

The Iindaba Ziyafika Project: A New Community of Practice?

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Arts in Journalism and Media Studies.**

Rhodes University

By

Sihle Nyathi

Supervisor: Professor Anthea Garman

October 2011

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the practices of citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project. The objectives of the research were to explore the evolving practices of citizen journalism in Grahamstown and to extrapolate how citizen journalists are securing a discursive space in relationship to conventional journalism. The study investigated whether the citizen journalists based at *Grocotts Mail* and Radio Grahamstown are developing practices and patterns that can be distinguished from the practices of conventional journalism. It also evaluated whether the content that is produced by citizen journalists differs from the content that is produced by professional journalists, so that it can be understood as “alternative” and as promoting engaged citizenship. A sub goal was also to explore whether citizen journalism does enable the practice of citizenship through expanding the public sphere.

The findings of the research are that in the Iindaba Ziyafika project, citizen journalists see news as a process and not as a series of news events. This is clear departure from event-based news conceptualisation associated with mainstream journalism. They view news as unfolding social processes, allowing citizen journalists to question the factors which would have precipitated the event and investigate the causal factors of particular phenomena.

The research also reveals that citizen journalists in the project are engaging in pro-am journalism. Part of the practice of citizen journalists involves a very significant amount of collaboration between professional journalists and citizen journalists. The collaboration is in the production of content and in the presentation of radio broadcasts.

Part of the findings of the study are that journalists in the *Iindaba Ziyafika* project work in different mediums and this calls for them to acquire the competencies of the different mediums. The same citizen journalists produce content for print, radio and for online media. The diction used in the stories published by citizen journalists is couched in struggle and revolutionary language which seems to pit the community against the authorities. The citizen journalists also make use of every daily language in their radio broadcasts and borrow from their cultural expression. This they do through populist methods. The citizen journalists have also integrated communication brokering as part and parcel of their practice. This is because the citizen journalists have also made it their mandate to enable the flow of information between the

residents and the local authority. In terms of sourcing there is a deliberate stance to include those who are not ordinarily given a voice in the mainstream media. Women and the poor appear frequently in stories as sources and this is a different scenario from that prevalent in mainstream journalism which frequently covers the rich and the powerful. The citizen journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika project have also borrowed practices from professional journalism and this has been integrated into their daily practice. This includes following strategic rituals of journalism objectivity and balance.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writing of the thesis has been a journey. It has been an amazing one in which there have been people who have been my travel companions. Firstly I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Anthea Garman for her astounding patience on this journey. This thesis would not have possible without her valuable input.

I would like to pass my heartfelt thanks to my friend and worst critic Loisa Mbatha, who kept me on my toes. I say, natotela sana (thank you very much). Thank you to Halima Namakula for her assistance in terms of ‘community of practice’.

My friend, Admire Mare who was there to listen, who understood the excitement, offered advice when necessary and most of all believed. Ndinotenda (thanks), to my friend Rufaro for her encouragement and her unwavering conviction in the dream.

To Lynette Steenveld, my Media and Society professor, who introduced me to the academic arena. You have unknowingly been my inspiration. You made me want to know more and push back the frontiers of ignorance.

I wish to also acknowledge, the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project, without them this project would not have been. I would also to like to make special mention of Bongi Bozo, Khaya Thonjeni and Kwanele Butana who played a pivotal role in this work.

Above all, I dedicate this thesis to my family and to the Glory of my God, for who he is.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	1
1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Research background	1
1.3. Statement of the problem	3
1.4. Social Context of the Research	3
1.5. History of <i>Grocott's Mail</i>	5
1.5.1. <i>Grocott's Mail</i> under Rhodes University ownership	7
1.5.2. Relationship Between Iindaba Ziyafika & <i>Grocott's Mail</i>	7
1.6. Radio Grahamstown	8
1.6.1. Relationship Between Iindaba Ziyafika & Radio Grahamstown.	8
1.7. Theoretical Framework	9
1.8. Research Goals and Objectives	11
1.9. Research Design	11
1.9.1. Research Techniques	11
1.10. Structure of the Study	12
1.11. Conclusion	13
CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical framework and literature review	14
2.1. Introduction	14
2.2. Community of Practice	14

2.3. Citizen Journalism	18
2.3.1 Citizen Journalism in Africa	19
2.4. Conceptualising Alternative Media	22
2.5. The Relationship between Citizen Journalism and Professional Media	25
2.6. Concept of Citizenship	28
2.7. Conclusion	29
CHAPTER THREE: Research methodology and data analysis procedures	30
3.1. Introduction	30
3.2. Philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research	30
3.3. Observation	32
3.4. In-depth interviews	36
3.4.1. Profile of the interview process	37
3.5. Textual analysis	38
3.6. Strategies of data analysis	38
3.7. Conclusion	39
CHAPTER FOUR: Presentation and interpretation of findings	41
4.1. Introduction	41
4.2. Multi-media practices	41
4.3. News as a process	43
4.4. Relationship between professional and citizen journalists	44
4.5. The use of ideological and value-laden language	47
4.6. Action-oriented journalism: playing a social and community role	50
4.7. Sourcing	52
4.8. The populist nature of the news bulletin	55

4.9. Language use	56
4.10. Borrowed Practices	57
4.10.1. An emerging beat system	57
4.10.2. The use of material from mainstream media	57
4.11. Collaboration on stories within the group	58
4.12. Citizen Journalism Enabling Citizen Participation	59
4.13. Hyperlocality	60
4.14. Conclusion	61
CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion: Limitations and recommendations	62
5.1. Introduction	62
5.2. Summary of findings	62
5.2.1. An emerging community of practice	64
5.3. Recommendations and areas of further research	65
5.4. Conclusions	67
APPENDICES	68
APPENDIX A: Interview guide for citizen journalists	68
APPENDIX B: Interview guide for predators	69
BIBLIOGRAPHY	70

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study. It highlights the statement of the problem and the significance of the study. It also outlines theoretical perspectives that underpin this study. The chapter also presents the goals and objectives of the study as well as the methods, and procedures used. It justifies the research project as well as provides the structure of the study.

1.2 Research Background

The study researched institutionalised citizen journalists and explored their news gathering practices. In particular, it investigated how they were developing as a community of practice in an impoverished town where citizenship rights are not actualised. A community of practice is a group of people who share an interest or a profession and who develop distinctive methods and practices as they interact (Wenger 1998). The citizen journalists under study are affiliated to the Iindaba Ziyafika Project. Their stories are published in the *Grocotts Mail* print edition and on its website and, in a later development of the project, are now also being broadcast on a current affairs programme on Radio Grahamstown. The citizen journalists have a newsroom at the newspaper's offices. Both the newsroom and the training of the citizen journalists are funded by the US-based Knight Foundation. The Iindaba Ziyafika Project was launched by Rhodes University's School of Journalism and Media Studies in 2009. According to Berger (2007) the project sought to impact "the poorer residents of Grahamstown, whose voices and information sources are currently constrained in terms of newspaper and web access". The project aims to empower the citizens of Grahamstown through training in the use of new and mobile media to participate in local debates, and thereby engage more effectively in the practice of citizenship.

Citizen journalism is a new phenomenon in Africa and the definition of citizen journalism is still a contested terrain. Steenveld and Strelitz (2010) and Rosen (2004) however assert that citizen journalism refers to the journalism produced by non-professionals. Coyer et al. (2007) define citizen journalism as radical writing that reports from the subject position of someone with an unabashed political perspective whose ideology is laid bare from the outset. As such, Banda

(2010) notes that citizen journalism fits into a frame of practice that would conflict with the historically grounded, professional ways of practising journalism with its claims to “objectivity” and “neutrality”. The citizen journalism movement has mushroomed because of the dissatisfaction with mass media and its ability to meet the needs of different segments of society. Mabweazara (2010: 16) argues that citizen journalism in Africa has not accumulated sufficient historical capital and has not yet evolved sophisticated codes of practice. Mabweazara also argues that the practices and tendencies of citizen journalism may have weaknesses because of the low levels of education of most citizen journalists (ibid.). The practice of citizen journalism has been likened to giving someone in the street a scalpel and telling them to operate (Foss 2008). Mabweazara (2010) postulates also that citizens are under no professional obligation to use the time-honoured ethics of journalism. He asserts that citizen journalists are not constrained by traditional journalistic processes or methodologies and usually function without editorial oversight.

It is in light of the above assertions that this research is necessary in order to explore the developing practices of citizen journalism in Grahamstown. This research is also necessary as Steenveld and Strelitz (2010) note that the western model of citizen journalists as “producers” (Bruns 2007) presumes a citizenry both as consumers and producers of media products who are relatively well-educated, has familiarity with, and access to, the new media as a form of social communication, and is confident in their right to participate in newly-developed public spheres, particularly those online. “In Grahamstown, however, the recruited citizen journalists come from a community in which there is 70% unemployment, poor schooling, and a lack of basic facilities such as running water, indoor sanitation, and electricity” (Steenveld & Strelitz 2010). It is therefore imperative to find out how citizen journalists in the socio-historical context of Grahamstown gather news, given a social background which seems to militate against their ability to engage in what is understood in other parts of the world to be citizen journalism. The findings of Steenveld and Strelitz (2010) therefore provide the premise for the need for further research into the actual practices of citizen journalists and their relationship to the mainstream, although community-based, journalistic publication, *Grocotts Mail*. Atton and Hamilton (2007) also assert that many of the studies on citizen journalists have been dominated by approaches that focus on their political value and their capacity to empower citizens. They argue that studies

of the working practices of citizen media are absent from most research in the field and that there is a need to study and better understand the actual working practices of citizen journalists.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Banda (2010) views Citizen Journalism in Africa and the western world as an indictment against mainstream journalists in the sense that it came about because of the dissatisfaction with the practices of mainstream journalism. Mainstream journalists are said to be serving corporate interests and not the interests of citizens. This is because many journalists work for private companies with profit motives. It is precisely because of profit imperative that in Africa, their practice of journalism is said not to be benefiting the grassroots. On the other hand, citizen journalism is a movement that seeks to come up with practices that better inform citizens. It is precisely because of this that this thesis seeks to ascertain how the citizen journalists in Grahamstown operate. This study is also motivated by the need to ascertain whether the practices of citizen journalists are living up to the claims of citizen journalism.

1.4 Social Context of the Research

The objective of this section is to provide a socio-economic account of the conditions of Grahamstown as the citizen journalists ply their trade in the area. Grahamstown lies about 125 kilometres north-east of Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa. Grahamstown is home to an estimated population of over 120,000 (Probyn, 2006: 395; Holleman & Paterson, 2002: 38). Grahamstown is one of the oldest towns in South Africa, having been founded as a military garrison in 1812 located as a buffer between the Cape Colonists and Xhosa (Hammond-Tooke, 1970: 26; O'Meara, 1995: 12). The city was named after Colonel John Graham who was appointed by the colonial government of the Cape Colony to enforce and expand its eastern frontier. There is a strong British influence in the buildings, institutions, and atmosphere ever since the occupation (O'Meara, 1995: 13). The 1820 Settlers' Monument, a huge hilltop memorial to the 5,000 British settlers of 1820-21, forms Grahamstown's claim to be the capital of "settler country" in the Eastern Cape (Lemon, 2004: 278).

Lemon continues to state, the Anglican Cathedral and the English-medium Rhodes University, at opposite ends of High Street, symbolise both the "Englishness" of Grahamstown and its

functions as an education and cultural centre (2004: 278). One can view the whole of Grahamstown from the hilltop Settlers' Monument because of its physical location in a valley, and its relatively small size. According to Lemon (2004: 28), as is the case in an "apartheid city", the African townships were and are prominent features of the landscape visible from many "white" parts of the city. Lemon (2004: 28) describes three distinct settlement types in Grahamstown as marks of the legacy of colonialism and apartheid. Firstly, former all-white suburbs in the west are well treed and relatively spacious. Secondly, the former coloured area forms a transitional belt between the mainly white part of the town and the African townships.

Thirdly, contrasting with western Grahamstown, beyond the older African townships like Fingo Village, Tanti, and Makana's Kop, the more recent informal and formal African settlements extend three to five kilometres to the east. A dense mass of buildings and shacks, a few trees and open spaces, only a few schools and sports facilities characterise the townships and there is a higher degree of poverty there as opposed to the relative affluence in the west.

The apartheid government justified these racially segregated patterns of settlement through the various Group Area acts that it passed from 1950 onwards. The purpose of the acts was to enable the state to re-zone land in order to move people into racially segregated areas and freeze their rights to movement and property (Holleman & Paterson, 2002: 24, 29).

Historically, starting with the frontier war of 1819 between Xhosa warriors and the colonial British troops, Grahamstown was the stage for many battles and confrontations between whites and blacks until the end of apartheid in 1994 (Grundy, 1994: 388,395; O'Meara, 1995: 84-85). As in other cities in South Africa, Grahamstown experienced an anti-apartheid confrontation spearheaded by the youth, starting in 1977 and continuing intermittently into the 1980s (Manona, 1988: 96). As in many South African cities and towns, the new chapter of Grahamstown opened with the demise of apartheid and the ascent to power of the democratically elected African National Congress in 1994 (Holleman & Paterson, 2002: 44).

Economically, it is one of the poorest provinces in South Africa and has a 60-70% unemployment rate, (Lemon 1994: 279; Manona, 1998: 96). Survival, for many families, depends on social grants and informal employment (Lemon, 2004: 279). Lemon and Manona attribute the widespread phenomenon of poverty and unemployment to the legacy of apartheid as

well as to a growth in population without a parallel economic growth. The other factors exacerbating the poverty and underdevelopment of Grahamstown include the town's lack of industrial establishments and the low wages for the formally employed (Roux & Leger 1970: 26; Manona, 1988: 96). Now, this former frontier town and apartheid city seems to be mainly concerned with expanding the frontier of knowledge in many different ways (O'Meara, 1995: 12). It does this through Rhodes University, colleges and several other private and public schools. On the other hand, there are many township schools with low pass-rates and poorer facilities. These educational institutions along with many legal, cultural and religious institutions form the economic pillars of today's Grahamstown (Holleman & Paterson, 2002: 15).

Grocott's Mail as a print media institution is embedded within the socio-economic conditions of Grahamstown and finds sources for news stories from the eastern townships and the western suburbs. Therefore, the social history of the town can positively or negatively feed into and shape the stories that are gathered from the town. Radio Grahamstown is the community radio station which is also embedded in the economic realities of the town. Radio Grahamstown tries to report the realities of the town through current affairs programming and partnering with the Iindaba Ziyafika project.

1.5 History of *Grocott's Mail*

This section presents a brief history of *Grocott's Mail* from the date of its foundation to the present. Launched in 1870, *Grocott's Mail* refers to itself as the oldest independent newspaper in South Africa (*Grocott's Mail*, 15 May 1970; O'Meara, 1995: 46). However, a history of the South African press shows that the first local publication started in 1795. Fourie's account of the 1795 publication does not specify the title of the publication. Five years later, some pioneering papers appeared. These were known as *Cape Gazzette* and *African Advertiser* published on 16 August 1800 (Fourie, 2001: 35). As they were controlled by the governor, only official notices and advertisements were printed in the first newspapers. *Cape Gazette* continues to exist to date. Therefore, at least according to Fourie, there were some newspapers in South Africa 70 years before *Grocott's Mail*.

Thus, established on Wednesday, 11 May 1870 as an advertising medium in Grahamstown, South Africa, *Grocott's Mail* can justifiably be called one of the oldest South African

newspapers and the oldest surviving newspaper in Grahamstown. Now the newspaper has served the Grahamstown community for 141 years (*Grocott's Mail*, Friday 15 May, 1970; Dugo 2007 ;www.grocotts.co.za).

Grocott's Mail started as an advertising medium for Grahamstown and its surroundings on Wednesday 11 May 1870. This advertising medium was then named *Grocott's Free Paper: An Advertising Medium for Town and Country*. The word “free” was to indicate that the newspaper’s first copy was distributed free in Grahamstown and several other frontier towns at the morning markets (*Grocott's Free Paper*, Wednesday May 11, 1870). It was a four-page newspaper published once a week, every Wednesday. The paper was filled with advertisements, announcements, and events. It was hard to find news in *Grocott's Free Paper* except for the sporadic appearance of some short “news-like” items that appeared under the column “Local and Colonial”. For instance, the column was used to write about the arrival of high-ranking colonial military officers from Britain to the Cape Colony or the departure of them upon accomplishing their services (*Grocott's Free Paper*, 1870, 1871). This trend continued for the two year period the newspaper was published under the title *Grocott's Free Paper* (1870-1872).

Grocott's Mail was a family owned and managed newspaper almost for a century and four decades. Thomas Grocott who founded this media institution, in 1870, had already had ample experience as an employee of newspaper industries first in England and then in South Africa. The title plate of the newspaper bears the family name of its founder Thomas Henry Grocott (1838-1912). Thomas Henry Grocott was not only the founder and the owner of the newspaper but also its editor until he died in 1912. Later, after he died, the brand name was maintained and the business was continued by other members of the Grocott’s family.

So far, the history of *Grocott's Mail* shows the changes that the newspaper has undergone in terms of its services in response to external factors including Christianity, colonialism and wars although it was mainly a family owned newspaper. Ever since South Africa’s transition to a multi-party democracy in 1994, the newspaper is said to have been a parochial one mainly serving only one section of the community, the white section, in terms of stories that it covered. This trend came all the way down from its day of establishment (Dugo 2007; www.grocotts.co.za). *Grocott's Mail* was purchased by Rhodes University as it faced closure

because of funding problems. The paper was purchased so that it could be used as a training ground for journalism students under the university's experiential training programme. Describing the lack of editorial independence before the newspaper was purchased by Rhodes University in 2003, (Amner in Dugo 2007), said, "*Grocott's Mail* ran short of marks of quality journalism. Amner's view is that in terms of transforming the publication to a formal print media grounded in the principles of independent and critical journalism, Rhodes University has played a pivotal role.

1.5.1 *Grocott's Mail* under Rhodes University ownership

The shift in ownership from the previous owners to Rhodes University since 2003 has been a turning point for *Grocott's Mail* in terms of infrastructure, the employment of professional journalists, and more balanced coverage of all residents in Grahamstown (Dugo 2007). The previous goals of the newspaper such as serving as an advertising medium and covering religious stories were replaced by two new other goals as stated in article 3.2 of the founding by-laws of the David Rabkin Project for Experiential Journalism Training. These are "to publish *Grocott's Mail* as a Grahamstown community newspaper that also serves as a rich training function for the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University" (DRPEJ, 2003: 1).

After the newspaper's acquisition by the Rhodes University Department of Journalism and Media Studies in 2003, the change to accommodate all communities in Grahamstown started taking roots. Whereas in the past *Grocott's Mail* privileged the conservative white community, recently it has undergone a profound change in terms of covering stories about residents in Grahamstown East (Dugo 2007). The coverage of the residents in Grahamstown East increased when the citizen journalism project was introduced as they deliberately covered stories from those communities.

1.5.2 Relationship between Indaba Ziyafika and *Grocott's Mail*

Grocott's Mail was acquired by a Rhodes University-linked company in 2003. Named in honour of a former journalist, the company is known as the David Rabkin Project for Experimental Journalism. On the other hand Indaba Ziyafika is a project run by the Rhodes School of Journalism and Media Studies. The project won a US\$630,000 grant from the Knight Foundation

in 2008, and was managed by the MTN Chair of Media and Mobile Communications, Harry Dugmore. Iindaba Ziyafika is designed to explore answers to these overarching questions, with a particular focus on young people in Grahamstown and on creating communication that connects people to power and economic opportunity. One of the projects that Iindaba Ziyafika runs is a citizen journalism newsroom at *Grocott's Mail*. The citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project publish their stories in the online version of *Grocott's Mail* and also in the print version.

1.6 Radio Grahamstown

Radio Grahamstown is a community radio station located and broadcasting in Grahamstown on the 102.1 fm frequency wavelength. Radio Grahamstown is a non-profit organisation that broadcasts for 16 hours a day. This community radio station started broadcasting on 22 November 2008. The station broadcasts in three languages: isiXhosa (60%), English (30%) and Afrikaans (10%) (Interview, Thonjeni, 04/12/10).

The station broadcasts up to a radius of 100km from the Grahamstown city centre with a listenership of 4 200 from August 2010. The station has a variety of programmes and it has 60% of talk radio and 40% music. The station claims that during the shows the presenters discuss and talk about issues that affect people in Grahamstown. According to Thonjeni “the content is in support of democracy and tenets such as freedom of expression and right to information” (Interview, Thonjeni, 04/12/10).

1.6.1 Relationship between Indaba Ziyafika and Radio Grahamstown

Rhodes University through the Iindaba Ziyafika project has a memorandum of agreement with Radio Grahamstown. According to the agreement, Iindaba Ziyafika wishes to strengthen local media in order to give the community more access to and involvement in the media process and content creation. It has a particular interest in radio because of its accessibility, cost efficiency and flexibility in terms of language.

Iindaba Ziyafika therefore, invested resources into the improvement of Radio Grahamstown's infrastructure and equipment. This included moving the station to more suitable premises in the *Grocott's Mail* building and the purchase of necessary equipment. The agreement also included the secondment of a station manager for an interim period. The agreement also included

providing training for Radio Grahamstown staff in the areas of production, presentation and station management. According to the agreement, the station manager appointed by Iindaba Ziyafika is supposed to help with the production of local news programming and especially in cases those where audiences can participate using their cell phones (both through phoning, text messages and Mxit) as per the key aims of Iindaba Ziyafika project. Iindaba Ziyafika also seconded to the radio station a news producer who is paid by the project like the news editor.

In return, Radio Grahamstown accommodates in its schedule the news and youth programming produced by the Iindaba Ziyafika project and in particular the Y4Y show and Lunch Time Live. Lunch Time Live is produced by the citizen journalists who were trained under the citizen journalism project. The citizen journalists are not a static group as they contribute to Lunch Time Live whenever they are able to.

It is expected that this programming will form an integral part of the overall refinement of the Radio Grahamstown schedule and help increase audiences and, consequently, revenue. Radio Grahamstown is also expected, according to the agreement, to accommodate a certain number of Rhodes journalism students at its premises, both in the provision of production experience on news and other programmes and in the broadcast of suitable material created by the students. This includes the carrying of Cue Radio output during the National Arts Festival.

Iindaba Ziyafika endeavours to use new media platforms such as cell phones, radio and web based technologies to provide information to citizens. These other platforms reach a tiny number of the residents in Grahamstown. This is because of the high poverty levels in Grahamstown which militate against residents having access to the internet or having individual cellphones.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

In addition to the evolving research on citizen journalism, this study also draws on literature on alternative media and the notion of community of practice. Steenveld and Strelitz (2010) argue that “the oppositional/activist imperative of the Iindaba Ziyafika project places it in the alternative media tradition.” Alternative media is “devoted to providing representations of issues and events which oppose those offered in the mainstream media and to advocating social and

political reform” (Haas 2004: 115), they function as “counter information institutions” and “agents of developmental power” (Downing 2001: 45 in Haas 2004: 115; Atton 2002).

Citizen journalism therefore appeals to and promotes publics marginalised by both conventional media and mainstream politics. Atton (2002) says that citizen journalism offers a different news agenda based on “alternative values and frameworks” which “aim(s) to include those often excluded from mainstream coverage by featuring them in news coverage as central actors, or producing content relevant to their everyday lives.” Citizen journalists may produce content which is different from mainstream approaches and employ a different way of engaging their constituency. Banda (2010) also emphasises that by implication, citizen journalism is an indictment against the undemocratic rituals of conventional media and journalism. This scholarship on alternative media will assist in analysing the working practices of citizen journalists as the theory spells out the tenets and characteristics of alternative media against which the Iindaba Ziyafika journalists’ reportage and practices can be evaluated.

The notion of community of practice also informs this thesis as it provides a framework for analysing how the citizen journalists under the Iindaba Ziyafika Project are developing a shared practice, which may be developing distinctive characteristics. A community of practice is described by Wenger (1998) as a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. A community of practice has three elements or domains. The first domain is that members come together because of a joint enterprise which rallies them around a common interest. The second domain is community and in this regard members engage in joint activities and discussions. The members also share information and develop a practice through interaction. In the third domain, members of a community develop a shared repertoire of communal resources and this includes experiences, tools and stories collected over time. The citizen journalists within the Iindaba Ziyafika project constitute a group that is developing a shared practice and it is this practice and its characteristics that this study seeks to investigate and understand.

The concept of engaged citizenship will also inform this thesis, as one of the aims of Iindaba Ziyafika is to develop the practice of citizenship, and to facilitate citizen engagement with the politics that they are part of. Focusing on the notion of “effective democracy,” Heller (2009:

131) argues that subordinate groups have limited opportunities for meaningful engagement with the State in South Africa. He argues that the status of citizenship should not be conflated with the practice of citizenship. He argues for the need to develop the “vertical dimension” of citizenship, as this will enable citizens’ engagement with the State. But in the context of developing democracies, where inequalities remain high and access to rights is often circumscribed by social position or compromised by institutional weaknesses (including the legacies of colonial and apartheid rule), the problem of associational autonomy is so acute that it brings the very notion of citizenship into question (Fox, 1994; Mamdani, 1996; Mahajan, 1999). The commitment to engaged citizenship and how it inspires and gives rationale to citizen journalism will provide a very important context for this research. The scholarship on engaged citizenship will be employed as a determinant for considering whether the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika Project operate at a local level as engaged citizens and whether their practice potentially opens up the public sphere for the deliberation of citizens in Grahamstown.

1.8 Research Goals and Objectives

The aims of the research were to explore the evolving practices of citizen journalism in Grahamstown and to extrapolate how citizen journalists are securing a discursive space in relationship to conventional journalism. This study investigated whether the citizen journalists based at *Grocott’s Mail* and Radio Grahamstown are developing practices and patterns that can be distinguished from the practices of conventional journalism. It also evaluated whether the content that is produced by citizen journalists differs from the content that is produced by professional journalists, so that it can be understood as “alternative” and as promoting engaged citizenship. The research was conducted through an ethnographic study of the practices of citizen journalists at *Grocott’s Mail* and Radio Grahamstown. This aim resonates with Banda’s (2010) assertions that at the core of citizen journalism lies the idea of subverting the institutional solidification of mass media.

1.9. Research Design

The methodological approach for this study was mainly qualitative. Qualitative research produces descriptive data through the study of attitudes and behaviours best understood within their natural settings. It also allows the researcher to understand the perspectives of social actors,

to retrieve experiences from the past, and to gain expert insight or information (Babbie & Mouton 2001). Qualitative research is suited to the study of social processes over time and the aim of most qualitative researchers is to blend in and become participant observers (Babbie & Mouton 2001).

1.9.1 Research Techniques

The research employed a three-stage design incorporating direct observation, in-depth interviews and qualitative content analysis. This research design allows inferences to be drawn from one data collection tool and supplemented by another. Participant observation was done at *Grocott's Mail* and Radio Grahamstown. The researcher observed diary meetings and observed how the most active citizen journalists gather news in the newsroom and in the field. Observation enabled me to get the insider perspective of social actors, as I was in a position to see things from the perspective of the citizen journalists. Babbie and Mouton (2001) argue that observation enables social researchers to study social actors in their natural setting and is an appropriate method for studying behaviour. Observation is also employed in qualitative research because it enables the researcher to generate information of enough complexity and richness on a case (Mason 1996: 61-63 in Deacon et al. 1999: 249). In addition, this method will provide me with “useful insights into unconscious behaviour” (Gorman et al. 2005: 40).

The second method of data collection that was used are in-depth interviews because it is a “valuable adjunct to observation” and “interviews also have the potential to offer balance and corroboration where observed phenomena are complex or involve a number of factors,” (Gorman et al. 2005: 41). The interviews enabled the researcher to get the views of the citizen journalists on how they gather news, how they understand the purpose of their journalism and to interrogate whether they link their journalism to enriched citizenship for themselves and for others. All the citizen journalists in the project were interviewed so as to get rich data.

Qualitative content analysis is the third research method that was employed in this study. It was used for gathering and analysing the content of texts and how they are combined (Deacon et al. 1999). It adopts an interpretative approach that seeks to explore the ways in which language and images are used in a complementary fashion. This involves exploring the meanings that are imbedded in the representations (Mayring 2000). Content analysis of articles that are written by

citizen journalists was conducted to ascertain whether the content falls within the alternative media tradition. The articles that were analysed were those published during the period that the participant observation was carried out (5 November to 5 December 2010). The content produced by the citizen journalists was analysed against the central tenets and characteristics of content that make up alternative media using categories outlined by Atton and Hamilton (2007). Both the raw copy and the edited copy were analysed to see how the reporting and writing of the citizen journalists and the news processes are actually carried out.

1.10 Structure of the Study

Chapter one introduces the thesis. Chapter two discusses the detailed theoretical framework of the study and reviews the literature that has been produced in the area. The chapter discusses literature in the alternative media theory framework, citizenship and the concept of community of practice.

Chapter three presents qualitative research methodology as an overarching methodology of the study. It then justifies why the methodology is appropriate to the study. The chapter moves onto discussing the reasons for using an ethnographic approach in studying the practices of citizen journalists. It justifies why this method is superior to others in dealing with the research questions. It focuses on data gathering techniques such as the in-depth individual interview, participant observation, and qualitative textual analysis and justifies why they are relevant to the study. These three data collection techniques are also discussed both from theoretical and practical points of view. The chapter clearly describes the expectations prior to data gathering and the problems encountered during the fieldwork. It also presents procedures of sample selection and data analysis in detail. The fourth chapter deals with the findings of this study and the last chapter is the conclusion.

1.11 Conclusion

This chapter serves as the introduction for this study whose aim is to ascertain whether the Lindaba Ziyafika project is an emerging community of practice. The study also aims to ascertain the kinds of journalistic practice that the citizen journalists in the project are coming up and find

out whether their content falls into the alternative media framework. The next chapter is a presentation of the theoretical framework and the literature that guides this study.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework that guides this research and presents the body of knowledge and research that has been produced in the area of citizen journalism. As has been outlined in the previous chapter, this research concerns itself with emerging practices of citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika Project. It seeks to answer the question as to whether the citizen journalists in the project are developing a distinctive community of practice. The first part of the chapter therefore deals with the concept of community of practice and unpacks its defining characteristics.

The research also seeks to ascertain whether the news that is produced by the journalists in the project can be considered “alternative journalism”, and it is in light of this, that it deals with literature on alternative journalism. It presents various arguments on what alternative journalism is and specifically how this relates to definitions of citizen journalism. It also deals with literature on citizen journalism projects and on the controversies surrounding the collaborative relationship between professional and amateur journalism in citizen journalism projects.

The research also concerns itself with the concept of citizenship which citizen journalism is predicated upon. Heller, in writing on citizenship (2009) argues that citizens in South Africa do not enjoy the full rights of citizenship and neither can they practice their citizenship because the public sphere is dominated by political party voices. Given these assertions the research seeks to explore whether the Iindaba Ziyafika project has opened up the democratic space at a local level in Grahamstown.

2.2 Community of Practice

The concept of “community of practice” (cop) provides a useful perspective on how knowing and learning is transformed into distinctive modes of practice. Communities of practice are formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavour (Wenger 2006). The concept of communities of practice can also be used to describe learning through practice and participation, which is also referred to as situated learning (Lave & Wenger 1991). A community of practice is defined by Wenger as a group (or groups) of people who share a concern or a passion for something and learn how to do it better as they interact. Lave and Wenger’s model of situated learning proposes that learning involves a process of engagement in a community of practice.

In a community of practice, a group of people who share an interest or a profession come together to deliberate on their practice. Communities of practice can evolve naturally because of the members' common interest in a particular domain, or it can be created specifically with the goal of gaining knowledge related to the field. It is through the process of sharing information and experiences within the group that the members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally (Lave & Wenger 1991).

In this research the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project represent a specific kind of deliberately-created community of practice in which the instigators of the a project have sought funding and participants in order to test the efficacy of citizen journalism in a small South African town.

Wenger (2000) quoted in Daniels (2001: 72) identifies a community of practice as consisting of three core elements:

The domain: a sense of joint enterprise that brings members together. This creates an identity, a shared area of interest and a commitment to the domain. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people. The domain is not necessarily something recognised as "expertise" outside the community. The members value their collective competence and learn from each other, even though few people outside the group may value or even recognise their expertise.

The community: In pursuing their interest in their domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other. Members of a community of practice do not necessarily work together on a daily basis but these interactions are essential to making them a community of practice even though they might often work alone. But for there to be a community of practice there needs to be regular interaction and an ongoing history of engagement is crucial because it creates a forum for building both the practice and the community. Learning therefore often takes place through joint activities. "Learning is situated in that community and is something that takes place with other members of that community".

The practice: A community of practice is not merely a community of interest; members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools and ways of addressing recurring problems. This takes time and sustained interaction. The development of a shared practice may be more or less self-conscious.

The combination of these three elements constitutes a community of practice. And it is by developing these elements in parallel that a particular community is created. Communities develop their practice through a variety of activities. They can develop their practice through problem solving, requests for information, seeking experience, discussing developments, and visits, mapping knowledge and identifying gaps (Wenger 2006). Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that in a community of practice there is need to create opportunities for open dialogue within and with outside perspectives. While the members and their knowledge are the community of practice's most valuable resource, it is also beneficial for the community to look outside to understand the different possibilities for achieving their learning and knowledge sharing goals.

Lave and Wenger (1991: 98) suggest that one of the central features of a community of practice is the movement from the periphery of a practice into participation as a core member. They distinguish newcomers from established members but they validate what they call "legitimate peripheral participation" (LPP) because they think it is essential for newcomers to learn by participating in the community of practitioners through undertaking certain tasks which

contribute to the productive activity of the enterprise or community. Lave and Wenger suggest that Legitimate Peripheral Participation can be viewed as a necessary and important process of moving from being a peripheral participant in an activity or within a community to becoming a core member. Initially members begin with simple tasks and gradually begin to take on more responsibility. Learners learn from/and in the presence of experts and through a process of interaction and acceptance move towards becoming core participants. Lave and Wenger caution however that LPP is not just about goals, tasks and gaining knowledge but also about identity.

Wenger (1991) identifies three main levels of participation in a community of practice. Firstly there is the core group who participate intensely in the community through discussions and projects. This group typically takes on leadership roles in guiding the group. The second group is the active group who attend and participate regularly, but not to the level of the leaders. The last group is the peripheral group who are passive participants in the community. Wenger notes the third group typically represents the majority of the community. Community members move through these levels as the focus or domain of the community shifts. Active members may be deeply engaged for a month or two and then disengage and peripheral members may drift into the centre as their interests or expertise are required. The boundaries of this model are therefore fluid and even outsiders have the opportunity to become involved as the focus of the community shifts in their area of interest or skill. The different levels of participation are important for this research as there are different levels of participation of citizen journalists within the Iindaba Ziyafika project.

Communities of practice need to develop both public and private community spaces. While these communities typically operate in public spaces where all members share, discuss and explore ideas, they should also offer private exchanges. Different members of the community of practice can co-ordinate relationships among members and resources in an individualised way based on specific needs. Communities of practice should therefore create opportunities for participants to explicitly discuss the value and productivity of their participation in the group. They should offer the expected learning opportunities as part of their structure, and opportunities for members to shape their learning experience together by examining the conventional and radical wisdom related to their topic (Wenger, Mcdermott & Snyder 2002). In the project under study, this aspect

of the community of practice theory will be used as framework of measuring the kinds of relationships within the project and the practices that they give birth to.

It is important to note the distinction between a community of practice, a community of interest and a team. The key element in a community of practice is the idea of a shared and developing practice. A community of practice is different from a team in that the shared experience of learning and interest of its members is what keeps it together and not the pursuit of a goal or a work plan (Wenger 2000).

Benzie et al. (2005) claim that the notion of community of practice provides a useful theoretical framework for researching the social processes of groups in contexts such as the workplace or local community. This is because the research setting would be within the community itself, which allows for a holistic analysis of the structures and relationships.

The strength of working with an analytical framework that has the concept of community of practice at the centre is that it emphasises the situated nature of knowledge and brings matters of context to the fore. It highlights relationships both between individual and community. It is well suited to supporting accounts that capture social community. (Benzie et al., 2005: 185)

The ideas of community of practice in this research will be used as a framework for understanding the social processes in the Lindaba Ziyafika project that are taking place. It has also been taken up as a framework of analysing and gaining insights on the kind of practice that is being cultivated within the community of practice. It will also be used to explain the kinds of interactions that are responsible for the genesis of their particular practice.

2.3 Citizen Journalism

There are competing definitions of citizen journalism but it has certainly been touted by certain scholars as a promising new breed of news-making and hailed as “a kind of antidote to the “bowling alone” effect” (Schaffer 2007: 6) for its potential to empower the “former audience” (Gillmor, 2006, Rosen, 2005) by granting ordinary citizens a role in the making of news. Schaffer (2007) claims that citizens are learning how to practice journalism and in some cases are doing a better job than professionals as they provide timelier news reports. Atton (2003: 267) defines citizen journalism as “a philosophy of journalism and a set of practices that are

embedded within the everyday lives of citizens, and media content that is both driven and produced by those people... and whose practices emphasise first-person, eye witness accounts by participants.” Moyo (2010) asserts that citizen journalism presupposes the agency and autonomy of citizens in sharing information that they perceive to be in the public interest without necessarily following prescribed rules or being paid for their work. Moyo goes on to establish that the understanding of citizen journalism is underpinned by the idea of equal access to new technologies and he points out that a different scenario prevails in Africa.

Although citizen journalism is hailed as a new phenomenon and while some in media circles are sceptical about it, according to *The State of the News Media* report (2007), citizen journalism can no longer be dismissed as work done by amateurs when professionals are absent but as something that enriches the conversation in the public sphere. Schaffer (2007: 7) contends that the “citizen media is emerging as a form of bridge media, linking traditional media with forms of civic participation” because of the active involvement of citizens in news production. Citizen journalism sceptics however claim that untrained citizens can only produce commentary, analysis and opinion and can occasionally report on breaking stories when they happen to be “in the wrong place at the right time” (Allan, 2006:152). A number of scholars have also blatantly asserted that citizens are unqualified to produce original news content (Lemann 2006; Lenhart & Fox 2006; Reese et al. 2007).

Scholars who have surveyed hyper-local citizen news outlets in the United States say that in their estimation, these sites are “forming as fusions of news and schmooze” and their citizen contributors tend to be “prose-shy”, often supplying fragments of stories instead of full-fledged news items (Schaffer 2007: 6-10). Media analysts who are interested in political questions are also interested in whether new technologies can empower ordinary people to put their issues on the news agenda. The scholars who believe that citizen journalists cannot produce original news content are indirectly supported by the most celebrated citizen site in the world, South Korea’s *OhmyNews*. Besides its phalanx of volunteer contributors, the site has hired a team of staff reporters (Allan, 2006: 129; Kim & Hamilton, 2006: 545). As such, the *OhmyNews*’ management has indirectly acknowledged that there are at least certain journalistic tasks which require “real” reporters.

2.3.1 Citizen Journalism in Africa

The difficulties in defining citizen media and the debates over its value that have been experienced in the West are also prevalent in Africa. Hyde-Clarke (2010) acknowledges that the concepts of alternative and new media are of relevance to South Africans but are difficult to define. Moyo (2010), on the other hand, argues that in Africa journalism has always existed alongside other forms of news dissemination and storytelling and argues therefore that citizen journalism is not new. Quoting Stephen Ellis (1989: 321) “pavement radio”, which Ellis defined as “the popular and unofficial discussion of current affairs in Africa, particularly in towns,” is regarded as a pervasive form of storytelling that allows citizens to discuss and comment upon important political issues of the day. Ellis (1989: 321) argues that “the urban pavement, bar, market, living room or taxi-park” are the spaces “where Africa’s political pulse beats most strongly” and not in the mainstream media as in the industrialised nations of the west. The arrival of new technologies has merely transformed these spaces but did not create them, as the technological determinists would presuppose. Moyo argues that the digitisation of pavement radio did not put an end to the traditional methods but simply amplified the capacity of citizens to produce and distribute their stories in record time. Therefore in Africa, “citizen media” has always had a place and it is not a new phenomenon as seems to be suggested by Western scholarship.

The media of citizens in South Africa has a particular relationship with alternative media and according to Knight (2010) alternative media in South Africa has a distinctive and powerful tradition with its roots in media organised around opposition to the apartheid regime. This is because the dominant media during the apartheid era could not cater for the information needs of the majority. She posits that since most of the alternative news organisations were structured around political goals and were externally funded, many closed after the country’s first democratic elections as funding was withdrawn. After 1994 there was resurgence of alternative media, mainly through community radio.

Knight also notes that there is commercial citizen journalism in South Africa through such sites as reporter.co.za. Reporter.co.za was launched in 2006 and they were not strictly independent as they were created and funded by Johnnic/Avusa media. According to the website the site is

entirely written by its readers. Articles, images, audio and video which are published are said to be from ordinary members of the public. Knight (2010) argues that the site was explicitly created to develop as a news source for the commercial entities of Avusa. The site paid minimal fees for stories. Stories submitted to the site were edited by a team of professionals and journalists were given guidance by the team. Banda (2010) states that the site did not take off because “it turned out that the African media space is not yet ready to engage in a dedicated citizen journalism project. There are still access issues that make it impossible for many people to contribute on this citizen journalism site,” (Banda 2010: 55). Banda also asserts that people are not yet ready for such changes and it will take time for them to adopt such concepts.

There are other citizen journalism projects in Africa such as Voices of Africa which is a pilot project that invites mobile citizen journalists to report on different events and news from Africa by hiring and training local citizens in Kenya, South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. The project encourages individuals of low income and disadvantaged backgrounds to become involved in the task of producing content that speaks to people of a similar background. According to Dockney et al. (2010) the Voices of Africa project encourages citizens to become involved in producing content that resonates to people of a similar background as locals express opinions in their own languages. In the project, alternative media in the form of mobile videos are distributed through the internet, multimedia messaging service, universal serial bus flash drives and blue tooth function as “channels of citizen empowerment and information dissemination...The videos also demonstrate the ability of alternative media to provide content which is more diverse, specialised and of interest to smaller groups...” (Dockney et al. 2010: 85).

In an exploratory study of citizen journalism in Africa, Banda (2010) argues that citizen journalism projects have also arisen out of conflict like the site ushahidi.com which arose when Kenya was engulfed by ethnic violence in 2008. The platform relied on crowd sourcing and:

“[W]as for the public to share their stories and discount rumours. Ushahidi was used to get citizens’ testimonies via text messages, Twitter, Facebook and blogs. At that point, Kenya’s online community collaborated and shared content, depending on their location. Ushahidi complemented the work of bloggers by graphically showing location and information through maps. (Banda 2010: 43)

In this instance citizens became the producers of news through the use of cell-phones and this ensured that the online communities expanded the democratic space and allowed people to share opinions. In Uganda village women are blogging in local languages and exchanging information whilst in Kenya rural constituencies are using media to hold leaders accountable.

In Southern Africa citizen journalism is practised in various ways. There are also cases of institutional citizen journalism and a case in point is the Botswana paper, Mmegi which has a Facebook group and short message service project which is especially targeted at young people. Kubatana.net is a Zimbabwean website which ran the “text’em” campaign which helped women in Zimbabwe to contribute to the constitution-making process. Sangonet projects, on the other hand, give non- governmental organisations a platform to criticise governments on issues of national importance and facilitates the sharing of experiences.

Banda (2010) states that none of the citizen journalism sites which he studied had any clear quality control measures and some of the organisations were of the view that placing quality control measures on content would be tantamount to censorship. The organisations however reserved the right of publication and would not publish any content that they deemed inappropriate.

In Southern Africa, there are different models of practising citizen journalism because “a key feature of the contextual framework within which citizen journalism occurs relates to the sustainability or business model for the phenomenon of citizen journalism” (Banda 2010: 54). Commercial newspapers and magazines seem to have powerful profit motives for implementing citizen journalism projects as they hope to grow their audiences through tapping into the youth market. This is because young people are regarded as technologically savvy and have easier access to the internet. Banda emphasises that media organisations are appealing to the media consumers’ need for expression and then making them pay for it “giving rise to a form of transactional democracy” as they pay for expressing an opinion (Banda 2010: 54).

Moyo (2010) posits that there is a danger in the developing world and particularly in Africa where the new space created by citizen journalism will not achieve its potential as an arena of true citizen journalism but rather one for a staged form of citizen journalism. Citizen journalism presupposes free agency where rights-bearing citizens act spontaneously to capture and share

information. He says the growing intervention by non-governmental organisations to aid and nurture citizen journalism can only take away the agency and autonomy of the citizen and create disempowered citizen journalists who act primarily to please donors.

2.4 Conceptualising Alternative Media

Various scholars acknowledge that defining alternative media is difficult and there are different ways in which it can be conceptualised based on different contexts. One of the leading scholars in alternative media, Atton (2002: 9), asserts that critics claim that “alternative” has no discernible definition and could be referred to as something “not mainstream” and which allows citizenry a “voice”. Banda (2006) asserts that the concept of alternative media is related to normative media theory and Fourie (2001: 269), shows how normative media theories are idealised views about the role of the press in society. Banda goes on to claim that the development media and the democratic participant media theory propounded by Mcquail (1987) underpin the idea of alternative media.

John Fiske (1992) seems to concur with the previous assertions but has pointed out differences between the mainstream media and the alternative media in their selection of news and in the way that selection is made. However, Fiske is severely sceptical about the relevance of alternative journalism to the concerns of ordinary people, emphasising that alternative media may not have a straightforward relationship with the desire for “citizen” media.

Alternative media are not profit oriented, as they are more interested in the free flow of ideas than in profit. Schuman (1982: 3) argues that “the alternative press – in whatever format – is our modern pamphleteer.” The alternative media are activist in nature and this is factored into the methods of production and distribution that they employ. They are guided by an activist philosophy of creating information for societal action, timeously and rapidly. Alternative media therefore are rightly placed to deal with emerging issues, as it is the nature of activism to respond to social issues as they emerge. O’Sullivan (1994) introduces the notion of “radical” social change as a primary aim of alternative media, in that they “avowedly reject or challenge established and institutionalised politics, in the sense that they all advocate change in society, or at least a critical reassessment of traditional values.” O’Sullivan (1994) argues that independent productions are different from the mainstream because of their “democratic or collectivist

process of production and a commitment to innovation or experimentation” (O’Sullivan et al, 1994: 205).

The Royal Commission of 1977 proposed some elements of the alternative media which includes: an alternative publication deals with the opinions of small minorities; it expresses attitudes hostile to widely held beliefs and it espouses views or deals with subjects not given regular coverage by publications generally available at newsagents. The editors of *Alternatives in Print* (the major current bibliographical reference work in this field) have also suggested the criteria against which alternative media can be tested and these include: the publisher has to be non-commercial, demonstrating a basic concern for ideas and not profit and that the subject matter of publications should focus on social responsibility, creative expression or a combination of both.

Bailey et al. (2008: 3-34) quoted in Dockney et al. (2010) argue that there are many competing definitions of alternative media but offer four approaches:

1. Community-oriented alternative media (media that are constituted by and serve a community).
2. Alternative media in relation to mainstream media.
3. Alternative media as part of civil society and;
4. Alternative media as “rhizomes”

Dockney et al. (2010) state that no single approach is sufficient in dealing with alternative media and there is need for an all-embracing approach. Dockney et al. (2010: 80-81) note that in the first approach which is made up of community-oriented alternative media notions of participation and access are critical for community media as they are important in ensuring that the community is given a voice which is necessary for development. Participation in this instance occurs through the opportunity for self-representation in the public sphere as opposed to representation by proxy. In this approach, the community has the potential “to generate and communicate their own ideologies and discourses either in contrast or in tandem with mainstream representations” (Dockney 2010: 81).

In the second approach to alternative media “currents of alternative media power thereby manifest as either resistance through counter –discourse or as supplementation to mainstream and mass media” (Dockney et al. 2010: 81). In the third approach to alternative media it “can also be conceived as separate from, or beyond, the market and state – as part of civil society.” In the fourth approach alternative media are seen as rhizomes because “the rhizome metaphor allows for a sense of fluidity and movement to exist with regard to the alternative media, which have no sense of borders they are trans-borders that emerge when necessary and then promptly disappear. They also establish links to civil society, the state and the market” (Bailey et al. 2008: 27).

O’Sullivan (1994) posits that alternative media fights for social change and seeks to involve citizens in their processes of news production and are committed to innovation in form and content. Alternative media also seeks to improve the quality of content and the fairness of organisational procedures.

These ideas are buttressed by Michael Traber’s notion of alternative media who posits that:

[T]he aim is to change towards a more equitable social, cultural and economic whole in which the individual is not reduced to an object (of the media or the political powers) but is able to find fulfilment as a total human being. (Traber, 1985: 3)

Traber notes that that the mainstream media marginalises the role of ordinary people, foregrounding instead the rich, the powerful and the glamorous. Ordinary people are viewed as observers or marginal commentators on events especially in the “vox pop” interviews. Ordinary people only achieve prominence when they are actors in conflict or victims in bizarre situations. Traber also posits that alternative media are divided into two sectors: advocacy media and grassroots media. The alternative advocacy media adopt very different news values from the mass media:

[A]lternative social actors [such as] the poor, the oppressed, the marginalised and indeed the ordinary manual labourer, woman, youth and child as the main subjects of [their] news and features. (Traber 1985: 2)

Traber points out that grassroots media embody alternative news values and they are produced by the same people whose concerns they represent from a position of engagement and direct participation. Traber surmises that professionals can be involved in news production processes in

the grassroots media but in the role of advisors and merely meant to enable ordinary people to produce their own work, independent of professionals. The entire range of alternative and radical media represent a challenge to hegemony on political platforms and employing all manner of indirect challenges through experimentation and transformation of existing roles, routines, emblems and signs that Hebdige (1979) locates at the heart of counter-hegemonic subcultural style. Jakubowicz (1991) argues that the “alternative” does not simply involve sects or narrow special interests, but includes wide ranging and influential spheres that may include all manner of reformist groups and institutions. Culturally and politically, then, such media as defined by Downing as “alternative” and by Jakubowicz as “oppositional” are perhaps best considered as oppositional in intent, having social change at their heart.

2.5 The Relationship Between Citizen Journalism and Professional Media

It has been suggested by scholars such as Glaser (2008) that citizen journalism cannot do without the ongoing input of professionals. He emphasises that it is increasingly clear that to succeed, or even just to persist, crowd-sourced citizen journalism projects must rely extensively on the work and leadership of a professional core team. A “pro-am” (professional/amateur) model that mixes user-generated content with the input of professional project workers is the one that research carried out in Western contexts suggests as the most viable (Glaser 2008). In Western contexts citizens have easier internet access but in Africa, access to the internet is still seen as a luxury. This trend is useful for this study as it might mean a different trend exists in terms of citizen journalism projects.

Many scholars suggest that the relationship between citizen media and mainstream media is symbiotic. This is because most information communities and weblogs discuss and extend the stories published by mainstream media. These sentiments are also buttressed by the fact that the blogosphere also produces news, grassroots reporting, eye witness accounts, commentary analysis, watch-dogging and fact-checking which the mainstream media feed upon, developing them as a pool of tools and story ideas like in Reporter.co.za (Knight 2010). This style of interdependent reporting has also been called “semi-pro” journalism, as it combines the ground work of average citizens or inexperienced journalists with editorial and production expertise of professional journalists (Glaser 2008). This model underpins the most successful and enduring

examples of crowd-sourced citizen journalism projects such as *Oh MyNews*, the leading Korean citizen journalism service, which mixes professional and amateur journalism, strong editorial oversight and professional site and content management.

Incorporating the efforts of citizen-generated work with a co-ordinating professional team is seen as necessary by many, due to what Simons (2008) describes as the “limitations of the crowd”, which are becoming apparent in a range of experiments in citizen journalism. Jeff Howe, who coined the term “crowd-sourcing” as a way of describing the new collaborative relationship between professional and citizen journalism on online platforms, in late 2007, reflected on the limited skills of citizen journalists and their effect on news platforms. In assessing the failure of the citizen journalism initiative Assignment Zero – a collaborative project between *Wired* and Jay Rosen’s New Assignment to provide a platform for collaborative, pro-am reporting, Howe wrote:

Crowd sourcing projects are generally characterised as being the product of a few super-contributors and a mass of people who contribute some minor bits. I've heard this called the "dirty little secret of open source. The fact that most of the heavy lifting is done, not by the crowd per se, but by a few select individuals from within the crowd. I'd like to posit another rule: Any crowd sourcing project must install one go-to guy (or girl) who will thanklessly toil day and night to keep the project on the rails. (Howe, 2007: 52)

Some scholars argue that there is no guarantee that citizen journalists, often volunteers, will reach a point where they can produce high-quality content that draws a readership on its own account. Marc Cooper (in Glaser 2008), a citizen journalism advocate and experimentalist says that the biggest problem is in assuming that untrained citizen reporters can quickly and adequately replace professionals. He argues that the training and rigors of training journalists should not be underestimated.

According to Bruns (2005) in pro-am projects there are professional journalists, whom he refers to as “preditors”, who ensure that stories written by citizen journalists meet legal, regulatory, ethical and quality requirements. This view is attested to by Mattin, (2005) who states that preditors are focused on sustaining a pro-am news-making community. Preditors’ primary area of content work is in the editorial supervision of citizen journalists’ contributions. Bruns (2005) also posits that preditors need to do networking activities to connect citizen journalism with a range of people and other avenues for news (Russell et al. 2006). He further postulates that

networking is crucial in order to take advantage of existing, established online and offline news outlets.

Bruns (2005) asserts that part of the work for predators is community work and this includes efforts to galvanise audiences for citizen journalism sites and to keep communities engaged with on-site content and one another. Predators can facilitate the growth of communities through educating communities and by imparting skills. Bruns notes that citizen journalism is an essentially online phenomenon, driven by the affordability of internet technologies. Predators need knowledge of a range of digital technologies as this underpins all of their work. Predators might assist in web design and share responsibility for making the site user-friendly. This aspect of predators will assist as a tool for analysing whether there are predators in the Iindaba Ziyafika project and ascertain what their functions are.

2.6 Concept of Citizenship

One of the objectives of this thesis is to ascertain whether citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are enabling local people to deepen or enact their citizenship. The concept of engaged citizenship will therefore inform this thesis, as one of the aims of citizen journalism, and of the Knight-funded Iindaba Ziyafika project, is to develop the practice of citizenship, and to facilitate citizen engagement with the polities that they are part of, thus reinvigorating democratic society. Focusing on the notion of “effective democracy,” Heller (2009: 131) argues that subordinate groups have limited opportunities for meaningful engagement with the State in South Africa. He argues that the status of citizenship should not be conflated with the practice of citizenship. He further believes that civil society in South Africa is “highly constricted” and “leaves little room for the practice of citizenship” (2009: 131). He posits that “political parties not only monopolise the channels of influence but also exert considerable power in setting the agenda and determining the issues, claims and even identities which enter the political domain” (2009: 132). This, he argues, has resulted in the public sphere being shaped by political parties, lobbies and powerful brokers rather than from the deliberation of reason-bearing citizens.

As a result, he argues for the need to develop the “vertical dimension” of citizenship, as this will enable citizens to develop the mechanisms to engage with the state. But in the context of developing democracies, where inequalities remain high and access to rights is often

circumscribed by social position or compromised by institutional weaknesses (including the legacies of apartheid and colonial rule), the problem of associational autonomy is so acute that it brings the very notion of citizenship into question (Fox, 1994; Mamdani, 1996; Mahajan, 1999). Heller observes that associational capabilities are highly uneven across social categories and that they have their roots in specific histories of inequality. The class based hierarchies and inequalities in South Africa make the practice of citizenship difficult. Mamdani (1996) argues that the concept of citizenship is a contested terrain in Africa and that the legacies of colonialism present obstacles to advancing citizenship in South Africa. The commitment to engaged citizenship and how it inspires and give rationale to citizen journalism will provide a very important context for this research. The scholarship on engaged citizenship will be employed as determinant for considering whether the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika Project operate at a local level as engaged citizens and whether their practice potentially opens up a public sphere for the deliberation of citizens locally.

2.7 Conclusion

The first part of the chapter therefore dealt with the theory and the literature that guides this thesis. The theoretical framework for this thesis combines the concept of community of practice, citizen journalism and later alternative journalism. It presented various arguments on what alternative journalism is and specifically how this relates to definitions of citizen journalism. It also dealt with literature on citizen journalism projects and on the controversies surrounding the collaborative relationship between professional and amateur journalism in citizen journalism projects. The theoretical framework dealt with in this chapter has been used as a guide to assess whether the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are developing as a community of practice and to also ascertain whether the content that they produce falls into the alternative media framework. The next chapter will present the methodology and methods of analysis chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

3.1 Introduction

In attempting to generate data on whether the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are becoming a distinctive community of practice, and to ascertain whether their content constitutes alternative media which promotes citizen engagement at a local level, the study employed a qualitative approach with its roots in ethnography. This chapter discusses the research design and procedures that were followed in this study. It places emphasis on the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research and it focuses on participant observation, in depth interviews, qualitative content analysis and the data analysis procedures which were employed.

3.2 Philosophical Underpinnings of Qualitative Research

The methodological approach for this study is mainly qualitative and this is in line with Gaye Tuchman's view that the approach one uses "depends upon the specific questions one wants to answer" (1991: 79). My research question therefore necessitated that I employ a qualitative research design as it produces descriptive data through the observation of behaviour (Taylor & Bodgan, 1984: 5). Qualitative research allows one to understand social phenomena from the

perspective of social actors, to retrieve experiences from the past, and to gain insight into the everyday practices of social actors (Babbie & Mouton 1989). Qualitative studies start from the assumption that in studying people, researchers are examining a creative process whereby humans produce and maintain forms of life, society and systems of meaning. The creative ability of human beings rests in the ability to build cultural forms from symbols that express the will to assert meanings.

There are two key philosophies of social inquiry that inform this study's approach and these include phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Phenomenology is underpinned by the notion that the world is socially constructed and subjective and that to understand this, there should be a focus on meaning construction (Gray 2004: 22). Also, it uses an inductive approach, multiple methods to establish different views of a phenomenon, small samples researched in depth or over time and qualitative methods (Gray 2004: 22). Phenomenology takes the actor's perspective as the empirical point of departure.

Symbolic interactionism assumes that behaviour and perceptions derive from processes of interaction with other people (Silverman, 2005: 98) and that the actor's interpretations need to be examined (Bryman 1988: 55). These two perspectives form the philosophical basis of the qualitative research methodology (Bryman 1988: 106). Qualitative research may be defined as a process of enquiry that draws data from the context in which events occur, in an attempt to describe these occurrences. This is done in an endeavour to determine the processes in which events are embedded and the perspectives of those participating in the events, using induction to derive possible explanations based on observed phenomena (Gorman & Clayton, 2005: 3).

Qualitative research draws data from natural settings as researchers believe in the merit of investigating a phenomenon where it occurs as opposed to subjecting it to laboratory settings. It is also suitable for cases where processes are more important than outcomes and when the main aim is to understand processes and when parts are used to create a whole. Investigating phenomena in their natural settings implies that researchers should avoid changing the natural settings in which processes take place and it takes into account that people engage in activities that make sense to them and constantly create meaning (Matza 1969 in Bryman 1988: 58). The emphasis of observing processes in qualitative research also speaks to the importance of viewing

phenomena as dynamic processes and allocating enough time to understand them (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 271; Bryman, 1988: 65). There is also an emphasis on “thick description” which is the detailed description of the phenomenon under study (Geertz 1973 in Deacon et al. 1999). Bryman attests to this:

This emphasis on description entails attending to mundane detail; the apparently superficial, trivia and minutiae of everyday life are worthy of examination because of their capacity to help us understand what is going on in a particular context and to provide clues and pointers to other layers of reality. (1988: 63)

Qualitative researchers try to understand the ways in which people act using an inductive approach. Within the inductive approach, “...plans are made for data collection, after which the data are analysed to see if any patterns emerge that suggests relationships between variables” (Gray 2004: 6).

Qualitative research often focuses on “only some partial set of relationships in group life or on one aspect of a scene” (Lindlof 1995: 21). This is the case in this particular research study, where I focus closely on the news making processes of citizen journalists. This study seeks to ascertain whether the citizen journalists under the Iindaba Ziyafika project are becoming a community of practice as citizen journalists which are distinct from communities of mainstream journalists. In light of this I need to study them in their natural surroundings and this entails the newsroom and also in the field where they gather stories and interact with their “citizen” sources.

3.3 Observation

The primary method of data collection employed in this study was participant observation. This took place between 5 November and 5 December 2010. In conducting the observations in the Iindaba Ziyafika Project, I started my observations on the 5 November. I attended diary meetings in order to observe how the stories were being treated. During the diary meetings I made notes of the issues that were being discussed and noted the various interactions that took place as per my research questions. There were four diary meetings during the week and I attended all of them. I was also in the studio during the broadcast of the lunchtime live news bulletin to observe the style of presentation and other working practices. I also took care to spend time in the newsroom in order to observe how citizen journalists interacted with their sources and how they treated

them. I also made some field trips with some citizen journalists so as to observe how they conducted themselves in the field.

Observation was chosen as a data collection method because studies of media production rely on some form of observation of the production process (Deacon et al. 2007) and because of the belief that “only observation can provide adequate complexity and richness of data, or even that it is more ethical to enter into the lives of those researched rather than remain aloof and distant from them” (Deacon et al. 2007: 249). Participant observation has several advantages and one of them is that since subjects can say whatever they want in an interview, observation would help to ascertain whether they were telling the truth during interviews (Gorman et al., 2005: 104).

Participation has its roots in ethnography which is basically about writing about the way of life, or culture, of social groups (Fielding 1993). Fielding (1993) says that ethnography is a form of qualitative research which combines several methods, including interviewing and observation. At its simplest, it involves the researcher inserting themselves into the natural setting of the social group being studied and participating in and observing their daily life (Mcneill & Chapman 2006: 87). The purpose of the research is to describe a group’s way of life in a way that approximates the way they actually live.

Mcneill and Chapman (2005) note that observation takes a great amount of skill and requires also that the researcher establish rapport with the research group. The participant observer needs to be skilful in conducting informal interviewing that naturally flows from the social situation and this proved to be the case in the observation that was carried out. I held informal interviews with the citizen journalists within the project and got some useful data. Mcneill and Chapman say that it is important for the observer to choose the role that they will have during the observation and I chose to be a participant observer. I declared that I was joining the citizen journalists as an observer. Various scholars claim that if a researcher declares their observer status, the group’s behaviour can be artificial but with time they can start behaving normally. On the contrary, I did not notice any artificial behaviour and the citizen journalists were willing to let me “shadow” them.

Taylor and Bodgan (1998: 29) say that “participant observers usually gain access to organisations by requesting permission from those in charge”. Getting access to a venue requires

that the researcher manages their identity and projects an image that will maximise the chances of getting access (Kotarba 1980 quoted in Taylor and Bodgan 1998; Fielding 1988). I was introduced to the other citizen journalists by the citizen journalism editor, Kwanele Butana. This made it easier for me to be accepted by the group and I already had good rapport with Butana as I had interacted with him at the Highway Africa conference. I explained my research to the group but not the specific elements and I did not mention that I would be evaluating whether they really fit into the alternative media tradition, as they would have felt that they were being evaluated and feel uneasy (Taylor & Bodgan 1998).

Taylor and Bodgan states that researchers enter the field with the hope of establishing good relations with the informants and become an unobtrusive part of the scene and this I did by initially observing how they were conducting themselves and then blending in. As observation tends to change the behaviour of people who are aware that they are being observed it was important that I blend into the environment and be taken for granted (Gorman et al., 2005: 105).

I had initially decided that that I would be a passive observer but then on being implored by the group, I agreed to do some entertainment reporting as I realised this would help in building rapport. This is actually one of the advantages of ethnographic studies as a researcher can adapt to what is happening in the field and it resonates with the ethnographic study that was done by Johnson (1975) who gained people's trust by doing favours for them. Taylor and Bodgan (1998) also note that one of the ways of establishing rapport with people is by establishing what one has in common with them. For instance in Bodgan's study of unemployed people; he got to know most of his informants through conversations about fishing. Likewise, being able to speak isiXhosa, the language spoken by the citizen journalists, being a former journalist and my familiarity with newsroom procedures helped me to blend in.

The participant observer walks a thin line between being an active participant and a passive observer (Gold 1958; Junker 1960) and I found this to be particularly true in my data collection, as at times I had to refrain from doing some tasks as I was participating too actively. There was an incident when I had to refrain from covering a story so that a citizen journalist could do so. At different times I was a passive observer, as I had nothing to contribute in the production of the news bulletin. Taylor and Bodgan (1998) assert that when participation places you in a

competitive situation with the informants it is best to withdraw. I had to constantly renegotiate my role as I seemed to be taking on increasing roles and in one instance when I went into the field with a citizen journalist to cover a story on water outages in the townships, I had to be a passive observer and not make a lot of suggestions on how he should cover his story. This is because of my experience as a journalist and this was also to avoid going “native” (Miller 1952). There were times where I had to make a conscious decision to avoid competing for presenting the bulletin with the citizen journalists and had to suggest that the citizen journalists should present rather than me. I had to negotiate this a lot because I have more journalism experience than citizen journalists and the consultants in the project wanted to have a good bulletin and would prefer someone with experience to present the bulletin.

Miller (1952) talks about being co-opted by friendships developed in the field to a point where one does not tell the story as it is and also to a point of giving up potentially embarrassing lines of enquiry. One needs to be continuously critical in the field and I had to guard against losing my critical edge and to persist in asking critical questions, for example in relation to their time management and why there were so few women in the newsroom. The friendships I developed in the course of conducting this research helped as I gained access to different areas of the Iindaba Ziyafika Project, for instance, I edited the citizen journalists’ stories for the website and managed to see some emerging trends about their practice, which will be discussed in detail in the data presentation chapter. Some of the people who work in the Iindaba Ziyafika project also became my key informants and also provided ample information during the in-depth interviews after the observation period (Fine 1980; Fielding 1990). Zelditch (1962) calls key informants the “observer’s observer” and this is also because informants fill the researcher in on what happens when they are not there and also on the history of the project. This was particularly pertinent as I got some information on some hidden aspects of the project which helped me to understand some of the citizen journalists’ behaviour. There are times when one can have difficult field relations as Taylor and Bodgan (1998) state that fieldwork is not exempt from all the elements of human drama found in social life. This was true in instances when some of the citizen journalists seemed hostile and this could have been because my greater experience showed up their inexperience.

In observation, data analysis is an ongoing activity and this is done through the keeping of field notes and reflecting on them. Taylor and Bodgan (1998) stress the importance of field notes and states that they should be comprehensive and should include things such as date, time and a record of what was happening. Fielding (1993: 161) emphasises that “the production of field notes is the observer’s *raison d’être*... If you do not record what takes place, you might as well not be in the setting. In order to take full field notes it is sensible to develop your own powers of observation gradually.” In line with this I noted my observations in the field and since I was observing in a newsroom too, I was at liberty to make notes discreetly as it is expected of journalists to be writing notes in the general course of their work. The notes that I made in the field were brief annotations and when I was away from the newsroom, I made more comprehensive notes. This is in line with Fielding’s (1993) observations that there are different types of notes. He talks about the taking of mental notes which is a skill that many journalists develop when they cannot write things down at the time. At times I was not able to make notes during diary meeting because there would be someone sitting next to me and it would have been odd if they saw that I was writing not only diary items but also recording their behaviour. I also recorded my comments of the interactions taking place because in observation, analysis is an ongoing process and so is reflection. This helps in deciding on what categories have to be observed in the future based on the research questions. Peshkin (2001: 240) notes that “the selection of a category is a form of sampling that focuses the researchers’ attention, interest, time and energy in a particular way.” I decided in the initial stages to narrow my focus for observation and chose diary meetings and how citizen journalists interacted with their sources rather than trying to observe all the different processes in a newsroom at once.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) talk about “theoretical saturation” to refer to a point in field research when data becomes repetitive and no further major insights are gained and suggest that at that point one can leave the field. I noted that after four weeks I had reached theoretical saturation. I had worked with the citizen journalists for days a week over a month and no new information was becoming available. Given that I had established a good rapport with the citizen journalists it was difficult to leave the newsroom and I had to find a way of easing off by reducing the frequency of the visits and by doing fewer and fewer tasks. Although I was not getting any new data, it took a few more weeks to completely disentangle myself from the project. This slow

extrication was also necessary so as to leave the subjects while on good terms with them for future purposes and leaving the door open for future contacts (Miller & Humphrey 1980).

3.4. In-depth Interviews

My second method of data collection was the interview because it is a “valuable adjunct to observation” and “interviews also have the potential to offer balance and corroboration where observed phenomena are complex or involve a number of factors” (Gorman et al., 2005: 41). I conducted a number of interviews in order to more fully explore some issues that I had observed. Interviews also afforded me the opportunity to collect diverse views and I used them as my “main road to multiple realities” (Stake 1995: 64).

The purpose of data collection through in depth individual interviews in this study was to get detailed descriptions of first hand experiences from interviewees (Rubin & Rubin, 2005: 2-3). An interview is a conversation where an interviewer seeks responses from an interviewee for a particular purpose (Gillham 2000). The in-depth individual interview owes its genesis to the qualitative research philosophy and it is an extension of ordinary conversation. As an extension of ordinary conversation, an interview is invented anew each time it occurs. The interviewer determines the next question as the talk flows (Rubin & Rubin 2005).

An in-depth individual interview is a process of obtaining detailed data on how and why interviewees construct meaning (Babbie & Mouton, 2001: 291). The interview technique is suitable to the study because it helped to corroborate the data that was inferred from participant observation. According to Bower (1973: quoted in Jensen 2002: 140) the commonsensical justification for interviewing is that “the best way to find out what the people think about something is to ask them.” Jensen also articulates the relevance of in-depth individual interviews in media as:

In-depth interviewing... may be well suited to tap social agents' perspective on the media, since spoken language remains a primary and familiar mode of social interaction, and one that people habitually relate to the technological media. (2002: 240)

The reasons given for the choice of qualitative methodology also hold for interviews. In addition, it also adds in both “depth and breadth to one’s understanding of the issues” (Gorman et al. 2005: 41). Gorman et al. (2005) asserts that the information gained from interviews is of “inestimable

value in understanding contexts and creating links that are such key aspects of qualitative research” (2005: 41).

3.4.1 Profile of the Interview Process

Nine in-depth individual interviews were conducted, each lasting for about 30 minutes: with the Radio Grahamstown news editor, Radio Grahamstown producer, citizen journalism editor, and six citizen journalists.

I posed specific questions to the editors and the producers that dealt directly with certain aspects of the working practices that I observed. For the citizen journalists I posed the standard questions which were in the interview guide but I probed specific issues that came up. The interviews took the form of ordinary conversations and were semi-structured so as to allow a degree of flexibility.

3.5. Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is the third research method that was employed in this study and was used for gathering and analysing the content of texts and how they are modified in the editing process (Deacon et al. 1999). This was crucial as this study seeks also to study the news that is produced by citizen journalists and ascertain whether it falls into the alternative media tradition.

Mayring (2000) argues that content analysis is not only concerned with the manifest content of material but emphasises that the analysis of formal aspects is one of its central aims. Krippendorff (1969: 103) defines “content analysis as the use of replicable and valid methods for making specific inferences from text to other states or properties or properties of its source.” It adopts an interpretative approach that seeks to explore the ways in which language and images are used in a complementary fashion. This involves exploring the meanings that are imbedded in the representations (Mayring 2000). Neuman (1997: 273) points out that

Qualitative content analysis allows the reader to probe into and discover content in a different way from the ordinary way of reading a book or watching a television programme. (1997: 273)

There are a number of procedures in qualitative content analysis, among them the inductive category development and the deductive application. The step model of inductive category

development main's idea is to formulate a criterion of definition which is derived from the theoretical framework and the research question. These aspects determine the aspects of the textual material to be taken into account. The material is read and categories are tentatively produced. The categories are then used to interpret the results of the texts. The Iindaba Ziyafika citizen journalists publish and broadcast their stories in the *Grocott's Mail* newspaper and in Radio Grahamstown and these are the stories that were analysed for this study. The articles that were analysed were all the citizen journalism stories published in the period that the participant observation was done. A total of 12 articles were analysed.

3.6. Strategies of Data Analysis

The central aim of the data analysis stage is to give meanings to first impressions of the case as well as final compilations. There is not a specific moment to start doing analysis nor is there a clearly demarcated beginning, middle or end (Stake, 1995: 71-72). Taylor and Bodgan (1998: 140) note that data analysis “is a process of inductive reasoning, thinking and theorising”. They further note that in qualitative research, data collection and analysis go hand in hand. In light of the preceding insights, throughout the data collection phase, I was careful to see whether there were emerging themes and whether what I was observing in day to day happenings could be tied to the theory that informs this study.

This study relied on the data analysis procedures as suggested by Taylor and Bodgan (1998). They suggest that the first stage involves collecting all the field notes, transcripts, documents and other materials. The researcher has to read through them carefully. They say that analysis should start when the researcher knows the data very well. The next stage involves recording important ideas that come to mind as one reads through the data. The next phase involves looking for emerging themes and patterns. The next phase involves developing concepts which is an intuitive process. Concepts are important, as it is through them that one moves from description to interpretation and theory. After the development of concepts one engages with the theory and the literature that informs the study. The merit of using theory is that it helps one to engage with the data that guided the research. The idea is not to make sure that the data fits the theory but it helps as theory gave birth to the theoretical assumptions in the study. For instance this study sought to ascertain whether the Iindaba Ziyafika journalists are becoming a community of practice and in

light of this the tenets of community of practice will be used to interpret the data. The next step is coding and this entails bringing together all the data and analysing all the data bearing on major themes, ideas, concepts and interpretations.

3.7. Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methods, procedures and techniques followed in the research. Then it went on to present the qualitative research methodology tradition. It justified why qualitative research methodology is appropriate for this study. The first justification was its relevance to the study which sought to observe social phenomena in its natural setting. It argued that using participant observation; in depth interviews and qualitative content analysis were appropriate methods for carrying out this research. These techniques provided an opportunity to achieve triangulation in both data collection and analysis. The merits of each technique were discussed further. The chapter then balanced the theoretical perspective with descriptions of situations encountered during the fieldwork. Finally it dealt with data analysis and interpretation strategies. The next chapter deals with the data analysis and interpretations.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and interpretations of the study. The study sought to ascertain what kind of practices the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are developing. One of its objectives was to analyse whether the content citizen journalists produce falls into the alternative media classification of journalism and the other was to establish whether the citizen journalists can be regarded as a distinctive community of practice. The analysis is based on a combination of data obtained through in-depth individual interviews, participant observation and qualitative textual analysis. The analysis and interpretation will be conducted in tandem with the goals and objectives of the study that were reiterated above. The analysis will be informed by theoretical considerations such as the alternative media theories, concept of citizenship and community of practice.

The analysis will be presented in narratives using quotations, summaries and paraphrases from the above-mentioned data sources. Texts from the published stories that are quoted are those that are deemed the most concise and useful. Quotations from the interviews that were held will also be used whilst paraphrases will be from the observations that were noted. While the concepts covered may be overlapping, theme-by-theme presentations below are used for analytic reasons.

4.2 Multi-media Practices

The journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project work in different mediums and this calls for them to acquire the competencies of the different mediums. The citizen journalists write for the print edition of *Grocott's Mail* but first of all their stories are published in the online edition of the paper. The journalists aspire to be published in the print edition of *Grocott's Mail* as they are paid for the stories that are published in print but few get to be published there. This is because the citizen journalists compete to be published in the print version with *Grocott's Mail* staff and Rhodes University journalism students. This is because *Grocott's Mail* is owned by Rhodes University and is used for experiential learning. It is a design of the project and built into its funding procedures that the citizen journalists should be published online before they are

published in the print version. This is because of the prevalent view that citizen journalism is enabled by the internet. The stories are published under a “Citizen Journalism” banner. The news editors of the paper version look at the stories in the online edition and consider them for publication in the newspaper. The hard copy is published bi-weekly but the website stories are published whenever the citizen journalism editor has finished editing the stories. In most instances the stories that the citizen journalists write for *Grocott’s Mail* are also broadcast on Radio Grahamstown, the local community radio station. Some current affairs programmes are podcast on the *Grocott’s Mail* website. The citizen journalists also broadcast a current affairs news production on Tuesdays and Fridays on Radio Grahamstown. This means that the citizen journalists are developing skills in audio recording and writing for both online and print publications.

In some instances when there are topical issues that affect the Grahamstown community a current affairs programme titled *Lunch Time Live Extra* is produced. *Lunch Time Live Extra* in one instance was produced to deal with a controversial name change debate affecting the city of Grahamstown. This debate was also eventually podcast on the *Grocott’s Mail* website. Khaya Thonjeni, the Radio Grahamstown news producer, says that unlike in mainstream media, in citizen journalism they have to think of different formats that they can use in covering a story (Interview 03/12/11). Thonjeni says that citizen journalists in the project are very few and the same citizen journalists have to produce news for Radio Grahamstown, the online edition of *Grocott’s Mail* and also for the print version of *Grocott’s Mail*. The citizen journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika differ in their practice of citizen journalism from other citizen journalism projects that have been done in Africa. Many of the citizen journalism projects which have been embarked upon in Africa have been marshalled through online media. Bruns (2005) notes that citizen journalism in the West is an essentially online phenomenon, driven by the affordability of internet technologies. Projects such as Ushahidi in Kenya have been enabled by platforms such as cell-phones and Facebook (Banda 2010). Other projects such as the Voices of Africa Project which is being run in Southern Africa also publish on the web only. The citizen journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika project are unique in that they work across the mediums of print, web and radio. They exhibit tendencies that have not been documented or been observed in literature that is there in African scholarship on citizen journalism. This particular project in Grahamstown may

therefore be somewhat of a paradigm shift in citizen journalism practice described by African scholarship.

4.3 News as a Process

In practising their craft, Iindaba Ziyafika citizen journalists see news as a process and not as a series of news events. This is a clear departure from event-based news conceptualisation associated with mainstream journalism. Viewing news as unfolding social processes, allows citizen journalists to question the factors which would have precipitated the event and investigate the causal factors of particular phenomena. According to Khaya Thonjeni, it is important to see news as a process because contextual issues are important if one is to understand certain events which take place in communities. A case in point is the issue of the Phaphamani residents who were promised electricity for a long time and they eventually resorted to violent marches because their issue was not being resolved. The citizen journalists covered the story from the time they were marching peacefully until they engaged in violent marches, excavated tars and burnt tyres in an incident which has come to be known as the “Flames of Phaphamani.” Seeing news as a process has also influenced the structure of news stories published in the print version of *Grocott’s Mail* because background information for citizen journalism stories is given in the second paragraph of stories. This is different from mainstream stories because they adhere to the inverted pyramid structure which means that background information is found at the bottom of the stories. In the story published under the headline “Ward 10 Electricity fight sees results”, in the second paragraph, there is an explanation given of the residents’ earlier attempts to convene a meeting with the mayor to no avail and their electricity woes. In an informal interview Kwanele Butana, the citizen journalism news editor, (21/11/10) said that he prefers to give background information in the second paragraph so that readers can understand the context of a story and understand the genesis of the events being dealt with in the story. Butana says that he has adopted this as a rule for all the citizen journalism stories. The approach adopted by the citizen journalists is in line with Bruns (2005) who posits that while mainstream journalism offers news as a product, which is a collection of easily digestible reports based on research, ready for consumption, citizen journalism presents news as a process. He argues that the news process in citizen journalism is a continuing and necessarily unfinished coverage of topics and events inviting user participation and aims to achieve deliberative journalism.

4.4 Relationship between Professional and Citizen Journalists

Part of the practice of citizen journalists involves a very significant amount of collaboration between professional journalists and citizen journalists. The collaboration is in the production of content and in the presentation of radio broadcasts. The collaboration in the project seems to be a product of the project design of Iindaba Ziyafika. Firstly, the citizen journalists were given a six-week course in basic journalism skills and it gave them some grounding in the expectations the project has of citizen journalists. The course included the basic skills of professional journalism and its objectives were to inculcate journalistic ethics such as objectivity, accuracy and balance among other values. One of the citizen journalists, Thembeni Onceya said that during the course they were taught also to be the “eyes and the ears of the community” (Interview 03/12/10). The project’s central aim to deepen democracy and citizenship at the local level was made clear to the citizen journalists in the project.

The second aspect that explains the collaborative nature of the project is that the project is funded by Knight Foundation and works through the School of Journalism and Media Studies at Rhodes University and alongside *Grocott’s Mail*, the newspaper owned by Rhodes University and used as an experiential learning laboratory by the school for its journalism students. The school is therefore responsible for the project management. The project management team also appointed professional journalists to work with the citizen journalists and give them their knowledge and grounding in journalism. In addition to this, Iindaba Ziyafika has a memorandum of understanding with Radio Grahamstown and hence citizen journalists broadcast from there.

According to Bruns (2005) the set-up in the Iindaba Ziyafika Project is typical of “pro-am” (professional-amateur) projects which are a collaborative effort between professionals and non-professionals. Bruns (2005) also coined the term “preditors” to refer to, professional journalists who carry out a number of key functions in pro-am projects. They usually do “content work” which involves editing and producing original content in citizen journalism projects. “Content work” also includes ensuring that stories written by citizen journalists meet legal, regulatory, ethical and quality requirements that would apply in professional journalistic environments. In a nutshell, “preditors” primary area of content work is in the editorial supervision of citizen

journalist contributions. This is certainly the case in the project as the professional journalists provide guidance in the authoring of stories and make sure that journalistic ethics are adhered to. The predators in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are Jayne Morgan, a consultant radio journalist, Khaya Thonjeni, the news producer, Bongi Bozo, the studio producer and Kwanele Butana, the citizen journalism editor and who is also former municipal reporter for *Grocott's Mail*.

Having adopted a pro-am model of citizen journalism, various predators work with the citizen journalists in the execution of their tasks. Kwanele Butana works with the citizen journalists in various capacities for the production of their online stories and also in the production of radio bulletins. Butana is responsible for the editing of the citizen journalism stories and he also plays a mentoring role for the citizen journalists. Bongi Bozo and Khaya Thonjeni are the producers for the radio programmes which are aired on *Radio Grahamstown*.

There is extensive editing of citizen journalism stories for the online edition of *Grocott's Mail*. During my participant observation, I edited some stories and noted that there were serious grammatical errors and in some instances the stories had to be rewritten. The observations in this case resonate with the findings of Simons (2008) who notes that besides some successful precedents, incorporating the work of a co-ordinating professional team is necessary because of the "limitations of the crowd" (Howe 2007), which are becoming apparent in a range of experiments in citizen journalism projects. The concept of the "limitations of the crowd" refers to the inadequacies of citizen journalists because of their lack of professional training. In some instances it has been noted that most citizen journalism projects are buttressed by a few super contributors and in the case of the Iindaba Ziyafika project, a few super contributors actively contribute stories while some citizen journalists go for weeks without contributing any stories. The super contributors are visibly those who have better standards of education and who have relatively more experience in community media, like Thembeni Plaatjie who has been educated up to, matric level unlike some of his peers. Plaatjie has been working in community radio since 2001.

The "limitations" of citizen journalists and the justification for pro-am projects were also apparent in cases where there were serious violations of ethics in the Iindaba Ziyafika project. Some of the stories written by citizen journalists lacked balance and some lacked objectivity as

the citizen journalists clearly sided with some of the people involved in the stories. An example of a story which needed heavy editing is the story which was published on 26 November 2010 under the headline “Tornado beauty show to go ahead.” The story was about residents exposing the corruption in hall allocation in the municipality. The citizen journalists clearly sided with the residents and during the conversation, it emerged that he had ties with the councillor of the ward which was protesting. The story was also not balanced, as the citizen journalist had not sought the comment of the municipal officer. Although citizen journalism is ideologically-driven and takes the side of citizens, in diary meetings the predators emphasise ethics and so this particular case can be seen as violation of traditional journalism ethics. Moreover in the six-week training that the citizen journalists were given, there was an emphasis on ethics. The story needed heavy editing such that the citizen journalist had to be called for clarification on a number of issues. Bongzi Bozo, the studio producer attests to the fact that they assist the citizen journalists greatly in the production of stories:

Citizen journalists can grow in radio. We have to acknowledge that they are not trained professionals. We work with them in the production of stories. We help with editing; we help anyone stuck with a script. Basically we help any of them if they need help. (Interview, 04/12/11)

Bongzi Bozo also says that when they started the radio programme they had to give them a quick course on the use of recorders and on interviewing techniques. Howe (2007: 52) points out that there are consequences in involving non-professionals in news production. He says that there is no guarantee that citizen journalists, who are often volunteers, will reach a point where they can produce high-quality content that draws readership on its own account.

Besides the *Grocott’s Mail* being an outlet for citizen journalism stories, on occasion, there were notable collaborations with journalists at *Grocott’s Mail*. On numerous occasions, citizen journalists and *Grocott’s Mail* staff attended functions together and some stories were written by citizen journalists but the picture would have been shot by a professional journalist from the *Grocott’s Mail*.

The collaborative relationship between professional and non-professional journalists also extends to the production of *Lunch Time Live*. The *Grocott’s Mail* news editor, Abongile Mgaqelwa presents the sections “*News Headlines*” on *Lunch Time Live*. In instances when the citizen

journalists would not have been able to cover certain stories, journalists from *Grocott's Mail* were invited to be studio guests on *Lunch Time Live* and be interviewed on the stories that they would have covered for *Grocott's Mail*.

The discussion in this section validates what has been suggested by scholars such as Glaser (2008) who postulated that citizen journalism projects cannot survive without the ongoing input of professionals. Glaser emphasises that it is increasingly clear that to succeed, crowd-sourced citizen journalism projects must rely extensively on the work and leadership of a professional team. Crowd sourced journalism refers to journalism projects which rely on user generated content for their survival. He also argues that a “pro-am” model that mixes user-generated content with the output of professional project workers is the one that international experience suggests as the most viable. Traber (1985) postulates that professionals can be involved in news production processes in grassroots media but in the role of advisors and to enable amateur journalists to produce their own work, independent of professionals. In the case of Lindaba Ziyafika, it seems the project designers have borrowed a leaf from international experience and engaged in pro-am journalism. The notable difference with international experience is that citizen journalists in the project are impeded by low literacy levels and therefore need a lot more help than citizen journalists in the western context require. Citizen journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika project also need monetary support in order to continue plying their trade. The citizen journalists are also different in that they have no readily available internet access and have to rely on the equipment in the citizen journalism newsroom.

4.5 The use of Ideological and Value-laden Language

The diction used in the stories published by citizen journalists is couched in struggle and revolutionary language which seems to pit the community against the authorities. On 2 November 2010, a story with the headline “*Electricity fight sees results*” was published. The use of the word “fight” in the headline speaks to antagonism between residents and the local authority that is responsible for the provision of electricity. The headline and the rest of the story presents the residents as being able to foster change in their own communities as it celebrates their fight for electricity through the demonstrations that they held against the authorities. The findings of this study echo Atton’s (2008) analysis of *SchNEWS*, an alternative publication

published in the United Kingdom. According to Atton, *SchNEWS* constructs local people as capable of action, able to identify problems and provide solutions. The *Grocott's Mail* story under discussion hails the fight for electricity as it had yielded results as the local authority then promised that the townships of Phaphamani and Zolani would be electrified within a month.

The struggle to have electricity supplied to the Phaphamani and Zolani informal settlements gained momentum when 60 ward 10 residents braved inclement weather and again picketed outside the city hall recently. (2 November 2010, *Grocott's Mail*)

The article celebrates the actions of the residents as it reads that they “braved the inclement weather.” Although Atton (2008) argues that the representation of ordinary people in alternative journalism does not set them apart as heroes or victims, but as voices that have as equal a right to be heard as do the voices of elite groups, they are, however, constructed differently in the *Grocott's Mail*. In the article under discussion the residents are foregrounded as heroes who are on a mission to make sure that their communities are electrified. The people are constructed as champions as they represent the rest of the community which did not demonstrate but still need electricity. Furthermore, according to the article, the residents’ persistence forced the mayoral resolution to electrify the areas. The tone of the article suggests that the citizen journalists might be aiming to achieve what O'Sullivan (1994) refers to as “radical social change,” which is considered to be one of the primary aims of alternative media. In defining alternative media, Bailey et al. (2008: 3-34) quoted in Dockney et al. (2010) argues that media outlets that are constituted by and serve a community can be termed alternative. In light of these theoretical considerations, it would suffice to say that the content produced by citizen journalists in the project is indeed alternative media. This is because firstly, the citizen journalists publish in community publications. *Grocott's Mail* although owned by Rhodes University is a community publication. On the other hand, *Radio Grahamstown* is indeed a community radio station as it serves the community and it has no commercial imperative. The people who work for the station are volunteers and represent different sections of the community hence it is truly a community radio station.

In another article published on 9 November 2010 under the headline “Transit Camp *resumes* after stalling” the project steering committee leader Nompumelelo Williams is quoted as saying the committee “fought” with the human settlement department before the funds could be

released: “We fought with the department and forced it to recognise our rights and we won because today the project has resumed,” (*Grocott’s Mail*, 9 November).

There seems to be a strong awareness of rights within the Grahamstown community and that they have to fight so as to get efficient service delivery. This ideological stance is reflected in the practice and the reports of citizen journalists, and in an informal interview; Them bani Onceya said that he deliberately writes about things that adversely affect his community. The ideological underpinnings of the citizen journalism project also come out emphatically as Thonjeni says that “citizen journalists are loyal to the community,” (Interview, 03/12/10). The in-depth interviews with the citizen journalists themselves show that they are activist in nature. The findings are also reflective of the study conducted by Carroll and Hackett (2006: 96) who consider the practice of alternative media as “a reflexive form of activism that treats communication as simultaneously means and ends of struggle.”

The citizen journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika project are guided by an activist philosophy of disseminating information for societal action, timeously and rapidly. The citizen journalists in the project under study exhibit alternative media practices as they deal with emerging societal issues. It can be argued that the citizen journalists respond to emerging issues and desire societal action. Them bani Onceya, a citizen journalist, said he covered the Phaphamani story about electricity in the hope that the authorities would do something about it. Thonjeni also says that they report stories from the standpoint of what affects the people and not what is said by the authorities.

The *Lunch Time Live* team also responds to emerging issues and they do this through holding talk shows where they discuss topical issues such as the water debate, held in response to a rapidly deteriorating water supply situation in the city and townships. There are perennial water problems in Grahamstown with residents experiencing ongoing problems of discoloration, interruptions to supply and warnings that tap water is not safe to drink because of high bacterial and heavy metal content. Residents and local institutions, like schools and the university spend a great deal of money buying in and distributing bottled water. This happens regularly due to pump failures, as a lack of staff within the municipality which limits the servicing of the pump station. According to Khaya Thonjeni, the water debate was held so that technicians from Makana

Municipality could be brought into the studio and explain the causes of the water problems. The debate was held so that the heart of the problem could be ascertained and rectified on behalf of those in the community who have no access to these officials themselves.

4.6 Action-oriented Journalism: Playing a Social and Community Role

The citizen journalists have integrated communication brokering as part and parcel of their practice. The citizen journalists have also made it their mandate to enable the flow of information between the residents and the local authority. They not only do this through the stories that they cover but also through consultative meetings that they hold with local authorities. Thonjeni says that they have played the role of communication brokers in a number of instances. “We interviewed the Mayor and we told him that some residents were coming to his office to discuss service delivery issues but he did not believe us. In that instance we could have been communication brokers (Thonjeni, Interview 03/12/10).

In another incident, Onceya helped to raise funds for the burial of a Grahamstown teenager who died in Johannesburg (Interview 03/12/12). This illustrates that the citizens see themselves as imbedded in their community and obligated to use their journalism to solve their problems whenever they can. The citizen journalists go beyond just covering stories as they closely identify with the community.

During the *Lunch Time Live Extra* name change debate, the citizen journalists created an enabling space for different sections of the community who had different viewpoints to meet and discuss issues. The Grahamstown name change process has been ongoing for more than three years and it is therefore of importance to the community. The name change issue started on 13 July 2007 when Makana Mayor Phumelelo Kate announced that the name Grahamstown was offensive and should be changed. This is because its namesake, Colonel Graham was a coloniser responsible for displacement of the amaXhosa, murders and cattle theft (*Grocott's Mail*, 25 November). Numerous names have been suggested as alternatives, such as Rhini and Makana. The debate included participants from both Grahamstown East and West (euphemisms in the town for the townships and the largely white town). The debate also cut across the age divide and residents participated through different forums such as the *Lunch Time Live* Facebook page while some residents sent text messages and some residents made telephone calls. Many emails,

facebook messages and sms comments voiced what they considered to be the benefits of the change such as: claiming back the community's dignity from the reign of a brutal commander, while others argued that the money should be spent on other important service delivery issues. The citizen journalists also invited residents to come to the studio and participate live. This venture proved to be very successful as residents came to the studio and participated. Thonjeni says this debate was very successful as people got an opportunity to air their views.

The *Lunch Time Live Extra* name change debate was also used as a platform to manage conflict between different organisations that had strong opinions about the name change issue. Some members of the community had serious antagonistic relationships and refused to be in the studio at the same time. There are several organisations which are actively involved in the name change debate such as Julia Wells, who is head of the name change committee and a member of the ANC, Advocate Loyiso Mpumlwana of the Eastern Cape Geographical Names Committee (ECGNC) and Advocate Jock McConnachie and Sigidla Ndumo of Keep Grahamstown Grahamstown (KGG). There were fierce debates with several parties involved questioning the views of each other and claiming that the opposing organisations were trying to hijack the process. Those who were pro-name change argued that the name was a colonial relic and those who were anti-name change argued that it was too expensive to change the name and that there should be a focus on service delivery issues. It took a great deal of careful negotiation on the part of the producers to get them to come together in the studio and discuss issues in a congenial manner. In this instance, citizen journalism played a conflict-resolution role as they enabled residents from different associations who had sworn not to talk to each other to meet and discuss issues that had to do with the name change.

Another example of citizen journalism playing a social and community role is the supplement “Ward Focus” published by *Grocott’s Mail* as a way of assisting city residents with information in the run-up to the municipal elections of 2011. The project formed the core of a course undertaken by School of Journalism and Media Studies students but the citizen journalists were called upon to assist the students to set up meetings with people in each ward (Informal interview with Odwa Funeka, 6/12/10). The citizen journalists therefore brokered communication between the communities they are part of and the Rhodes students who are in training to become professional journalists.

In a story run on *Lunch Time Live* about a baby who was dumped, the treatment of the story showed an inclination to perform a community service role as Thembani Onceya interviewed a social worker who told young mothers about the steps that they can take in order to look after babies such as applying for the South African government-sponsored child support grant. Bongzi Bozo also says that “we go beyond the ordinary story as we want to effect change in our communities and we just don’t cover stories, we give people a voice,” (Interview 04/12/10). This is also attested to by an incident where a story was covered about a fire which destroyed the home of a family in Grahamstown and the station tried to assist the family by giving the listeners a cell number where they could offer assistance to the victims (Bozo, Interview 04/12/10).

The practices of citizen journalists that have been discussed in this section show that alternative media can make important contributions to the social and political life by developing communities and becoming a vehicle for “active” citizenship (Rodriguez 2000, 2003; John Downing 1984, 2001).

4.7 Sourcing

In terms of sourcing there is a deliberate stance to include those who are not ordinarily given a voice in the mainstream media. Women and the poor appear frequently in stories as sources and this is a different scenario from that prevalent in mainstream journalism which frequently covers the rich and the powerful. Bruns (2008) asserts that citizen journalism constructs a deliberate situation where expert knowledge has no privileged position and all the sources are regarded as experts in the ways in which the common problem touches their everyday lives. This is the case in the Iindaba Ziyafika project as it is the ordinary people who are quoted in stories and not the rich and powerful.

In the story running under the headline “Ward 10 electricity fight sees results” more ordinary people are quoted as sources than official sources. In the story two women and one man are quoted in the story because they are affected by lack of electricity. In field observations that I conducted, there was a deliberate effort by citizen journalists to interview ordinary people and in particular women and children. In covering the water outage story in Joza Extension Township, Thembani Onceya made a deliberate effort to interview more women than men and this was attributed to women being particularly adversely affected as they rely heavily on water for

domestic use. Since Onceya is relatively well-known in the community he could go into residents' homes and seek people out so as to interview them. In covering ordinary people, citizen journalists make a deliberate effort to place emphasis on highlighting their plight.

Another case where ordinary people are fore-grounded is the story running under the headline "Transit Camp project resumes after stalling." The story highlights some of the major problems in Grahamstown which are housing and unemployment. The story is about a housing project which was meant to cater for residents who need homes in Grahamstown but it came to a halt due to funding problems. In the story, although the owner of the construction company is interviewed, his role is mainly to highlight the suffering of residents who had destroyed their shacks to make way for the housing project. In the same story, a worker at the construction site is interviewed and he talks about how he is benefiting from work in order to highlight the unemployment problems in Grahamstown. This particular practice of citizen journalists is emphasised in a study conducted by Atton (2008) on the British alternative newspaper and website, *SchNews*. He noted that the paper constructed its stories around the voices of "ordinary" citizens and marginalised elite groups, who are the dominant voices in mainstream media. Although the paper did not ignore elite sources entirely, however, it did not quote them directly or extensively. By contrast, *SchNews* used the voices of ordinary people to set the terms of reference by which its readers are encouraged to understand issues and events. The trend in *SchNews* is also symptomatic of the practices by citizen journalists under study in Grahamstown as the readers in the story under discussion are encouraged to understand the story from the position of the ordinary people who are directly affected by the failure of the housing project. The readers are encouraged to see the project as providing employment and housing to the residents who suffer from a lack of these necessities.

Traber (1985) also posits that alternative advocacy media adopt very different news values from the mass media:

Alternative social actors [such as] the poor, the oppressed, the marginalised and indeed the ordinary manual labourer, woman, youth and child are the main subjects of [their] news and features. (Traber 1985: 2)

Traber points out that grassroots media embody alternative news values and they are produced by the same people whose concerns they represent from a position of engagement and direct

participation. The citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project do indeed embody the values of alternative media and they do identify with the concerns of the community, as they are also resident there. Thembeni Plaatjie in an interview authenticates this notion as he said that he enjoys doing human-interest stories as he likes to show people what is happening in his community. He also says he likes writing stories that “are unique and will not be covered by mainstream papers. The people in my community know me and they give me some of my stories”, (Interview 03/12/10).

Reich (2008) argues that citizen journalists are hindered by their inferior access to news sources, unlike mainstream journalists. This is because official sources enjoy a lot of coverage from mainstream sources who give them favourable coverage. Citizen journalists are said to negotiate their limited access to sources by making modest use of human sources and they have a high proportion of one-source items. Citizen journalists are also said not to have long-term relationships with sources. In conducting participant observation of the Iindaba Ziyafika journalists, they seemed to have developed long-standing relationships with sources. Malibongwe Maxhawulana, a citizen journalist who reports on sports, in an interview said that he has relationships with coaches and hence they give him stories. They only give him problems when their teams would have lost and are unhappy to talk about losses.

However, because of their work alongside professional journalists and the project’s demand that the citizen journalists write balanced stories they also use officials as sources. In doing this they suffer the same difficulties as professional journalists in getting officials to speak to them and give them the right information. At times Makana Municipality officials also have a problem giving interviews and “usually say that it is only certain officials who can comment on particular issues and at times they say that they are too busy for appointments”, (Thembeni Plaatjie, interview, 03/12/10). There was however deliberate efforts to get interviews with sources as there is a strict policy imposed by the predators to write balanced stories and hence citizen journalists try to observe professional methods of sourcing. The sourcing by citizen journalists is also much like professional journalists as they are assisted by professional journalists who have been working in Grahamstown and have developed relationships with sources within the town. In some instances professional journalists assisted citizen journalists who were having trouble getting comments from municipality sources. In other instances, Bongzi Bozo had to make

appointments for citizen journalists but in other instances, the professional journalists ended up taking over the stories themselves.

4.8 The Populist Nature of the News Bulletin

Bongi Bozo says that the populist nature of the bulletin presented by citizen journalists is their trademark as it makes them unique as a citizen journalism project. In the broadcast of *Lunch Time Live* there is frequent use of stage names and the bulletin is very relaxed. Stage names are usually taken on by performers because of the view that real names are unattractive. Sometimes a performer adopts a name that is unusual or outlandish to attract attention. Other performers use a stage name in order to retain anonymity. The equivalent concept among authors is called a nom de plume or pen name, while the term ring name is used in professional wrestling. In radio, the term “radio name” or “air name” is used. Thembeni Plaatjie who anchors the programme is called TP on the airwaves whilst Salinda Saki-Neko is dubbed the “*First Lady of Lunch Time Live*”. Odwa Funeka is referred to as *uMfokaTshangisa* which is his clan name. *Lunch Time Live* gives the citizen journalists room for cultural expression especially when they are broadcasting in IsiXhosa. This is because radio gives them room to use the language that they use in their daily life. The bulletin is also informal because in some instances when anchors are saying goodbye they use other indigenous and international languages. The citizen journalists are given a platform for creative expression within the bulletin hence they can use the cultural resources from their communities in the form of music and language. In mainstream news, presenters are not able to use their clan names within the bulletin and to make use of their totems in introducing themselves. They also seek new ways of presenting the radio bulletins in creative, non-conventional formats. Citizen journalism also helps the citizen journalists in the project to find fulfilment as they make room for cultural expression.

The bulletin is also populist as popular songs are played between segments in the bulletin. The music is from a variety of artists and sometimes the music is for advocacy purposes. For instance there was a song titled *Khusela abantwana* by Ringo Madlingozi, which was played during the 16 days of activism in line with the protection of children. On World Aids Day, the song played was by Adesin titled *HIV/Aids* so as to commemorate the day.

Citizen journalist Thembani Onceya's weather presentation is off the cuff and some listeners have said that his voice is too loud for a news bulletin whilst other listeners enjoy his broadcast. Bongzi Bozo however says that Onceya is one of the popular characters on the show and listeners identify with him. In greeting listeners for instance Thembani Onceya says "greetings from the holy mountain" and this is because he identifies with the Rastafarian movement which believes in the notion of there being a holy mountain. In his presentation of weather he uses both isiXhosa and English and he has introductions which reflect the language spoken in the townships and one of his favourite lines is "phola spring, welcome summertime" and he goes so far as telling listeners what to wear. In this instance, Onceya's background seems to influence his presentation and in an interview he said that he used to use rap music as an outlet for the frustrations of "his people" but now uses the avenue of citizen media. Onceya's presentation seems to give credence to Atton (2008: 215) view that "alternative media often employ populist methods of presentation that resemble the practices of tabloid journalism." O'Sullivan (1994) posits that alternative media fights for social change and seeks to involve citizens in their processes of news production and are committed to innovation in form and content. Alternative media also seeks to improve content and organisational procedures.

4.9 Language Use

In the broadcast of *Lunch Time Live* news bulletin there are two main languages that are used, IsiXhosa and English. The station has a mandate to broadcast in 60% percent isiXhosa, 30% English and 10% percent Afrikaans and this reflected in their news bulletins. There is a mixture of languages and formats in single stories as individual stories are broadcast in both isiXhosa and English. A case in point is the story on the African National Congress's disruption of an Unemployed People's Movement (UPM) meeting. The introduction for the story was in English and the UPM spokesperson Xola Mali was interviewed in English but the ANC spokesperson was interviewed live in isiXhosa. Thonjeni said in an interview that they try to cater for their diverse audience hence they try to use all languages in individual stories (Interview 03/12/10). The above points illustrate that radio has a capacity that print does not have and based on the observations carried out, radio seems to be more suitable for African citizen journalism.

4.10 Borrowed Practices

The citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project have borrowed practices from professional journalism and the following section deals with these practices.

4.10.1 An Emerging Beat System

Although Thembeni Platjie says he does not have a specific beat, he has an inclination towards crime stories and he has written a number of crime-related stories. He covers an average of one crime story a week. Kwanele Butana on the other hand covers a lot of political and municipal stories. An analysis of the stories published during the observation period showed that Chesley Daniels only covers sport and he also presents the sports segment with Malibongwe Maxhawulana for *Lunch Time Live*. In this instance, it is significant that citizen journalism is using mainstream journalism practices as they have been tried and tested.

4.10.2 The use of Material from Mainstream Media

Like a number of citizen journalism projects, the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project make use of material from mainstream media in cases when they would not have managed to cover certain stories which the mainstream press would have covered and in some cases in order to buttress their own stories. Malibongwe Maxhawulana, the sports reporter used material from the *South Africa Broadcasting Corporation* (SABC) because he had been unable to cover a soccer match which SABC covered. On occasion stories from *Grocott's Mail* were used in *Lunch Time Live*. In some cases, stories were translated from the *Grocott's Mail* to IsiXhosa for broadcast on *Lunch Time Live*. The entertainment guide which is aired on Fridays is also supplanted from *Grocott's Mail* which carries the adverts. Citizen journalism sceptics claim that untrained citizens can only produce commentary, analysis and opinion and can occasionally report on breaking stories when they happen to be “in the wrong place at the right time,” (Allan, 2006: 152). A number of scholars have blatantly asserted that citizens are unqualified to produce original news content (Lemann, 2006; Lenhart & Fox, 2006; Reese et al., 2007). Although citizen journalists have been said not to be in a position to produce original content, it was only on rare occasions that the Iindaba Ziyafika citizen journalists used material from mainstream media and in those instances, the material was used as it was felt to be in the public interest.

4.11 Collaboration on Stories within the Group

The citizen journalists within Iindaba Ziyafika assist each other in the coverage of stories. They rely on their different skills and competencies to help each other to come up with better stories. In some instances one citizen journalist writes a particular story for print whilst the other records it for broadcast on *Lunch Time Live*.

Story treatment is discussed during the diary meetings and citizen journalists are helped with the questions that they should ask interviewees. For instance citizen journalist, Odwa Funeka was given questions by other citizen journalists that he was supposed to ask Blade Nzimande, the Minister of Higher Education, who was about to visit Grahamstown for the official opening of the Rhodes University library. This is because citizen journalists assist each other with assignments and more often than not they are given the questions that they should ask. Kwanele Butana attended the official opening with Funeka. Butana interviewed the minister whilst Funeka recorded the interview. In an informal interview, Funeka said that they had three minutes to interview the minister and hence he left it to the professional to conduct the interview.

In another incident, there was a water story which was being covered by the citizen journalists, two citizen journalists covered the same story. This is because the citizen journalists had to cover different areas which were covered by the water outages and at different times of the day. The citizen journalists interviewed residents affected by the water outages in different areas. In field observations, there were cases when Salinda Saki-Neko covered court stories with Thembeni Plaatjie. In such cases, the two journalists focused on covering the different dimensions of the story. There is also collaboration for *Lunch Time Live* extra programmes. In the production of the name change debate, different members of the team volunteered to undertake different roles for the production of content, for instance some volunteered to do vox pops in different areas whilst some were making appointments with studio guests. This is because in making decisions within the community of practice, there is no imposition but there is active negotiation on the roles that citizen journalists can perform within a production. Negotiation of roles is also necessary because citizen journalists have other jobs that they undertake and some are at college. Citizen journalists are also not paid for the work that they do in radio hence they cannot be forced to take on duties.

Scripting for the news bulletin is also collaborative process and the producers help in its production. In the writing of scripts, the anchors for a particular show are responsible for its authoring. The individual citizen journalists supply the anchors with the contents of their stories so that they write the scripts. The citizen journalist who would have covered a particular story is responsible for giving the lead to the anchor and when they are supposed to be interviewed on air, they are responsible for supplying the anchors with questions.

This kind of collaborative behaviour ties in with the notion of a community of practice. In the concept of a community of practice, members are accountable in developing a practice, they bring their experience and receive help with their problems, they get a chance to discuss their new solutions, to share them with others and integrate them into the community's practice (Wenger 1998). As has been discussed in this section, members of Iindaba Ziyafika help each other with their problems and develop their practice like in a community of practice.

4.12 Citizen Journalism Enabling Citizen Participation

Khaya Thonjeni says that Iindaba Ziyafika endeavours to create a platform for citizen participation as that is one of the premises of citizen journalism. They try to do this through the production of *Lunch Time Live* within Grahamstown. Their main objective, Thonjeni says, is to make media accessible and he is of the view that "radio is the best platform for doing that" (Interview, 03/12/10). He says that there is only one newspaper in the town with a circulation of 4000 leaving most of the inhabitants without space to air their views and opinions. Thonjeni surmises that *Lunch Time Live* is expanding the platforms for the distribution of news. He also envisages the creation of a marketplace of ideas.

In the debate on the name change that we produced, we did manage to create an archetypical public sphere. We had people from different areas of the town airing their views. We need to make sure that there is a stock exchange of ideas and that the values have some currency. (Interview, 03/12/10)

The show endeavours to cover the different sections of the town through the various debates that the citizen journalists hold. Thonjeni also says that they are reaching out to people who are not accommodated by other stations which broadcast in English in a community with high illiteracy levels. *Lunch Time Live* also tries to provide an enabling environment for the exchange of ideas as they follow up on the issues that affect the public.

Khaya Thonjeni says that they have conducted studies to ascertain when people in Grahamstown have more disposable income and are in a position to participate in programmes, as they would be having money to do so. He notes that the elderly people are more likely to call at month ends because that is the time when they would have received their grants while younger people are more prone to use social networking channels and mobile media to participate in the public sphere. Having ascertained this, debates are programmed at month ends to enable people to call.

The public sphere that is enabled by *Lunch Time Live* however does not adhere to the Habermasian ideals of rationality as there were highly charged emotions during the debate and one listener said that “we drove out the crazy white people”. The public sphere is also a departure from the Habermasian public sphere as it is certainly not a bourgeoisie public sphere. This is because the debates included people from all sides of Grahamstown and people of differing social classes. Dockney et al. (2010: 80-81) note that in alternative media:

[N]otions of participation and access leverage a critical platform for the community (in relation to the dominant and generalist mass media) to raise its voice from the margins for empowerment, development, identification and self representation...Such participation occurs through the opportunity for self representation in the public sphere as opposed to representation by proxy. In this approach, the community has the potential “to generate and communicate their own ideologies and discourses either in contrast or in tandem with mainstream representations. (Dockney 2010: 81)

The composition and constitution of the public sphere constituted by *Lunch Time Live* does give the community a means for expression and an opportunity to propagate their ideas and opinions as suggested by Dockney et al. (2010).

4.13 Hyperlocality

Proponents of citizen journalism claim that citizen journalism enables hyperlocal stories to be produced. In the course of the field observations that I carried out, I noted that during the diary meetings that there was an emphasis on local stories being covered. The citizen journalists relied on sources in the townships for story as they tried to cover stories that resonated with the citizens of Grahamstown. Thonjeni says that they try to bring a local perspective to the news for instance during the 16 days of activism, the citizen journalists covered local events. On the other hand they also covered the activities of local non-governmental organisations such as the Jabez and

Raphael Centre during the commemorations for World Aids Day. The citizen journalists also achieve hyperlocality through the airing of the Ward-to-Ward focus on *Lunch Time Live*.

Thonjeni also notes that stories about crime and poverty are prevalent in the community hence they are covered a lot by the citizen journalists. He also notes that since Grahamstown is also an education town and a cultural destination there are a lot of stories about that which are covered. Besides the hyperlocal stories that are covered there are also some stories that are covered which are essentially mainstream stories. A case in point is the story under the headline “Nzimande opens renovated Rhodes University campus library”. The story was published on 5 November 2010 and was about the Rhodes University campus library being officially opened officially by the minister for higher education.

4.14 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the findings of this study. The major finding of this research is that citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project engage in pro-am journalism. This is because they are aided in the production of their stories by professional journalists. It is also the finding of this study that the content that is produced falls within the alternative media framework as they produce content that aligns itself with the ordinary people. Among the practices that also emerged is that citizen journalists also borrow from the practice of professional media. The next chapter serves as the conclusion for this thesis whose aim has been to investigate the emerging practices of citizen journalists.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The goal of this study was to provide insight into citizen journalists' techniques of gathering news. The thesis examined whether the practices of citizen journalists attached to *Grocott's Mail* and Radio Grahamstown constituted a new kind of community of journalistic practice. The thesis also investigated whether the Iindaba Ziyafika project produces alternative journalism and whether it enables local citizens to deepen their citizenship by giving them a voice and vehicles for engaging with local politics.

The methodological approach for this study was mainly qualitative. Qualitative research produces descriptive data by observing behaviour (Taylor & Bodgan, 1984: 5), allows the researcher to understand the perspectives of social actors, to retrieve experiences from the past, and to gain expert insight or information (Babbie & Mouton, 1989).

The research employed a three-stage design (participant observation, in-depth interviews and qualitative content analysis) which allows inferences to drawn from one data collection tool to be supplemented by another.

This study was informed by alternative media theory, the notion of community of practice and the concept of active citizenship. The concept of active citizenship was used as a lens to ascertain whether the citizen journalists are able to use communication to deepen citizenship in Grahamstown. Alternative media theory provided a framework for ascertaining whether the content produced is indeed alternative as defined by the scholarship in this area. The notion of community of practice was used as a theoretical tool to see what new practices or arrangements the citizen journalists were engaging in or creating.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The research reveals that citizen journalists in the project are engaging in a very interesting combination of professional-amateur journalism. Citizen journalists in Grahamstown have developed a symbiotic relationship with professional journalists in the city. Part of the practice of

citizen journalists involves a very significant amount of collaboration between professional journalists and citizen journalists. The collaboration is in the production of content and in the presentation of reports, particularly on radio. The research showed that citizen journalism works best alongside professional journalism and is not necessarily setting itself up as an alternative and separate practice. There are, however, a few remarkable instances when citizen journalists produce alternative content that is distinctive from mainstream journalism. This is particularly evident in the *Lunch Time Live* news bulletin on Radio Grahamstown.

In the broadcast of Lunch Time Live news bulletin two main languages are used, IsiXhosa and English. The station has a mandate to broadcast in 60% percent isiXhosa, 30% English and 10% percent Afrikaans and this is reflected in their news bulletins. There is a mixture of languages and formats in single stories as individual stories are broadcast in both isiXhosa and English. In the case of Radio Grahamstown, radio seems to have a great capacity to draw citizens into debates. This is because the use of voice escapes the formalised conventions of print and it allows citizens and citizen journalists to use their own language, isiXhosa, thus giving them familiarity and ease with the medium. The findings of this research which show how effective radio enabled citizen journalism is, indicate that this medium should be taken very seriously in future projects of citizen journalism in South Africa, and perhaps further afield in the continent.

The citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project also have a very interesting symbiotic relationship with the professional journalists at *Grocott's Mail*. They have borrowed certain practices from professional journalism. Citizen journalism and professional journalism bring different dimensions to the symbiotic relationship. Citizen journalism brings knowledge of Grahamstown and relationships and contacts with residents in the townships while professional journalism brings the expertise and techniques of professional practice, which enables the engagement with those with power in the city. An interesting outcome of this relationship is that the citizen journalists see their relationship with professionals as a way to learn and to make possible their own stepping stone into formalised, professional journalism.

The study also reveals that in practicing their craft, Iindaba Ziyafika citizen journalists see news as a process and not as a series of news events. This is clear departure from event-based news conceptualisation associated with mainstream journalism. They view news as unfolding social

processes, allowing citizen journalists (and the professionals they work with) to question the factors which would have precipitated the event and investigate the causes of particular phenomena.

The journalists in the Lindaba Ziyafika project work in different mediums and this calls for them to acquire the competencies of the different mediums. The same citizen journalists produce content for print, radio and for online media and this gives them a unique opportunity for learning and growth as journalists.

The diction used in the stories published by citizen journalists is couched in struggle and revolutionary language which seems to pit the community against the authorities. The citizen journalists also make use of every daily language in their radio broadcasts and borrow from their cultural expression. This they do through populist methods.

The citizen journalists have also integrated communication brokering as part and parcel of their practice. This is because the citizen journalists have made it their mandate to enable the flow of information between the residents and the local authority – a characteristic which benefits not just their reporting but also is a small step towards enabling active citizenship.

In terms of sourcing there is a deliberate stance to include those who are not ordinarily given a voice in the mainstream media. Women and the poor appear frequently in stories as sources and this is a different scenario from that prevalent in mainstream journalism which frequently covers the rich and the powerful.

5.2.1 An Emerging Community of Practice

This thesis sought in a sense to ascertain whether the journalists in the project do constitute a new type of community of practice. The notion of Community of Practice (COP) envisages that members will become a community when they share a common interest (Lave & Wenger 2000). The Lindaba Ziyafika journalists are developing an incipient distinctive practice but it is one that has a close relationship with professional journalism, relies on it and continues to see it as the superior form of practice. They are bonded also by a common interest in becoming professional journalists. The citizen journalists in the project are unemployed young people or they have part time jobs, hence the project is a means for them to enter into and learn the codes of professional

journalism practice. For example, as a result of this exposure, one of the citizen journalists, Odwa Funeka, is now making plans to study for a degree at a local university. The orientation of the journalists, despite exhibiting some of the characteristics of citizen journalism, seems to be leaning towards professional journalism as shown in their endeavours to observe strategic rituals of journalism such as balance and objectivity and in their constant efforts to learn the skills of journalism.

The citizen journalists were initially taught the basic skills of journalism in a six-week training course by a hired consultant. For the purposes of the production of *Lunch Time Live*, they were then taught how to use field recorders. There is also mentorship within the project and this mainly happens during diary meetings. In one diary meeting, it was noted that the levels for the recordings done by a citizen journalist, Malibongwe Maxhawulana were low and Jayne Morgan, a project consultant, then made an appointment with citizen journalists to teach them flawless field recording. Other training sessions were held on aspects of broadcast such as editing audio for radio. There is also learning and coaching even for the online edition as the citizen journalists seek a lot of guidance from the citizen journalism editor, Kwanele Butana on how to cover stories and ask his advice when they have challenges in the execution of their duties. The citizen journalists also help each other with their stories outside of diary meetings. They have defined times for meetings and specific deadlines for the production of articles and bulletins and they have their own newsroom at *Grocott's Mail* where they produce stories and a space at *Radio Grahamstown* where they edit and produce their bulletin. All these features give them a bounded sense of community and a practice that is valuable.

5.3 Recommendations and Areas of Further Research

This study has revealed that there is a lot of collaboration between professional and citizen journalists. This collaboration has great benefits for professional journalism. The citizen journalism being practised is institutionalised (rather than alternative in the institutional sense), but there is a continuous need for the negotiation of power and emphasis between these two elements because they do have different epistemological foundations.

It would also be interesting to see whether citizen journalism would stand on its own without donor money. This is especially true in light of the Knight Foundation grant coming to an end.

Observations have shown that part of the motivation for engaging in citizen journalism is because it is a form of employment. This is because the citizen journalists are paid for the stories that are published in the print version of *Grocott's Mail*. There is some reluctance to cover stories for radio and when faced with a choice of doing a print or radio story, the citizen journalists invariably chose print as they are paid for it. The Iindaba Ziyafika project has enlarged a local public sphere and created much excitement and expectation among local residents. If the project is discontinued, it raises questions about the usefulness of donor-funded initiatives which exist for a short period and do not benefit communities in the long term. This scenario is particularly unfortunate as there are high literacy levels in Makana and poverty such that the majority of the people listen to radio rather than buying *Grocott's Mail*. The project is conceived by the citizen journalists as employment and if it comes to an end, it means then that the project is not sustainable. It would be worthwhile for the project managers to seek alternative forms of funding.

In Africa people tell their stories through radio and through print because the majority of the people do not necessarily have access to the internet. In the western context citizen journalism has been enabled by the web and I am of the view that it is a folly to expect Africa to leap frog to development like in the western context because of the internet (Mudhai et al 2009). Citizen journalism is being enabled by new radio because of literacy problems in the community and there is just no culture of web practices such as blogging. The lack of a prevalent internet culture is buttressed by the study conducted by Steenveld and Strelitz (2010) who discovered that there are few comments on the citizen journalism stories published in the online version of *Grocott's Mail*.

It would therefore be worthwhile exploring further the aspect of radio-enabled citizen journalism. The participation of the people is mainly seen through radio and in particular in the debate space created in the studio for *Lunch Time Live* and one can conclude that some of the premises of the Iindaba Ziyafika project were wrong especially in the context of Africa given the challenges of internet access in Africa. The memorandum of understanding signed with Radio Grahamstown seems to have been born out of the realisation of this medium's particular power locally. Nevertheless, the citizen journalists in the Iindaba Ziyafika project are still not being

paid for the content that they produce for radio and there is therefore a need to change this. This is especially necessary if *Lunch Time Live* is to continue being broadcast.

Broadcasting in indigenous languages is empowering as it reduces barriers to entry and creates a platform for cultural expression. It cannot be over emphasised that citizen journalism in the Iindaba Ziyafika has indeed provided a space for deliberation between different facets of the community and there is need for support of this endeavour taking into account factors such as language and the use of the most accessible media to the people. Citizen journalism stories do focus on the issues affecting the community, such as marches for service delivery issues.

Although the citizen journalism here in Grahamstown is institutionalised with a newspaper and an online version, it is empowering the local community as Radio Grahamstown now broadcasts news and Grahamstown East can hear itself in the media. Although an unexpected development, this feature has shown that a blend of professional and amateur journalism which uses different mediums treats news as a process as well as a series of events, reaches into communities with a concern to hear their voices and raise their issues.

5.4 Conclusion

This thesis has been an exploration into the practices of citizen journalists within the Iindaba Ziyafika project. The research showed that citizen journalism works well when it is in a symbiotic relationship with professional journalism. Citizen journalism however, has moments when it exhibits characteristics which are unique to it. There are areas which can be further researched in the area of citizen journalism and these include the aspect of radio enabled citizen journalism. Part of the recommendations is that radio should be taken more seriously in future projects of citizen journalism. One of the questions which can be researched is whether citizen journalism is sustainable without donor funding. Ultimately citizen journalism is empowering the residents of Grahamstown as the residents find space for debate on Radio Grahamstown.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CITIZEN JOURNALISTS

1. What is your role within the project?
2. What kind of stories do you cover?
3. How do you get your stories?
4. What kind of relationship do you have with your sources?
5. Do you ever have any problems with sources?
6. How did you get involved in the project?
7. How are you learning to be a journalist?
8. Why did you join the project?

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PREDITORS

1. What is your role within the project?
2. What kind of stories do citizen journalists cover?
3. Where do the citizen journalists publish their stories and why?
4. What guides the choice of stories within the project?
5. What is your assessment of the citizen journalists?
6. What are some of the challenges in the project?
7. What are some of the lessons learnt in the project?

REFERENCES

- Achbar, M. 1994. *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*. Montreal: Black Rose Books.
- Atton, C. 1996a. *Alternative Literature: a Practical Guide for Librarians*. Aldershot: Gower.
- Atton, C. 1996b. Anarchy on the Internet: Obstacles and Opportunities for Alternative electronic publishing. *Anarchist Studies*. Pp. 115-32.
- Atton, C. 1999a. Green Anarchist: A Case Study in Radical Media. *Anarchist Studies*. 7(1): 25-49.
- Atton, C. 2001. The Mundane and its Reproduction in Alternative Media. *Journal of Mundane Behavior*. 2 (1). Retrieved 12 October 2010 from: <http://www.mundanebehavior.org/index.htm>.
- Atton, C. 2002. *Alternative Media*. London: Sage.
- Atton, C. 2007. *Alternative Media*. London: Sage.
- Babbie, E., & Mouton, J. 2001. *The Practice of Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Banda, F. 2010. *Citizen Journalism and Democracy in Africa: An Exploratory Study*. Grahamstown: Highway Africa.
- Bardoel, J. & Deuze, M. 2001. Network Journalism: Converging Competencies of Old and New Media Professionals. *Australian Journalism Review*. 23 (91-103).
- Benzie, D.H. et al. 2005. Communities of Practice. In Somekh, B. & Lewin, C. (Eds.). *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. London: Sage, pp.181-3
- Berger, G. 2007. Iindaba Ziyafika – The News is coming: hyper local journalism integrates with cell phones in an African setting. Unpublished proposal to the Knight Challenge.
- Boyman, S., & Willis, C. 2005. The Future is Here, But Do News Media Companies See it? *Neimann Reports: Citizen Journalism*. 59 (4). Available at www.neimann.harvard.edu.

Bruns, A. 2005. *Gatewatching: Collaborative Online News Production*, New York: Peter Lang.

Bruns, A. 2007. *Producers: Towards a Broader Framework for User-led Content Creation*. Retrieved on 31 July 2010 from: <http://www.siteseerx.ist.psu.edu>

Bruns, A. 2008. *Blogs, Wikipedia, Second Life and Beyond: From Production to Producers (Digital Formations)*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Bruns, A. 2008. Gatewatching, Gatecrashing: Futures for Tactical News Media. In Boler, M. (Ed.). *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT P, pp. 247-270

Bruns, A. 2008. The Active Audience: Transforming Journalism from Gatekeeping to Gatewatching. In Domingo, D., & Paterson, C. (Eds.). *Making Online News: The Ethnography of New Media Production*. New York: Peter Lang, 171-84

Bryman, A. 1984. The Debate about Qualitative and Quantitative Research: A Question of Method or Epistemology? *The British Journal of Sociology*. 35 (1): 75-92.

Bryman, A. 1988. *Quantity and Quality in Social Research*. London: Routledge

Carroll, W.K. & Hackett, R.A. 2006. *Remaking Media: The Struggle to Democratize Public Communication*

Chapman, S. & McNeill, P. 2005. *Research Methods*. New York: Routledge,

Chipkin, I. 2007. *Do South Africans Exist? Nationalism, Democracy and the Identity of 'The People'*. Johannesburg: Wits University Press.

Coyer, K., Downum, T., Fountain, A. (Eds.). 2007. *The Alternative Media Handbook*. New York: Routledge.

Dahlgren, P. 1997. Cultural Studies as a Research Perspective: Themes and Tensions. In Corner, J., Schlesinger, P & Silverstone, R. (Eds.). *International Media research: A Critical Survey*. London: Routledge, pp. 48-64.

Deacon, D., Golding, P., Murdock, G., & Pickering, M. 1999. *Researching communications: a practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis*. New York: Hodder.

Deacon, D., Golding, P., Murdock, G., & Pickering, M. 2007. *Researching communications: a practical guide to methods in media and cultural analysis*. New York: Hodder.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. 2003. *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Deuze, M. 2007. *Media Work (Digital Media and Society)*. London: Polity Press

Dockney, J., Tomaselli, K., & Hart, T. 2010. Cellphilms, mobile platforms and prodsumers: hyper- individuality and film. In Clarke, N. (Ed.). *The Citizen in Communication: re-visiting traditional, new and community media practices in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta & Company Limited, pp. 75-96.

Downing, J. 1984. *Radical Media: The Political Experience of Alternative Communication*. Boston, Mass.: South End Press.

Downing, J. 1988. The Alternative Public Realm: The Organization of the 1980s Anti-nuclear Press in West Germany and Britain. *Media, Culture and Society*. 10: 163-81.

DRPEJ. 2003. *David Rabkin project for experiential journalism training*. Unpublished.

Dugo, H. 2007. Journalists' Appropriation Of ICTs In Newsgathering And Processing: A Case study Of *Grocott's Mail*. Unpublished Master's Thesis, Grahamstown: Rhodes University.

Fielding, N.G., & Lee, R.M. 1991. *Using Computers in Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Fine, G.A. 1980. Cracking diamonds: observer role in little league baseball settings and the acquisition of social competence. In Shaffir, W.B & Stebbins, R.A. (Eds.). *Fieldwork experience: qualitative approaches to social research*. New York: St. Martins Press, pp. 117-131.

Fiske, J. 1992. British Cultural Studies and Television. In. Allen, C. R. (Ed.). *Channels of Discourse, Reassembled*. 2nd Ed. London: Routledge, pp. 284-326.

- Fiske, J. 1992. Cultural Studies and the Culture of Everyday Life. In Grossberg, L., Nelson, C., & Treichler, A.P. (Eds.). *Cultural Studies*. New York, N.Y. & London: Routledge, pp. 154-173.
- Fiske, J. 1992. Popularity and the Politics of Information. In Dahlgren, P. & Sparks, C. (Eds.). *Journalism and Popular Culture*. London: Sage, pp. 45-63.
- Fiske, J, 1992. The Cultural Economy of Fandom. In Lewis, A. L. (Ed.). *The Adoring Audience: Fan Culture and Popular Media*. London: Routledge, pp. 30-49.
- Foss, K. 2008. Ordinary citizens redefining news gathering. *The Star*. 15 September 2008. Retrieved 23 July 2010 from: <http://thestar.co.za/index.php?SectionId=&fArticle=vn2008915055712809c852277>.
- Fourie, P.J. 2001. *Media studies: volume one: institutions, theories, and issues*. Lansdowne: Juta Education.
- Gans, H. J. 1980. *Deciding what's news: A study of CBS evening news, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek, and Time*. New York: Vintage.
- Geertz,C. 1973. Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.
- Gillham, B. 2000. *The Research Interview*. London: Continuum.
- Glaser B.G. & Strauss, A. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Glaser, M. 2008. *Media Shift/Digging Deeper: Semi-Pro Journalism Teams Give Alternative View of U.S. Elections*. 13 March 2008. Retrieved 12th July 2010 from: http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2008/03/digging_deepersemipro_journali.html.
- Glaser, M. 2008. *Media Shift. The Perception Game: Am I a Journalist or Blogger? PBS: Media Shift*. 3rd March 2008. Retrieved 12 July 2010 from: http://www.pbs.org/mediashift/2008/03/the_perception_gameam_i_a_jour.html
- Gold, R.L. 1958. Roles in Sociological Field Observation. *Social Forces*. 36: 217-223.

- Goode, L. 2009. Social News, Citizen Journalism and Democracy. *New Media and Society*. 11(8): 1287-1305.
- Gorman, G.E. & Clayton, P. 2005. *Qualitative Research for the Information Professional. A Practical Handbook*. 2nd Ed. London: Facet Publishing
- Gray, D.E. 2004. *Doing research in the real world*. London: Sage
- Grocott's Free Paper. 1870. *Grocott's free paper: an advertising medium for town and country*. Vol. I. Wednesday, 11 May 1870. Grahamstown.
- Grocott's Free Paper. 1871. *Grocott's free paper: an advertising medium for town and country*, vol. II (35), Wednesday 4 January. Grahamstown.
- Grocott's Mail*. 1970. *Grocott's mail centenary edition*. 15 May, pp.1-8.
- Grocott's Mail*. 2004. "Readership profile for 2004". Unpublished.
- Grocott's Mail*. 2006. *About us*. Retrieved 15 October 2006 from: <http://www.grocotts.co.za/about.php>
- Grocott's Mail*. 2007. *Grocott's mail sales 2007*. Unpublished.
- Grundy, K. 1994. The politics of South Africa's national arts festival: small engagements in the bigger campaign. *African Affairs*. 93 (372): 387- 409.
- Gubrium, J.F. & Holstein, J.A. (Eds.). 2002. *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Methods*. In Gilmor, D. 2006. *We the Media: grassroots journalism by the people, for the people*. Sebastopol: O'Reilly Media.
- Gurevitch, M et al. (Eds.). *Culture, Society and the Media*. London: Methuen, pp. 30-55.
- Haas, T. 2004. Alternative Media, Public Journalism and the Pursuit of Democratization. *Journalism Studies*. 5(1): 115-121.
- Habermas, J. 1989. *The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. Massachusetts: MIT.

Hamilton, J. 2001. *An alternative practice of alternative media*. Unpublished manuscript.

Hammond-Tooke, W. 1970. Urbanisation and the interpretation of misfortune: a quantitative analysis. *Africa: journal of the international African institute*. 40 (1): 25-39.

Hebdige, D. 1979. *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Routledge.

Heller, P. 2009. Democratic deepening in India and South Africa. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. 44: 123-149.

Holleman, H & Paterson, L. 2002. *Graham's Town: the untold story: a social history and self-guided tour*. Grahamstown: Black Sash Publication.

Howe, J. 2007. Crowdsourcing: the importance of community. Retrieved 12 July 2010 from: <http://crowdsourcing.typepad.com/cs/2007/07/the-importance-.html>

Jakubowicz, K, 1991. Musical Chairs? The Three Public Spheres in Poland. In Dahlgren, P. and Sparks, C. (Eds.). *Communication and Citizenship: Journalism and the Public Sphere in the New Media Age*. London: Routledge, pp. 155-75.

Jensen, K. 2002. *A handbook of media and communication research: qualitative and quantitative methodologies*. London: Routledge.

Johnson, J.M, 1975. *Doing field research*. New York: Free Press.

Junker, B. H. 1960. *Field Work: An Introduction to the Social Sciences*. Chicago: University of Chicago press.

Kalton, G. & Schuman, H. 1982. The Effect of the Question on Survey Responses: A review. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*. 145 (1): 42-57.

Knight, M 2010. Blogging and citizen journalism. In Clarke, N. (Ed.). *The Citizen in Communication: Revisiting Traditional, New and Community Media Practices in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta & Company Limited.

Krippendorff, K. 1969. Models of Messages: Three Prototypes. In Gerbner, G., Holsti, O. R., Krippendorff, K, Paisley, W.J & Stone , P.J (Eds.). *The Analysis of Communication Content*. New York: Wiley.

Kvale, S. 1996. *Interviews: an introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Lemann, S. 2006. *Bloggers get off your high horse you are not journalists*. Retrieved 12 July 2010 from: http://www.healthcarevox.com/2006/08/nicholas_lemann_bloggers_get_o.html.

Lemon, A. 2004. Redressing school inequalities in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Journal of Southern African studies*. 30 (2): 269-290.

Lenhart, A. & Fox, S. 2006. *Bloggers, Pew Internet & American Life Project*. 19 July. Retrieved 12 July 2010 from: <http://www.pewinternet.org>.

Lindlof, T.R. 1995. *Qualitative communication research methods*. London: Sage

Mabweazara, H. 2010. New Technologies and Journalism Practice in Africa: Towards a Critical Sociological Approach. In Clarke, N. (Ed.). *The Citizen in Communication: Revisiting Traditional, New and Community Media Practices in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta & Company Limited, pp. 11-30.

Mahajan, G. 1999. Civil Society and Its Avatars: What Happened to Freedom and Democracy? *Economic and Political Weekly*. 34 (11): 88–96.

Mamdani, M. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Manona, C, 1988. Small Town Urbanisation in South Africa: a Case Study. *African Studies Review*. 31 (3): 95-110.

Matza, D, 1969. *Becoming Deviant*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall

McQuail, D, 1987. *Mass Communication Theory*. 2nd Ed. London: Sage

Moyo , D, 2010. We are all Storytellers: Citizen Journalism in the age of Digital ‘Pavement’ radio. In Clarke, N. (Ed.). *The Citizen in Communication: Revisiting Traditional, New and Community Media Practices in South Africa*. Cape Town: Juta & Company Limited, pp. 51-74.

Neuman, W. L. 2000. *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. New Jersey: Allyn & Bacon

O’Meara, E. 1995. *Grahamstown reflected*. Grahamstown: Trustees of the Albany Museum.

O’Sullivan, K.1994. *Understanding Ways: Communicating Between Cultures*.Sydney: Hale & Iremonger.

Peshkin. A. 2001. *Permissible Advantage: The Moral Consequences of Elite schooling*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Probyn, M. 2006. Language and Learning Science in South Africa. *Language and Education*. 20 (5).

Rosen, J. 1993. Beyond Objectivity. *Nieman Reports*. 47(4): 48-53.

Roux, M. & Leger, M.n.d. *Grahamstown: Fingo Village*. Johannesburg: Christian Institute of South Africa.

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I.S. 1995. *Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data*. 2nd Ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Silverman, D. 2000. *Doing Qualitative Research: A Practical Handbook*. London: Sage.

Simons, M. 2008. Journalism: The limitations of the crowd. *Creative Economy*. 15 February. Retrieved 17 July 2010 from: http://www.creative.org.au/webboard/results.shtml?filename_num=195592

Singer, J. B, 2006. Journalists and News Bloggers: Complements, Contradictions, and Challenges. In Bruns, A & Jacobs, J. (Eds.). *Uses of Blogs*. New York: Peter Lang, pp. 23-32

Smelser, N. 1976. *Comparative Methods in the Social Sciences*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Smith, M.K. 2003. Communities of Practice. *The Encyclopaedia of Informal Education*. Retrieved 24 October 2010 from: www.infed.org.

Snyder, W.M. & Wenger, E. 2004. Our world as a learning system: communities of practice approach. In Marcia, L., Conner, J., & Clawson, G. (Eds.). *Creating a Learning Culture: Strategy, Practice and Technology*. Cambridge: Cambridge university press, pp. 38-58

Stake, R.E. 1994. Qualitative Case Studies. In Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage, pp. 443-466.

Stake, R.E. 1995. *The Art of Case Study Research*. London: Sage.

Steenveld, L. & Strelitz, L. 2010. Citizen Journalism in Grahamstown: Iindaba Ziyafika and the Difficulties of Instituting Citizen Journalism in a Poor South African Country Town. Unpublished research paper, presented at the World Journalism Education Congress, Grahamstown, 5-7 July 2010.

Thurman, N. 2008. Forums for citizen journalists? Adoption of user generated content initiatives by online news media. *New Media and Society*. 10: 139-157.

The Task Force on Alternatives in Print, Social Responsibilities Round Table, American Library Association. 1987. 6th Ed. *Alternatives in print: an international catalogue of books, pamphlets, periodicals and audiovisual materials*. New York: Neal-Schuman.

Tomaselli, K & Louw, P. 1991. *The Alternative Press in South Africa*. Bellville: Anthropos.

Traber, M. 1985. Alternative Journalism, Alternative Media. *Communication Resource*. London: World Association for Christian Communication.

Tuchman, G. 1978. *Making News*. New York: Free Press.

Tuchman, G, 1991. Qualitative Methods in the Study of News. In Jensen, K.B. & Jankowski, N.W. (Eds.). *A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research*. London: Routledge, pp. 79–92.

Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wenger, E. 2000. *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Business School Press.

Wenger, E. 2000. Communities of Practice: the Structure of Knowledge Stewarding. In Despres, C. & Chauval, D. *Knowledge horizons: The Present and the Promise of knowledge Management*. Butterworth–Heinemann: Boston, pp. 205-224

Wenger, E. Communities of Practice: An Introduction. Retrieved 23 November 2010 from: <http://www.ewenger.com>

Wimmer, R.D., & Dominick, J.R. 1991. *Mass media research: an introduction*. 3rd Ed. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Zelditch, M, 1962. Some Methodological Problems of Field Studies. *American Journal of Sociology*. 67: 566-675.