and expenditure monitoring. This includes improving hospital infrastructure and human resources management, as well as procurement of equipment and skills. Health facilities – such as nursing colleges and tertiary hospitals – are being upgraded.

As mentioned, in accordance with their development communication mandate, government would prefer the print media to communicate achievement in the democratic health care sector rather than privilege what goes wrong in the system. The state's development communication imperative is of particular urgency with the roll out of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHI). The massive health turn-around project foresees comprehensive health services for all citizens. (SouthAfrica.info, citing Bua News 2012)

1.5.1. Reporting mainly bad news

As noted previously there is a good deal of official data to support a negative perception of post apartheid public healthcare. Issues highlighted in the media included limited efforts to curtail HIV/AIDs; emergence of multi-drug resistant MDR-TB and XDR-TB; lack of attention to the epidemic of alcohol abuse with consequences of domestic violence and child rape; insufficient health professionals in public sector hospitals; poor quality of healthcare; operational inefficiency. (Harrison, 2009)

It is hard to miss the "bad news" specifically because the media highlights this for our attention.

¹³ National Department of Health Strategic Plan 2010/11-2012/13

A child's penis was amputated by mistake. Babies are born brain-damaged after their mothers are not properly cared for during labour and an infant went blind after doctors failed to diagnose a problem at birth.¹⁴ (Child, 2014)

According to this publication, cases of medical negligence are increasing nationwide and the Gauteng health department is facing negligence claims amounting to R1.28-billion for the 2012/2013 financial year. The claims primarily concern damage done to children. These include

- R20 million for negligence leading to baby's blindness at Rahima Moosa Hospital in Johannesburg
- R20 million for birth damage at the Far East Rand Hospital in Johannesburg
- R15 million for damage to a child's penis during a circumcision procedure at the South Rand Hospital in Johannesburg
- R10.7 million for amputating a minor's penis at the Steve Biko Academic hospital in Pretoria

The negative perception was initially framed by print media's reporting of the Mbeki government's denialism of HIV/AIDs and support for unorthodox views of a small group of AIDS dissidents, resulting in delay in providing ARV treatment. Tomaselli (2011, p.25) describes how in 2002 Mbeki and a group of influential cabinet ministers questioned scientific evidence linking HIV to AIDs, the accuracy of statistics and the reliability of tests.

The denialist speculation was startling, given that South Africa has the highest HIV prevalence in Southern Africa, with about five million people being HIV-positive in 2004 (Butler, 2005 p.591). Trends occurring in this country symbolically affect Southern Africa as a whole, much like the way in which the United States influences the Western world. In this way any controversy or debate initiated in South Africa will spread throughout the region. This understanding will have contributed to the heavy criticism of South Africa's response to HIV. (Tomaselli 2011, p.25)

¹⁴ Child, C. 2014. "Hospital horrors costing SA plenty". Times Live: 17 January

Subtexts fueling this negative perception were the Minister of Health, Dr Manto Tshabala-Msimang being ridiculed in the media and dubbed “Dr Beetroot” for prescribing vegetables to treat HIV. She was also condemned for appearing to support President Mbeki in disputing the effectiveness of ARVs and speculation about the medication’s toxicity.

Highlighted in the media were also Mbeki’s promotion of Virodene, a drug that contained industrial solvent that caused liver damage and his endorsement of “vitamin entrepreneur” Matthias Rath who claimed ARVs were toxic. The R 14.2 million spent on Sarafina 11, a musical aimed at changing behaviour patterns also generated a public outcry and claimed media headlines.

Jacobs and Johnson (2007) note that studies of media coverage of HIV/AIDS during Mbeki’s presidency (May 1999 to 2007) focused on conflicts around HIV/AIDS policy rather than the urgency of the crisis.

1.6. CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an introduction to the development communication issue to be analysed in this study. It pinpointed a dissonance between government’s expectations that the mass media would partner in communicating development and the media’s adherence instead to a long established watch-dog role. (Christians et al., 2011 p.125) A background to developments in the public health sector followed, the aim of which was to juxtapose achievements with media reportage that resulted. This chapter also served to explain the central aim of this research which was to highlight the discrepancy between what government wished to communicate and print media response. It offered evidence that achievements in the public healthcare sector are eclipsed by negative perceptions highlighted in media reports of weak healthcare system managements, alarming fluctuations in the distribution of chronic medication, patient neglect due to low staff morale and the burden of diseases related to HIV/AIDS.

CHAPTER 2 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Worldview assumptions

Creswell (2009, p.5) advises researchers to think through the philosophical worldview assumptions they bring to the study, the strategy of inquiry that is related to this worldview and the specific methods or procedures of research that translate the approach into practice.

The approach I take in this particular study follows a pragmatic worldview, one which:

Arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions. There is a concern with applications – what works – and solutions to problems (Patton, 1990). Instead of focusing on methods, researchers emphasise the research problem and use all approaches available to understand the problem. (Creswell 2009, p.10)

This pragmatic worldview will inform my understanding of why news regarding public sector healthcare is framed to communicate catastrophe, as this study will show, and why developmental achievements are not reported on. Working inductively, I take a cultural approach, which “considers the work of journalists in their news organisation and the texts they produce” (Berkowitz 2011, p.xii). This cultural perspective in a theoretical framework of media sociology significantly shapes my research, steering it away from a critical political economy of the media approach, which considers media ownership as a conditioning factor in the production of news.

Berkowitz (2011, p.xii) points out that in media sociology the cultural approach

.....sees journalists as people living and working in the culture of a newsroom, a media organisation and a society. And it views the texts that news organisations produce as an artefact of the culture that represents key values and meanings. This is quite different from the role of the journalism critic because the cultural scholar steps aside from professional judgements to consider journalism as a human

phenomenon like any other. The cultural scholar of journalism realises that a particular study produces one of several possible answers shaped by the conceptual premise guiding the enquiry.

Following this rationale, I apply cultural theories from media sociology alongside a framework of normative media models in as much as they contribute to an understanding of different normative expectations between media and government in reporting developmental issues. Normative models support my cultural approach in that they shed light on factors influencing news values choice. (Gans 1997, p.182)

Creswell (2009, p.11) points out that a pragmatic approach allows for multiple methods of research, for different worldviews and different assumptions.

It is my view that these conceptual frameworks in isolation are inadequate if one wishes to understand print media response to the South African government's development communication messages. Normative media theories shed light on different ideological positions, questioning why print media represents government in a certain manner, and why this is not acceptable to government. (Christians et al. 2009, p.3). Cultural theories on the other hand evaluate the actual image projected in the news report. Cultural theories answer the question: "what are media reports implying?" Normative media models are then applied to understand "why this choice of news values?"

2.2. Theoretical framework

Badenhorst (2008, p.155) notes the importance of grounding research in previous studies and theoretical assumptions:

In an academic context, all research is based on previous research. The literature review is where you discuss how your research emerges from previous research. Literature reviews are essentially analytical papers. They encompass a whole process of reading, thinking, organising, analysing, reading, thinking more, identifying patterns, evaluating.....

To support my study of print media response to government development communication messages I have used a framework of three main bodies of literature. These theories interact to shed light on different critical components of my research questions:

1. Development communication theories - these underpin the South African government's original development communication intention first discussed in the Comtask (1996) report. Development communication theories will be examined in a discussion of government development communication intentions.
2. Media sociology which includes both organisational and cultural theories of how news is constructed. I take a cultural approach looking at theories of news values¹⁵ and newsworthiness,¹⁶ which explain the formation and content of media reports. I apply concepts such as gatekeeping, framing and priming in as much as these contribute to the shaping of the news report. In summary, cultural theories will be used to explain "what is the image projected in the news report and how is it constructed technically?"
3. Normative media theories – specifically social responsibility theory which outlines expectations of the media in democratic societies and the libertarian model which advocates independent journalism, press freedom and the watch dog role of the media to keep government on track and expose malfunctioning.¹⁷ Normative media theories will be used to explain why print media represent government in a certain manner according to a specific image and why government might object.

¹⁵ I refer to "news values with negative connotations" implying a value judgement consistent with a prevailing social and moral norms. I regard this as an embedded concept throughout the study. However the intention is not to critique the value judgement itself, rather to note it an operational factor informing perceptions about public health care delivery. Turnstall (1971, p.261) cited in Braun (2009) suggests news values are "simply a mass media version of social values held by millions of audience members". The idea of news values reflecting social values underpins my study.

¹⁶ "newsworthiness" is defined in the thesis as constituted by news values, criteria for reporting on an issue or event. (Cohen and Young, 1973, p.183).

¹⁷ Lars Palsson Syll discusses Amartya Sen's comparison of neo-liberalism and libertarianism. While neo-liberalism relates rights to obligations, libertarianism restricts the meaning to absence of any coercion that might restrict freedom. larspsyll.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/amartya-sen-on-neo-liberalism.pdf

2.3. Limitations of the literature review

Curran et al. (1982) observe that different media theories are interrelated and should not be considered in isolation as all contribute to the understanding and shaping of the media message.

..... together they complement each other. When pulled together they provide a comprehensive view of the ways in which media messages are produced and shaped and offer insights into the ways in which different influences on this process are combined in a single composite product. Curran et al. (1987, p.17)

However, to achieve the desired focus in analysing print media response to the South African government's development communication messages I have chosen not to apply theories regarding critical political economy of the media.¹⁸

A critical political economy of the media focus would have taken my research in another direction. I would have had to consider ownership and the capitalist ideology of media organisations as a major factor conditioning print media response to government's development communication messages. In terms of methodology I would have used discourse analysis to show news content as contrived to depict government and its messages in a slanted light. (Herman and Chomsky, 1998)

In my application of media sociology as a theoretical framework, I have also chosen not to focus on organisational theories. My rationale for this choice is twofold:

1. A cultural approach leads me to focus my attention on the final news product and the relevance of news values. An analysis of organisational theories would have diverted my attention to newsroom hierarchical structures and routines, taking me on a tangent.
2. My methodology of choice was content analysis of the final news product, looking specifically at news values. An organisational approach would have required me to analyse the movements of journalists conditioned by newsroom structures and limitations.

¹⁸ Critical political economy of the media theories would be relevant in as much as they describe the advertising related imperative to sell newspapers, which in turn conditions the way content is framed. (Herman and Chomsky 1998, p.17)); (McChesney 2001, p.88); (Curran et.al., 1987)

Qualitative interviews would have become my prime methodology. I used comments from qualitative semi-structured interviews in my cultural review, but only to reflect on the findings of my content analysis. My intention in using information from these interviews was to provide background information and to allow reporters and officials to comment on these findings. In this way I hoped to offer a richer picture. (Creswell 2009, p.176)

2.4. DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION – MODERNISATION THEORY

2.4.1. Significance to study

Literature regarding development communication theories, and specifically looking at the modernisation paradigm is pertinent to this study. This theory critically reflects the South African government's documented intention to pursue a development communication policy to uplift citizens. This same thinking shapes government belief that the media should be used to report on achievements and inform citizens so that they can better their lives. (GCIS Documents: Thusong Services Centre)

However this intention regards media usage and the suggestion is not that government's development communication policy was formulated in terms of the modernisation paradigm. Participatory communication is a key element of government communication strategy and government documents stress consultation and two-way dialogue.

The constitution explicitly stipulates participatory communication rather than top down prescription (Constitution, Section 57 (1))¹⁹ though it is postulated by scholars such as Tomaselli (2011) and Servaes (2008) that in their expectations of the role of the media the South African government abides by principles pertaining to the modernisation paradigm.

While development communication theory has a history of at least six decades and has morphed through different paradigms (Tomaselli 2011, p.12-17) it is suggested that the modernisation paradigm with its emphasis on the use of the mass media to reach citizens

¹⁹ <http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/a108-96.pdf>

continues to shape government government's normative expectations of the media. (ANC discussion document 2002; Servaes, 2008)²⁰

Throughout the literature development communication scholars note the use of the media to disseminate messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. (Servaes, 1994) The formula was to inform about projects, illustrate the advantages, and recommend that they be supported. Rogers' (1962) "diffusion model" of putting out information in the belief that people would use it to better their lives, is evident in South African government publications.²¹

2.3.2. Development communication historical background

Nora Cruz Quebral coined the term "development communication" in 1971. She redefined it over the years to fit the evolving challenge of development and in 2001 describing it as:

the art and science of human communication linked to a society's planned transformation from a state of poverty to one of dynamic socio-economic growth that makes for greater equity and the larger unfolding of individual potential. (Quebral, 2006).

Reflecting the modernisation paradigm, the principle of development communication has been applied historically whenever there was a call to promote social development following times of devastation or lack. The South African government recognised this need when democracy was first proclaimed in 1994 (GCIS History).

This same communication need was identified by American President, Harry Truman in 1945, at the end of World War 11. Scholars recognise this as the critical starting point for Development Communication. (McPhail 2007, p.4).

²⁰ See footnote 7

²¹ It is not within the scope of this research to undertake a detailed analysis of GCIS publications. Suffice to say that publications such as Bua News, My District Today and Public Sector Manager bear witness to Rogers (1962) diffusion of innovations approach

On Truman's instructions the Marshall Plan intervention was launched in March 1946 to rebuild war-devastated Western Europe. Besides financial aid, the intervention aimed to modernise industry and make Europe prosperous again. The secondary intention was to stop the spread of Soviet Communism by substantially aiding non-communist countries.

The United Nations was established 1945 and with the success of the Marshall Plan, from the 1950s attention turned to the third world where two thirds of the world's population lived on 15% of the world's income. In 1949 President Truman, in his inaugural address, proposed the Point-Four program which was to replicate the Marshall Plan. The US "would embark on a new programme of modernisation and capital investment". (Truman 1949, cited in McPhail, 2007 p.4.)). The aim was not wholly philanthropic and as history proved, the idea was also to identify new markets and raw material supplies. The ultimate economic dominance proved to be to the detriment of underdeveloped regions. (Melkote and Steeves, 2001)

Melkote and Steeves (2001, p.51) note that:

The philosophical consistencies between the Marshall Plan and the Point Four plan were very clear. Both aimed to alleviate suffering and both aimed to do so through capital investment. Countries considered "non-communist" or "freedom loving" qualified as beneficiaries of aid..... the key to prosperity and peace was greater production through a wider and more vigorous application of technical and scientific knowledge. (Daniels 1951, p.11.; Melkote and Steeves 2001, p.51) The outcome of this proposal was increasingly equated with development.

Communication was expected to help modernise people's attitudes and ways of thinking in support of the economic model already adopted successfully by the West. The belief was that individuals had to change before development could truly take off (Melkote and Steeves, 2001).

The modernisation period was pro-innovation, pro-persuasion and pro-top-down, pro-mass media and pro-literacy. (Melkote and Steeves, p.53).

From the 1950's too, communication sciences gained academic recognition and Development Communication became the subject of research. Proponents were mainly American scholars and policy makers who wanted to explain what they perceived as underdevelopment in Africa. Lerner (1958), Schramm (1964) and Rogers (1962) were among the earliest advocates. Their understanding was that the Third World needed to develop to resemble Western Europe and the United States (McPhail 2009, p.7)

Rostow (1960) cited in McPhail (2009, p.7) classified five stages of modernisation. For traditional society (stage one) to progress to a modern one (stage five) new attitudes, work habits, progressive economics models, supportive public policies were required. They were to be reinforced by the application of mass media messages. Societies would need to leave behind old behaviours and traditions and adopt new industrialised behaviours in reflection of western values. Wilbur Schramm (1964) discussed the need for the mass media to facilitate economic improvement across poorer regions of the world. Lerner (1958) proposed that what was needed was to "break free of the stupefying bonds of traditionalism", heralding as it were the passing of traditional society." The mass media were to be used to disseminate information leading to political participation and economic growth.

Typical of this approach was the Magic Bullet, or Hypodermic Needle Theory, based on the assumption that the media could be used to inject messages into passive audiences. (Rogers, 1962)

Indeed, Rogers (1962) argued that communication processes were [are] integral, vital elements of modernisation and development. During the modernization period the mass media were seen as the vehicles for transferring new ideas and models from the West to the Third World and from urban areas to rural countryside. (Melkote and Steeves 2001, p.117). Thus the mass media were a key feature of the modernization communication approach and were assigned a key role in the modernisation development model (Melkote and Steeves 2001, p.114).

This emphasis on utilizing the mass media stemmed from the belief that when effectively utilized, the media was capable of changing people's mindsets and attitudes. UNESCO, for example, considered media to be a crucial means for promoting change and in the 1960s provided guidelines to a country's desirable per capita consumption of television sets, radio receivers, newspapers, and cinema seats. (Mefalopulo, 2008)

Modernisation theory as promoting socio economic betterment was the dominant paradigm for nearly two decades. The paradigm embraced a variety of disciplines including sociology, agriculture, economics etc. All emphasised the role of the mass media in promoting development and the goal was "to make the inhabitants of poorer nations of the South more like the wealthier peoples of the North." (McPhail, 2001)

A significant advocate of modernisation theory is Daniel Lerner (1917–1980). His treatise, *The passing of traditional society: Modernizing the Middle East* (1958), a study of Egypt, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and Turkey provided the first comprehensive statement of the role of mass communication in the process of modernization for postcolonial countries. The general theory posited a model of societal transformation for poor countries made possible by embracing western manufacturing technology, political structures, values, and systems of mass communication.

In Lerner's model, increasing urbanization led to the growth of mass media (as people demanded news and information) and literacy (as more and more schools were built), which in turn resulted in greater public participation in economic activity and politics. Lerner maintained that mass communication was the key factor in helping traditional societies become modern.

2.3.3 Conclusion

There are indications that in its expectations of the mass media, the South African government's approach to development communication reflects the modernisation paradigm.

Fair (1989, p.129-150) points out that even during the 1987 – 1996 period when participatory development communication became the new theoretical framework, the top-down media role in communication for social change persisted.

Criticisms levelled at the paradigm contained certain Western assumptions and values about the process of development....Yet, based on some of the results presented from the meta-research ...it seems fair to say that the impact of the debate has not been to radically alter the way scholars carry out their research. Rather, it seems the field has continued in the tradition of the modernisation paradigm. (Fair 1989, p.144).

According to Fair (1989), the same assumptions underlying the modernisation paradigm continue to influence the policy and planning of governments, both at theoretical and applied levels. She was referring to the communication of developmental plans and projects.

2.4 NORMATIVE MEDIA THEORIES

2.4.0. Introduction

A review of normative media theories sheds light on the South African print media response to government's development messages. Skjerdal (2001) notes that normative press models define the hypothetical, offering different views on how the press should perform. For this reason they might not correlate exactly with the actual socio-political environment. However, he categorises the South African print media as "libertarian inclined", whereas the South African government advocates a "social responsibility" model.

First articulated by Frederick S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm in their seminal *Four Theories of the Press* (1963, first edition 1956), even today conflicting normative views govern public opinion about how the media should report.

The authors of *Four Theories of the press* identified the Authoritarian theory, the Libertarian theory, the Soviet theory and the Social Responsibility theory as prime normative models.

McQuail (1983) later contributed two additional models – the development model and the Democratic-participant model.

Christians et al. (2009, p.3.) consider normative media theories as responses to political systems or ideologies. The social responsibility theory concerns Western social democratic ideals. The libertarian theory comes from classic liberalism advocating freedom of the individual.

They also note two fundamental problems to prescribing how the media should behave. They point out that firstly there are contending interests within the media and within society. Secondly press freedom, besides the right to publish, includes “the right to refuse or evade any externally imposed communication obligation.” (Christians et al. 2009, P.121).

The objective of my study, unlike that undertaken by Skjerdal (2001) is not to simply critique print media reporting on government according to normative models. The aim is rather to apply normative models to understand the choice of news values which shape content of print media in response to government’s development communication messages. In this way normative media theories would shed light on the content shaping the discord between media and government regarding development communication. This theoretical application would assist in answering my third research question:

3) what does this (discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media) tell us about the state of development communication and journalism in South Africa.

Finally normative theories explain how the print media appears to have assumed a watchdog role which, as my research attempts to show, is revealed in the news values²² that shape news reports.

²² See footnote 15

2.4.1. The authoritarian system and its relevance to South Africa

Some scholars contend that because the South African press was muzzled by an authoritarian system for so long the watchdog role the media has assumed with democracy is a reaction to a past system of obsequiousness to government. McQuail (1987, p.109).

Before South Africa became a democracy in 1994, under the Nationalist government an authoritarian-type system prevailed. The press was subordinate to state authority and was expected to echo or remain neutral towards government actions. McQuail (1987, p.111)

Yet despite draconian laws which prevented journalists from going into black townships or reporting on political gatherings,²³ liberal media models existed, examples of which are The Rand Daily Mail, Drum and the Weekly Mail which contested apartheid. (Touwen, 2011)

With the new constitution which enshrined media freedom and protected it under the Bill of Rights (Gordhan Barker in De Beer 1998, p.268) South Africa left behind such a system. Today the state may not censor media content or impose content and the media contests attempts to curtail freedom to publish. The role taken on by the media since democracy has predominantly been one of acting as a check on the state.

While scholars such as Claasen (1999) from the University of Natal's Centre for Cultural and Media Studies, propose that the libertarian watch dog stance of the media in South Africa (he describes as a capitalist force), is no different from the authoritarian system of apartheid, it is not within the scope of this research to evaluate normative theories from an ethical point of view. Normative theories concern my study in as much as they explain worldviews and the impact of these on choice of news values.²⁴

²³ The Protection of State Information Act, 1982, one of many draconian laws promulgated during apartheid, is now being replaced by the South African Protection of State Information Bill, which aims to regulate the classification, protection and dissemination of state information, weighing state interests up against transparency and freedom of expression will currently regulates these issues. Wikipedia [^ " 'Secrecy bill' a step backwards"](#). News24. 17 September 2011. Retrieved 19 October 2013.

²⁴ What was once a force for democracy is now an agent of capitalism - the libertarian philosophy cannot understand an economically unequal society which clashes with its presupposition of a level-playing field of free, rational individuals. As I have earlier described, the South African libertarian press criticised apartheid for its political repression, but their critique was weakened and was partially collusive because the libertarian

2.4.2. The Libertarian system

Several scholars concur that the South African media follows a libertarian model. (De Beer, 1989, 1990; Louw, 1984; Tomaselli & Louw, 1990)

De Beer (1989) describes the South African press as a “post apartheid media”, implying that the media has reacted to the authoritarian system imposed by apartheid. McQuail (2009) citing Merrill and Lowenstein (1979, p.164) concurs that the South African press has assumed a libertarian or social libertarian stance with minimal government controls. The press are free to publish and operate as businesses within the free market system.

Libertarianism defeated authoritarianism as a model for press policies in the 1700s, considered the age of enlightenment. Skjerdal (2001, p23) citing Grossberg, Wartella and Whitney (1998) points out that this had a direct influence on thinking regarding the role of the press. True liberty was defined as individual freedom from state intrusion.

Libertarianism is often confused with liberalism or neo-liberalism. While it is not in the interests of this study to debate the nuances of libertarianism, it must be noted that while liberalism refers to an ideological tradition that can be traced back to 17th century philosopher, John Stuart Mill, libertarianism is historically connected, but considers the state a necessary evil. Libertarians believe that the media should be free from government intervention. Liberalism on the other hand is an ideological, political model of how the state should function. (Masse, 2000)

Significantly the same principle of press freedom that governs libertarianism is also championed by the social responsibility model as Christians et al. (2009) point out. In other words, libertarianism is not the polar opposite of social responsibility.

press couldn't comprehend that apartheid was based on economic exploitation. (Claasen, 1999. Unpublished paper, *Between the devil of apartheid's legacy and the deep blue sea of a rationalised press*)

McQuail (1987, p.112) discusses free press theory which for him is the relabelled version of libertarian theory as described by Siebert et al. (1956). The underlying principles are those of the liberal democratic state which upholds the supremacy of the individual and the sovereignty of public will. Significantly he suggests that the theory needs to reconcile media independence with obligation to society. (McQuail 1987, p.110)

The viability of a libertarian inclined media in a developing country like South Africa is questioned by scholars advocating the need for the media to be socially responsible.

Fourie (2011, p.189) notes that while the role of the media is seen differently in different political systems, the libertarian system does not adequately meet the needs of a developing democracy such as South Africa.

The libertarian model in which the media is seen as the watchdog of government is the normative media model of an established democracy. On the other hand, the development media model proposes a much softer approach in terms of which critiquing the government should be second to nation building. The media in a developing democracy such as South Africa, are thus faced with the challenge of fulfilling conflicting roles. On the one hand the media are striving to adhere to the principles of the libertarian model and therefore have the responsibility to hold government accountable by, among other things, reporting on crime and corruption and contributing to the public debate on these issues. On the other hand we are not yet an established democracy and the principles of the development media model should also be kept in mind.

Curran (2002, p.121) notes that the prevalent characteristic of the libertarian model is its role as “the free market watch dog”. The role stipulates that the press has a duty to criticise government and an adversarial relationship between government and the press is a healthy one.

The principal democratic role of the media, according to liberal theory, is to act as a check on the state. The media should monitor the full range of state activity and

fearlessly expose abuses of official authority. The watchdog role is said to override in importance all other functions of the media. It dictates the form in which the media system should be organised. Only by anchoring the media to the free market, in this view, is it possible to ensure the media's complete independence.

Scholars including Curran (2002) and Christians et al. (2009) agree that the watch-dog role of the media need not negate socially responsible reporting.

2.4.3. Social Responsibility theory

Social Responsibility theory originated with the American initiative - The Commission on Freedom of the Press (Hutchins, 1994). This was the result of a growing awareness that the free market had failed to deliver expected benefits to society (McQuail 1987, p.117)

It was a reaction to the libertarian American media and called for a "socially responsible press" that conceived of liberty as anchored in society as a whole rather than the individual. Like the libertarian model the social responsibility model also emphasises the press obligation to society but it interprets the obligation differently. While the libertarian model promotes the watchdog role of revealing wrong doing, the social responsibility model holds the press accountable for the information that it provides. According to this theory the press must provide a broad platform so that all citizens have an avenue to express their views. (McQuail 1987, p.116). The theory supposes that the press has a duty to lead the public, while giving it a voice and being independent.

In short, media ownership and control is to be viewed as a kind of public stewardship, not a private franchise, and there is a pronounced shift away from the relativism about ends, characteristic of free press theory and from optimism that the free marketplace ideas will really deliver the individual and social benefits claimed on its behalf. Under conditions of private ownership the media professional is not responsible to consumer and shareholder but also to society at large. (McQuail 1987, p.116).

It is the media's responsibility to use its powerful position to ensure appropriate delivery of information to audiences. If this does not occur, the state should intervene.

The power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such a responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it. (Siebert et al., 1956)

McQuail (1987, p.117) sums up the main principles of social responsibility theory as follows:

1. Media should accept and fulfil certain obligations to society
2. These obligations are mainly to be met by setting high or professional standards of informativeness, truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance
3. In accepting and applying these obligations, media should be self regulating within the framework of law and established institutions
4. The media should avoid whatever might lead to crime, violence or civil disorder or give offence to minority groups
5. The media as a whole should be pluralist and reflect the diversity of their society, giving access to various points of view and to rights of reply
6. Society and the public, following the first named principle, have a right to expect high standards of performance and intervention can be justified to secure the public good
7. Journalists and media professionals should be accountable to society as well as to employers and the market

It would be simplistic to interpret the tension between government and the media as merely reflecting the tension between the social responsibility and the libertarian systems, proposed in Skjerdal (2001). The social responsibility model supports the idea that the press has a nation building function in tandem with government, therefore at times cooperation is necessary for the social good. Applied literally the libertarian system appears to push state and press apart so that the press can enact its watch-dog role.

However, as noted previously, while social responsibility theory appears to be the reverse side of the libertarian coin, Christians et al. (2009, p.125) argue that the libertarian stance is not incongruent with social responsibility, in that both support the premise that a role of the media is to be critical on behalf of the public and in the interest of truth.

I will elaborate on this position when I attempt to answer my third research question, which examines the state of development communication and journalism in South Africa.

2.4.4. The developmental media system

De Beer (1998, p.19) supports the idea of the social responsibility system as well suited to new democracies like South Africa. He sees it as a suitable Western version of the developmental system which is found in Third World or developing countries

The developmental system reflects the social responsibility model characterised by social responsibility: responsible, positive reporting, information, general good, accountable, trustworthy, understanding, transparency, nation building. (McQuail 1987, p.113).

This system falls between the extremes of the Marxist-Leninist or the authoritarian system: De Beer maintains that “this system does not favour either the extremes of the Marxist-Leninist or the authoritarian system, neither can it afford the ‘luxury’ of the social responsibility or libertarian systems. He suggests the following as characteristics of the developmental system:

1. Sensitivity to positive developmental tasks such as nation-building, economic or health plans. Content choice should reflect these. Priority should be given to economic, political, cultural and social development as a primary national task. This should be an overriding commitment.
2. Press restriction according to cultural, political, social and economic priorities and developmental needs of society. Further, in the interest of developmental needs, the state can restrict press operations. Censorship, subsidy and direct control can be used

3. While journalists enjoy freedom in information gathering and dissemination, they have a societal responsibility

Features of this system, which one might argue impinge on media freedom, include a press that can be restricted depending on the nation's needs, a press that should seek to unify the nation, and a press that should prioritise national culture and language. However, McQuail (1987, p.121) maintains that the right to press freedom must be weighed up against the economic system in which it finds itself. This could conditionally limit press freedom.

The one thing that gives most unity to a development theory of the media is the acceptance of economic development itself. This would include the notion of 'nation-building' as an overriding objective.

The implication is that although journalists are free interns of information gathering and dissemination of news, they do have responsibilities towards the nation.

2.4.5. Conclusion

A review of normative theories offers an important perspective to media conflict in South Africa and to this study. Scholars such as Fourie (2011) question the viability of a libertarian media in a developing country like South Africa. The media is a critical component of the developmental state. South Africa is in a crisis of poverty and other social ills. In this context the media and how it reports on government issues is significant and needs to be understood. There is the contention that the media has a different kind of social responsibility to that of more developed countries.

In her paper, "Social Responsibility in the Media", Middleton (2009) emphasises the significance of public interest. She points out the crucial role of the communications sector in shaping societal processes: the formation of public opinion and civil society movements, social and political development patterns. However she also notes that

Holding the press accountable for the level of responsibility of its actions implies having a clear idea of what this “responsibility” entails. In the words of Hodges who has attempted to assemble this kind of definition, “we cannot reasonably demand that the press give an account of itself or improve its performance until we determine what it is the press is responsible for doing” (Hodges, 1986).

This contention is relevant to this thesis which also posits that the media is an important bulwark against government infringements of human rights. The study offers evidence that in many occasions the watchdog role the media takes on in exposing wrongdoing in public hospitals has incentivised government to remedy the situation. The implication is that without media exposure human rights infringements would continue.

2.4.6. Beyond normative media models

Moving the normative debate forward, Christians et al. (2009) maintain Siebert et al’s (1956) seminal work is limited in that it was a response to the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press in the mid 1940’s. With the growth of media since World War II there was the need to articulate the relationship between media and politics.

Moreover, the press had become an institution, separate from the people and “it became more intelligent to talk about the public’s rights – the right to know, the right to free expression – rather than the press’s rights. The press had responsibilities, the public had rights.” Christians et al. (1995, p.5) citing Nerone (1995, p.4)

Much later McQuail (2000, p. 164) also noted that the role of the media in society is contested terrain in social and political theory. Most media are established to serve cultural, professional and commercial goals rather than to ideologically “serve society”.

Significantly while the liberal-pluralist and Marxist approaches which prevailed in the interwar period focused on how the media conditioned society, the interest in media

institutions and their work practices which emerged in the 60s marked a shift in focus. (Curran et al. 1987, p.11).

Reasons for this shift have been varied. In part it was prompted by some disillusionment with the capacity of “effects research” to fully explain the power of the media. The media came to be seen, not as an autonomous organisational system, but as a set of institutions closely linked to the dominant power structure through ownership, legal regulation, the values implicit in the professional ideologies of the media, and the structures and ideological consequences of prevailing modes of newsgathering.

Taking up the assertion by Curran et al. (1987) what follows is a critical review of cultural theories from media sociology which will shed light on the construction of news.

2.5. MEDIA SOCIOLOGY

2.5.0. Introduction

As stated previously, this study draws primarily from cultural theories situated in a framework of media sociology. Media sociology examines how news is produced. It takes into account organisational theory looking at newsrooms as professional institutions governed by “competing demands of professionalism, the market place and cultural traditions” (Schudson 2000, p.1).

However the research gives precedence to cultural rather than organisational theories. While organisational theories examining the impact of news room structure, routine and hierarchy are significant, the research interest lies in the final product, the words and content which shape the news report.

This cultural approach to analysing the print media’s response to the South African government’s development communication messages, will consider news as a structured genre, or a set of genres of public meaning making. (Schudson 2000, p.1).

2.5.1. From media ideology to media sociology

Berkowitz (2011, xiii) argues that the shaping of news can be seen from different vantage points. These represent different world views. He identifies three:

- the journalistic position
- the sociological organisation
- the cultural dimensions

The core tenets of the “journalistic” position concern ideals of objectivity and the mission of a journalist as standard bearer of the Fourth Estate.

According to Berkowitz (2011, p. xiii) the weakness of this ideological normative view is that it is based on a fallacious belief that news can ideally represent the real world, presenting an accurate picture of what is really out there.

This dualism regarding the nature of reality is evident in the discrepancy between government expectations and media output. Government believes the media should communicate developmental issues as achievements while the journalist’s professional mission is to investigate and highlight wrong doing. (Berkowitz 2011, p.xiii). The implication is that the objectivity of a news report is conditioned by point of view. One might ask the question: Is the public healthcare service producing competent healthcare workers as claimed, or is nursing incompetence and negligence claiming lives? I will take up this point in Chapter seven of the report which discusses implications for development communication.

Berkowitz (2011, p.xiii) maintains that:

Relying on this professional ideology to understand news actually masks understanding by making normative judgements about what is good and bad about journalism. A news article can be depicted as a good story or a bad

story. Likewise the article's writer can be called "a good journalist" if the story as seen by other journalists is "right" or as "not a good journalist" if a story does not conform to professional convention. As a professional ideology, the journalist's perspective may be applied to criticise the accuracy or slant of the news we encounter, but underlying this critique rests the unspoken belief that news can ideally represent the real world, presenting an accurate picture of what is really out there.

In the context of print media reporting of government's development communication messages, the journalist who has exposed hospital negligence regards this news as a truthful presentation of reality. Government on the other hand finds this as an incorrect news interpretation of what is out there. This discrepancy is highlighted by Joseph (2013)²⁵

I don't agree with the way the media reports on the health care system. They are not interested in reporting development. There is a tremendous lack of awareness and understanding of what is taking place. Our media write to destroy trust and that is a total contradiction of what we decided to do as a democracy.

Berkowitz proposes two other vantage points, the view that news is a socially and culturally created product like any other and also that news is shaped in a social organisational environment with culturally agreed upon meanings.

2.5.2. Supporting the cultural construct of news

Schudson (2000, p.178) is a proponent of the view that one needs to re-examine the sociology of news production if one wants to understand news. He notes the extent to which the press in liberal societies is an adversarial, often nihilistic force that denigrates government, but refuses to attribute news selection to the ideology of a hegemonic system.

²⁵ Joseph, D. 2013. Chief Director Human Resources, GDoH: 31 January

Differing from critical political economists like McChesney (2001b) he is sceptical of the link between ownership of news organisations and news coverage.²⁶

According to Schudson (2000, p1):

Today if any of the perspectives discussed here needs special advocacy, it may well be the social or social organisational one. The conventionalised opposition in media studies programmes between 'political-economic' and 'cultural approaches' has too often neglected the specific social realities that can be observed at the point of news production. This is where news sources, news reporters, news organisation editors and the competing demands of professionalism, the market place and cultural traditions collect around specific choices of what news to report and how to report it.

The schism between ideologists and culturalists is evident in the literature. While ideologists maintain that it is possible to get beyond organisational limitations like deadlines and allow an accurate presentation of reality to prevail, Berkowitz (2011, p.xiv) argues that

in order to go beyond judging news and move towards understanding it, we must step aside from professional ideology, avoiding the notion that news can be neutral.

Christians et al. (2009) distinguish between two types of theories of the press: real or descriptive and ideal or normative. According to these authors the media and society relationship can be articulated at two levels, i.e. theories describing the factual role of the media in society or theories prescribing normative tasks for the media in society. While normative theory sheds light on why different kinds public discourse lead to better collective decisions, organisational and cultural theories are more attuned to the realities of professional organisations.

²⁶ However Schudson (2000 p.1) agrees that advertisers are attracted to papers that attract small concentrated elite audiences leading publications to tailor their news content to a select elite audience.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) maintain we should forget about normative theories and look more closely at actual arrangements connecting media with society. One might argue that the two reflect different perspective from which to understand media studies. Normative theories shed light on conflicts resulting from different points of view, exemplified by (view 1) the dissonance between government development communication expectations of the media and (view 2) the sociological and cultural factors that shape the news.

2.5.3. Criteria for newsworthiness affecting gatekeeping

The process of gatekeeping, first articulated by psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1947, describes how news is selected and what to publish is filtered in accordance with the culture of the publication. (Schudson, 2000, citing White, 1950; Gieber, 1964)

Gurevitch et al (1982, p. 37) argue that gatekeeping is a product of organisational culture rather than ideology as political economists will claim.

Weaver et al. (2006) note that journalists themselves are at the heart of decisions regarding newsworthiness. This assumption is directly tied to the concept of the journalist as a gatekeeper — someone who selects what to cover and how to cover it (Bennett, 2007).

Early inquiries into gatekeeping theory concentrated on the decisions of a single gatekeeper. David Manning White (1950) cited in Singer (2011, p.53) examined the decisions made by a newspaper wire editor in selecting stories to publish. White concluded that the wire editor's decisions were subjective and based on his beliefs concerning newsworthiness. Cassidy (2008) cites studies by Snider (1967): Hirsch (1977) and Bleske (1991) showing similar findings. According to Cassidy (2008) this implied the existence of a cultural norm which explained the decisions taken, based on commonly held views among the journalism profession about whether or not a story is newsworthy.

News was framed or presented in a certain manner and according to Singer (2011, p.62) the way the story is framed goes beyond the journalist's conscious choice.

A key question then becomes who or what shapes the journalists' agenda and that has proven an extremely complex question to address. Influence comes from both inside and outside the journalists' environment through everything from interpersonal communication to work routines and norms, to the efforts of news makers to attract attention, and more (Shoemaker and Reese, 1991)

In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but also how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position.

My research suggests that public impressions of the public healthcare service have been critically shaped by the way issues are framed in media reports.

2.5.4. Normative interpretation of cultural theories

As mentioned previously my intention is to base my research on a framework of normative and cultural media theories. I would apply normative theories to shed light on why print media represents government in a certain manner, and why this is not acceptable to government. (Christians et al. 2009, p.3.). Cultural theories would be used to examine the actual image projected in the news report.

Schudson, (2000, p.15) argues that while organisational views looks at relationships between people in a newsroom, the cultural view examines the symbolic way in which journalists interpret facts in line with their cultures and backgrounds.

Social organisational approaches do not focus on the cultural givens within which everyday interaction happens in the first place. These cultural givens, while they may be uncovered by detailed historical analysis, cannot be extrapolated from features of social organisation at the moment of study. They are a part of culture – a given symbolic system within which and in relation to which reporters and officials go about their duties.

This supports a normative interpretation of cultural theories. The reporter assimilates the newsroom culture, the way of thinking and the approach to interpreting news. My research suggests that if a normative model which supports the watchdog role prevails in the newsroom, the reporter will be inclined to focus on hospital negligence rather than government policy in public healthcare.

A reporter from the Sowetan notes that government and the media understand news differently:

Government has money and services are expected of them. But they expect to be praised for something they are supposed to do anyway, like build a hospital. They need to understand what a story is. (Sifile, 2013)²⁷

Shedding light on the impact of culture on the presentation of news, Hanitzsch (2011, p.33) describes how market orientation influences gatekeeping. Citing Masterton (1996) and Xiaoge (2005) he points out how the concept of social responsibility is understood differently in East and West. In the East responsibility of the media linked to the preservation of social harmony and respect for leadership.

When Market orientation is high journalism gives emphasis to what the audiences want to know at the expense of what they should know. Journalism cultures on this pole of the dimension champion the values of consumerism; they focus on everyday life issues and individual needs. Audiences are not addressed in their role as citizens concerned with the social and political issues of the day but in their role as clients and consumers whose personal fears, aspirations, attitudes and emotional experiences become the center of attention (Campbell, 2004). Market oriented journalism is driven by a rating mentality and takes place in commercial media where the perspective of the individual is increasingly privileged (Bourdieu, 1998; Hallin & Mancini, 2004).

²⁷ Sifile, L. 2013. health reporter at the Sowetan: 30 January.

A similar normative inclination would condition the way print media journalists choose to focus on the patient who has suffered negligence at the hands of staff rather than report developmental aspects of public hospital policy. This is a central question that I attempt to answer in the study.

2.5.5. Cultural theories regarding agenda setting, framing and priming

The media propensity to shape and artificially frame news is emphasised in the literature describing agenda setting theory. The concept of “framing” is recognised as a central construct. Readers are influenced by media presentation of news stories in the way they interpret and rate items on the public agenda (Chyi & McCombs, 2004).

McCombs and Shaw (1977) argued that the most important effect of the mass media was "its ability to mentally order and organise our world for us." The news media "may not be successful in telling us what to think," the authors declared, "but they are stunningly successful in telling us what to think about."

Erving Goffman (1974) identified frames as cognitive structures which unconsciously lead the individual to what is to be noticed and which define that situation for the individual. Agenda setting theory posits that frames can be manufactured.

Tuchman (1978, p.4) agrees that in disseminating information news organisations both circulate and shape knowledge. Tuchman emphasises that the media is a “social institution... embedded in relationships with other institutions.” The media organise information in “frames” to suit an agenda. The question here is: what agenda?

Whereas critical political economy of the media theories proposed by Herman and Chomsky (1998) and McChesney (2001) interpret agenda setting propensity as intentional and related to media ownership, cultural theorists explain the propensity to frame issues in accordance with criteria of newsworthiness.

A frame is the central organising idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue. News and information has no intrinsic value unless embedded in a

meaningful context which organises and lends it coherence. News stories can be understood as narratives, which include information and factual elements to be sure, but also carry an implicit message. Tuchman (1978, p.5)

In journalistic parlance, frames relate to news angles. If one considers this analogy, frames also tie in strongly with news values, in a media quest for new angles (novelty).

Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) assert that "Nothing in the [journalism] field is more important than decisions about what is worthy of publication or broadcast", noting that much of the criticism about the news media concerns the selection of news stories.

Pertinent to this theory of agenda-setting is the assumption that the press and the media do not objectively reflect reality; they filter and shape it. The other significant issue is that media focus on select issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than others.

Agenda-setting theory sheds light on the pervasive role of the media in political communication systems. The South African government is concerned about the influence of the media and interprets print media focus on the negative as adversarial. (ANC document, 2002)

Iyengar (1991) evaluates the framing effects of television news on political issues. He found that the framing of issues by television news shapes the way the public understands the causes of and the solutions to central political problems. Television news is routinely reported in the form of specific events or particular cases — Iyengar calls this "episodic" news framing — as distinct from "thematic" coverage which places political issues and events in some general context. "Episodic framing," he says, "depicts concrete events that illustrate issues, while thematic framing presents collective or general evidence."

Iyengar found that subjects shown episodic reports were less likely to consider society responsible for the event, and subjects shown thematic reports were less likely to consider individuals responsible. In one of the clearest demonstrations of this phenomenon, subjects who viewed stories about poverty that featured homeless or unemployed people (episodic

framing) were much more likely to blame poverty on individual failings, such as laziness or low education, than were those who instead watched stories about high national rates of unemployment or poverty (thematic framing). Viewers of the thematic frames were more likely to attribute the causes and solutions to governmental policies and other factors.

Similarly my study suggests hospital negligence is thematically framed leaving the reader with the impression that the system is to blame. This is evident in the framing of a report in the Star (Milford, 2012)²⁸:

We shouldn't, however, allow our feelings about how perfect we expect nurses and doctors to be to blind us to the real problem, which is the shambles in which the Department of Health has left our healthcare system. It is not clinicians on the ground who decide how many hospitals there should be, how many beds those hospitals should contain, what services those hospitals should offer and how well those hospitals should be staffed. Those things are decided by administrators, as they should be. Those administrators are appointed by the Department of Health, also as it should be. And the Department of Health is run by a bunch of politicians, who are doing the most terrible job of representing the interests of the people who put them there.

Both Iyengar (1982) and Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007) note that the concept of priming relates how the media shapes social opinion. Where framing centers on political loading of the presentation of news, consciously or not, priming has to do with drawing attention to certain issues even in a neutral manner. The public health system is negatively portrayed so often in the print media that many citizens are afraid to be admitted to a public hospital and the commonly held belief is that "one goes to a public hospital to die". Again, this can be attributed to thematic media framing.

2.6 NEWSVALUES AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.6.0. Introduction

²⁸ Milford, K (2012) the Star: 10 July

The conceptual framework of news values, which explains the gatekeeping practices of the media and their criteria for publication, underpins my research. (Galtung and Ruge, 1965). This chapter reviews the literature concerning theory of news values, showing that news values play a significant role in the way journalists shape stories. My own observation, supported by literature pertaining to public relations, is that media relations officials also apply news values in writing media releases. This observation is relevant to my study in its evaluation through content analysis of print media uptake of news values in government media releases.

News values theories are widely debated in the literature by scholars such as Gans (1979); Tuchman (1979); Manning (2001) and Hall et al. (1978). While some scholars question whether news values are not merely artificial constructs peculiar to journalism, (McQuail, 2000; Tunstall 1971, p.263) others see them as reflecting social values as well (Gans, 1979).

Pioneers, Galtung and Ruge (1965) never proposed news values were peculiar to news alone. On the contrary they saw news values as a product of culture. They maintained that journalists used the same logic in reporting events that people apply to filtering and making sense of information about their world. (Gans, 1979; Bell, 1991).

In an analysis of how the Sowetan and The Star respond to government health messages my study considers these news values as an operational factor in a story “making or not making the paper”. The research showed how similar news values operational in GDoH media releases, confirmed the negative incidents described in the media reports.

In identifying news values in the GDoH media releases as well as print media reports, my research supports assertions by Gans (1979), Bell (1991), Galtung and Ruge (1965) and Hall (1978) that news values are not exclusive to the news room or unique to journalism. In this context my study recognises that while journalists apply news values in the construction of news, so too may communicators in compiling media releases. This holds specifically if the communicator aims to attract media attention. Media relations officials in public as well as private sectors are schooled to include news values in their media releases. Articles such as

the one by Sanders, K. (2013) *News Values – the secret to a great angle for your press release* are found online and in media relations manuals.²⁹ Zoch (2006, p.250) maintains:

Most research has determined that although public relations practitioners do not have complete control over the outcome of their information subsidies, they can increase their value and chances for success if they focus on certain news values.

2.6.1. News values and news worthiness

News values have been established theoretically as representing determined attributes. This helps identify and define them for analysis. This theoretical formalisation of news values has contributed to the training of journalists and serves for research purposes.

Since Galtung and Ruge (1965) first identified 12 so called news values which make an issue or event newsworthy enough to be reported, 40 years of research has contributed significantly to their list. (Braun, 2009). Scholars I refer to in my research include Schultz (2011, p.85); Lee (2009, p.176); Harcup and O'Neill (2001, p.279); McGregor (2002).

For the purposes of my study I have chosen to highlight the following news values which predominate in my samples of both news reports and media releases. They will be coded in my content analysis:

- timeliness – current affairs or new information (novelty)
- impact – the more people an issue affects the more likely it is to be reported
- meaningfulness – the more relevant an event is the more likely it is to be reported
- unexpectedness – if an event is unexpected it will be reported
- personification – if the issue can be represented as people it will be reported
- negativity – an event with a negative outcome is more likely to be reported
- conflict – between people or interests
- sensation – something that stimulates feeling or emotion in the reader

²⁹ <http://oxygenagency.co.uk/news-values-the-secret-to-a-great-angle-for-your-press-release/>

Harcup & O'Neil (2001) citing Galtung and Ruge (1965) show how news values interrelate operationally according to certain hypotheses. The "distortion" hypothesis suggested that news values may be exaggerated when they were appeared. The "replication" hypothesis suggested that they would be further emphasised as they passed through the production process. The "additivity" hypothesis added that the more news values an event possessed, the more likely it was to become news. The "complementary" hypothesis suggested that in the absence of one news value the event could become strong by showing one or more of the others. The implication is that news values do not work in isolation, but reinforce one another and the news item accumulates impact.

McGregor (2002) notes that "sensation" as a news value is driven by "visualness" and "emotion" which are television derived.

Her premise is that the more an event exhibits an emotional sub-text, the more likely that it will be selected as news. This hypothesis, she maintains, links what is selected as news to both the content inherent in the news story and its reception by the audience. The implication is that events heighten emotions in common news when they contain elements of human interest dilemmas, tragedy, survivors, children and animals. She compares this with the concept of "pathos" described by Aristotle. She recalls Iyengar and Kinder (1987) who maintained that the highest calling achieved by television news is "the communication not of information or analysis but of raw human experience."

McGregor (2002) notes that the criterion of negativity has been popularised in the concept of "bad news sells" which she maintains is "no less real for being a cliché". She cites Hall et al., (1978) who pointed out that when reporting crime, the aspect of negativity and violence were given primary news value status. This fits in with Galtung and Ruge's "distortion hypothesis"

My research offers evidence that the "distortion hypothesis" is active when public healthcare issues are reported in the print media. The news values given status relate to themes such as negligence, financial wastage, harm to patients.

News values describing suffering, hurting people and the horror of vast wastage of money and health predominate. Most of the legal cases against the department regard children dramatically maimed at birth. Human interest and emotion characterise media reporting on the public sector healthcare.

2.6.2. Study approach to news values theories

My study considers two interrelated conceptual strands from the literature describing news values. The first points to the culture of news values in a sociological perspective; the second brings in normative implications.

1. **Sociological cultural construct:** News values constitute criteria for publication and are the end product of a complex process of sorting and selecting according to socially and culturally constructed categories (Hall et al., 1978)
2. **Normative interpretation:** News values are an outcome of organisational socialisation (Hall, 1978; Galtung and Ruge, 1965) and have normative implications (Gans, 1979). The same news values reflect social norms and values active in society. Galtung and Ruge (1965); Gans (1979)

2.6.2.1. Cultural construct of news values

Schultz (2011, p.83) agrees that news values reflect a predominant cultural view of social discourse. However the understanding of newsworthiness is learned in the organisational structure of the newsroom. An intern in a newsroom will have less sense of what constitutes a story than a journalist who has been in the newsroom for a while and has absorbed the culture that leads to the understanding of what constitutes a story.

Earlier on, Hall (1978) referred to this newsroom acquisition of news values as if assimilated by cultural osmosis:

Although they are nowhere written down, formally transmitted, or codified, news values seem to be widely shared as between the different news media,...and form a core element in the professional socialisation, practice and ideology.

News values are said to constitute the final product of news. News indeed is

an end product of a complex process which begins with a system of sorting and selecting of events and topics according to a socially constructed set of categories. (Hall et al. 1978, p. 53)

Cohen and Young (1973, p.183) agree that news selection is a logical outcome of a particular way of working and of shared criteria of what makes material newsworthy.

According to Hall et al. (1978, p.197) these shared criteria for news values also represent the social values that can be easily identified by the readers. The shared professional and cultural view of news “is located within a range of known social and cultural identification.”

2.6.2.2. Normative interpretation of news values

Gans (1979, p.139) regards news values in a normative context, pointing out that:

Journalists try hard to be objective but neither they nor anyone else can in the end proceed without values. Furthermore reality judgements are never altogether divorced from values..... if a news story dealing with activities which are generally considered undesirable and whose descriptions contain negative connotations then the story implicitly expresses a value about what is desirable. In the process the news also assumes a consensus about values that may, or may not exist for it reminds the audience of values that are being violated and assumes that the audience shares these values.

Citing Peter Schrag, Gans (1997, p.39) maintains

Every reporter operates with certain assumptions about what constitutes normative behaviour, if not the good of society

Supporting the normative view, some researchers see news values as a form of framing unique to the Western press. Hartley (1982, p.80) discussing Galtung and Ruge's original 1965 study of news values, agrees that

news values are neither natural nor neutral. They form a code which sees the world in a very particular (even peculiar) way.

2.6.3. Conclusion

Literature discussing choice of what to publish and how to frame is of significant interest to my research. I ask questions like: why did reporters choose to write about nurses' negligence and corrupt hospital officials rather than focus on developments in the public health sector. The selection of what to publish and how to frame it results in gatekeeping. The identification and choice of news values also leads to gatekeeping.

It is commonly held that the newsworthiness of a report will heighten its appeal to readers and enhance the marketability of the publication and so attract advertising. Galtung & Ruge (1981, p.52) note that the journalist should understand what will get reader attention. Harcup and O'Neill (2001) commenting on Galtung and Ruge's news value theory, add that news values are very relevant and journalists, whether consciously or subconsciously, select and shape stories according to a methodology geared to attract readers.

This is not intended to justify the journalist's choice to write about nurses' negligence and corrupt hospital officials, instead of investigating developments in the public health sector. My intention is rather to explain how the choice operates.

CHAPTER THREE - RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.0. Introduction

This chapter gives an overview of the research methodology used in this study. It also offers theoretical definitions of the methods selected for the data capture and analysis. Finally

the discussion will relate the methodology and findings to the relevant literature. The chapter will unfold as follows: research design, methods of data collection; research approach; quantitative methods; qualitative methods; data processing and analysis; limitations of the study.

3.1. Research design

Research designs describe the plans and procedures for research that start with broad assumptions and then look at detailed methods of data collection and analysis. The research design, according to Creswell (2009, p.3) should be informed by the “worldview” assumptions the researcher brings to the study.

This takes into account the strategy of enquiry and specific methods and procedures that translate the approach into practice. Creswell (2009, p.5)

Creswell (2009) presents four philosophical worldviews:

1. Postpositivism in which the researcher works deductively, beginning with a theory and then collects data which either supports or refutes the theory
2. Social constructivism in which the researcher works inductively, examining a complexity of social views people have of the world. This is shaped by their personal, cultural and historic experiences.
3. Advocacy and participatory holds that research inquiry needs to consider politics and political agenda.
4. The Pragmatic Worldview arises out of actions, situations and consequences. It focuses on the research problem and then inductively uses pluralistic approaches to understand it

The Pragmatic Worldview best informs my research as it is not committed to one system of philosophy and reality. (Creswell 2009, p.10). It uses mixed research methods and does not see the world as an absolute unity with fixed truths. My research, in accordance with the pragmatic worldview, will consider social, historical, political and other contexts. I

considered the pragmatic worldview most compatible with my research enquiry into print media response to government's development communication messages. It is not dogmatic and allowed me the freedom of choice and the flexibility to use multiple methods and critically examine different worldviews and assumption.

3.2. Method of data collection

Creswell (2009, p.178) advises the researcher to clarify the boundaries of the study and purposefully select documents that will help understand the problem and the research question.

To assess print media response to the South African government's development communication imperative regarding health care I analysed reports from two major Gauteng daily newspapers, The Star and the Sowetan during the period 1 January 2012 to 30 December 2012.

The Star is one of the titles under Independent News & Media South Africa group recently acquired by Sekunjalo Media Consortium. It has a circulation of 102 000 and a readership of 498 000 (ABC: April to June 2013)

The Sowetan is owned by Times Media Group, formally Avusa and has a circulation of 99 000 and a readership of 517 000. (ABC: April to June 2013)

These publications are read by a cross section of middle income racial groups in Gauteng. Both are well established and are deemed representative of South African mainstream daily newspapers and the coverage given by commercial print media to public health issues and specifically hospitals. Both publications are bracketed among the top ten newspapers which reach an LSM³⁰ 7-10 readership which represents 48% of newspaper readership. (Chronis, 2012)³¹

³⁰ SAARF's Universal Living Standards Measure (SU – LSM) www.saarf.co.za

³¹ Chronis, M. (2012) The Media Online: 18 December

The report samples were drawn from SABINET, an online repository that stores media archives from major print media publications. The research tool enables the user to run specific searches for topics covered by the media in specified timeframes. The database referred to was that of the South African Print Media. The sample was generated through specific key words entered on the SABINET database. Keywords entered were: hospital, healthcare, Gauteng Department of Health

For the period January to December 2012 the research tool generated 50 reports for the Star and 26 for Sowetan.

The media releases were obtained from the Department of Health communications unit but are available on the Gauteng DOH website.

3.2.1. Public Health Services development communication messages

I referred to content from the Gauteng DOH website – Health Priorities and Health topics to provide a more comprehensive understanding of what issues and messages government wanted to communicate regarding Public Sector Healthcare Development.³² These included intentions from the National Health Development Plan 2030 and Programmes and initiatives supporting health. Specifically I referred to the content of the National Department of Strategic Plan 2010/11 – 2012/2013 regarding priorities for the period 2009 to 2014. **(Appendix iv)**. The ten points are replicated in the GDoH website.³³ From these core tenets I derived a baseline of public health sector development communication messages I would compare with the content of media releases and media reports. These would help me define “development communication messages”. **(Appendix v GDoH 10 Point Plan)**

³² Ten point plan contains public health sector development communication messages

³³ <http://www.health.gpg.gov.za/Pages/10-Point-Plan.aspx>

3.3. Research approach and methodology

I used both quantitative and qualitative research methods in the study. Creswell (2009 p.3) points out that

Qualitative and quantitative approaches should not be viewed as polar opposites or dichotomies; instead they represent different ends on a continuum (Newman & Benz, 1998). A study tends to be more qualitative than quantitative or vice versa. Mixed methods research resides in the middle of this continuum because it incorporates elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

The intention was to first measure quantitatively three issues: 1) to what extent are GDoH developmental intentions reported in The Star and the Sowetan in the period 2) to what extent do reports in these publications in the same period depict the GDoH as not fulfilling its developmental intentions³⁴? 3) to what extent do these reports depict the GDoH as fulfilling its developmental intentions?

These were compared with a sample of 42 media releases sent out by the Gauteng Department of Health in the same period. As mentioned above I also referred to strategic documents and DOH website content 34 above to confirm and bolster the message content of the media releases

Finally the data obtained was coded and analysed qualitatively enabling me to answer the questions: 1) How do the Star and Sowetan depict the GDoH in their fulfilment or less of their public sector health development mandate? 2) What news values emerge in the media reports? 3) What development communication messages showing government fulfilling its health development mandate are evident in the GDoH media releases and website?

3.3.1 Quantitative methods

Badenhorst (2008, p.92) explains “quantitative” as expressing quantities and asking the question “how much?”. This is in answer to three other questions i.e. 1) what demonstrable

³⁴ The Department of Health developmental intentions to bring quality healthy care to all citizens is captured in the 10-point plan outlined in the National Department of Health Strategic Framework 2010/11 – 2012/13

reality is out there? 2) how do we know what is out there? 3) how can I distance myself objectively to show this?

The quantitative method depends on counting, numbering, coding and analysis of characteristics of an event or issue in terms of numerical and statistical methods and representations. According to Creswell (2009, p.4) it is a way of testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables can be measured so that numbered data can be analysed using statistical procedures

As mentioned above I used quantitative methods to measure the extent to which Gauteng Department of Health developmental intentions were reported in The Star and the Sowetan in the given research period as fulfilling or not fulfilling its developmental intentions.³⁵

3.3.2 Qualitative methods

I used qualitative data analysis to understand the content of news reports, media releases and semi-structured interviews with journalists and government officials in the health sector. Patton (2002, p.453) defines qualitative content analysis as

Any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings.

Zhang and Wildemuth (2009)³⁶ point out that qualitative analysis goes beyond extracting objective content from texts or interviews. The method allows the researcher to examine meanings, themes and patterns that may be manifest or latent. It allows researchers to understand social reality in a subjective but scientific manner by identifying, analysing and comparing themes.

Creswell (2009,p.184) adds that

(qualitative data analysis) is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions and writing memos throughout the study. I say

³⁵ The Department of Health developmental intentions to bring quality healthy care to all citizens outlined in the ten point plan (2010)

³⁶ Zhang, Y. and Wildemuth, B. (2009) Qualitative Analysis of Content
https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~yanz/Content_analysis.pdf

that qualitative data analysis is conducted concurrently with gathering data, making interpretations and writing reports.

He emphasises that analysis is carried out while the research is underway.

While interviews are going on, for example, the researcher may be analysing an interview collected earlier, writing memos that may ultimately be included as a narrative in the final report, and organising the structure of the final report.

Qualitative research investigates human choices and motivation. Schwandt (2001) describes how qualitative methods help researchers seek meaning in human action. The researchers depend on description of what occurs to express their data. Badenhorst (2005, p.326) suggests the key question is: What does this signify? Qualitative research allows for interpretation of multiple realities and sees the importance of researching what is out there in context with all its complexity. It is necessary to immerse oneself in the research context to understand meaning.

This same process obliged me to question continually the journalist's choice to report failings in the public health sector rather than achievements and the ethical consequences of this selection via gatekeeping.³⁷

This qualitative approach enabled me to interpret and understand development communication messages on the GDoH website and in the media releases sent out.

In addition, the qualitative method was used to provide information about what impression was given by the two dailies regarding public health development. This was gauged by coding and analysing evident themes in the reports and comparing them with themes from the media releases and website defining development communication messages. These themes took the form of phrases and words representing news values, or aspects of events that make them more likely to receive coverage. I refer to definitions by Galtung and Ruge (1965); Gans (1979); Cohen and Young (1973) Hall et al.(1978, p.53) in literature regarding newsworthiness.

³⁷ Singer (2011, p.62) notes that ".....journalists become not gatekeepers, but sense makers, not agenda setters but interpreters of what is both credible and valuable."

3.3.2.1. Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were not my primary research method but served to add nuance and give background to the findings of my content analysis. Semi-structured interviews with reporters and government communication officials provided useful context to my news reports and media release samples. I interviewed two government healthcare officials³⁸ and two journalists (one from the Sowetan and one from the Star)³⁹ regarding intention and coverage of health issues and development.

Creswell (2009, p.175) argues that the researcher is the key instrument in qualitative research. This applies particularly to interviews. The researcher plans the interview and conducts the interview keeping a focus on the meaning that the participant holds about the problem or issue, rather than the meaning the researcher brings to the research or the literature. At the same time the researcher's interpretation is also influenced by their own backgrounds.

After a research report is issued, the readers make an interpretation as well as the participants, offering yet other interpretations of the study. With the readers, the participants and the researchers all making interpretations, it is apparent how multiple views of the problem can emerge. Creswell (2009, p.176)

In this way a holistic account and a picture of the issue in all its complexity is achieved.

According to O'Leary (2004, p.162) semi-structured interviews start with specific questions but allow a conversation to happen. As Bower, 1973, cited in Jensen (2002, p.240) puts it, "the best way to find out what people think about something is to ask them". Semi structured interviews allowed me to steer a purposeful conversation with the respondents, as well as the flexibility to redirect the course of discussion when responses fluctuate.

The aim of the semi-structured interviews with journalists was to understand:

1. how the journalist had obtained the information in the report

³⁸ Mrs Jennifer Jaffe, radiologist at Charlotte Maxekwe Academic Hospital; Ms. Thandiwe Mvuvu, public relations manager at Charlotte Maxekwe Academic Hospital

³⁹ Lindile Sifile, reporter at the Sowetan; Baldwin Ndaba, reporter at The Star

2. why the journalist had framed the issue in that particular manner
3. the extent to which information provided by government was useful to the report

The aim of the semi-structured interviews with health officials was to understand:

1. government's view of the way healthcare was covered by the media
2. how government expected the journalist to cover the specific health issue

3.3.3. Triangulation

Using both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a strategy of triangulation I attempted to achieve a richer evaluation of research evidence. Yeasmin and Rahman (2012) note that:

Triangulation is used to combine the advantages of both the qualitative and quantitative approach. Each method offers specific advantages as well as disadvantages.

Citing Young (1968) they point out that social reality is inherently complex and cannot be grasped in its entirety using only one method of investigation.

I employed qualitative analysis to examine the content of the media coverage in both publications. I assessed the angle and framing of each report through tabulation of key concepts pertaining to public health development messages. The aim was to answer the question "How are GDoH developmental messages framed in these two newspapers? The findings would assist me in answering the overall research question: "Is there a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media?"

Detailed content analysis revealed recurring themes which I tabulated and analysed, juxtaposing these with the literature to achieve a richer interpretation. (Creswell 2009, p.26)

Similarly, media releases sent out by the Gauteng Department of Health were analysed quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Quantitatively the research measured the number of

media releases sent out reporting developmental issues as well as the number of media releases sent out in answer to negative issues taken up by the media.

Qualitative analysis was used to examine the content of the media releases and assess the quality of their “newsworthiness” according to Galtung & Ruge’s (1965) definition. In this way the question could be answered: “what were the implications for print media response to this content?”

This was helpful in that I needed to interpret media uptake in the context of events occurring at the time. A qualitative methodology allowed me to interpret the news values that the journalists in question were attracted to in a situational context. i.e. information transmitted by government communicators might be seen in a different light from what was intended, in the context of events happening at the moment. For example positive news of a new paediatric unit might be overshadowed by negative news of babies dying due to staff negligence in a city hospital. This was understood through a qualitative paradigm in accordance with a pragmatic worldview. (Creswell 2009, p.11)

3.4. Data processing and analysis

I used a system of data or content analysis to process my results.

Semple (2003, p.209) explains content analysis as a “formal system for something we do informally rather frequently – draw conclusions from observation and content.” He notes that impressions observed are frequently coloured by their perspectives.

Significantly, he adds that content analysis can be both quantitative and qualitative and the two are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, he insists both methods are necessary.

He refers to the classic definition by Berelson (1952 p.18):

Content analysis is a research technique for objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.

The implication is that content analysis must be objective and not impressionistic. Categories need to be so tightly and precisely defined that different people can apply them

to the same content and get the same results. It must be carried out systematically, implying all content needs to be analysed in the same manner and according to the same categories. It must be quantified, i.e. the numerical values must be recorded and the frequency with which they occur. The manifest content must be coded and not the content the analyst feels is intended

Using content analysis I quantitatively assessed the extent to which both media releases and media coverage carried public health sector development communication messages or conversely, reflected these developments negatively or neutrally.

Finally I achieved a numerical data set of results measuring how often and how many reports in these two newspapers mention the public healthcare topic being researched. This quantitative approach provided an important baseline for my study.

I matched these with media releases sent out by the GDoH in the same period. I used the National Department of Health (DOH) website to fully capture public health development messages government wished to communicate. The website is a comprehensive repository of government public health programmes and strategies. My reasoning was that the journalist would look at a website and interview government representative to fully understand a situation or issue.

Comparing data from news reports, media releases and government website I intended to provide a quantitative answer to my first research question:

Is there a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media?

Finally the quantitative values that emerged from the news reports and from the media releases were examined in the context of the theoretical framework of the literature regarding news values. The aim was to test the hypothesis that the more newsworthy an event is judged to be the more prominently it will be covered by the print media. (Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

By situating the quantitative findings in the context of the theoretical framework of news values and newsworthiness I was further able to reflect on the title of research which questions print media response to government development communication messages in terms of their newsworthiness. At the same time I needed to weigh up the interpretation of newsworthiness in the context of social responsibility.⁴⁰

3.5. Data analysis procedure

Creswell (2009, p.186) notes that the process of data analysis involves making sense of text and image data. It involves preparing the data for analysis and moving deeper into understanding it.

Working first quantitatively then qualitatively I applied a system of thematic content analysis to the raw data in the newspaper reports and the media releases. This procedure is illustrated in the diagram below (Figure 1) adapted from Creswell (2009, p.185).

⁴⁰ Christians et al. (2009) note that social responsibility theory upholds the watchdog role of the media.

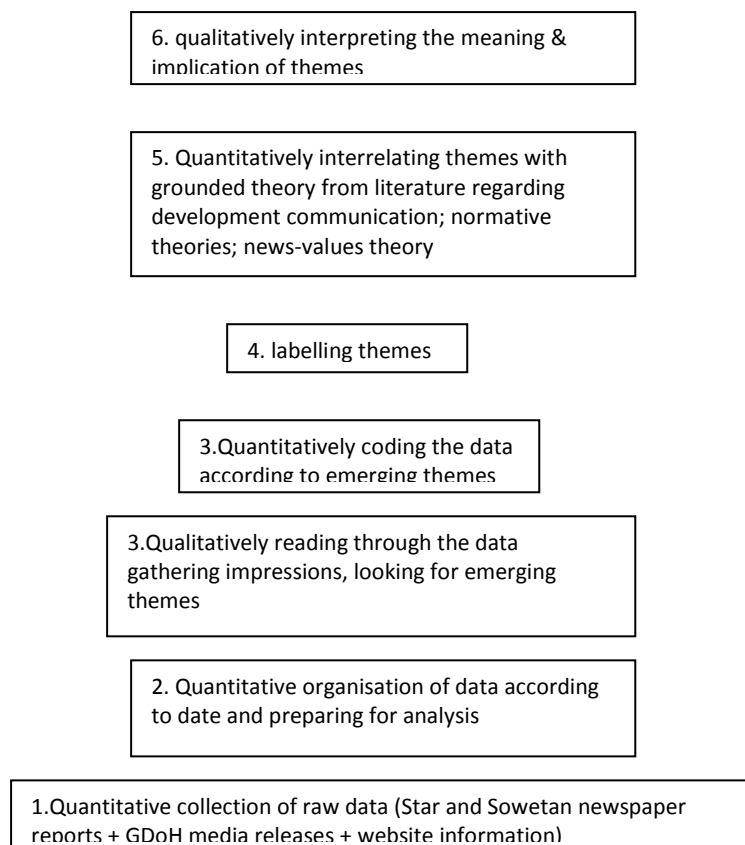


Figure 1: Thematic content analysis (Creswell 2009, p.185)

CHAPTER 4 - CONTENT ANALYSIS CATEGORIES

4.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the coding procedure used to assess the data gathered from the 62 report samples from The Star, 26 report samples from the Sowetan and 48 media releases sent by the DOH. This was achieved by following a process of quantitative and then qualitative content analysis.

The different applications of content analysis are discussed and my rationale for the choice of coding frames are identified and named.

4.1. Coding categories

In his description of coding systems, Creswell, (2009 p.186) differentiates between *preset* and *emerging thematic* categories of codes. The grid below shows material the code draws on (source) and the literature it relates to (theoretical framework)

Coding category	Source	Theoretical framework
Preset thematic category	Research questions and literature review	Normative media theories Development communication theories Theories of news values, framing and agenda setting
Emerging thematic category	News values as shared criteria representing social values	News values theory

Thematic content analysis allowed me to identify emergent categories from the data and compare these with preset categories. In this way I used a combination of preset and emerging categories which I coded. I derived the preset categories or concepts from the research questions, theoretical framework and literature review. Specifically these referred to frameworks concerning normative media theories; news values constructs and development communication theories. These would serve as theoretical baselines and my intention was to compare them with the content of the news reports and media releases.

The *emerging* categories are those themes that strike the observer unpremeditated from the data collected and are equivalent to news values, which according to Hall et al.(1978, p.53) are shared criteria which also represent the social values that can be easily identified by the readers.

The identification of thematic codes in the reports and media releases allowed me to systematically order my data so that I could interpret it. Creswell (2009, p.182) notes that the process of analysis involves making sense out of text and image data.

4.1.1. Preset thematic categories testing theories in literature review

According to Creswell (2009, p.186) preset thematic categories are predetermined categories that can be related to theoretical frameworks, allowing the researcher to test a theory. This was significant to my research as I wanted to test the theories discussed in my literature review, specifically the construct of news values. In addition my research topic questioned the “newsworthiness” of information given to the media by government.

Creswell (2009, p.186) advises the researcher to first read through the data to get a sense of the whole and to understand the general impression that emerged. Accordingly, I listed themes that struck me and listed these as categories.

4.1.2 Emerging thematic categories reflecting news values

Validating my application of content analysis, these *emerging* themes can be compared with interpretations of news values in the literature.

A predominant discussion in the literature is whether news values are a product of the news media or whether they occurred in real life as well. (Galtung and Ruge, 1965; Bell, 1991; Warner, 1970; Hall, 1978; Tunstall, 1971; Schultz, 2011). Two common observations relevant to this research shed light on the *emerging* nature of news values. Bell (1991) observes that:

News values approximate to the often unconscious criteria by which newswriters make their professional judgements as they process stories

And Schultz (2011, p.83) maintains:

news values reflect a predominant cultural view of social discourse

The observations by Bell (1991) and Schultz (2011) also reflect on the question regarding the viability of the libertarian stance of the South African print media with its *cultural* propensity to be attracted to watchdog news values which reveal government failings. South Africa has a development communication imperative which supports the social responsibility to report on developments. As I noted in my review of normative theories in Chapter 2, Siebert et al. (1956) argued that

The power and near monopoly of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide.

This will be taken up again in the conclusion to this study.

4.1.3. Preset thematic category coding frames

The preset categories reflected the literature and were coded as follows:

Category 1: Development communication messages: (code: lit: devcomm)

This category provided a baseline defining development communication against which to measure my findings. It also related directly to my research topic which evaluates print media response to the South African government's development communication messages in terms of newsworthiness.

It would also enable me to answer my first research question: Is there a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media?

As stated previously I referred to content in the National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010). (32). Specific development communication references would include:

- monitoring and improving hospital management and staff performance
- improving hospital infrastructure and services
- improving financial management of resources
- promoting lifestyle changes in support of health
- HIV/AIDs prevention and management including distribution of ARVs
- Primary healthcare and prevention of infant mortality
- Drug supply management

My references from my literature review were specifically

- Nora Cruz Quebral's, (1977) definition of development communication as: the art and science of human communication linked to a society's planned transformation from a state of poverty to one of dynamic socio-economic growth that makes for greater equity and the larger unfolding of individual potential.
- Comtask Report (1994); Dr Essop Pahad (History and Background of GCIS); defined government's development communication intention as: using the communication media to support development initiatives by disseminating messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects. The emphasis was on the need for an inclusive development communication drive to inform citizens.

Category 2: Normative media theories: libertarian model ([code lit: watchdog](#))

This category identified a normative media model, answering the question: what role should the media play? It would shed light on why the media responded to government communication messages as it did. It would enable me to answer my second research question: How does one account for this discrepancy?

My references from my literature review were specifically:

- the media is seen as the watchdog, holding government accountable by exposing wrongdoing (Curran 2002, p.121)

I would look for examples in the content of media reports of government not fulfilling obligations expressed in the National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010)⁴¹

Category 3: News values theories – (code lit: news values)

My intention was to evaluate the news values in the data including reports and media releases. These are defined by Johan Galtung and Mari Ruge (1965); Harcup & O'Neill (2001; 2009). They describe the gatekeeping practices of the mainstream news media. News values are defined as qualities of events that increase the likelihood of their being covered in the news

Category 5: Framing, Priming, Agenda setting, - code lit: agenda setting

My intention was to evaluate the framing of the news reports. I also wanted to quantify the framing in a certain manner which would result in priming as discussed in the literature by Tuchman, (1975); Iyengar et al (1982) and Scheufele & Tewksbury (2007). This quality of frame would determine the way government development communication intentions were perceived.

4.1.4. Emerging thematic category coding frames

Emerging thematic categories

The following emerging themes were identified in the news reports and coded:

1. negligence towards patients - (code: negligence)
2. medication abuse or deficiency – (code: med)
3. corruption by staff or authorities - (code: corruption)
4. financial implications to department - (code: finances)
5. deficiency in hospital resources or food - (code: resources)
6. staff shortage or ill-treatment - (code: staff)
7. development achievements and messages - (code: dev message)

⁴¹ See Footnote 32.

The following emerging themes were identified in the media releases and coded:

1. supplier debt settled following media exposure – (code: supplier debt)
2. task team set up to investigate following media exposure - (code: task team)
3. wasteful expenditure curbed following media exposure - (code: expenditure)
4. hospital equipment fixed or replaced following media exposure - (code: equipment)
5. more staff allocated following media exposure - (code: staff)
6. development messages: MEC visits to communities regarding inoculation, HIV/AIDS testing (code: dev message)

CHAPTER FIVE - FINDINGS OF THEMATIC CONTENT ANALYSIS

5.0.Introduction

In this chapter I present the findings and interpretations of the thematic content analysis of newspaper reports and the media releases. The chapter describes major findings relating to the objectives of my research which were to a) investigate the print media response to the GDoH's development messages and b) assess the quality of newsworthiness of these messages in the context of print media criteria for publication.

5.1. Thematic content analysis findings in news reports and media releases

I have adapted Creswell's (2009, p.185) diagram to explain the inductive procedure I used.

Step 1 & 2:

Firstly I organised my data for analysis. Data consisted of:

- 50 Star reports 2012 regarding public health care organised by date from 1 January to 30 December. (Appendix i)
- 26 Sowetan reports 2012 regarding public health care organised by date from 1 January to 30 December. (Appendix ii)
- 42 Gauteng Department of Health Media releases 2012 regarding public health care organised by date from 1 January to 30 December. (Appendix iii)
- Data from Department of Health (DoH) website including strategic documents showing development communication messages. (Appendix iv)
- National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010) (Appendix v)

Step 3

Creswell (2009, p.185) advises the researcher to first read through the data to obtain a general sense of the information and reflect on its overall meaning.

The overriding impression given by both the Sowetan and The Star news reports was that government hospitals were malfunctioning institutes, characterised by corruption and negligence, crippling newly born babies and children and resulting in expensive lawsuits that consumed financial resources. Suppliers weren't paid and resources not delivered in consequence, leading to further human suffering. In many cases doctors and nurses were corrupt and slothful causing distress and suffering to vulnerable patients, often children.

These impressions were heightened by the way the reports were framed using eye catching dramatic headlines and angling the first paragraph to depict an alarming angle. (Table 1). This initial representation allowed me to capture the impression through the eyes of the reader.

In my literature review, referring to scholars including Goffman (1974); McCombs and Shaw, (1972); and Tuchman, (1978) I discussed framing as a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is at issue. News and information has no intrinsic value unless embedded in a meaningful context which organizes and lends it coherence.

News stories can be understood as narratives, which along with information carry implicit messages.

In journalistic parlance, frames relate to news angles. If one considers this analogy, frames also tie in strongly with news values and novelty with the offer of new angles.

According to Erving Goffman (1974), frames are cognitive structures which unconsciously lead the individual to what is to be noticed and which define that situation for the individual..

Agenda setting theory posits that frames can be manufactured. McCombs and Shaw, (1972) showed how journalists generate consensus among audience through the way they frame particular issues and the prominence those issues are given.

According to Tuchman (1978, p.4.) the media organise information in "frames" to suit the agenda of making a report newsworthy.

The framing of public healthcare to imply non-fulfilment of its development intentions⁴² sets the agenda for a negative perception of government's developmental undertakings.⁴³ Tables 1 and 2 analyse examples (which I have tabulated for clarity and ease of understanding) from the two newspapers which reflect the observations made above. They are labelled with headings to describe how the narrative is framed. The "headline" is in itself a frame and the "lead paragraph" a frame which expands on the headline.

5.1.2. Table 1 showing examples from Sowetan

Date	Headline	Lead paragraph	Impressions	News values
31 – 1 -2012	Gauteng agrees to pay out damaged boy's claim	The war between the Gauteng government and the family of a 12-year-old boy who was left brain damaged at birth is set to end	Government caused harm to child. Subsequent paragraphs reveal negligence and notable sum of money wasted in settlement	personification; relevance; consequences proximity; timeliness; negativity; sensation
16-4-2012	Gauteng pays R,5bn	Service providers of Gauteng hospitals have not abandoned their part of the bargain and have continued to supply services despite the Department of Health owing them millions	Money squandered and mismanaged. Subsequent paragraphs reveal corruption	personification; relevance; consequences proximity; timeliness; negativity; sensation
12-7-2012	No room at Bara for burn patient	Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital management will investigate why emergency services took a critical patient to the hospital when there was no space to accommodate him	Hospital does not help critical patient. Subsequent paragraphs show disorganisation in admissions policy. Patient died.	sensation; conflict; consequences; personification proximity; timeliness
17-7-2012	Hospitals in cat scan crisis	The lack of working cat scanners in Gauteng's four biggest public hospitals has placed the	Sick people not diagnosed in time threatening prognosis. Subsequent paragraphs reveal	Consequences; personification; proximity; impact controversy; sensation.

⁴² In terms of the National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010)

⁴³ See footnote 15 defining negative perception in terms of news values with negative connotations

		province in a critical predicament, preventing doctors from diagnosing potentially deadly diseases.	maladministration resulting in non payment of suppliers.	Timeliness
16-8-2012	Patient refused treatment – ‘doctor told me to buy R50,000 medication’	A patient with kidney cancer was allegedly turned away at Helen Joseph Hospital in Johannesburg by a doctor who told him to buy his own treatment worth R50,000 before he could be operated on.	Sick unemployed patient in pain told to buy his own medication by corrupt doctor. Hospital did not have medication and did not offer alternative.	sensation; consequences; proximity; controversy; unexpectedness; Personification; conflict timeliness

5.1.3. Table 2 showing examples from The Star

Date	Headline	Lead paragraph	Impression	News values
30-1-2012	Nurses are afraid to work in ill-equipped hospitals	Overcrowding, a lack of resources, overworked and underpaid and a lack of functional equipment. These are among the reasons why professional nurses are turning their backs on the public healthcare system for more lucrative options in the private sector.	Staff leaving a malfunctioning system. Sick people are the losers.	Consequences; personification; proximity; impact; controversy; sensation; meaningfulness.
27-3-2012	Department underspends by over R2bn – health’s tardiness killing people, Gauteng DA leader rages	The Gauteng Department of Health is underspending on the R2.2 billion allocated to it for the improvement of its provincial hospitals and clinics	Incompetent department cannot be trusted to buy lifesaving equipment to help sick people. What do they do with this money?	impact; relevance; sensation; controversy; consequences; negativity timeliness
6-2-2012	Rape kit backlog improves after Star expose	Hospitals around Johannesburg have reported an improvement in the collection of rapekits for forensic tests following an expose by the Star.	Negligence and abuse of equipment by public hospitals compromise investigations. Indifferent attitude of staff.	consequences; controversy negativity impact meaningfulness timeliness unexpectedness

		The newspaper reported in June that hundreds of rape kits used to help police gather evidence were gathering dust in hospitals.		
9-2-2012	Health service on brink of collapse. Patients face unnecessary death as drugs run out and some laboratories close down.	Gauteng's public health service has run out of life saving drugs and its laboratory services are on the brink of collapse.	Catastrophic state of collapse of public health system	impact; consequences; personification; sensation; controversy; negativity; timeliness
11-12-2012	Premier steps in to fix health collapse	Damning media reports – including patients eating rotten and infested food at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and others dying at Steve Biko Academic Hospital because of non-functioning machines – have prompted the government to act.	The health system is in a state of collapse and patients are fed rotten food. Health workers don't care.	Sensation; consequences; personification; controversy; timeliness; negativity

5.1.4. Framing in GDoH Media releases

Upon first reading of the GDoH media releases sample, suggested in the procedure described by Creswell (2009 p.185) the impression was twofold. I examine these as “frames’ defined by Goffman (1974) as:

...cognitive structures which unconsciously lead the individual to what is to be noticed and which define that situation for the individual.

Frame 1 – Action taken to correct negative news framed in media report

Attempts to respond to alarm raised about crises situations revealed in the media were evident in 18 of the samples of media releases. (Appendix iii). Significantly these responses came after the news report had raised the alarm, illustrating the watch dog media springing

into action and alerting government. Media releases show government acting to rectify the situation. i.e. paying suppliers, hiring new staff, buying new equipment.

Curran (2000) notes that

The libertarian model strongly upholds the watch-dog role of the media. The role stipulates that the press has a duty to criticise government and an adversarial relationship between government and the press is a healthy one.

Frame 2 - Development communication action

The second frame is one of government on a development communication drive, going to communities, advising about vaccinations. This can be interpreted according to the modernisation paradigm as described by Melkote and Steeves (2001)

The Modernisation period was pro-innovation, pro-persuasion and pro-top-down, pro-mass media and pro-literacy. (Melkote and Steeves, 2001 p.53).

The impression is a top-down one of the MEC prescribing to communities suggesting steps they need to take to better their health and their lives.

GDoH website –<http://www.health.gpg.gov.za>

An initial reading of the GDoH website gives the impression of a proactive department with strategies and plans for important developmental health issues. The website is clear and should be useful to journalists seeking background information. The website replicates the 10 point plan from the National Department of Health Strategic Framework (2010)⁴⁴ and offers material for socially relevant topics that a health-beat reporter on a commercial daily might investigate. Government healthcare messages that appear on the website include:

- focus on primary health care
- focus on lifestyle and preventative medicine

⁴⁴ <http://www.health.gpg.gov.za/Pages/10-Point-Plan.aspx>

- focus on early diagnosis of chronic illnesses such as diabetes
- focus on nutrition
- focus on early infancy and neonates
- focus on breastfeeding
- focus on control of HIV/AIDS

5.2. Step 4 - labelling themes

Cresswell (2009, p. 189) advises the researcher to generate and code emerging and preset themes or categories. I described this coding procedure in Chapter Four, explaining my intention to identify preset coding categories based on the literature and emerging thematic categories which were comparable to news values (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

My findings are tabled below as a visual aid. This is followed by a qualitative narrative explanation. According to Creswell (2009, p.189) visuals and tables can be used as an adjunct to the narrative discussion.

The consistency of the uniformity of preset thematic codes defined by the literature review (last column) should be noted. This consistency suggests a link between the watch dog role of the media with news values and agenda setting. An interpretation might be that the reporter on a watch dog mission discovers negligence then applies news values with negative connotations framing the report and setting an agenda for a negative perception of government service delivery. It also suggests the corollary, which is that if the reporter investigated objectively in a socially responsible manner and identified social developments, the news values would reflect this. The report would be framed in a different manner and a different perceptive agenda set. The implication is that the normative role of the media conditions the way news values are applied to frame the report.

5.2.1 Table 3: Emerging and preset literary themes in GDoH media releases

Thematic Category	Emerging thematic code used in content analysis	News values	% content of sample	Preset thematic code defined by literature review and used in content analysis
Supplier debt settled following media exposure	Code: supplier debt	Impact, timeliness, conflict,	29% (12/ 42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating

		meaningfulness		to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Task team to investigate following media exposure	Code: task team	Meaningfulness Personification Sensation Timeliness	19% (8/42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Expenditure control following media exposure	Code: expenditure	Impact Unexpectedness Meaningfulness conflict	12% (5/42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Equipment fixed following media exposure	Code: equipment	Timeliness Impact Conflict Meaningfulness	38% (16/ 42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Staff allocated following media exposure	Code: staff	Timeliness, impact, meaningfulness Conflict	19% (8/42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Medication supplied following media exposure	Code: meds	Impact, timeliness Meaningfulness Conflict	21% (9/42)	code lit: watchdog confirming issue raised in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
development messages: MEC visit to communities regarding inoculation, HIV?AIDS testing; domestic violence; new clinics	Code: dev message	Impact Meaningfulness Timeliness Personification	45% (19/ 42)	code: lit: devcomm not reported in media reports and relating to: code lit: news values code lit: agenda set

5.2.2. Step 5 - Qualitative narrative interpretation of emerging and preset literary themes in GDoH media releases

In this step Creswell (2009, p.186) advises the researcher to advance how the themes will be represented in a qualitative narrative. He suggests that quotations showing multiple

perspectives from individuals can accompany the narrative. For this purpose I used content from my semi-structured interviews.

Table 3 shows that the Gauteng Department of Health sent 42 media releases in the 2012 period under review. Of these 45% of content of the sample studied contained development communication messages for media attention. These included visits headed by the MEC to communities to promote primary health needs such as vaccinations, breast feeding, cancer screening, HIV/AIDS screening. Five media releases described new treatments available in hospitals. Neither The Star nor the Sowetan reported these.

The other themes that emerged constituted 55% of content of the sample studied. They confirm and acknowledge wrongdoings that had been picked up by the media and corresponded with reports in The Star and the Sowetan for the same period. These concerned issues raised in the Sowetan and The Star regarding negligence, supplier debt, wrongful expenditure, corruption and staff shortage.

As observed, the development related media releases regarding community visits, health care and awareness programmes, new procedures and treatments available were not reported in either newspaper. Working inductively one can confirm the following finding:

Finding 1:

100 % of the news values reflected in the print media reports depicted negative social and moral values such as negligence, supplier debt, wrongful expenditure, equipment and staff shortage

Finding 2:

More than half the newsworthy content of the media releases regard negative issues in the media reports, reflecting the department not fulfilling its developmental mandate, as described in the Ten Point Plan. In confirming them the media releases reinforce the predominant negative framing of these issues in the media and the media agenda. These constitute 55% of the content of the media releases sent out in the period under analysis. The 45% of sample content concerning developmental issues are not reported in either

publication. The implication is that the media is not investigating newsworthy issues of a developmental nature that are not within the watchdog “job description”.

5.3. Evaluating newsworthiness of development communication messages

What follows is an evaluation of the newsworthiness⁴⁵ of the 45% content of media releases sent out by the GDoH in 2012 in which development communication messages were evident. These are distinguished from media releases sent out as explanations or assurances of correction for hospital negligence and maladministration revealed by the two publications. I have assessed the newsworthiness of the media releases according to literature regarding news values described by scholars, Galtung & Ruge (1965); Harcup & O'Neill (2001); Gans (1979); Hall (1973); McQuail (2000);b Ryan (1991); Tunstall (1970); Schultz (2011). I needed to qualitatively evaluate the newsworthiness of development communication messages in the GDoH media releases. This was in response to my research title which questioned whether government development communication messages were newsworthy enough to be reported.

I used narrative analysis to evaluate the newsworthiness of a selection of the media releases concerning development communication issues. I referred to corresponding reports in Sowetan and the Star which not only did not take up the information in the GDoH media releases but contradicted it by exposing negligence and corruption in very topics the DOH used to communicate development messages. This confirms Galtung & Ruge’s “distortion hypothesis” which describes the intentional exaggeration of negative incidents. McGregor (2002) adds that news values served to heighten emotions when they contained elements of human drama, such as children. She cites Iyengar and Kinder (1987) who describe the achievement of television as:

the communication not of information or analysis but of raw human experience.

⁴⁵ Also see definitions of news values and newsworthiness in footnotes 15 and 16

In my narrative analysis I also show the media propensity to act as watchdog, exposing wrongdoing. This normative stance impedes any suggestion that the GDoH is achieving its public healthcare goals. Siebert et al (1956); Christians et al (2009)

What follows is a detailed analysis of news values in this first media release regarding nurses. I unpack and analyse these news values with reference to the relevant literature. I chose not to present here a detailed analysis of my entire sample of 42 media releases because they reported similar findings. Instead I highlighted passages in the two newspapers that dramatically contradicted the development messages proposed by the GDoH.

Media release 10 May 2012 – Gauteng commemorates international nurses day

The media release highlights the contribution of nurses and the role of nursing in primary healthcare. It contains information about the role of the nurse. "...intended to empower nurses to identify what evidence to use, how to interpret that evidence, how to put that knowledge into everyday use." It can be observed that seen in a social responsibility framework news values such as relevance and identification are evident in the media release. News values such as conflict and sensation privileged by watch-dog reporting are absent. Gauteng & Ruge (1965) however note the media propensity to cover events that accord with existing prejudices i.e. a news value showing consonance. In this case the common perception of nurses is associated with negligence and shortage. Ryan (1991) says stories attract interest when they have cultural resonance and confirm our impressions of the world. In contrast to the GDoH media release eulogising nurses, the Star, 8 February 2012, reports "Bara baby crisis" in which "Doctors tell of brain damage deaths and dysfunctional and unsafe service by staff." (Appendix i no.7.) The blame is attributed to nurses.

Several reports in the 2012 period studied echo the concept of nursing negligence. The Star, 30 January 2012 reports that "Nurses are afraid to work in ill-equipped hospitals." (Appendix i. no.1.) highlighting critical issues affecting the health sector such as clinical and human resources. "Battleground Bara" The Star, 30 January 2012 reads: "The war against staff shortages has turned critical" describing how untrained community service interns and

SA National Defence Force staff have been sent in. (Appendix i no.1.) The connotatively negative news values regarding nurses increase to include: *conflict*, *bad news*, *threshold*, *continuity*, *personification* (Galtung & Ruge, 1965; Harrup & O'Neill, 2001). According to Ryan (1991) the media focus on *conflict* because it creates drama and this incites audience interests. Galtung & Ruge (1965) note that the media traditionally over-report *bad news*. The flurry of media reports regarding nurse shortage resulting in negligence inspires the news value of *continuity*. According to Galtung & Ruge (1965) if the story is unresolved it will inspire ongoing coverage. The news values of *drama* and *emotion* are elicited in the nursing issue the GDoH proposes as developmental. (Ryan 1991). While *Persons* and *Human Interest* (Gans, 1979) are newsworthy, the nursing media release put out by the GDoH is about a general issue. (that of nursing as a career). Galtung & Ruge (1965) also observed that the news media avoid stories about abstract ideas. They look for action and that implies real people. They are looking for a real situation like a nursing crisis or nursing negligence. The news value of *proximity* emerges in the news reports focusing on well known hospitals in Gauteng. Ryan (1991) observes that news organisations focus on events and issues that impact their regional audiences. Tuchman (1978) however points out that *proximity* also allows for *accessibility*, referring to organisational constraints in the news room. The news value of *relevance* is evident in the nursing story proposed by the GDoH as a developmental message but negatively interpreted by the media. *Relevance* refers to *meaningfulness*, and according to Galtung & Ruge (1965), the implication is that the story is meaningful outside its cultural context. i.e. more affluent readers who may be unlikely to go to a state hospital will still empathise. It is a looming crisis that could affect them personally. Potentially anyone could be admitted to a state hospital. (Gans, 1979). This also reflects negatively on the public sector and government development communication messages. In its vision statement the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) pledges "to be the best provider of quality health and social services to the people in Gauteng." The GDoH mission statement affirms that it will "Provide excellent, integrated health and social development services in partnership with stakeholders to contribute towards the reduction of poverty, vulnerability and the burden of disease in all communities in Gauteng."

The news value of *timeliness* (Ryan 1991; Galtung & Ruge, 1965) is significant in the nursing media release put out by the GDoH. News has a shelf life and is stale after a day. The

nursing media release refers to an event, International Nurses Day. However this event is not newsworthy in itself, but in its interpretation – what is the quality of nursing in South Africa? It can be argued that the GDoH intended to send a developmental message in line with the National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010). This would serve as a response to the negative media reporting regarding nurses. Nonetheless, print media did not report this intention.

Media release 25 July 2012 – Gauteng reduce AIDS deaths by a fifth and aims to put more on antiretroviral therapy (Appendix iii no.x.)

The media release gives details of successes in reducing HIV/AIDS and TB deaths particularly in terms of saving lives of mothers and babies. It is remarkable and reports developmental achievements. This media release suggests news values such as *human interest, consequence, affecting a large number of local people, proximity, and relevance*. It was not reported in either The Star or Sowetan despite the potential newsworthiness. One might attribute this neglect of potentially newsworthy content to organisational factors such as newsroom routines, tight deadlines and staff shortage. (Hall et al., 1978; Tuchman, 1978).

A reporter interviewed at The Star says:

I report on public health issues, but my area focus is investigating what goes wrong and when hospitals don't deliver and patients are neglected. I don't have time for longer investigations. We are a daily newspaper and bring out four editions every day. Ndaba (2013)⁴⁶

Indeed reporters would need to visit clinics and interview people. However time and resources did not appear to be a deterrent when same reporting requirements were needed in the media reports on the same issue described below in The Star: "Hurdles to breast-feeding keep children at HIV risk." (Appendix i no.39)

Comparison with media report on same HIV/AIDS related issue:

⁴⁶ Ndaba, B. (2013) reporter at the Star:17 December

Bega, S. (2012) reports in The Star that babies with Hiv are at risk because of mothers are obliged to breastfeed and formula is not available. News values with negative connotations include: *proximity, human interest, sensation, emotion* (always present when babies and small children are the subjects), *relevance, controversy, threshold, meaningfulness, continuity, negativity*. (Galtung & Ruge, 1965).

Media release 25 September 2012 – Gauteng is becoming safe for pregnant women

The media release reports the decrease in the number of maternal deaths which is a developmental goal. It gives details of initiative put in place to reach the goal. The media release contains news values such as *proximity, relevance, sensation, human interest*. It was not reported in either the Star or Sowetan despite the newsworthiness.

Comparison with media reports on same maternity-related issue:

The watchdog role of the journalist contradicts the development message put out by government and suggests it is untrue. Medical negligence during delivery results in irreversible damage to babies and law suits. The media responses are particularly damaging as most focus on babies who have been damaged for life. A report in the Sowetan (Appendix ii no.21) “Hospital blamed for baby’s death.” tells how:

Lindiwe Monoe, 34, of Mohlakeng near Randfontein, said while her baby boy was dying at the Yusuf Dadoo Hospital in Krugersdorp, the nurses kept telling her he was doing well.

The reports regarding small children suffering are the most dramatic and portray the GDoH as negligent and uncaring. News values evoked are: *drama, human interest, sensation, emotion, gut wrenching tragedy*. This is encapsulated in the plight of a little girl reported in the Star (Appendix ii no.25.) “Young girl’s plight a headache for state.”

It started with a headache – an active little girl pointing to her head and telling her mom her head was sore. A multitude of tests, operations and lengthy stays in hospital later, baby Nonjabulo Mavimbela is now a brain damaged child who cannot talk, walk or even shed a tear to indicate she is in distress.

Media release 29 October 2012 – Breast cancer awareness campaign in west rand communities

The media release concerns breast cancer and a drive by the department to educate communities. A mobile clinic is visiting different areas and people are being screened for cervical cancer and taught to perform self-examinations. This report suggests news values such as *human interest, consequence, affecting women, proximity, and relevance*. It was not reported in either the Star or Sowetan. However, the Star (Appendix i no.50.) reported under the headline: “Hospitals fingered over cancer deaths” that:

Two of Gauteng’s largest state hospitals stand accused of delaying the treatment and diagnosis of hundreds of desperately ill cancer patients because of broken machinery – often out of order due to poor maintenance and non-payment of suppliers.

Media release 2 November 2012 – department is making progress in delivering quality healthcare

This is a review of the annual report and states the intention of the department to ensure South Africans attain the goal of a long and healthy life (as per their mission statement). The review notes the tendency of patients to visit hospitals for basic healthcare rather than clinics. The consequence of this is that hospital facilities are overburdened with patients congesting the system with minor ailments. This is an interesting and newsworthy angle. It is relevant and contains the news value of “consequence”. The department assures the public that the number of staff at clinics has been increased. Other milestones presented in the release are the decrease of maternal deaths and the aggressive campaigns to promote breast feeding. The increase in patients receiving Antiretroviral (ARV) treatment is also reported. An increase in the number of patient presenting lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and hypertension is noted. Campaigns are being carried out to educate people regarding lifestyle including healthy eating. This report suggests news values such as *human interest, consequence, affecting a large number of local people, proximity, and relevance*. It was not reported in either The Star or Sowetan despite its newsworthiness. The development message is not picked up by the news media.

Media reports on same hospital related issue:

Print media reports contradict these achievements suggesting the opposite as noted in Tables 4 and 5 showing emerging and preset literary themes in The Star and Sowetan. Content depicting negligence constituted 88% of public sector health reporting in the Star and 81% in Sowetan. A report in the Star “Our healthcare system is a shambles.” (Appendix i no.29) contradicts this achievement:

Down the passage are more patients wedged as closely together as possible. They’ve all suffered some sort of trauma: they’ve been stabbed or shot, hit by cars or thumped by thugs, throttled by their boyfriends or beaten by community members. Some of them are elderly people who fell and broke their hips while on the way to the bathroom, others are teenage boys who broke their legs playing soccer. They’ve filled up all the stretchers in the unit and have flowed over to the chairs, wheelchairs and benches. They’re asking for water and bedpans and receivers to vomit into. They’re asking for help with pain medication.

The visualness, emotion and drama are evident in this report. (Iyengar and Kinder 1987)

Damningly the report concludes by evoking the need for the media to act as watchdog. Curran (2000)

We shouldn’t, however, allow our feelings about how perfect we expect nurses and doctors to be to blind us to the real problem, which is the shambles in the which the Department of Health has left our healthcare system. It is not clinicians on the ground who decide how many hospitals there should be, how many beds those hospitals should contain, what services those hospitals should offer and how well those hospitals should be staffed. Those things are decided by administrators, as they should be. Those administrators are appointed by the Department of Health, also as it should be. And the Department of Health is run by a bunch of politicians, who are doing the most terrible job of representing the interests of the people who put them there.

Media release: 22 November 2012 - Dr George Mukhari Surgeons performed the first laparoscopic op in SA

This media release contains potentially newsworthy elements which may be questionable given the state's emphasis on primary health care and the severe shortages of basic facilities such as hospital beds in most hospitals.⁴⁷ This doubt remains despite the quote by spokesperson, Simon Zwane that "This is one of the initiatives of the Department to improve the delivery of healthcare in the province." Laparoscopic cameras worth R2-million have been purchased for George Mukhari Hospital. The human interest (personification) factor is highlighted through an interview with the patient. It is relevant and audiences can identify with the plight of the patient and the help given to him creates emotion (sensation) in the reader.

Media reports on same facilities-related issue

Both The Star and the Sowetan highlighted the lack of facilities and basic hospital resources, suggesting that expenditure on hi-tech equipment was extravagant. Content depicting inadequate resources constituted 65% of Sowetan and 54% of content of public sector health reporting in 2012.

The Sowetan published this report just 10 days before "Just 3 phones to save lives." (Appendix ii no.22) describing how:

For almost a year health workers at the Witbank Hospital, one of the biggest public hospitals in Mpumalanga, have been relying on just three phones to communicate with the outside world.

The Sowetan also reported earlier "R12.3m spent on equipment for 2 hospitals" on the same George Mukharit that had purchased laparoscopic cameras to the tune of R2-million as "the troubled George Mukhari Hospital at GaRankuwa" which had to be bailed out by the Gauteng Department of Health. (Appendix ii no.25)

⁴⁷ The National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010) point 10 refers to Strengthening Research and Development.

This further supports the notion that the watchdog function of the media might lead journalists to deny the objective newsworthiness of government development reports, through negatively framed content offering contradictory evidence.

Media release 6 December 2012 – Gauteng health embarks on a big drive to recruit health professionals

The media release describes a drive to recruit health professionals including doctors, nurses, registrars, dental practitioners, pharmacists and allied professionals such as radiographers, dieticians, physiotherapists. There is a comment from MEC Hope Papo confirming that the aim is to improve the quality of healthcare.

However one might suggest a lack of news values in this media release as defined in the literature. (Galtung & Ruge 1965; Gans 1979). Its only relevance might lie in the negative implication that the healthcare system is failing due to a deficit of professionals. Organisational process such as employing staff is not newsworthy in terms of relevance. At the same time, if the journalist decided to frame it in a context of conflict and sensation i.e. relating it to negligence towards patients it would reflect negatively on the department.

In the sample period analysed, both Sowetan and The Star expose fake doctors with no qualifications: “Bogus Medic is struck off”. (Appendix ii no.26) and Patient refused treatment - doctor told me to buy R50,000 medication” (Appendix ii no.8.) and in similar vein: “Doctors fleece state hospitals – private client surgeries carried out in public facilities illegally.” (Appendix ii no.15) or doctors who sexually harass patients “Doctors in sex claims – fingers inserted in patient’s private parts.” (Appendix ii no.16)

5.4. Evaluation of emerging and preset thematic codes in The Star and the Sowetan

Tables 4 and 5 show how I evaluated emerging and preset codes in the two newspapers. I tabulated them to facilitate understanding and give a narrative interpretation below.

Again the consistency of the uniformity of preset thematic codes defined by the literature review (last column) should be noted. This consistency suggests a link between the watchdog role of the media with news values and agenda setting. An interpretation might

be that the reporter on a watchdog mission discovers negligence then applies news values with negative connotations ⁴⁸ framing the report and setting an agenda for a negative perception of government service delivery. It also suggests the corollary, which is that if the reporter investigated objectively in a socially responsible manner and identified social developments, the news values would reflect this. The report would be framed in a different manner and a different perceptive agenda set. The implication is that normative role of the media conditions the way news values are applied to frame the report.

5.4.1. Table 4 showing emerging and preset literary themes in The Star

Thematic category	Emerging thematic code used in content analysis	News values relating to news report theme	% content of sample	Preset theme code defined by literature review and used in content analysis
Negligence towards patients	Code: negligence	Sensation Timeliness Meaningfulness Personification unexpectedness Negativity	88% (44/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Medication abuse or deficiency	Code: med	Conflict Timeliness Meaningfulness Personification Impact	22% (11/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Corruption by staff or authorities	Code: corruption	Sensation Conflict Negativity Impact Timeliness Meaningfulness	40% (20/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Financial implications for department	Code: finances	Conflict Negativity Impact Timeliness meaningfulness	92% (46/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Deficiency in hospital resources or food	Code: resources	Impact Timeliness Negativity conflict meaningfulness	54% (27/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Staff shortage or ill treatment	Code: staff	Impact Meaningfulness Sensation Personification Negativity Conflict	48% (19/50)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set

⁴⁸ See footnote 15 defining news values with negative connotations

Development	Code: dev message		0% (0/50)	
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5.4.2. Table 5 showing emerging and preset literary themes in the Sowetan

Thematic category	Emerging thematic code used in content analysis	News values relating to news report theme	% of content of sample	Preset theme code defined by literature review and used in content analysis
Negligence towards patients	Code: negligence	Sensation Timeliness Meaningfulness Personification unexpectedness Negativity	81% (21/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Medication abuse or deficiency	Code: med	Conflict Timeliness Meaningfulness Personification Impact	19% (5/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Corruption by staff or authorities	Code: corruption	Sensation Conflict Negativity Impact Timeliness Meaningfulness	58% (15/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Financial implications for department	Code: finances	Conflict Negativity Impact Timeliness meaningfulness	58% (15/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Deficiency in hospital resources or food	Code: resources	Impact Timeliness Negativity conflict meaningfulness	65% (17/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Staff shortage or ill treatment	Code: staff	Impact Meaningfulness Sensation Personification Negativity Conflict	58% (15/26)	code lit: watchdog relating to code lit: news values code lit: agenda set
Development	Code: dev message	0/26	0%	

5.4.3. Table 6: Comparison of emerging thematic category codes in news reports with news values described in the literature (Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

I analysed the codes that emerged in both the news reports and the media releases and compared them with news values described in the literature to evaluate their newsworthiness.

It can be gauged that the analysis of thematic categories that emerge in the media releases and comparison with news values show similar results. The same news values confirm the exposure in news reports that the department is not fulfilling its developmental mandate. (National Department of Health Ten Point Plan 2010). In the media releases, the 45% of sample content, constituting developmental messages and lending itself to an interpretation supporting a social responsibility paradigm, can be interpreted as foreign to the dominant organisational and cultural print media newsroom culture. (Schultz 2011, p. 83; Gans 1979, p.139; Galtung & Ruge, 1978). This newsroom culture which supports the watchdog role of the media appears to limit the reporting of developmental issues described in the media releases and on the website.

5.4.4. Table 7: Comparison of GDoH media release emerging thematic categories with news values described in the literature (Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

42 DOH Media releases 2012		
Category	Code	News value
Supplier debt settled following media outcry	code: supplier debt	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
Task team to investigate following media outcry	code: task team	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
Expenditure control following media outcry	code: expenditure	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
Equipment fixed following media outcry	code: equipment	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
Staff allocated following media outcry	code: staff	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
Medication supplied following media outcry	code: meds	negativity timeliness; relevance, identification; conflict; sensation
development messages: MEC visit to communities regarding inoculation, hiv/aids testing; domestic violence; new clinics	code: dev message	Elite person; developmental news values possibly excluded by and 'foreign' to dominant print media newsroom culture

As suggested previously and supported by the literature, the coding patterns that emerge in both publications and media releases reflect commonly understood news values in turn reflecting the watchdog role of the media. According to Gans (1979); Schultz (2011) and Galtung & Ruge (1965) these news values represent social norms and values.

5.5. Qualitative interpretation of emerging and preset literary themes in The Star and Sowetan

5.5.1. Introduction

It can be observed from Table 6 comparing emerging themes in The Star and Sowetan that the response to government public health messages is similarly negative in both daily newspapers. The theme of negligence predominates in both newspapers, featuring in the content of 88% of public sector health reports published in The Star in 2012 and 81% in Sowetan. This is a significant percentage particularly if compared with development communication messages which featured 0% in both newspapers. Problems with medication availability featured lower on both lists, 22% in the Star and 19% in the Sowetan. Corruption featured 58% in Sowetan and 40% in the Star. In the Star 92% of report content for the period depicted financial mismanagement or wastage while in Sowetan it was 58%.

5.5.2. Interpretation and discussion of emerging themes in print media reports

The research intention is not to comparatively evaluate the extent to which themes feature in the two publications. They do not corroborate significantly. However, it can be observed that themes depicting government public health services negatively predominate. Development Communication messages are notably absent in both publications.

That the media is playing a watchdog role is evident. These themes reflect violation of citizens' rights as a result of negligence by state institutions that are supposed to be helping them.

Curran (2000, p.121) argues that

The principal democratic role of the media, according to liberal theory, is to act as a check on the state. The media should monitor the full range of state activity, and fearlessly expose abuses of official authorities.

However Curran (2000, p.127) also notes that in liberal theory while the watchdog view sees the role of the media as preventing those in power from abusing it, the media is also expected to serve as a source of information, empowering citizens to participate in democracy. The media also provide a channel of communication between citizens and government.

Yet a comparison of emerging themes in the newspaper reports with government media releases confirms the opposite. The prevailing themes in the media release are rather reactions to media reports of negligence, staff shortage and financial misspend. These constitute 55% of media release content for 2012.

The similarity between the topics and angles in the two publications reflect the homogenisation of news. (ANC document, 2000). The reports refrain from analysis, favouring what has gone wrong above policies and structures.

Schudson (2000, p.188) describes the phenomenon of “pack journalism” where reporters from different publications emphasize similar angles and take the similar viewpoints.

Constraints come not only from the news organisations reporters work for directly but from patterns of news gathering that bring reporters from different publications under the influence of one another.

Critical political economists attribute the fact that publications displayed similar angles in their reporting i.e. a homogenization of news, to media ownership. However proponents of the cultural perspective of media sociology, which underpins this study, detect the impact of commonly shared news values.

5.6. Detailed analysis of news values in five reports from both Sowetan and The Star.

Tables 8 and 9 unpack the content of five sample reports in each of the daily newspapers to evaluate the news values shaping the reports. The previous tables mentioned them by code in line with the content analysis carried out.

The content analysis shows that the print media depicts government development communication initiatives. It is not within the scope of this study to venture into a detailed semiotic analysis or discourse ethics questioning whether these news values are right or wrong. However it must be noted that while Hartley (1982) asks the question: “Whose values are news values?”, semiotic theory holds that there are certain set norms and values that govern behaviour in society. We have an instilled cultural conception of right and wrong. According to Fiske, J. (1987 p.4) language is made up codes whose rules and conventions are shared amongst members of a culture, and which are used to generate and circulate meanings in and for that culture.

This supports the observation that the news values in the print media reports reflect social value judgements regarding government development communication endeavours. The implication is that while the media may be accused of neglecting government development communication initiatives, the exposure of wrongdoing is in accordance with social beliefs.

5.6.1. Table 8 showing examples from Sowetan

Date	Headline	Lead paragraph	Narrative analysis of news values
31 – 1 -2012 (Appendix ii no.7.)	Gauteng agrees to pay out damaged boy's claim	The war between the Gauteng government and the family of a 12-year-old boy who was left brain damaged at birth is set to end	Government caused harm to child. Subsequent paragraphs reveal negligence and notable sum of money wasted in settlement
16-4-2012 (Appendix ii no.7.)	Gauteng pays R,5bn	Service providers of Gauteng hospitals have not abandoned their part of the bargain and have continued to supply services despite the Department of Health owing them millions	Money squandered and mismanaged. Subsequent paragraphs reveal corruption
12-7-2012	No room at Bara for	Chris Hani Baragwanath	Hospital does not help critical patient.

(Appendix ii no.6.)	burn patient	Academic Hospital management will investigate why emergency services took a critical patient to the hospital when there was no space to accommodate him	Subsequent paragraphs show disorganisation in admissions policy. Patient died.
17-7-2012 (Appendix ii no.7.)	Hospitals in cat scan crisis	The lack of working cat scanners in Gauteng's four biggest public hospitals has placed the province in a critical predicament, preventing doctors from diagnosing potentially deadly diseases.	Sick people not diagnosed in time threatening prognosis. Subsequent paragraphs reveal maladministration resulting in non payment of suppliers.
16-8-2012 (Appendix ii no.8.)	Patient refused treatment – 'doctor told me to buy R50,000 medication'	A patient with kidney cancer was allegedly turned away at Helen Joseph Hospital in Johannesburg by a doctor who told him to buy his own treatment worth R50,000 before he could be operated on.	Sick unemployed patient in pain told to buy his own medication by corrupt doctor. Hospital did not have medication and did not offer alternative.

5.6.2. Table 9 showing examples from the Star

Date	Headline	Lead paragraph	Narrative analysis of news values
30-1-2012 (Appendix i no.1.)	Nurses are afraid to work in ill-equipped hospitals	Overcrowding, a lack of resources, overworked and underpaid and a lack of functional equipment. These are among the reasons why professional nurses are turning their backs on the public healthcare system for more lucrative options in the private sector.	Staff leaving a malfunctioning system. Sick people are the losers.
27-3-2012 (Appendix i no.21.)	Department underspends by over R2bn – health's tardiness killing people, Gauteng DA leader rages	The Gauteng Department of Health is underspending on the R2.2 billion allocated to it for the improvement of its provincial	Incompetent department cannot be trusted to buy lifesaving equipment to help sick people. What do they do with this money?

		hospitals and clinics	
6-2-2012 (Appendix i no.4.)	Rape kit backlog improves after Star expose	Hospitals around Johannesburg have reported an improvement in the collection of rapekits for forensic tests following an expose by the Star. The newspaper reported in June that hundreds of rape kits used to help police gather evidence were gathering dust in hospitals.	Negligence and abuse of equipment by public hospitals compromise investigations. Indifferent attitude of staff.
9-2-2012 (Appendix i no.8.)	Health service on brink of collapse. Patients face unnecessary death as drugs run out and some laboratories close down.	Gauteng's public health service has run out of life saving drugs and its laboratory services are on the brink of collapse.	Catastrophic state of collapse of public health system
11-12-2012 (Appendix i. no.49.)	Premier steps in to fix health collapse	Damning media reports – including patients eating rotten and infested food at Chris Hani Baragwanath Academic Hospital and others dying at Steve Biko Academic Hospital because of non-functioning machines – have prompted the government to act.	The health system is in a state of collapse and patients are fed rotten food. Health workers don't care.

CHAPTER SIX – INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.0. Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to draw conclusions from the research findings in order to answer the research questions and evaluate whether the study fulfilled its objective.

This chapter highlights salient findings that emerged from my research into print media response to the South African government's development communication messages. I present these findings in the context of my research aims and objectives and the theoretical framework informing it. Specifically the findings relate to print media interpretation of and response to the newsworthiness of government's development communication messages. I draw upon a paradigm of normative theories regarding the role of the media in society and theories from media sociology pertaining to the construction of news.

6.1. Study intention revisited

My study aimed to interrogate the apparent gap between the South African government's development communication imperative regarding health care and the lack of take up by the print media. To achieve this I needed to critically analyse discrepancies between information given by government communicators and what is ultimately published in the commercial print media.

I needed to evaluate my findings in the context of literature regarding media and development communication theories. Creswell (2009, p. 25) citing Cooper (1984) and Marshall & Rossman (2006) notes that anchoring the study in the theoretical framework of a literature review:

relates the study to a larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature, filling in gaps and extending prior studies. It provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study as well as a benchmark for comparing the results with other findings.

Ultimately my intention was to apply these findings in a discussion regarding the viability of libertarian inclined media operations in post-colonial contexts, and specifically in a developmental state, such as South Africa.

The interpretation of the findings would also allow me to answer the three research questions posed in the study:

1. Is there a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media?
2. How does one account for this discrepancy?
3. What does this tell us about the state of journalism and development communication in South Africa?

6.2. Findings derived from interpretation of content analysis

In this section I collate and group into themes the findings derived from the interpretation of content analysis. Three distinct themes emerged, each contributing to the interpretation of print media response to government development communication messages.

THEME 1 – GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION IMPERATIVE

The first theme regarded the South African Government's development communication messages sent out through media releases in order to fulfil its development communication imperative.

Finding 1

There is a discrepancy between what government wants to communicate and what appears in the print media.

The development communication messages are not being reported in the print media. The research shows that 45% of content of media releases sent out by the GDoH contained development messages for media attention. None of these were reported in the two publications. (See Tables 4 and 5 showing emergent and preset literary themes in The Star and in the Sowetan)

Finding 2

There is a lack of “consonance” between development messages projected by the GDoH and the “negative” and “bad news” reported in the print media. (Gautung & Ruge; Harcup & O’Neill, 2001)

Government media releases regarding hospital innovations and community visits are disputed by media reports regarding the same topics and showing negligence.

THEME 2 – CONCEPT OF NEWSWORTHINESS AND NEWSVALUES

Finding 1

100 % of the news values reflected in the print media report samples depicted negative value judgements such as negligence, supplier debt, wrongful expenditure, equipment and staff shortage

The print media reflects GDoH media release communication content in a manner that is detrimental to government’s development communication intention. Reports ignore developmental information and messages and negatively depict the same themes presented as development communication in the media releases.

Finding 2

55% of the newsworthy content in the media release sample justifies and reinforces the negative issues revealed in the media reports and reflects negatively on the department.

The 45% concerning developmental issues, which carry their own newsworthiness, are not reported in either publication.

Finding 3

Because the news values print media reports favour reflect a normative watchdog role and imply value judgements, government failures are highlighted. The news values suggesting social responsibility in media releases are deemed not newsworthy enough to be reported by print media. Conversely if the issue referred to in the media release is considered newsworthy, it is negatively reported in the media. Tunstall (1971, p.261) asks the question:

whose values are news values? He asks: ...are news values simply a mass media version of social values held by millions of audience members? This implies the subjectivity of the very news values which serve as criteria for publication (Galtung & Ruge 1965).

THEME 3 – LIBERTARIAN WATCHDOG ROLE

Finding 1

The negative news values in the content of media reports highlight the media's watch-dog role in reporting government failures and maladministration. The predominantly watchdog role the media has assumed finds the healthcare sector lacking and reports this by employing news values with negative connotations. However the watch dog role should not preclude social responsibility, according to which theory the press must provide a broad platform allowing for different points of view. (Siebert et al 1956; McQuail 1987, p. 116)

Finding 2

The negative news values in the content of the media reports contradict the development messages in the GDoH media releases, implying they are untrue.

CHAPTER SEVEN – RESEARCH CONCLUSION

7.0. Introduction

This chapter sums up the key issues that arose out of an interrogation into an apparent gap between the South African government's development communication imperative regarding healthcare and the lack of take up by the print media. The study considered government intentions in using the mass media for development communication then set out to critically analyse discrepancies between government communication and what is ultimately published in the commercial print media.

The research was based on the assumption that the media is a critical component of the developmental state and South Africa is in a crisis of poverty and other social ills. In this context the media and how it reports on government issues is significant and needs to be understood. The contention that the media has a different kind of social responsibility to that of more developed countries finally led the study to suggest that a libertarian inclined media that plays a watch dog role can also report developmental achievement. This raises issues for further research.

I noted that previous studies of print media reporting on government initiatives had, to my knowledge, adopted a critical political economy of the media perspective, highlighting media conglomeration and ownership. On the other hand, studies analysing media content used discourse analysis to show normative differences in an interpretation of media criticism of government. (Skjerdal, 2001).

Using content analysis as a primary research method, my study examined print media response to government's development communication messages through a framework of media sociology, considering news values in the formation of news. Comments from semi-structured interviews with reporters and government officials were used to qualify findings in the content analysis.

7.1. Discrepancy between government messages and print media uptake

My interpretation of the themes that emerge from this content analysis undertaken on media reports and media releases in 2012 confirms a gap between government development communication needs and print media output.

I discussed the “newsworthiness” of government communication through a survey of media release sent out by the Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH).

An evaluation of news values in a critical content analysis of print media response to government development communication messages shows that print media focus is on negligence in the very critical areas where government intention is to communicate development.

Findings suggest that the critical watchdog role the media assumes does not consider developmental achievements communicated by government, but focuses rather on failures.

Studies by Galtung & Ruge (1965); Gans (1979); Hall et al (1978); Manning (2001) and other scholars support the notion that the same news values that shape content, reflect and evoke value judgements in readers. In describing the public healthcare sector the value judgement evoked is one of a dangerously dysfunctional entity. Yet according to social responsibility theory this is not the whole picture. The frame that shows achievements is missing in print media uptake of government development communication. (Deuze, 2011, p.26)

7.2. Viability of a libertarian inclined media in a developmental state such as South Africa

The issues of maladministration and negligence that predominate in the content of news reports show the South African print media as libertarian-inclined and providing critique through a watchdog function. Its surveillance of the socio-political environment serves as a mechanism for holding officials to account. Christians et al.(2009, p.123)

However, in line with the view expressed by Christians et al.(2009, p.125) this study maintains that the same libertarian stance is not incongruent with social responsibility, a premise of which is to be critical on behalf of the public and in the interest of truth.

Christians et al (2009, p.124) cite Blumler and Gurevitch's (1995) summary of the main functions of the media that democracy requires. These include obligations of social responsibility "to serve the common good following an unwritten social contract."

However, Christians et al. (2009, p.124) also point out the concept of social responsibility supports conventional standards and values of an ordered society.

The view that it is the task of the media to criticise stems from a strong notion of engagement (the participant perspective), but the pursuit of that task can be encouraged within a libertarian tradition. Social responsibility can also embrace the duty to be critical on behalf of the public and in the interests of truth.

The suggestion then is that in theory a libertarian inclined media would be viable in a developmental state such as South Africa.

Further to this, Skjerdal (2001) notes that

if the normative role of the press is restricted to the watchdog metaphor of libertarianism alone it will not debate more profound issues such as policy and development.

The implication is that in response to government development communication messages the media could report differently on developments that have taken place in 20 years of democracy. Scholars such as Duncan (2003); Lansink (1998) cited in Skjerdal (2001); and Fourie (2011) have noted the need for the same watchdog model to be applied in a more investigative manner teasing out solutions to impediments to implementation of policy.

7.3. Implications for development Journalism

Deuze (2011, p. 20) supports the notion of what she recognises as "public service journalism" where journalists provide a public service (as watchdogs or 'news-hounds', active collectors and disseminators of information).

She adds that the multimedia and multicultural environment of today's journalism implies seeking out new angles and voices from different communities. The watchdog role of the media broadens from merely reporting what is dysfunctional to investigating and reporting community driven solutions:

A slow and subtle shift occurs in the consensual notion of serving the public, as it moves from a primary top-down meaning to an increasingly bottom-up application. It is a move from 'telling people what they need to know' to Carey's (1989) ideal of amplifying conversations society has with itself. Deuze (2011, p.26)

According to Deuze, the notion of objectivity in a multicultural perspective compels journalists to consider different points of view.

Singer (2011, p.56) citing Siebert et al. (1956) recalls the 1940 Hutchins Commission report which urged journalists to "seek to provide the truth about the fact", accepting responsibility for helping readers evaluate the trustworthiness of conflicting sources and gain perspective about complex issues.

Disputing suggestions that development oriented reporting can be equated to government controlled news, Gunaratne (1996) citing Aggarwala (1978) points out that development journalism is essentially critical, operating through investigation, follow up and analysis. (Gunaratne, 1978 cited in Gunaratne, 1996)

Wimmer J. and Woolf S. (2005) citing Shaw H. (1990) also emphasise the investigative thrust of development journalism.

Development news should examine critically, evaluate and interpret the relevance of development plan, problems and issues. It should indicate the disparities between plans and actual accomplishments, and include comparisons with how development is progressing in other countries and regions. It should also provide contextual and background information about the development process, discuss the impact of

plans, policies, problems and issues on people and speculate about the future of development.

This implies that a developmental interest in reporting public healthcare sector issues would demand a different approach by print media reporters.

It would question the logic of the reporter at the Star that:

I report on public health, but my area of focus is what goes wrong and when hospitals don't deliver and patients are neglected. I don't have time for longer investigations. We are a daily newspaper and bring out four editions every day. (Ndaba, 2013)

It would question the logic of the reporter previously interviewed who elaborated on the unwritten requirement to get the story done and move to the next:

Bad stories are a lead story for one or two days then you want to do a follow up and the editors are not that keen because it will take up time and it's not a new story and might not even make the paper. (Sifile, 2013)

Instead of framing the report to speculate about Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi receiving special treatment when he was admitted to Steve Biko Academic Hospital for a cardiac procedure in 2013⁴⁹, journalists would investigate the feasibility of government hospitals housing facilities for private patients.

Some scholars support the notion that news values in developmental journalism differ from news values characterising more commercially oriented media. In a study of news values models in different cultures Robbie (2006) suggests that whereas "first world" news values emphasise timeliness, proximity and personality, "third world" news values prioritise "development, national integration and social responsibility".

⁴⁹ SAPA (2013) No special treatment for Motsoaledi. Media 24 report: 14 August

De Beer et al. (1996)⁵⁰ maintains that the conflict and negative news values characteristic of Western models distort the way issues are reported in Southern Africa:

to concerned governments, media researchers and others involved in the media, it seemed as if events in southern Africa and other parts of Africa could only become news (not only in the Western media, but also in African media) if conflict-orientated or disruptive themes such as corruption, coups, political unrest and famine were the main course on the news menu.

However my study suggests that a developmental approach to reporting public sector healthcare issues would not necessarily disregard the original news values debated in the literature. (Gautung & Ruge, 1965)

It can be argued that news values perform an operational function of making copy meaningful to the reader. Cohen and Young (1973, p.138) note that news values contribute to newsworthiness and are criteria for reporting on an issue or event. (Schudson 2000, p.1) points out that because the print media have a commercial imperative to stay afloat, newsworthiness remains a criteria for sales.

The implication is that news values such as “conflict” and “negative news” would still be valid but thematic categories such as the ones coded in my content analysis (Tables 4, 5) might extend to embrace other themes in a follow up. For example, a report on nurses’ negligence would be followed up with reports showing solutions taken and resolution of crisis. Simple reporting of events and incidents would no longer be considered good journalistic practice.

Reporting objectively on government develop communication initiatives in the public healthcare sector would still require the socially responsible media to play a watch dog surveillance role. A national healthcare facilities baseline audit undertaken for the period

⁵⁰ De Beer, S. Serfontein, L. Naude, A. Steyn, E. (1996) Paper read at the 10th Biennial Conference of the African Council for Communication Education, Peninsula Technikon, Bellville, South Africa, 17-22 November. <http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/results/debeer.htm>

May 2011 to May 2012⁵¹ reported in City Press (Mapumulo, 2014)⁵² reveals that hospitals scored as low as 18% for infection control and 7% for cleanliness. It was found that 93% of maternity wards did not have functional and essential equipment needed to keep mothers and babies safe.

7.4. Implications for development communication

Fair (1989, p.129-150) and Servaes (2008) maintain that the South African government's expectations of the media in development communication reflects the top down approach of the modernisation paradigm (McPhail, 2009). Suffice to say (without even commenting on the ethical implications) the expectation that the media should be a vehicle for promoting development communication initiatives remains unrealistic without the effective collaboration of communicators.

If reporters are to follow up on development news, "providing contextual and background information about the development process" as Wimmer and Woolf (2005) suggest, the practice of development communication would need to take on a different momentum. There is evidence that bureaucratic restrictions by government significantly impede transfer of useful information to journalists.

Daily newspapers are governed by tight deadlines for submission. Because government communication is centralised, responses to queries can take several days, requiring authorisations by as many as three different people. (Mvuvu, 2014)

Fear of the consequences of misinterpretation by reporters also impedes health officials from volunteering information even if the news is positive.

We can't just give out responses to reporters. It's too risky. The incident needs to be researched and verified and doctor responsible consulted. This takes time. When we receive the answer, it has to be authorised by the hospital CEO and then by the Department of Health. We have good things happening but even so we don't tell

⁵¹ <http://www.health.gov.za/docs/reports/2013/Healthcare.pdf>

⁵² Mapumulo, Z. Exclusive: Inside the hospitals audit. City Press: 2 February.

these stories. We sit and wait for reporters to come to us, which they do, but only when something has gone wrong. (Mvuvu, 2014)

Reporters interviewed note that the same delayed response or late delivery of information impacts negatively on media uptake of government development communication messages.

Hospitals like Baragwanath have a 3-day response policy and as a daily paper we can't wait three days. Sources get tired and go to our competitors. I don't really need comment from Baragwanath if they are not ready to give it. They hide, they run, they switch off their phones. We have to put the story on ice. We have to go and dig. Often it's not their fault so why hide? If a nurse steals it's bad, but it's not their fault so why hide? I'd like more access, haste in responses and more detail than the one liners that don't explain. I have to sneak in because they refuse access. They claim patient confidentiality and they give you the run around. So I ask the patient to get the file to avoid all the red tape. (Sifile, 2013)

7.5. Limitations of study and suggestions for further research

The research into organisational factors shaping print media response to government's development communication messages is relatively limited. Interviews with reporters however indicated organisational constraints discouraging follow-up on reported incidents of negligence (Sifile, 2013).

Reese, (2011 p 11) notes that lines of authority are important and reporters answer to editors who are conditioned by editorial policies. He suggests that

Power is not often overtly expressed over the news product because it would violate the objectivity notion, that news is something out there waiting to be discovered. Enforcing policy about what the news is would contradict this principle.

A reporter at the Sowetan implies that unwritten organisational rules discourage the pursuit of longer development oriented stories:

We don't experience obvious interference from editors but what I find is that bad stories are a lead story for one or two days then you want to do a follow up and the editors are not that keen. It's been in the paper already and they want you to move on and look at new stories. (Sifile, 2013)⁵³

Research into newsroom restrictions impacting on development reporting would contribute to a discussion of media uptake of government's development communication messages. Parallel research into government communication procedures in terms of media relations would also be of value.

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⁵³ Sifile, L. Sowetan:

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Colonial rule started when the Dutch East India Company established a settlement in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. Racial segregation was instituted in 1910 and in 1948 saw the rise of apartheid.
<http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu/unit.php?id=65-24E-2> retrieved 14 January 2014

² Examples of perceived negativity of the media towards government abound. In a discourse analysis of 102 newspaper articles between 1996 and 1999, Skjerdal (2001) traces allegations by ANC-led government leadership that the press had not transformed to meet the conditions of the new democracy. In October 1996 President Mandela criticized named senior black journalists for being lapdogs of their white owners. Then at the 50th ANC congress in Mafikeng December 1997 Mandela suggested that the so-called white media were part of a counter-revolutionary force. President Thabo Mbeki attacked the press for "lack of patriotism and positive reporting on government actions" ("Threatened by Mbeki" 14 June 1996). The Sunday Independent (Seloane, 21 September 1997) quoted then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki as saying "the democratic press should not be so critical". At a business conference in Swaziland 29 May 1996, Mpumalanga Premier Mathews Phosa agreed that journalists preferred to highlight negative developments rather than cooperating with government initiatives. "They never let facts stand in the way of a good story and always concentrate on the negative issues (Phosa says – 30 May 1996).

³ From the 1996 Comtask report to ANC discussion documents as recent as 2011 the developmental role of the mass media is emphasised. (ANC Discussion Document, 2002; ANC Discussion Document, 2011).

⁴ Mona, V. (2012) former GCIS Deputy Ceo: 10 April

⁵ Mokoli, S. 2012. Business Day: 5 December.

⁶ Ensor.L. 2011. Business Day: 10 June.

⁷ Bruce, N. 1996. Financial Mail: 14 June.

⁸ Jaffe, J. 2013. Radiologist at Charlotte Maxeke: 25 December.

⁹ Bloom, J. 2013. Democratic Alliance Gauteng spokesperson: 12 December.

10. SAPA, 2014. Times Live: 17 January
11. Joseph, D. 2013. Chief Director, Human Resources at GDoH till August 2013: 31 January.
12. Health-e. Article. <http://www.health-e.org.za/2014/01/13/research-trends-national-provincial-health-hiv-budgets-south-africa>. downloaded 7 February 2014
13. National Department of Health Strategic Plan 2010/11-2012/13
14. Child, C. 2014. "Hospital horrors costing SA plenty". Times Live: 17 January
15. I refer to "news values with negative connotations" implying a value judgement consistent with a prevailing social and moral norms. I regard this as an embedded concept throughout the study. However the intention is not to critique the value judgement itself, rather to note it an operational factor informing perceptions about public health care delivery. Turnstall (1971, p.261) cited in Braun (2009) suggests news values are "simply a mass media version of social values held by millions of audience members". The idea of news values reflecting social values underpins my study.
16. newsworthiness" is defined in the thesis as constituted by news values, criteria for reporting on an issue or event. (Cohen and Young, 1973, p.183).
17. Lars Palsson Syll discusses Amarta Sen's comparison of neo-liberalism and libertarianism. While neo-liberalism relates rights to obligations, libertarianism restricts the meaning to absence of any coercion that might restrict freedom. larspsyll.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/amartya-sen-on-neo-liberalism.pdf
18. Critical political economy of the media theories would be relevant in as much as they describe the advertising related imperative to sell newspapers, which in turn conditions the way content is framed. (Herman and Chomsky 1998, p.17)); (McChesney 2001, p.88); (Curran et.al., 1987)
19. <http://www.gov.za/documents/constitution/1996/a108-96.pdf>
20. See footnote 7
21. It is not within the scope of this research to undertake a detailed analysis of GCIS publications. Suffice to say that publications such as Bua News, My District Today and Public Sector Manager bear witness to Rogers (1962) diffusion of innovations approach
22. See footnote 15
23. The Protection of State Information Act, 1982, one of many draconian laws promulgated during apartheid, is now being replaced by the South African Protection of State Information Bill, which aims to regulate the classification, protection and dissemination of state information, weighing state interests up against transparency and freedom of expression will currently regulates these issues. Wikipedia [^ " 'Secrecy bill' a step backwards"](#). News24. 17 September 2011. Retrieved 19 October 2013.
24. What was once a force for democracy is now an agent of capitalism - the libertarian philosophy cannot understand an economically unequal society which clashes with its presupposition of a level-playing field of free, rational individuals. As I have earlier described, the South African libertarian press criticised apartheid for its political repression, but their critique was weakened and was partially collusive because the libertarian
25. Joseph, D. 2013. Chief Director Human Resources, GDoH: 31 January
26. However Schudson (2000 p.1) agrees that advertisers are attracted to papers that attract small concentrated elite audiences leading publications to tailor their news content to a select elite audience.
27. Sifile, L. 2013. health reporter at the Sowetan: 30 January.
28. Milford, K (2012) the Star: 10 July

29. <http://oxygenagency.co.uk/news-values-the-secret-to-a-great-angle-for-your-press-release/>
30. SAARF's Universal Living Standards Measure (SU – LSM) www.saarf.co.za
31. Chronis, M. (2012) The Media Online: 18 December
32. Ten point plan contains public health sector development communication messages
33. <http://www.health.gpg.gov.za/Pages/10-Point-Plan.aspx>
34. The Department of Health developmental intentions to bring quality healthy care to all citizens is captured in the 10-point plan outlined in the National Department of Health Strategic Framework 2010/11 – 2012/13
35. The Department of Health developmental intentions to bring quality healthy care to all citizens outlined in the ten point plan (2010)
36. Zhang, Y. and Wildemuth, B. (2009) Qualitative Analysis of Content
https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~yanz/Content_analysis.pdf
37. Singer (2011, p.62) notes that “.....journalists become not gatekeepers, but sense makers, not agenda setters but interpreters of what is both credible and valuable.”
38. Mrs Jennifer Jaffe, radiologist at Charlotte Maxekwe Academic Hospital; Ms. Thandiwe Mvuvu, public relations manager at Charlotte Maxekwe Academic Hospital
39. Lindile Sifile, reporter at the Sowetan; Baldwin Ndaba, reporter at The Star
40. Christians et al. (2009) note that social responsibility theory upholds the watchdog role of the media.
41. See Footnote 32.
42. In terms of the National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010)
43. See footnote 15 defining negative perception in terms of news values with negative connotations
44. <http://www.health.gpg.gov.za/Pages/10-Point-Plan.aspx>
45. Also see definitions of news values and newsworthiness in footnotes 15 and 16
46. Ndaba, B. (2013) reporter at the Star:17 December
47. The National Department of Health Ten Point Plan (2010) point 10 refers to Strengthening Research and Development.
48. See footnote 15 defining news values with negative connotations
49. SAPA (2013) No special treatment for Motsoaledi. Media 24 report: 14 August
50. De Beer, S. Serfontein, L. Naude, A. Steyn, E. (1996) Paper read at the 10th Biennial Conference of the African Council for Communication Education, Peninsula Technikon, Bellville, South Africa, 17-22 November.
<http://www.ibiblio.org/newsflow/results/debeer.htm>
51. <http://www.health.gov.za/docs/reports/2013/Healthcare.pdf>
52. Mapumulo, Z. Exclusive: Inside the hospitals audit. City Press: 2 February.
53. Sifile, L. Sowetan:

APPENDICES

Appendix i – The Star media reports on public health: January to December 2012

1. Skade, T. 2012. "Nurses are afraid to work in ill-equipped hospitals." The Star: 30 January
2. Skade, T. 2012. "Battleground Bara." The Star: 30 January
3. Motlounge, M. 2012. "Why premier chose to appeal payment to brain-damaged boy." The Star: 31 January
4. Seale, L. 2012. "Rape kit backlog improves after Star expose." The Star: 6 February
5. Skade, T. 2012. "It took a year to get some payments." The Star: 8 February
6. Skade, T. 2012. "Department finally acts on negligence millions." The Star: 8 February
7. Thom, S. 2012. "Bara baby crisis." The Star: 8 February
8. Thom, S. 2012. "Health service on brink of collapse." The Star: 9 February
9. Skade, T. 2012. "Health Dept vows to cough up R1.6bn for debts." The Star: 10 February
10. SAPA. 2012. "Services at Gauteng labs are up and running." The Star: 14 February
11. Ndaba, B. 2012. "Health a target as premier opts for zero tolerance." The Star: 17 February
12. Cullinan, K. 2012. "SA health 'low value for money.'" The Star: 24 February
13. Tau, P. 2012. "Lebese's irate family blame hospital." The Star: 24 February
14. Staff reporter. 2012. "Memorial service for soccer star." The Star: 27 February
15. Ndaba, B. 2012. "Blitz on doctors' overtime pay." The Star: 28 February
16. Ndaba, B. 2012. "R130m makeover of state hospitals on course." The Star: 28 February
17. Ndaba, B. 2012. "Hospitals get more direct power in drastic move." The Star: 1 March
18. Mokati, N. 2012. "Answers sought over deaths of two elderly patients." The Star: 3 March
19. Flanagan, L. 2012. "Gauteng restoring old structures to health." The Star: 9 March
20. Skade, S. 2012. "Cancer patients turned away again." The Star: 13 March
21. Ndaba, B. 2012. "Department underspends by over R2bn." The Star: 27 March
22. Buthelezi, L. 2012. "NHI grants lift health budget." The Star: 19 April
23. Chin, C. 2012. "Widower sues hospital for medical negligence." The Star: 26 April
24. Makhubu, N. 2012. "Family takes on hospital." The Star: 8 May
25. Mooki, O. 2012. "Young girl's plight a headache for state." The Star: 16 May
26. Molosankwe, B. 2012. "R12m awarded for botched birth." The Star: 6 June
27. Flanagan, L. 2012. "New Soweto hospital hopes to open by end of the year." The Star: 11 June
28. Molosankwe, B. 2012. "Ministry in crisis has top-heavy management." The Star: 26 June
29. Milford, K. 2012. "'Our healthcare system is in a shambles.'" The Star: 10 July
30. Olifant, K. 2012. "Less is More? No, not in this hospital." The Star: 20 August
31. Olifant, K. 2012. "'I knew I wanted to be somebody one day'" The Star: 20 August
32. Mkize, V. 2012. "Man turns to DA for help after department fails to pay him." The Star: 13 August

33. Thom, A. 2012. "Life is not a choice." The Star: 7 September
34. Mtshali, N. 2012. "Doctors work by cellphone light as outage hits Bara." The Star: 11 September
35. Roane, B. 2012. "Deceased's family seek answers from hospital," The Star: 17 September
36. Buthelezi, L. 2012. "Department turns to private hospitals to provide services." The Star: 21 September
37. Mokati, N. 2012. "Embattled Bara defends launching of TV channel." The Star: 22 September
38. Molosankwe, B. 2012. "Woman who lost leg to sue Health Department." The Star: 18 October
39. Bega, S. 2012. "Hurdles to breast-feeding keep children at HIV risk." The Star: 20 October
40. SAPA. 2012. "Gauteng health to pay R5m damages." The Star: 8 October
41. Ndaba, B. 2012. "'Academic hospitals need autonomy'." The Star: 18 October
42. Mkhwanazi, A. 2012. "Current CEO deemed not fit enough to manage Bara." The Star: 2 November
43. Bega, S. 2012. "Health MEC must pay after child lost legs." The Star: 10 November
44. Mooki, O. 2012. "Negligent Gauteng Health Department to pay." The Star: 13 November
45. Molosankwe, B. 2012. "Health Department wants lawyers' agents banned from touting at hospitals." The Star: 19 November
46. Ndaba, B. 2012. "R74bn shot in arm for province's health care with latest bail-out." The Star: 24 November
47. SAPA. 2012. "Doctor axed for charging for free op." The Star: 28 November
48. Mkhwanazi, A. 2012. "Patients at Bara are served rotten food." The Star: 10 December
49. Ndaba, B. 2012. "Premier steps in to fix health collapse." The Star: 11 December
50. Stassen, W. 2012. "Hospitals fingered over cancer deaths." The Star: 5 December

Appendix ii – Sowetan media reports on public health: January to December 2012

1. Mashaba, S. 2012. "Gauteng agrees to pay out damaged boy's claim". Sowetan: 31 January
2. Mashaba, S. 2012. "Mokonyane to fork out extra R1.4m". Sowetan: 2 February
3. Mashaba, S. 2012. "Gauteng govt finally pays up." Sowetan: 7 February
4. Seleka, N. 2012. "Gauteng pays R1.5bn." Sowetan: 16 April
5. Monama, T. 2012. "Hospitals target more revenue." Sowetan: 24 April
6. Selebi, M. 2012. "No room at Bara for burn patient." Sowetan: 12 July
7. Sifile, L. 2012. "Hospitals in cat scan crisis." Sowetan: 17 July
8. Sifile, L. 2012. "Patient refused treatment." Sowetan: 16 August
9. Sifile, L. 2012. "Gauteng health cuts debt by R3.4-billion." Sowetan: 22 August
10. Sifile, L. 2012. "Fine hospital not working": Sowetan: 24 August
11. Molathwa, O. 2012. "Gauteng R234m cut." Sowetan: 27 August
12. Molathwa, O. 2012. "State wastes R136m on health smart cards." Sowetan: 29 August
13. Monama, T. 2012. "Hospitals are still in need of CEOs." Sowetan: 5 September
14. Moselakgomo, A. 2012. "Still no help for injured granny." Sowetan: 3 September
15. Malefane, M. 2012. "Doctors fleece state hospitals." Sowetan: 8 October
16. Sifile, L. 2012. "Doctors in sex claims." Sowetan: 22 October
17. Sifile, L. 2012. "Hospital 'points fingers instead of fixing problems'." Sowetan: 25 October
18. Sifile, L. 2012. "Hospital staff 'burn-out'." Sowetan: 29 October
19. Kotlolo, M. 2012. "Doctor's sick note had 'genitalia drawings'." Sowetan: 2 November
20. Sifile, L. 2012. "Hospital CEOs back to school." Sowetan: 7 November
21. Selebi, M. 2012. "Hospital blamed for baby's death." Sowetan: 7 November
22. Sifile, L. 2012. "Just 3 phones to save lives." Sowetan: 12 November
23. Sifile, L. 2012. "New hospital's 'service poor'." Sowetan: 16 November
24. Molathwa, O. 2012. "Health's cash woes worsen." Sowetan: 19 November
25. Sifile, L. 2012. "R12.3m spent on equipment for 2 hospitals." Sowetan: 7 December
26. Moselakgomo, A. 2012. "'Bogus' medic is struck off." Sowetan: 23 December

Appendix iii – Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) media releases: January to December 2012

1. "Department is committed to paying suppliers." GDoH: 19 January
2. "Laboratories at hospitals are not operational." GDoH: 13 February
3. "Department has put recruitment of administrative staff on hold." GDoH: 14 February
4. "Ambulance response time improves but more work needed." GDoH: 21 February
5. "Gauteng succeeds in protecting vulnerable children." GDoH: 22 February
6. "Condolences to Thabang Lebese." GDoH: 23 February
7. "A new technique for the treatment of prostate cancer to be initiated at Charlotte Maxeke Academic Hospital." GDoH: 4 March
8. "Challenges with radiation machines at Johannesburg Academic Hospital" GDoH: 12 March 2012
9. "MEC Mkgwe updates community leaders on progress of Zola/Jabulani Hospital." GDoH: 20 March
10. "Department in search for hospital board members." GDoH: 20 March
11. "Department implements a turnaround." GDoH: 12 April
12. "Department aims to improve healthcare services." GDoH: 16 April
13. "Gauteng Health Department has settled all debts to medical suppliers." GDoH: 1 May
14. "Gauteng commemorates international nurses day." GDoH: 10 May
15. "More ambulances for Gauteng province." GDoH: 23 May
16. "MEC Mkgwe takes health services to informal settlement." GDoH: 31 May
17. "Health services to improve in Gauteng." GDoH: 1 June
18. "Department to speed up construction of TB wards." GDoH: 4 June
19. "Availability of medicine in Gauteng improves." GDoH: 5 June
20. "Department settles baby Skhosana's litigation claim." GDoH: 5 June
21. "Department release(s) more money to suppliers." GDoH: 6 June
22. "Bara's burn unit is the best in Africa." GDoH: 14 June
23. "Gauteng Health Department intervenes to restore cancer treatment." GDoH: 20 June
24. "Media briefing by MEC for Health Ms Ntombi Mkgwe Sunday 8 July 2012." GDoH: 8 July
25. "MEC Mkgwe sends her condolences to family members." GDoH: 9 July
26. "Department re-iterates its position on supplier payments and clarifies its position on CBK washroom." GDoH: 10 July
27. "Gauteng reduce AIDS deaths by a fifth and aims to put more on antiretroviral therapy." GDoH: 25 July
28. "Services are not disrupted at Leratong Hospital." GDoH: 27 July
29. "Department steps up efforts to collect R1.1 billion owed in patient fees." GDoH:
30. "Department is making progress in paying municipalities." GDoH: 30 August
31. "Gauteng Department of Health condemns the exploitation of the jobless." GDoH: 16 September
32. "Top management at Gauteng Health has been strengthened." GDoH: 20 September
33. "Gauteng is becoming safe for pregnant women." GDoH: 25 September

34. "Department in progress (process) of filling posts at Charlotte Maxeke." GDoH: 2 October
35. "Backlog in cancer treatment is clearing at Charlotte Maxeke Hospital." GDoH: 3 October
36. "Media Statement by MEC Hope Papo on developments in the Gauteng Department of Health." GDoH: 9 October
37. "Breast cancer awareness campaign in West Rand communities." GDoH: 29 October
38. "Department is making progress in delivering quality healthcare." GDoH: 2 November
39. "Department condemns neglect of pregnant woman in Soshanguve." GDoH: 21 November
40. "Dr George Mukhari surgeons performed the first laparoscopic op in SA." GDoH: 22 November
41. "MEC Papo conveys condolences to the Ngubentombi family." GDoH: 5 December
42. "Gauteng spends millions on hospital equipment." GDoH: 6 December

Appendix iv – Ten point plan from National Department of Health Strategic Plan 2010/11 – 2012/2013 regarding priorities for the period 2009 to 2014

1. Provision of Strategic Leadership and creation of a Social Compact for better health outcomes

The objective of this priority is to ensure that there is unified action across the health sector. This requires appropriate planning and the involvement of provinces, communities and their leaders in the health sector. Another key feature of this priority is the development of an integrated annual national health plan in conjunction with Provincial Departments of Health. This annual plan will be used to inform and develop a costed budget to submit to Treasury. Review of policies adopted in order to achieve health sector goals will be conducted quarterly, annually and bi-annually.

Thirteen Ministerial Imbizos will be held to get feedback from communities on their experiences of and recommendations on health service delivery issues. Policy and guidelines relating to home and community based care will be developed and an incremental process for providing stipends to community care-givers will be embarked on.

Building the capacity and ability of governance structures to meaningfully fulfil their roles and responsibilities has also been identified as a deliverable under this priority. A training manual for hospital boards will be developed. However, priority attention should be given to strengthening the capacity of clinic committees to mobilise their active participation at grassroots level.

2. Implementation of a National Health Insurance for South Africa

A White Paper setting out the framework for the implementation of a National Health Insurance and draft legislation which will be open for public comment will be produced. Using an inclusive approach, the necessary institutional and organisational arrangements required to implement the NHI will be introduced. By 2011/12, policies to remove user fees for certain indigent groups will be implemented.

3. Improving the quality of health services

Improving the quality of care delivered at health facilities is an important plank of the 10 Point Plan. The Quality in Health Care Policy strives to improve quality of care through measuring standards against actual practice and filling gaps. The revised Core Standards for Health Establishments in South Africa, now extended to Primary Health Care facilities, are aimed toward assessing these gaps in order to ensure the delivery of respectful, safe and high quality clinical care with effective support systems. To monitor health service delivery, the implementation of quality improvement plans is crucial for all districts, particularly the 18 identified priority sub-districts. These sub-districts were selected on the basis that they were lagging behind in performance on key maternal and child health care indicators measured in MDGs 4 and 5.

Health facilities around the country are being improved and upgraded through the Hospital Revitalisation Programme. This programme aids the scaling up and refining of the improvement of quality of service at health facilities. Facilities will be encouraged and monitored in developing and implementing quality improvement plans and infection prevention and control plans.

As part of the programme to escalate good service at facility level, all primary health care facilities will be visited by a supervisor at least once a month and an Ombuds Office which will receive and investigate all complaints relating to quality of care will be fully functional by 2011/12.

4. Overhaul the Health Care System and Improve its Management

Robust financial management systems will be put in place to improve audit outcomes. Provincial expenditure patterns will be monitored on a monthly basis and quarterly visits to each Province will take place.

District Management Teams will be created in all 52 districts. These teams will undergo a series of targeted trainings to assist them to develop and monitor District Health Plans. Provinces will also be supported to develop District Health Councils.

Management of hospitals will also be strengthened with 150 Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of hospitals being targeted for enrolment into a Hospital Management Training Programme.

By the end of March 2012, 60% of all hospital CEOs will have been enrolled in the programme.

5. Improved Human Resources Planning, Development and Management

Strong consideration will be given to the planning, management and development of Human Resources for Health (HRH). This includes ensuring that all provinces have developed and begin to implement human resource plans which are consistent with service delivery objectives. As part of a detailed planning and forecasting process for various categories of HRH for the next five years, the re-opening of nursing colleges in order to ensure the accelerated production of nurses will also be given due attention. Targets for the training and production of various cadres of workers will be developed culminating in a revised national HRH Plan in 2010/11.

6. Revitalisation of physical infrastructure

Policy guidelines to assist provinces in planned preventative maintenance of their health infrastructure will be developed. Regular reports on the progress of the Hospital Revitalisation Programme will be submitted to the National Health Council. The establishment of Public-Private-Partnerships to facilitate the construction and refurbishment of health facilities will be given priority as will initiatives to revitalise primary level care facilities in order to improve quality of service. A national audit of all PHC infrastructure and services will be conducted.

7. Accelerated implementation of the HIV and AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections National Strategic Plan and the increased focus on Tuberculosis (TB) and other communicable diseases

The objective of this target is to ensure the implementation of the various existing treatment guidelines and to strengthen prevention interventions. Recognising the close relationship between the two, attention will also be paid to strengthening TB programmes including MDR and XDR TB.

8. Mass mobilisation for the better health for the population

A Healthy Lifestyle Strategy focusing on nutrition, physical activity, tobacco control , alcohol and substance abuse control and safer sexual practices which will inform all Provincial Health Promotion plans will be developed by 2009/10. A national initiative to improve maternal, neonatal and child health in 18 priority districts which aims at reducing high morbidity and mortality at health facilities by implementing the Integrated Management of Childhood illnesses and the Perinatal Problem Identification Programme will be introduced. This includes the incremental provision of two vaccines (Prevenar and Rotatrix) which will help to prevent death due to pneumonia and diarrhoea respectively.

The Department will also seek to improve its management of non-communicable diseases particularly hypertension and diabetes.

9. Review of Drug Policy

A Drug Supply Management Information System to improve the monitoring of drug availability will be introduced into the provinces in a phased manner. The Department intends to maintain a zero (0%) stock-out rate of antiretroviral and TB drugs on tender in all provinces. An external team will conduct a review of the country's drug policy.

10. Strengthening Research and Development

Areas relating to the South African Demographic and Health Survey (SADHS) 2010.

Appendix v – Gauteng Department of Health (GDoH) 10 Point Plan

<http://www.health.gpg.gov.za/Pages/10-Point-Plan.aspx>

1. Reorganisation of support services

- Strengthen Health Information Systems and improve data collection.
- Develop the National Health Laboratory Service to integrate laboratory services from provincial health departments, the South African Institute for Medical Research, the national Department of Health and academic institutions into a public entity.
- Develop an integrated food safety and control system.
- Facilitate the transfer of medicolegal mortuaries from the South-African Police Service to the provincial departments of health to strengthen efficiency, effectiveness and accountability.
- Transform the current fragmented blood transfusion services into a single national blood transfusion service.
- Improve efficiency in the units of the compensation commissioner and the Medical Bureau of Diseases.

2. Legislative reform

- Strengthen the development of new or amended legislation to support strategic objectives of Department.
- Ensure the proclamation of all subordinate legislation (regulations) linked with the Acts already passed or to be passed.
- Facilitate the passing of Provincial Health Bills.
- Develop health technology legislation.

3. Improving quality of care

- Strengthen the Batho Pele programme that has already been initiated.
- The development and operationalisation of a National Policy on Quality.
- Introduce mechanisms to advance patients rights and protection.
- Improve clinical practice.
- Strengthen governance structures to facilitate community and user participation.

4. Revitalization of hospital services

- Develop a National Planning Framework to reduce disparities in health access and outcomes.
- Ensure that hospital services are planned rationally, are affordable and sustainable.
- Ensure long term planning for highly specialized services.
- Improve rehabilitation of the Hospital Sector Infrastructure.
- Improve hospital management efficiency.

5. Speeding up delivery of an essential package of services through the district health system

- Strengthen the delivery of a Comprehensive Primary Health Care Package.
- Strengthen programmes to ensure communities are active participants in their own health care.
- Increase access to and availability of Primary Health Care services.
- Incorporate the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) with the implementation strategy of the PHC Package.
- Ensure the incorporation of the Urban Renewal Programme (URP) with the delivery of PHC services.

6. Decreasing morbidity and mortality rates through strategic interventions

- Reduce the incidence and prevalence of childhood infectious diseases.
- Reduce the incidence of health problems amongst the youth.
- Decrease the incidence of HIV/AIDS, STDs and TB.
- Strengthen Information, education, social mobilisation and communication on HIV/AIDS.
- Promote safe sexual behaviour.

- Improve the effectiveness of services for the treatment and management of HIV/AIDS.
- Co-ordinate and facilitate role player partnership in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- Strengthen initiatives to decrease incidence of STDs.
- Decrease the incidence and prevalence of tuberculosis.
- Implement and evaluate a comprehensive prevention, care and support; package for HIV/AIDS/STD/TB.
- Reduce the incidence of malaria.
- Improve women's and maternal health.
- Reduce the incidence of mental health problems.
- Increase the availability and effectiveness of mental health care services
- Reduce the level of alcohol and substance abuse.
- Reduce the incidence and impact of violence with special focus on women and children.
- Prevent chronic diseases of lifestyle and preventable cancers and blindness.
- Reduce the prevalence and burden of chronic diseases/ conditions and cancers.
- Improve accessibility of health facilities to people with disabilities.
- Promote poverty alleviation and food security strategies.
- Strengthen nutrition interventions to prevent and manage malnutrition.
- Develop integrated rural development strategies in collaboration with other partners.
- Improve the safety of food, drugs and biological products.
- Improve the effectiveness of Emergency Medical Services.
- Strengthen the development of disaster management strategies.
- Strengthen health promotion programmes.
- Reduce the incidence of infectious diseases.
- Reduce child malnutrition.

7. Improving resource mobilization and the management of resources without neglecting the attainment of equity in resource allocation

- Reduce inter and intra provincial inequity in resource allocation.
- Strengthen funding for Primary Health Care.
- Improve management of budget expenditure.
- Improve revenue generation.
- Facilitate the implementation of the New Medical Schemes Regulations.
- Consolidate inter-departmental collaboration on comprehensive Social Security of which Social Health Insurance is a component part.
- Finalise the public-private partnership framework.
- Strengthen effective management of health technology.

8. Improving health human resource development and management

- Determine human resource requirements of the country by level of care.
- Determine the most appropriate and affordable skill mix needed at each level of care.
- Develop strategies to reduce inequities in the training, and distribution of personnel.
- Develop a human resources strategy to address organizational structures, management systems and culture, recruitment and retention of personnel, and training and retraining;

9. Improving communication and consultation within the health system and between the health system and communities we serve

- Improve communication both within the public health system and with other stakeholders.
- Increase effective use and availability of electronic communication tools.

10. Strengthening co-operation with our partners internationally

- Ensure effective participation to fulfil international treaties and agreements made e.g. WHO (especially in the Africa Region) and UNICEF.
- Consolidate and revitalise bi-lateral and multi-lateral agreements entered into over the last five years.
- Strengthen and expand agreements with Africa and the Middle East, the Americas, Asia and the South Seas, all the UN agencies and other multilateral organisations.